

Home of Baha-ollah.

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Acca, Syria

March 31st 1914

Dear friends!

What a joy to live again in the Home of Baha-
o-ollah - the center of spiritual light and life, wisdom and
understanding! One finds here a peace that passeth ^{all} unders-
tanding and marvels at the New Faith born in this world!
Just picture in your mind the high, thick walls of the
military barrack, its closed door and forbidding guards.
This barrack built in the center of a town surrounded
by immense fortifications, ramparts, ~~mole~~ ^{moat}, battresses,
and most careful defensive measures - a prison within
a prison, a wheel within a wheel - dark, cruel, hopeless and
unbearable. What ~~will~~ ^{would} be your mental and spiritual
attitude toward the world and mankind if they arrested
you and your family without any substantial reason
and incarcerated you for many years in a place
like unto this! Naturally from a human standpoint you
~~would~~ lose all hope. Why? Because all the means

of communications with the outside world are closed
 before your face, and to all intent and purpose you and
 your cause are lost. But from behind the thick walls
 of the Military Barracks and closed door; from behind
 the closed gate of Acca; while groaning under the heavy
 chains ^{Baha-o'llah} he proclaimed to the people of the world the mes-
 sage of Universal Peace. Out of the darkness of despair
 the ^{white wings} ~~rising~~ message of Hope shone forth; the rains
 of a new conviction and divine consciousness
 descended from the heaven of the Will of God and
 out of ^{the} depths of the sea of revelation new pearls of en-
 thusiasm and Faith appeared. Calm and serene all
 the believers of Acca manifest the same attributes and
 characteristics which were fully revealed in the Temple
 of His Holiness Baha-o'llah. They are God's elect and
 are filled with the Faith, Hope and Charity as loved
 and interpreted by the Supreme Manifestation.
 They live the real Bahai life, unostentatious spirituality
 and ^{the practice of} loving-kindness toward one another. Every one
 loves them and tries to imitate them ^{the life of true} in simplicity.

In the morning the Master called me and delivered
into my hands a number of my Tablets for translation.
About eleven o'clock I left the house of the Master to
attend^t some personal business in the Bazaar and as I
was going back I saw a believer coming toward me with
the message that the Master ^{wanted} ~~wants~~ me. When I entered
~~in~~ his Presence three of the Pilgrims were then and he
was speaking to them about certain events pertaining to
the old history of the Cause, and the misdeeds of Subhi
Ezaki, and how during his 40 yrs stay in Cyprus, although
under the English Rule, ~~freedom~~ ^{freedom yet} ~~was enjoyed~~ ^{he} he was
unable to reach even one soul, while ~~Taha~~-ollah sur-
rounded by the most insurmountable difficulties
spread the Cause of God in all parts of the world.
Then when the Pilgrims left the room the Beloved told me
to be ready ~~to~~ leave in the afternoon for Acre. I hurried
up the mountain and was ready in an hour. I locked
the door of my Rest not knowing ^{exactly} ~~when~~ ^{when} I will return
exactly, and descended the mountain with youthful
joyousness and happy heart. One hour spent in

¹⁶ the companionship of the Beloved is equal to a thousand years in paradise. In half an hour the Master followed by Khosro came out of the house. A carriage was ready and he asked me to sit beside him. In another carriage Rouba Khanom; Moynavar Khanom; the wife of Aga Sayad Ali Afshar and Khosro followed. While we were in the station the Master went toward an old, sick man whom he happened to know years ago, and started to inquire about his health, and so arranged that ^{for him to go} he ~~may send him to hospital~~. Having bought the tickets we got our seats in the train, the Master ^{had} a compartment all to himself, the ladies ^{had} another and Mirza Ali Akbar of Russia, Ahmad, his wife's brother, Khosro and myself in a third compartment. Looking out of the windows we could see the calm, lovely sea on one side, the range of Mount Carmel on the other, and the green, flowery country on all sides. After one hour we reached the station and although the Aqa Behavers did not know the Master's arrival yet half a dozen of them were there

to welcome him. There were no carriages in sight so the Beloved
walked to the home. On the way he told us not to wait for him
but hasten our steps^{as}. He would like to walk all alone.
All the way long the people of Acre came forward and wel-
comed him back. The children were running toward him
and ^{by} kiss his hands. Having reached home we found more
believers and ^{the Master} he arrived a few minutes later. He spoke a
few words with each and then ascended the steps to
the ^{second} ~~third~~ floor of the house. Meanwhile the believers
gathered in the room and we started to talk about
the Cause. Alul Iasem and Aga Mehdi were there
with a number of bouquets of flowers from the Bazaar
and the Garden surrounding the Holy Shrine. Many stories
were related to me by a number of old Bahais, ^{all}
of them fascinating in their beauty, simplicity and the
^{they contain} moral and spiritual lessons ^{that can be} to impart to those who are
of hesitating feet and wavering faith.
^{After awhile} Then the Beloved of the hearts descended the steps
and entered the reception room. The old and tried
veterans were there to salute him and he was ^{delighted}

to look into their benign faces set aglow with the fire of his Love:- "It was sometimes" he said "that I ^{have been} longing to come to come to A.C.C. Every day I was expecting to leave ^{Hayra} but difficulties were in the path and they had to be removed. Now praise be to God that I have come and will associate with you for the next few days."

Then a number of Arabs and Turks arrived and were welcomed by the Master. Just at this time two questions are much discussed in all the circles: women's rights and ^{military projects} Militarism. During the last few years suffrage ideas have been spreading quietly behind the harems. The men were ignorant of it, everybody was ignorant of it and now suddenly the floodgate is set loose and at least the men of Constantinople have found it necessary to resort to drastic measures. Suffrage Clubs have been organized, ^{progressive circulars} intelligent Bylaws incorporating their demands have been ^{written} drafted and circulated; women's journals and magazines have sprung up, publishing excellent articles, and public meetings were held. Then one fine day, the members

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of these Clubs all of whom belong to the substantial Classes
of the Society cast away the veils. They were not only 10 or 50
or one hundred but four hundred strong. The staid,
fossilized class of the Society ~~were~~ were shocked, the good Mussulmans
were alarmed, and the government forced into action. These
four hundred liberty-loving women were divided into
several groups. One group composed of forty ~~are~~ ^{have} ~~were~~
exiled to Acca and will arrive in a few days. Thus you
see the lively gossip of the ancient city of Acca is one of
the most puzzling modern questions. ^{of suffrage} Everybody is talking ^{about}
it, and it is really surprising to see how numerous
are those who are in favor of removing the veils ^{from} off the
faces of ^{the} women. Many men with whom I have talked
think the custom is not only archaic but thought-stifling.
The Turkish authorities thinking to extinguish this light
of liberty have greatly added to its flame, and their
high-handed action has materially assisted the
creation of a wider public opinion and a better
understanding of this crucial problem. X O

The other question is the formation of a Military

and strategic quarter out of Aca. Although such was the former position of this town yet of late it has been neglected but it is going to assume its bygone importance. I hear that six regiments of soldiers with their officers will be stationed here. Many officers have already arrived and are at their wit's ends how to live here. They are hunting for houses and as a result of this the rents have become trebled. Many soldiers are without any shelter and the question of housing and feeding them is the town topic.

Taking the present situation into consideration and the opportunity it affords the Beloved spoke with whomsoever came to night on Suffrage, equality between men and women and Universal Peace. They listened to his words and advice with attention and marvelled at his wisdom and thorough knowledge of these subjects.

Mirza Ali Akbar and myself were invited to sleep in the house of Aga Hossein Ash-jee. He is a very kind and hospitable Bahar.