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Brief Account of My Visit to 'Akká

Mary L Lucas

1905

I had been in Egypt nearly six years when I received Permission from the Master to visit His household for two nights. I was rejoiced and gladly would have gone had it been for an hour only. The steamers are very uncertain in these localities on account of the quarantine, so I started alone on the first one leaving Port Sa'id which sailed by way of Beyrouth.

During the season of the year there are few tourists, and on this occasion the limited number on board disembarked at Jaffa, leaving me the only passenger on the vessel. At first thought this seemed rather dismal, but when I remembered where I was going, and to Whom, I was happy though my sole companion for the night was the German stewardess. She was very kind, and I made use of the little German I knew to good advantage.

The next morning the steamer arrived in the harbour at Beyrouth, and I engaged a Cook's courier to take me ashore and to the Oriental Hotel. My surprise and delight were great, as the carriage stopped at the door, when I saw one of the American pilgrims who had just returned from 'Akká, standing in the doorway. After a warm greeting, he took me inside to surprise the two other friends and the meeting was a happy one.

The Austrian Lloyd steamer had been expected that day, and I had hoped to sail for Haifa, but it was 24 hours behind, so Friday the 26th, of January 1905, I spent a most delightful day with my friends, walking about Beyrouth in the morning, visiting the bazaars and seeing much of the native people. After luncheon we engaged a boat and four Arabs to row us to the Pigeon Grottos. These are nature's natural caves made by the water in the great rocks, where the pigeons build their nests. The day was perfect – the blue Mediterranean reflected the azure sky above, yet the pure transparency of the water was like emerald green and silver, as we came near and into those caves, with lofty arches the exquisite coloring of the rocks shading from a deep purple to the most delicate shade of green.

We had carriage following, and after landing, climbed the steep cliffs and met the carriage waiting for us at the top of the hill. The drive was delightful. The beautiful fresh air was invigorating, and the tender spring flowers were charming. I saw violets and daisies here and also the first red anemones (spoken of by

Bahá'u'lláh).

We visited the American University which commands a wonderful view of the sea, and had a most interesting time. We met the founder and his son who were exceedingly courteous, and they showed us the points of importance. It was impressive to hear hundreds of those Orientals singing the hymn Nearer My God to Thee. I learned that many of our well known Americans are the directors of this great institution, which embraces all departments of learning. The atmosphere of the place is decidedly American, and the effort is indeed like that of an oasis in the desert.

Our little party of four spent the evening together, and the returning travellers talked of their recent Visit to 'Akká, which was delightful. The next morning, Jan. 28th 1905, I learned that my steamer has arrived, sailing for Haifa at three o'clock in the afternoon. My friends were now en route for Jerusalem by way of Jaffa, they decided to go later in the day by Russian steamer. So we seemed to part here, I embarked with a Cook's courier, rowing out to the ship. I was greatly surprised about an hour later to see my friends come aboard the Maria Teresa. They had learned the Russian steamer was uncertain, so they changed their plans suddenly, sailing for Jaffa by way of Haifa. We had beautiful talks before and after dinner, retiring about ten o'clock.

The wind was blowing a gale, and the waves were running high. It was 2:30 in the morning when the steamer arrived in the open sea at Haifa. There is no harbor here, the landing is most difficult, and at times very dangerous. The distance to Haifa is about a half hour row in a small boat.

The steamer arrived in the blackness of the night and the Arabs who had come in the small boats to take the passengers ashore, rushed on board in a wild excited state after their wrestle with the sea. I alone (the only woman) with a Cook's courier, and these insensate creatures went down the side of the ship, into the night, and into the sea – it seemed as the Captain commended me to GOD, for he realized how perilous the night was.

Mr. ____ came on deck to be with me to the last, and he was sorry to see me go down the side of the ship alone, - but even at such moment his keen sense of humor did not desert him. When the Arabs came on board screaming in their excitement like reckless demons, my friend remarked: "Don't be alarmed, he is only telling his friends how much he loves his mother"

But I had no fear and as I jumped into the little boat, itching and tossing in the roaring sea, my first thought was to set the light at 'Akká, which was shining there in the distance.

We had about eight, and as they rowed against the mighty sea, their movements were regulated by song and rhythm (and by this rhythm they rowed evenly together). They sang these wonderful Words, repeating over and over. "There is no GOD but GOD! There is no GOD but GOD! My heart sang with for they were calling upon the Name of GOD for help: your GOD, and my GOD!

What great thoughts are here” But I must continue my pilgrimage, and arrive at ‘Akká as soon as possible.

When the boat came near the beach at Haifa the sea seemed rougher and when the frail bark was on the top of the wave I jumped to the shore amid the shouting and screaming of the Arabs, who were waiting there to assist the landing.

With the Cook’s courier, who was extremely kind and considerate, I drove to the Mt. Carmel Hotel about a mile distant. All the inhabitants of the hotel were invisible. An old man opened the door, and then disappeared. But the courier seemed to know the ways of the hotel, and showed me to my room on an upper story. As I ascended the stairs I wondered how much higher he was going to take me, in the dark with only a match to light the path for our feet. Finally we arrived at the top and found the room. It was bare with no carpet, but had two beds and chair. After I had made a choice of beds, I was settled for the remainder of the night, and the hour was then four in the morning. No sooner had I become quiet than I heard the gnawing of what seemed like rats, but I consoled myself with the realization that it could not be on until daylight.

At the first peep of dawn I arose, arranged things, taking with me only such as were, necessary, - leaving my trunk at the hotel. Then after breakfast I engaged a high carriage, for I knew there were two rivers to ford during the ten mile drive from Haifa to ‘Akká - I told the driver to drive me to ‘Akká. He said it was a long drive and would require three horses, and that he would have to go to the stable for an extra horse, and food for their dinner. So after this preparation we started for ‘Akká, the White City, which was glistening in the distance.

The drive was along the beach all the way from Haifa. As one looks from Haifa to ‘Akká, it seems like a horseshoe. The wind was still blowing, and the waves of the Mediterranean were rolling high. The sun was shining, the sky was blue, the sea emerald green, with the white caps glittering on one side and on the other stretches of sand, and an occasional palm tree swaying in the stiff breeze.

When we reached the gate of ‘Akká, I told the driver to take me to the house of ‘Abbás Effendi. He drove for a little while in the narrow dirty streets of ‘Akká. They were so narrow that it was impossible to pass the heavy laden camels which we met coming in the opposite direction. There was quite confusion when we encountered it grow of those. They were obliged to back out of the way of the carriage and how the Arabs started when they saw the vehicle with its foreign looking passenger! The oriental environment was so strange that it seemed to me like a dream.

At last we reached the house of the Master. As the carriage stopped, a man in a red fez came forward to meet me, and asked me to follow him- which I did, - in perfect silence. I followed him up the stone steps rough and uneven - they timed very old.

At the top of this long flight of steps, perhaps twenty-five or thirty in number, - is a door which opens into a courtyard that is square in shape, as I remember,

and the doors of many of the room open out on this enclosure. It is built about with 4 stone wall of considerable height. If one looks up, he sees the sky – and in order to go from one room to another, it is necessary to pass through this open space. I remember how strange it was at night, going from one room to another, to look up and see the stars overhead. The doors of the rooms are light blue color, and are opened by iron latches. If one straight on after entering the courtyard, the large dining hall is reached, which has a stone floor. This is the largest of the many rooms opening out on the court. The furnishings of all are extremely simple and oriental in style.

To return to my story: at the top of the steps I saw familiar face, that of Miss B., who greeted me, and showed me to my room. It was now about eleven o'clock in the morning. I was obliged to arrange my hair, for the wind was so high I was unable to wear my hat during the long drive. I stood by my window looking out on the sea, singing softly to myself:

“I waited for the Lord, He inclined unto me. He heard my complaint. Oh, blest are they that hope and trust in the Lord!”

When luncheon was announced, Miss ____ came for me, and we walked across the courtyard to the small dining room where the Master was standing, waiting for us to appear. Shall I ever forget how He came and took me by the hand! It was not in the ordinary way in which one is greeted when meeting a stranger for the first time - but as though my Host were continuing a friendship which had always existed. He took me by the hand, turned His back to me, and led me to my seat at the table, and not one word was spoken. The Master's two youngest daughters were also at the table, together with Miss ____ and the man with the red fez who met me at the gate.

The Master asked about my trip from Port Sa'íd, and I told Him of the difficult landing the night before in the small boat, but that I had no fear because I knew I was coming to my Lord. He smiled and said “Yes”, - and, told a story of Bahá'u'lláh how one man walked for days to see Him, suffering hardship and fatigue.

After luncheon He walked to little washstand in the corner of the room, and washed His face and hands while all remained standing. Then He went and stood in the doorway, He turned to me and said: “You are fatigued with your long journey. Go and, rest.” Then I saw those Glorious Eyes which He directed upon me for the first time.

I rested in the afternoon. Later Rooha Khánum came to my room, and about four o'clock the Master knocked at my door and came in also. He sat on the divan a few minutes saying very little.

At dinner Sunday, Jan. 29th, in the evening He spoke of tests, and remarked that those in America had not experienced the severe tests of the Orient. He spoke of the parable of the wedding feast, when all the invited guests made an excuse to remain away, - by this the religious leaders of the day were indicated.

Then spoke of the simple ones in comparison, - Peter, for instance. I retired soon for dinner, - not seeing the Master again that night.

Every morning it is the customs of the Household to meet in the large sitting room, where tea is served, and the little children of the family come and chant for the Master while he drinks His tea. At this first meeting, at seven o'clock in the morning, how inexpressibly I was impressed by the absolute poise of the Master; His absolute naturalness; absolute freedom! There was an utter absence of any desire or effort to impress one with His Greatness, - which is majestic in its simplicity. When we consider that He has never been enrolled in any school, has always been an exile and a prisoner, has had no access to books, - that in spite of all this, His knowledge is unbounded! Truly we must marvel! An illustration of this is found in His answer to the musical question I put to Him. I have all my life been interested in music, - have studied in America and in Europe, and when I asked the Master some special questions in regard to this subject, I was amazed in one sense at His familiarity with it.

He has never heard any music such as we are accustomed to, having been a prisoner all His life, and yet His knowledge far exceeds that of people who have had great advantages. This fact not only applies to music, but to all things.

This was my question: "I used to be very critical of people; would judge them if they did not meet with my approval I would dislike them. But when I heard beautiful music all these feelings were forgotten, and the most intense love for the people, for animals, for the whole world filled my heart and being."

I asked for an explanation of this and I give you the answer. The Master spoke one whole luncheon and dinner consecutively on this point, and has given us but a crumb of His great wisdom. I realized how much was denied me by not knowing the Persian language in which He spoke, for he glorious is that eloquent tongue, - and the Words necessarily lose many shades of meaning through translation.

MUSIC.

"Voice is the vibration of the air, and is like the waves of the sea. The voice is produced through the instrumentality of the lips, throat, tooth, tongue, etc. These cause a wave in the air, and this wave reaches the nerve of the ear, which is thereby affected. This is the voice.

All pure things are acceptable. For example, water-pure is acceptable; fresh air is most acceptable. As all pure things are acceptable pleasing, - therefore a pure voice is most acceptable, and causes great enjoyment. There are three kinds of voices. One when the complete instrument is perfect, then the emission of sound is perfect. The second is when the instrument is imperfect, - it affects the voice in such a way that it is far from pleasing. What we have just said refers to the voice itself.

It is natural for the heart and spirit to take pleasure and enjoyment in all things that show forth symmetry, harmony, and perfection. For instance, - a

beautiful house, a well designed garden, a symmetrical line, a graceful motion, a well written book, pleasing garments, - in fact all things that bare in themselves grace or beauty are pleasing to the heart and spirit: therefore it is most certain that a voice causes deep pleasure.

What is music? It is a combination of harmonious sounds. What is poetry? It is a symmetrical collection of words. Therefore, they are pleasing through harmony and rhythm. Poetry is much more effective and complete than prose. It stirs more deeply, for it is of a finer composition.

A fine voice when joined to beautiful music causes a great effects for both are desirable and pleasing. All these have in themselves an organization, and are constructed on natural law. Therefore, they corresponded to the order of existence like something which would fit into a mould. A true voice fits into the mould of nature. When it is so, this affects the nerves, and they affect the heart and spirit.

In the world of existence physical things have a connection with spiritual realities. One of these things the voice, which connects itself with the spirit, - and the spirit can be uplifted by this means: for though it is a physical thing, it is one of the material, natural organizations, - therefore, it is effective.

All forms when understood aright gladden the spirit. Melodies are like water. The voice is like a goblet. The pure water in a pure glass is pleasing Therefore, it is acceptable; but even though the water be pure, if it be in a goblet which is not so this receptacle will make it unacceptable. Therefore, faulty voice even though the music be good, is unpleasing.

In short melodies though they are material, are connected with the spiritual - therefore, they produce a great effect. A certain kind of melody makes the spirit happy, another kind makes it sad another excites it to action.

All these feelings can be caused by voice and music, for through the nerves it moves and stirs the spirit. Even over animals, music has an effect. For example When they wish to take a camel over a desert road, they attach to him some bells, or they play upon a flute, and this bound prevents him from realizing the fatigue of the journey; his nerves are affect but he does not have an increase of thought he feels nothing but physical sensation.

-Continuation of the Conversation at Dinner.-

Whatever is in the heart of man melody moves and awakens. If a heart full of good feeling and a pure voice are joined together a great effect is produced. For instance, if there be love in the heart, through melody it will increase until its intensity can scarcely be borne: but if bad thoughts are in the heart, - such as hatred, it will increase and multiply. For instance, the music used in war awakens the desire for bloodshed. The meaning is that melody causes whatever feeling is in the heart to increase.

Some feelings occur accidentally and some have a foundation. For example, some people are naturally kind, but they may be accidentally upset by a wave of anger. But if they hear music, the true nature will reassert itself. Music really awakens the real, natural nature, the individual essence.

With whatever purpose you listen to music, that purpose will be increased. For instance, there will be concert given for the poor and unfortunate, and if you go them thinking of the aim the music will increase your compassion and generosity. This is the reason music is used in war. And so it is with all the things that cause the excitation of the nerves.

But the principal effect is caused by the Word, - and when words are united to beautiful melody, the most exquisite harmony is produced.”

Monday afternoon Rooha and Monever Khánúm came to my room and told me the ladies of the Household would call upon me after sunset. So the Greatest Holy Loaf – the Mater’s sister – and the Holy Mother – the Master’s Holy wife - Rooha and Monever Khanon - the Master’s daughters – came to my room. I gave them presents sent from America and delivered to Rooha Khánúm, many supplications for the Master, from Americans.

Monday night I spent with the ladies in the large sitting room. They asked me to sing for them, and I sang many things. They requested the hymn “Nearer my God to Thee.” While I was in Egypt I learned from one of the Persian believers a Tablet in Arabic, and also learned to chant it. The members of the Household were such pleased when I chanted it for them. This was Monday night, Jan. 29th, 1905 –my second and last night, I thought, in this sacred and spiritual atmosphere, - as the Master had said I could come for two nights.

During my stay the Master was never present in the evening after dinner. The Household consists of the Master, the Greatest Holy Leaf, the Holy Mother, two married daughters their husbands and children – Rooha and Monever – the Master’s two youngest daughters – besides some little children who are orphans and have no one to take care of them – and woman who are widows – their husbands having suffered martyrdom in the Path of GOD. These serve in some capacity in the Household, and the sentiment of love and equality in every member of this Home is a living example for the world. Everything is done in the spirit of love.

These women whose husbands have been martyred who are living under the Master’s roof, are very happy as their beaming faces testify for all their sorrow is forgotten in the Presence of this Great One. Through Him they are learn the reality of life.

It is beautiful to see this Master with the little children and observe His consideration for their childish troubles. One morning His tiny granddaughter, about two years of was talking to the Master in the most serious way, telling Him with expressive gesticulations her difficulty. Something had gone crosswise with her. The Master without a smile listened most attentively. This was a great lesson.

When we consider that the Master has to bear – a man of ordinary strength could not endure it one hour, - yet when a little child games aid confides in Him her trouble hew tender how loving 1e is! How forgetful of self!

Shall I ever forget the Heavenly smile and Love expressed in that Beautiful Face when this tiny maiden was chanting for nu a Tablet! Every now and then slow would forget a word. He would gently chant it for her, while He drank His tea, seated in the corner of the divan or the little children love Him!

Tuesday morning Jan, 31st, tea was served in the large sitting room at seven o'clock. When I entered the room, the Master was sitting in the corner of the divan, and He bade me come and sit beside Him. We sat in silence for some time. How one is at rest in this Presence! I had no desire save to remain with Him always! He spoke this morning on miracles. How wonderful art these explanations and interpretations which banish all imagination and superstition, - so that the Scripture can be understood according to reason! This is what He said:

Miracles

“The Holy Manifestations of GOD are the Source of miracles wad wonderful signs. To them even the impossible things are possible, and from the most I wonderful things appear, - but they have an especial mode of expression. To them miracles are of no importance. They do not mention them. If miracles were proofs, it would be for those present - not for those who are absent. For example you might tell a Zoroastrian that wonderful miracles have been performed by Moses and Christ, but he would not believe you – even idolators say that wonderful things were accomplished by their idols. In India many books are written in which endless miracles are ascribed to the masters. So the Zoroastrian would say, - how can I decide which is true? If I accept one, I must accept all, if they rest on this proof.

If miracles are a proof for those who are present, they are no proof for those who are absent; but if the true inner sight is opened at the time of each Manifestation, everything which appears from them is proof, and no other proof is so important as the Manifestations themselves. For what it is the importance of causing the blind to see, if finally through death they must lose their sight? What is the importance of bringing a dead body to life? Being material it must finally be decomposed? But that which is of importance is to give the sight which is everlasting is to give the life which is immortal.

This material life even at the time of its existence is nothingness. For instance, at the time of Christ, people had this life, but He said: “Let the dead bury their dead.” Those who merely lived the physical life wore to Christ as though they were dead for the real life is the life of the spirit, the life eternal.

Therefore, if it is mentioned in the Holy Books that the dead were raised, - the meaning is that they received life eternal. If the blind were cured, - the meaning

is they received inward sight. If the deaf were healed, the meaning is that they found Heavenly bearing. This is explained in the text of the Bible itself, and as Christ quoted the words of Isaiah: "Kars have they and they hear not; eyes have they but they see not..."

The meaning is that the Manifestations are not able to perform miracles – for they are able – but the meaning is that to thou the inward sight, the Heavenly hearing, the Eternal Life - is that which is acceptable: and when it is mentioned in the Holy Books, this is the true meaning.

When the blind are healed, it means spiritual sight, knowledge. They were ignorant and became wise; heedless and became faithful; asleep and became awakened; dark and became light; weirdly and became Heavenly."

Then the Master asked me to speak to Him – and I took this opportunity to mention to Him the names of all those we had asked me to speak of them, or had sent any message. He replied by bidding me go to the Holy Tomb, and while there to pray for all those I had mentioned; and also to sing at the Holy Tomb. So later in the morning, Rooha and Monever Khánúm, Miss _____ and myself went to The Tomb, and this experience I shall never forget.

The day was superb and after driving through the narrow streets (which now seemed so wonderfully beautiful to me) we came to the open country. At this time of the year it is the same as our Spring, the 1st or middle of May. The fields were green, carpeted with the red anemones, the yellow buttercup and daisies. The blue Mediterranean and the hills were in the distance. How magnificent was the view! We got out of the carriage and gathered the flowers, - and then proceeded on our way to the Tomb, with the flowers we had plucked.

As we entered this Holy Precinct we took off our shoes.

The silence here was like nothing. I have ever experienced. As we advanced toward the door no one spoke, but we all prayed. I remembered the Master's wish, and sang part of Gounod's Sanctus, "Holy, Holy, Holy!" It was the first thing that came to my mind. It seemed as though I was not singing, but the voice of itself was soaring, and had left my body.

We all came out without speaking a word, the flowers still with us. Then we drove to a hill which Bahá'u'lláh used to frequent, and gathered some more flowers there, - then returned in time, for luncheon.

At luncheon, Tuesday the Master talked of the Holy Manifestations of GOD; and Tuesday night at dinner gave the explanation of the fish and the piece of money. He also told of miracle ascribed to Christ in the Qur'án which is not in the Bible. Christ is written of in other Books besides the Bible. I reproduce below my notes in regard to the Master's words concerning the fish and the clay bird.

The Story of the Fish and the Piece of Money.

Interpretation.

The hook is the teaching; the fish the man who receives it; the money the teaching which is in his mouth.

When the disciples asked a certain teaching of Christ, He bade them go and teach one particular man, who would explain this to them. This they did, and so it come to pass.

The Bounty of GOD is so great that as soon as a man believes, he can receive the true knowledge or wisdom.

The Clay Bird.

In the Qur'án are many things referring to Christ not mentioned in the Gospel. For instance, it is said that Christ took a bit of clay and shaped it into the form of a bird. Then He blew upon it, and it flew away.

The interpretation of this is that the bird symbolizes an earthly man, who received spiritual education through the Christ. The story says: "He blew upon it, and it flew away." This means that the man received the Breath of Life Eternal, and through this enlightenment, soared into the Heaven of Knowledge."

The Master told us a beautiful story written in a Persian book of the Christ and His disciples. They had nothing to eat, but nevertheless Christ possessed a great treasure, buried in the earth. There was a rule in that country that no stranger should be entertained in the village where he stopped, - but Christ went to the house of an old woman, and Christ's Face was so beautiful that she could not refuse His entrance. The old Woman confided in Christ, and told Him of her unhappy son. When Christ met the son, He told him he could help him if he would confide in Him. So the son confessed to the Holy One that he was poor and loved the King's daughter, and he felt there no hope for him in his obscure position. But Christ consoled him. Then He took the buried treasure and gave it to the young man; so he became rich and won the King's daughter. But after he had gained the desire of his heart, he wondered why Christ had given him the treasure instead of keeping it for himself. So he questioned him, and Christ replied: "You are My treasure."

When the young man realized what this meant and that treasure was that of His love, he left the material riches he had acquired, and took from Christ the spiritual and eternal riches which He offered him.

Tuesday afternoon Monever came to my room talked, telling me many things of interest. Nothing had been said of departure. It is the custom to await the Master's Command in regard to coming and going. Tuesday night I spent with the ladies in the large room. The Holy Mother told me of an old prophecy - I have forgotten the name of the book from which she quoted - it says: "Blessed

are those who attain to 'Akká, and blessed also are those who see and know who have visited 'Akká."

Wednesday morning in the large room, tea at seven o'clock. After the Master inquired as to my health, - He spoke of the absolute Authority of the Divine Manifestations - who are Kings of Independence.

This morning the Master said Christ spoke the Hebrew language but not the pure language, as it was intermingled with the Chaldean (if I understood aright). Christ spoke but one language.

Wednesday at noon I watched the Master walking in the garden. He walks and holds His Head like a king. Outside the garden gate were many Oriental pilgrims who had come long distances to see Him: sages philosophers and scholars, I was told. Some had long white looks: all wore the red fez. With their flowing robes they made a picture as they stopped and watched the Master, outside the enclosure. He walked about the garden and seemed examining its condition and attending to such things as were necessary, as it was spring and time for planting. As these Orientals stood and watched Him there, what an impressive sight it was! As He went back and forth in the garden their bodies followed every movement, and they were careful to keep their faces always turned toward Him. They stood in the most reverent attitude with their hands folded. Later they gathered closely about the gate to see Him pass out. Of course they have their interviews with Him, at certain hours, as do others. It reminded me much of the pictures I have seen of the wise men of the East who came to worship the infant Christ.

Wednesday afternoon I spent with Rooha Khanoum. The Master was not at dinner tonight. During my eight days stay He was absent from two meals only, but we all missed Him on these occasions, and were disappointed. He knew this so well that often He would come to the table and say: "I am not hungry, but I come to sit with you.

Thursday Feb, 2nd, we had tea as usual in the large sitting room at seven o'clock. The talk from the Master explained St. John 5:43. It was in answer to a question.

"I am come in my Father's name and ye receive me not. If another shall come in His Own Name, Him ye will receive."

The Master said: "These words of Christ were addressed to the Jews and Pharisees. By coming in the name of Father, Christ meant He came with the Divine Attributes and Perfections of GOD, - but still the Jews did not accept Him though they were waiting for the Promised One to come and establish His Kingdom. They did not see that the prophecy was being fulfilled in Christ, because they were waiting for a great victorious material kingdom to be established on earth, and the Messiah was to be one who possessed endless wealth and sovereign earthly power: While Christ came in a contrary manner to this, and the Jews would only obey and accept according to their desire and the will of

man. Therefore when men like Caiaphas came in their own name, full of worldly power and qualities, they were accepted by the Jews as leaders of the people. Christ explained their unbelief, their rejection, when He said: "How can you be a believer when you are looking to others who are imperfect, and thereby reject the everlasting honor which GOD can give."

At luncheon Thursday, Feb. 2nd, the Master gave the interpretation, in answer to the question as to the meaning of the

*-it refers to the marriage feast at Cana-

passage in St. John, 2:1-11; "Jesus saith unto her, 'Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.'"

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"For everything there is a special time. There is a special time to plant the seed; there is a special time for its growth; a special time to gather the harvest; a special time for the threshing. When the seed is first planted, you cannot expect to gather the harvest immediately. A baby is first nourished by milk, - gradually he is fed on other food. Mary desired that Christ would reveal Himself to those present, but He said 'the hour is not yet come.'

"The water in this sense bears the meaning of words, for it is the cause of life, in its literal and spiritual interpretation. Therefore Mary desired He would speak to them something that would exhilarate their spirits, like wine for the body."

At luncheon the Master had with Him a bunch of hyacinths and violets which He left on the table, and I took them. When the master inhales the odor of flowers it is wonderful to see Him. It seems as though the perfume of the hyacinths were telling Him something As He buries His Face in the flowers. It is like the effort of the ear to hear a beautiful harmony - a concentrated attention! How He understands the mystery of all these things, - of which we know nothing!

Before dinner, Thursday Feb. 2nd, I talked with Monever Khanoun. The Master asked me tonight at dinner if I was happy, because He permitted me to remain over ray stated time, told Him, "You know!" and He smiled and said "Yes." Our talk was "The Words of GOD are like buds."

"The Words of GOD are like Buds."

Each bud when it opens has a particular perfume and color. Christ explained the hidden meaning of the Bible, - the Blessed Perfection, the hidden meaning of the Gospel. When They appeared the reality of these Books became apparent. The Law of the Bible was like a tree, and Christ was the fruit of that tree. Until the fruit appears upon a tree, the tree is unknown. From the fruit wooden judge of the tree. Therefore, the fruit makes clear the reality of the tree. The Christ explained the reality of the tree of the Bible. The Blessed Perfection explained the Reality of the Gospel. The Bible is like a body, and Christ is the spirit, and

the spirit gave it life. The Bible is the Word, and Christ is the meaning, - the purpose of the Lord was the Meaning.

In the same way the Gospel to like an exquisite body, and the Blessed Perfection is its spirit. It is the Word, and the Blessed Perfection is its Meaning.

The Bible is like a lamp, with oil and wick, and the Christ is like the Light. The Jews became the lover of the lamp, oil and wick, - but not of the Light, If they had looked for the Light, they would have accepted It in the appearance of Christ."

Friday morning, Feb. 3rd, we had tea as usual in the large room, at seven o'clock. The Master again in the same way if I was happy because He had permitted me to remain over the stated time. I told Him, He knew. He smiled and said, "Yes." He then added that all He did was prompted by great wisdom. He said some see the wisdom, and some do not, - and some of My Wisdom is impossible for any to understand, but all that I say and do has great significance. Every day that you remain here is a year. So I understood that my remaining so long over the time appointed for me to leave had an important meaning.

As I looked from my window on the courtyard below, I saw women seated on the ground with little children about them, while some carried infants in their arms. There were old decrepit men also, and all were in an attitude of expectancy. Presently I heard the Master's Voice in the distance (that clear penetrating voice). Often when I was in my room sitting at my table and writing out the talks I had been privileged to have with Him, I would hear the Master's Voice outside in the distance. It always thrilled me; I listened and was unable to go on with my work until the very last sound of it had died away. Upon this occasion He came nearer so that I could see Him. He spoke words of encouragement and love to everyone as they crowded around Him and gave something to each. Every Friday morning it is His custom to minister to these poor unfortunate and wretched ones. They come to His house to wait for Him on this day, for He does the seer give in this way to the poor He is a prisoner and far from wealthy Himself. A circumstance was brought to my mind which explained the matter, and the incident was related by one who had been long a guest in the Master's Household. All that the Master gives is a real sacrifice, and is saved by the cutting off of at most people would consider necessities.

It is the custom of families to have three meals a day, though the Master as a rule eats but one and that a very staple one. Upon the Occasion which was described to me this Holy One said to His family:

"You have had two meals today, and there are many people who have had none so we will do without our supper, and give it to those who have had nothing to eat all day." Thus the supper was given away, and the faces of the family were radiant and happy in making the sacrifice. In fact they did not consider it a sacrifice for their hearts were full of love.

The Master has many gifts sent to Him but He gives them all away. A story is

told of a beautiful silver service which was presented to Him, and He did not even look at it. One and another received portions of it until piece by piece it disappeared. A significant incident is that of a wealthy woman who offered him a sum of money before she left 'Akká. At refused to accept it, and as the lady pleaded for the privilege of placing it in His Hands, He said at length: "I never accept anything for myself but if you wish you may bestow it upon poor man (mentioning his name) for the education of his son." So the money was used for this purpose.

The Master slept on the stone floor with only a rug and a matting between His body and its cold hard surface, and no cover except His cloak. One of the American was grieved to see Him so deprived of comfort, and gave Him a bed and mattress. Soon afterward it was discovered to be gone, and when questioned about it, the Master replied: "How could I sleep in luxury when so many have nothing!"

His asceticism is always that of love; and His principles are indicated by the following extract from a Tablet recently received by an American believer:

"... Man while in this life should endeavor to learn of the Throne of GOD to serve the Holy Threshold, to seek knowledge of the other World, to soar to the Realm beyond, to become of the Kingdom heavenly, spiritual illumined: and to attain a temperament like unto the rose in the garden, making fragrance to the world."

In personal appearance the Master is of medium height and slender build. His complexion is rather dark from the American point of view, but He is fair for a Persian. His eyes are bluish grey, and there is a white line within the iris which sometimes seems to radiate light, making His Eyes wonderfully luminous. His countenance is of the type rendered familiar to us by the old Master's paintings of Christ. His Hands are small and delicate, decidedly of the spiritual and artistic sort, but with a grip of steel. Though but sixty years old His hair and beard are white, and His hair falls over His shoulders in Oriental fashion. He is very indifferent as to His appearance – though extremely neat and in warm weather frequently tucks His flowing locks up under His fez in undisguised desire to get them out of the way. His ordinary

costume is a tan colored robe of simple material, and a white fez.

He replied: "My Heart is in a continual state of thanksgiving and so often those accustomed to this form say the words with the lips merely, and their hearts are far from being in a state of thanksgiving."

I noticed that when the little children chanted the Holy Tablets in the early morning, the Master sat looking out of the window, as He drank His tea. Now beautiful it was to see this entire absence of form and how pure and brilliant is this great heart!

The following is one of the Master's talk on:

Form and Spirit.

“Religion can be divided into two parts: the first is the spirit which never changes; and the second the laws which are regulated according to the time. The spirit of religion is expressed in the Attributes of GOD, truthfulness, justice, Leroy, humility, sanctity. The laws represent the element which alters: for instance, divorce and the Sabbath of the Jews changed by Christ.

True religion is always one in whatever form it may appear. True religion can be compared to a flower: If you find it in valley, in a garden, in a vase, - it is always a flower. The spirit of religion may be likened to a man, - and the laws and forms to the clothes he wears. These he may change - but it is of little import, for he is always living, though the outer garment be altered.”

In the afternoon Rooha and Monever Khanoum and the older sister with her little daughter together with myself, drove to the garden of Riswan. This also was a beautiful day, and the garden was a delightful place. A stream runs through the garden, and the great tree and seat where Bahá'u'lláh used to sit is on the edge of this stream. There are all kinds of birds and fowl in this garden the peacocks were especially attractive. The varied collection of trees and shrubs was exceedingly charming. Many species of orange trees were there, and date palms. I brought two oranges home with me. They were of a sort that would keep. Many of these plants have been brought from a distance to adorn this garden by those who love Bahá'u'lláh and the Master.

There are flowers of every description, the roses and violets were especially beautiful. There is also a house in the garden where Bahá'u'lláh lived in summer. I saw the room where He was accustomed to sleep and receive His friends. Rooha asked me to sing at the Threshold of the door, and again I sang, “Holy, Holy, Holy! Abide with me! Hark, Hark my Soul! and “Blessed art Thou Who Cameth in the Name of the Lord! Monever went inside and took from a vase there some peacock feathers and gave them to me.

As we sat in the garden the keeper brought us some lettuce just picked from the bed, and with it a dish and some orange juice. We sat there and ate the lettuce, all dipping the leaves into the orange juice in the same dish. I was so much reminded of the days of Christ! I was even living in a recurring period of the sage grandeur, and this simple custom was still in existence in those localities.

After leaving the garden we took a drive, and as we drove once again through the streets of ‘Akká we met the Master walking on the street. The carriage stopped, He said something and then passed on. The Master was not at luncheon today.

When we had tea this morning, Saturday Feb. 4th at seven o'clock, no subject was discussed, - but we sat together with the Master in silence. Later in the morning the Master sent for me to come and sing for Him. I now went into a large room I had not seen before, with a divan running all around the sides. In one corner the Master sat. I sang: “I Waited for the Lord”-Mendelssohn, and “Came unto Him”-Handel. And then He asked me to sing the Arabic chant,

which I did.

The Master listened intently while I sang, and when I had finished, He said: "It is beautiful, and you sing with such feeling. The quality of your voice is like the Persian voice."

At luncheon Saturday the Master expressed a desire that I return to New York by way of Paris.

Several scriptural questions I asked the interpretation of "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold"- He said this meant others outside the tribe of Israel: Europe, Asia, etc.

Another text presented was: All those who have gone before me are thieves and robbers."

He said in substance: "This I dictated first of all those who claim falsely to be the Messiah, - but they had no followers. The sheep always listen to the Shepherd's voice,- but it is impossible for another who is not the Shepherd to rather them. True Shepherds can attract and keep their flock together, for the truth is with them. But as to another, even if he gathers the sheep, they will be finally separated, for that which is not established on truth cannot remain. A tree even though it be green must wither if it has no roots. All buildings, if they have not a solid foundation even though they are very high, must finally crumble." Another question was in regard to the leaves. St. John, Chapter 9:

The Master said: "The leaves are five Words with which Christ answered and satisfied the questioning multitude. The fish represents the spiritual meaning of these Words. The basketful that remained in the superabundant teaching gathered from the Words."

A question was asked in regard to the passage in St. John 8th chapter, which describes the episode of the woman taken in sin, whom the Pharisees condemned and Christ forgave. The answer was: "The bending of the head denotes a state of surprise. The Christ was amazed that these people who were sinful themselves should condemn her who had sinned. This attitude showed that He did not accept their condemnation. What He wrote on the ground contained the Words that He pronounced: "He that is without sin let him first cast a stone." Afterward He forgave this woman and she became a believer."

As to St. John 9:6- He said this in regard to the miracle of the blind man, speaking especially of the dust and spittle.

"The spittle coming from Christ was the meaning. The dust was the expression that He used in accordance with their understanding."

Another passage in St. John 18:10, was in regard to ear and the sword. The Master replied; "In the Gospels the Christ said to His disciples, 'He who has no sword let him go and buy one.' This had not a literal meaning. The sword which He meant was the eloquent tongue, - like the one spoken of in Isaiah as the two edged sword. This symbol is used because a sword out and separates

and in this some it separates wrong from right. The Christ meant this. Peter did not understand, therefore Christ ordered him to sheathe his swords thereby showing plainly that His reference to the word was a spiritual one”

The Master sent for me again this afternoon, and I spent a long time with Him alone. Monever interpreted for me and I talked to Him of everything in my heart. He said again He desired me to go home by way of Paris. As I sat beside Him on the divan He made for me a cup of tea with His own Hands. He also dictated Tablets for those for whom I requested them and wrote one for me while He talk. Here is the translation of it:

“To the maid-servant of GOD, Mrs. ____ Upon her be Oh servant of GOD! Give thanks to GOD for you have come to the Holy Land, visited the Sacred Threshold associated with Us for a few days, and heard the Divine Admonitions, which are in the Heavenly Books. Now return, behave and act with perfect firmness, according to the Heavenly Teachings, in those regions, in order that you may become the cause by which human perfections will be attained.”

The Tablet I had requested for my friends is as follows:

“HE IS GOD!”

To Mr. _____, Mrs. , *Mrs.* , upon him, and upon them be Bahá'u'lláh!

Oh united souls! The letter you sent is perused, and by its contents, happiness and joy was produced- for it expressed union and harmony, that all of you have became one in heart one in thought and one in purpose. I hope that this union and harmony may increase day by day and produce good results, so that it may become the cause of fragrance and joy, and the means of happiness in the hearts of friends. Today union and harmony are important things, and have satisfactory effects. If souls be found who will entirely put aside their thoughts, sacrifice their hearts and lives to the Beloved, become free from all blemish, and attain to the capacity of manifesting the Lights of the Sun of Reality, such souls will be lightened like Heavenly candles and bestow upon all the world, of humanity the lights of love, kindness and Heavenly Blessing. Upon him and upon them be greeting and praise. EE”

The Master again spoke of my music, and said: “Now how you will sing when you return!” and also, “Teach singing!”

He called me to come to Him and anointed my head and forehead with attar of rose oil. Then He called Rooha and Monover Khanoum and anointed their heads also I supplicated for many of my loved ones, mentioning their names, and asking for them the same blessing I wished for myself.

Words are very weak thing to express what this Visit with the Master meant to me. One cannot come into this Presence without being changed in every atom of the entity. The Master said that words are incapable of expressing the things of the spirit.

At dinner tonight, He said; "You have had a very beautiful Visit here. You have heard beautiful Teachings and Talks. I hope that these Words will be like seeds in a pure soil,- that they will grow and cause you spiritual development and progress!

The Master said there are five kinds of love.

1st. The Love of His own perfections Which caused GOD to create that His Beauty might be made manifest and appreciated.

2nd. The love between sanctified souls for the attributes of the Divine which they see reflected in one another.

3rd, GOD'S Love to man individually that is gained according to the measure in which a man turns to GOD.

4th. Man's love for GOD the Creator, This is the cause of his life, progress and happiness.

5th. Is the love of self, which directed to the ego will deprive the man of All true development but if the love of self is a standpoint but from one of inspiration.

The Master gave the following explanation of the passage in St. John 12:7, in which the story of the anointing of the Savior's feet is told:

"Then said Jesus, let her alone; against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

He said in substance: "In olden times when they washed the dead they perfumed the bodies. The kings were sometimes buried in the midst of perfumes and spices. The Christ was to be crucified, and had no need of this embalming; therefore this ointment was put upon Him then by Mary, and she dried it with her hair"

Sunday morning the Master sent for me, I asked Him questions which were purely personal. After luncheon the Master sent for me to go to His room again. This time it was a small room where He slept,- it was the first time I had seen this room. Rooha Monever and the Holy Mother were also there. I rested my head on the Master's knee While He talked.

And now the time had come for me to go, so I took my leave of Him. I left Him sitting in His small room with His face turned toward the window looking out in deep thought. After I had left the room, I turned my head and looked again, and He had not moved,

Written by Mary L. Lucas, May 1905.