

Bahai Jst. Mount Carmel
 Baqa Syria

July 20th 1914

Dear friends!

Our dear brother Mirza Ali Akbar Rafsanjani with a believer from Maro, ~~Russia~~, left this evening for Constantinople. From that point they will proceed to Russia and then Persia. The Master received them two or three times during the day, pouring upon them his rich blessings and benedictions. When we ascended the Mountain this evening and entered the Pilgrims Home, for the first time I found no pilgrims - every body had left and ^{the} empty rooms and quiet surroundings echoing back the pleasant memories of those stirring, happy, crowded months of the past. Aga Muhammad Hassan looked sleepy and forlorn. He missed the ^{bright} faces of the pilgrims who greeted him every night on their return from the house of the Beloved. I could not help but to think of the many, many pilgrims who have come and gone during the past seven months. What did they gain while they stayed in the Holy Land? Will the Eastern world be made richer, more tolerant, more susceptible to spiritual ideals? because these

Pilgrims returned to their respective countries with their hearts and minds full with the knowledge of the Lord? Will they quicken the dead and spread the Glad-tidings of the Kingdom? Just as the body of man is composed of millions and millions of active, living cells; each ^{cell} or each group of cells performing an specified work, supplying and in turn demanding co-operation and assistance from other colonies of cells - likewise the Bahai Cause is a vast co-operative, divine Society, each member or each assembly corresponding to a cell or a community of cells, devoting their time and energy to the furtherance of a number of definite principles and indirectly helping other assemblies who are widely scattered but belong to the same body and for their nourishment depending upon the same centre. Hence these pilgrims, as the spiritual cells of this spiritual body are closely connected with the ideal Central Nervous System of the Cause and respond immediately to his slightest command or suggestion. Just as the brain is the great centre of Nervous system and its function is to govern all the organs of the body, and to cause them all to work together for the Common good, similarly Abdul Baha as the spiritual guide and preceptor of the Bahai

Cause is guiding and controlling the welfare and prosperity of all the Bahais. Again, just as from every cell comes a cell, likewise these Bahai pilgrims realizing their responsibilities are devoting all their spare time to the teaching of the Cause, the promotion of the divine principles: for they know, it is only through their ceaseless activity that the number of the Bahais is being increased and the Flag of Universal Peace raised higher.

All this morning the Beloved was busy receiving friends and strangers and filling his environment with the sunshine of his happiness and joy. He gave me about 30 Tablets to be translated and mailed to their respective destinations.

It was about 2 pm and I was busily translating when I heard the voice of the Master in front of the door. I hurried out of my room and I saw he was already in the carriage which was driven way toward the Tomb of the Bab. Without waiting I took the pedestrian road and as he alighted from carriage I was there to salute him. All the Students and our two departing Pilgrims were there. The tea being served he spoke at first about some incidents relative to the building

of the Tomb, recounting most interestingly the difficulties overcome and the obstacles removed. While he was relating how the successive obstructions were taken away and the road paved one could not help bringing to his mind the saying of a great European scholar concerning the characteristics of the Great man: "The mind that never wanders, the Eye that ^{never} blanches and the Will that never relaxes."

Then he related the story of a Motassarraf of Acre who several years ago tried his best to harm the ^{Bahians} believers. "There was a Motassarraf "he said" by the name Abdorrahman Pasha. In some way he became most inimical against us. He did his best to find a pretext, no matter how inaccurate and thus sentence us to exile or other forms of punishment. One evening he called on the Nafti and told him that he has received a cablegram from the Sublime Port which states that Abbas Effendi's power has become so paramount in Acre that the influence of the local authorities has become negligible. Therefore some practical steps must be taken to stop the further spread of his power. The first thing to be done tomorrow is to close the shops

of all the Persians, arrest them and throw them into the prison; then arrest Akhas Effendi himself. In short he boasted of many dire punishments that he will mete us tomorrow. That very night I was invited to the house of Beem-Bashi and while I was there they brought these what they called distressing news. They were very agitated and wished me to send a cable to the Governor-General, begging him to withdraw his threatening orders. I told ^{them} that is quite impossible, that they should not be worried and that God knows ^{better} how to deal with these treacherous people. After midnight we bade farewell to our gracious host and each person went to his house to sleep.

Early in the morning we heard some one knocking at the door of the house and the telegraph Manager was ushered into my room with a burning face. 'What is the news?' I asked. 'I have just received a telegram' he answered ^{from the Governor General,} 'deposing ^{the} Motosarrafi, stating that a commission is on his way to investigate his affairs and kiss the hands of Akhas Effendi'.

On the other hand Abdorrahman Pasha left his house very early and taking with him several guards

went to the Bazaar and stood in a corner. He was waiting for the time the believers open their stores and he may order their arrest. While he was thus waiting, never realizing that his doom is already sealed, Mofti passed by. No sooner he saw him than he flew off ^{in a} tangent, flared up and stormed. 'What is this secret?' he cried out. 'I have heard that the Manager of the telegraph office has called on Abbas Effendi early this morning and thou hast called at the house of the Judge at an unusual hour. What does all this mean? What is this intrigue and conspiracy?' Mofti said, 'Your Excellency! There is no plot. Only I hope that God willing, you will be promoted to a higher government position.' 'Oh!' Motosaraf cried out in astonishment, understanding his situation. Cowering and cringing with fear he beckoned to his guards to leave the market and hurried back to his home. Thus in this miraculous way he was defeated in carrying out his plan of arresting and imprisoning the believers. That evening I was walking in the street and I saw a tall man covered with a counterpane, and a shawl was ^{over} ~~over~~ ^{around his body} ~~around~~ it and his head he wore 'Japy-yargel'. When I approached him I was surprised to see Moto-

sarraf in this fantastic disguise. He had called on the town commissioner who had some influence with the Governor General to intercede for him; - so that he might be sent away without the usual disgrace attending the disposition of a Turkish official. When he saw me he began to plead and implore; - in order that I may also mediate in his behalf. 'you are the only person in this world' he said who does not dream of any retaliation but these many persons to whom I have done evil, now that they have heard I am deposed, will do their utmost to vilify my character and ruin my reputation. you are forgiving. I beg you to come to my assistance.' All the friends know how well I treated him and he left Aca very happy. "

After relating this interesting story he conducted all of us to the Holy Tomb of the Bab and he chanted the Visitation Tablet in the most wonderful clear voice. Every one was in a worshipful attitude. After this heavenly service he went to the Pilgrims' Home to meet three European Newspapermen. They had brought their own interpreter with them, so he did not take me with him.

The Beloved's talk in the evening was very significant and every one thought it was in reference to the unpleasant activities of a number of heedless souls in ———. As it was rather short and symbolic I will bring this letter to a close with its translation:—

"Today I was thinking over the following Subject: The heavenly Farmer came and cleared the ground from thorns and thistles. He harrowed the field and prepared it for plantation. With the utmost trials, sufferings, hardships and vicissitudes he toiled on till the land was cleared of all spines and underbushes. The ground was furrowed deep, pure seeds were sown and young trees planted;— so that in time there may appear a waving field of wheat and a fruitful garden. He expected to realize thousands of Crops at the harvest time and abundant fruit during the season;— thus heavenly blessings and spiritual fertility might become revealed. Having planted these tender trees he irrigated them with the Water of life and caused the sun of His Grace ~~pour~~ ^{shine} upon them. Then he ^{did} set about instructing His servants ^{how} to take care of the farm and how to train the garden. He enjoined upon them that if they followed strictly

the path of
 their high duty the farm will grow and be crowned with
 many a good crop and the trees will develop and produce
 many kinds of fruits.

Then while the stalks are yet green and unripened, a
 number of people come up and start to cut them with the
 sickles. If the overseer cries out at them: 'What are you
 doing? Why are you reaping the green stems? This is not
 just. The divine Farmer has labored hard, - so that at the
 proper season he may gather in many harvests.' They
 answer back: 'What do we care with the labors of the divine
 Farmer? We are in a hurry. We need grass for our animals.'
 The overseer tells them: 'Then go to the prairies and plains
 and there you will find green grass to feed your animals.'
 They say: - 'No! No! The prairies are too far and this farm
 is so near. We have not the courage to venture out of
 this district.' Again they start to cut down the young
 trees. The overseer coming up asks them impatiently: -
 'What are you doing again? Do not chop these tender plants. Do
 not cut them so mercilessly.' They reply: 'Dont bother
 us any more. We have nothing to do with your agricul-
 tural precautions. We need wood, we need kindlings
 to make fire.' The overseer tells them: - 'There are

many wild trees in the jungle. Go there and cut as many as you like but leave these trees. The spiritual Gardener has planted these trees and he hopes to gather much fruit but if you cut them down now, there will be no fruit in ^{its} season! The gardener has kindled many shining lights. All of a sudden he observes these people are trying to extinguish these lights one by one. He demands of them: 'Why are you doing this?' They say: 'We love darkness. We want to steal and rob men. We cannot pilfer and purloin while so many lights are burning. We can only carry along our business while covered with the mantle of darkness! What an injustice is this! What a cowardice is this! What a tyranny is this! What a heedlessness is this! In short, the point is this: - His Holiness the Báb underwent persecutions and martyrdom; His Holiness Baha-ollah accepted willingly sufferings, exiles and ^{their} attendant hardships - till at last this field was cleared from the thorns and tares of human selfishness, it was furrowed with the hands of thousands earnest souls, ^{the pure seeds of the divine} ~~the pure seeds of the divine~~ ^{teachings were sown} and watered with the blood of thousands of martyres. Now it has

fallen to our lot to superintend this farm with our ceaseless effort and untiring exertion, it is apportioned to us to irrigate and take care of it - perchance through our endeavor many harvests be gathered and the heavenly blessings be vouchsafed.

Those souls who are severed from all else save God, ^{are} attracted ~~with~~ the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, are perfumed with the Fragrances of the rose-garden of Abba, have renounced everything except the Good-pleasure of the Lord, are submerged in the Sea of Divine Mercy - they will strive by day and by night - so that this spiritual Farm may be protected from the prowling of jackals and ^{the ravages of the} wolves. Then ^{day} by day, the greenness, the luxuriance, the beauty and the verdancy of the farm will increase and those who have worked for its protection enjoy its wonderful color and loveliness. The believers of God must exert themselves to sow the seeds of wisdom and Knowledge in the virgin soil of the hearts and water them with spiritual rain descending from the heaven of the Divine Will.