

... description: ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Haifa II, March 3 2015 - May 31 author: Mírzá Aḥmad Sohrab  
title: ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Haifa I  
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## ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Haifa II

Mírzá Aḥmad Sohrab

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Haifa II, March 3 2015 - May 31

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**March 3rd 1915 Moonbeam Baha’i Cabin Abon Senan, Acca Syria**

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Dear friends,

This morning we were delighted to be called into the Presence of Abdul Baha. This was the second time that I found myself in his room in the house in which the Holy Family lives. From its windows all the surrounding country mountains and valleys are seen-thus bringing before the eyes a most charming view. Behind one of these windows, on the Divan the Beloved was sitting. He sent also for Sheik Saleh- the ground old man of Abon Senan. For one hour we were thus enjoying the showers of his spiritual blessings and our ears were charmed with the music of his voice. Because Mirza Badi Effendi and Doctor Ḥabíbu’lláhallah were going to leave for Haifa to return tomorrow he sent with them a loving message to the Egyptian young man whom he meet in Acca:- "Give him my greeting. Tell him that nowadays correspondence is impossible. Letters of the simplest kind are dangerous to be mailed. Notwithstanding this, the hearts communicate with each other with perfect spirituality. Ideal correspondence cannot be stopped. The feelings and susceptibilities annihilate space and bring the souls together.

Then he spoke about the present sad conditions of the country. The wisdom of all these events will become apparent in the future. The plan of God will emerge out of these confusions little by little. We must patiently wait for the end and not be disturbed by these means. Speaking about healing he said:- "Healing is of two kinds, the physical and spiritual. The physical healing is made possible through medicines, but the spiritual healing is granted by God." Then he spoke about Russo-Japanese war and the extraordinary victory achieved by Japan. He related certain phases of war which are too well known to the historians and need not be recorded here.

At eleven o'clock Mirza Jalal and Rouha Khansin and two of his children accompanied by our two brother left for Haifa.

Then the Master after having a long walk stopped at the door {{p20}} of the Bahai school and entered the room. All the children got up from their seats and stood reverently while the Beloved was looking kindly at each. Speaking to Mirza Moner who is also a teacher said:-" These are my children. They are my dear sons and daughters. I am very thankful to both the teachers because they are exerting themselves very faithfully in their education.

In the afternoon he was downstairs. The Orthodox priest and another Young man called on him and for an hour or more he entertained them with local stories of brigands and ruffians who infested the streets of Haifa and Acca in former years and the methods used by the authorities to arrest them. There was a small meeting in the evening. The Master came down but did not speak. He asked Mirza Moner to chant the Holy communes, thus breathing into us a new spirit of life and Joy.

I may share with you the translation of the following small supplication revealed by Abdul Baha for the children:- "O Thou Incomparable God! Grant Thou an asylum to this weak O Thou Almighty. Although we are perishable plants, we belong to thy rose garden. Although we are leafless and blossomless tress, still we are of Thy orchard. Therefore nurture Thou this plant with the Showers of the Clouds of Providence and water it with the rain of Thy Mercy. Awaken him, make him intelligent, suffer him to become worthy being, confer Thou upon him eternal Life and establish him in Thy Kingdom."

The friend in Abon Senan send you Bahai greeting and wish to be remembered to you under all circumstances. Although we do not hear from you yet our hearts are one in the love of Baha. The flowers of the Kingdom of Abba perfume the souls and the stars of past memory shine as brilliantly. Nothing can break the bond of unity between believers. In the course of this human life we may not meet each other but we know the spirit of God is protecting all, guiding all and inspiring all. Let us all turn our faces towards the center of reality and there we will find an eternal presence.

**March 4th 1915 Moonbeam Bahai Calun Abon Senan, Acca Syria**

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Dear friends,

Spiritual solitude, a deep and reverent searching into the things of God a whole-minded concentration the development of the latent abilities of the soul the down pouring of supernal strength and Grace, the gathering up of the power of life and light, the inner illumination, the emerging out of solitude and entering upon a vast arena of ideal, intellectual and physical activities in the service and for the progress of mankind have been more or less, the gradual steps in the enfoldment of the divine life of every divine Man. Far away from the hustling and bustling of mankind they stand and work waiting patiently for their destined time; so that they may come out and occupy themselves in the service of their

fellowmen. These are the most extraordinary beings, whose bodies, brains and hearts seem to have been created out of other texture than mortal clay. They are in every sense the accredited Ambassadors of the Most High sent to the warring nations to settle their disputes and extinguish the fire of their chronic differences. As such their authority is supreme, forming the supreme Court of Justice for the people of the world. If we look into the nature of their laws and precepts we clearly see they were intended for the protection of mankind and not for their destruction, they were revealed for the advancement of real civilization and not the fostering of anarchy, they were proclaimed as antidotes and not as poisons to undermine the constitutions of humanity. If in certain instances the latter has been the result, we owe it principally either to the misguided zeal or the ignorant interpretation of their narrow-minded followers who prefer sectarianism privileges to the radiant bliss of celestial brotherhood, the dim light of the candle to the world illuminating rays of the sun. The primary teachings of these good men were truly intended for all mankind and each in his own age and cycle stood as the prototype of all goodness, all justice and all mercy. Whatever is asserted to the contrary they had no love of preference or distinction. They did not come to establish their own claims because that was not necessary - but they came to educate the people and teach them how to love God and each other and live will and peace as the members of one family.

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Taking up to the premises laid down in the first part of this letter and looking for a moment into the recorded history of the prophets of God- we see that Moses left his people in the wilderness and ascended the Sinaitic Mountain, there to speak with Jehovah and receive the Tablets of Decalogue, engraved upon them with the fingers of 'I am that I am', those simple eternal laws which have been considered the very corner stone of civic and moral life. When Gautama evinced that preoccupation with the sufferings of all sentient beings he left his palace, wife and son and all the pomps of royalty of a throne- in order to retire under the Bodhi druma.' [the tree of intelligence] There he sat for weeks plunged in profound meditation on the cause of things, fighting with Mara or the Prince of darkness till at last he emerged into that state of inner enlightenment and mystic illumination in which he understood, according to the Buddhist historians, the cause of sufferings and consequently its cure. It was after this spiritual enfoldment that Siddhartha became The Buddha-'The Awakened, The Enlightened.' The solution of his problem or in other word, the world's problem having been vouch safe, he spent the last forty years of his life travelling and preaching his gospel. His Holiness Christ spent forty days in the wilderness, preparing himself for his world wide mission of love and light. Satan took him on the top of the mountain showed him the Kingdoms and principalities of this earth and offered them to him if he would fall on the ground and worship him. But Jesus resisted this temptation and at the end of forty days came out amongst his fellowmen and started his Ministry and the announcement of the Kingdom of God and the ringing message of life, life more abundantly.' Before Mohammad reached his fortieth year he sought the solitude of a Cavern on

Mount Hera, about three leagues North of Mecca, where he would remain days and nights together, engaged in prayer and meditation. Here his fervent and enthusiastic spirit labored with conceptions too great for mortal thought. Here he became convinced of the gross idolatry of the Arabs and his divine heart was inspired with the idea of religious reform. In this state of solitary and mental abstraction he spend many months, especially the month of Ramzan, sacred to all the Arabs.

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At last the hour of inner illumination and heavenly annunciation arrived and a flood of spiritual light encircled him. His understanding was instantly brightened with celestial splendor and he also left his Cave and commenced his God-given work amongst the Arabs, purging his country from the evil practice of polytheism and heinous customs and raising the Flag of the Oneness of God. On October 14th, 1853, Baha Ollah and his family were exiled from Teheran to Bagdad. He was then 37 years old. A year after his arrival in Bagdad he retired for prayer and contemplation to the Mountains of Kurdestan. In the vicinity of Soleymanich he lived in a cave for two years. Here he thought over his future Cause, laid its foundation upon the firm rock of his capacious heart and prepared himself for the great universal work which was going to usher in the age of brotherhood. Here in the evenings he would sing out his pains and sorrows and all the shepherd in the surrounding hills, attracted by the rich symphonies of his life, gathered to listen to his melodious voice. Here he immersed himself in the sea of Universal Love, walked in the rose garden of universal Peace, basked in the sunshine of Universal Truth, perfumed his inner being with the flowers of Universal Ideals communed uninterruptedly with the Universal Intelligence, drank deep from the Fountain of Universal Beauty and feasted his soul at the hangout of Universal Mind. Then having been fully equipped with these sharp weapons of realities and his heart enkindles and illumined with the Fire of the Holy Spirit he left his retirement and came out into the world of men to help and assist them not only with His Laws but with His Majestic Presence. The rest of His divine Life was spent in the education and enlightenment of the world, whole undergoing for the sake of His Principle calamities and banishments, till at the early dawn, on the 28th of May 1892, he ascended to the Supreme Horizon, while having in the Mansion of Bahajee, outside of Acca.

After the ascension of the Blessed Perfection Abdul Baha, the Centre of His Covenant, retired for about 40 days to the Cave of Elijah {{p24}} and communed with the spirit of prophesy. Alone and in the solitude of the sacred cave he prayed and reinforced himself from the centre of all-power. Here he dreamed of the general promotion of the Teaching of His Kingly Father and here he evolved out of those Teachings his matchless addresses and talks now extant in every part of the world.

Similarly the Bahais who have received the essences of the teachings and wisdom of the past prophets and are anxious to serve mankind must of a necessity acquire this illumination, receive this spiritual baptism and gain this initial admission.

This mystic enlightenment is not a matter of training or education; it is a pure Gift bestowed by the almighty upon whomsoever He willeth. But our task is to purify the vessels of our hearts, to clear the dust off the surface of our souls, to cleanse the interior chambers of our minds and forget self and its enticements. In other word, if we have no ability or capability we must create it by a process of refinement, consisting of prayer, supplication, contemplation, meditation and activity, and trust in the Illuminator of the hearts knowing full well that He will never disappoint His suppliant servants standing at His Door. He has reserved our hearts for the thrones of His Presence but we have invited the strangers in. He comes to take his place but finding another he returns to His Supreme Abode. He pays us calls at the early dawn but discovers us in deep slumber upon the couch of negligence; then swifter than the nightingale, he flies back to the rose-bush of eternity.

Today we did not see the Beloved. It was a windy day and therefore did not come out. In the afternoon Mirza Badi and Doctor Halubillah returned from Haifa and brought us the good news of the recovery of Haji Mirza Haydor Ali. In the evening there was a meeting and the Master was present. He said:-“One hour in the life of Haji is a rare jewel.” Then he urged the friends to show firmness and steadfastness in the face of the present difficulties and let not outward circumstances disturb their

**March 5th 1915 Moonbeam Bahai Calun Aban Senan, Acca Syria**

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Dear friends,

Real faith is the cornerstone of all the great accomplishments and without it nothing succeeds. We must have faith in God and faith in ourselves. After a small army have overcome a superior force, because they have had faith in their general and faith in the power of their arms. Faith is the soul of a nation; now and then through the negligence or ignorance of the people it may sleep but it will never die. An internal or external shaking will awaken it out of its slumber and give to it extraordinary activity in all directions. The more our faith the greater our power of endurance. A faithless wight is a weak person. Faith is an eternal miracle and the power to forget the present turmoil and agnosticism and look into the future, pregnant with peace and trust in God. Faith is the unerring seer, the wise knower and the logical thinker. A person without the power of Faith can never achieve greatness nor reach the pinnacle of the mountain of confidence. Faith is the cool water of Life that allays the thirst of atheism. Faith is the radiant orb that illumines the dark corners of the heart. Faith is an imperishable rose that perfumes the nostrils of those who inhale it. The true life of man is the life of faith. With its assistance he will become enabled to surmount every difficulty to weather every storm, to accept serenely every test and attain to the highest point of assurance. One grain of faith is more precious than all the jewels of the earth. Real Faith is the solvent

of all the problems and the guide of every erring one. Faith is the paradise of contentment, the Abode of Peace, the asylum of security, the home of truth, the fountain of salvation, the singing bird of joy, and the harbinger of good-tidings! If we have faith we have everything if we are animated by the spirit of faith we are alive, if we turn our faces toward the Beauty of faith we will be confirmed and if we fill our hearts with the graces of faith we will become invulnerable.

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This morning I found the Beloved downstairs and he was speaking with a clergyman on the power of faith. I have tried to embody the spirit of his remarks in the above words. Then he spoke on botany and scientific agriculture, giving innumerable examples how to sow wheat, barley, potatoes and beans. Fertilization of the soil was another topic that interested several farmers who were present. When the meeting was at an end he arose from his seat and invited others to take a walk with him through the beautiful, green country. They all followed him but I returned to my Cabin to speak with you quietly with pen and paper. The rest of the day I was working with few interruptions. From nine to 12 Doctor Ḥabību'llāh-allah is in the room to receive the sick ones and minister to their physical pains and sufferings. While I sit in the corner of the room I am forced eye-witness of the patients and their manifold sicknesses. This morning a woman came in whose left eye was blinded, the right eye very sore and the nose flattened, When our Doctor asked her the cause of this disfigurement, she told him a pathetic story: Her husband being a cruel and brutish man because she had forgotten to feed the chicken one afternoon, had kicked her in the left eye which was totally blinded, brought the force of his fist against the right eye which was quite destroyed and pushed her forward from above the stairs, thus falling on the ground downward, causing the flat nose. Oh! my blood boiled in my veins when I heard this story! Who could listen to such dreadful story and look into the face of this poor, bewailing woman and not be shaken to the core of his being. Such are the beastly qualities of some of these savage men who are disgracing the virgin purity, delicacy and beauty of woman! And the worst of all was that poor girl could complain to no one nor carry her heart-rendering case to any court nor ask redress from any person. This is one of many such instances that comes daily within our notice and our good Doctor tries his level best to bind the wounds and recover the shattered, depressed souls.

In the evening we had a large meeting and the Beloved relates a fascinating story which I will relate for your benefit in

**May 1, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria**

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Dear friends!

The blue horizon of the kindling azure was begemmed with the golden rays

of the dawn of the sun, heralding the coming of the incense- breathing morn and putting an end to the palpable obscure of the night. I had awakened quite as early and was in the paradise of eternal joy, so still and peaceful was the sacred place. My heart was in silent communion and prayer with the source of all good and my mind was busy with the thoughts of far- off friends who are longing day and night to approach the throne of the glorious Master and receive his spiritual benediction. Although the word has become a pandemonium of harsh and discordant voices and the sound of trumpet and the clash of arms are deafening the ears of all the inhabitants of the globe, yet here, in this sweet garden we have peace, because the Prince of Peace lives amongst us. Because he possesses our hearts and we possess his love we do not feel the need of anything. His love has made us rich; his faith has glorified us; around his heavenly table we have sat and we are satiated; from the many-fountain [unreadable] spring of his knowledge we have quaffed and we have allayed our thirst, the ruby wine of his sincerity we have drank from the goblet of severance and thereby we are intoxicated; the beauty of his face we have beheld and have become his soul-sacrificing slaves; the effect of his words we have felt and thus we are hastening toward the arena of martyrdom; the wisdom of his utterances we have felt and hence we are living under the shade of the tree of obedience to his command; the tenderness of his affection we have experienced and therefore we are devoted to his Cause. The sun of his mercy has illumined the consciences of those who have turn toward him and sought spiritual light and guidance just this phenomenal sun bestows light and life to all the created beings. With him for our support we are invulnerable. His celestial majesty will transform our earthly degradation and his supernal station will raise us out of the dark well of debasement.

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While I was weaving together the silken threads of the above thoughts I heard the footstep of the Beloved and I turned and bowed down. "Ah!" he asked. "What art thou doing so early in the garden?" "I was praying." "For what?" "I begged Baha Ollah to make the heart of each individual like unto this holy garden." "I will also pray for this," A stiff breeze was blowing and therefore he said: "Those who are advanced in age must not expose their bodies to the cold and cutting wind. This frigid wind causes the indisposition of the physical body bent the frosty gale of passion and self-undermines the foundation of the spiritual health of mankind. Under all circumstances we must protect our ideal and astral bodies from one of the Persian poets the translation of which is as follows: "I trained myself and at last it became the means of my undoing. I did not know all this time that I was training my own implacable foe." He said: "It is very true, Self is not only one's own enemy but rather the enemy of God and humanity alike."

About ten o'clock I went out and found him sitting in the store of Mirza Amayetullah. He had just returned from paying a visit to the German Consul. He beckoned to me and bade me to be seated. A young boy passed by followed by a little, white bleating lamb. Evidently this simple scene evoked

in him the pleasant memories of childhood for he smiled and said: - "How the children love the small innocent lambs! especially when they ran after them, filling their ears with baa..aa..aa baa..aa..aa... Because their nature is so simple the children love all kind of animals and stories relating to them as well as to inanimate objects. I remember an incident of my childhood which will bear out this matter. I was then very, very young, probably 3 or 4 yrs. At the time the Blessed Perfection lived in Teheran. In our street, close by to our house lived one of the Farrashes of the palace. He was a bird fancier and in a peculiar manner, all his own he had tamed a number of nightingales which followed him everywhere, sitting on his head and shoulders and while he walked in the streets they marbled melodiously. He had cut a piece of the lower bills of the poor birds; - so that they could not pick up the grains and were forced to eat out of his hand. Often he used to come to our garden with the nightingales perched on his head. As a child I was delighted with the strange spectacle.

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The birds flew away and sat on the branches of the trees singing. Then suddenly the man whistled and they returned back swiftly, roosting on his head, shoulders and hands. This sight especially pleased me and I clapped my hands with glee as I watched them. Here the Beloved laughed very heartily and clapped his hands with such joy as though he was again witnessing the sight of long years ago.

In the evening we all gathered in the holy Presence and speaking about faithfulness he said: "Man must be loyal and faithful to his superior. An unloyal person is dispossessed of every fair virtue. Those who have entered beneath the shade of the tree of the Blessed Perfection and live in accord with this good-pleasure are the faithful servants of the Cause of God. They are the standard bearers of the principles of rectitude and integrity."

During the last few days there has been a talk of the return of the Holy Family and the believers from Bou Senan. Four days ago the Master gave them permission and naturally this has made them very happy, because they did not feel quite themselves when he was away from them. today the first party arrived and were present in the meeting. They reported that the Sheiks and the Druises were much [unreadable] over the sudden departure of believers and were actually weeping on account of the separation. They had counted on us that we were to continue to stay at least for one year and could not make out the reason why the Master gave the word of return. No doubt each one of the believers according to his intellectual and spiritual training can recount his experiences in the small Arab village on the top of the hill and the simple peasants will narrate many stories about the goodness and benevolence of the Lord. If we do ever meet in this world I shall relate to you what I have witnessed of the glorious deeds of the Beloved. These letters represent but a dim and faint picture of the heroic and dramatic actions of the one round whom all names revolve." However much we may strive to paint the picture in a life-like manner still it lacks life, motion, energy. The same rule is applied to the translation of his words. One must know



and appreciate the subtle beauty, the pictorial eloquence, the poetic imagery, the lofty style, the magnetic diction, the spiritual allusions of the Persians Bahai literature and then he will realize that our translations no matter how perfect, how faithful, how correct are only glimmering shadows of the originals.

**May 2, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

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Dear friends!

We were the guests of the Beloved, because this was the last day of the season of Rizwan. All over the world the friends are feasting in the verdant country and green gardens, singing songs, chanting sacred verses, speaking out the glad tidings of the kingdom and filling their hearts with the exhaustless joy of a new life. We also feasted on the slope of Mount Carmel, in the Presence of the Master and in the companionship of the saints of the Lord and in our prayers remembered those who were absent. This morning the Beloved descended the stairs of the house into the garden greeting us with his smileful Marhaba, and then told us to go to the Pilgrims Home and wait for his arrival. Joyfully I ascended the Mountain and found Aga Mohamad Hassan and others very busy preparing the roast meat and eggplants. I went over to my Bahai Nest and in anticipation of flying back to it I put everything in order. Now that the Holy Family are coming back I will surely be given leave to return to my old charming mountain Cabin. What sweet days I have spent in it and whether the same spiritual pleasure will be given me in the future, only time will reveal! The supreme object of my life consists in being in the neighborhood of the Adored One and in serving him serve the believers of God. About ten o'clock he arrived with his three sons-in-law and entered the Pilgrim's Home. All the friends arose from their seats and in their respectful silence they expressed their love and affection for him. He gave a short talk about the governmental restrictions by which Baha Ollah was surrounded in the first two years of his arrival in Acca and the subsequent relaxation of the same rules by the same despotic authorities. Then he retired to another room-thus letting the meeting to descend to a lower tone of intimate and heart to heart intercourse which would be impossible when he is present; because so long as the sun of his countenance is shining in the congregation no one would care to receive lights from lesser and smaller satellites. Soon the long table in the central hall was prepared and the Lord was informed that everything was ready. He came out and asked everyone to be seated.

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He did not sit himself but continued to serve, fill the plates with more meat and walking around. The soup of Haji Mirza Haydor Ali had too much fat in it and he took it to the kitchen himself and made it thinner. He looked after his food as a tender mother looks after the diet of her child. Then he

placed his hands on my shoulders and stood a long time reclining on my back. "Dost thou like this food?" he asked. While he was walking around the table he delivered the following talk for the benefit of a number of young Bahais:- "All the Bahai Children must learn a trade or manual profession. This must be aside from their literacy education. The study of foreign languages, such as English, French, German etc. must be coupled with the study of an art, craft or profession." "Bonjour", "Bonsoir", "Comment ca va", "au revoir" are not the sole insignia of an educated person. Do not be satisfied with a superficial smuttering of a language. If you learn it, learn it thoroughly, scientifically. Even the Arab porters in the street speak as much and more, but they go hungry because they have not been taught a trade. Learn to do something in this world, no matter how small it may be. It is better to be a good carpenter, a fine shoemaker, a skillful physician, an accomplished engineer, an excellent gardener, a brilliant artist, a superior teacher, an inspired writer than to be an angel in heaven with nothing to do but to sing hallelujah and play on a golden harp. The mothers who have nursed and trained you have a great claim on your productive income and the girls whom you expect to marry desire to see in you the examples of manly honor and useful activities. Do not waste your energy over that which is not practicable. Let me repeat again this fundamental rule that every Bahai Child without any exception must be taught in some kind of trade or craft; so that if he should travel around the world he may not become a burden on the shoulders of other communities and wherever he may go the people may apply for his talent. This will guard him against all future poverty, misery and wants. This is the explicit command of the Blessed Perfection and all mankind must abide by it. I desire for you that which would become conducive to the exaltation of your over station and the increase of your moral and intellectual stamina. Now I have grown old and my hairs have become white and hoary. I advice ye, o youths of Baha! Learn {{p18}} the arts, study the sciences, acquire the practical methods of knowledges, trades and professions, learn the most useful crafts of the age; -thus you may be honored amongst men and respected by all the people. Be ye the fruit-bearing trees of the garden of Abha, the shining lamps in the gathering of the friends, the fragrant flowers of the meadows of the world and the efficient members of the body polity. Be ye original, invent your thoughts and deeds. Do not let the sphere of your ideals be contracted. Be not imitators. Seek the radiant path of Divine glory. Be ye attracted and enkindled. Do not sit idle, trust in God and walk in the spiral road of progress. Be ye full of dynamic motion and let the rhythm of your life be perfect. Be ye the embodiments of animation and the rolling ball of good cheer and stirring joy. In this century of light precede all others in sympathy, in philanthropic actions, in physical and intellectual culture and in association with the rest of mankind. Do not let the pool of your thoughts become stagnant. Open the shutters of your mind and air its secret chambers. Refresh and renew the growing temples of your characters by the blowing breezes of the sunlit ideals. Adorn yourselves with the gems of rare and world, enlightening actions, sing like unto the stars, sweep along like unto a mighty river and let not the tributaries of your beings be frozen by the cold blast of the winter of disappointment and hopelessness.

Pour down like unto the rain, weep like unto the cloud, laugh like unto the roses. Be inquisitive and learn every good things. Once you have finished the course of your discipline, strike in the new, untrodden paths of life. Go forward. Learn the law of self-control: Bring under your own dominion the lower appetites of human nature. Practice that which you teach, Unravel those mysteries of the universe which are conducive to the welfare of humanity. Stand firm on your own ground without the borrowed staff of another man. No one will help you if you do not help yourselves and your fellowmen. Work and its reward will come to you. Work and wait for the results. Work and its traces will immortalize your name. Work and when final success comes the world will [unreadable].

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After this talk the Beloved went over to the house of Aga Abbas Goli to have his siesta and the friends forming various groups gave themselves up to the spiritual enjoyment of the moment. Two hours passed in this happy and delightful association and then the scene was shifted to the reception room of Megham. [The tomb of the Bab] Here another meeting was held, full of the glow of the spirit and radiance. Soon the glorious King appeared amongst us and some on the throne of Celestial Majesty. Haji Mirza Haydor Ali was not there and looking around inquiringly he asked: "Where is Haji? Send someone for him. I love him. With his presence a meeting will become truly spiritual. The individuals of the world of humanity are in different degrees. They are like unto the candlesticks. There is a candlestick whose candle sheds light and illumination; another candlestick is holding a candle but not yet ignited; a third has not a candle and is for a mere show; A fourth has had a candle but now it has burned out and is forever extinct. Similarly there are some enkindled souls whose very presence in a meeting changes its atmosphere, suffering the people to become truly spiritual, turning their faces toward God; others like unto the black smoke, darken the horizon of the minds. Thus in whatever meeting I enter and find Haji Mirza Haydor Ali I obtain joy and fragrance. My counsel to you is: Never let the candle of your heart become extinct. Strive to increase its light. Add to it the oil of wisdom. Illumine everyone with its rays. A candlestick without the candle! Ah me! A body without life, a sun without light, a pearl without lustre, a sheaf without wheat, a garden without vegetation and a mine without gold."

Then he led the service by chanting aloud the visiting Tablet. This last part of our unwritten program coming to an end six military officers headed by the Commander called on him and they were entertained for one hour. Then Mofti and three Mullahs arrived and the Master through his lofty conversation instructed them. He with his guests rode down in the carriage and we descended the mountain, our memories enriched by the matchless experiences of another never to be forgotten day. The cup of our joy was filled to overflowing when in the evening we sat around the table in the presence of the Lord and partook of his.

**May 3, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria**

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Dear friends!

This morning Doctor Finkelstein, the Director of the Jewish technical Institute called on the Beloved. He received him in the garden and they sat in the glorious sunshine. For more than one hour they talked together on many subjects, too numerous to be recorded in these pages. I will however mention the salient pots of only a few topics. The bottles fought between the Turks and the forces of the Allied powers of Europe in Gallipoli were considered in detail and the rather non-committal opinion was expressed that we have to wait and watch for the final results. The facts that more than forty war- ships are “knocking” at the gate of Dardanelles and the Russian fleet is “knocking” loudly from the Bosphorus on the black sea and that according to the current report from England and France have landed “400, 000” soldiers in the neighborhood of the sea of Marmora were reviewed. All these reports are of course based on the “Depeches communiqués par l’Agence Turque”. For the last few months the regular channels of communication have been so completely blocked that we have not received one single page of European Newspaper Doctor Finkelstein related the history of the thirty years as well as the seven years wars in Germany and the rapid progress in the invention of modern armaments. Then the Master spoke on the question of Universal Peace, the barbarism of war and the sweetness of international understanding. He wondered at the ruthless cruelty of man and hoped the day will come when all the nations of the world will discuss and settle their dispute in the Parliament of humanity. Being the servants of god, the sheep of one flock, the pages of book, the letters of one word, the leaves of one tree, the petals of one rose, the members of one family, why did they shed each other’s brothers, why did they cover vast fields with the mutilated bodies of their brothers, why did they violate the laws of mankind, why did they relapse into the primal stage of savagery? They are not men, they are hundred thousand times worse thou the murdered and infuriated bulls in a Spanish Arena.

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Then asking the Doctor how old he is and finding he is 33 years old, but still unmarried, he advised him to marry as soon as it well be possible for him. He said: “Buy a piece of land on the top of the Mountain and build for yourself a lovely [unreadable] house. Then marry a strong, vigorous, athletic girl like thyself. Marriage is as holy and divine Covenant, and young men, in order to partake of the responsibilities of life, must enter into this sacred compact of physical and spiritual relationship. They must bring into their new lives pure bodies, pure thoughts and pure motives. This is the richest settlement on the port of the young man and the most priceless dowry by the young girl. Through the inculcation of a thorough knowledge of hygiene humanity must be freed from all manner of diseases and ailments. The parents must teach their children the laws of life and how to avoid evils and temptations. Thus may they grow into

healthy and robust manhood and womanhood. This is indeed the most glorious heritage they can hand down to posterity. Generally the offsprings of marriages between the age of 25 and 40 became hale, muscular, able-bodied and braving; provided the contracting parties have been free from diseases and certain weaknesses of the body. Every couple must bring into their new home that quality of love and devotion which is solid and permanent. Their attachment must not be based upon the foundation of changing, personal attraction but founded on the deeper laws of spiritual co-operation and good fellowship. As the years roll on their respect and fondness for each other must increase. Hand in hand they must go on and on, learning new things, revealing the subtle tenderness of wedded life, unfolding the rich meaning of the ideal family and diffusing the sweet fragrances of mutual association. It is an axiomatic fact that all the lasting and beneficial reforms must commence with the family. Both the father and mother must contribute their share to the idealization and sanctification of the hearth. This the cornerstone of national greatness."

In the evening we were in his presence only for a few minutes. A propose question he said: Only through the power of the Holy Spirit the Cause of Universal Peace will be established in the world. There must be divine executive power to bring the self seeking government the terms of universal brotherhood and conciliation. Nothing else [unreadable]

**May 4, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria**

{{p22}}

Dear friends!

Three of the Zoroastrian Bahai farmers who were here with us for the last few days were ushered into the presence of the Beloved this morning and because they were going to return to Adassiah he gave them the following talk. "Convey my sincere greeting to all the friends. Tell them: Teach the Cause of God through your deeds and actions. This is God's real benediction and blessing. Live in such a way that when they observe your manners, behaviors, morals and conducts they may exclaim: these are not men and women but the angel of the Lord. Be ye kind to all mankind. Let mercy be the stimulus of all your dealings with the people. Do not look at their shortcomings. Win the heart through love and charity. Set them aglow with the Fire of the Love of God. The joy of that soul is indescribable if the fragrances of spirituality waft from the garden of his being. This divine happiness is not followed by any sorrow nor this heavenly spring is terminated by the sultry days of summer. I am very hopeful that you may ignite in Adassiah the bright candle of guidance."

Then he asked me to follow him on a tour of visits. On the way he spoke about the collection of the Western and Eastern newspapers dealing with the cause and containing articles about his trips. I told him that I have made such a partial collection when in America and it has been kept up even after my departure. He said "This is most important. To collect the opinion of the

Western world concerning the Bahai Movement will render invaluable service to the future generations. When I send thee back to America this will be one of thy works...Many months have elapsed and we have received no news from the believers in the United States." I said. "I hope the means of transportation will soon be established and then you will be enabled to go to Port Said to read the accumulated correspondence of the past months." "Why should we go there? We will ask Ahmad Yazdi to mail it to Haifa," "what I have been thinking of late" he said is this: After this war I would like to send 2063 energetic, well-informed Bahais to America: - so that they may travel {{p23}} and teach the Cause as I have done it. Whom do you have in mind?" I said "Badi Effendi will be an excellent member of such a party. He is a graduate of the American college in Beirut, he speaks the English language quite fluently, he has a good voice and informed of the teachings of the Cause and a sign of the mercy of the Almighty. He must be an embodiment of exhilaration and an announcer and liver of the glad-tidings of the Kingdom. Then all his words and deeds will tend toward the glorification of the Cause and the promotion of the Principle...Although I need thee with myself I may send thee as a member of this party. Then it will be the time of displaying the utmost exertion and proclaiming the dynamic message of the revelation." By this time we reached the store of Mirza Anayetullah and he sat there and talked with him for a few minutes. He stopped on his way at the Pharmacie, next to the Ottoman Bank, sat there for half an hour and conversed with the proprietor. Then ascending the stairs of the Bank he spoke with the Manager and other officer and went with them over same financial transactions. From the Bank we hired a carriage and called on the Mofti and stopped with him for about one hour. Here the conversation turned on the lives and manners of the Turkish Judges and the Master related several humorous stories to illustrate his talk and at the same time entertain those who were present. Bidding farewell to the Mofti and his guests we walked to the Persian tea-house, built near the custom house. Here several Sheiks gathered around him, tea was brought for them and the conversation turned on Mohamadan theology and its futile, unproductive theories. Then we walked to a wheat store near the Mosque and the Master sat there till one hour afternoon. Geammagam, the judge and other officers successively called on him and with each and all he spoke. It was like a court where all the people; high and low, rich and poor received the blessings of the ideal King. many miserable {{p24}} women applied for relief and did not go away empty-handed. While he was sitting in the wheat-store he wrote a letter to the Commander interceding for a partially blind man who was been forced into the rank of the army and the dispatched a telegram to Jerusalem to Zakki Bay, the Commander who was with us last year in Hammeh to come to Haifa and be his guest.

In the afternoon while he was entertaining a number of officers in the garden, the greatest Holy Leaf with three of the maids arrived from Abou Senan and we were all very happy to welcome her back in our midst. Twenty camels loaded with the household utensils and furniture and beds knelt at the gate of the garden. During the last few months these things were taken to Abou Senan

little by little but now they have brought them back all at once. The long line of 20 camels made an interesting sight. When the work of unloading was finished the camel drivers were asked to come in and have their dinner.

Before sunset the Master took me out for another walk. All the way he was silent and on our return he asked me to speak. I said: - : “Now that the holy Family has come back, if it is Thy will I may go up in the evenings.” He replied: “Go up! Why? No one has taken thy place. Thou art living downstairs. Thou art in my home. Thou must stay with me. Thou dost know all my moods. Now thou art a part of me. Whenever I like to take a walk I take thee with me, because thou dost not expect me to talk. I desire to have thee near me. No. Do not go up. Live in my house.” This touching invitation of my Beloved gave me supreme happiness. What a glorious privilege to have the home of Truth” for one’s abode; to walk in this paradise of flowers, this heaven of peace, this dwelling place of the angels! O Lord Confer on me the faculty of appreciation, the deeper sense of realization, the true perception of this divine honor! Ah! I am so worth less, so useless, so utterly incapable! O God! Give me the strength of thy Power, the Consolation of thy Eternal Presence, O My Master! I weep over my own ignorance, inability and wretchedness! Who am I, what am I? I am less than nothing. I am ashamed. Oh I am so ashamed and I feel my life has been a sad failure from beginning to end.

#### **May 5, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p25}}

Dear friends!

This afternoon our two brothers Mirza Badi and Doctor Haluliolla arrived from Abou Senan and the Beloved received them in his sleeping room overlooking the flowery garden. Mirza Hadi served us the ruby tea and the Monarch of the spiritual world thus addressed: “I have chosen you for the service of the Cause of God. I desire that in all the realms of life you may adorn your temple with radiant qualities and strive in the promotion of the word of God. Who been experienced by former generations and understood by the great men of this century that all the strivings and accomplishments of humanity on the physical plane are like the mosaic pictures traced on the surface of water which are effaced immediately afterwards. Consider the enraged and infuriated conditions of the present wild nations of the world who are pursuing the gloomy path of slaughter and destruction. What extraordinary effort what colossal self- sacrifice! Cheaply are they throwing away their possessions and lives. Already millions of souls have crimsoned the earth with their blood and mountains of corps have been piled up. Thousands upon thousands of these men have been Commanders generals and high officers who had spent their whole lives in the study of military science and naval tactics and who in one moment have become the targets of the infernal bullets of death. Truly I say all their efforts are fruitless. The utmost is this: - The names of the military leaders of each one of these nations

will be recorded in history as warlords, patriots, defenders of the country's rites, protectors of the laws of civilization, heroes etc. But those souls who have striven in the promotion of the word of God, and sacrificed their lives in the Divine Path, their triumphs will be eternal and will not be subject to change and mutation. The victories of these warring governments are temporal and ephemeral, while the victories of the servants of God are everlasting. Whenever a person starts on a journey he must put forth his entire stock of energy in order to reach the goal. He must arise in the fulfillment of all the requirements of the path {{p26}} and be not discouraged at the sight of dangers and obstacles, otherwise no results will be forthcoming. For example, if a person is occupied in the diffusion of the Fragrances of God and consecrating his time to the Cause of the Blessed Perfection, he must be severed in reality and not in word; he must be attracted, he must be magnanimous, he must be in constant motion, he must be exhilarated. If he is lacking in anyone of these essential qualities, glorious outcomes will not be obtained. How often it has happened that the effect of the services of many years has been entirely nullified by the commitment of a small mistake, intentional or non-intentional. I will pray for you and supplicate and beseech at the Threshold of the Kingdom of Abha to suffer to become perfect from every standpoint."

This morning the Beloved asked me to follow him to the house of American Consul, built on the shore of Mediterranean, at the end of the street of the German Colony. He welcomed him into his drawing-room and after a few preliminary remarks and exchanges of courtesies the Master told him: "It has been a long time that I intended to pay you a visit, because I have heard every one praising your qualities of impartiality, fairness and justice" He answered, "I have always practiced that which I have considered my duty." The beloved said: - "This is the sign of the perfect man, He strives and exerts himself to live up in accord with the obligations of his conscience. This feeling of rectitude must be inculcated in the hearts from the earliest childhood and then the educative influence of such training will grow with the growth of the children. To do good, irrespective of all considerations must become natural to man. Although it is passable to eradicate the roots of evil habits after their incrustation in the character yet it is better to prevent their formation during the plastic age of adolescence. The Arabic proverb says: 'Education in childhood is as the art of engraving upon the stone. It will not be effaced.'...We must all time fulfill the responsibilities laid upon us by our fellowmen. His holiness Christ says, give unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and unto God what belongs to God. We must discharge our duties towards our fellowmen and never fall short in their observances. All the divine prophets have come for the education of mankind; - so that they may become freed from the defects and vices of nature and be ushered into the world of light. The inhabitants of {{p27}} of this country not being enlightened with the light of education are deprived by the benefits of material and spiritual graces. In commerce and trade and industry they have not made any advancement whatsoever. Their children do not receive any industrial, practical training and thus when they reach the age of maturity they



are as parasites.”The counsel agreed with the above remark and told him something about his own life to Palestine and from that time on settled in Haifa. After drinking coffee, we descended into his garden, walked around and bade him farewell. He asked for a time to call on the the Beloved and it was settled on after tomorrow 11 a.m.

On the way he spoke about the vicissitudes that beset the path of young men and how they should train themselves in the bitter and hard experiences of life “When I was in Bagdad I had one plain cotton overcoat which I wore constantly for more than three years.” he said. “I had drilled and hallucinated myself in the severe misfortunes of life. I withstood the physical fatigue of a longer journey and the mental anguish of the mood perplexing problem.”

During the day many people called on him and he received each and all in the reception room with the gentleness of the spirit and the true servitude of a kind father.

In the evening he had several guests for dinner, such as Gaemmagam Mafti, the military physician and other officers from Acca and Haifa. He spoke to them about some of his spiritual experiences in Europe and America and gave them the Christian Commonwealths containing the Arab Texts of his lectures. They stayed with him till very late and their cups were filled with the wine of his words. Under all circumstances he is the Master of the occasion. People listen to him and are charmed. The power of his utterance uplift them, the magic his explanations enthrall them and they go away with a [unreadable] of deep satisfactions, knowing full well that they have been in the presence of the super-cosmic man, that they have hearkened to the music of the nightingale of Reality and that they have drawn from the fountain of the Water of life.

#### **May 15, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p4}}

Dear friends!

As I entered the garden this afternoon I found the Beloved alone walking under the trellis and looking at the gorgeous variegated flowers. “Come?” he beckoned to me “The Cause of God is in need of many active efficient workers and the time is soon coming when the whole responsibilities of the religion of Baha Ollah will fall on their shoulders. Thou must be one of the standard-bearers of the Cause. For more than three years thou hast lived and travelled with me day and night and I have been contemplating to send my thee away in the not distant future; -so that thou must be engaged in the service of the Vineyard. Do not forget the words that I am telling thou now. Each letter will act as a light, guiding thee and illumining thy path toward the ultimate goal. They are as follows: ‘Walk thou in my footstep. If I look to earth, do thou the same; if I gaze toward heaven, turn thou also thy eyes heavenward; if I am sitting, sit; if I am walking,

walk; if I am silent, be thou silent; if I speak, speak; if I am praying, pray; if I work, work; if I love the poor, be thou also kind to them. In brief, be thou a pattern of good deeds and an example of patience, purity and forbearance. Rest thou assured that I will be always with thee. I will not be far from thee for one second, I did not bring thee with me without a good reason nor have I kept thee so long without a cause. Be thou not grieved, I am thy instructor I have educated thee in my own college. Thou art my student. Adorn thyself with my words, deeds morals, manners. See thou with my eyes. Listen thou with my ears, speak thou with my tongue, hold those with my hands and walk thou with my feet." I said: "I will always pray that I may be assisted in the fulfillment of the Master's hope...Because in Turkey, teaching is not permitted one does not gain the same spirituality and joy." He answered: "This is true; but I am not training thee for these parts; the field of thy labor is beyond these limited confines. As thou know it is very easy for us to teach and spread the Cause in this country but the government will rise immediately against us and the Blessed Tombs {{p5}} of Baha ollah and the Bab will be demolished by the hands of fanatical mob. This is one of the many reasons that we must not raise our voice in Turkey" I said: "This is the fourth year that I am serving at the threshold of the Beloved. If the result of this apprenticeship does not appear in the world of action and practical services I will be ashamed before God and His creature and as a dried tree will be only worth to be cast into fire." He said: "Praise be to God the result has become manifest and as time rolls on thou wilt be confirmed in the accomplishment of greater and greater things. On the eve of thy departure I will breathe in thee such a breath whose effect will be universal. Wait and see at that time thou will thyself stand astonished. Thou art my son and my whole aim is thy education according to my own standard. Thou observe that I do not speak in this manner with some persons who have not the capability of rendering any service to the Cause. I do not interfere with their affairs. I have left them to their own devices. They may go where they are please and come whenever they are pleased. I do not expect them to listen to my advice nor have I have any hope in their ability or mediocre attainment. They are not made of heroic staff. They are self- occupied and incapable to conceive any large and universal plan. In thee I have great hope. I am assured that thy intentions are for the promotion and protection of the Cause." I said: "My highest hope and ambition is to be the mad lover of Abdul Baha and that I may entertain no other thoughts to save him." He replied with a smiling face: "Praise be to God that thou art Praise be to God that thou art." I was upborn on the wings of ecstasy and I fall at his holy feet weeping like a child. "My Lord" I tried to say" If thy confirmations and presence accompany me in my wanderings, everything will be possible but if they leave me for one second I will be nothing and less than nothing." He raised me from the ground and with his hands dried my tears. Then he said: "I am giving thee a definite promise that just as thou hast been assisted in the past thou will be confirmed in the future. Be thou confident. No sooner is the means of transportation is established then will send thee for thou {{p6}} I was called this morning into his wonderful presence and the following Tablet was dictated for the father of

Doctor Ḥabíbu'lláhollah : -

"O thou servant of God! It has been sometimes since that no epistle has been forwarded to you from this land. Innumerable hindrances have bought about the interruption of correspondence, otherwise the voice of the [unreadable] and the cooing of the Dove would not have been ceased. Now that his honor Mirza Ḥabíbu'lláhollah 'Khodabaksh' [ the gift of God ] is departing I consider it my duty to write this epistle to you. Praise be to God that he compelled his study of medicine with the utmost joy and fragrance, faith and assurance, firmness and steadfastness and preceded all the other students of college and while he was in the college itself he was at all times confirmed in the service of the Holy Threshold and from every standpoint kept the students-the sons of the believers-in the utmost state of spirituality and fragrance. After his examination he received an excellent and commendable diploma and having left the college he was for a time occupied in the service of these wanderers. Now he is returning to those parts. Undoubtedly, by looking into his sincere face and inhaling the sweet odor of his character you will become infinitely rejoiced and glad. Thank thou God that thou hast such a glorious son who is the love of God is a glowing and lighted candle and is striving with main and force in the service of the world of humanity.

Be thou not sad and broken-hearted over the martyrdom of thy happy starred young son. Although that candle was taken out of the candle stick of this nether world it was ignited in the lamp of the Kingdom and although that bird of the morn flew away from the meadow of this mound of earth yet it soared up toward the rose-garden of the Merciful and his honor Mirza Ḥabíbu'lláhollah will be like to thee unto one hundred sons.

Convey the wonderful Abha greeting to all the believers of God...In the evening the Beloved gave a long talk, interpreting one of the verses of the Koran on the effect of good and evil words and thoughts and wished all the believers correspond their inner faith with their outer confession. Then because our brother Doctor Habil was going to leave [unreadable].

**May 16, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p7}}

Dear friends!

For half an hour this morning Doctor Ḥabíbu'lláhollah was in the presence of our Beloved, receiving his last instructions and blessings. We were waiting for him in the garden and now and then caught a stray word falling from the holy lips and brought to our ears on the wings of the viewless courier of the air. When he came out his eyes were wet but the assurances of the King had comforted and rejoiced him. Badi Effendi, Mirza Jalal and myself followed him to the carriage and bade him our last farewell. The old saying out of sight out of mind does not apply to Bahais, for their hearts are united together with the diamond bond

of the Love of God and their souls have responded to the quickening vibrations of eternal friendship. As the world is their home, as they are the members of one family and as the loving Father has established the unchanging law of mutual good will and peace between them, absence or presence does not affect them materially. They believe that God is the Director of all their affairs and will guide them rightly if they turn their faces toward him. The omnipresent spirit of this Cause has so united the friends that the illusions of time and space are rent asunder and the seeming differences of remoteness and nearness are annihilated. We are in reality not separated but whether living in the East or in the West we are standing in the glorious temple of unity and singing the glad songs of thanksgiving. We are conscious of the fact that the followers of Baha do not forget each other so long as they are occupied with the mention and praise of the name of Abdul Baha. He is our common home, under the shade of his wide spreading tree do we all rest, in the boundless sea of his glory do we all swim, his in the supreme power of harmonious amalgamation. like the planets, solar system we receive our light from him, everything that we know is through his grace and inspiration. In him we are all agreed and in his celestial Court we are all unworthy servants. He is majesty, dominion and grandeur.

{{p8}}

When we gathered tonight in the room of the Lord he said: - "Doctor habid left this morning for Persia. Truly I say he served the students in Beirut conscientiously and his highest longing is to sacrifice his life at the Holy Threshold. His character is stainless and immaculate. He is as clear as the translucene mirror. It is assured that he will be confirmed and assisted. It is indeed a matter of great wonder that God has created certain souls for the manifestation of the qualities of pure goodness. One cannot find the least trace of guile, artfulness and duplicity in them. They have no other wish save the good-pleasure of the Blessed Perfection...The lives of all the Bahai Students in Beirut have shed lustre on the name of the Cause. Although they are studying arts and sciences yet in reality they are serving the Cause of God..."

In the afternoon the Master went out alone and I thought I will ascend the mountain and visit the holy Tomb. As I reached near the Pilgrims Home I turned back my eyes to have a look at the charming scene and I saw him coming from the opposite side of the street toward the house. He stopped for a minute in front of the door and then returned. Somehow I felt in my heart that he wanted me and finding I was not in he went back. Without going any further I descended in haste as though an invisible force was driving me forward. As I entered the garden Esmael Aga told me the Master was inquiring about thee and thus my feeling was correct in this instance I hurried out toward the German Colony and found him sitting on a piece of stone and talking with several Arabs. "ha! thou hast come he said. For half an hour more be continued to talk to them and then arose from his seat. On the way we saw one dog was pursuing another, whose barking furiously."Dost thou know why this dog is barking?" he asked. I answered in the negative. "The most characteristic quality of the dog" he said

“is faithfulness to his master. The barking dog wants to teach to the other that he has been unkind to him, it would have been better if he had stayed there and demonstrated the quality of loyalty. Nothing should have separated him from his solicitous owner.”

**May 17, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria**

{{p9}}

Dear friends!

The larvae of the locusts boil up out of the earth like water. A tidal waves of tremendous fury they rise and rise to wash away the land by their irresistible force. It seems to me that Jehovah has struck with His hand the dock of the country of Syria and instead of twelve fountains of crystalline water millions of springs of larvae have gushed forth to [unreadable] the earth with a flood of terrific consequences. The government issued an order yesterday that for the next few days all the people must shut their stores and go into the country to kill as much as they can these pestiferous insects. The order is general and does not exclude any person of station and rank; even the officials, the bank officers and Gaemmagam will go out to set an example of strict obedience. The Master told us last night that all the believers including his three sons-in-law must join the national crusade against the common enemy; thus when we arose this morning we needed no further impetus and no sooner the friends were collected in the garden we ascended the mountain and pitched in the work. The lands surrounding the Pilgrims Home and the holy Tomb were assigned to us. There are two ways to do away with insects. In the first place we formed a circle and pushed them toward dry thorns, picked and put together. When they were all inside, they were lighted and burned with a match. I do not know how many millions were roasted during those few hours! Poor creatures! but they are so harmful. Are they not? The surface of the mountain looked like unto a waving, undulating sea of larvae. They could not rise above the earth but they hopped from one place to another. By noon we were all fatigued and perspiring, so we resorted to the Pilgrim's Home, ate our lunch and rested for an hour. There is another way by which these larvae are destroyed. They take a large piece of cloth in the centre of which a big hole is made. Then under this hole a sac is sown. Four persons hold in their hands the four ends and lower the edge to the ground. Then the rest go after the larvae and from {{p10}} the four directions chase them toward the cloth. It is very strange that when one of them starts on the road, all the rest follow its wake like sheep, Soldier- like they march as a regiment. It will be enough to change the course of one and the rest will follow it blindly. Now you can easily imagine that when from four sides thousands upon thousands march in an elderly manner toward the white sheet otherwise the trap- it is filled in a minute. When the cloth is groaning under its weight they raise its four ends and with one or two shaking they all slide doven through the hole into the sac. This process was a continue till an hour before sunset and we felt quite satisfied with the result of our labor. Meanwhile we found out

that the latter process was more advantageous than the one we followed in the morning. We had altogether a lovely pic-nic.

Every morning as I ascend the mountain and pass by the thorns and bushes and trees, thousands drop to the earth and here and there the roads are turned into a moving mass of black insects. They are generally following a downward course from the high slope to the foot of the mountain.

The authorities have decided to push this work of destruction. For this reason they have made a by law that those who would not like to go out or is busy may pay three Beshleeks and another person will be sent instead of him.

When the other day the bahai Zoroastrian farmers came over from Adassiah and reported that the army of locusts have entered their gardens and fields and eating every green thing in sight the Beloved comforted and instructed them to be resigned and submissive. "The world of humanity is suffering" he said. "And we must also take a share in this general grievances. Not one single soul is expected I am thinking of you and will protect you. Continue to stay in Adassiah. I desire that you may sow there the seeds of the Love of God and the knowledge of God and gather the spiritual harvest of truth. These locusts are your guests and may not leave your vicinity until they are satiated."

{{p11}}

When we gathered tonight in the presence of the Beloved of our hearts and told him what we have done during the day he said: - "There are two kinds of afflictions the first is human, the second is divine. Human affliction can be coped with and eradicated by human agencies and methods but when an affliction is brought down upon mankind, occasioned by their utter heedlessness and negligences the displaying of all their available forces will not be crowned with the least success. Under such exceptional circumstances they must gather in their temple of worship and praise their hands toward heaven, begging and smoking God to shower upon them His benedictions and turn the tide of trials away from them. With heartfelt contrition and humiliation they must invoke and beseech Him to forgive them and overlook their sins and rebellions...These heedless people merit the descent of the terrible wrath of God. They are not at all entitled to His Love. Even what they have and are enjoying has been and is through His limitless Mercy. On the otherhand if we look upon this God's catastrophe from another standpoint it is Mercy itself, for it may become the cause of their wakefulness and mindfulness. But if this much-desired spiritual regeneration is not obtained, then it is indeed God's wrath. For example, the student commits a mistake, the teacher punishes him. Now if this correction will become conducive to his improvement, then indeed it is identical with mercy and kindness but if on the contrary it adds to his unawareness, obtusely and doltishness, it is a heavy and grievous chastisement. Therefore God has never and will never be anything else but Clement, Merciful and Kind. From whatever standpoint we may approach the creator and the sustainer we find Him the Mainspring of Mercy. In short you must know that God is the source of heavenly

goodness and the Giver of life and light. Thus it is written in the book of Psalms chapter 9th: "The Lord shall endure forever: he hath prepared the thrones for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness; he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee."

**May 18, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria**

{{p12}}

Dear friends!

Before translating another long, soul-uplifting talk given by our Beloved for my benefit and that of the Bahai world I would like to share with you a short supplication which he dictated early this morning in his own room: -

"O God! O God! Thou seest me cast on the ground of humility and lowliness supplicating the Kingdom of thy Singleness, wandering in the wilderness of abasement and agitation, beseeching the supermal Realm of Thy oneness and flowing from my eyes the torrent of tears. O Lord! I am roaming in the desert of deprivation and seeking the meeting of Thy Countenance. How long. O God! How long hast thou consigned me to the desert of oblivion and dost thou not call me to the pain of bereavement and wandering in the plain of remoteness and oblivion my bones are broken up, my flesh is dissolved, my powers are disintegrated, my limbs are trembling and my organs are slackened. O Lord! destine for me the Cup of the most great Martyrdom and ascension to the Neighborhood of Thy Mercy, O thou Creator of earth and heavens! Verily Thou art the Giver, the Self- Sufficient, the Self- subsistent, the generous and the Beneficent!"

When he finished dictating he closed his eyes, immersed in a sea of contemplation. For more than five minutes he was silent. Then as suddenly he got up from his seat in the corner of the sofa and began to walk. His present vibrating animation was just the opposite of his still calmness a few moments ago. Now he was possessed by a stirring, overwhelming spirit. He looked at me and I saw his eyes were blazing like living fire, the veins of his temple filled and throbbing and the lines of his forehead becoming more prominent, just as unconsciously he took off his turban and his white locks fell his snow- white patriarchal beard gave an unearthly majesty to his whole being. His former tranquil and composed face was now completely changed and the signs of the gathering of a storm of divine emotions and sentiments became visible. I stood in my place stock still {{p13}} transfixed with awe and wonder. I thought something was forthcoming but I did not know what. Erect and sovereign- like he stood near the window, then he wheeled around as quickly and with a flushing countenance and earnest expression he said: "I have sent for thee this morning to speak to thee on a confidential matter. The covenant-breakers have again concocted another device, whereby they may terminate my life and the enemies of the Cause of God may suspend

me on a cross. Through one of the prominent inhabitants of Jerusalem whose name I did not mention, Mirza Mohamad Ali has forwarded to Jamal Pasha a long list of new accusations and calumnies against me, charging me with the corruption of the morals of the youths of Islam and undermining the religion of Mohamad and that furthermore there are many Christians who believe I am the return of Christ and that I teach secretly I have actually descended from heaven and many other such baseless allegations. Jamal Pasha in turn has expressed his ideas concerning this subject in a public meeting before many civilians and officials that if in reality [unreadable] Effendi is disseminating such pernicious doctrines and is holding such poisonous views, God willing I shall hang him on a pillory. My aim however is to render him a kind service, because if he believes that he has come down from heaven, he will be glad to return to heaven. Now he may put into execution his threat, for he has already hanged several very prominent Christians and Mohamadans in Jaffa, Lebanon and Damascus. According to the reports he is a merciless and pitiless man. When Mirza Mohamad Ali hears about the above words of Jamal Pasha he sends to him the Tent of the Blessed Perfection- thus he may carry to his menace and fulfill his promise... He is spending all his time and energy in devising means for my destruction. He imagines vainly that if I am out of this world, people will gather around him and pay him homage and respect. He does not realize that I am day and night longing and praying for the station of martyrdom! What greater happiness than this! What mercy more glorious than this! I am ready and expectant to drink from this celestial chalice of God's Bestowals!

"In brief, I am telling thee this matter in confidence. I have not spoken about with others for they will become confused and sad and its {{p14}} present divulgence may bring in a long [unreadable] other complications. I am telling thee this so that thou mayst know that I am encircled with an impending danger- thus if anything should happen thou mayst convey my message to all the believers and it is this: The friends of God, including thyself, must not be shaken by any test. As the lofty mountains you must stand firm in the Cause of God, as the tempestuous sea you must never become calm and still. As the brilliant star you must ever shine and gleam. As the sweet flowers you must always diffuse the Fragrances of divine civilization. As the warbling nightingales sing ye throughout all the seasons. As the coal fountains gush ye forth with the waters of spiritual explanations. As the verdant meadow be ye not scorched by the blowing of the hot winds of opposition. As the sun wander through your course and be not wearied of well-doing. As the real guides of humanity, illumine the ignorant with the light of wisdom, to raise the lovely, inspire with noble ideals the despondent and lead the erring ones into the path of truth. Live ye in accord with the good pleasure of God. Arise ye with an irresistible force in the promotion of the teachings. Like unto the sanctified apostles of Christ summon ye the people to the kingdom of God and invite them to walk in the Road of heavenly prosperity and success. Let not any hindrance or obstacle dampen your enthusiasm. Set [unreadable] the hearts with the free of joy and exhilaration. Adorn the temple of the world with the garment of new creation.



I have trained and educated you for this. Your reserved powers are needed for such a day. Beware, beware lest Luke warmness overtake you, indifference master you, negligence take hold you and listlessness overwhelm you. You must nurse, water and take care of the Blessed tree of the Cause of God: -so that it may grow and develop; its branches giving shade to the people of the East and of the West: Seek ye no other pleasure, long ye for no other delight; be ye filled to overflowing with the love of Baha Ollah; promulgate ye the traces of his grandeur and dominion, be ye attached to his caused advance ye toward His Beauty and receive Bounty {{p15}} from His inexhaustible storehouse. The tree of the Cause must be watered by you: - so that it may bring forth leaves blossoms and fruits. If you do not arise in the accomplishment of this service who will then arise? To whom should I look forward? Whom can I trust with this pearl of great price? Who will uphold the name of Baha Ollah? Who will make me happy in the Kingdom of my Father? Who will carry away this ball from the field of self-sacrifice? Who will give up his rest and comfort for the promotion of the Cause? Who will raise his voice in the vast congregations of humanity? Ah me! Who, who will turn his face toward heaven and pray: Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done and not mine?"

Oh the pity and the feeling of suffering with which his face was painted at this juncture! My heart was melted at his loneliness and his deep concern for the future of the glorious Cause for the establishment of which the Bab of the Blessed perfection and himself have undergone all manners of persecutions! In the face of this heart rending appeal who is so pusillanimous and mean-spirited as to prefer his own interests of the Cause? Who will be the coward as to shrink from the most annihilating danger? Who will be as chicken-hearted as to shun the common misfortunes of an active, consecrated life of service?

After the above talk he went out to call on Zakki Boy and they returned together. They sat in the garden and the Beloved read to him the account of the International Bahai Congress held in San Francisco as well as his talks at the headquarter of Salvation Army in London and the one given after attending the presentation of Eager Heart.

At noon about ten men including Gaemmagam, [unreadable] President of the Bank, Zakki Boy and other officers were his guests and they sat around his table and partook of the material food prepared for them.

Both in the afternoon and evening he gave long talks that I refrain from translating for the present, because this letter has become already long.

### **May 19, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p16}}

Dear friends!

This afternoon my Beloved sent for me to accompany him to the house of the Persian Counsel. On the way I asked him for a Manuscript book containing the

account of the martyrdom of the Bahai in Yazd. Wearily he answered: "All the Bahai books are being preserved in boxes and in these days I have no inclination of opening them. In former years month after month I worked from sunrise till midnight and I did not feel the effect of it, but now it is different. For the last few weeks I have been thinking of my possible attainment to the greatest station of martyrdom- perchance the end of my life may be diffused with the fragrance of this musk and that I may quaff this goblet of the most exhilarating wine. I am placing myself on the plane of perennial spiritual prayerfulness, so that if it comes it may find me ready, resigned and in a state of submission. I am also thinking, dreaming, cogitating what will become of the future of the Cause when I am not in this world, where are the souls who shall meet and solve the perplexing, crucial problems that shall constantly arise, of what materials are they made, how will they bring together the contending, antagonistic parties? I am hourly supplicating and entreating at the Threshold of the Blessed Perfection to appraise such spiritually- minded souls for the promotion of the principles of His Cause, men and women endowed with extraordinary powers, angelic strength and world- subduing resolutions. I desire them to dedicate their whole beings to the service of the Lord of hosts. According to the ultimate wish of my heart and soul should they go forth and teach the glad- tidings of the Kingdom of Abha. While my body lives in Haifa my mind is searching throughout the world to see whether there are such capable servants. For this work I am daily instructing thee; for the carrying out of this divine behest I am training thee. In the realms of thought thou must consecrate thy entire life to the proclamation of the word of God. Thou must abide in the station of renunciation and self-sacrifice. Under all conditions {{p17}} thou must show firmness, steadfastness and stability. Encourage and incite others in the execution of those affairs which will become conducive to the glorification of the Cause."

By the time we reached the house of the Persian Consul the Beloved had given me a long talk, embodying personal advice and exhortations, part of which I have translated for my own strength and reinforcement in the future. We found him at home and the rather interesting intelligence was given us that the Italian Parliament will be opened tomorrow to decide whether Italy should declare war against Austria and indirectly Germany or not. The consensus of opinion is that Italy will also join the rank of the warring nations but everyone is waiting with suspense anxiety.

When the Beloved came out this morning to take his customary walk in the garden haji Mirza Haydor Ali was standing near a tree. The Lord of Love approached him with beaming face and while the words of inquiry about his health were on his lips he took him passionately into his arms and kissed his face and beard again and again. Oh" Mirza! Oh Mirza" he said "Thou dost not know how much I love thee!" I cannot describe to you the feeling of happiness which except over the old man, his back bent with years in the service of the Cause. This was indeed a heavenly reward, the like of which he did not expect to receive even from the kings of earth.

After a few minutes several little boys and girls came at the door and clamored for money. He went toward the gate and informed them that for the present his pocket was empty. They did not want to believe and insisted on their demand. The Master was in a kindly mood, so taking out his handkerchief and rosary, he asked them to come forward and search through his pockets. All of a sudden they were dancing and laughing around him, forcing their small, little hands into his pockets but finding nothing they live them out. Then they thought his bag contained money and insisted on him to open it. He complied with their request and lo! there was not even one Matalaek. The children did not mind it and went away happy and contented. Altogether it was a lovely picture that will never be forgotten.

**May 20, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria**

{{p18}}

Dear friend!

In the Tablet of the Blessed Perfection that I translated on April 29th, he mentions the name of Nabeel whose voice was heard from Nazareth and who was one of those earliest pilgrims who could not enter Acca and meet the glorious Manifestation in the prison Barsak. About the history of this remarkable Bahai the Beloved said: - "His real name was Mirza Mohamad Ali Gaini. He was a man of great spirituality and wit. Long before the appearance of the Bab from Shiraz, he and the son of Mir Assadollah Khan, the brother of Mir Alam Khan, the Ameer of Gain, were brought to Teheran. The government held them as hostages, because they were in a state of rebellion and revolution against the established authority. Together they lived in the capital under the secret eye of the police. Nothing however could be detected from their words and actions that they harbored in their minds any revolutionary plan- and thus the restrictions and precautions with which they were hedged in were temporarily removed. One night the Blessed Perfection invited these two men to His residence and showing them much kindness, consoled them with His utterances. From that time on Mirza Mohamad Ali became the devoted friend of Baha Ollah and under all circumstances expressed for Him his respect and love. Later on His Holiness the Bab proclaimed his mission to the world and then the Blessed Perfection exposed his Cause and became the staunch supporter of his principles. When Mirza Mohamad Ali heard about the appearance and execution of the Bab and the manifestation of the Sun of Reality under the title of Him Whom God shall manifest, he became a believer without asking a single question. He would often state that he was a believer in Baha Ollah before He declared Himself, for at the night that he was invited to his house he observed in His general appearance the grandeur and spiritual authority of the Lord. Through His elevated discourse he would say He cheered and brightened us, saying. Be not unhappy, be not sad, ere long you will become free and return to your town with honor at that time we entertained no hope of liberty, for our enemies {{p19}} had woven the iron webs of accusations all around us. But all of a sudden the authorities sent

for us and informed us that we are free, that his imperial majesty the Shah was very gracious toward us to go wherever we were pleased. In short during those days Baha Ollah told us many things in the course of conversation, all of which came to pass. Hence from his manner behavior and morals one could easily see that He was an individual distinct from other members of humanity.

In short, this Mirza Mohamad Ali was at the time living in Khorassan and associating with the erudite philosopher and Bahai thinker Aga Mohamad Nabeel, well - known in the Bahai world for his deep learning and eloquence.[In another letter I will translate the story of the life of this second Nabeel as related by the Master.] Through their public teaching of the Bahai Cause they become famous and the ignorant mob arose in their persecutions. Realizing how impossible it was to live in such fanatical communities both of them journeyed to Teheran and here also their open way of spreading the teachings made them odious in the sight of the public. Mirza Mohamad Ali could not tarry any longer and decided to leave the capital. Going through a series of startling difficulties and sorrow and travelling on foot, he at last reached behind the gate of Acca. It was in the first year of our arrival and thus we were imprisoned behind the thick walls of the military barrack. Seeing how utterly impossible it was to enter the town he went to Nazareth and passed his days in selling needles and his nights in prayer and supplication but he behaved with such an independence of spirit that all the Nazarenes thought he was a wealthy man. Meanwhile I was watching for the opportunity to send for him and when it was offered I took it by the forelock. Secretly and with the utmost precautions I brought him to the prison and all his troubles were compensated the moment he stood in the presence of the Blessed Beauty and hearkened to His life-giving words. After a number of days he was permitted to return {{p20}} to Nazareth and engage in business, at that time he was accompanied by his two sons, Mirza Ali Akblor and Aga Galam Hassen, the latter of whom is now living in Ramleh, Alexandria.

"When the freedom of the tower was granted us he used to come and go oftentimes on one of his trips, he came to me and said: 'Sir! I desire to enter into a partnership with you. You invest the capital be seven piastres and half with this I shall buy needles and in selling them make a world of [unreadable] I laughed over his modest demand for such an insignificant capital [about 0.30 cents] and his expectation of making a world of profit.' I gave him the required sum and he went away. Buying several packages of needles he started on his road toward Nazareth, now he used to exchange needles for one egg and when the eggs were collected he sold sixty or fifty of them for one Beshleek. [Ten cents] Out of the profit of this prosperous business he made living.

"After a few months he came back to Acca and I asked him for my share of profit of our partnership. 'I hope thy expectation of making a world of interest is realized. Come now my friend, and let me have my share. Thou must have become as rich as Croesus! He laughed and was full of joviality and good humor. 'O my Lord! We are ruined our very capital is gone. I don't think I am a good business man! I asked him with amused amazement: 'How is that? What didst

thou to demolish our house of fortune? He answered: 'One day I got sick and could not go around peddling my needles for eggs, but toward the afternoon I felt better and thought I will leave my lodging and do at least a little business. It was a little dark and my eyes could not see very clearly, hence I gave four needles instead of three for one egg. Oh this was the beginning of our business collapse! The women communicative as they always are informed each other immediately that this Persian peddler is a rich merchant that all along I have been cheating them, that today I have given them four instead of 3 needles for one egg and that if they boycott my ware I will raise the number of needles to five. For several days they did not buy anything {{p21}} from me and thus I was forced to give them fine needles for one egg. This combination of feminine determination drove a dagger into the very heart of my profit- making ambition and reduced my income. After a time I saw with astonished disgust that the capital is gone and now I have come back to you with another proposition of commercial partnership which in a short space of time will make both of us quite rich! While talking in this half serious, half- joking manner he laughed all the time. He was in the highest station of joy, fragrance and attraction as though established on the golden throne of Sovereignty."

This morning I was sitting alone in my room and was speaking with you with my pen and heart when I heard the distinct sound of the feet of the Beloved and his resonant voice calling out my name reached the ears. Before I had time to get up he was in carrying in his hand a dish of mulberries. "This is from the garden of Rizwan. Abdul Gasem has seen it for me and I have brought this plate for thee. Dost thou like it. Then he asked me to follow him through the garden and see the apricot and prune trees of Esmael Aga."I love to look at the trees while they are adorned with their fruits and not much when they are devoid of them. A fruit- laden tree is like unto a man who has accomplished many good deeds and performed many selfless services." Walking around the garden he pointed out to me the fruits with the injunction that they must not be plucked. Now and then he felt them with his hands and every time I thought he will pluck a few and give them to me but he did nothing of the kind. He guessed my thought, for he said: "Will not the mulberries be sufficient for today? "He told Esmael Aga that he should not let the children enter that port of the garden for with one attack they will put an end to all the ripened and unripen fruits.

In the afternoon he had a ride in the landew with Zakki Bay and Doctor Ali Reza and with Badi Effendi and Mirza Anayetullah we called on Doctor Finkelstein whose face and hands were slightly burned by the explosion of powder.

In the evening The Beloved gave a very short talk on the ephemeral qualities of all things and the unchangeability of the eternal essence of God.

**May 21, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p22}}

Dear friends!

While the landeau was driven toward Elijah's cave this afternoon I asked three questions from the Beloved. As they were general in tone and scope you "will it help the promotion of the Bahai principles and the establishment of Universal Peace if at the termination of this war an International Bahai Conference could be formed in London?"

"Yes. We must wait and see how the results of the mighty events which a taking place in these days will shape themselves into concrete facts and how far the Western nations will soar toward the bright heaven of human brotherhood! This old world of ours is undergoing undreamed changes and revolution. It is in a transitional state, shedding off its old skin and taking unto itself new ligments and building up new tissues. The happy and healthy children of a new order of public opinion are being born, the ethical laws of the world are in the process of a radical reformation and an entirely new code of statutes will be legistated for the international relations and final consolidation of the modern and ancients nations. No human mind can conceive the startling changes which God has in store for His chastened children."It seems to me that the present war is rather intensifying the root of enmity and hatred between the nations because so much blood is being shed and all the pacific agencies have failed in their mission. Have they another power through which they may eradicate the basis of this new evil?"

"It is now demonstrated that all their existent powers have contributed something toward the realization of this world war, even their so-called christian religion has been made pliable instrument for the promotion of war purposes. Hence it is evident that they have no other executive power strong enough to remove the accumulated load of their new-created rancours. The only power that is left is the Power of the Bahai Movement which is impartial and entirely spiritual. This is the only highway through which they can marshal their armies of Peace. When they turn their faces {{p23}} toward this Point their hearts will be illuminated with a new light, their complicated relations will be readjusted and their problems solved. For this reason I have said that after this war there must needs be many Bahai teachers, equipped and ready to go out into the world and explain to the sorrow-stricken nations the self-evident benefits of peace. The whole world will then be in a listening attitude and willing to forget the past and strike a new road of mutual helpfulness and co-operation." "Supposing there were a few Bahai members in the national parliaments and Senates of the nations, would they have been able to promote in a practical manner the Cause of Universal Peace?"

"Yes. It would have had a market effect. God willing this excellent idea will become realized, for such representatives and Senators would concentrate all their energies and influence on the side of Peace and conciliation. Their public utterances in the national councils will be listened to respectively and their sincere strivings crowned with success. By the delivery of eloquent speeches they will attract the attention of the world to the insanity of war adherents-thus

organizing a strong, virile wisely-propelled public opinion capable to stem the furious tide of any uprising and changing the current of blind evil forces into the channel of world solidarity and inter-racial brotherliness. Such Bahai members having drank from the pure fountain of the Universal Teachings of Baha-Ollah, are in reality cosmopolitan in spirit, mind and soul and have arisen above the stultifying limit of nationality and patriotism. They exert all their moral, religious and intellectual powers for the progress of the world and the perfection of mankind. God will assist and confirm them in all their undertakings. Of a truth they are the harbingers of roseate daven of the sun of world's amity and friendship. Their words and deeds will exert a decided influence on the decisions of their governments. They will become enabled on the decisions of their governments. They will become enabled not only to usher in the era of the United States of Europe but the infinitely more important measure will be brought into fruition under their wise and statesmanlike leadership and that is- the organization of the United- States of the world. If there has been possible {{p24}} in the past the formation of a United States of America, the next nature step will be the constitution of a United States of Europe, each state autonomous within its boundary, inter-dependent and working for the common prosperity, general advancement, expansion of commerce, diffusion of learning, the welfare of the whole communities, the socialization of industries and the improvements of arts of the human society."

Our landeau stopped a few minutes under the olive grove and he spoke about the deposition of Gaemmagam," Such the course of human events yesterday he was the governor of Haifa and did practically as he pleased. Today he is shorn of all his autocratic powers and cannot oppress the poor people." On our return he alighted from the carriage at the police station and talked a few minutes with the commissioner. Then he walked to the hotel Carmel and several military officers arose from their seats on the veranda and welcomed him in their midst. Here also tarried for a quarter of an hour and when we reached home the commander of the garrison in Acca was awaiting him. He welcomed him and took him by the arms. In a second they disappeared in the house. Thus for about three hours we were with the Lord, [unreadable] in the sunshine of his countenance and receiving the sweet manna of his blessings.

At noon I partook of the material food at his table. There were a few more guests and he spoke to them on a variety of interesting subjects. In the morning he took Badi Effendi through the garden and showed him the fruits hanging on the branches and tempting the beholder. In the evening Haji Mirza Haydor Ali asked him to dictate to me half an hour a day the detailed history of the life of the Blessed Perfection as a priceless heritage for future generations. He did not answer him but simply said: "The signs of greatness and majesty was apparent in Baha Ollah at every stage of his miraculous life and those who entered His presence went away impressed with His supernatural learning and intelligence."

**May 22, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria**

{{p25}}

Dear friends!

The restless spirit revolts against the monotonous environment and lifeless surroundings but the angel of mercy exhorts to patience and endurance. The mind longs after busy scenes and unremitting labors but the beautiful seraph reminds it of the spiritual reward given to those who suffer and wait. Man yearns for the things of this world but the cherub of the Most High desires his separation from them. The new fledgeling wishes to break the cage which guards it against the storms of tests and hurricanes of trials but the tender mother gives persuasive talks and anxious advice. The soul cries out against the lack of the spirituality of those with whom he consorts and aspires for the association of the high minded and the noble but the kind mentor teaches him to look inward and commune with the ideals of the invisible friends. Do not leave the real, in order to chase after an imaginary phantasm. Be thou a loyal soldier and stuck behind thine own gun. Fire out thy spiritual and intellectual balls into the camp of enemy. Aim high thy projectiles so that it may burst through the air by the impelling force of the spirit. Let the missiles shot from thy fire arms set on fire the houses of superstitions and the abodes of prejudices. Be not afraid that thou hast become an automaton machine. This will never be, for the Lord is protecting thee under the shadow of His Spirit and causing the outflowing of pure water from the never-failing fountains of thy mind and heart. Hast thou not learned enough that the pleasures of this world shall pass away, while the joy of the kingdom is eternal? the youthful beauty will be followed by white hairs and old age but the beauty of lordly services and the youthfulness of pristine ideals shall remain forever the same? Hence, give up thy heart to the adored beloved of faithful reality and clasp in thy arms the virgin bride of celestial attribute. Be happy with what God has been gracious enough to bestow on thee and let thy days be one uninterrupted song of thanksgiving. Worry not over thy future. The One who has taken care of thee in the past, will also take care of thee in the time to come.

{{p26}}

This morning the Beloved of the world was walking along the avenues of the verdant garden and with a pruning-shears was cutting off the superfluous branches of a number of roses bushes. He wore his long, flowing cream-white Persian overcoat and he looked very majestic as he trimmed the trees and moved slowly from this to the other end of the garden. Who could doubt for a moment that he is the real spiritual gardener of the world of humanity who pulls up withered trees and plants in their stead new and young saplings, full of the sure promises of blossoms and fruits.

One of the believers asked: - "Although it is assured that the life of this world is transitory and attachment to it is not praise worthy yet in many sacred Tablet



the Blessed Perfection and the Master himself have lamented and bemoaned the physical deaths of those who have journeyed to the abode of eternal Peace. What is the wisdom of this?"

The Master answered: "The physical body has also a shore. When I was in America a number of Christians came to me and asked a most subtle and difficult questions. It was this: 'While the apostles longed with perfect resignation and radiant acquiescence for the station of martyrdom and many of them and thousands of later converts sacrificed their lives with joy and happiness, how is it that his holiness Jesus Christ, just before his crucifixion prayed to His Father to take away this cup from him, saying: 'The spirit is truly ready, but the flesh is weak? (St. Mark chap 14. v. 38). I told them, you may go first to your own ministers and clergy and ask this question from them, for they look upon the Easterners as heathens, unbaptized, unconfirmed, unregenerated and unordained while they consider themselves as the heirs and joint-heirs of the Kingdom of God and well-informed of the mysteries of Holy writ, hence they are not willing to accept our interpretation quite readily.' They went away and returned after a few days that the Ministers answers did not agree with each other nor did they satisfy them. I [unreadable]. The answer to your question is very simple and given in a few words: The body or the flesh was 'sorrowful and very heavy' (Math chap 26th ) because it loathed to be separated from the companionship of such divine, celestial Spirit and be returned to clay and dust. This was the secret of its weakness, sorrow and heaviness."

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Before noon the landau was prepared and he took a ride with Zakki Bay and with him called on a number of officials. In the afternoon several Arab and Turkish gentlemen paid him short visits and he received them in the garden. Which he talked with them Khosro served tea and cigarettes.

Tonight the friends of God gathered in the reception room and listened to the words of their Master. He said in part: "I found the Jews very crest fallen today, because on slight excuses the government has exiled of their prominent leaders. The new rigorous laws of the naturalization weigh heavily on them. They are actually accused of planning secretly to establish a visible kingdom in Palestine. The Orthodox Jews according to the literal interpretation of a number of passages in the Old Testament, of course were holding such a belief but the growing literacy and intellectual party, having cast away the enthusiasms born out of ignorance, discredit the whole proposition as nothing else but a dream. They think it is no more than a wild fancy on the part of the Jews to ever harbor the idea of founding the Solomonic Sovereignty in Jerusalem. Firstly, the economic and social status of the Jews in different parts of the world precludes the idea of bringing all of them together. Secondly, the Christians and Mohamadans who claim equal shares in the sacred spots of the holy land will never permit them to so much as draw the plan of such a kingdom. Thirdly, the European Powers who have vital and permanent interests in Syria will do everything to extirpate the growth of such a national feeling amongst the Jews,

one of Turkish officers had asked a Jewish woman in Damascus, what did the Israelites think about the organization of a kingdom in Palestine and she had answered that this was the cornerstone of their belief. This confession has been much made of, although the whole belief has been known to everyone from time immemorial. Much importance has been given to it at this special hour because it is serving the peculiar and sinister purposes of those who are in authority. This has been made also the reason for the banishment and imprisonment of their leaders. If the Turkish government is so anxious to pressure her integrity, would it not be better to protect her domains from the aggression of Russia, England and France and leave these poor Jews and their Messianic dream of concrete Sovereignty to themselves?"

**May 23, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p28}}

Dear friends!

This morning the Beloved called Badi Effendi and this servant and we walked behind him through the street of the German Colony as far as the Hotel Carmel. His words were as follows: - "A Bahai must conform all his great and small affairs in accord with the good pleasure of the Blessed Perfection. This is the unerring criterion. For example if he takes one step forward or one step backward, he must first think whether this will be according to the good-pleasure of Baha Ollah or whether such a step will be considered as a service or not. If he sees that his forward step will not contribute something to the promotion of the Cause, it will be better for him to stand still. The people of the world are thinking of by, and for themselves. They are promoting their own selfish interests and serving their own small causes. Each soul is attached to his own hobby and beating on his own drum and soaring in the atmosphere of his own desire. If they speak they have some known or unknown objectives point in view, if they walk they wish to reach the goal of some personal ambition, if they eat and sleep they desire to be strengthened in order to advance their own ideas. In brief all their movements are dictated by obedience to self. They live, move and feel like unto the animals, self-centered, self-occupied, seeing nothing, believing in nothing beyond their five senses. But the morning-spring of the actions and deeds of the believers of God must be the good-pleasure of Baha Ollah. All their services and thoughts must be for the sake of God. If they sleep they must sleep with the idea of being refreshed; - so that when they arise next morning they may serve the Cause with greater efficiency and strength. If they eat they must eat with the object of building up new life-force, in order that they may move and walk in the Celestial Highway. The life of such Bahais with these lofty purposes will bear great fruits; otherwise no results will be gathered from all their strivings and efforts. They will spend a few profitless years and then there will be nothing for them left in the end same regret, deprivation and remorse."

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When we reached near Hotel Carmel he pointed out to us a fig-tree and said: - "If this fig-tree does not bear fruits, the gardener will tear it from the root and cast it into fire. Similarly if the trees of the world of humanity do not produce fruits, the hand of Divine Power will pull them out of His garden and throw them away. The friends of God must be the fruit-bearing trees of the Orchard of the Lord. Their manners and behaviors must be an example for those who have not been fortunate enough to come under the benign influence of the Bahai dispensation. The Cause is great and universal and it will be ever in need of equally great and universally-minded followers."

Entering the hotel he told us to return to the house. We were made very happy in listening to his words and recording them for the benefit of those who are deprived in these days to stand in his holy presence.

At noon he gave another luncheon and his guests included the deposed Qaem-magam, Zakki Bay, the President, Secretary and Treasurer of German Bank, three generals and a few others. As the guests were rather numerous there were no seats for me around the table but from behind the door I could hear his voice and now and then observe his animating gestures.

About three P.M. Badi Effendi and myself were walking in the garden when the door of the house opened and the Beloved came out majestically and stood erect on the step. Calling out my name he said: -"Hast thou heard the news? Italy has declared war against Austria and Germany has expressed her readiness to take up arms against Italy. What dost thou think? This is another axe added to the slaughter house of humanity, another martial anthem joined to the universal carnage of mankind." I reminded him that four months ago he expressed the opinion that should Italy join this dram of fratricide, it will hasten the end of war.

The landeau was made ready and for one hour and half we had a delightful ride with the centre of the covenant. All along the way have e did not speak and although I had several questions I choose silence on this occasions.

In the evening he delivered a long historical talk, having a direct relation with the progress of the Cause throughout the world.

#### **May 24, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p30}}

Dear friends!

Another occasion arose this afternoon in the Pilgrim's Home and the Beloved gave another urgent and emphatic talk on the necessity of the acquirement of trades and crafts by all the young Bahais. He said in part: "The parents must exert their utmost effort; -thus their children may learn trades and professions. The first and primal thing that is essential for every young man is a trade. This is supremely an industrial age and the man who has not specialized himself

in some line will be crippled on every side and hampered on every step in his pursuit of a livelihood. No sooner the children have laid the foundation of their theoretic and primary knowledge in the school rooms they must be sent to the workshops to learn the applied and practical sciences. This is ofcourse not a universal necessity for they will be found always some well-to-do families who by providing a complete course of academic, intellectual and philosophic education for their sons and daughters will enable them to shoulder in its proper time the civic moral and spiritual responsibilities of the growing communities giving wings to the birds of ideals and raising the general tone of the mass by noble utterances and heaven-glittering thoughts.

"In this dispensation to study an art is prayer; work is considered as worship. For this reason it is said: the tradespeople are the friends of God! Reflect for a momment how blessed is art or trade that is acquirement or occupation is regarded as prayer. Through the educational laws of attention and suggestion, encourage and incite the children to characterize themselves with merciful ethics, spiritual qualities, praiseworthy deeds and moral principles. Study well their moods and feelings and through the many pleasurable enterprises direct them into inspiring channels. Do not lose an oppurtunity in cultivating in their minds a sense of the beautiful and the perfect.

"When we were imprisoned in the barrack, one day, the Blesed Perfection spoke about the necessity of industrial education of the believers of God {{p31}} and their descendents. This was before the revelation of the Book of Akdas where the command of industrial education was laid down. When I heard His word I addressed myself. What can I do to learn trade? I am the proison. I cannot go out. There are no arts and trades school in Acca. After much inquiry I found there was a mat-weaver in the town and I sent for him and stipulated with him for a certain sum to teach me his trade. He installed his simple weaving machine in one of the prison rooms and for six months I was an apprentice under the direction of my master. The first mat that I wove with my own hands I spread under the feet of the Blessed Perfection."God confirms and assists those souls who obey and follow His laws and commandments. Obedience to the divine statutes is conducive to eternal life. The very thought that he was carried out one of the principles of God will grant him joy and pure happiness; he will soar in the spiritual realms of the Almighty and advance toward the heaven of bliss.

"I am solicitous about the conditions of the friends of God and am concerned with their steady progress. I love them and wish for them unlimited development. Others do not worry themselves about it nor are they anxious. They say: Why should we bother ourselves about the conditions of those that do not concern us. But I am not so constitute I must look after your welfare and speak to you about those things which would exalt your stations.

"The mothers and fathers must not leave any stone unturned in the thorough education of their children according to their aptitudes and potentialities. Day and night they must exert themselves. One momment of negligence is culpable. If they have not receive a technical and manual education in their childhood,

when they grow up they will be poor, miserable, homeless, shelterless, hopeless, walking all nights in the streets or at the best sleeping in the public lodging house and becoming imbued with the sinful and unpardonable quality of beggary and mendicancy, either directly or indirectly.

"God has created man noble, how can he degrade this station of divine nobility by begging? He has made him of the pure essence of spiritual wealth, how does he dare to alloy it by the base metal of mendicancy?

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One minute of negligence on the part of the mothers may cost the children years of pains and sufferings. Manual training, technical education, industrial efficiency must be the object of every mother in raising her sons and daughters. The mothers must not spoil the children by showering upon them too many endearing words. They may better decrease the numbers of 'my darling', 'my lambkin', 'my dove', 'my sweet baby', 'my fragrant narcissus', 'light of my eyes', 'my heart', 'my beauty', many other such affectionate titles copiously indulged in by fond mothers and increase the quality of education and the quantity of instruction given to the growing minds and spirits of their children. If possible they must go over their lessons every night and help them in every way to pass through the trying and important period of adolescents. They must watch their habits and sympathetically find out and stop the source of their evil customs. As far as it lies in their powers they must not let them associate with bad and immoral companions and both b examples and advice teach them to avail [unreadable] of the friendship of the worthies and the communion of the pure.

"In short, the explicit command of Baha Ollah is that every child whether rich or poor, aristocrat or democrat, high or low must learn a trade, an art or a craft. This law must be incorporated in the constitution of every school. Supposing that a person is not in need that economically speaking he is rich, even he for the sake of obedience to the blessed command must acquire a profession. A Bahai must correlate his actions, words and affairs with the basic principles of the Blessed Perfection. If he sees that the former agrees with the latter, he may feel quite sure that he is on the right track. All our difficulties arise from the fact that our deeds do not correspond with the good pleasure of Baha Ollah. With the presence of such a condition, it is passing strange that we still hope for benefic results. Is this possible that we have sown the wind and we must inevitably reap the whirlwind. We have repeatedly experienced that those actions which have not been found approvable by the Blessed Perfection have yielded no good results and have always terminated by undesirable [unreadable] have not been warned nor have we [unreadable].

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Consequently if we desire to succeed in this life we must conform all our deeds, thoughts and habits with the good-pleasure of Baha Ollah. We must suppose Him as alive and sitting in His room and we, standing in his divine Presence and if we explained to Him our aims and purposes, would He have been pleased with

them or not? would He have addressed us: 'Well done! This is good?' Now the Blessed Perfection is not in our midst but we have with us His Teachings and [unreadable]tations. Therefore we must correspond thwm with those heavenly instructions and keep them ever before our minds."

This morning the Beloved was in the garden, passing a pleasant hour in trimming the trees and giving valuable hints to Esmael Aga in exterminating the harmful insects which are destroying this verdant and freshness. Then he went out to call on Zakki Bay because he is going to leave today for Jerusalem. From the hotel they walked together to the store of Mirza Anayetuallah and there they continued their warm conversation till noon. At the corner of the road they bade farewell to each other, the Master kissing his face two or three times and showering upon him his protective blessings. When we reached home he ascended the stairs and after a few minutes I heard his voice calling out to me. I ran out and after a few minutes I heard his voice calling out to me. I ran out and saw him standing near the door with a pair of his own shoes in his hand. "Come up and try these on thy feet, if they fit thou canst have them." I tried but they were too small. "I see the feet are larger than mine. Give them back to me." he said and stretch out his blessed hand to take the shoes. "My Lord! these are now mine. I would like to take them for surely they will fit other feet than mine, I will be made supremely happy and blessed to possess them as a precious relic." Pake' Ala"- very good- and retired to his room. I descended the stairs in joyful spirit and kissed and hugged the shoes many times. I shall wait meanwhile till I meet the worthy soul to wear them, not for always but only on very rare occasions.

#### **May 25, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria**

{{p34}}

Dear friends!

Yesterday we received a letter from Beirut containing the rather sad news of the death of Haji Mirza Hassan Khorassani in Cairo, Egypt. As you know he was very prominent Baha merchant in that city and many years ago he went to the United States for the purpose of teaching this revelation. The old believers in America and those who have visited the East and passed through Egypt remember his kingly bearings and generous hospitality. Although during the last few years he had many financial reverses yet in the palmier days of his successful career he served the Cause of God and the believers in many practical ways. When he arrived in Cairo about fifty or sixty years ago he was a poor man but by industry and application he reached to the top of the ladder, was honored amongst his compeer and his experienced advice sought on every side. In the strictest sins of the word he was a self made man, making his fortune by the dint of perseverance and acquiring a fame for honesty and fair business dealings. During the lifetime of Baha Ollah as well as after His Departure he was almost an annual pilgrim to the holy land. In those blessed days there were pilgrims

from many countries of the Orient and he spread before them royal banquets and feasts around which they all gathered in the Presence of the Manifestation or His Son hearkening to their Words of Truth and Wisdom and receiving the blessings of the Holy Spirit. His large, palatial residence surrounded by a beautiful garden has ever been the meeting-ground of all the Bahais- permanent place for Friday gatherings, for special reunions- a headquarter for the carrying out of many Bahai activities. He loved to entertain the friends and he had a wonderful knack in gathering them together so that they may speak about the Cause and chant Tablets. When I first arrived in Cairo I alighted in his house and from that time on my love and admiration for him has ever been growing throughout the many evolutions of my life. When we arrived in Port Said he was there to welcome back the centre {{p35}} of the Covenant; in Ramleh we associated with him almost everyday and attended his Friday meetings and after our landing in Haifa he came and stayed for two or three months. He was a true and noble Bahai and I believe he would have sacrificed his life for the good of the Cause if the occasion has arisen. His love and veneration for the Master was beyond description. When the news was broken to the Beloved last night he was at first stoned and felt grieved. "This is a sad news" he said and became silent. After several minutes he raised his head and continued: -"Poor Haji Mirza Hassan but he is now released from the worries of the world. For him there were no more happy days. With all the financial difficulties that surrounded him he could dream of no peaceful hour. He was a man of magnanimous disposition and generous nature. He was a high-minded and honorable, liberal and disinterested and in the blessed Cause he was firm and steadfast. What a good thing is death! With it all man's suffering and troubles are brought to an end. It frees the soul from the chains of water and clay. In its court all-kings and subjects, the philosophers and the ignorant are equal. It levels all the barriers of distinctions and titles constructed by the crude hands of men during their short spans of their lives on this globe. Why should men view death with horror? Why do they paint it with a shocking and repugnant sight? Why do they shrink and recoil from its bare mention? However much man is surrounded with griefs and tribulations when he thinks that there will be a time of freedom, a time of liberty, his heart is eased and his mind tranquilized. For this reason the sanctified souls however longed for the coming of the angels of death. Like unto the birds imprisoned in the cage they yearn for the opening of the door, - so that they may wing their ways through the immensity of the blue, singing the songs of paradise and rising higher into the glorious regions of light. Now how restful and quiet has become Haji Mirza Hassan! he has hastened to the vicinity of the Lord of Grandeur has taken his abode in the neighborhood of God's Mercy. The people and their shifting concerns do not touch him anymore. His affairs are in the hands of His maker.

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"Truly I say he was a disinterested man and a distinguished personage. In his lifetime he served the Cause of God and the friends of the Merciful. In Alexandria he gathered together all the believers and gave them good positions in his

up-to -date Persian department store for many years; he gave work even to the Arab Bahais and kept them in a state of spiritual progressing and co-operation. Invariably and without exception the friday meetings were held in his residence. He was a magnet of attraction and the string of his purse was nevertied. During the feast and holidays he gave magnificent banquets and elaborate fetes, inviting all the friends and sympathize to help themselves at his bounteous table. his engaging personality diffused gladness, gayety and merriment amongst the company of guests.

“The large and beautiful candelabrum suspended in the reception room of the Tomb of the Bab on Mt. Carmel and the wonderfully carved table around which dozens of guests can sit are two precious souvenirs from him.”He was a liberal man; he was not stingy, he burned always like a flame, he was not extinct; he was ever active and his enthusiasm contagious, he was not passive nor cold. With a nobility of mind he worked and took care of the friends. What a pity that he died but has he not found eternal rest? did he not enter into a divine world which is sanctified beyond and above our mundane conditions? Firmly, steadfastly, believingly, assuringly he stepped into the changeless kingdom of Abha. Is not this the first of our existence? If not this, then what else?”

This morning he walked through the avenues of the garden and step by step led us into the perennial gardens of the spirit, wherein the roses never fade and the lilies do not wither. While promenading through these celestial gardens we listened to the sweet songs of the nightingales and were enraptured by the melodies of the birds of paradise. Assuredly you have had glimpses of those happy regions, you have beheld the luxurious of their imperishable flowers, you have witnessed the indescribable beauty and remarkable clearness of their surroundings. These are only the godlike experiences of a few minutes which make life worth living and inspire man with a courage and faith to rediscover [unreadable].

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This afternoon the landeau was ready and he asked me to accompany him. It was driven toward the Arabian quarter of Haifa in the East. After a long ride through dirty, narrow roads it stopped in front of a house. Here was a sick-man the son of an old friend of the Beloved and the Master was in his room for half an hour, consoling him and his anxious family and prescribing [unreadable] some kind of medicine. When he came out we were still driven further to a tea house belonging to a Persian Bahai by the name Haji Farhan. The tea house is surrounded by a lovely garden- agreeen oasis in the midst of desert built on the main road- a resting place for the weary wayfarers. Here we found the seventy government laborers sent out daily too kill the locusts. They had just returned from their arduous work and were taking a rest under the shade of trees. The Master spoke to them and inquired about their health. Then he ordered Haji Farhan to entertain them with tea in his name. They needed this refreshment and were thankful for his thoughtfulness. From the tea house he walked to the home of the brothers of Zoenat Khanom -the wife of our brother



Doctor Bagdadi. He visited their rooms, surveyed their garden and instructed them to plant olive trees. Then he stopped a few minutes at the house of Mirza Moneer Zain to welcome and bless the new baby girl born on the tenth of the current month. Both his wife and himself are very happy over the arrival of the new guests and he feels already the importance and responsibility of fatherhood. Then he called at the home of another friend and spoke to her about the welfare of her son. Again I found myself with him in the landeau and soon we were back in the home of Truth. The extra exertion and the heat of the day fatigued him very much and he retired to his room for a short rest before the meeting.

When I was in the landeau I asked him to give me a complete suite of his clothes to be carried to America as a priceless heirloom for posterity. He smiled and assented to my request. It will be very wonderful of the various articles of his clothes are kept in a safe deposit for future generations. There are many believers who have the different pieces of his clothes but it will be very fine if we could have them all together and in one place.

#### **May 26, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Acca, Syria**

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Dear friends!

The sun had already arisen and the sweet garden was a picture of peaceful calmness. The Master came down from his room - a majestic king descending from his throne of glory and authority. There were a few friends who had come to see him, thinking he will leave this morning for Acca. Looking into their faces and then gazing over the flowers he said: - "I am leaving this afternoon for Acca to spend the night of the ascension in the Blessed Tomb. For the last four or five years I have not been here and have been deprived of this spiritual bounty. In no other place do I find such rest and comfort as in Acca, in no other room do I feel so strongly the vibrations of the spirit as the room in which the Blessed Perfection lived for ever so many years. Although the weather of Acca is generally humid and nowadays quite hot, yet whenever I go there I do not like to leave the place, because it is the most great prison of the Manifestation of God." Then turning his eyes toward [unreadable] Mirza Haydor Ali and addressing the friends he said: - "You must take very good care of him. He is a blessed soul. He harbors in his mind and heart no other thoughts and ideas save the welfare of the Cause of God. Praise be to God that all the believers are thinking and dreaming of the promotion of the message. The followers of the Blessed Perfection have undergone innumerable hardships in the Divine Path. Each person according to his ability and station in life forbore much trials and ordeals for the sake of Truth. They were always surrounded with danger. They did not rest for one night nor were they secure for one day. [unreadable] did they fall into the bands of the enemies and hailed unbearable calamities. Although in the estimation of the people their moral and spiritual value is unknown yet in the sight of Baha Ollah they are very dear. How many nights did they not

sleep and groaned under the weight of chains and fetters! How often did they become the object of contumely, obloquy and reproach. Many a time did they receive the crushing blow of the axe of the oppressor! In many a city their properties were confiscated {{p39}} and their belongings pillaged. Thousands were martyred and these children made captives. Consequently in the sight of the Blessed Beauty they are all very beloved and acceptable. The spiritual station of these early Bahais are not known now but it will become revealed after their departure from this life. It is like the seeds which are sown under the soil. Temporarily nothing is visible but after a while the large field will become verdant. The station of the apostles of Christ was not manifest in their own days and even for many years afterwards.”

Then he ordered Esmael Aga to prepare four vases to be carried with us to the Holy Tomb. “We are poor and we have nothing worthy to carry to that Divine Court. These flowers are also raised by thee. Praise be to God that thou art assisted in this service.”

People commenced to come and we retired to our room. Till noon they arrived and the Lord spoke with them and lifted up their loads of sorrows and troubles.

In the afternoon the carriage was ready and the Master took his seat in it. He took with himself Badi Effendi, Khosro and this servant, Mrs. [unreadable] Getsinger and a number of the family will follow us in a day or two. While we were driving along the sacred shore he spoke about the quiet scene and the charm of the sea. “The sandy desert along the beach is full of mystic stillness. Here a person is far away from the weaknesses of the flesh and out of the reach of all the human temptations. If a person could disclose and bring into the light of day the real and secret qualities of the hearts, he would observe that although these people are human in outward form and shape yet in truth they are wolves, jackals, leopards, elephants, hyenas, serpents, scorpions and tarantulas. Of the human and divine attributes they are totally deprived. Therefore a spiritual man keeps himself always out of their venomous and ferocious company and associates only with the pure in hearts and devout in contemplation.”

After a long silence he asked me to speak and I told him how entirely and completely we are secluded from the world’s current and how little do we hear about the believers of God in America.

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He said: “In the United States the Cause of God is progressing. The invisible hand is working and the unseen tongue is speaking. In Germany and America the tree of the Cause is being watered and is growing day by day...”

At last we reached Acca and entered the holy home of the Manifestation. No sooner the Master entered his room than the friends and the strangers began to arrive to welcome him back after more than a month of absence. The utter desolation and apparently lifeless appearance of the town struck me with a chill of horror. The Beloved felt the same way, for as the carriage entered the gate

and he looked in the pale and gaunt and ghost like faces of a few shadowy human beings he said: “Oh! What a sad, sad scene! This is the city of the dead. It has become like a cemetery, God is indeed chastening its inhabitants. The light of God shone in their midst for many years and they comprehended it not. They were blind, deaf and mute. This is indeed God’s retribution. The people are sitting in sackcloth and ashes, they are surrounded with the burning fire of the Lord’s wrath, yet they are not awakened nor are they made mindful. ‘In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction... all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.’ [Isaiah chap 24, v.11 12] We hope still that the ruined places shall be build up, the songs of joy be raised and the hearts be filled with the glory of the Lord.”

In the evening we had a good meeting and the Beloved spoke about Italy and her entrance in the arena of the warring nation. Then he touched on the history of the occupation of [unreadable] by England and related an incident to illustrate his theme. Now indeed all the doors are closed before our faces. The only means of communication with the outside world was the weekly or fortnight arrival of the Italian steamer and that also is brought to amends. Not that the Italian steamer brought us any letter or news or pilgrims but it afforded us only the pleasing sight and sensation that we are not totally forgotten. Farewell to all such peaceful scenes till God in His own mysterious way calms this raging storm and extinguishes this world consuming fire.

#### **May 27, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Acca, Syria**

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Dear friends!

Yesterday and today the heat in Acca has been something quite unbearable and of the most nerve-shattering nature. I could neither eat, sleep nor walk. It affected markedly the brightness and vivacity of the Beloved. I was limp and spiritless and the heated weather had so affected my disposition that I would have quarreled without any cause with whosoever crossed my path. This time the very atmosphere of the place is extremely depressing, the faces are joyless, the hearts are heavy, the spirits are dead; the flowers of happiness have withered away, the green leaves of mirth have sered by the apressure winds of multitude of cruelties, the birds of serenity have become silent and flown away and the sky of prosperity is beclouded. My heart moved with pity at the sight of this miserable, wretched and woe-begone humanity! I felt sad and grieved and totally powerless before this awful scene of walking and living charnel-house. Over the houses the broods the ominous spirit of ray less gloom, the eyes are palled and colorless, the heads are drooping and the hopes are sinking to the bottomless pit of despair. The blooms and flowers of this generation are blown away by the sharp sword of this calamities war, leaving behind bereft mothers and fathers. The daily exactions of a pitiless, military government have brought the starving residue of the people to the verge of open rebellion. God hath sent to them the countless

legions of locusts, changing in one night the verdant gardens- the result of years of patient, arduous labor- into plain deserts. They are threatened with bombs and shells from sea and from the upper sphere. Truly they are encompassed on all sides with all the trials and calamities. Never before Syria has been afflicted with so many disasters at the same time and in the same year. The scourges of God and man are administering an unheard of punishment to the harassing people. This is indeed the year of tribulations, wars, plagues, woes, earthquakes and tremblings, the most unlucky year in the history of humanity. Day by day the fire of prejudices and hatred is kindled with greater intensity, burning thousands upon thousands.

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Tonight the Master gave along spiritual talk containing the short history of one of the celebrated Baha teachers and I may share its translation with you: - "In the world of creation every cause has a magnetic focus, a centre of attraction around which revolves its powerful activities and interests. The magnetic center of the Bahai Cause which attracts unto the personality of the holder all the spiritual benedictions and privileges is steadfastness. Whosoever has gotten a firm hold of this spiritual principle, divine confirmations shall descend upon him and attainment to eternal God will be made easy. Especially when with this supreme quality is joined the practical and altruistic ability to serve and teach the Cause of Reality. This is the magnet of real attraction, otherwise the end of every success is failure, the goal of every rest is trouble, the bound of every immortality is mortality, the purpose of every glory is disgrace, the conclusion of every affluence is poverty and the termination of every union is dispersion.

"Ponder for a moment by whom this house was built and with what pride and self-assertion he walked on the face of the earth. While he was alive all the people of Acca envied his wealth and position and longed to receive one twentieth part of his comfort and riches. He walked on the earth as though he bestowed upon it a great favor. What did become of him he died and passed away as though he had never been born, named or lived. Thus it is evident that the end of that honor which is not gained in for and through the Cause of God is identical with degradation, collection is simile to scattering and the accumulation of riches will be followed destitution. Where is the sovereignty of Nasser-Eddin Shah? Where is the imperial haughtiness and arrogance of Sultan Abdul Hamid? Where is the over-bearing egoism of Ali Pasha? Where is the ministerial deceits and corruption of Mirza Aga-ssi? Where are the tactics of the commandership of Moshired Daulet? Where is the splendor and magnificence displayed Ameen-es-Sultan? Like unto the unreal ghosts that appeared upon the stage and vanished away. But had these men served at the Divine Court they would have illumined the vast majestic audience of humanity. This is no other than truth.

Similarly in the religious world there lived in Najaf Sheik Morteza {{p43}} who was the chief Pontiff of fifty million Shiites. Before there was Sheik Mohamad Hassan who became famous for his theological learning. He was revered and respected by the Mohamadan world. Likewise great muta physicians like Ay-

atallah of Khorassan and Mirza Ḥabíbu'lláhollah of Shirag became well-known for their religious erudition. Above and beyond all these towered high Haji Mohamad Karim Khan of Kerman who held in his hand the scepter of temporal and spiritual powers. By virtue of his being a prince he lived as a King and having reached the position of an authoritative religion leader he wielded an overwhelming moral force. Whenever he made a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Mashad more than one thousand knights dressed in gold and silver-plated cuirasses, bucklers etc, followed and served him. All this pomps, ostentatious and flourish have passed away as the bad dreams of a feverish brain. "Amongst the many students of Sheik Morteza there was a brilliant follow by the name of Aga Mohamad of Qavin, whose title in the Bahai world is His holiness Nabeel the Great! Having finished his theological studies in the college of Sheik Morteza he investigated and accepted this revelation. When he received his diploma from his master he came to Bagdad. Here we met him. He was in reality the flame of the love of God. He stood or sat in the presence of Baha Ollah with the utmost lowliness and humility and listened to His utterances of wisdom. One day he was thus sitting with gentle submission while the Blessed Perfection was talking to him when the door was opened and Haji Mirza Hassan Ammou, the unquestioned leader of the Mullahs of Karbala, accompanied by Lein-el-Abeddin Khan (title, Fakhrod-Doulet) entered the room. Ammou was surprised to see Nabeel sitting with such humility in the presence of Baha Ollah. Sheik Morteza had not given in his life a religious diploma to any of his students some Nabeel and through this particular distinction he had become a well known scholar for his extraordinary intellect and acumen. Therefore Ammou asked him with wonder in his eyes, what he was doing there. Nabeel answered meekly: "I am here after the same quest that he has brought you!

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"From Bagdad Nabeel returned to Qavin, his native town in Persia. The Ameer of Qavin, Mir Alam Khan received him with marked respect and distinguished honor. He showered upon him much love and attention when the people observed their chief honoring Nabeel in such a whole hearted manner they all followed in his footsteps and paid him unprecedented homage. The flame of the Love of God was so enkindled in his heart that he could not keep it hidden for a long time and thus it bursted out in glowing coruscations. Truly I say he illuminated the district of Qavin and guided many souls to the fountain-head of Reality. When he became known as a standard-bearer of this revelation, the fanatical clergy arose against him and incited the mob to persecute him. Mir Alam Khan also followed the crowd and manifested the greatest opposition. The affairs reached to such a height that they finally banished him from the town and after a long and arduous journey he reached Teheran. Here he removed the turban and placed a simple lambskin hat on his head; - so that no one may recognize him and he may become better able to teach the Cause and spread the Holy Fragrances. Of a truth he was the brilliant lamp of guidance and the Celestial torch of spiritual illumination. Dangers encircled him on every side, the minions of darkness searched after him to arrest and execute him but the

hand of destiny directed his steps toward Ashkhabad and Bakhara while he was engaged in the latter city in the service of the Cause he departed to the kingdom of Abha. He has composed a very eloquent book to demonstrate the validity of this dispensation. It is my hope that book will become [unreadable] long available, published and circulated.

“In short, the point is this: these great religious pontiffs like Sheik Morteza, Mirza Ḥabíbu’lláhollah, and Ayatollah [unreadable] Ayatullah Mazandrani disappeared like clouds, leaving behind no eternal trace nor any permanent landmark, no result and no fruit. Millions of Sheiks, pontiffs and {{p45}} clergymen have come into this world and each and all have disappeared from the face of the earth but the star of his holiness Nabeel will shine for eternity from the horizon of everlasting glory. Why? Because he was steadfast in the Cause of God till the end of his life, was occupied in the service of the King of heaven and was teaching the people the statutes of the Lord. Day and night he was engaged in the diffusion of the Fragrances of the Merciful. Hence it became evident that every honor which is not gained in the Cause of God will be followed by degradation, every tranquility is disrupted by confusion and the fortune is ended by misery. Indeed his holiness Nabeel was the sign of guidance. In the Cause of God he lived up to the requirement of the law of self-renunciation. He abandoned the glory of this world, forsook the affluence of position, relinquished the comfort of home, renounced the fame of ecclesiastical leadership and even parted with his life in order to become a real servant at the holy Threshold of Baha Ollah.” He was a learned and wise man. He had studied deeply the different branches of knowledge. He was a theologian, a philosopher, a Sufi and a Bahai. The eloquence and fluency of his tongue was matchless and when he began to speak he moved the hearts of men with the power of the spirit. In brief, he was a symposium of finely balanced intellectual and spiritual knowledges and his death deprived the Cause of one of his most sincere defenders.

In the morning we took our tea with the beloved and he relate to us the interesting story of Baha Ollah in prison. In the afternoon the Matosaraḥ, the disposed Qaemmagam of Haifa, the German Consul and several other prominent citizens called on him and he spoke to them at length about the spiritual conquests of Peace and amity and the destructive effects of war.

The rest of the day was spent in calling and receiving the people and relieving the dire wants of a number of the utterly destitute families. Lunch and dinner were consumed around the table of the Lord.

**May 28, 1915 Bahajee Acca, Syria**

{{p46}}

Dear friends!

The spiritual experiences of Bahai pilgrims to the holy land will blossom into the variegated and fragrant flowers of ideality and perfection, should he or she

be privileged to spend the Night of the ascension in the companionship of Abdul Baha within the sacred precinct and holy Shrine of Baha Ollah. The experience laden with the sweet odor of the paradise of spirit, renovates consciousness, strengthens the will, illuminates with the rays of ineffable light the dark paths of the brain, encircles the in accessible heights of the heart with the fluttering white wings of the doves of peace and goodwill, confers the glad-tidings of the kingdom of Love and brotherliness, fills the cup with the exhilarating ambrosia of real meekness and self-alienation, moves the mind from its centre of indifference and lethargic habits, reminds the worshippers of the necessity of greater zeal and more contagious enthusiasm in promoting the universal principles of divine Civilization, the teaches him in the languages of the angels, the urgency of a whole- hearted conservation to the service of the Cause of God and the upholding of the rights of man.

If the Blessed Beauty departed on this night to His Supreme Abode of eternity, He left amongst us His glorious Son; if He concealed His Countenance from the dazzled eyes of mankind, He disclosed the shining Face of His Centre of the Covenant; if He withdrew the consolation and comfort of His Celestial Presence, He gave us the sinless and luminous body of His laws and precepts; if the Sun of His Personality sunk below the horizon of this temporal world. It davened with greater splendor and majesty from the pure temple of His appointed Successor; if the soft, murmuring breezes of his garden were hushed, the winds of His mighty will began to blow with velocity and force from the mountains of the Mystery of God and if the Nighting of the divine spring become silent and still, the Bird taught by him stark the sleepy and heedless world with the melodious songs and joyous hymns of spiritual truths.

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Passing over the many interesting incidents that transpired during the day let us go directly to the threshold of Baha Ollah and see with our own eyes what has happened on this eventful night. An hour before sunset the believers directed their steps toward the holy Tomb and Badi Effendi and me found ourselves amongst them. The carriage brought from Haifa the members of the holy Family and then returned again to Acca to bring the Beloved of our hearts. The sun had just set behind Mount Carmel in the liquid deep of the golden sea when the Master alighted from the vehicle and greeted the believers who had gathered outside the garden to welcome him. At first he entered the holy shrine alone and chanted the Visitation Tablet for women who had gathered there to worship. When they went out the men were called in and we found him sitting in one corner of the room, sublimely patient silent, still, pure, meek and holy- a wonderful picture of the heavenly being who has subdued every inclination, every appetite, every desire from prompting of self and has thus found within the empire of his eternal heart the Kingdom of love, humility service and the joy that never fades. His eyes were closed and in the mirror of his countenance one could easily see the reflection of the sorrowing, prostrated world. The atmosphere was also colored with the sad and obscure shades of grief and unnamable

distress. Here yea, here, there is all peace, all unity, all redolent sweetness but there, there what about there! Our brothers are killed and being killed on the battlefield, our mothers are widowed, our sisters are weeping over the deaths of their dear and near ones, towns are destroyed, the precious blood of the innocent is flowing and many atrocities are perpetrated in the name of religion and patriotism. How could our hearts find rest while the spirit of hatred and murder has filled the hearts of humanity! How could we feel happy, how could the ethereal atmosphere of this sacred place be joyous, how could the face of the Prince of Love be radiant, while mankind is in the grip of a deadly struggle! No indeed! None of us could lay a claim to happiness. We were all suffering. The heart of the universe is pain-stricken, how can the limbs and the members be whole! For more than one hour we sat around the Divine Candle while it burned silently with the light of pity and compassion! Then we {{p48}} left the holy Shekimah with the same solemn silence and quietness. For almost 5 and 6 years the Master was not in Acca and consequently these meetings on the nights of the ascension lacked the dynamic of his presence and benign influence of his personality. From this standpoint the friends were happy in having him in their mindset and receiving from him the blessing of heaven. They were all his guests for supper and at 9'oclock two large tables were set and we were served with roast meat and other delicious eatables. According to his usual custom he walked around the tables, spoke with this or that believer, ordered Aga Mehdi and Khosro to fill the plates with more meat, and serve ice-water. His three sons-in-law were also serving. He saw me eating with a spoon and he came and stood behind me. "Hast thou not yet learned to eat with thy hand?" he asked humorously and slapped me hard on my shoulder. "I am not glad to be able to serve the believers of God. This I consider to be my highest attainment and my greatest glory. The real friends must be the servants of each other and arise in mutual helpfulness and cooperation. The hallmark of spiritual illumination is service, love and fellowship. Let the believers adorn their inner beings with these qualities and advance step by step along the path of ideal progress. We are all the servants of humanity and must endeavor to fulfill the law of self-sacrifice in its perfect and most complete form." After dinner he sat down himself and partook of the same food while Khosro served him. Then he retired to his room to rest, leaving the friends to their own devices. It was most beautiful moonlight night and we were divided into different groups, some of us took our chairs under the olive trees, others went under the pine trees, and still a number of young ones took a long walk in the moonlit plain among the sea-shore, dreaming of past events and visualizing the future bliss and serenity of their fellowmen. The old believers of the days of Baha Ollah related for my benefit the details of the last hour of the Ascension and in what happened afterwards. In the sweet and soft light of the moon I took notes of those things and I hope to incorporate them in a separate article sometimes in the future. Because the Beloved was sleeping we did not sing Bahai songs but we would {{p49}} have done so under any other circumstances. Thus we spent the hours of the night till 3 a.m. The few sleepers awake and Aga Mehdi was seen busy preparing tea to arouse and refresh the drowsy ones. No sooner we



drank two or three small cups then we found ourselves fully awake and in the passion of all our faculties, although we did not close our all eyelids all night. After a few minutes the Master came out of his room and in his majestic yet humble way led us again to the holy Tomb. All night the lamps and candelabras were burning, sending out into the moonlit space, streams of soft, gentle light. The inside of the "Holy of [unreadable] was redolent with the sweet fragrance of exotic flowers and plants and the delicate odor of orange blossoms made the air subtle and ineffably beautiful. Again the Beloved sat in his unobtrusive corner and two of the believers started to chant Tablets in lovely voices. On and on they continued chanting verses of holiness filling our hearts and minds with the charming whisperings of the Spirit. Although, you, dear reader, were far away, yet we all prayed for and remembered you. We sent you through ether the silent messages of love and affection and hope you have received them. The Master was praying for the whole Bahai world, supplicating at the threshold of his divine Father to pour upon them the confirmations of the Kingdom of Peace and encircle them with the angels of the Realm of Might. We are all sure that his devout prayers will be borne directly to the footstool of the throne of the Lord and his earnest desires will be fully granted. The whole world is nowadays dependent on his heart. Quietly the hours slipped by in this sacred communion and silent worship. There was no music, no choir, no organ, no vocal expression of adoration but all the hearts were turned to God begging Him to keep us firm and steadfast in His Covenant. While we were thus praying the sun arose from the Eastern horizon and flooded the plain with its rays. As we left the holy place we were greeted by the twittering of birds heralding the arrival of another day.

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This morning we drank tea in the Presence of the Beloved and he dwelt on the extraordinary heat of the past few days emphasizing the fact that in such hate enervating climate the Blessed Perfection lived for nine consecutive years.

Aga Mehdi Abul Qasem came in reported that the locusts have entered the gardens and are eating the flowers and the trees. They wished him to order them to go away. He was silent for a few minutes and then he said: - "These locusts are your guests. Is it quite in accord with the law of decorum to send them away, especially now that they are quite hungry? What would you have done were you attacked with hunger and nothing in sight to eat? They are the armies of the Lord. If you give banquet or a feast to the King's army, would he not be pleased with you and send you a decoration and express his satisfaction and now would not the Lord be pleased with you because you have so bountifully entertained his numberless legions?" Poor Abul Qasem was very disconsolate, for he knew that in a few days the lovely Rizwan will be changed into a barren waste with not one green leaf in it. For the last few days he had worked himself to the point of utter exhaustion to keep out the "guests" but they were knocking from all sides and finally breaking through all barriers, they rushed in from every direction like the torrents of water.

In the afternoon The Motosarref, Gaemmazam, the German Consul and five other officials called on him and they kept him busy talking to them for more than one hour. With the utmost deference and respect they sat in his presence, listening to his words. Then three Catholic and Orthodox priests called and he spoke on the interpretation of certain passages of the Holy Scriptures and instructed them in the mystic significations of the Words of God. Then he made tea with his own- blessed hands for us and served us in his own inimitable natural, spontaneous manner.

### **May 29, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Acca, Syria**

{{p1}}

Dear friends!

The day was spent in Bahajee and I enjoyed a restful, refreshing sleep under the tall over shading pine trees waving with not unmelodious sighs, in dark luxuriance, in the hottest sunshine. It was a difficult thing to keep awake all night but it was a new and never-to-be forgotten experience which may not become repeated in my life in exactly its present environment and spiritual suggestibility. No doubt sometimes in the near future I will be sent out of this Eden of Peace and heavenly contentment into a world of constant struggle and unceasing activity and then the remembrance and mention of these days and nights will be a source of noble aspirations and creative ideals. Then depending on the Beloved's Confirmations these sacred events will form the ground plan of my activities and hopes. How difficult it will be to leave him and go away from him. One is so accustomed to this calm and peaceful atmosphere that separation from it will act as a great shock. There are some people who have been prisoners in the open, spacious cage of his Love, have breathed day and night the air of his tenderness, have sang the songs of his grandeur, have eaten their food from his table and soared in the immensity of his compassion. Like unto the fish they are habituated to swim in the salubrious water of his knowledge and bears joyfully every hardship and trouble in order that they may grow and perfect themselves by learning his lessons and applying them to their daily problems. When such persons are sent away from him they will feel more than many others the exquisite pangs of separation, because from the home of truth they are sent into a world of falsehood, cant and hypocrisy, from the rose-garden of reality they have to wander through the sandy plain of the thorns of doubt and the briars of skepticism; from the heaven of Love they hurled down into the hell of hatred, suspicion, selfishness, condemnation and distrust. There is however only left the dim light of one consolation and that is, to go out and both by precepts and examples teach the Cause and serve the friends of God not that they will be beyond the pole of the criticism, the abuse and the denunciation of the friends and foes but they will have a chance to practice that which they have learned {{p2}} to give that which they have taken in, to spread that which they have accumulated and to proclaim these glad tidings which they have mastered. The

secret of growth, comprehensiveness, excellence and enfoldment lies in actual service and in the loving association of spirits with spirits. If a person walks in this undeviating path he will surely reach the goal of true attainment and perfection; otherwise he will have to be satisfied with the mediocre and the commonplace, never rising to the noble heights of universal thoughts and the lofty attitudes of deeds.

Looking on this subject in the light of the above observation it is a double blessing to be with Abdul Baha in these days, for one gathers strength and moral force by simple association with the centre of the Covenant and will come to his assistance whenever surrounded by the ministers of trials and hardships. He will then bring back to his mind his smiling face, his majestic mien, his heavenly presence, his spiritual words and his solicitous advice and then being energized and moved by these blessed remembrances his faith will be increased, his belief will be reinforced and his assurance electrified. Pondering over His concentrated purpose for the promulgation of the Teachings he will apply himself to its clearer realization, knowing the universal scope of this self-renunciation he will consciously try to imitate him, considering the impartiality of His practical charities, he will strive to approach his standard, reflecting on the sweet gentleness and amiability of His character he will endeavor to gain the same qualities visualizing His simple spirituality and humility he will make an effort to manifest the identical attributes and beholding Him in the highest heaven of divine glory he will attempt to ascend the same golden rounds. Thus living, thus dreaming, thus working he will become able to chase away the gloom of separation, to neutralize the effect of remoteness, to banish the two great specters of Time and Space, to leave behind the dark station of the “Everlasting No” and step into the radiant world of the “Everlasting Yea”.

By the evening all the friends had returned to Acca and Haifa; the Beloved and his holy sister were driven to the former and we walked from Bahajee, and after an hour found ourselves in the home of the Blessed Beauty, ready to take up the thread of our lives where we had laid them down.

### **May 30, 1915 Home of Baha Ollah Acca, Syria**

{{p3}}

Dear friends!

An interesting incident in the life of the Bab before he declared his mission to the world and while he was living as a merchant in Bushir was related by the Beloved. Those who have lived in the East and have become familiar with the immemorial custom of bargaining and haggling between the seller and the buyer enjoy this story, for it clearly shows how the Bab in that early period acted on the principle of “Prix Fixe”, a radical procedure, setting at naught the time honored commercial code of century prevalent amongst merchants and traders. The public expects to haggle and the storekeepers knowing this ingrained custom invariably advance the price, - leaving a margin for reduction; in order to attract

the whimsically of the people.

The Master said: "One day in the course of conversation Haji Sayad Javad said to me: 'I was a good friend of Haji Sayad Ali, the maternal uncle of the Bab. During my travellings I reached Bushir and inquired about him. They directed me to his office and to my chagrin I found that he has left for Shiraz but the Bab who was then in the efflorescence of his youth was appointed in his place to manage the business of the office. His mustache was just beginning to grow and the signs of manhood appearing in his whole being. As I looked into his young countenance I was wonder-struck with his spiritual dignity, stateliness of manners and the nobleness of his department. At the time his holiness was engaged in the business of indigo. After a short conversation I left him impressed with the loftiness of his ethical standard and the purity of his personal character.

Another day I called on him and while I was sitting in his presence several commission men entered the office. He received them with discourtesy and bade them be seated. After a few preliminary remarks they broke the news that letters are being received from India that the market value of indigo has dropped one or two points. Other merchants were also present and they refuted strongly the assertion made by the commission agents. Pro and Con the conversation lasted for two {{p4}} hours, each side trying to down the other. While the bitter controversy was raging the Bab sat silent and still and seemed to be not at all interested in the talk which has been going on with such animation. This was rather a crafty device for they intended to buy indigo from the Bab in the absence of his uncle at a lower price than the market value. When they finish their talk, one of them addressing him said: ' Malek- Ottojar has heard that you have in your office many boxes of indigo and he desires to buy some of them from you at the current price. Will you be kind enough to specify your terms? Up to this moment the Bab had not said a word but now with the utmost calmness and dignity and with a few words and as simple as possible he told them the price and the terms by which the different installments were going to be paid. Loudly and vociferously they protested against the high price and the terms, as it was their wont, stating that there must be a reduction. He listened to their words silently and at last getting exasperated at his serene imperturbability they cried: ' What is your wish? He answered: 'I have already told you. Have I to repeat again the same propositions? Now they were indeed exasperated. 'What is this new custom?' they bemoaned! We have an interest right to bargain. This shall never be. Are you going to dictate to us? Do you, a young man, know the commercial laws of the country better than we do? Who has ever heard of such strict adherence to one idea? We will not have it. We warn you that if you want to carry on business amongst us you must change this novel, peculiar custom, otherwise no one will approach your office.' The Bab just looked into their faces and did not answer them. When they got tired with their harangues and realized that their words produced not the slightest effect they left the office with disgust and grumblings. In an hour they were back with a message from Malek-ottojjar that he says the price of this indigo is quite high and he begs him to make at least a slight reduction for his sake.

'I have stated in so many words' he said' the last fixed price and reduction is impossibility, you are wasting your precious time uselessly! The commission men were beside themselves with fury {{p5}} and attributed this one-sidedness to his stubbornness and obstinacy. Seeing how futile would be their rage they betook themselves away but soon returned in a chastened mood that the buyer has surrendered and won't like to have so many bases. The full terms were drawn up and the cases of indigo were transferred to the store of Malek-ottojjar. A few days passed and in order to gain their point they turned another leaf of double dealing and pretended the papers were tampered with and certain conditions were incorporated therein by the force of circumstance. Boisterous and noisy they came to the Bab, shouting for considerable reduction of price insisting that it must be done immediately. Without heeding their heated protestations he said: 'Are you not satisfied with former stipulations?' They all answered: "Of course not. We are duped we are hoodwinked?" 'Very well then, you many send back the goods;.' "What! Sending back the goods!" Who has ever heard such a thing! You are insulting the dignity and honor of Malek-ottojjar' [the king of merchants] 'Then you do not intend to send them back.' 'No indeed. We will be considered worse than fools.' Calmly turning his face to his servant he said: 'Go and take with thyself a number of porters call at the store of Malek-ottojjar and ask in my name for the cases of indigo. Do not return tell you bring them! The men were so stupefied at this thunderous command that they could not utter a sound and preferred to sit there and see the result. In an hour they were more than amazed to see the servant back with the goods.

"This incident was widely circulated in Bushir that Mirza Ali Mohamad has had the daring and courage to precipitate a commercial alternation with the king of the merchants and that his career will be brought to an end by the secret machinations of the powerful man whose dignity has been so sorely wounded. The intimate friends of Aga Sayad Ali called and begged him to go to the enraged man and beg his apology and pardon, intimating that the result of this injured feeling will probably be ruinous to the trade of his uncle. The Bab listened to their advice and said simply: - 'Do not worry about our business. There is {{p6}} a God who will protect it from al the outside encroachments." After two months the same cases of indigo were sold at a good profit and in cash. When his uncle arrived from Shiraz and heard the story in all its bearing he was not a little puzzled and agitated and thought it was no more than a commercial obligation to offer his apology to Malek-ottojar in order to sooth his anger, but the Bab forbade him not event to dream of such a humiliating course, that the episode had been closed and needed no more ventilation."

During the day we had only a few glimpses of the Beloved for he was busy, going out to call on his friends and receiving those who came to see him. Whenever he comes to Acca there is always a long procession of callers who come either to inquire about his health or to relieve them out of their manifold distress. In these days the latter classes prevail over the former.

In the evening he received the believers in his room for a few minutes and

exhorted them to be patient and forbearing under the heavy loads of present misfortunes and troubles. He promised them that better and happier days are coming and assured them of the protection and preservation of the Divine Powers.

Toward the afternoon two big warships were seen in the horizon cruising back and forth which they continued to do till long after sunset. There was something threatening in their dreams.

The plain Acca is a swimming sea of locusts. They have entered the town and filled the streets. The aqueduct is contaminated by them and this source of the supply of water is shut to the distracted inhabitants for the next fifteen or twenty days. They enter the rooms and every conceivable place. As many of them are being trampled under the feet, a most fetid and poisonous odor is diffused which may become the source of some epidemic disease. Oh Lord! How Thou hast abandoned thy servants and enriched them with unimaginable trials!

#### **May 31, 1915 Home of Abdul Baha Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria**

{{p7}}

Dear friends!

Last night in the course of his conversation the Beloved referred to our departure for Haifa and I was glad to know that we will be out of the depressing, dejecting and sickening atmosphere of Acca. Save the companionship of Abdul Baha and the holy remembrances attached to the home of his heavenly father nowadays nothing is left in this desolate town to cheer one's heart and uplift one's aspiration. The sooner one is out of such soul-burdening environment the better it is. Hence it was with a feeling of relief that Badi Effendi and myself and two other Bahais hired a carriage at one P.M and started for Haifa. Because the greatest Holy Leaf and two other members of the blessed family were going to be with him he sent us ahead with the promise that he will come tomorrow. The two warships appeared again this morning and anchored in front of Haifa. About noon one of them approached the harbor and started to bombard the warehouse petroleum and a village by the name Hartieh, two hours from Haifa, the head quarter of the army. She threw about 25 shots and then ceased. The bombardment was going in Haifa while the poor inhabitants of Acca were panic-stricken, fearing that the same virtuals of shots and shells might be served to them. Notwithstanding this we started on our way and were meanwhile watching the movements of ships. We had covered more than half way when all of a sudden the bigger warship steered its course and anchored right in front of the German Colony. In a minute the reverberating sound of the gun filled our ears and the white smoke covered the slope of Mount Carmel. At first we were startled and worried ourselves for the safety of the believers, because the smoke arose from the vicinity of the home of the Beloved. As the bombardment con-

tinued we observed the balls were aimed at one spot and that spot we guessed to be no other than the German Consulate. Fifteen missiles were thrown {{p8}} but their terrific sound was more than deafening! The carriage driver was so afraid that he thought it would be safer if he retired behind the sand hills and thus a temporary protection secured.

Our brother Badi Effendi has written his impression of this significant day and I would like to quote herein his article: -

"It is indeed a most radical change to hear the roaring of cannons within the centre of the Canopy Universal Peace! Ever since the dawn of history some religious significance has been associated with Mount Carmel. Its peaceful and calm atmosphere attracted the attention of seers and prophets. Through the play of the forces of nature, winds and storms, lightning and thunder they received messages from an High. The pure hearts detached from worldly passions and appetites heard the still small voice of the Lord of Hosts whispering into their ears. Its very atmosphere is full of spiritual inspiration and its starry heaven affords ample material for one's meditation. Hearts were lifted up to God in prayer and heavenly teachings were received for the betterment of humanity. The Glory of Carmel became an actual fact by the arrival of Baha Ollah who raised His tent on its summit and proclaimed to the world the establishment of Universal Peace. On this day instead of hearing that still small voice, sweeter than any music of human voice, we do not hear except the roaring of cannons, the bursting of bombs and the falling of missiles and shots from the air. The home of spirituality and blessedness is visited by the noise and confusion of hatred and malice. Men instead of looking up to heaven to receive the blessings of God turn their eyes in awe and consternation [unreadable] any bomb fall from the aeroplanes or the warships of the enemies. Is this the only calamity countless billions of locusts are besetting Syria and every green herbs or vegetables is eaten up, transforming Edemic gardens into waste barren; the pressure of military service and its requirements drags down the people to complete ruin, starvation is read in the eyes of poor people and destruction and death is the common lot of humanity.

{{p9}}

"Is there no Gracious God to help men in this terrible predicament or is this the fulfillment of the words, the wages of sin is death? The voice of God is as strong today as it was thousand years ago but the ears are [unreadable] prejudices and do not hear. The world is really in need of divine principles and teachings. The reason why these things happen is because the world of humanity is surfeited with materialism, that mankind has entirely neglected the spiritual bases of life. According to the natural laws of growth if we fail to nourish any part of our life we are sure to find it atrophied and deficient in carrying out its function therefore the first and foremost duty of man is to nourish the moral side of his life; failing to do so, he has killed his life of spirit and that surely leads to the destruction of the whole being, just in some diseases of the eyes if one is affected the other will surely meet the same fate.

"In the morning an aeroplane was sent up to scout the outlying district and three bombs were thrown down to destroy telegraphic lines and as a result two persons were killed. We were still in Acca that the petroleum storehouse was bombarded and on our way near Haifa we witnessed the destruction of the German Consulate by the unerring marksmanship of the warships' gunner.

"The Master's house being very near the consulate, the Governor had sent words that it seemed wiser and safer for the members of the family to move somewhere else. Therefore in a precipitate manner they with the exception of Mrs. [unreadable] who unnamed is the house with [unreadable] had left everything, taking refuge in the Holy Tomb and the Pilgrims Home. Many natives also, both men and women had availed themselves of this rare opportunity. Hence in an actual manner, the Temple of the Lord had become a refuge and a shelter for the oppressed and the weak ones."

When we reached Haifa we found all the shops were closed and the streets guarded by soldiers. Near the German Consulate hundreds of men and women had gathered to see the wreck. We ascended the mountain and were glad to find to find all the friends safe and sound. The people had been much afraid.