

Home of Baha Ollah
 Acca. Syria
 March 21st 1915

Dear friends!

Now Rouz! Now Rouz! the symbol of the recurrent spring that gives to life a new beauty, to the birds a new song, to the hearts a new love and to the sleeping nature a new awakening. Child of God! arise arise and let thy pure lips be kissed by the sedulent vibrations of the new breezes, thy tongue be inspired with the magical eloquence of the new era, thy heart be touched by the quickening effect of the fresh flowers and thy mind be impressed with the new scenery of the new season. Up! Up! Do thou not lie in the dark chambers of thy home; come out and let us wander through green prairies and walk in verdant meadows. Hark! Hark! Is not the golden oriole singing, the sweet nightingale warbling? Listen! the musicians of nature have tuned their orchestral instruments and soon our ears will be enraptured by the flood of pleasing sounds and melodious ^{ideas} ~~airs~~ ^{breaking} upon our still surroundings. Leave the old ~~things~~ ^{ideas} behind, they will not satisfy thee, they will not sustain the new budding yearnings of thy heart; take hold of the new Spirit, let thy soul be interpenetrated with the fresh Zephyrs of the new dawn; pass by the foul, stagnant water and quaff from the luminous goblet in the hand of the cup-bearer of Immortality! Strike at the root of dried, old trees and plant in their places new, vigorous saplings. My friend! This is ^{thy} ~~thy~~ ^{spring} this is thy god-given opportunity, let it not be spent in sadness or sorrow. Thine is the power to open the gates of heavenly joy, to sing the descent of blissful happiness, to raise the voice of ideal ecstasy, to break the fetters which have so long, oh! so long ^{have} kept thee in the prison of the past, - ^{these thou mayst} fill the hearts with the intoxication of the new wine! My dear friends! Let us soar on the wings of the new Ideals, enter into the etherealized ^{presence} of the Beloved and rejuvenate our whole beings; - so ^{that} we may receive the power, the glory and the blessings of the

"He hath bidden His chamberlain - the morning breeze - spread out the emerald carpet (of the earth) and hath commanded His nurses - the vernal clouds - to foster in earth's cradle the tender herbage - the daughters of the grass - and hath clothed the trees with a garment of green leaves, and at the arrival of Spring hath crowned the young branches with wreaths of blossoms; and by His power the juice of the cane hath become exquisite honey and the date - seed, by His nurture, a lofty tree. " *end*

Cloud and wind, and sun and sky,
 Labor all harmoniously,
 That while they thee with food supply,
 Thou mayst not eat unthankfully.
 Since all are busy and intent for thee,
 Justice forbids that thou a rebel bee "

With the above thoughts in mind I arose early this morning and looked out of my window. A fair heaven, a fairer sunrise and a fairest sea, reflecting the glad beauties of the first two poetic pictures greeted me. My tongue praised Abdul Baha for his abundant blessings and my heart responded in thanksgiving. Dressing ⁱⁿ a clean suit of clothes and taking in my hand a small bouquet of flowers I descended the stair and joined the happy company of the friends each one wishing the other a happy new year! Haji Sayad Janad brought us the news that the Master has expressed the wish that all the believers proceed to Bahajee and that he will soon join them. Consequently with a few others I started off, a little disappointed that I could not look into his countenance before leaving. However fate had reserved a more ideal place for our meeting. We were walking leisurely in the plain of Acca and enjoying the grass and the flowers when the sound of the wheels of the Master's carriage reached our ears. In a moment it overtook us and we were rewarded with his sight. Manavar Khanom and Mirza Mohsen were with him. He ordered Isfandeyar to stop the carriage, wished us a happy new year and inquired about our health. "Come, I have brought two umbrellas for Mirza Fazlollah Khan and you, - so that you may not walk in the sun. Come, take them." just

think of the thoughtfulness and affection of the Master who thinks always of the comfort and pleasure of his children! In an hour we reached Bahajee and ^{heard} the Beloved was praying in the holy Tomb. The carriage was sent on his arrival to Abou Senan to bring the members of the blessed household. Before long we saw the head of a long cavalcade of donkeys, horses, mules, over which the friends were riding. Alighting from their "Oriental automobiles" we greeted them with open arms and hearts. All the children were there also, singing and diffusing ^{the} sunshine of their laughs and joys. Mrs. Pettinger also arrived riding on her "autodonkey". I was glad to talk with her for half an hour right under the wing of the Sacred tomb. I found her in the state of spiritual happiness, her heart aflame with the fire of service and her will resigned to the Will of the Beloved.

By and by the believers gathered in the room of the Southwestern house of Bahajee expecting the coming of the Lord. He came and they all arose to welcome him. He sat at the corner of the long divan and after a minute of silence he said: - "May this Now Ruz be a blessing to all the friends! In year there are two ^{points of} equinoxes in which the hours of the day and the night are equal. The first is Vernal Equinox - when the sun enters the Zodiacal Sign of Aries, beginning with March 21st. This day according to Persian calendar is Now Ruz - the first day of their New year and consequently a national holiday. The second is Autumnal Equinox - when the sun enters the Zodiacal sign of Libra, beginning with September 22d. On this day the sun ⁱⁿ its heavenly path, while entering Aries ^{on part} divides the earth into two ellipses and a wonderful activity of all the dormant powers of nature is realized. Whereas formerly the mountain and the valley, the plain and the meadow, the field and the gardens were dead, now they are quickened and pushed forth into life by the outpourings of the Spring! They were withered and dried, they are now clad in verdant robes and delicate green garments. What freshness! What charm! What radiance! What spiritual beauty is witnessed everywhere! It is evident, therefore, why ⁱⁿ Persia they celebrate this Day with much elaboration and ^{with} many delightful ceremonies. They invest it with the most

poetic feelings and clothe it with royal importance. It has never been a mere idea but a thoroughly established institution. When I was in Persia they kept this Feast with the utmost precision and preparations; especially in villages and hamlets. They went into the trouble of making ready all the means of happiness. Owing to the recent revolutions and their blighting effect they have not been able to keep it of late with the same elaboration ^{as} of yore, nevertheless ^{they} keep it with the same zeal and enthusiasm. This Feast has been honored by the Persians from the time of great antiquity. When the tyrannical rule of Zohhak came to an end, it was so brought about that the inauguration of King Jamshed as the rightful Sovereign of Persian Empire happened on this particular day and the Great Temple of the Sacred Fire constructed just previously, was also dedicated to Ormozd. After Jamshed, all the Monarchs of Persia continued to hold this day as a great fête and thus little by little it assumed a national significance. Moreover they began to look upon this day with the eye of supreme reverence and whenever they intended to contract a treaty of peace, to lay the foundation of a public building, to launch a new civic enterprise, to open a convention, to start in a philanthropic work they commenced ^{it} on this day and felt assured that it will be auspicious. His holiness the Bahr approved this Feast and Baha Ollah emphasized and reiterated it in the Ketab El-Akdas and many other Tablets especially revealed for this Day."

Then he asked the children to sing the poems of the Blessed Perfection. After that Aga Abdol-Rassoul, Mirza Naureddin and Badi Effendi chanted communions appropriate for the occasion and the meeting was brought to an end. From the drawing and lecture room the Beloved directed his steps toward the Kitchen. Here he sat cooking with the help of Khosro for over three hours. Aga Mehdi, Mirza Jalal and a few others were there to give ^{him} their assistance. While the Beloved was thus engaged he asked the friends to go into the verdant

country and enjoy themselves. Men, women and children, there were about 120 individuals who partook of the material and spiritual dinner of the Lord. It was indeed the Lord's supper, for the light of love shone in the faces and the King of Kings was the Servant. Soon two long tables were spread, one in the airy, spacious hall, another in the room. The friends ^{were} called in and took their seats. The Master did not sit but served. He was now in the hall, now in the room, now in the kitchen, seeing to it that everyone had sufficient roast meat, vegetables, eggs etc. No amount of persuasion on our part could incline him to sit and let others serve. "The greatest attainment in this world is to serve the believers. From my heart and soul I am happy because I have found this opportunity to serve you. When one is engaged in the service of the friends of God His Confirmation ^{and} assistance shall descend upon him and spiritual happiness will be obtained," he said. After dinner he took his own meal and the friends resorted to the shades of the venerable pines. Here the children and the grown up started to sing Mrs Waite's hymns and the Master came out and listened to them with great delight. Mrs Waite has been fortunate in having had two of the greatest Persian Bahai poets - Nayyar and Sina - as the translators of her inspiring hymns. Her hymns are more popular amongst the Bahais in the Orient than one could ever dream! They are taught in the class rooms and sang in almost every meeting. "Let us sing the hymns of Our American poetess" is on the lips of every one. Most of them are committed to memory by men, women and children. The Master has listened to all of them repeatedly and all his grandchildren are taught to sing them. Several of them have stirring, moving tunes and airs.

In the afternoon the Beloved divided ^{with his own hands} amongst the friends oranges and boubons; the believers left for Abou Senan with joy in their hearts, and we walked back to Acca. This was of course after a most impressive and spiritual service in the holy Tomb wherein all the believers took part Mrs Setzinger being amongst them. She was the only woman present. After we all sat down and Mirza Monier chanted a long Tablet revealed by Baha Allah. After this the Master went around and anointed everyone with rose-water - a spiritual baptism which we will never forget; then in his clear and sweet voice he chanted the visiting Tablet. I prayed in behalf of all my brothers and sisters and entered at the Holy Threshold that the benedictions of the Kingdom of Abha may pour upon them copiously. And now at the close of this letter, while my eyes are