

Home of Baha-ollah⁷¹
Acca, Syria.

April 22^d 1914

Dear friends!

Our celebration of the Feast of Rizwan would not have been complete without at least spending a few days in Acca and under the roof of the Home of Baha-ollah. This is just the right season - the season of roses and spiritual motion, the time of rejoicing and happy memories. The Master is feeling well, the Bahais are working all over the world for the promotion of the Word of God. The Bounties of the Lord are spreading before us, the Favors of the Merciful are inexhaustible and the sea of divine revelation is in agitation.

Last night five pilgrims arrived from India and the Beloved received them in his drawing-room. After welcoming them he spoke to them briefly. The contents of his talk may be taken as a Rizwan Message to the Bahai world:-

"Praise be to God, the news received from all parts

72 indicate the fact that the believers of God are striving in the promulgation of the Cause of God. Today honor and victory are destined for that soul who has freed himself from every thought and is engaged in the exaltation of the Word of God and the diffusion of the Fragrances of God. This is the season of seed-sowing. Whosoever scattereth the seeds will gather many harvests. Today the matter of conveying the Message is successful or confirmed. For example during the season of seed-sowing, the matter of ploughing and planting is successful and not harvesting and crop-gathering. We must all of us - cleanse and purify the mirrors of our hearts from every imagination and idea and day and night summon mankind to the Kingdom of God and raise the Cry of "Ya Baha El Abha". Then you will observe what a world-stirring resurrection and revival is set up and how the stupendous Power of the Cause of God has become manifest and evident. To Day the matter of

Teaching is incumbent and obligatory upon ^{all} the ⁷³ believers — men and women. For this season, Abdul Baha notwithstanding the infirmity, weakness^{and} indisposition of the physical body begged permission and consent spiritually from the Holy Threshold and supplicated Confirmation and assistance and then hastened towards the empires of the far West. He sought rest neither by day nor by night. He longed for no comfort and yearned after no composure. Although often he was unwell and many a night he suffered ^{from} insomnia or was passing through a fever, yet he would present himself before great conventions and raised the voice of Ya Baha El Abha in his churches.

Now my utmost hope is that through the Favor and Bounty of the Blessed Perfection I may again with infinite detachment turn my face toward another direction, that I may cry out till my very last breath and through the music of the Supreme Concourse I

94 may invite the people of the world to the Kingdom of Abba. Pray, ^{that} perchance this most great Bestowment be revealed and this weak body and meek spirit be assisted to turn ^{the} ~~his~~ face toward the Kingdom of Abba while walking in the path of the Blessed Perfection and drinking the Chalice of martyrdom in the city of sacrifice - thus the end of my life may be performed with the Fragrance of the must.

When I awoke this morning a heavy rain was falling and it continued for more than one hour. There was a dark mist all over the mountain and the Bay was enveloped ^{by} ~~with~~ it. We knew yesterday that the Master of Wisdom ^{was} ~~is~~ going to Acca to day, but when I looked at the rain and the fog I said to myself: he will surely not go in this weather. After an hour the rain stopped and the clouds vanished. Like any other day I took my papers and descended the mountain. Then far I saw the carriage ^{waiting} at the gate and when I arrived near, Khesro told me the Master ^{was} ~~is~~ going to Acca. Not having any

45

time to go up the Mountain and take a few necessary objects I stood ready for his Command. After a few minutes he descended the stairs and walked straight toward the carriage. Mirza Jalal and Khessa joined him and as I stood there waiting he called aloud my name "Come up, Mirza Ahmad. Where art thou?"

The ^{two} believers from Neirez had arranged to give a tea in Bahajee this afternoon, so all the Pilgrims ^{were} invited. When the Master's carriage arrived at the station they had already taken their seats in the train. We bought our tickets and joined the friends. All the people in the station both strangers and natives show the greatest amount of respect toward the Beloved as he passes by through the crowd. When the train started for Aice the Master came out and stood in the passage to watch the long range of the Mountain and the plain covered with verdure. I heard him talking with much interest with an Arab about the land valuation & the high cost of living and consequently I joined him.

16 Suddenly he turned his face to me and smilingly said:- "Who hath said that wherever I go thou must follow me? Hast thou become my shadow? Is it not more than two years that thou hast been accompanying me? What hast thou done that thou must travel with me all the time?" I said:- "I have done nothing and am not good enough to be with the best Beloved even for a second. I am not worthy of Thy Bestowals. Thy Bounty and Favor have chosen this broken vessel, this shattered instrument. I only pray to be given the capacity and ability to understand and appreciate the value of all these heavenly Graces." When we arrived at the station there were none of the believers to welcome us, because the Beloved had sent them word last night that they must not come. Instead of going to the House ^{he} rode on the donkey to Bahajee. The pilgrims walked after him. Khassro went to town to prepare the lunch. On the way to Bahajee we were soaked with a big shower, ^{which} lasted several minutes.

As soon as we reached the home of ^{ago} Sayad Ali Afnan ⁷⁷
the Master took off his Ala to ^{have it} be dried in the sun, and
^{then} went in to rest. All the Pilgrims gathered in the
guest House and commenced to chant the ^{Special} Tablet of
for the Riquian known ^{as} by the name "The Sun of the Words".
The plain of Bahajee was a mass of verdure and flowers.
White and yellow daisies and red anemones had trans-
formed the country into silvery, golden and ruby colors.
A more beautiful sight of nature one could hardly see
anywhere ~~else~~. The sun was now shining in its ancient
glory, and the believers came out of the rest house and
were divided into different social groups. One group
was singing Bahai poems, another chanting Tablets,
~~but~~ one conversing on the high themes of ^{the} spirit, and
this one recalling the days when the Blessed Perfection
pitched up the tent of Peace and brotherhood quite
near by, ~~on an elevation~~, and the people ^{were} ushered in
under its shade to learn from Him the path of
truth and righteousness.

While we were eating our lunch around a large

18
Table the Master entered the room and wanted to know whether we ^{had} enough to eat. Then he ascended the old, rickety stairs to his own little room on the roof.

Having finished our lunch we came out into the garden and the Beloved, hearing our footsteps, left his room and stood ~~erect~~ at the top of the stairs. With his ^{white} cream overcoat, and ^{his} long, white locks falling on his shoulder, and his white beard, he looked exactly like the archangel descending from heaven and ^{suddenly} revealing himself to the astonished world. Standing thus he commenced to speak:— "In the neighborhood of Bagdad there lived a man and a Bahai by the name Mo-hamad, the thorn-picker. He lived about 21 miles away from the city. Once he invited me and a number of other believers to his home. In order to cover this long distance on foot we started at midnight and arrived there before noon tired and exhausted. His establishment consisted of a small bamboo hut. Outside the sun shone brightly and the desert sand was hot. Perspiringly ^{we} all crowded into this little hut, ^{and} but the warm hospitality

79
of our heat cooled our heat. He ordered his wife to prepare
the lunch. "On my eyes, my lord" she said cheerily. From
the corner of the hut she brought forth a few handfuls of
flour. She kneaded this into dough. Then she added a
few dates to it and made it into a round ^{Ball} ~~thing~~ like
a hard cannon-shell. In the midst of the hut there was
a primitive earthen oven. She made a fire with thorns
and threw the ~~cannon~~ ball into the center of ^{the oven} it to be cooked.
From a human standpoint we could not stand the heat
of the Arabian desert nor the heat inside the bamboo hut,
but making light of it we chanted Tablets, sang Bahai
songs and did not mind the natural discomforts. After
an hour the woman took out of ^{the} blazing fire this bomb-
shell, placed it on a rough wooden tray, cut it into
two and ~~set~~ it before us with ^a natural grace. Our
lunch consisted of this half-cooked, black dough. There
were no spoons, so we ate it with our fingers. A
similar dinner was prepared ~~for us~~ for the evening, and
after eating we bade our kind and genial host,
well and started homeward. Because, Mo ha

the thorn-picket, was the flame of the Love of God, the relish of his food is yet in my taste. I have attended many large banquets and partaken of various dishes, but this was better than all of them. I have not forgotten and will never forget it." X

At half past two we started towards the Holy Tomb. The Master was there. He anointed every one with rose water and afterwards chanted in a sweet low voice the visiting Tablet. After this he walked to the guest House and with his own blessed hand distributed oranges

and bonbons. Then followed by all the believers he visited the Tomb of Great Afman not very far away and ordered ^{the construction} of the grave of Mirza Aga Jan. "Whatever he did towards me during his lifetime I have forgiven him. I hope, through the Favors of the Blessed Perfection, he may be submerged in the sea of His Forgiveness." He asked all the Pilgrims to return and that he ^{would} return in a day or two. He rode, then on the donkey, and ordered us to ride in the carriage and in half an hour we were all again in the Blessed Home. In the evening he called all the believers to his room. He was fatigued and therefore was reclining on the divan. The old believers tell me that this was exactly similar to those days ^{that} Baha-Allah was living. The Beloved was sitting in the same place that his Great Father used to sit when receiving the friends. He gave an informal, intimate talk, relating a number of historical events that transpired in this very room, taking us back in imagination to those excellent days of the Manifestation. Afterwards a number of "Muejids" called to pay their respect to Abbas Effendi, the friend of the poor and oppressed.