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In the Promised Land

Mary MacNutt

January 3rd 1905

The White Star steamship Republic sailing out of New York harbor for the Mediterranean December 1st 1904 carried nine Bahá'í pilgrims en route for the Holy Land. They were Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, Mr. and Mrs. Percy A. Woodcock, Miss May Woodcock, Ms Eva Woodcock, Mrs. Mary Lucas, Mrs. Julia M. Grundy, Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt.

The voyage was a happy one, the sea calm and weather perfect. In due time all reached Port Sa'íd where Mírzá Abu'l-Faḍl, seriously ill after his long and devoted labors in America found loving welcome from the Egyptian Bahá'í Friends. The rest of the party proceeded to Haifa in groups according to instructions telegraphed by 'Abdu'l Baba. Three of us, Mrs. Grundy, Mr. and Mrs. MacNutt, accompanied by Miss Barney sailed from Alexandria at midnight December 31st. After a strenuous trip up the Syrian Coast we were resting January 3rd upon the top of Mount Carmel where we had arrived the day before and registered at the Prose House. Our instructions were to await further message from 'Akká. As we sat in the warm brilliant sunshine, looking outward and downward upon the magnificent picture of mountain, sea and sky, a tall handsome man clothed in all-white oriental costume with crimson tarbush came swinging up the rocky pathway at a rapid walk. At once we concluded our messenger had arrived, but without turning his head, he kept straight on, looking neither to right nor left, passed over the summit and started down the path on the other side of the mountain. Something impelled Mr. MacNutt to follow him which he did for half a mile. Suddenly the stranger without changing his pace, put his hand behind his back and Mr. MacNutt saw that he held a letter which he dropped in the road. In a short while we were reading the letter.

It was a message of instructions from us to go to 'Akká next day. In half an hour the messenger came back up the road, his white garments fluttering in the wind, looking neither to the right nor left, passed by and disappeared down the mountain. Then we saw him take a horse from behind a point of rocks, mount and gallop along the shore toward 'Akká.

Next morning we drove over to 'Akká, reaching the great gate of the prison-fortress just before noon. In a short time we were in the Household, surrounded by a number of faithful believers who brought us word that 'Abdu'l-Bahá would be with us immediately. Suddenly all present rose with the exclamation

“Mowlana!” “Mowlanah!” and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá entered quickly, saying “Mahv-abah!” “Welcome! The mercy of God is very great. Two years ago I sent for you. For a long time I have yearned to see you. You have come from America, I from Persia, to meet here in unity, and unity is only through love. How are the beloved of God in New York? Are they unified? Are they one in love and harmony? Are they enkindled by the fire of the love of God?” Mr. MacNutt answered “There are more signs of unity and love among us in New York now than there have ever been in the history of our meetings; and this is owing, ore to the good work of our women than to any other cause”. Then turning to Mrs. MacNutt, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said “Are you happy to be in the Promised Land? Go and rest until we are ready to have food”. Altogether we were privileged to remain eighteen days amid the holy scenes and surroundings of Haifa and ‘Akká, ten of which were spent in the Household of the Master. On account of an acute crisis in political conditions, Mr. MacNutt was restricted to two short visits to ‘Akká aggregating five days. When he was sent for the second time, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said “You are moat welcome. I have so longed to see you again that I sent for you to come today. Your visit here is during a time of great political difficulty. Spies are many; espionage is constant; enemies are everywhere. The Governor knows that you have arrived. It will be necessary for you to remain very quiet. Do not go outside the house and do not show yourself upon the roof during the daytime lest you may be seen by those who are watching to make trouble. Your coming to ‘Akká is not so dangerous to yourselves as it is to the Bahá’í Friends who live here. They may suffer the consequences of your coming to ‘Akká after you have gone”. Mr. MacNutt had been brought over from Haifa on this occasion, hidden in the rear of a covered wagon, gowned like an oriental and wearing a tarbush. The notes which follow were taken during our visit to the Household. They reflect the radiance and beauty of the “Light of ‘Akká” according to the capacity and degree of the mirrors upon which it shone. “Yet a little while is the Light with you. While ye have Light, believe in the Light, that ye may be the children of light.

MARY J. MACNUTT.

In the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá you partake of food from the heavenly table of his words, every crumb of which is filled with spiritual nourishment. His answers to questions or his happy greetings in the spirit of love are deep, wise and epigrammatic,- the very essence and brevity of Truth, conveying inner meanings and significances which must be thoughtfully considered and treasured. Historically his words are of the very greatest importance, often explaining as they do the events of the Bahá’í Revelation in which he himself has been a central and commanding figure since the day of his birth and the Báb’s declaration day May 23, 1844. Naturally we were anxious that none of these precious crumbs should fall to the ground wasted, and so it happened that in addition to his talks with us upon specific subjects, our notes contain many statements from his lips which we have not classified under separate headings. Our trip to the East naturally centered in the ten days we spent with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in ‘Akká, and it is

wonderful how every contingent fact and impression, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, by sea or by land, upon mountain, desert or river – everything we saw, everything we did or thought was haloed by the light of that love which shines so brightly out into the world from the walls of the Prison City. Without connection, sequence or classification, we record here the words he spoke to us, then add a few chapters of our own impressions, reflections and experiences during the days of our happy pilgrimage.

MOUNT CARMEL.

We sailed from Alexandria on the little Khedivial steamer Mariout at ten o'clock on the night of December 31st 1904 bound for Jaffa and Haifa. It was the eve of the New Year, fitting symbol of a Bahá'í journey out of the darkness and bondage of the land of Egypt into the light of the New Day and Dispensation; servants of GOD going in to possess the Holy Land of Promise. The night was clear, but a wild gale from the north blew directly into the mouth of the harbor as we fought our way out against it past the light-houses into the open. Beyond the breakwaters the sea grew violent, the little ship pitching and plunging in a hissing cauldron of waves, the stars reeling in their courses overhead and life below decks full of excitement and discomfort. Morning broke upon a wild, savage picture of desolation, the sea gray and furious, lashed and scourged into raging white by the stinging whips of the wind. At noon the tempest suddenly abated, a characteristic of Mediterranean storms, but the sea refused to be comforted and we were rocked in deep cradles of billows all day. After another night of motion and emotion during which the little steamer seemed to have lost her course and to be turning handsprings for exercise, the second morning came and we saw land, the low-lying Syrian coast below Jaffa. Off Jaffa we lay five long hours; – a glistening sun overhead and a great rolling ground-swell coming at us from the open sea with every variety of motion known to those who go down to the sea in ships. These Jaffa "rolls" were our only breakfast. By noon the Captain had decided no landing could be made at Jaffa. We lay more than a mile off shore, but even from that distance could see a fearful surf running its white race-horses along the rocks and black reefs which make the entrance to Jaffa one of the most dangerous in the world. So we raised anchor and roiled away up the coast toward Haifa, twisting and gyrating upon the still heaving bosom of the deep. At three o'clock the grand old head of Carmel came into view, looming up from the low coast like an elephant's back with the head and trunk thrust into the sea. Still reeling and pitching along in futile effort to find a centre of equilibrium, the little Mariout finally crept past the headland of the Mountain of GOD, bringing the white square walls of 'Akká into view across the indented Bay. Beyond 'Akká on the mainland the Lebanons raised their heads into a peaceful blue sky. Further in we crept until Haifa emerged from the base of Carmel and when we had reached a point just between Haifa and 'Akká, cast anchor about a mile and a half from shore and prepared to land in the Arabic language. Great surf boats had come off from Haifa filled with half naked Arab boatmen straining their splendid muscles at immense oars. In a few moments

the Mariout from bowsprit to rudder was pandemonium. These bare-footed sons of Ishmael literally swarmed over us, yelling, screaming, gesticulating; a jargon and babel of voices, – as if the one with the strongest lungs was most entitled to employment. None of us after our wild experiences with wind and wave on the Mariout had the physical energy to resist so we were lugged down the long swaying rope ladder like so many bags of grain and carried away shoreward by our vociferous captors. But the sea still had its claims upon us. At first the boatmen steered down into the point of the bay intending to land us through the surf but realizing almost too late that this was hazardous we turned about and fought back with straining oars to the dilapidated wharf at the Custom House where we were dragged by muscular arms from above and pushed by strong shoulders from below up to a rickety terra firma, drenched and soaked by waves which still leaped hungrily after us. Thus we landed at Haifa on the afternoon of January 2nd, by what we afterward termed the “Haifa lift”. The Customs examination of our trunks and bags occupied very little time, after which we drove along the shore front, practically the only street in old Haifa to the foot of Carmel. To ascend the mountain by the most direct road, we passed through the German Colony or modern Haifa, a village or community of devoted German Christians who settled here in 1868 to it the promised Coming of the Lord, the very year in which Bahá'u'lláh was sent to ‘Akká just across the Bay. Over the doorways of some of the thrifty little houses is written “Der Herr Kommt” (The Lord Cometh). The German Colony offers striking contrast to the old city; clean streets well laid out, neat modern villas, shade trees, lawns and flower beds, everything evidencing thrift and industry. The native houses are quite the reverse. The Oriental builds his home hostile and secluded from the eyes of the outside world, walls it up solidly from the street; leaving only a single doorway of entrance and a few narrow close-latticed windows overhead; lavishing his taste upon the court interior which he alone sees and enjoys. The type of European house is just the opposite, a thing of beauty from the outside, open and hospitable, as if welcoming a visitor. This contrast is strikingly sown in the old and new sections of Haifa and perhaps if we had time to make further comparison, the relative characteristics of the Oriental and Occidental would stand forth still more sharply outlined in the way they build their homes and houses.

The road turns at right angle at the German settlement, leads directly through it and climbs the mountain as straight as it can without being a sheer gravity pitch. As we go up, the horses stumble upon loose rocks and there is, plenty of mud from recent heavy rains. We pass the Tomb of the Báb, see the monastery of the Carmelite monks upon the brow of the mountain just overlooking the sea, make a couple of turns at the summit, bringing ‘Akká into clear view golden with sunset glory, and alight at Pross House a small hotel tending in the middle of Carmel’s head. We are the only guests, and the host Hans Schneider a lay preacher in the German Colony gives us most kindly greeting, figuring out in his own language who we are, why we have come up here in January and how much he shall charge. S. terms are very low and his suspicions incline to

the belief that we are American friends of ‘Abbás Effendi. The next day was golden with sunlight and balmy with spring-like warmth. How we enjoyed it! And what a difference between the “firm foundation” of Carmel and the tricky deck of Mariout. From first to last our eyes never tired of the view from the mountain-top, one of the most beautiful and wonderful in this world of beauty and wonder. Let us stand here awhile and look around. Imagine that you are standing upon the brow of a gigantic steamer just starting from land, out into the open sea, its brow projecting, so far forward that you seem to be surrounded on all sides by a blue horizon of water. The vast vault of the sky overhead is just as blue, a few filmy clouds floating like flotsam and jetsam upon the bosom of the celestial ocean, the line where blue meets blue impossible to distinguish, no other thing visible, just sea and sky that is all, desolate yet grand, awe-inspiring, sublime) weird and luring in its sublimity. You are nearly a thousand feet above the Mediterranean. From the lofty eyrie you look up and down the coast fully thirty miles each direction, the far away vistas reduced to miniature and nearer views dwarfed into Lilliputian perspective. To the right, stretching away eastward and curving to the north is the shore line of the Bay of ‘Akká flanked by titanic masses of the Lebanon ridges and heads. The sand is golden color and rimmed by the white line of surf as sharply and distinctly as the curving edge of a bowl; the whole shore from Haifa and extending far beyond ‘Akká to the Lebanon and sea horizon forming a horse-shoe. ‘Akká lies upon the distant side of this vast horse-shoe, five miles across from Carmel and twice as far around, fixed four-square upon the golden shore-line as if a gigantic glistening white boulder had come tumbling down from the Lebanon tops, rolled across the plain and poised just upon the brink of its plunge into the sea. Deep in the midst of the Lebanon background of this sea-picture rises the snow-covered head of old Hermon the highest point in Palestine, seeming just behind ‘Akká but in reality fifty miles away; its grand majestic brow dominating all Northern and Central Syria, literally a “mountain in the tops of the mountains”. Back of you and still to the right as you stand upon Carmel’s head stretches an open vista as if carved through mountain obstacles, opening the way inland to Tiberias, Nazareth, Tabor, Esdraelon and Galilee and furnishing a seeming outlet for the waters of Jordan hurrying southward through the heart of the Holy Land to be lost in the salt tomb of the Dead Sea. The words of Bahá’u’lláh come to you as your eye sweeps the picture “Surely the River Jordan hath joined with the Great Sea”; for nowhere in Palestine could Jordan find all outlet to the Mediterranean except through this “Way of the Sea” into the Bay of ‘Akká; and upon the spiritual side of the wonderful Words, nowhere except in the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh that Most Great Sea of Utterance can Christianity find its outlet and apotheosis. There is a Christianity which follows its own narrow discolored course into the Dead Sea and is there lost in the bitter waters of non-accomplishment. There is another, a higher, truer Christianity which pours its current, pure as the waters of Galilee, into that Ocean of the Revelation of the Word of GOD which Christ himself plainly and prophetically promised would appear in these the “latter days”. But we are standing upon Carmel viewing its limitless horizons. The mountains look old as if sleeping away time,

their history and warfare accomplished. Carmel itself resembles a great elephant back, the head dipping into the Mediterranean, the back extending about ten miles inland and gradually increasing in elevation until sixteen hundred feet above the sea and plain. Straight inland from us and toward the south west the blue hills of Samaria are seen and still more southward the eye searches for but cannot make out the position of Jerusalem. Directly down the coast to the left as we face the Mediterranean, a succession of ruined cities mostly Crusaders strongholds perch like 'Akká upon the shore line, As there were no harbors on the coast line, these ancient warriors watchful of military advantage built their cities as far out into the sea as the rocky foundation would permit, and ran up their heavy stone walls four-square in the form of fortifications which they could approach from the seaward side without the danger of shore landing. As we look, we see Athlit, Caesarea, Tantura and far down in misty perspective on a perfectly clear day Jaffa, distant sixty miles, where Hiram King of Tyre sent Lebanon cedars for the temple of Solomon. Strange commentary upon the religion of or these Crusaders and their walled forts! 'Akká itself a storm-centre of their fanatical invasions with fire and sword; the name of Christ upon their lips and emblazoned when the banners under which they slew those who were defending with equal valor and fanaticism their belief in the religion of GOD Our Jesus Christ Calm, unmoved amid these long centuries of human violence, oppression and bloodshed Carmel has stood awaiting the "Great Day of COD" when the "Sun of Righteousness would rise with healing in His Wings" and the Message go forth from 'Akká, I come to bring peace, not to lay the sword.

Our point of observation on the mountain head is just over Haifa. As we look seaward and toward the southwest, the white stone monastery of the Carmelite monks is directly in the line of vision. It is built over the cave or den in which, according to tradition Elijah the Tishbite lived; that picturesque solitary figure of Old Testament history; the prophet of GOD so inseparably linked with Carmel during his eventful life and who is announced to appear again as the forerunner when the Lord of Hosts reveals him-self in Carmel, Sharon and Lebanon in the latter days. Near where we are standing is the place from which Elijah invoked the rain upon the parched and of Israel; the "little cloud no bigger than a man's hand". Far behind us on the back of the mountain overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon a small stone chapel marks El Mahrakah the "Place of Burning ", the spot where he called down fire from heaven upon the priests of Baal. Along the base still flows the brook Kishon whose waters ran red with their blood when the prophet slew them.

Nowhere is the view of 'Akká more perfect and complete than from the top of Carmel across the scintillating waters of the sea, shining like a pure glistening white pearl in the mountain atmosphere of the Lebanons. We saw 'Akká from Carmel in all lights; in the soft purple gray of early dawn, in the golden burst of sunrise, in the zenith radiance of high noon, at sunset, golden in the slanting arrows which reflected from the burnished bosom of the sea, in the rose curtains of twilight, and under the silver of the moon. Even at midnight under the glorious procession of heavenly orbs and constellation our dev ted eyes still

sought 'Akká when nothing but the red eye of its lighthouse shone seaward into the black darkness.

What sacred memories and heavenly atmospheres surround the head of this old mountain! Here Abraham dwelt and was blessed by Melchizedek King of Salem; Jesus, walked upon Carmel and Muḥammad the Prophet of Arabia followed the footsteps of the Nazarene. Here Bahá'u'lláh walked and prayed. The holy atmosphere of the mountain is impressive beyond description. Nor are Carmel's natural beauties any less impressive and glorious. Standing out alone and solitary in the blue skies, surrounded upon three sides by waters of still deeper blue, the Mountain of Goo is unique and wonderful in its natural beauty. The colors upon its summit are indescribable;- a composite holiness of the past seems woven, blended and mingled in its mosaics; an atmosphere translucent and vitalizing, redolent of vineyards, as if an incense rising from the bosom of earth to the Goo of power and beauty.

But word-pictures are endless, innumerable. A world and wealth of fact, narrative and description come crowding into the mind claim, in expression and utterance. The centuries focus in Carmel history haloes it; spiritual forces surround it, outworking human destiny in the chain of its hallowed associations.

The splendid forests which once covered and crowned the mountain and from which it takes its flume have entirely disappeared. Only a few olives growing here and there in vineyards and gardens adorn the otherwise bare picture. From base to summit the soil is scanty, the rocks and rough ridges peeping through. As you look, the landscape seems covered with a velvety soft mosaic of carpet, but as you go about on foot the conditions are incredibly rough and hostile. Sharp edges of flint and hornblende out your shoe like knives, briars and prickly bushes catch your cloth most tenacious limestone clay clogs under your feet hardening like cement wherever it adheres.

There are no roads, simply donkey paths filled with rocks and stumbling places. Agriculture is practically unknown. Here and there the Arab scratches the soil with a primeval plough hitched to a pair of small wiry bullocks scatters seed with careless hand. What there is of the soil is wonderfully fertile however. Without further care or cultivation he gathers good harvests from his rude tilling. There are no fences or boundary lines. As you look across Carmel' back the untrained eye sees nothing betokening human occupancy or habitation. After awhile growing accustomed to the picture you begin to pick out few little huts built of rocks, and mud so secluded among natural surroundings that you come upon them before you clearly make them out. As you approach threading your way through the rocks and briars, a lot of savage dogs rush out challenging and checking your approach. Long before this you have been seen by watchful eyes of the Arab's family. Although you have not seen them, they have seen you. If your eye is quick you might have detected a scurrying of children and elder females to inner seclusion. If the Arab himself is away, your visit to his hut is profitless; you will probably see nobody but an old crone who bids you begone. If the liege lord is within he will come well out to meet you, the expression of

his face as dark, forbidding and non-committal as a Comanche Indian. But the jingle of a little baksheesh transforms him from an ogre to a beneficent genie in a moment. If he is a Muḥammadan he still denies you the inner hospitality of his home and view of his household. If he be a Christian convert; you are now welcome at his door and may drink a cup of coffee which he brews himself in a brazier over a charcoal fire. A little more baksheesh entitles you to a quasi-cordial send off. He has done the best he could. Life to him is a hostile and hard condition. He has but little, he can give but little. You have warmed the simple sensibilities of his heart, helped him by your gift and pittance. As we looked upon him the whole world seemed to be ours and so little of it his; his existence a dull limitation of conditions which we through civilization have been privileged to surmount.

Sometimes these rough ramblings far back upon the mountain are attended with danger. Mr. MacNutt happened on one occasion to approach an Arab but without seeing it, and was confronted by a sinewy son of Ishmael armed with a double barrelled shot gun held toward him at full cock. The morning salutation "Arag said!" and a few copper coins relieved an otherwise embarrassing interview. The atmosphere of Carmel is wonderfully pure and translucent. Distances are deceptive, much greater than they look, a characteristic of all mounti.lin atmospheres. Standing at the edge of the declivity which overlooks Haifa it seems as if you might throw stones down into the streets. The whistle of the little locomotive just outside the city is heard ten seconds after you see the steam, although it does not appear distant. Shepherd boys call to each other from ridge to ridge across the valleys although actually half a mile apart. One day we started to walk down the road to the shore of the sea on the side opposite Haifa. It seemed half a mile or so and we intended to return in an hour in time for dinner. After a long walk the distance appeared undiminished, so we returned without accomplishing it and learned that we were attempting a round trip which measured over five miles.

A deep stillness rests upon the old mountain, a silence pro-found and impressive. Literally there is no noise whatever, neither sound of insect, song of bird nor hum of busy human centers. As you go about you feel that you are alone with GOD and surrounded by vibrant spiritual beings. Sometimes it seems that every human trace has disappeared. Then your eye will detect a moving bit of color in the mosaic of rock, sea and sky. If you have your glass you will see a shepherd slowly following his herd of goats as they scramble amid the rocks,- then another and another appears as if by magic, so completely hidden and blended into the picture have they been. The holy scenes of Christ's life and parables are constantly before you; the shepherd and his flocks, the sower going forth to sow, the vineyard and its laborers, just as he saw them, still true and unchanged as if they, like his Words, would never pass away. At morning we saw the sheep hurrying up the mountain ahead of the shepherd, eager, self-willed to seek the pasture. In the evening we saw them following him home to the fold, content, obedient to his guidance. So in life's morning we go forth in self-will and strength but in the eventide we are content to follow the Shepherd

home. How vivid the Christ picture of the sheep and goats; the sheep tractable and Obedient to the shepherd's word; the goats wild and self-willed browsing in impossible places, restless, untamed and a constant anxiety to him as he patiently follows them in their erratic wanderings.

It was January, therefore we did not see Carmel in its spring robe and in the beauty of summertime. Few of the flowers for which it is celebrated had ventured forth. Yet some of them welcomed us. Wherever we walked we found crimson carpets of red anemones spread. This wonderful flower expresses in its outer beauty that inner spiritual loveliness and fragrance which characterize the soul of man when it blooms in the paradise of His Will and blossoms upon the mountain of His Manifestation. It is essentially the Bahá'í flower for it has been utilized by the divinely alert eye of Bahá'u'lláh to symbolize that loveliness and submissiveness which must characterize the true servant of GOD. Botanically it is called the "wind-flower" The Arabs call it *Shaqiqat* human. Early in the spring, before winter has really departed, it appears upon the mountain slopes of central and north Syria, rearing its little head amid hard, hostile and inclement conditions which other flowers have not the hardihood to face. It grows amid the rocks, finding its foothold in cracks and crevices where ever so little soil has lodged. No blast of the tempest can uproot or destroy it for its happy face is mounted upon a long stem which bends double without breaking and is strong as wire. Its color is blood crimson and its odor permeates the landscape particularly at dawn like the fragrance of a thanksgiving incense to GOD for its life and beauty. Its face follows the sun from dawn to sunset, opening its petals and disclosing its heart at sunrise and closing them in sleep just before twilight. Nor can it be persuaded to open at any other time or by the influence of any other light. Through the night and when the skies are cloudy it remains asleep, seemingly dead, only awakening when the sunlight calls it back to life. What more perfect symbol of a Bahá'í could be found bending, submissive to the hardest blasts of oppression yet impossible to break; growing in most difficult environments and in the wintertime of religious conditions when all other flowers of the Spirit seem dead; coming in the Spring-time of a New Dispensation, called into life by the sunshine and showers of His Word; crimson with the blood of martyrdom; redolent of spiritual fragrance, permeating and perfuming the atmosphere of this early dawning of the Day of GOD; the face turned toward the Light of this Manifestation, refusing to follow, or open the heart to any other Light than the Light of the Sun of Reality in Heaven;- is not the symbolism complete and perfect? So Bahá'u'lláh seeing in the simple beauty of this mountain flower a matchless lesson which would ever refresh, stimulate and admonish the soul of man, said "Discover the truths of the mystery of Love from the red anemones of this New Garden which hath appeared in the open court of Holiness" (Persian Hidden Words 18).

A few miles back from the sea Carmel is almost savage in its rugged wildness. Throughout its entire length great wadys or valleys are scored into its sides like gigantic incisions by some great titan knife. These wadys or cuts extend from the spine of the great elephant back down either side of sea or plain. Through

them in heavy storms the water rushes as it does through the canyons of the Western Sierras. Near the sea the sunny slopes of the wadys are planted as vineyards and produce a mellow pure wine. Farther back on the mountain no cultivation or agriculture is attempted and here the scenery in the wadys is surpassingly grand and beautiful, the flint rock gnarled and twisted into fantastic designs and rude geological architecture forming cave grottos and dens where wild animals and serpents make their habitation. Five miles from the Mediterranean, Carmel is literally a howling wilderness minus only the trees. In our ramble we hyenas, foxes, adders and evidences of larger and more dangerous four-footed inhabitants. Wild birds abound, perching upon rocks in lieu of tree-tops. It is usually difficult scramble down through the wadys to earth and sea level, twisting about these erratic water courses like miniature alpine climbing. It seems but half an hour's undertaking but sometime you find the white foaming surf which seemed just below, four or five miles away in reality. Everything is larger and more distant than it appears and after awhile you yourself seem to be the only thing insignificant in the colossal proportions of Carmel and the picture in which it stride so majestically.

Sometimes in our early morning rambles we would meet Syrian girls and women coming down the mountain paths from shepherd huts far back in the interior carrying upon their heads great jars of sour goats' milk called "leben", on their way to Haifa. There they sit along the streets among the bazaars selling it until late in the afternoon. Then you will meet them coming homeward climbing the "short cut" mountain paths with tireless vigor making perhaps a round trip of twelve or fifteen miles between sunrise and sunset, balancing their jars upon their heads with perfect skill, barefoot and walking swiftly among boulders and loose stones which bothered us to scramble over with nothing to carry. Some of these girls are magnificent physical specimens, veritable amazons in poise and figure. They walk majestically, swaying the body with an indescribable rhythm and grace from the hips, the arms free and swinging, the chest and shoulders held rigid and erect supporting the heavy burden on the head and the vivid Oriental colors of their costumes making striking and picturesque effects in the mountain scenery.

No word picture of Carmel would be complete without mention of its weird beauty at dawn. The day comes suddenly. Long before the sun appears, a calm holy radiance begins to steal over the Lebanon summits and the night shadows on Carmel slowly merge into an iridescence of soft grays and purples like an exquisite mosaic. For a lone time this lingers. It seems as if the daylight itself is not coming. Then a great fan-shaped burst of rose-tinted glory mounts to the zenith from the black silhouette edges of Lebanon, the stars of heaven pale and vanish as it comes; Carmel is glowing with dull fire. The red glory fades as quickly as it appeared and a pure radiance reflects from the mountain as if from mirrors of alabaster. Will the day ever come? Suddenly the sun flashes its fiery eye over the summit of Hermon, every shadow vanishes and the day literally "springs" into being Men may come and go but this heavenly panorama goes on forever. The divinely sensitive eye of Bahá'u'lláh awake to

its sublimity, viewing the illimitable worlds of Spirit, has likened this matchless effulgence in the phenomenal world to the coming of the Day of GOD and termed the Manifestation himself the “Dayspring of Glory”. Blessed are those who understand.

Often the thought came to us “Why did the Abhá Glory reveal Itself here upon Carmel And in ‘Akká?” The answer is simple and direct, the conclusion irresistible. Here is the very heaven and firmament of the Divine Will; here is the land made holy and illumined by the coming of the same Sun of Reality in former Dispensations; here is the focus of the spiritual vision and belief of humanity; here the hope, promise and expectation of the Day of GOD; Be could have come in no other place. The Dayspring of Illumination must arise upon ‘Akká; the glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel, the beauty of Sharon must witness the coming of the Lord.

And often at midnight as we looked out from the summit of Carmel, the constellations of heaven overhead, the earth wrapped in blackness of night beneath us, nothing but the watchful eye of the lighthouse out upon the sea-wall of ‘Akká to meet our straining vision, – often we thought – there indeed is the Light of the World, shining, glowing in the darkness, a beacon of warning and guidance to the world, streaming out into the dimness and obscurity of religious belief; and into the radiance of that Light all the illumination of this world must be polarized. And this shall verily come to pass.

One more, our last picture. We have come down from the top of Carmel, taken our final drive through the narrow muddy streets of Haifa and gone aboard the steamer in the Arab surf boats ready to start homeward. The sun is setting; its glowing face goes down, down, lower, lower until from our anchorage out in the middle of the horse-shoe Bay we see it finally sink and disappear behind the Mountain of GOD. As the daylight fades, the sea turns into molten metal iridescent with fire, and shadows fall like azure robes upon the land pictures. We stand silent, spell-bound upon deck looking toward Haifa. Behind us ‘Akká pure white and glistening is still bathed in the sun’s last arrows. The colors deepen, the light is going out. Then from the high blue heavens overhead descend curtains of fire upon Carmel, great palls of flame which envelop its grand old head with auroral magnificence. Someone speaks “Elijah is again calling down fire from heaven upon the priests of Ba-al.

It was nearly midnight before the little steamer weighed anchor and sailed out of the Bay. The sun had long since gone but in the east the full moon had arisen bathing earth, sea and sky in chaste reflections of silver, no color, just pure white radiance. On the top of Carmel, ghostly and gray we saw the Carmelite monastery where the monks are still awaiting through the night, the coming of the Day of GOD. 80 we swept on out into the Mediterranean, around Carmel, the only moving thing in this still, silent, holy, radiant picture. And the eye of the Light upon the sea wall of ‘Akká followed us as we turned our course into the west.

TOMB OF THE BÁB.

A little more than half way up the eastern side of Mount Carmel, terraced deep into its bosom of solid rock, stands a splendid white mausoleum looking out with five great round eyes toward 'Akká upon a heavenly picture of sea and sky. Above it rise the massive beet-ling brows of Carmel's rough ridges and boulders gnarled and twisted into convulsive shapes like wrinkles of agony upon a giant forehead. Below, the profile of the giant face projects peacefully down the mountain slopes and merges into the sea. This mausoleum, the most conspicuous object upon Carmel, is the Tomb of the Báb, that winsome messenger and forerunner of the Day of GOD, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the Way of the Lord in the year 1844, and who, like Elijah, ascended into heaven in the fiery chariot of a glorious martyrdom. No spot upon earth could more appropriately mark his last resting-place, for here upon Carmel cluster the scenes and historical events in the life of his illustrious prototype, the old Tishbite prophet, that grand, solitary figure who stands out alone and luminous with the radiance of GOD against a black background of Israel's degeneracy. The more we study these two holy lives, the more they parallel in character and accomplishment; each appearing suddenly upon the scene, speaking words of burning fiery zeal with unflinching courage and fearless confidence in GOD; each calling down fire from heaven upon the priests of religion and consuming their ignorant idolatries. Just westward along the mountain side is the cave or den in which Elijah lived, and it may be, notwithstanding the tradition of his literal ascension into the sky, that the mortal dust of the old Israelitish prophet is mingled with that of the Báb in this same sanctified soil.

The Báb suffered martyrdom at Tabriz, a city in north western Persia, July 9, 1850. After the tragedy of his execution, his body was thrown into a moat outside the walls of the city where it lay until midnight of the second day. Then loving hands carried it away and since then knowledge of its whereabouts has been locked and sealed in the depths of loyal hearts. This much can be said with certainty, however, that after being removed from the moat, the body was embalmed, swathed in silk and afterward sent as a bale of silk to Ṭihrán by the command of Bahá'u'lláh. It remained hidden in Ṭihrán many years. The method of concealment was to cut a hole in the solid masonry of a room in some believer's house, put the body therein and wall up the opening. There it remained until it was deemed expedient to remove it to another similar hiding place. From Ṭihrán it was finally carried by faithful and appointed souls through Irak-Arabia across the Syrian desert to Beirout and from thence transported to Haifa where it now rests.

The Tomb is a solid gray-white structure built of the lime-stone rock from which its site has been excavated. This rock hardens by exposure to the atmosphere and merges in color after a time into a soft mellow grayish white tone peaceful and refreshing to the eye. The terrace upon which the Tomb proper stands is built out into a projecting level, flanked upon either side by deep square subterranean cisterns hewn out of the solid rock for the purpose of storing water

which is always soar upon Carmel's rocky slopes. The surface of the terrace, about fifty feet square is laid out in paths and planted with beautiful flowers. In the centre of the terrace and leading down the steep slope between the great cisterns is a long stone stairway. From the foot of the stairway the mountain side descends sharply perhaps six hundred feet to the upper edge of the German Colony in Haifa, the Tomb being located so that a line drawn from the stone stairway down to the sea will pass through the whole length of its principal street. That is to say, when we stood in front of the Tomb looking down the mountain, the line of vision passed directly through the center of the long beautiful avenue of the German settlement, bordered upon either side by fine trees which meet in perspective at the Pier and shore front. The purpose is obvious. As all the mountain side from the Tomb to the German Settlement is owned and controlled by Bahá'ís, someday a broad, beautiful esplanade surmounted by the Tomb and terrace will extend down to Haifa, making a continuous and striking scent from the shore of the Great Sea to the Tomb of the Báb.

The Tomb itself is about fifty feet in front width and rises about half as much in height above the level of the terrace. It is built in three distinct sections separated upon the front wall by high pilasters of masonry, each section containing two long windows, the only doorway of entrance opening into the middle section. High above the doorway and windows, just under the simple square stone cornice are five great round eyes or circular openings, two upon either side and one directly in the middle over the doorway. As we entered the doorway we stood in a large square ante-room or chapel which communicates right and left with two other rooms of equal dimensions. Each of these three ante-rooms opens at the back by a doorway into the actual Tomb or crypt. There are three tomb chambers in the crypt of this wonderful Bahá'í mausoleum, extending side by side with head toward the sea, their hemispherical mounds of masonry almost flush with the floor. In one of them the blessed body of the Báb rests; the remaining two await the mortal temples of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Back of the crypt, excavated into the very heart of the limestone rock will be three other chambers or rooms, similar to those in front. At the time of our visit (January 1905) all work upon the Tomb had been temporarily discontinued owing to an investigation by the Turkish authorities, certain enemies of 'Abdu'l-Bahá having circulated a report that the structure was in reality a fort so planned that it commanded Haifa and approach to the harbor by sea. The three rear chambers were therefore not yet complete. The structure throughout is unique in architectural simplicity and solidity, being entirely without ornamentation or embellishment, chaste, Pure, religious, in tone and designed to last for centuries. Its central purpose is to enshrine the mortal bodies of the Forerunner, the Manifestation and the Servant of the Glory of GOD. The three outer rooms or ante-chambers are intended for congregation and assembly; back of them three tombs or sarcophagi; and the rear chambers evidently for retirement, communion and prayer. In ground plan the sacred edifice is built in three times three divisions making in all nine, the number of "Perfection."

Before we enter upon a statement of its evident symbolism and significance in

architectural design and detail we must speak of our own experiences and visits to this Kibla of the world. We first saw the Tomb as we came into the Bay from the open sea Far out from land, the eye catches its white conspicuous head rising from the sombre side of the old mountain. It resembles no other building near it nor anywhere in fact, and could not be mistaken for church, chapel, monastery or fortification. Architecturally it is designed and blended into the mountain picture, prominent and striking, yet such an intrinsic part of the whole that it seems as natural as the rocks, ridges and boulders upon which it stands and as if it had always stood there. As we drove up the mountain the evening of our landing, we passed directly behind it, the terrace upon which it stands being about two hundred feet from the roadway leading from Haifa at the base to Prose House at the summit. During our stay on the mountain we spent long hours upon the edge of the cliffs looking out toward 'Akká, Haifa at our feet and the glistening white Tomb just below our rocky eyrie. Nestling almost beneath the Tomb in the ensemble picture is a little white stone Bahá'í house, its blue-shuttered windows looking up at you like timid eyes beseeching yet not courting recognition. Several times we went down the steep mountain foot-paths and spent hours at the Tomb lost in holy reflection and looking with ever new delight and wonder upon the matchless picture of mountain, sea and plain stretching from far-away horizon to horizon. One rainy day when Mr. MacNutt was alone upon the mountain he went down to the Tomb and found it closed, the attendant absent. It was his first visit to the sacred spot. Above the doorway was an open transom unfinished and still in process of construction. He climbed up and looked into the interior. Upon the pure white cemented wall of the middle chamber hung a frame surrounding these words from the Bayán "I am forever alive in the Horizon of El ABHÁ." The Spirit of the Great Báb is still speaking these words to our conscious listening souls from the horizon of the Supreme Concourse. They halo the Tomb, express its meaning, embody its purpose, perpetuate its memory and significance. Like the glorified. Spirit of the Messenger of the Day of GOD they will never pass away.

The attendant at the Tomb was a simple-hearted Persian believer, his face filled with the fire of love, his whole life centred upon service in the Cause of GOD. Whenever we appeared, he would come running to meet us from his little but anon e the rocks, showering Persian greetings and salutations upon us, holding our hands und breathing the Greatest Name. Then having found us rude seats, he would hurry back to his little house and presently return bearing steaming cups of tea. While we drank the tea he would gather anemones and other wild flowers for us among the rocks. One day to test him we offered him a coin in return for his kindness and service. He took it, held it a moment, said some holy word e in Persian, then carefully placed it in Mr. MacNutt's bosom just over his heart.

Immediately behind the Tomb, between it and the roadway is a group of cypress trees ten in number, growing very close together upon a circular knoll and forming a dense shade. They are about twenty feet in height and most striking in appearance from the fact that the slopes of Carmel at this elevation are

absolutely bare. Beneath the shade of these cypresses the Blessed Perfection pitched his tent, rested and drank tea upon one occasion with those who loved Him so completely, devotedly. Each time we visited the Tomb we stood silently under them hearing the voice of the Spirit in the waft of the mountain winds through their branches, our hearts filled and overflowing with realisations so deep, so solemn, yet so completely happy.

I shall not venture into extravagant or emotional interpretation of the inner meanings so evidently, embodies in this glorious Bahá'í shrine of the dead. The soul of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is speaking in its plan and mysteries; his, not mine the power to set forth the heavenly lesson of its architecture and significances, for the design and authority of its construction are from him. The secrets which lie unrevealed behind that authority will be known in the years and centuries yet to come long after the spirit of the third and last of these wonderful beings has ascended to the horizon of El ABRA and loving hearts have entombed the mortal dust of its glorious Temple with tender tears of love and remembrance. O 'Abdu'l-Bahá! Blessed is the soul which hath been quickened by the breath of the spirit of thy words! Happy are those who know and have looked upon thee! Thrice happy those who perceive the Blessed Perfection of the Mystery of the Oneness of GOD in his Messenger, his Manifestation and his Servants

Yet I cannot turn away from the Tomb without some simple sincere mention of its broader, clearer symbolism. As we looked down upon it from the cliffs of Carmel, as we saw it from the sea in the calm radiance of the moon when we sailed away, as we see it now by the spirit-light of memory, it is ever the expression and symbol of those wondrous mortal bodies in which the divine breath of the Holy Spirit was once manifest. Standing there white and glorious upon the bosom of the Mountain of GOD, a shrine of earth, pure, holy and spotless, its five eyes of vision turned toward 'Akká, looking out upon the Great Sea of Revelation, filled with light from the heaven of the Divine Will, nine chambers of soul-powers within, now empty, now nothing but dust, the light of Spirit fled from the mortal Temples of its Messenger, Manifestation and Servant, three shrines yet one in whom the Glory of coop has appeared, spoken and ministered unto humanity;- we are looking not upon the Tomb of the Báb, but the Shrine of the ABHÁ Manifestation.

When the day of our departure from these holy scenes came we walked down the mountain for the last time and sat upon the beautiful terrace in front of the great white mausoleum, looking over toward 'Akká where the blessed Servant of GOD still kept his faithful vigil upon the walls of the Holy City. We were watching down the coast for the little steamer which would carry us away from him. Few words were spoken; the mountain wind sighed through the green cypress trees just behind us. For a long, long time we sat there; then we saw the steamer coming and we started away, down the mountain to meet her. And as we slowly went the simple hearted Persian believer who keeps the Tomb came running after us, his arms filled with roses and red anemones.

THE TRIP FROM HAIFA TO ‘AKKÁ.

Never dawned a day more fair, more perfect than January 4th, 1905, when the sun-arrows of morning glancing from the tips of the Lebanon s awoke the valley and plain of ‘Akká with streaming floods of light. From the summit of Carmel we looked upon pictures of sky, sea and land bathed in vibrant life and splendor; the heavens opened at the call of the sun; a new day descended upon the horizons of the phenomenal world. But the splendor in which the outer world lay immersed was but dim reflection of that inner glory which illumined the Kingdom of Spirit, quickening the conscious eye with celestial vision and a perception heavenly. For we were standing upon a supreme apex of the visible world, lofty, towering and luminous in the light of history that is holy and associations that are hallowed and sacred, within the very forces of powers and forces spiritual, upon Carmel, “Mountain of ODD” where the hosts of the Supreme Concourse and holy souls of earth alike center their vision. Everything in the wonderful picture brought its attendant spiritual suggestion and lifted the soul to contemplation and consciousness of GOD. We were enveloped in the Spirit; upon holy ground indeed, and in the Holy Land of the world’s promise, expectation and fulfilment. Such was the glory and heavenly prospect of the day upon which we made ready to complete our pilgrimage from the mountain of endeavor to the holy city of attainment, from hope and longing to the joy of realisation, from the Camel of announcement to the ‘Akká of appearance and manifestation.

We drove down the mountain early in the morning, aglow with the exhilarating, crystal pure atmosphere, stopping a few moments at the Báb’s Tomb to pick a bunch of red anemones. Shepherds with large flocks of sheep and goats were coming up the mountain from Haifa, on their way to pastures at the summit. Our cheery greeting “Arag sa-id!” met a cordial response and even the four-legged creatures with “baa” and bleat gave us a morning salutation as we went on down the steep road, through the long, street of the German Colony, turning at right angles but before we reached the sea. At the foot of the street is the pier built by Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd in honor of Emperor William of Germany when he visited the Holy Land in 1902. In a few minutes we entered the old city of Haifa, threading our way along the narrow principal street lined upon either side with little bazaars, mere holes in the wall, each one presided over by a faced dignified merchant in white gown, his head topped by a lofty red tarbush. There are no sidewalks and our horses were jostled by donkeys, camels and a kaleidoscopic current of humanity, making the going very slow, but thanks to his cracking whip and Arabic yells cur driver pulled us through the confusion and completed his contract by depositing us at the eastern edge of the town, close by the starting-point of the railroad now building between Haifa and Damascus. There are only three railroads in all Syria; this is one of them. Having dismissed our conveyance we strolled nonchalantly along the sandy beach as if a further trip in the direction of ‘Akká was the last thing in our minds, until, importuned by an Arab who spoke a little French, we engaged him to secure us a beach wagon

for a “promenade” along the shore as far as River Kishon or Nahr Mukatta, a mile or so on our intended way. Reaching the river, the horses fording it, our ideas of “promenade” expanded and after a lain colloquy in kindergarten French and Arabic assisted by eloquent pantomime we bargained for transportation, to ‘Akká as if suddenly to go. The conveyances which make the trip of nine miles along the surf are known as “American wagons”, high-wheeled, long canvas-covered and much like the prairie schooners of our Western plains before the rail roads were built. Three horses abreast furnish the motive power and long experience upon the sandy footing has made them very knowing. Without slackening pace and with reins hanging loose, they follow the surf out as it recedes and dexterously avoid the next wave by running up higher on the beach when it breaks, making a zigzag course as they go, always finding hard sand for their footing. The Mediterranean by the way is not a “tideless sea” as the sacred poets would have us believe, bit rises and falls appreciably. The Kishon which we first crossed, drains the Carmel slopes and wanders toward the sea in serpentine course from far back in the ‘Akká plain. Tradition says its current ran red with the blood of the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal when Elijah slew them at the foot of Carmel. After heavy rains its waters are deep and furious and fording is impossible. We saw other wayfarers crossing the river in primitive fashion, all unconscious of formality and conventional garb.

The Oriental is always a picture of deliberation. Haste and levity are unknown words in his vocabulary. When he reaches the Kishon on foot he calmly rests awhile, then slowly die robes, carefully tying his few clothes in a little bundle, puts the bundle on top of his head and solemnly wades across the river. A we drove along we met strings and strings of camels, usually ten or a dozen, traveling in single file, the largest in front, the procession preceded by a diminutive donkey who acts as guide and pacemaker to his giant followers. Now and then little donkeys scurried past carrying long-legged Arabs, so long of limb that they had to turn their feet up at the bottom to prevent trailing upon the ground. This disproportion has its advantages however, for when the Arab wishes to accelerate the donkeys speed he nimbly kicks him in the face from either side. Sinewy Arab fishermen, bronze-black from toe to turban were casting their circular nets into the surf with scanty results; patriarchal old Bedouins in baggy white bloomers, gaunt and wiry in muscle and limb, passed um on foot as if the nine mile jaunt from ‘Akká to Haifa was only a trifling morning exercise. We saw a few specimens of the “murex” lying on the shore, a spiny fish from which the ancient people of Tyre extracted the purple dye which made them famous. The coloring matter is found in a gland in the throat of the fish. A little beyond, half way to ‘Akká we gave the hard working horses a good rest; then off again until we reached the second river, Nahr Namen, the Belus of the Ancient Greeks. This bright forceful stream, although narrow, is deep and rapid in current. It rises in the Lebanons and in its short hurrying course to the sea, passes through the garden of Riqván situated a little over a mile from the gate of ‘Akká upon the plain. Upon its banks in ancient times stood a colossal statue of Memnon similar to those in the plain of Thebes. The white sand of the Nahr

Namen was esteemed and utilized by the ancients in their manufacture of glass. On the plain of ‘Akká nearby and to the right we saw Tel el Fukhar, the high sand dune upon which Napoleon 1 planted his batteries in 1799. In a little while we came upon a wide boulevard lined with fine old trees and extending from ‘Akká gate toward the Riḍván. As we drove along it we had a critical survey of the city and the inhabitants thereof. Right before us the high forbidding walls of the prison-fortress loomed up in discouraging monotony, unbroken save by a high gateway flanked on either side by heavy bastions and military towers. ‘Akká’s population had poured itself out through this gate and distributed itself along the highway by which we reached the gate and entered the city. However we toured no curiosity among the Orientals although their picturesque kaleidoscopic grouping and color excited our liveliest interest. It seemed indeed as if an Oriental rag-bag had burst open at the city portal, covering sand and sward with a motley assortment of remnants;- men, women, children, goats, sheep, cattle, camels, and donkeys in heterogeneous confusion, the picture vivid and glowing in a Mediterranean brightness of clear sky and perfect sunshine. We drove on into the city through the angles and double walls of the great gate, passing keen-eyed sentries who asked our Arab driver questions, then emerged into a large court-apace surrounded by barracks and coffee houses where groups of Turkish soldiers lounged and stood apart. Passing across the court, the street suddenly narrowed and we unhitched one horse, leaving but two for the finale. The wagon jolted and bumped over rough heavy stone blocks of street pavement through the centre of which ran an ill-smelling drain, the open sewer of the city. On either side as the wagon toiled slowly along we peered into great vaults or dungeon holes of mediaeval construction and suggestive of horrors past and present. Every fifty yards the street ended in a black wall, then turned at right angles in another direction, a veritable catacombs with the roof taken off. Squalid pictures of humanity were everywhere before our eyes, pestiferous odors rose to the nostrils from the filth in the passageway; it could no longer be called a street. After ten minutes slow going the conditions improved; we were passing between the high walls of buildings upon either side, a few bazaars more cleanly and attractive appeared and finally we came into an open court at the far end of the city just inside the sea-wall toward the east. Our driver had received his instructions from us in the words “‘Abbás Effendi” and drove straight across the court to a large doorway from whence a number of Bahá’í brothers came and welcomed us with “Alláh u ABHÁ. We passed into an inner court. A fountain was playing in the centre and bright faced roses welcomed us in their beauty and fragrance. We climbed a long flight of steps to the upper rooms of the house which opened upon the court of roses and were shown into a large room around which ran a low divan. We had reached the goal of our pilgrimage.

‘AKKÁ

From ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:- “Concerning my freedom thou hast expressed great joy. I am always free although I remain a prisoner. All the fortresses and castles of the world cannot confine me; nor is the dungeon able to bring me under the

narrow bondage of the world. The spirit is ever soaring in untrammelled heights even though the body be in the depths. Those who surround me may imprison the body but the spirit they cannot restrict. The spirit will ever soar in the atmosphere of eternal bliss and glory. Therefore neither is the prison a cause of sorrow, nor is freedom from it a source of joy. When thou dost find, the way to the kingdom, the earthly world shall be of no account; and when thou art illumined, the darkness will not affect thee, nay rather the four corners of the earth will then be radiant, every thorn become a rose, every prison a rose garden."

From the tablet of Bahá'u'lláh to the Shal of Persia: "The rulers of authority are about to send us forth from this land (Adrianople) to the city of 'Akká and according to report it is most assuredly the most desolate of cities of the world,, the most unsightly of them in appearance, the most detestable in climate, the foulest in water, the metropolis of the owl; no sound is heard from its regions but its echo. And in it they intend to imprison this servant, to shut in our faces the doors of mercy during the days that remain of our life in this world. But though weariness should weaken and hunger destroy us, though the couch should be made of hard rock and our associates be beasts of the desert, we will not falter but will be resolute and determined in the strength of GOD and under all circumstance give thanks unto Him. And we ask GOD to make this ark calamity a shield for the Temple of His Command, to protect it thereby from sharp swords and piercing blades. Through affliction hath the Light shone; this hath been His method through past ages and bygone times."

From Tablet to the Pope: "Even though they burn Him upon the earth, verily He will lift up His head in the midst of the sea. And though they cast Him into a dark pit they shall find Him upon the summits of the mountains, crying "The Desired One heath come with the authority of might and sovereignty." And though they bury Him in the earth He will arise from the horizons of heaven proclaiming with loudest voice El Baba hath coma in the Kingdom of GOD! Under the swords of enemies We call the servants unto GOD; end neither by hosts of the oppressors nor influence of the wicked can. We be hindered."

'Akká is the key of entrance into Palestine, the gateway of the Holy Land. From the rock-rimmed coast of the far north where lofty mountain ranges rise like gigantic fortifications and palisades out of the Mediterranean, to the low sandy shores and plains of the extreme south where shoals and shallows menace approach to the mainland, the Holy Land possesses no harbor or natural port except the bay and plain of 'Akká which lying between the Lebanons and Carmel, open an inland way to Galilee and the valley of the Jordan. Upon one side of thin natural gate stands Haifa planted at the foot and upon the slopes of Carmel itself. The opposite gate-post of the great water-way is 'Akká built directly upon the shore-line and separated from the Lebanon ranges by a wide strip of arid sandy plain. Upon this natural site, the ancient Canaanites or perhaps still earlier peoples founded a city. Long before the posterity of Jacob came up out of Egypt to possess the Land of Promise and Israel became a conquering nation,

Accho had an existence and history extending back into the misty centuries were record ceases and even tradition wanes in its narrative. Its history was comparatively modern when the Israelites took it about 1200 B.C., with keen military sagacity allowing its inhabitants to remain undisturbed under their conquering yoke. When the power of Israel declined, the Egyptians under one of the Ptolemys overcame Accho about 300 B.C. and hued its name to Ptolemais, Later the all-conquering Roman legions laid it tribute to their triumphal series of conquests and built a military road along the coast north to Beirout, paralleling similar roads evidently built by the Assyrian and Egyptian long before, the ruins of which furnish interesting and comparative archaeological studies along the route through Tyre, Sidon and in the Lebanons near Beirout. Paul visited Ptolemais on his way along the coast, remaining as the Scriptures state “one day with the brethren”, then going on down to Caesarea. In the centuries after Christ, Ptolemais became a stronghold of Christianity and the seat of a See or Bishopric. When Muḥammad arose in Arabia, the destiny of Ptolemais passed under Muḥammadan control. The Arabs in fanatical zeal of conquest took possession of the much-conquered city in 638 A.D. Then followed five hundred years of comparatively calm historical weather broken only by occasional storms and campaigns in which the Muḥammadans stronghold was the center. Finally in 1104, Baldwin 1, brother of Godfrey de Bouillon King of Jerusalem came upon it with crusader legions and ended the domination of the Saracen and his religion. At this time the Crusaders built the fortified cities of Athlit and Tantura on the shore-line just below Carmel, modelling them upon the plan of Ptolamais which had become the chief landing-place and military centre Of the Crusaders. Through it poured those sanguine hordes of Christian warriors, the flower and chivalry of Europe bent upon the recovery of the Holy Land from the power of the infidel Saracen. Two and a half million of these warlike Christian zealots perished in the endeavor before defeat and destruction wrote the fiat of non-accomplishment upon banners of war which had defiled the name of Christ in their mad fanatical invasion. In 1187, the Saraced came back under Saleh-ed-Din (“Fidelity of Religion”) and humbled the Christian Crusaders into second place and subjection. History records the justice and clemency of this conqueror toward his Christian prisoners.

He signalized his triumph by administering the “Oath of Muḥammad’ to his army, under the terms of which the life, property and religious belief of their Christian captives remained protected and inviolate. In addition to this he liberated most of them after depriving them of weapons. Four years afterward the scene changed and history again reversed itself. Richard 1 of England, Coeur de Lion, took the city by storm in 1191. In cruel contrast to Salet-ed-Din’s mercy, Richard the Lion Heart, arch-king and Christian conqueror massacred twenty-five hundred Muḥammadan captives outside the walls after promising them protection if they surrendered and laid down their arms. Nothing more fearful and foul in the annals of war and history can be found than this unwarranted deed of treachery and Christian violence, It will remain forever a stigma upon Christianity in the memory of man, a wound which will never cease to

rankle and burn in the Oriental heart and for which centuries have furnished no balm or hearing. Significant too is the fact that their massacre took place near the Riḍván, perhaps upon the very site of the Garden of Paradise planted by Bahá'u'lláh amid the hostile conditions of the Prison City and its desert surroundings. About 1200 A.D. the Crusader Knights of St. John changed the name of the old city to St. Jean d'Acre from which the modern pronunciation of 'Akká or 'Akká degenerated in the tongue of the Arabs. In 191 the irrepressible Moslem appeared on the coast and again made 'Akká the spoil of his ever-ready sword. Five hundred years of somewhat quiescent history followed during which occasional tempests of local conflict raged about the walls of this devoted city, but the dominion of Islám remained unbroken. About 1790 Jezzar Páshá an alert, capable Muḥammadan leader infused new life into the old battered city. He built an aqueduct from the Lebanon across the plain and restored the city walls and defences with material brought from the ruins of Athlit about twenty miles, down the coast. Napoleon I appeared upon the scene in 1799, another vivid and central figure in the varied drama of war enacted upon this religious yet bloody stage. Determined and long was the siege. With cannons mounted upon Tel-el-Fukhar a high sand dune near the Garden of Riḍván, this European genius of war heretofore irresistible and invincible bombarded and besieged the little Syrian city in vain. The months passed. Jezzar Páshá with fiery unflagging zeal still held out against the would-be world conqueror and 'Akká gave a mortal wound to the ambitions of the French Napoleon by delaying him. His opportunities and accomplishments in Europe waned and weakened; his failure to overthrow 'Akká marked the beginning of his humiliation and end. Abandoning the siege, he said "My fortunes have been arrested by a grain of sand. Had I taken 'Akká I would have changed the face of the earth."

During this memorable siege, three hundred French cavalry swore an oath pledging themselves to take the gate of the city by sea or never come back from the attempt. They kept their word to a man; not a single one came back. In 1832 Ibrahim Páshá of Egypt took 'Akká by land and sea attack and after plundering it abandoned it as wasted and worthless. In 1840 the combined fleets of England, Austria and Turkey came up the coast and bombarded it once more, levelling into ruins every building that stood higher than the walls. By this time all vestige of antiquity and archaeological interest had been swept away. 'Akká had become a counterpart of Jerusalem, the Jerusalem of the Coast, built and rebuilt of rubbish. In the distribution and allotment of the spoils of war and by agreement of nations, 'Akká was apportioned to the Turk and continues today under the government of the church and state of Islám.

Such in very brief is the superficial record and history of this "holy" yet most unholy city; strange commentary upon the lives, motive*, and religious belief of men; fitting evidence that the heavenly Messengers who have appeared from time to time for the purpose of eliminating animalism and infusing the spirit of GOD into the souls of men, have labored against well-nigh impossible conditions. For so dimly has the light of the Spirit burned in these dark centuries that, strange paradox, men have esteemed it a privilege and principle of the

religion of GOD to kill and destroy their fellow-creatures from these heavenly Heralds of His Will have come to uplift and save. Practically all the warfare, siege and bloodshed waged within and without the walls of 'Akká have been in the name of GOD and under the banners of His Religion. While the physical forces of Ptolemy, Alexander, Richard, Baldwin, Saleh-ed-Din and Napoleon have assailed and destroyed the outer walls of the city of GOD; the spiritual powers of, Abraham, Melchizedek, Elijah, Jesus, Muḥammad, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have Ministered to its inner upbuilding. Therefore the inspired ones looking forward with divine perception and prophetic vision have pictured an ultimate, eternal city of GOD which shall be "without walls" and wherein warfare shall be accomplished and ended; a City of True Religion and Love within the soul of man instead of the cruel warring selfish animalism of humanity, the Will of "Our Father Who art in Heaven."

The history of 'Akká is the history of religion from sun-worship and Ganaanitish idolatry to Islám and the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. It stands today a mute witness of eternal and inviolable laws of survival and degeneracy. The Egyptian, Assyrian, Roman and Greek disappeared in the tombs and dust of the past, deprived of the vitalizing power of the Word of GOD. Even Israel a still more significant and awful example, degenerated into oblivion when the Law of Sinai merged into idolatry and priestcraft. And today 'Akká stands looking seaward upon the disintegration and impending doom of modern nations in whom the light and spirit of true religion is burning dim and low. Whenever and wherever the Word of GoD descended the nations and peoples who received it witnessed in themselves a corresponding and immeasurable uplift.. When the Spirit of Truth departed from their worship and belief and only dead forms and the corpse of ecclesiasticism remained, nations and peoples were eclipsed and disappeared. This had been and is the law of the centuries, and the fixed, unchanging rule of destiny.

'Akká is the only counterpart in history of Jerusalem, that other paradox of human blindness and divine favor. Upon no two cities of earth has the light of GOD descended so continually, yet no cities of earth have such fearful records of war and bloodshed. In themselves they witness the inexorable outworking of the law of destiny and divine judgement. With a history extending for five thousand years backward into the past, 'Akká is now a prison, a penal colony, a place of exile, built upon ruins and rubbish. Notwithstanding boundless possibilities this has been the outcome; sap commentary upon the frail, perishable, powerless kingdoms of this world. Yet GOD has chosen 'Akká to furnish the soul of man with His supreme example. In contrast to the degeneracy of human power, a King of Eternity he descended there to rule with dominion which has been from everlasting in the spiritual world and will continue forever in the world to come, His heavenly lineages from the Son of Man who walked amid the Lebanons and by the shores of Galilee; His Spiritual Ancestors are the Kings of Glory who have spoken the Word of GOD ever since the world began. Why GOD has chosen to reveal Himself in 'Akká is at once apparent. Why He has in the "latter times" made it "glorious by the Way of the Sea" needs no explanation. Why "the desert

has blossomed” and the parched land has been made glad” by the rain from heaven is easily understood. The “glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and the beauty of Sharon have seen the Glory of the Lord; ‘Akká the very centre of the prophetic picture has been the scene of the heavenly drama and the home of the Promised One of the centuries in order that GOD might emphasize the supremacy and independence of His dominion over the kingdoms and powers of earth, teach man severance from the world and dependence upon the Heaven of Divinity, -seed show that oppression, violence, persecution and imprisonment constitute the very training -ground of the Spirit and minister to its highest, holiest fruits. For the Law of GOD has gone forth from this “Prison City”, which, so long unholy in its human history and purpose has yet become holy and heavenly in the Plan Divine. In this way GOD has made human conditions of war, violence and hatred minister to spiritual outcomes and the fulfilment of His Eternal Purpose; utilized unrighteousness to upbuild righteousness and made the kingdoms of earth contribute to the foundations of the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the supreme lesson of ‘Akká to humanity. How clearly then we see that although Bahá’u’lláh the Manifestation of GOD was sent to ‘Akká by the independent exercise of human power and human will yet the Divine Will and Knowledge had preceded Him and spoken the place of His appearance by the tongue of the prophets. He must appear there to fulfil prophecy. Even from a logical standpoint of necessity He must appear as He did. Read again the history which surrounds ‘Akká; history accomplished in the Name of GOD and Religion. View again the bloody record of Israel at Tabor and upon the Plain of Esdraelon, of Elijah at the brook Kishon, and the slaughter of Siserá’s hosts; consider the Christian Crusaders, Richard and Napoleon the Emperor of a Christian country; remember where Israel, Christianity and Muḥammadanism have laid the sword for more than three thousand years; reflect upon the harvest of death and vintages of human blood shed for religion; then ask in what other spot of earth should He come, could He come. So we find His Words continually directed toward that crucial calamity of the world “religious discord”; hear the Voice of GOD amid these tempests of human hatred called “religious beliefs”; see Him standing in the gateway of the “Holy Land”; upon the walls of ‘Akká the key to the home of Religion and the focus of Sacred History, not seeking to recover or possess city, land and mountain in the name of code and creed, but overcoming human souls by the power of love, setting up in them the Kingdom of Heaven and that Peace of GOD which shall have no end;- this King of Glory, this King of the New Jerusalem who is destined to bear the government upon His shoulder”. And upon the banners of His spiritual crusaders His servant this ‘motto “I come to bring Peace, not to lay a sword.”

VISIT TO THE RIḌVÁN.

“And the Lord GOD planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed.”

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad and the desert shall rejoice

and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the Glory of the Lord, the excellency of our GOD.”

“And He pointed out to me a river of the water of life, bright as crystal, issuing forth out of the Throne of GOD and the Lamb and a Tree of Life bearing twelve crops of fruit, every month yielding its fruit; and the leaves of the Tree were for the healing of the nations.”

Happy are they who have the right unto the Tree of Life and rough the gates may enter into the City.

These are Scriptural pictures of soul-gardens and the Divine 114rner; from the natal endowment of man to the degree of his __ i: ly attainment, from material creation to spiritual consummation the paradise of Eden to the Riswan of El-ABHÁ. Created the Heaven of His Will, the human soul through disobedience and _____ of the Divine Will and Command, loses its condition of _____ and becomes a “desert”, “-solitary place”, a “wilderness” parched land”. Into these hostile, desert-like soul-conditions _____ of GOD descends; the Word of GOD speaks from the ‘Akká of prisonment; so the desert blossoms and living streams bring _____ life into the wilderness of human idea. Then high above _____ of the soul-city upon earth is seen the Holy City of the _____lled with the Light of GOD, the Tree of Eternal Life Te growing in its midst and a river of the Revealed Teaching going forth to accomplish the healing of souls and nations. No detail has been omitted in the heavenly pictures of the Divine Books. Blessed are those who understand! Blessed are those who have the right of entrance into that City! Happy are those who eat of Its Tree of Life forever as gods.

Bahá’u’lláh the Blessed Perfection of the Word of GOD manifest in the temple of Man has said “O People of the Delectable Paradises Let the people of Certainty know that a new Garden hath appeared near the Ridván in the Open Court of Hilliness and all the people of the heights and temples of the exalted heaven are around it. Radiant are the eyes of those who have entered therein with trust.”

Today we visited the Ridván, the garden of Bahá’u’lláh, driving out from the city in the early afternoon. The air was soft and balmy as the breath of June and golden sunshine poured its wealth of glory upon those wonderful vistas of mountain, sea and plain which form the historical setting of the great religious dramas of the world. Straight out through the massive gateway along a fine boulevard lined on either side with splendid trees, we kept the road which has its far away terminus at Nazareth, Galilee and the plain of Esdraelon. After a short distance how-ever, probably a mile from the city, we turned suddenly to the left and came to a large rustic gateway through which we passed on foot into the Ridván the earthly and visible symbol of the Paradise of GOD. In the guide books it is referred to as “a wonderful Persian garden”. In the books of our Bahá’í hearts it is the garden of a wonderful Persian. Old Abu’l Ghassim who kept the garden when the Blessed Perfection walked among its quiet paths,

greeted us with loving words of welcome, his face still radiant with that light which once shone upon him from the Luminary Itself. The love of this humble yet glorious soul finds expression in the flowers he so carefully rears and tends. In a few moments our hands were filled with hyacinths, narcissus, heliotrope, violets and roses, their sweet odors mingling with the gracious love and fragrance of his words and greeting.

Flowers, flowers, everywhere flowers surrounded us like a picture of enchantment; golden fruits hanging low and ripe from green branches brought back the scenes of Eden, oranges, grape-fruit, lemons and tangerines, strange-looking oriental trees with deep, thick-leaved foliage, some of them heavy-weighted with blossoms, palms, olives, cypress, dwarf evergreens and here and, there a tall, stately carob, quiet paths lading aimless, about under them, rare birds flitting overhead in the branches, where they have their nests, knowing nothing of fear, and just a soft breath of wind stirring the leaves, luring the soV11 into Elysium. This is the Ridván, the visible Garden of El-ALBA. "And there were two other trees in the midst of the garden, wonderful Towering mulberry trees growing upon an island encircled by living streams of water. For the Nahr Namen or River Belus which comes rushing down the Lebanon slopes fed by never failing sprint and streams, waters the Ridván with its pure current before it loses itself in the bosom of the Great Sea. As it approaches the garden it parts into three heads or streams, two of which pass directly through it and at times form its boundary. Before the river reaches the sea, these divided currents are again blended into one, fitting symbol of the Bahá'í Dispensation in which the Ridván of human souls is watered and refreshed by three living streams conjoined as one, flowing from the mountain of Manifestation, then divided and again conjoined after watering the garden, and pouring together into the bosom of the ocean of eternity.

Beneath the mulberry trees is the chair or rustic seat where the Blessed Perfection spent long afternoon hours, sometimes alone and silent, sometimes surrounded by the holy souls who loved Him so devotedly, speaking to them and dictating to scribes those majestic words burning with the fire of eternal truth, literally a Tree of Life in the midst of the garden. Just in front of His chair stands a flower-pot in order that no one may inadvertently sit therein. Separated a short distance is the chair or seat of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in which likewise no visitor ever sits. Here we rested a long time under the sheltering canopy of the two great trees, looking down into the depths of the pure limpid waters as they hurried by. While we sat there lost in silent reflection, Abu'l Ghassim brought us fruits of the garden, ripe delicious oranges and tangerines beautiful to the eye, refreshing to the taste and haloed by spiritual reflections of Eden and Paradise. Then we visited the little house or cottage of the gardener and saw the room where the Blessed Perfection often rested during hot midsummer afternoons. Near the window which opened toward Carmel was the chair where He sat; nothing has been disturbed, nothing changed, the simple picture just as He left it. Tea was served, then more delicious fruits, after which one of the daughters of 'Abdu'l-Bahá chanted a commune, "O Thou Who art the Almighty

and the Powerful! All are captive in Thy Hand of Power! Thou art the Helper and the Protectors Grant us Thy Blessing and Favor!

Open the doors of bounty! Look upon us in kindness! Send the life-giving breeze! Vivify the longing hearts! Illumine the eyes!

Cause the plain of the hearts to become the envy of the garden of roses and the verdant meadows! Give joy to the souls and great happiness to the spirits!

Manifest eternal power and show forth Thy mighty strength! Cause the birds of the soul of men to soar in a different atmosphere! Cause the intimate friends of the world to become acquainted with the secrets of the Kingdom of GOD!

Grant us steadfastness! Bestow upon us a constant heart! We are sinful, Thou art the Forgiver! We are creatures, Thou art the Creator! We are homeless and without a resting-place, Thou art the Protector and the Defender!

Assist us in diffusing Thy breeze and grant us help in proclaiming Thy Word. Make the destitute a ruler, give the unfortunate the treasures of the heart, grant strength to the weak and bestow upon the feeble heavenly power. Thou art the Creator, the Forgiver, and the Lord of Creation!"

After the chanting we knelt beside the chair in silent communion with the ABHÁ Spirit, then returned to sit again under the canopy of the mulberry trees willing to stay forever amid these holy, spiritual scenes. As the eye looks upon them, all the senses are permeated with peace. We breathed an inner atmosphere redolent of sanctity; our souls glowed with the Divine Life of Nearness; the Presence Itself enveloped, surrounded us.

And if our limited soul-vision awakened to such light and glory what heavenly vistas of time and eternity must have opened to the eye Of the Manifestation of or as He sat here under the leafy tent of Divine Protection looking out upon the world of humanity through these azure-tinted Mediterranean pictures! To this holy place pilgrims will come from all parts of the world, not in mere spirit of curiosity or routine of religious duty but to feel that inspiration of Divine Life which still thrills its vibrant life through the trees, mellows the heart of the Riḍván fruits, reflects from the chastened hearts= of its violets and heliotropes and sings in the flow of its glistening river. The ABBA Glory still lingers and lives in the Riḍván. GOD is still peaking as He spoke to His servant long ago – "Thou shalt not go up after the evening; turn away from them and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And it shall come to pass when thou hearest the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry-trees that thou shalt go out to battle, for know then that GOD hath gone out before thee."

It was not by mere chance and happening that Bahá'u'lláh the Manifestation of GOD planted a garden eastward in the plain of 'Akká and that therein He put the man whom He had spiritually formed. We are upon holy ground. These are illimitable vistas into which our poor dim eyes are looking. Some day we shall see clearly the Riḍván transplanted within ourselves, the wilderness and

the solitary place made glad, the desert blossoming abundantly there, yea, even with joy 3.nd singing, for we shall truly see the Glory of the Lord, the excellency of our GOD.

One more picture from this Eden of Holiness. we are at the gate of the Riḍván. Abu'l Ghassim the old faithful gardener is standing there in the soft radiance of the afternoon sun. His hands are filled with kaoricus flowers. He is looking over toward Carmel as he speaks; the sun's dying arrows are tipping the Tomb of the Báḅ with gold. He says "In the souls, of these beautiful flowers which. Bahá'u'lláh loved so much you will carry away the fragrance of the Riḍván. Remember Abu'l Ghassim'a words when you are far from here to the beloved in the West he sends the fragrances of the Blessed Perfection from the Riḍván of His Love."

VISIT TO THE TOMB.

Our visit to the Tomb of the Blessed Perfection today was the outer realization of that inner soul pilgrimage which devoted and faithful servants of GOD are making from all the religious systems of the world to meet the Manifestation of GOD in this "Day of Judgment". For now that Holy Temple in which the Spirit revealed Itself and from which the Word spoke, has become the universal Kibla of mankind. The Spirit needs Its Temple of Manifestation; the soul of man requires its Kibla of worship; and these two are one in Bahá'u'lláh. Though we have not been privileged to see Him in the flesh yet we may look upon the beauty of His life and the divinity of His teachings; be uplifted by the sacred association of these holy scenes amid which He walked and behold the Glory of GOD revealed in the Blessed Perfection of Man. The true "pilgrimage" is not a mere visit to 'Akká to look upon these scenes of historical interest with a vision colored more or less by sentiment and emotion, but it is that journey of the soul across oceans of superstition and imagination, through valleys of trials and tribulations and over mountains of obstacles to the Holy Land of Spirit where we meet GOD, see Him with the eye of a pure heart and know Him by the light and knowledge of His Manifestation. Happy are those who perceives! Blessed are those who know: Blessed are those who give ear unto this Message and attain this pilgrimage!

We drove slowly through the narrow crooked streets of the "Prison City", literally threading our way through its scenes of squalor and wretchedness, on and outward toward the great fortified entrance, that door of hope and gateway of despair through which all must pass coming or going. A few wretched shops or bazaar s line the passageway on either side as we approach the gate, mere holes in heavy walls of masonry. Mendicants and cripples, (every native of 'Akká seems to be one or the other), begged alms almost under the horses hoofs. Mute imploring eyes, eyes of sinister hatred, sightless orbs from which the light of vision had fled, sharp scrutinizing glances from soldiers and sentries are turned toward U.S as we go along until the narrow tortuous road opens into a small square just inside the walls where throngs of soldiers are sitting in

barracks and drinking-shops. Now we have passed the sentries and are outside the walls of 'Akká. The heavens seem to open and flood the picture with light and beauty. It is a golden oriental day, deep blue sky overhead, the sun brilliant in the zenith, a balmy southwest wind coming up listlessly out of the land of Egypt and almost directly across the back of old Carmel; away to the left as we go rise the heaven-kissing heads of the Lebanons, Hermon with its snowy cap surmounting them all; behind us and seeming all around us the encircling arc of the Mediterranean deeper in blue than the sky itself; a rare day, and in January too, a rare day indeed for us in every sense, a Day of GOD! From the gate the road leads straight out into the plain of 'Akká. For awhile the border of fir trees upon either side deceived us with the promise of fertility and cultivation but after half a mile the trees ceased and sandy desert-like soil, the true plain of 'Akká, came all around us. Over there to the right upon Tel-el-Fukhar a high sand dune, Napoleon I planted his guns and laid siege to 'Akká without success in 1799. Called away by momentous demands in Europe he abandoned 'Akká with the memorable words "My fortune has been arrested by a grain of sand; had I overcome 'Akká could have changed the face of the earth." Everywhere as we drove along the earth seemed crying out for water, a very realistic symbol of those parched and arid conditions of human need which have called down the deluge of Living water from the Heaven of the Divine Will in these the "latter days". The road grows more and more sandy; the going more and more difficult. After awhile we turned sharply away to the north-east; heading toward the Lebanons. Here and there we passed little clusters of mud huts, mere hovels thatched with straw, harboring chickens, dogs, donkeys and miserable looking Arabs. The sand gave place to dust which followed us like a cloud. Savage looking dogs kept guard over the mud villages. Groups of lazy vagabond men were playing cards in the dusty lanes between their habitations; the women whenever visible, hard at work. Children scantily clothed mingled with the animals in the squalid doorways of the huts, darting out to pursue us with shrill cries of that omnipresent word "baksheesh"! Three or four miles from the city gate upon a slightly raised plateau stood a group of buildings white and clean with red sloping roofs, oriental in aspect and architecture. We were approaching them. Soon we made out Bahjí the "Place of Delight" wherein the Blessed Perfection lived and just beyond it the Tomb in which His body lies. Before we reached them we were joined by a number of believers who seemed to spring up out of the earth. Passing by but not entering Bahjí, now the home of Muḥammad-'Alí, we looked reverently up at the windows of the Blessed Perfection's rooms, where He so often sat and beneath which during His life-time groups of faithful pilgrims were accustomed to gather. Beyond Bahjí we entered the Tomb, a simple unpretentious building rectangular in construction, one story in height and lighted by a number of windows upon all sides. At the threshold we removed our shoes. After passing through a small vestibule the interior opens into a large room built in the form of a court with side aisles and columns. The atmosphere is redolent of sanctity. Rich beautiful rugs cover the white stone floors. Banging around this court and standing upon the floor are numbers of costly and rare lamps, gifts from pilgrims to the shrine. Plants and flowers are growing luxu-

riantly in the centre leaving the side passageways clear. Spiritual associations halo the interior, and spiritual forces surround you as you walk slowly upon the soft silken rugs or stand silently in prayer bathed in the holy light which filters through the windows. Nobody speaks. One of the ladies with u beckons with her hand that we should go forward to the f end of the room. We do so, turning to the right and entering the sacred precinct of the Tomb itself. The same chaste simplicity prevails even in this inner holy of holies. A rug covering a great stone slab in the floor marks the restingplace of that mortal shrine in which the divine breath of Spirit once manifested Itself. We were swept with profound emotion. The ages and cycles seemed to have their quintessence and culmination. Here we stood in the presence of the Blessed Perfection Himself; that glorified Spirit now manifest in u as we knelt in prayer upon the Tomb of Its mortal body realizing in ourselves the eternal purpose of Its Incarnation in the temple of man.

The earth receded and the Haven of the Divine Will opened. We were indeed upon "holy ground". The voice of inner consciousness spoke "Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

The Spirit knows; It sees, hears and feels, but speaks not in words of tongue or pen. These are realizations through inner channels, only to be received and conveyed 511 the language of intuition and inspiration. In these precious moments we lived forward, backward through cycles of time to the threshold of eternity. All seemed so clear, so real, so true and perfect. We saw our own little lives enlarged and expanded into illimitable vistas of purpose and accomplishment. Soul quickened into Spirit. The significance of oneness with the ABHÁ Spirit became clear and evident to us. In silent wonder we withdrew; then stood a long time amid the flowers Ne loved so much, lost in vivid panoramas of past and future, seeing ourselves by the Light of the Glory Itself, as now creatures of immortal vision and eternal life. Our pilgrimage to the Tomb was perfect, complete.

Tea was served in a small ante-room just opposite the entrance door. One of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's daughters chanted a prayer and we drove "home", for "home" indeed 'Akká has become to us "home" of the Spirit of the Blessed Perfection. Nobody spoke on the way back to the prison gate. The "Holy Leaf" took me in her arms and we rode on in silence. This time we did not see the mud-villages, the Arabs, dust and sand, Ahead of us on donkeys rode a number of believers', holy and patriarchal men, their faces turned toward the sun which had now burn to sink behind the purple brow of old Carmel the Mountain of GOD. We entered the city just at sun-down; drove again through the narrow and crowded streets, narrow and crowded no longer, for we had come to realize that prison walls and oppressions of earth have no power to restrain the spirit Ms from soaring upward into that paradise of freedom where it has its home. Nay, rather through oppression persecution and imprisonment is the soul of man perfected and released unto its divinely appointed station of oneness with GOD 4nd His Manifestations.

‘ABDU’L-BABA.

Although the secret of the power and beauty of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá lies in the eclipse of his personality and the shining forth of the Spirit Itself in his perfect servitude to GOD and man; although what impressed me most was his impersonality, yet I find I cannot forget the face, the features and the man so beloved by the people of BAHÁ throughout the world. To meet Him is to come under the charm and spell of the spirit, but notwithstanding the inner realization, memory holds up the winsome lovable picture of the personality to the outer eye. Knowing that the light within the temple is the reality will describe the temple itself.

After climbing the long flight of steps leading from the inner courtyard, we were taken into a large light room immediately to the right. A soft divan extended completely around it. There we waited, welcomed in succession by several Bahá’í brothers, until – Miss Barney arose and announced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He was clothed in a long black robe open at front, disclosing another robe of light tan; upon his head a pure white turban. The face was light itself, the voice ringing with happiness. A man of medium height, strongly and solidly built, weight about one hundred and seventy pounds, alert and active in every movement, the head thrown back and splendidly poised upon the shoulders, a profusion of iron-gray hair bursting out at the sides of the turban and hanging long upon the neck, a large massive head full-domed, remarkably wide across the forehead and temples, the forehead rising like a great palisade above the eyes, the eyes themselves very wide apart, their orbits large and deep, looking out like soul-windows from under the massive overhanging brows; strong, perfect nose, generous ears, the mouth and chin kindly and tender, yet fixed in unswerving decision, complexion a creamy white, beard same color as the hair, worn full over the face and carefully trimmed at almost full-length; this is a very insufficient word picture of a face which in its composite is haloed with love and expresses majesty. The focus of the soul of this wonderful being is in the eyes. Love lingers in their depths and tenderness quivers in flashes of sympathetic light upon the lids. If the tongue were silent the eyes would voice the Spirit’s messages in tremulous thrills of eloquence. When the full battery of this irresistible personality is turned upon the soul, you are immersed in an ocean of Love, you see that which was hitherto invisible, hear the inaudible, and attain knowledge which had seemed unknowable. As to His power there can be no doubt. The secret of His spiritual beauty lies in the eclipse of His personality. The Holy Spirit is manifest in this perfect temple of servitude, this incarnation of love.

One morning about a week after our arrival we saw Him in the narrow garden strip which borders the sea just outside the crumbling stone wall. He was standing under a small evergreen, looking out over the blue Mediterranean, His face turned upward into the sunlight silent, motionless, reflective, perhaps in prayer. A short distance away from Him stood a group of ten believers, all of them patriarchal men, holy and picturesque in garb and attitude, the very reproduction of the group of disciples who attended the Christ of Nazareth nineteen hundred

years ago. Some of them wore pure white gowns and turbans, some with a fold of red in the head-dress, some with the green turban, indicating lineage from the Prophet. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in full black with a white turban. All stood motionless for a long time; then the central figure began to walk slowly to and fro, inhaling the fresh breeze coming down from the pure laboratory of the Lebanons. When he stopped, they stopped; when he walked they followed, always maintaining a distance and evidencing love and reverence in their movements. Love haloed the picture. The scenes of long ago had come back in living reality before our eyes, so accustomed to different pictures in the West. After awhile an elderly believer arrived at the gate of the garden carrying a large bunch of roses, which he gave to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who took them aside, buried His face in them a long time, then slowly separated them into small bunches, which MA gave to each of the brethren. As He did so they held His gift to their lips, then placed the floral treasure in the bosom of their loose flowing gowns. Altogether it was a heavenly picture, these bronze faces luminous with the light of love, splendid looking men, but doubly glorious in their spiritual beauty, pictures of what men should be, of what men must ultimately become when humanity is up-lifted by the grace of GOD into His spiritual image. GOD is manifest in any man who has the power of transforming hearts into this semblance. These loving souls had been drawn together by divine attraction from different walks of life, and still more significantly, from different systems of religious belief. Among them were Jews, Muḥammadans, Parsees, and Christians; now all Bahá’ís, now loving each other as Christ taught.

On a Friday morning we saw another picture which carried us back to scenes in old Jerusalem and by the waters of Galilee. It is the custom of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá each week on Friday morning to distribute alms to the poor. From his own scanty store he gives a little to each one of the needy ones who come to ask assistance. This morning about one hundred were ranged in line, seated and crouching upon the ground in the open street of the court where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s house stuns. And such a nondescript collection of humanity they were All kinds of men, women, and children, poor, wretched, hopeless in aspect, half-clothed, many of them crippled and blind, beggars indeed, poor beyond expression, waiting, expectant, until from the doorway came ‘Abdu’l-Bahá attended by His brother. He was clothed in pure white from foot to turban. Quickly moving from one to another, stopping sometimes to leave a word of sympathy and encouragement, dropping small coins into each eager outstretched palm, touching the face of a child, taking the hand of an old woman who held fast to the hem of His garment as He paused along, speaking holy words of light to old men with sightless eyes, inquiring after those too feeble and wretched to come after their pittance of help and sending them their portion with a message of love and uplift, this is what we saw with our western eyes untrained to holy scenes, this is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Servant of God as Be ie. Light and love seemed to emanate from Him.: As we looked, our eager, rushing, selfish, money-grasping life in the West beyond the peaceful blue of the Mediterranean horizon, seemed dwarfed, insignificant, little, and our hearts turned wearily away from its burdens to the rest of these

quiet, holy scenes in a land made holy by such service, such sacrifice, such love. O the rest and peace of doing, of being the Will of GOD! The saints and holy ones of GOD found the true secret of life,- "they went about doing good".

A few days later we said goodbye to 'Abdu'l-Baba, saw Him standing radiant and beautiful at the top of the long staircase which leads down to the inner court where the fountain plays and roses bloom all the year. The light of love was still upon His face; it is always there; it is a face of love, and so I shall ever see Him.

From notes by Mary J. MacNutt.