

Moonlican Bahai Cabin
 Abou Senan. Acca, Syria
 March 26th 1915

Dear friends!

It is only for one day. We shall return tomorrow. This morning I did not know anything about it nor the people in Abou Senan could guess that the Master was going to pay them this short visit. It was all so unexpected and interesting. Because some women members of the holy family were going to ride with him in the carriage and we could not have any seats, it was arranged that Mirza Fazlollah Khan and myself ^{should} ride on donkeys and start before the rest. We accepted this plan with pleasure. The Beloved stayed behind in order to receive some people who had sent in word that they were anxious to see him. About 2 P.M. he was sitting in the store of Demetri talking with them and Khosro serving them with tea. Soon we found ourselves on the lovely plain of Acca, carpeted with yellow and white daisies as well as red anemones. The green ears of rice and wheat have already appeared on their stalks but the farmers are praying for rain, because there has been no regular downpour for the last 3 or 4 weeks. Several of them called on the Beloved and begged him to pray for it and he promised them he will do it tonight. I am sure we will have rain. When he supplicates at the Threshold of the Blessed Beauty for a definite thing there is no doubt that it will be answered. In short, as I had never gone to Abou Senan alone and not knowing the exact demarcations I took the wrong road and after two hours of journey we found ourselves before an entirely ^{new} village. Realizing that we are on the wrong track we ^{did} put a few questions to a camel driver who was coming from the opposite direction and soon he showed us the right path. By a strange coincidence as soon as we reached Kofre-yassif the carriage of the Beloved also arrived and when he alighted from it I had the donkey ready for him to ride to Abou Senan. I took the rein in my hand and walked before him. From the height the believers had seen the carriage and hastened down to meet their Lord. He entered the house amidst the great rejoicing of the sincere ones.

Today Mirza Mahsen and the holy leaf arrived from Ahoon Sanan before we left ^{Acco} and brought with them a letter from Mrs Getzinger, because she did not know that we were going to be there in a few hours. We had received a cablegram from Mashad concerning the martyrdom of one of our most excellent Bahai teachers who was here last year with a delegation of Bahais from India. His name was Sheikh Ali Akbar Goutchani. He was a very fluent speaker and being gifted with a retentive memory he could recite pages of the writings of Baha Ollah and Abdul Baha, especially the latter talks in Europe and America. His likeness can be pointed out in one of the group photographs which were taken the year past. He had travelled throughout Russia, Persia, India, Turkey, Syria and Egypt and taught the holy Cause with ability and sincerity. He was not more than 40 yrs old, just in the beginning of his noble, godlike career. When this evening I gave the translation of the cablegram to the Beloved he read it with the stillness of the spirit and looked up with startled, sad eyes. "Sheikh Ali Akbar martyred in bazaar with Coup of revolver. Body disappeared." These were the words of the message which danced before the eyes of the Master but he did not utter a word, I read in his countenance a world of sorrow. In the face of such an actual calamity, words seem to be so inadequate, feeling is so deep that it is beyond the reach of expression. The rest of the meeting which was held in the room of the Beloved in his house went on smoothly enough, Sheikh Salih and his sons keeping the subject of conversation in and around the Turkish defeat in Suez Canal and the retreat of the rest of the discouraged army. Therefore let me share with you Mrs Getzinger's note concerning our lamented martyr. She writes "We have received this morning a cablegram addressed to Mirza Mahsen containing the news of the martyrdom of Sheikh Ali Akbar whom I met in Bombay. He was a beautiful soul and so enkindled and full of love that when he spoke in the meetings our hearts burned and our tears fell over our faces. I wish

so much to have him remain in India and help me but he left for the Sacred Presence with Vakil and others and now comes this news ^{which} truly affects my heart very much. Blessed is he to have attained such a station in the Path of the Covenant and I wish I had been with him as a partaker of that Incomparable Cup. Please supplicate on my behalf at the Holy Feet of the Beloved One that a Tablet be revealed for him; for another sweet singing bird has taken its flight from this mortal world to sing in the heavenly Rose-Garden of El Akha and now I want very much to hear through the Divine Instrumentality of the Word of God, what he is singing and what is the topic of his song. The day before he left Bombay he came especially to see and talk with me. He spoke so sweetly and encouraged me to go on and teach and endure no matter ^{what} happened and promised to pray for me. Now I want to know if from that world of all-luminous Light and Beauty he has a word of encouragement to send me.

After the meeting in the house of the Beloved we descended the stairs and being a lovely moonlit night we walked in the country. My roommates Doctor Halibellah and Badi Effendi are well and happy, each striving to serve the friends and the people amongst whom they live. The school was going to have an examination but they postponed it to some more ^{opportune} time. The pupils are all eager students and they are doing fairly well with their lessons. Many of us imagined that by the spring the political conditions of the country will be settled down and the friends then will return to Acca and Haifa but the spring has come and past and troubles are still brewing on every side. One sees ~~hundreds~~ of people who have been out of work for months and are praying day and night for the cessation of hostilities. Man can endure every suffering but the suffering of hunger and Syria has today thousands of unemployed hungry inhabitants. They are ^{willing} to work but the country is drained thoroughly and all the doors are