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## Cairo Notes

**Lua Getsinger**

**Cairo, Egypt. April 4, 1899.**

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As I have written an account of my first visit to the Holy Household, and sent to Mr. James, which undoubtedly you have heard here this, I thought perhaps you might be interested in hearing the description of my last visit there, though to me it was heart-breaking in the extreme.

On the afternoon of March 26th, I said, "Goodbye to Dr. and Mrs. Kheiralla and Nabiha and Labila in Haifa. (for they were to leave the next day for Port Sa'id) and sat out for myself for 'Akká, the gardens, 'Abdu'l Hasin, who happened to be in Haifa being my sole companion in the carriage and he made the drive over very pleasant, by telling me in simple Persian, some of the tablets and words of the Manifestation."

When we reached the city, our Lord and Seyyed Yahyá were standing near the gate, but we passed them without speaking, or noticing them apparently for there were many Turkish soldier standing about – and went directly to the house, where I was most cordially welcomed by the "Greatest Leaf" and went the daughter of our Master.

It was nearly dark – so we went to the apartment of the "Holy Leaf", where we had tea and then sat talking, waiting for the "King" to come. At last a servant announced that he was coming, so the two youngest daughters and myself ran out in the court to meet Him. I reached Him first and knelt down before Him, kissing the hem of His robe. He therefore took my hand, and saying in Persian, "Daughter Welcome," helped me to my feet, and keeping my hand, walked with me into the house, where I sat down beside Him while He drank some tea and asked me if I was well, "Happily and content." To which I could only reply that to be in His presence was health, happiness and contentment itself, then He said, "I am sending you back to America that you may work to gain a place beside me in the Eternal Kingdom."

Soon after this, dinner was served and our Master seated me beside Him – then His wife "The Greatest Holy Leaf" and His daughters made up the rest of the party while His son-in-law waited upon us. This meal was served according to the Arabic fashion – on a very low table, around which we sat on the floor upon cushions. Once during the meal our Lord took a piece of bread, and putting on it some honey, and handed it to me to eat, say as He did so: "Let all of your words be as sweetly flavoured as kindness to all people as this bread is flavoured

by honey.” Then I swallowed mouthful from His blessed hand, I truly felt a great spiritual blessing. I have studied the language through sometimes, we had a good laugh over my queer accent especially on words containing the E & C. they never tire of hearing about the work in America and the four daughters are studying English diligently so they can speak to the pilgrims as they come to ‘Akká in the future: We retired about eleven o’clock and I was very happy indeed.

Next morning very early the Bábís in ‘Akká began to assemble at the home of the Lord, the ladies going to the room of the Holy Leaf, and the men remaining downstairs. The occasion of this gathering was on account of March 1st being New Year’s day. Our Lord came into the room and gave to everybody some sweets from His hands. After which Rooha Khánúm, one of his daughters chanted a beautiful tablet. Then He arose and saying a few words of welcome, went to the room occupied by the men. There He gathered all of the children together and gave each of them a few coins – about ten or fifteen cents, which made them all delighted and very happy, of course because He gave it to them. After drinking tea and visiting a little while, they all went away. Then we had lunch and directly after, prepared to make my last visit to the Tomb of the Manifestation, I went in a closed carriage with Rooha Khánúm, and upon our arrival we went to a small room where we remained hidden until all of the others had the visit with our Master and departed. Then, He came and told us to come out which we did – Immediately he led the way to the room where lies the precious casket which contained the most Brilliant Jewel that ever shown upon the earth – Bahá’u’lláh and there He lifted up His voice in supplication for me – (worm of the dust that I am. Oh! God my heart burns like fire and my tears flow like rain when I think of it:) asking that I should receive the confirmation of the Holy Spirit, and go forth to work in the Cause of God guiding souls to the Kingdom. What this day was to me no one can ever know; My work, my work, my deeds must tell in the future where whether or not He prayed for me in vain: I can only say I wanted to fall at His feet then and there, and give my heart, my soul, and my life for the dear and sacred mouth that had spoken in my behalf! I then prayed for our teacher who was the means of giving us the Truth in America foul felt that if I should live a thousand years I could never ask God to repay him for what he has done for me and for those I love in my dear native land. I can never do it. God can only pay my deep debt of gratitude by answering my supplications for welfare. As we turned away my eyes lingered lovingly upon the Sacred Place – and in my heart I could only feebly thank God for His great mercy and many blessings which I can never deserve, though I give y life for His sake by shedding my blood in His Cause – which I pray maybe my happy lot – when His will in me is done:

It was dark when we reached the house of the Master in ‘Akká, so we have dinner soon after. The Master was not present as He was obliged to go on business directly after our return to the House of one of the government officials, we had a pleasant evening in the apartment of the “Holy Leaf” rading the tablets, singing, visiting. After which we retired.

The next morning, March 22, Mr. Getsinger came and was welcomed by our Lord who kissed Him tenderly on both cheeks and bade Him sit beside him. He wrote many tablets, accordingly smiling *king a* words to him, asking after to give to the hungry souls who are seeking to know their God – “The Bread of Life” which is the Word of God and to shiw them how sweet is the “Water of Life” – which faith in God.

He talked about our journey, inquiring most carefully how long it would take, and telling us, when we reached Cairo that we should see Mírzá ‘Abdu’l Tazl and ‘Abdu’l Karim who would tell us some things we wished to know. (Mírzá ‘Abdu’l Tazl) is we find a most learned man, he knows the Bible by heart and is a great historian. He then told us that he wished us to be in America in six weeks after we left ‘Akká, so our stay in Cairo must be short. Arising and bidding us “Goodnight,” He went to sleep.

Thursday, March 23, our last day at the Holy Household was a beautiful day. Early in the morning Rooha Khánúm called me and arising hastily, I went with her to the room of the “Greatest Holy Leaf” where the Master was sitting, He bade me welcome and entered and I knelt before Him, kissing His hand, and then sat down at His feet beside the “Holy Leaf,” and we drank tea together. As I looked at Him and thought, “I must leave Him today” the tears came to my eyes and my heart was very heavy, though I tried hard to conceal my feelings, He noticed it and said “Do not cry – be happy I will go with you in spirit – the separation of the body is nothing, I will go with you.” I dried my eyes and went with Him to the room where He writes, and with Rooha Khánúm sat down while He began His work for the day. He took up Mr. Chasis picture which was on the divan beside Him also one of Mr. Clark’s and one of Mr. Struven. (the two last names were pupils of mine in Ithaca) and looking at them, kissed first one and then the other, then turned and said; “You must tell them that I kissed their pictures and am glad to have them, that they are my sons and my heart longs to see them so I may kiss them.”

Soon after he called Mr. Getsinger into the room and gave him a bottle containing juice of pomegranate; also to each of us a small bottle of the oil of roses, shortly before noon He went out and we went out and we watched Him as He walked through the court for we wanted to see Him as much as possible. After a little while He returned and sat down to luncheon with us, one on each side of Him. We could scarcely swallow for we well knew that it was our last meal with Him, and the thought of parting was breaking pur hearts. As we left the table a servant said, “The carriage is ready,” so then came the “Goodbyes” which were painful to the extreme though everybody was trying hard to be brave – but it was impossible we all cried – and when we went to our Lord I was faint and sick. He came quickly from the room, and taking me by the hand, led me down one flight of stairs and I pressed His hand to my lips, while He turned away and silently kissed Mr. Getsinger – then left us hastily. When I reached the court below it seemed that the sun grew dark for I realized that I would not see Him anymore, the pain of it was awful.

We rode in silence back to Haifa and very soon went on board the steamer.  
From the deck, we watched 'Akká fade away out of sight and then I knew