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House of Baha-Allah

Acca, Syria

April 23^d 1914

Dear friends!

The first visitors of the morning were Abul-Gasem and Aga Mehdi, each bringing large and small bouquets of flowers to decorate the reception room of their King and Beloved. Knowing my great love for roses they had ^{not} forgotten me, and I received from each a token of ^{so} Bahai friendship and brotherly ^{love}. While looking at the wonderful flowers from ^{the} Rizwan on these Rizwan days I am writing to you with an overflowing heart ^{overflowing} with the love of each. These are the days of rejoicing and merry-making and the Bahais no matter in ^{what} part of the world they might happen to be ^{should be} ~~be~~ ^{enjoying} happy and are trying to make other hearts happy.

Last night I stayed in the house of Aga Hossein Ash-fee and himself and his son did every ^{thing} possible ^{thing} to make me comfortable and welcomed. Whenever a new pilgrim ^{comes} to Acca there is always a happy ^{reunion}.

and discussion amongst the resident believers as to who is going to entertain him. The spirit of kindness towards each other and hospitality towards the guest is highly developed amongst them. With any one of them you feel perfectly at home. There is no harping criticism, no braggadocio, no ornamental, self-protruding pretensions. All that one can see in them is a deep feeling of reverence for the Celestial Spirit of goodness and wisdom which shines brightly amongst them. This "Reverence for Wisdom" in the inspired words of an English author is: "A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living Wisdom is quite infinitely precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by Hero-Worship, lives perennially in the human bosom, and waits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive."

From morning the Master received the people in his own room, not coming down on account of his fatigue.

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Before noon Ahmad Yazdi and his brother and Mirza Ali Akbar of Russia arrived from Haifa, and as the Master had just gone out to return a few calls they had to wait for his coming. They had brought three Albas to be given away by him as presents to whomsoever he deemed ^{it} necessary. After his arrival he called them immediately into his presence and had a long talk with them after which they rode in the Beloved's carriage to Bahaji to visit the Tomb.

Many newspapers articles and letters are being received from India giving the news of the spread of the Cause and the excellent work accomplished by our Western friends. Such good letters were received this morning and their contents made the Beloved very happy. When Ahmad Yazdi and others returned the Master called all of us into his room. He asked about the believers of Baku and Mirza Ali Akbar reported progress and union. The believers of God he said "must unite their scattered forces first and then teach the Cause. The uppermost thought on the mind of every Bahai

must be union, and then progress. 'Union of the friends, progress of the Cause' must be the motto of every man or woman in this Movement." Then he dictated Tablets in the Turkish language to the Pashas ^{who} met him in Paris. Our friends left for Haifa with the afternoon train, ^{and} ~~but~~ the Greatest Holy Leaf and Nurza Hadi arrived in the evening.

About 8 pm the King of Wisdom called us into his own - his father's - room. There were nearly 40 of us present and ~~we~~ sat on the floor. One of the European believers tried to kiss his feet, This was the prelude to his talk:- "I have often repeated that kissing the hands, the feet and kneeling and bowing are strictly forbidden ⁱⁿ the Bahai Dispensation. These are old, archaic customs of the religious East, and the new-born of the New Humanity must throw away these swaddling-clothes. The leaders of religions were so bigotted and presumptuous that they aimed and forced the simple, innocent people into these spurious customs: These outward manners are

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injurious to the nobility and majestic grandeur of the soul. They pollute the minds, degrade the loftiness of characters and debase the beauty of human nature. The hearts must be united together, the souls must affiliate with each other. ^{all of} Mankind must turn their faces to the spiritual susceptibilities and concentrate their attentions upon the emanations of consciousness. The Mohamadan Sheikhs and Ulemas who were the ^{possessors} barrels of pride and haughtiness, while walking in the streets ^{had} their hands always out of the sleeves of their Abas ready to be kissed by the motley crowds. How harmful it is! How harmful it is! The deed which is conducive to humility, meekness, submissiveness, evanescent is accepted by God. The action which in the least ^{commits} existence, pride, self-projection is human and not accepted by the Lord of mankind. For this reason it is said, If a sin becomes the cause of contrition, ^{remorse} shame, ~~and~~ self reproach and penitence, it is ^{better} than that act of worship or devotion which would create arrogance, vainglory, vanity, and self-esteem.

86 ⁶ For then man will shew that which is evil and hold fast to that which is good. Sacred history records that Satan was favoured at the Threshold of God, and was the teacher of the angels, and in every one of the seven heavens he was known by a ^{holy} name. As soon as he began to see himself, to think of himself he ~~was~~ ^{fell} ~~fallen~~. On the other hand, although man was created in the image and likeness of God and was ^{destined} to become the perfect, clear mirror, reflecting the rays of divinity, - ^{he} prayed from the depth of his heart: 'O Lord! We are sinners. Envelope us with the Graces of Thy forgiveness and illumine us with the lights of Thy Pardon.'

He continued to speak now about the incidents of the rich, dramatic life of Baha - allah, again further discoursing on the spiritual significances of humility and appealing to all mankind for greater tolerance and brotherhood.

In the evening Motosarrafi, the Manager of the telegraph office and a few ~~other~~ military men called on the Beloved and stayed with him till midnight.