

Home of Baha Ollah
 Acca. Syria
 April 14th 1915

Dear friends!

For one day we are going to stay in Acca and tomorrow afternoon we will leave for Haifa. The Beloved gave me this interesting information this morning as he descended from the stairs of the house in Abou ^{Sena} preparatory to his departure. He called on the family of Mashadi Ibrahim Gattah to comfort them again. When he returned he gathered the Sheik and the believers around him and spoke to them on the negligence of the people and their lack of spirituality. "Mankind are naturally heedless" he said and prone to commit injustice and excess. They do not turn their faces toward God and do not let their hearts be swayed by ideal emotions. Like unto the bee they swallow in the mire of materialism and find no eternal consolation in heavenly objects. They graze over green pastures and are drowned in the sea of inadvertence. Stiff-necked and self-willed they take their narrow circle of affected fellow-feeling as the limitless sea of universal sympathy or the tiny rivulet of their self-love as the fountain-head of an all-inclusive brotherhood. They are blind but suppose themselves to have been endowed with the all-searching eyes of the Omnipotence. They are deaf but imagine the all-hearing ears of the Almighty have been granted them. They are mute but they surmise the life-giving tongue of Christ is theirs. Restless and vain are their imaginations! The lovers of truth must not be deceived by these shadowy appearances. Their minds must be open for the reception of new revelations of reality, the gates of their hearts must be left ajar for the entertainment of new angelic guests from the supernal garden of Infinity. Then rising from his seat he rode on the horse of Sheikh Saleh and descended the mountain, requesting the friends not to follow him. The carriage was ready and only Khasro and Ahmad were the privileged companions of the short trip. Near the spring he asked Isfandiyor to stop the carriage and send Khasro to the family of Sheikh Asaad with a loving message of greeting and whether in the absence of the Sheikh he can render them any service. He returned with the word that a boy of their family has been

for Acca on foot and they would appreciate ^{it} very much if the Master asked him to ride in the vehicle. This was done a few minutes afterwards. On the way he said: "All this lovely plain was visited with ^{the} blessed and holy eyes of Baha Ollah. Whenever I pass through it I remember those days in which the Sun of His Face shone upon all the contingent beings." Then he asked me to speak. I said: "I am looking forward to the time when the Master will go out into the world to preach the Glad Gospel of the Kingdom of Abha." He said: "God willing. Insha-Allah. I am also waiting for the opportune time." Looking at the farmers who were ploughing the fields with their primitive ploughshares he said: "Dost thou see the farmers furrowing the fields for the sowing of new seeds? Are they not working with tireless exertion? If they do not plough the ground, if they do not sow the seeds, if they do not look after them and pull out the tares and weeds, if they do not water the soil, will they gather any crops? No. In serving the Cause of God we must ever keep the example of the farmers before our eyes. It is not enough to plough the ground, we must scatter the seeds. It is not sufficient to sow the seeds, we must root out the tares and weeds. It is not enough to pluck up the tares, we must water the soil and watch over it for several months till the harvests are gathered. Thus in teaching the Cause it is not sufficient to give the message, we must live it, work for it, be attracted to it, enkindle others with its fire, perfume the nostrils with its fragrance, surround our companions with its atmosphere, impress mankind with its grandeur and loftiness and raise the lowly and down-trodden to the highest pinnacle of honor and glory. Not through idleness do we accomplish anything but through ceaseless, joyful, ever expanding activity."

Because the wind was blowing into his face very strongly he left his front seat and sat next to me in the back of the carriage and continued his talk till we reached Bahajee. We stayed here till 5 P. M. and Aga Mehdi prepared for us a nice lunch. After his short siesta we prayed silently at the Threshold of Baha Ollah and then he gave us a talk on how the palace of Bahajee was built and acquired for the residence of the Blessed Beauty.

Riding in the carriage we turned our faces toward Acca and soon we were in the holy house, breathing the atmosphere of love and enjoying the peacefulness and serenity of the place. In the evening the believers of God entered in the Presence of the Beloved and listened to his words of Truth. Amongst other things he said: "The tests of God have encircled the world of humanity from all directions. From one direction the horrors of war have laid waste millions of homes, destroyed the edifice of their wellbeing and prosperity and demolished the fabrics of their hopes and aspirations. From another direction famine and its evil plight is threatening the lives of many a community. From a third direction locusts have poured down upon the heads of the already poverty-stricken inhabitants. From a fourth direction we are told that epidemic diseases such as plague, typhus, Cerebro-spinal Meningitis have visited certain parts of the country. No one is beyond the range of these catastrophes. Every one is suffering. To this general rule of the Creator there is not one single exception. It is as though God has thrown humanity into a boiling pot of trials and they are being refined, cleansed and purified. The gross matters will be cast away in this process. Notwithstanding all this I do see very few who are really mindful, ^{rather} rather day by day their negligence is increased. ~~They~~ ^{They} ~~pray~~ ^{pray or supplicate} or invoking God to turn away these ordeals from mankind, to shower His Mercy upon them and to encircle them with His Best ^{Gifts} also. Thus it is said: 'We have caused to descend upon them the small Calamity and withheld the Most great one, lest they may be warned and return to their Lord' Again it is said: 'Their hearts are like stone or even harder, for perchance out of the stone ^{will} gush forth the limpid spring.' Therefore you who are the believers and the elect of God pray, pray in their behalf; - so that the conflagration set ablaze by the Kings and emperors may be extinguished, the day of Peace, goodwill and better things may come, the afflicted souls may be set free from the chains of slavery and torment, the world may find rest and composure and the stars of prosperity may shine and gleam. Pray, Pray that God may not punish His ^{unfaithful} servants more than this that He may