

only one man to serve this mass of a hundred or more persons, all bent upon pushing their passports through the little opening. It was confusion worse confounded! The poor Frenchman at the window, sweltering in the heat, mopped his dripping brow, frantically expostulating to the indignant crowd that he could serve but one at a time. This acted only as a spur, for they continued to push only the more desperately until they came to blows and imprecations of an assorted variety. It was past midnight when I finally carried our passports, duly vised, in triumph to the Guarantee Officer, leaving many waiting ones behind. This triumph had been won by a little ruse which I felt to be justifiable. I was tired and almost fainting, and a happy roadside which was bordered with immense cactus trees loaded with large purple thistles, the fruit of which was adorned by prickly plait void une dame très malade: veuillez l'assister!" This brought thorns. I asked one of the guards on the train whether Palestine the desired result, for the French are ever ready to assist a lady in used this fruit for fodder as in California where the science of distress. The business was at once dispatched, and very soon there- Burbank has made this possible. The guard stared at me, exclaiming after Jenáb-i-Fadil and myself were conducted to our train. "Mon Dieu, Madame!" and then at length explained that it was not used for It was extremely hot, as the thermometer had registered 120 de- used for cattle, but that the natives used it as a staple food, and grees throughout the day, but now a furtive breeze relieved the heat sometimes during the war period it was all they had. The outer layer from time to time. My companion was placed at one end of the car layer of the fruit was stripped off, the spikes with it, leaving the solid and I at the other. We said "Good Night," although it was morn- solid part and the juice. I found it cool and refreshing later when some ing, but this was only in keeping with many other paradoxical ex- some was procured. I learned too that the juice is boiled and made into periences of the journey. Now I found myself in a very comfortable into an excellent syrup not unlike our maple syrup. My compartment with an excellent berth and every convenience. It is My heart-beats increased perceptibly as Jenab-i-Fadil announced due to the French, who are in occupation here, that much has been that we were now less than an hour from Haifa; indeed, my heart done for the comfort of the traveller. galloped as though trying to reach there before the rest of me! I was somewhat dismayed as I read a notice by which one was "Haifí, Haifí, all out for Haifí!" cried the guard, and everybody warned not to leave the window open as one's baggá*ge might disscrambled, collecting baggage, and endeavoring to get a carriage. appear. Too tired to care very much, my bump of caution, however, We were fortunate in securing a vehicle and, our baggage beside us,

causing me to lock my valise in the closet, I murmured a sleepy
we proceeded on our way through the narrow streets and stony
"Alláh-u-Abhá" and was soon beyond the pale of mortal disturbroad leading to
the House of the Master, ùAbdu'l-Bahá.

ances. Sleep was interrupted by a medley of jolts, bells and bellow-
What strange sights greeted our eyes! The people seemed clothed
ings until, consulting my watch, I found it was five a.m. and the
in fantastic garb, and every color of the rainbow was flaunted before
first flush of dawn was tinting the horizon. The train was speeding
one; a red fez, a purple scarf, a green head-shawl, a yellow sash, a
rapidly along; the landscape was uninteresting, a flat desert-like
white or creamy coat, and a gunny-sack on the form of a black boy
waste, not a bush nor a habitation to be seen. But for the lovely
mingled in kaleidoscopic fashion among the chattering throng. And
tints in the sky everything was barren and dreary.

quaintly worded signs fastened on doors and window blinds—these
We were now in Palestine, though the mountains were not yet in also
varied in color from gaudy pink to cerulean blue and saucy reds
sight. I gazed out of the window dreamily for an hour, then arose, and
henna, with old grey weatherboards showing here and there.
made a hasty toilet, and went out in search of my travelling com-
Advertising in western fashion was attempted heroically. Here
panion. I found him waiting with a huge bunch of luscious grapes, was
the "new" struggling with the "old." In bold black lettering in
which we enjoyed, as they furnished both food and drink. Much
English the advantages of the "Hotel Jerusalem" were announced.
refreshed, we sat silent for a long time, realizing we were coming The
hotel was an old stone house with a narrow, arched door, before
nearer and nearer to the most sacred spot in the world! which
stood a donkey laden with formidable sacks, containing, no
We could see now the glorious mountains h^, the distance. Egypt doubt,
the provender for this hotel; patiently it waited to be rewas far behind, and
the scenery of Palestine was more animated, if lieved of its burden,
meanwhile flicking off the troublesome flies
still quite monotonous. A camel, a donkey, some cows in a seem-
buzzing about it. In front of the hotel small tables were arranged
ingly bare pasture, an Arab now and then striding along, dotted at
which men were seated, laughing and talking in loud voices, and
drinking thick, black coffee from tiny cups, eating and smoking
"Praise be to God!" sang my heart. "May I become worthy of this
between times, and clapping their hands when anything was to be
bounty!"

replenished.

Every evening at eight o'clock the Master holds a meeting lasting
Our carriage wound its way slowly in and out of the melee of an hour
or more, during which He discourses upon intricate probanimals, carts and human
beings on the main street until at last we lems concerning the Cause. The

Master is seated upon the large
turned the corner, and this varied picture, like a "movie screen," porch
in front of the house, to which ten white stone steps lead from
vanished from sight. The sun, the brightest and hottest we had ever the
broad gravel path. A white stone coping borders the path on
known, greeted us with an intensity characteristic of the East, mak- each
side, providing seating space for fifty or more people who coning us burn with
impatience to get to our journey's end. Five min- stitute the audience.
utes more and we were at the Master's House. Being informed that
View with me that majestic Figure in white flowing garments
'Abdu'l-Bahá was not in just then, we went with Dr. Lotfullah to
seated before us, a white turban crowning the wonderful head with
the Pilgrim House across the way. Here we found Fugeta in its
long silvery locks lifted gently by the breeze; the beautifully
charge. We were greeted most heartily and shown to our rooms,
moulded hands emphasizing the discourse with impressive gesture.
where we removed the dust of travel, and after changing our gar-
After the address a Russian refugee Baha'i teacher chants in exments, we joined
the friends in the dining-room where we were
quisitely modulated tones, the prayers of Baha'u'llah. It is imposrefreshed
with tea. A general talk ensued. Jenab-i-Fadil was the
sible adequately to describe this scene. The writer became conscious
centre of attraction. He had been absent for more than two years.
of new emotions, the awakening of something so subtle, so elusive,
Among the guests was a young Egyptian who was visiting the
that one could not capture it, yet so impressive that everything was
Master for a few days before returning to Paris for further study,
cast into oblivion except the immediate present. The fragrance from
having met the Master there twelve years before. An Arabian govthe gardens on
either side wafted a different scent on each breath of
ernment official, who, among other duties, vised passports and who
the night air. Roses, orange blossoms, lemon buds, tuberoses, jascame to dinner
by invitation of the Master whenever his train
stopped at Haifa, was also there. He was handsome, of powerful mine,
honeysuckle,—each in turn left its definite sweetness as a
physique and his twinkling eyes and ready smile showed the good fresh
odour entranced one and vanished.
humour behind a rather stern mien in repose. He was a Muham- O
that I might impress this scene upon the heart of the world!
madan and loved the Master. To me
it is as though all eternity could not efface it;—that majestic
In the midst of our chatting and tea drinking Fugeta announced, white
Figure seated on the broad stone platform like a king en-
"The Master is coming!" Another moment and His resonant voice
throned, the setting of natural beauty so befitting His spiritual stawas
calling to us: "Bismillah! Bismillah!" Welcome! Welcome!
tion,—the gardens, the sea, the starry heavens, and the millions of

Taking us each by the hand He exclaimed: "We have been looking gleaming points of light reflected below. Shadows deepen under for you for some days. You should have wired us of your arrival trees, while at their tops the leaves glisten and glimmer like and we would have sent our carriage to the station for you." Turn-sparkling gems. The murmur of the sea is just beyond, the waves ing to me He said: "You must rest; you are very tired. Now you ever repeating undulations, coming nearer and nearer to caress are at home. This is your home. Here you must rest and be very shore. The melodious chanting, the deep silences, the seated happy. BkSillah! Bismillah!" and the Presence, like a tonic breeze, figures with bowed heads and devoted hearts.

vanished. I retired and rested for an hour. What heavenly peace!— The chant ends. In a few moments the Master rises and goes into a tender vibration, soft, silent, blissful! My soul was steeped in it. the house. Everyone rises also and salutes in the beautiful eastern

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fashion, hand touching the forehead and then the heart. The spell number,—we were served with tea, after which we sat in profound is broken! silence.

Then again the Master comes, descends the steps, finds me, and scene here also was most impressive. The sun was travelling motions that I precede Him into the dining-room, an addition toward the west, tinting the clouds with gold and mauve. "See the built recently for the entertainment of guests. This is a large room said the Master. "So is the bounty of God to-day flowing like having a very high ceiling, as have all the rooms in the East, and waves of this sea. We must try to appreciate His Goodness, His there are seven large windows. Everything is white. A long table and Glory." His beautiful voice echoed vibrantly through is in the centre of the room laid for fifty or more people. The Mas-space, giving clear-cut teachings as He sat there on the mountain. ter placed me at the head of the table on the right, and thus He prejudice, how it grows. First a few people say something placed me throughout my visit. He always inquired in English disparaging about a person, and, generally there is a fragment of after my health and would urge me to eat more, saying again and in what they say. The story grows, is spread, the circle widens, again: "Too little, much too little," when I assured Him I had discussions are indulged in, inharmony results, schism takes place, eaten abundantly.

a waste of precious time that could and should be used for On several occasions my replies to the Master's loving solicitations constructive work!"

in English were in Persian, a few sentences, but He was pleased Then He spoke of sincerity. "There are degrees always in everyand amused, I

think, judging by the merry light in His eyes. He thing. Until a man is freed from ego he may be positive and cersaid to the big Arabian official, who spoke only Arabic: "See, here tain about many things that are not so. He spoke of tests. "Tests is an American lady who speaks correct Persian. You say you are not sent as punishment, but to reveal the soul to itself. Suffering cannot learn it and you hear it every day. She does not hear it often unfolds both the strength and the weakness. Tests are sometimes but she has learned." The Master would ask, "What is this? What creative of grateful surprise also; for in the midst of our trials we is that?" indicating things on the table, and say approvingly, "Brava, are amazed at the fulness of our strength and our resources, and so Brava! You know everything that is useful to know. That is very the heavy discipline is creative of assurance; the trial becomes the good." The big man eyed me with astonishment at what seemed to source of greater confidence, faith and trust. It strengthens and conhim a wonderful performance, but he was not aware of my limita- firms." tions, nor of the fact that in asking His questions the Master chose 'Abdu'l-Bahá has a teaching, an apt illustration for every phase of only such things on the table, the names of which I knew in Persian! life; a guidance for every issue and crisis, a solution for every prob- Indeed, this did not dawn upon me until afterward and I felt quite lem and an answer to every question voiced or silent. proud of my accomplishment. How tenderly the Master seeks to Tea was served, and the "Tablet of Visitation" was chanted by a have one feel of some account in the world, and of course one longs sweet-voiced worshipper whose name I cannot recall but whose soul in return to become as dust beneath His Blessed Feet! was revealed to me in the ardour of that heavenly chanting. How On the first Sunday in Haifa I was told to be ready at 5 p.m. as long we knelt there I do not know, but when I raised myself I was the Master was to take me to the Holy Tomb of the *Bab, situated alone in the Sacred Tomb. A moment after someone touched me about half-way up Mt. Carmel, the Mountain of God, as the He- on the shoulder and beckoned, and silently I followed him out of brews call it. The Master placed me at His side in the automobile, the shrine.

Jenab-i-Fadil and several of the small grandchildren making the Of this wonderful experience I almost hesitate to speak. I had driving party. The other men pilgrims walked. When all had been lost in deepest contemplation and prayer. It seemed to me tlfat rived and were seated fronting the Tomb,—there were over fifty in all the souls that had ever worshipped here, together with all the

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"Friends of God" I had ever known, were congregated in this holy loveliness! The contrast to family life in the outside world is so

spot. A wonderful Company! Faces known and unknown rose before that the observer marvels, and the conviction deepens that fore my inner vision, and as my soul breathed a supplicating thought here is a miracle of miracles that only love, spiritual love, could for loved ones far or near, the faces would appear, just in a flash, make possible. What models to the world these holy women are, radiant and wreathed in smiles. The meaning of the reality of "One- can be known only to those who witness their lives of sacrifice and ness" dawned upon my consciousness, never again to be forgotten! service,—second only to the life of the Exemplar, their Teacher and This inner consciousness was unfolded later in relation to a subse- Educator, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Master, the Possessor of all perfections, quent experience. the embodiment of all virtues, the helper of the poor and needy, The Master had been waiting for me. As I hastened to the auto- the Counsellor of the afflicted and sorrowful,—He who is God's mobile in which He was seated and took my place beside Him, He Covenant to the people of the world! said: "I shall take you to the summit of the Mountain of God." I How can my feeble pen worthily record such a life of untiring could not speak, and the Blessed One said nothing more, but in the service and devotion as that of "The Greatest Holy Leaf," sister of silence we drove on and on, and I knew the Master read my heart,— 'Abdu'l-Bahá? its longing to reach the summit of consciousness in service to the From early morning till very late at night she is in demand, and Cause. with the assistance of the Master's daughters, she carries out every Every afternoon from four to seven during my stay, I visited the detail of this formidable household. ladies of the "Holy Household." On Wednesday afternoons a The women of 'Abdu'l-Baha's family are the precious flowering of "Woman's Meeting" is held in the large central room, secluded the spiritual civilization inaugurated at the dawn of the New Age, from the masculine gaze of the many visitors the Master receives at where every faculty of the mind and heart has been quickened by the all hours of the day. Baha'i women living outside also attend these the Divine Breath of the Gardener, who has nourished and susgatherings, where one of the Master's daughters reads or chants the tained them through all the vicissitudes that result from such prayers and tablets of Baha'u'llah. heroic living. No complaint is ever audible, and yet I read in the Tea is always served with Persian cookies and grapes. The Mas- depths of their wonderful eyes a real tragedy, and this is uncounter, if He can spare the time, generally looks in to greet the assemsciously voiced in their desire for their children; they long for bly, say a few words and make them all happy.

nothing for themselves, but yearn to give the children the advantages of modern knowledge and education, of which they, through not counting the children of the believers and His own grandlong years of exile and confinement behind prison walls, have been children. How wonderfully significant, as an example to the world, deprived. "For ourselves," they say, "we ask nothing; we are grateis this living service so cheerfully given by each member of the family! There is such harmony and unity in this household, where all the machinery of every-day life is carried on without a break. learned the meaning of sacrifice, which is not to do without things, Every emergency is provided for; unexpected visitors are always but if, for some reason, one is deprived, then to accept willingly entertained with a composure and sincerity unbelievable unless witnessed and uncomplainingly; but for our children we do desire and pray nessed day after day as I saw it. Where in this wide world could for education that they may be of greater service to humanity, and a parallel be found, even approximate to this? No complaint, no open the way to self-support for the women of the East."

friction amidst a variety of temperaments and of different stations Someone has said of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "He is the practical mystic," in life. It is a garden of variegated flowers growing in the utmost and certain it is that in the teachings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-

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Bahá the unity of all life is constantly emphasized. "The law of hopelessly in the grasp of the ancient fanatical ideas and customs human life is unceasing interaction between mind and body. from which the woman of the West has been emancipated to a "In accidents a surgeon is called to adjust injured members as large degree and is still pressing forward! We cannot, nay we dare nearly as possible to the original pattern by scientific means. Nature, not let the wail of our Eastern sisters remain unheeded. In that in obedience to a spiritual principle, inherent in every living thing, blessed shrine, the holy Tomb of Baha'u'llah, the most earnest supbrings into operation the healing power to the lacerated parts. This plication of my soul was that my Western sisters might respond and is true co-operation between organic and spiritual forces. Life's heal-assist the womanhood of the East, that we might co-operate in the ing power is spiritual, but its operation in behalf of an organic body building of a school for girls at Haifa, and equip it with volunteer is by adjustment to the workings of organic law. Waste of vital teachers.

and nervous forces through working at cross-purposes with law,— Now I must refer to a personal matter in order that my story may the failure to recognize the oneness of life in every phase, physical, be intelligible to the reader, a matter which concerns my having

mental, moral and spiritual, is largely the cause of the world's suffering and inefficiency." been called # by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the Holy Land. Briefly there had been

some misunderstanding as to the interpretation of certain Baha'i teachings. Some of the friends understood them in one way and rally desire the education of their children in the balanced ratio, and some in another. This had created confusion and I became very ill. In this crisis I was called to make the visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Baha'i teachings recognize that all faculties are expressed in the same and just before leaving the United States a goodly number of the organism and so are inter-dependent for the ill or good of humanity. friends,—some of one opinion and some of another,—called upon me "Nothing is true education that does not fit the human being for and I was requested to bring back something very definite from the constructive living. For twenty centuries men have clothed a spirit-Master.

ual ideal in the garment of ecclesiastical pomp and ceremony, and It was the custom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá each morning at about ten have preached an established form of traditional and superimposed o'clock to visit the Pilgrim House and talk to me, Mirza Bahadur authority. But of the daily living of the ideal of the spirit of Christ usually interpreting. The Master would begin with "How is your there is but little evidence save among a few choice souls. Of an health?"—which of course refers to the spiritual condition; and inner consecration to justice, to right, to moral initiative, to equity then, "Are you happy?" then "Perfectly happy?" Now I knew I in practical affairs, altruistic conduct toward humanity en masse, the was not "perfectly happy" so long as He had not given me the defispiritual dynamics of the life of Reality,—the world has had slight nite instructions which the friends had desired me to bring back.

evidence. But now, Praise be to God, in this century of Light the After a most heavenly day with the Master and His Household, I would practical advantages of social, ethical, and industrial relationships see the faces of the friends before me at night and they based upon other ideals are beginning to be recognized and dealt seemed to look sternly expectant. He had given ample illustrations with accordingly. Statesmen are glimpsing the fact that the world and examples that should have satisfied one not under the spell of must be reconstructed in the new spirit of understanding commen- acting as ambassador for a group of people and who felt the responsurate with this advantage." Such were the conversations with the sibility. Finally one morning, in answer to the question "Are you daughters of the Master during this memorable visit. perfectly happy?" I said, "Yes, dear Master, I am perfectly happy O women of the West! I beg of God that your hearts may be #

Mrs. Parsons of Washington, D. C , received the following cablegram from touched and stirred as was my heart by the hunger-cry of these 'Abdu'l-Bahá, dated Haifa, Palestine, April 27, 1921: "Send immediately Mrs. Watson

Eastern mothers, representing as they do thousands who are yet in utmost comfort to Holy Land."

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but for one little thing that remains in my consciousness; not for In this day electricity is the agent used to restore weakened vitality myself do I desire something definite, but for others," and then I ity and most successful are some results reported. To my spirit proceeded to give some details. But the Blessed One ignored it as 'Abdu'l-Bahá is a new discovery in Spiritual Science. He is pure before, and calling my attention to some clouds above our heads, Radium. His Spirit is the Spirit of Light, of life in the highest He said, "You must be like these swift-moving, luminous clouds. degree. It is creative. A new energy radiates from Him to the re- They move, nothing hinders them. I shall pray for you that you will cipient and makes him vital and alive. Blessed is the one who has be like these clouds. Let nothing hinder you. Speak always of the been treated with this Divine Current.

Love of God. Teach the people what the Love of God is. Give them "The age of miracles is past." Often we hear this statement from the Glad Tidings. Let nothing hinder thee; let nothing touch thy the press, the people, and even from the pulpit. The Higher Critispirit which is not in conformity with the teachings of the Blessed cism interprets the miracles of the ancients as symbols and symbols Beauty. Be ever engaged in the service of the Kingdom. Do not let only. It is true that many instances recorded in the Holy Books are the unpleasant things annoy you. You must be as far removed symbols of spiritual conditions, truths and universal principles, but from them as these clouds are above us. The important thing is that is not to deny the performance of miracles, even literally upon to spread the Teachings, to show love and compassion, to be kind this plane, by the Manifestations of God. What significance is there to all, and not wound the feelings of others. If we do not like to in the fact that the prophecies of the ancients are daily fulfilled, at associate with some people, very well, it is not compulsory. We can this time in a literal sense? "Greater things than these shall ye do" let them alone and become so busy with constructive work, that was uttered by the Christ nineteen centuries ago, referring to the mirthere is no time to waste upon such matters. We do not waste our acles of this age. Greater miracles are performed in this Day of God, time in discussing non-essentials. Neither must you do this. Forget because: "It is the Day of Maturity for the sons of men." Miracles every unpleasantness of the past; speak only of constructive work, upon

all the planes of life are performed because a New Spirit of the Love of God, of the compassion and mercy of God. See\ to adorns the world of mankind. Blessed are they who have eyes to ma\e others happy!" And so would end the teaching of one day, and ears to hear! How kind is the Compassionate Lord to His perfect, except for the one little thought which I deemed so impor- creatures!

tant! "O God, help us to be severed from all but Thee!" In

the year 1890 I was a victim of a car accident in the city of Washington, D. C. The injury was so severe that life was thought to be Many have tried to express it; many have partially expressed it.

extinct for several hours. The spinal column was twisted and Some, though feeling deeply, cannot express it at all. What the Mas- pushed out of alignment to such a degree that a portion of the ter says so simply,—seemingly, as it strikes the ear, if it reaches the vertebrae lay upon the left ribs, forming a protrusion the size of an inner being, contains ever-deepening truths. One marvels at the infant's head. The right ribs were crushed and splinters of bone beauty and wisdom, and at the dulness of the surface consciousness were removed. The right hip was out of the socket, not perceived of the merely human. at

first by the doctors, and the left arm could only be partially raised.

The first meeting with 'Abdu'l-Bahá never startles* It thrills one I lay unconscious at the hospital for many days, taking no nourishwith a new sense of vitality. It quickens. It is healing. It recalls: ment whatever, not even water, and undoubtedly would have been

"He cometh with healing in His wings." It is penetrative. One buried, had the period lengthened, but for the fact that some friends cannot possibly remain the same as before the meeting, because the informed the physicians that in childhood I had also been "in a Divine Ray has touched the creature and somehow, somewhere, trance" for nineteen days, so the interment was postponed. some time, the creature will know.

During this unconscious period, that is to say unconscious to all 12 13

earthly surroundings, my soul was very much alive on inner sub- the celestial vibration. As the night was far spent the seven pilgrims jective planes. In these experiences I met with a Wonderful Being,— silently proceeded through the garden laden with the sweet breath whom I afterwards learned was 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who gave me spiritual of flowers richer for the dews of night.

instructions and taught me the mysteries of life, saying: "Many of We entered in single file that Holy of Holies, and each pilgrim these things thou dost comprehend only in part, for thou must knelt in adoration. When we emerged it seemed that hours had rolled live them and then teach the people of the world. This is for future

on toward eternity! It was long past midnight. We supped harvesting." (From "The Two Paths.") lightly and retired. Sleep did not come. The few hours were spent For thirty years this crippled body suffered untold agony. For in communion, potent and exhilarating yet conducive to self-examination I had tried to live according to the Divine Teachings of purification and repentance. Tears flowed freely as we supplicated for the Baha'i Revelation, before coming, on the outer plane of life, into the "cleansing of the sanctuary" within the self, and many of the the knowledge of the actual embodiment of my Lord and Master, beloved friends were remembered in the supplications poured forth 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In 1901 He accepted me as a servant in His Holy that night in the Holy Shrine. Vineyard, and from that time my humble services and my life At dawn the seven pilgrims again made the blessed visit to the have been dedicated to Him for His Cause. Holy Tomb of Him whom God made manifest. Seven pilgrims, Now it is opportune to relate the remarkable experience after each from a different part of the world, strangers before, now bound my visit to the Holy Tomb of Baha'u'llah. It was on August the by the firm rope of Baha'i love and friendship, realizing their kinship, 1921, that seven pilgrims started for 'Akká to visit the Holy ship and unity as the children of the Household of Faith in the Shrine. Jenáb-i-Fadil Mázandarání and myself were of the party. Revelation of God in this Great Day! Strange paradox! We came to The Master's carriage conveyed us to the station of Haifa, where the Tomb for Life! "There is no death" has now a new meaning. we took the train to 'Akká, waited there for an hour, had some re- We realized it as we came forth, clothed with the garment of Real refreshments, and another vehicle was secured from a Baha'i friend ity. And now to complete the pilgrimage we were to visit the to finish the journey. It was late when we reached the house of the Ridván, or Garden of God, about two and a half miles from the caretaker of the Holy Tomb. The moon had risen and was shining Tomb of Baha'u'llah. above the mountains, pillowed on a vast bed of fleecy clouds, whose It was early morning. We had breakfast and at six o'clock we silvery edges appeared as an immense etching against the midnight were ready to start; but to our dismay, no vehicle was to be found. depths of marvellous blue. Earth and sky literally "embraced like The man who had conveyed us from the station could not come; he two lovers." had been called away and had gone to Haifa. What were we to do ? Again we were refreshed by tea, and when we gathered on the The men could walk, but it was difficult even for them in the heat and front piazza built of the white stone that is so much used in this and the dusty road. The caretaker, after a thoughtful moment, came

part of the country, another marvellous scene was presented to our view. At our feet lay the sea, or more accurately perhaps, the Bay of 'Akká. The Tomb on the right and the Holy Mountain of Car-locomotive power before me I had some misgivings as to the suc-cess of the venture.

The pilgrims seemed to sense my hesitation God. What an atmosphere! O the calm of that Holy Place! Night asked: "What do you think of it? Will you ride him?" "I have had flung her jewelled stars most lavishly abroad. The whole was mounted anything more lively than a wooden hobby-horse in magic splendour. The heart was entranced by such concentrated childhood" was my answer, "but as there is no other way, I shall beauty. No one spoke above a whisper lest a harsher note disturb to attempt it, for I must go to the Ridván with you." An im-

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provised saddle was brought, depriving the house of a solid pillow been given to the Cause, more dear than life and now the Blessed of generous dimensions. This was held in place by a rope passed One had sent for me to come to the Land of Desire; I had visited around the body of the donkey, who protested quite vigorously at the Holy Shrines and now I would enter the Ridván, the Garden the unusual equipment. Although the caretaker assured me that he God," so ran my thoughts.

was very gentle, I confess the prospect did not appear alluring. I felt strangely relieved and calm. I could see the tree quite near However, I mustered up courage, and as a chair was brought to that marked the entrance to the garden. The Doctor again assisted me to mount, I was finally seated sidewise and the reins were proached with Jenab-i-Fadil and they said: "We will help you down

placed in my hands. The donkey was led by the caretaker's son, a rest before going in." A few minutes more and I stood on my kindly youth who cast sympathetic glances at my "perch."

feet, but not as formerly! I could breathe deeply, which had not The procession started quite briskly. I braced up as best I could possible for thirty years. My hip, somehow, was in place, the for I did not wish to spoil the trip for the men-pilgrims by my projecting bow on the left side of my spine had disappeared. In a timidity; but oh, the road was so stony, the pillow was slipping flash this was all realized. I threw up both arms and cried out: "O and I was doubling up on one side! The donkey went swiftly along, God, my God! This is a miracle that God hath wrought! Yá-Bahá'-kicking every now and then to rid himself of the flies, while I u'l-Abhá!" The other pilgrims were no less astonished than I, and trembled within, fearing every moment that he would get rid of me joined me in fervent prayer and thanksgiving at what had been so

to our
It was
like
cess of the venture.
and
never
have
of

too. I prayed, "O God! help me to keep on," for now there were strangely accomplished by the ride on the Master's white donkey. strange snappings and crackings in my back, sides and shoulders. I mounted again with ease and sat as straight as a major on dress Pain, sharp pain, racked my whole body. It was growing unbearable parade on the back of this white "surgeon" who was utterly unand I was inwardly groaning with every forward step of the donkey, conscious of the aid he had given me, and of the feeling I enteras it stumbled over stones and I grasped its mane. One of the pil- tained for him as I reverently kissed his nose.

grims approached me and said: "Wouldn't it be better to rest a while? You are suffering, I see, and we have quite a long distance into the Ridván, and came to the blessed spot where stand the two yet." I declined, trying to smile, and said: "I think it is best to go on, mulberry trees so loved by Baha'u'llah, and in this vine-covered it would be too difficult to mount again." "Well, promise that when bower of beauty where He used to sit, we tarried, and here refreshit becomes too hard for you, you will call and we will help you ment was brought us by the caretaker, who said: "Oh, you should down to rest." He adjusted the pillow as best he could and I prom- have seen it before the war! It was the most beautiful spot in the ised to call for help if needed. We started again. The heat was whole world,—so travellers used to tell us. The Master will now intense yet I felt cold, every nerve quivering with pain, and there have it restored to its former loveliness."

was more snapping and tearing. What was going on, I wondered, At the end of the Garden on one side stands the little house in my spine and shoulder-blades? I felt as though I were being containing the "treasures" of the time of Baha'u'llah; the wonderful dismembered. Did it mean my death? The X-ray photograph of table with lids holding in its depths many articles used by him. my body came vividly before me and the words of the surgeon The precious chair in which He sat is preserved in a separate chest. were in my ears,—"Nothing can be done. If force is applied the Another photograph of us was taken at this historic spot, and all bones will snap. Death will be the result." "Well," I thought at the while I seemed treading upon air, and would ask myself: "Can last, "what more beautiful could happen,—to die in the Holy Land, it be true? Is this really I, who can breathe and walk without pain, to be released from pain and suffering? Evidently my work was so freed? O God, wonderful are Thy ways!" And there in that finished on this plane. For twenty years my humble service had garden, hallowed by the footsteps of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Bahá,

we lingered until it was time to leave for the train that was to carry The next morning I arose at six,—another, a different person.

us back to Haifa.

Fugeta, that most devoted and selfless servant who sees to the needs of everyone on the train seemed to stare at me. Was it because I was and comforts of every pilgrim, was setting the table for breakfast. a stranger, or was it that they read the overwhelming joy of my "You must have slept soundly. I never saw you looking so well spirit? I felt so elated, so buoyant, so intensely happy, I could only although it was an awfully hot night," was his greeting to me. "No, with difficulty control myself in silence. I longed to shout: "Glory I did not sleep at all, but it was not the heat that prevented me," to God! O people, if you could know the wonderful thing that has and then I told him of the wonderful change that had come over happened to me since yesterday you too would shout." My left arm me during the night, and that now I was perfectly happy as the was now entirely free and, again and again, I raised it above my Master had wished;—that I saw everything from an entirely different angle. God had opened my eyes; with His healing He had That night I lived over again the remarkable occurrences of the given me insight; I was no longer "blind"; I did not want the Master last twenty-four hours. The experience at the Holy Shrine of Bahá'—ter to give me anything definite for myself nor for anyone else! u'llah whither 'Abdu'l-Bahá had sent me and the various phases The friends joined me at the breakfast table and rejoiced with connected with the "visit." me, for they had heard of my experience. All had remarked: "How I did not sleep nor even try to. I realized a change in my con- well you are looking!" Doctor Lotfullah, who is of such valuable sciousness, a marked change of attitude in my mind and heart service to every visitor as well as to the blessed Household, and toward former matters. I shouted in the stillness of my being at the Mirza Bahadur, that sweetly dignified and serious young man who glorious realization; I knew that the physical healing was the outer has spent twelve years with the Master, is a linguist and most efficient symbol of the emancipation of my soul. I was free not only in body, cient in interpreting and translating, and that blessed soul, Jenab-ibut what was far more important, I was free in soul, in mind and Fadil Mázandarání. In the midst of these never-to-be-forgotten companions. O Compassionate God! What a revelation came to my soul! panions breakfast was eaten and before we dispersed I said: "Please, I realized the darkened state of human consciousness,—of even such Mirza Bahadur, when the Master comes this morning, tell Him the as believe themselves of the enlightened and faithful servants of substance of what you have heard, and say that I am perfectly con- God! I thought with pity of the former "foolishness,"—wanting tented and happy now, that I do not desire anything definite for something definite to take home to the friends. Wanting something

myself nor for anyone."

which the Master had ignored. "The wisdom of man is foolishness
The Master did not visit us as usual that morning, but He had
unto God" was truly proved. Fervently came the prayer: "O Lord!
luncheon with us. He greeted us all in His ineffable way, paying no
Heed us not in our foolish requests. Sever us from our limitations.
special attention to me. I was so happy and I wanted Him to know
Bestow upon us the Light of Thy Wisdom so that we may become
it. The meal would be over and soon He would be gone. "Please,
conscious of Thy Will!"

Mirza Bahadur," I said: "Do tell the Master what I requested of
The joy, the happiness, the bliss, the peace now experienced can you." But
before he could do so, the Master, in a voice thrillingly
not be conveyed. Rapture enveloped my whole being; for now I
knew the meaning of the- "Most Great Bounty" and the "Mystery
vibrant, said, as He turned to me: "Brava! Brava! Ah, now you are
of God." The love of the Master in which all humanity is em-
another Mrs. Watson! Now you are perfectly happy. Now you have
braced had so surrounded and penetrated my being that the Light
something most definite to take home with you to the friends."
of His Wisdom had transformed my view into a vision of Reality.
Tenderly His gaze rested upon me, radiating such love that I could
So are we "changed in the twinkling of an eye."

scarcely bear it. Fervently I thanked God that I was able to register

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in my soul a portion of this Divine Elixir so potently and lavishly
finishing some notes, and hastily putting down my work, I arose
bestowed by this perfect Christ-type man, the Master of Haifa. just
as the Master came in. Behold Him with me. There He stands,
Seventeen more golden days were spent with the Master and His this
wonderful Being, His countenance radiating every phase of
holy family. Only too swiftly did they fly. Every day, two or three
graciousness, love, beauty, sweetness and grandeur that the soul can
times as the occasion permitted, I saw the Blessed One. Now that
conceive! He bore in His hands a silver salver covered with white
I did not clamour for it, every explanation was given and made
jasmine. After greeting me He said: "I come to bring you my farewell. Is it a
wonder that my consciousness expanded far beyond the well gift, these
fragrant blossoms. May your deeds fill the world
boundaries of my former limitations and that I utterly forgot them with
like fragrance!" His "farewell gift"! I placed it on the table
in the dazzling splendour of illumination from the Sun of Truth, with a
tumultuous heart. The Master continued: "In a few days
the sign of which is 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant of you
will leave us. Other guests are coming and it is my wish that
God? you
visit as many of the friends in Alexandria, Port Said and Cairo

Mirza Sayyid Mustapha, from India, an old Baha'i and a great worker in the Cause, was a guest of the Master and had been in Baha'i love." possible. You will refresh them and they will welcome you with genuine the household for several months to recuperate after most arduous Left alone, I wept. A thousand memories of His wondrous kindlabours, having formed an Indian Baha'i colony of about 150 souls. ness rushed upon my soul and made real to me the divine outpour- ing of Love which the Christ manifested in the former time, but which ness to my healing. His wish was that I might go to his colony and which the earthly consciousness of men has so obscured that scarcely a trace teach his people. He asked if I would go, and I said: "Yes, most a trace is visible in the majority of mankind to-day. Now in the dawn of willingly, if the Master permits." Then he said, "The Master loves dawn of this great cycle, the outlook is hopeful and inspiring, for the you, will you not ask Him?" Again my answer was, "Yes, most the Christ Spirit has revealed a new Heaven of spiritual undergladly." Several times Mirza Sayyid Mustapha talked with me about standing, bringing about the union of minds and hearts in thouththe colony, the work I could do there, and how happy it would sands of ready souls, and a realization that this Christ Love must make him to have me go. A few days after, I did ask 'Abdu'l-Bahá be applied in the life of the individual. The and He said: "I have already told Sayyid Mustapha that if I should The miracles performed daily by 'Abdu'l-Bahá could not be resend you to India now, you would ascend in a short time to the corded by human pen; the healing of the soul's blindness, restoring Kingdom of Abhá. No, your body is not strong enough to stand the crippled in consciousness and the resurrection of the "dead" to the hardships such a trip and work would entail. I wish you to spiritual reality. These are indeed miracles that the people of every nation, go back to America and give the Glad Tidings. Take to them the nation, and every religion have seen demonstrated in this Day, as definite' things I have given you. You are a living sign of the Love well as the wonders of physical healing. Baha'is do not make physiof God." A few minutes later I told Sayyid Mustapha, and he said: cal healing of paramount importance. "If, merely, the physical sight is "The Master told me yesterday. He knows best. I did not realize is restored the person will, in due time, pass out of the body, and that you are not strong in body, your spirit is so alive." We both no permanent benefit is gained." Yet to me He said: "The adjustrealized that the Master had answered his question before I had ment of thy body is proof of the Love of God, and thou must be ever asked Him,—another proof of His power to read the heart's de- ever grateful for this bounty." That sires.

afternoon, meeting with the Ladies of the Household, my

A few days after this incident Fugeta came to my room and said: eyes showed traces of weeping, and in answer to their solicitous

"The Master is coming to see you." It was not the usual hour. I was inquiries, I told them of the Master's wish that I should leave in a I

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few days, and tears again came to my eyes. The ladies embraced me pressure

of His hand we parted. Silently I said: "Good-bye," and

with the utmost affection, saying: "Dear sister, do not weep, your going

down the stone steps for the last time, I gazed upward, and,

sadness makes us very sad too. We will ask the Master not to send seeing

the Master standing above, I seemed to feel and hear His

you away. We all love you and wish you could remain here always.

benediction.

We will ask the Master to let you stay. You could teach us many Later

I slipped over to the Master's House to see the ladies once

things." I was about to ask them not to speak to the Master, when more as

I had promised. The Greatest Holy Leaf gave me a rosary

He came in upon us unawares. We were standing in a group with of

lovely blue beads divided by exquisite blue pendants. She said:

locked arms and tear-stained faces, and endeavoured to separate, "I have

strung these myself for you, and have prayed that you may

but He said, pushing us together again: "Nah, nah, this is good, be

restored to perfect health and grow strong so that you may work

very good." Gazing with wondrous love upon us, before anyone many

years for the Master."

had time to ask, He said: "No, she must go, she is too useful in the It was

past midnight when, with many tender farewells, we

outside world to remain longer. She must go forth, spread the Glad parted.

That last hour is engraved eternally upon my memory as a

Tidings, teach the people, demonstrate to them the Love of God." sacred

ending of my visit of pilgrimage to the "Land of Desire."

"See," He continued, pointing to the little group which now the

younger grandchildren had joined, "See how they love you. We all

love you. This is your home, but now you must go away from

home. Thou hast eaten with us, not only material food, thou hast

eaten with us spiritual food. The Heavenly Food consists of the

Love of God, the knowledge of God, the bestowal of divine gifts.

Thou must be very grateful for this wonderful bounty to thee and

become radiantly happy." After this I shed no more tears!

The last day, August 27th, 1921, had arrived. Alláh-u-Abhás and

good-byes had been repeated many times by the beloved friends,

friends newly made, but eternal in realized consciousness. I did

not see the Master that day in the Pilgrim House owing to His

many visitors, but in His own house at dinner He was most kind

and regretted that He had not been able to see me before. At the

table He did not refer to my going away. But after dinner He

beckoned to me and led me out on the broad stone parapet and had two chairs placed there. He motioned to me to be seated and gave me some instructions as to His wishes regarding my work in the future. Finally He arose and said: "As you leave at three in the morning, I will not see you again. This is my last farewell to you. I send you forth under the protection of Bahá u'llah, the Blessed Beauty. Be filled with His Love to overflowing. We shall pray for you always. Do not forget this." He summoned Soheil to take me to the Pilgrim House and without another word, but with a strong

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— My Pilgrimage to the Land of Desire (Used by permission of the curator)