

STAR OF WEST THE

THIS period of time is the Promised Age, the assembling of the human race to the "Resurrection Day," and now is the great "Day of Judgment." Soon the whole world, as in spring-time, will change its garb. The turning and falling of the autumn leaves is past; the bleakness of the winter-time is over. The new year hath appeared and the spiritual

(Continued on next page)

spring-time is at hand. The black earth is becoming a verdant garden; the deserts and mountains are teeming with red flowers; from the borders of the wilderness the tall grasses are standing like advance guards before the cypress and jessamine trees; while the birds are singing among the rose branches like angels in the highest heavens, announcing the glad tidings of the approach of that spiritual spring, and the sweet music of their voices is causing the real essence of all things to move and quiver.

O my spiritual friend! Dost thou know from what airs emanate the notes sung by those birds? They are from the melodies of peace and reconciliation, of love and unity, of justice and security, of concord and harmony. In a short time this heavenly singing will intoxicate all humanity; the foundations of enmity shall be destroyed; unity and affection shall be witnessed in every assembly; and the lovers of the love of God at these great festivals shall behold their splendor.

Therefore, contemplate what a spirit of life God hath given that the body of the whole earth may attain life everlasting! The Paradise of El-Abha will soon spread a pavilion from the Pole-star of the world, under whose shelter the beloved shall rejoice and the pure hearts shall repose in peace.

—ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Baha' 1, 72 (March 21, 1916)

No. 1

The Light of Truth

Address delivered by Mirza Ali Kuli Khan before the Bahai Assembly
of West Hoboken, N. J., September 28, 1902

TRUTH is the foundation upon which the welfare of society, both temporal and spiritual, is dependent. To know the full scope of Truth secures man a passport with which to traverse through the boundaries of the world and advance with sure step toward the realm of eternity. Truth seekers are assiduous students in the school of worldly experience. They see many ups and downs and experience manifold stumbling blocks and afflictions upon the highway of trials which lead man to the destination of perfection. Every day life puts unthought of problems and questions to man, which are beyond his power to solve. But when, through suffering and hardships, Truth is attained, it endows man with a key to every enigma of life, and traces unto him a plain way to every fairy mansion sequestered here and there throughout the vast desert of time.

Now that we know that the Truth is the only thing worth having, we must buy it at any price. The Truth should be found and known through the heart and not through any of the outward senses. It should be perceived through insight and not sight, for the sight sees imaginary things as realities, considers the mirage of the desert as running water and takes a shifting shadow for a substantial form. The outward senses

rather mislead us than direct us to the Truth. When we look at things from the outward sense point of view, we are improvident and thus led to misjudge them. In such circumstances we take darkness for light, images reflected in the mirror for realities, and we fail to distinguish the Truth from falsehood. In other words, to seek after Truth through the instrumentality of outward senses, leads us to worship horizons—not the sun—and to judge by the appearance of the lamp and candle.

To illustrate this point, let us look back 1900 years ago when the whole world was in quest of Truth. In search of Truth all were exploring the dark recesses and nooks of the different sides of life through the help of the torch of outward senses, with the exception of a very few who sought after it and had for a guide the shining light of insight and inner perception. Then when the "Messianic Sun" dawned from the horizon of the "Man of Nazareth," those few who sought after the Messiah through the help of insight found that world-illuminating light as clear as the sun in midday and were by no means prevented by the lowly lamp of Jesus in whom that Light had appeared. On the other hand, myriads of pseudo-seekers, who were escorted by the gorgeous equipage of Greek philosophy and mounted on the steeds

of phenomenal science and speculation, were entirely veiled from the Truth, and the help of outward senses did no other than to cast them in the bottomless abyss of remorse and ignorance. The few, who sought only for the Light, attained to never-ending life, while the many who judged the Light by the outward appearance of the lamp, were submerged in the sea of everlasting death. The former became the goal of kings and queens, but the latter became the shame of nations, and their names remained in the world's history as a subject of universal derision and disdain. Peter became the custodian of divine mysteries, while Caiaphas became a true symbol of human abomination.

Everything in the world, such as tree, ocean, light, man or beast, has a poor beginning. For instance, the beginning of a tree is a seed, that of the ocean a drop, that of sunlight the dim twilight, that of man the embryo, and that of beast, an insignificant speck of mere potentiality. Just as the twilight, the drop, the seed and the embryo have severally the potentiality of becoming a midday sun, an ocean, a stately tree and a perfect man, likewise, a discerning man sees and realizes a movement of nineteen hundred years duration in the lowly man of Nazareth, the extinction of polytheism and idolatry in the illiterate man of Arabia, and the establishment of the Universal Peace and general emancipation of mankind in BAHÁ'O'LLAH, the noble man of Persia.

Philosophy and clear thinking teach that everything accidental and visible is an effect and is the outcome of a cause. The appearance and life of things begin with the existence of their causes. Though causes are ideas and pre-existent to the effects which are forms, yet the latter are inseparable from and contemporaneous with the former. For a further illustration of this fact, I quote the following from the words of Emerson, the literary and moral genius of America.

“Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means and the fruit in the seed. The change which breaks up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth.”

Also the same authority has said:

“Thought and form are equal in the order of time; but in the order of genesis, the thought is prior to the form.”

One day when in Acca, Abdul-Baha, speaking of the mentioned fact and explaining that the possibility of every effect is latent or deposited in its cause, gave the following illustration:

“A wise man when looking at an egg, sees in it the whole form of a bird; he sees the beak, the claws, the plumage, the wings and the eyes, as well as the song and melody of the bird; but a child or an unwise man sees nothing but the egg, even unable to go any further than the outward shell and appearance.”

Thus it was through the innate Light of Truth and divine power manifest in the “Lowly Nazarene,” that he said: “Verily, I have overcome the world,” while the multitude, who were blind to this fact judged Him from His outward humility and poverty and laughed at His words in derision. Woe unto man if he relies upon his outward senses and judges things according to their appearance!

The life of vegetation begins in the seed, and the seed bursts forth in early spring through the training of the vernal shower and gentle breezes. So is the case with the religious growth. It begins with the rise of a perfect man who represents that Invisible Sun of Truth in its fullness and perfection. The rise of such a man puts a period to the old cycles and opens the paragraph of a new dispensation. His rise is the spiritual spring-time, through the refreshing breezes of which the sterile desert of the chaotic world blossoms into new life and becomes the envy of the Kingdom. The

breezes of the temporal spring-time are but an outcome of ethereal vibrations and fluctuations, while the breeze of this divine vernal season is the pure breath of the Holy Spirit which imparts everlasting life upon the dead souls of mankind. It is the rise of this perfect man which gives rise to ideal resurrection and calls forth the mouldering bones of dead humanity from the graves of in-advertance and superstition.

The rise of this man revolutionizes the old school of pride, self-exaltation and love for temporal leadership, and establishes the flourishing institution of meekness, self-abnegation and servitude upon the well-made foundation of love and truth. The rise of this man brings to light the falsity of so-called knowledge, and removes the covering from the face of misunderstood facts. All depend upon Him for "He is all in all," and all spring forth from Him, for He is the source of Life. He is the "Alpha and the Omega," the beginning and the end, the manifest and the hidden. For He is the manifestation of that Essence who was from the beginning before which there was no beginning, and will continue to be until the end beyond which there is no end. To know Him is to know God; to adore Him is to adore God; and to love Him is to love God. For He is the most perfect and clear mirror upon which the rays of the Invisible Sun are reflected and it is only through that Mirror that man can behold the radiance of that Sun and be benefited by its life-imparting heat. He is HE, whether He claims servitude, divinity, prophethood, sonship, fatherhood or manhood. In whatever clothing He may appear, the prudent will recognize Him, and in whatever tongue He may speak, the spiritually minded will hear Him and will distinguish Him from imposters.

Thirty-four hundred years ago, when the whole world was covered with the wintry frost of ignorance and idolatry,

and the children of men were submerged in the sea of darkness and imagination, the Supreme Ordainer saw fit to purify the mirror of the phenomenal existence from the dust of barbarity and deliver mankind from the prison of fabulous beliefs and abominations. He selected an ordinary man of the desert and made him the means for the execution of His work and honored him with the robe of prophethood. The shepherd saw the fire of "Verily, I am God" in the burning bush on the Sinai of knowledge and was favored with the rod of command. He was chosen from among the whole world to be the bearer of the divine Message and to enact the supreme Law for the guidance of a certain number of mankind. He was commanded to release the children of Israel from the tyranny of arrogant Pharoahs and to remove the yoke of slavery from their necks. That man of God, that Law Giver, that interlocutor of God, directed by the divine Light, betook himself to the city of darkness and delivered the Message of His Lord to him who was the most powerful king in the history of that age. He discomfited the hosts of the magi with the white hand of argument and swallowed the snakes of imagination with the serpent of Truth. A shepherd, destitute of any material influence, learning, affluence or hosts, suppressed the power of kings, silenced the men of sciences, and imparted the wealth of Law and Truth to the Pharoah-ridden slaves, termed the Israelites. He directed them to the Land of Promise, and established them in the covenanted country in fulfillment of the Words of God to the Patriarch.

When we follow the history of the Israelites from the rise of Moses down to the day of Jesus, we are continually struck with amazement at the considerable change brought upon these slaves of Pharoah and at the great events and occurrences which mark the Hebraic cycle. For the Word of God, through Moses, illumined that benighted people

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Baha' 1, 72 (March 21, 1916)

No. 1

Announcement

The Annual Convention of Bahai Temple Unity will be held in Chicago, April 29th to May 2d, inclusive. Detailed plans will be announced in the call to the assemblies and in a forthcoming issue of the STAR OF THE WEST.

Harlan Foster Ober, Secretary.

ALLAH'O'ABHA!

Naurooz Greeting

As the seventy-second year of the Millennium dawns, the lurid flames and black smoke of war—such as the world has never beheld—seems to becloud the Sun of Truth.

How can such an hour be considered part of the Millennium?

Dispensations are like the links of a vast chain—each link overlapping the other. Consider the history of the Christian cycle which began with the birth of Christ. Yet it was not until seventy and more years later that the whirlwind finish of the Hebraic cycle became manifest. The Millennium began in 1844 and it is generally conceded that the end of the old dispensation draws nigh. The overlapping period witnesses the birth of the new and the death of the old; it is “a time of trouble” and “the day of judgment.”

At such a time “*shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father*” (St. Matt. XIII:24-30; 36-43).

At such a time, the Bahais in America and the STAR OF THE WEST have a mission to perform.

—*The Editors.*

Tablet from Abdul-Baha

Thy mission in America for the present is this: Thou must travel as far as possible to every part and pass through cities and towns, summoning everyone to the Beauty of Abha raising the Call of the Kingdom and proclaiming at the top of thy voice:

“A hundred-thousand glad tidings be upon ye that the Sun of the Reality of the Beauty of Abha hath shone forth from the Horizon of the Contingent Being and hath illumined the regions with the lights of the Most Great Guidance. The realities of the Old Testament and the Gospel are already fulfilled and the Mysteries of the Heavenly Books have become manifest. This is the century of the Merciful One and the Period of Joy and Gladness.

“O ye heedless ones, become mindful!

“O ye sleeping ones, be awakened!

“O ye blind ones, become seeing!

“O ye deaf ones, become hearing!

“O ye dumb ones, become speakers!

“O ye dead ones, become living!

“O ye deprived ones, take a portion!

“This is the effulgence of the Merciful and the moving of the Depthless Sea. This is the outpouring of the wonderful new springtime and the falling of the showers of the Bounty of the Most Great Lord!”

This is thy mission.

—ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

The Light of Truth

(Continued from page 5)

with the light of God-knowledge and honored them with the title of “The Holy People.” That unfortunate race, who were trampled under the feet of tyranny, became the envy of kings and gave rise to great chiefs and prophets. They locked up the fate of the world under the seal of symbology and set forth the events of the future world of religion and the appearance of the Final Reformer, in the language of prophecy. Every century of this long cycle was lighted with a prophetic lamp who admonished and warned them and awak-

ened the spirit of expectation in their hearts for the coming of the Messiah. When again the divine Law fell a victim to the misinterpretation of man and the priestly influence found prominence over Truth and sanctity, the children of Israel became stripped of the Robe of Holiness and the mirror of their hearts was stained with the filth of pagan philosophy and Phoenician idolatry. Thus their unity changed into division, their harmony into discord, their justice into oppression, their chastity into wickedness, until finally they entitled them-

selves to a long degradation, suffering, powerlessness and humility, which the time had laid in store for a near future, as a result of their error and inadvertance.

According to my honorable teacher, Mirza Abul Fazl, when we carefully study the writings of the Israelitish prophets, we will find that all of their prophecies point to two great events in connection with the children of Israel. The first are facts foretelling the degradation of the Israelites, their scattering, their suppression, the desolation of their land and the conquering of the Holy City by the Gentiles. The second speaks of their salvation, emancipation, the restoration of their land, their gathering together from all parts of the world, and their re-establishment in their inherited country. So it was in fulfillment of the first of these prophecies that the Father of all good illumined the land of Palestine with the beauty of the Son. As the Jews did not find His appearance consistent with their own limited minds and dark imaginations, as they did not find Him the literal fulfiller of the signs and tokens given by their prophets concerning the coming of the Messiah, and as the eyes of their hearts were blinded to the Truth and its shining Light, so they ignored His mission, misunderstood His message, persecuted His blessed Being, and finally they crucified that glorious Person who had come to unite the children of men and teach them the Fatherhood of God. That loving Spirit had come to direct the Jews to everlasting glory and quicken them with the spirit of eternal life, but as they refused to present themselves at the heavenly table of His bounty and satisfied themselves with the transient fruit of this world, therefore that divine Beauty chose the Gentiles to partake of that great Gift, and illumined the pagan Europe with the Light of Truth and God-worship. He extended the hand of divine confirmation over the children of Greece and delivered them from the pit-

falls of mythology. He abolished their abominable practices and taught them how to work out their salvation and attain to everlasting prosperity. In His sermon on the mount, He instructed them that meekness and lowliness were the foundation of glory, and plainness and simplicity were the basis of Truth. He proved to them that philosophy was not the key to spirituality, and that unification and welfare cannot be secured by the intellectual power of man. While in His day the Greeks considered His teachings as foolishness, yet in their good time these became a framework of their institutions and served as life principles to more than one-half of the population of the globe. On the other hand, the Israelites, depriving themselves of this great favor, fell into division and degradation and many a time their land was trampled under the feet of conquerors. They experienced calamity upon calamity, hardship upon hardship, and privation upon privation, until finally the Light of Truth appeared in the Lamp of Hedjas to illumine the pagan Arabs of the desert and direct them to the Light of real Truth.

Mohammed arose and set fire to the harvest of Arabian superstitions. His iconoclastic practice broke the idols of ignorance and barbarity, and his monotheistic principle established the belief in the "Oneness of God." In a short period of time his religion prevailed in most of the eastern world and brought Chinese, Hindoos, Fire-worshippers and pagans to the confession of the divine Unity. His appearance fulfilled the prophecies of old concerning the abomination of desolation in the Holy Land and the taking away of the daily sacrifice, for during the early decades of his manifestation, Omar, the Caliph and valiant conqueror, gained victory over Jerusalem and entirely expelled the Israelites from the Land of Promise, which exile led to the eradication of the daily sacrifice from among the Jews.

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"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened, that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes; these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Jalal 1, 72 (April 9, 1916)

No. 2

The Light of Truth

Address delivered by Mirza Ali Kuli Khan before the Bahai Assembly of West Hoboken, N. J., September 28, 1902

(Continued from page 8, No. 1 issue, Vol. VII)

ACCORDING to my honorable teacher, Mirza Abul F'azl, the exponents of religion and prophecy have divided the cycles of the world into two long periods:

1. The dark night of the age of darkness.
2. The Day of Light, or the Shining Morn, the Latter Day, or the Time of the End.

According to the opinion universally agreed upon by all the religionists, and testified to by the prophecies of the founders of religions, the age of darkness began with history and ended in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century. The reason why the cycles of the world, which preceded the dawn of the Day of Light, were called "The dark night" lies in the lack of civilization and enlightenment and the barbarity which prevailed in those days. The world was darkened with the dust of discord, inharmony and injustice, and the gratification of carnal desires and racial preeminence was the highest summit toward which the footsteps of mankind were directed. Countries were so divided from each other that every nation considered the populous and civilized part of the world to be confined within the bounds and limits of its own land, and no man conceived the idea that other nations did really exist in other parts which were unknown

to him, owing to the lack of communication and knowledge. Therefore, the Supreme Ordainer did not see fit to rule the disconnected chaotic world of humanity with one universal religion, for in those dark days the capacity of mankind was not developed enough to receive the Message of the kingdom of El-Abha, and the eye of benighted humanity would be blinded and dazzled by the world-illuminating Sun which was ordained to dawn at the time of the end and bring about the first millennium of the Day of Light. He sent forth different prophets to the different parts of the planet to deliver the people of various tastes, lands, nationalities and communities, the one message of Truth, and to raise a point of contact between man and his Maker.

The most ancient religion of the world, so far as the obscurity of the ancient history allows us to investigate, was Sabeism, founded by Enoch, the seventh after Adam. This religion embodied the creed of the old Egypt, Roman paganism, Greek mythology, Chaldean star worship, Arabian heathen worship and idolatry, as well as the ancient religions of some of the other nations of the world. A remnant of this religious community is still extant in the southwestern part of Persia, called the Sabis, and another embodies the present Phetish worship in Africa.

Afterwards, the Creator sent Confucius in China, the Buddhist and Brahmin prophets in India, Zoroaster in Persia, Moses in Egypt, Jesus in Palestine and Mohammed in Arabia. Each of these Divine men, assisted by the Invisible Power, worked in the amelioration of the characters and morals of their respective nations. They enacted laws and ordinances upon which the welfare and prosperity of every community is founded and bequeathed to them a Divine Book containing direction and enlightenment. Each of these prophets severally gave signs and tokens concerning the Appearance of God *in the flesh*, and prepared his people to look for the coming of that Great Day, which, as the dawn of Divinity, is the end of the long cycle of darkness and the beginning of the glorious Day of Light. Just as the Israelitish prophets prophesied that at the time of the end *men shall see God upon the earth*; just as the Gospels foreshadowed the appearance of the Father with the Son; just as Mohammed promised the Islam dispensation that they should see God and appointed the time of his appearance to be 1260 years after his own rise, so, also, the Chinese and Indian prophets, as well as Zoroaster, made the same kind of prophecies and gave the exact date and the country in which that Glorious Light should appear.

In fulfillment of the prophecies, about sixty years ago, the Bab—the precursor of the Lord—appeared in Persia, fulfilling the mission of the Elias of the Jews; the John of the Christians; the Mahdi of the Mohammedans; and prepared the people for the descent of the heavenly table which he said would appear nine years after his own rise. He proved the validity of his mission through his wondrous works, and laid the foundation of the millennial cycle upon the mutilated bodies of thousands who died martyrs for his sake, and cemented them together with the congealed blood of his blessed heart which was shed in the path of his beloved one, in the seventh year of his ministry.

Then the Word of the Almighty became incarnate in the Temple of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, the Glory of God; the heavenly Father appeared, the sun of the final salvation dawned, and the deliverer arose from the land of Persia to emancipate the children of man from the fetters of oppression, and to bring about the universal and practical unification of the world and nations, which task has been ever beyond the power of any man of learning, affluence, influence and temporal authority. Although the blessed person of BAHÁ'O'LLAH was, from the beginning, subject to fetters and oppression and exiled from city to city, owing to the hatred and jealousy of the antagonistic fanatical clergy of Persia, yet he occupied all of his blessed days in enacting laws and ordinances for the reformation of the world, and opened the seal of the prophecies of old, which were ordained to be unlocked and unfolded to mankind at the time of the end, through the supreme pen of the glorious Lord.

Day by day the penetration of his Word increased and his followers grew in number until finally the people of tyranny determined to exile him to the desolate land of Acca, located within a few miles of Mt. Carmel which was prophesied by the prophets to be the footstool upon which the Lord shall stand at the time of the end. Thus the prophecies of old were fulfilled and the Holy Land became the land of the Lord, toward which all mankind shall look for light and guidance. The Father came to gather his children together from all parts of the world and to remove racial differences and religious fanaticism which had for long periods marred the prosperity of mankind and had darkened the mirror of brotherhood with the dust of clerical narrowness and national prejudice. This human development ceased to be controlled by human action, and God, *himself*,* came to appoint the criterion through which truth and righteousness are distinguished from false—

* St. Mark XII:1-9.

hood and inadvertence. He revealed the message of God to all the crowned heads of the world and reminded them of the appearance of the King of the divine kingdom to whom kings and subjects should equally bear allegiance, and from whom all races should seek light and guidance.

Thus, in a short space of time, his great cause was spread throughout the world and thousands out of all nations and religious communities acknowledged his Word and saw the beauty of their Lord in the temple of man. His life-imparting breath diffused the breeze of regeneration throughout the graveyards of humanity and resurrected the spiritually dead from the tombs of heedlessness and desire. When his blessed person desired to return to his invisible kingdom and to ascend to the heaven of the unseen realm, he bade farewell to the court of phenomena and in the year 1892 he repaired to the supreme horizon. Before his departure, he wrote his blessed book of his covenant with his own hand and sealed it with his own seal, in which book he entered into a Covenant with all the people of the world, including his own household and "branches," that after his ascension, they should unanimously bear allegiance to and obey his eldest son, the Greatest Branch, the Mystery of God, the Center of the Covenant, Abdul-Baha.

Thus, in fulfillment of the prophecies, the beauty of the son appeared in the temple of servitude to teach humanity how to serve the beauty of El-Abha, and how, through meekness and humility, to attain to his good pleasure. He stood firm under all kinds of trials and tribulations, and notwithstanding myriads of arrows of oppression are flying toward his blessed person, from all sides and directions, he is constantly teaching humanity to love their fellow creatures and to co-operate in raising the banner of Universal Peace, even at the risk of their lives and property. He is the exponent

of the Words of BAHÁ'O'LLAH; he is the preacher of the sermon of love; he is the lover of mankind; he is the one who was appointed to direct the whole world to the fountain head of peace and harmony.

When we carefully investigate the teachings of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, we will find that the subject matter of his scriptures is the unification of mankind and the removal of religious prejudices. In one of the tablets he has said: "O people of the world, the pavilion of unity is raised, do not gaze upon each other with the eye of foreignness! Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch." Likewise, "Let him not glory who loves his own country but let him glory who loves the whole world." He has likewise demonstrated that the essential parts of the religion of God are faith and obedience; that these two are inseparable; faith without obedience, or obedience without faith is not sufficient to work out man's salvation. Love is the mother of faith. Faith signifies obedience to the commands of God and compliance with His laws and ordinances and is conducive to a pure life, which is the only and greatest fruit that can be gathered from the garden of faith.

Man should prove his faith through deeds and actions, not through words and claims. If the edifice of faith could be secured upon mere words, every living creature would be accounted of the faithful; even those who fought against the hosts of God and shed the blood of His prophets professed faith by word of mouth. Faith is the tree, and the fruit thereof is good deeds and actions and pure living. Faith without deeds is a tree without fruit, which is not worth mentioning. In this connection it is said by the pen of El-Baha: "In this dispensation the conquering hosts are good qualities and deeds, and the leader of this army is the fear of God. This is a commander and possessor of all things." Likewise, in the *Tablet of the World*,

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Jalal 1, 72 (April 9, 1916)

No. 2

Eighth Annual Mashrak-El-Azkar Convention and International Bahai Congress

April 29th to May 2d, inclusive,
at Auditorium Hotel, Chicago

PROGRAM

First Session: Saturday, April 29, at 8:00 p. m.

Subject: THE BAHAI MOVEMENT.

1. Investigation of Truth.
2. Fundamental Unity of all Religions.
3. Harmony Between Religion and Science.
4. Demonstration of Divinity and Inspiration—The Word.
5. The Bahai Revelation.

The Bab—BAHA'O'LLAH—Abdul-Baha.

Second Session: Sunday, April 30, at 3:30 p. m.

Subject: UNIVERSAL PEACE.

1. Religion Must be the Cause of Unity Amongst Mankind.
2. The Abandonment of all Religious, Denominational, Racial and Patriotic Prejudices.
3. The Education of the Children of all Countries, Races and Religions under a Universal Standard of Instruction and a Common Curriculum.
4. A Universal Tribunal for the Maintenance of International Justice and for the Enforcement of Peace Between Nations.
5. The New Spiritual Day.

Third Session: Monday, May 1, at 8:00 p. m.

Subject: THE ONENESS OF THE WORLD OF HUMANITY.

1. The Interdependence of Individuals, Nations and Races.
2. The Solution of Economic Difficulties.
3. The Equality of Men and Women.
4. A Universal Language.
5. The Coming of The Great Master, the Source of the Real Oneness of Humanity.

Fourth Session: Tuesday, May 2, at 8:00 p. m.

Subject: THE MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR.

1. The Mashrak-El-Azkar, the Divine Institution of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.
2. The Mashrak-El-Azkar of Eshkabad, Russia, and the Mashrak-El-Azkar Work in America.
3. The Philanthropic Aspect of the Mashrak-El-Azkar.
4. The Essential Necessity for the Confirmation of the Holy Spirit as Embodied in the Mashrak-El-Azkar.
5. The Importance of Erecting the Mashrak-El-Azkar Now, During the Days of The Covenant.

EIGHTH ANNUAL MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR CONVENTION

Celebration of the Feast of Rizwan, Auditorium Hotel, Saturday, April 29,
at 6 p. m.

Meeting upon the Site of the Mashrak-El-Azkar, Wilmette, Sunday, April 30,
at 11:00 a. m.

Monday and Tuesday, May 1 and 2, Morning and Afternoon Business Sessions.

Latest News of Abdul-Baha

Letter from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
February 16, 1916.

Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi,
Chicago, Ill.

My beloved brother Zia:

Your kind and affectionate letter of October 21st as well as the one to Abdul-Baha and the third for the family of your dear wife were all duly received and their contents imparted joy and happiness. Praise be to God, that you are assisted to hold aloft in that far distant country the torch of the Covenant of God and to remind the people that *firmness* in the testament of the Lord is the corner-stone of faith and assurance. It is a fire that will consume the thorns of self and the thistles of petty ideas. Through this unbreakable chain we are guided safely to the ultimate goal of

Truth. Through this white light the darkness of doubt and superstition is dispersed. It is the breath of life that quickens the dead; the power of God that strengthens the weak; the water of immortality that allays the thirst of those who are wandering in the desert of heedlessness. It is the voice of the angel of reality that will throw a mighty reverberation through the pillars of the earth. I delivered your petition to Abdul-Baha the other afternoon when he was sitting in the garden, he read it and was pleased to know that Zeenat Khanom and your dear self were well and in good health. Mohammed and Ata (Zeenat Khanom's brothers) are in Damascus. They have found work there and are quite happy. Hobour (Zeenat's sister) is in the house of Abdul-Baha and the other day I heard her voice. All the

friends are well and pray that the day will come when they will have the pleasure of seeing you in this Holy Land. Will that day soon come?

Concerning the fund that our brother, Dr. Getsinger brought with him, Abdul-Baha did not accept it and after his departure a cable was forwarded to America on this subject.

Abdul-Baha expected to go to Tiberias the other day with a number of the holy family, but he postponed it till after tomorrow. He is going to take me with him. I am very happy over it as I will have another privilege to be included in the divine society of Abdul-Baha.

Please give my sincere greetings to all.
Ahmad Sohrab.

“If all souls’ thoughts were entirely given to holy thoughts of God, what would become of the world from a commercial standpoint?”

Mirza Abul Fazl’s Answer to the above Question

LOVE, faith and being filled with the will of God are not contradictory to the temporal affairs that man has to attend to (that is, we can be filled with the love of God and at the same time look after our worldly life and pursuits which are necessary to guarantee our social welfare and prosperity, etc.), though in the beginning it is difficult for us to realize this state in ourselves, yet this can become feasible and practical, if we obey the laws and ordinances of God. For instance, consider David: While he was attentive and watchful over his temporal affairs and worldly dominion to such an extent that he looked after each one of his soldiers, computed their number, arranged their sustenance and means of living, and while he was so alert in arranging administrative affairs that he was not at all heedless of the neighboring kings and their thoughts—even through outward means—even in such wise that through warfare and battles he strengthened that weak kingdom of the Israelites and glorified his people before the eyes of the great kings of Egypt and Assyria—nevertheless, could it be thought that he was meanwhile separated from the love of God? Or could it be said he was so

carried away by temporal occupations and cares as to make him heedless of the commemoration of God? And could we and you, as some people, bring ourselves to believe that David did sin?

Likewise, consider His Holiness Abraham: He was a man who led a nomadic life, and possessed large herds and flocks in the desert, and he gained his living by rearing sheep and cattle. He was so watchful and attentive in the administration of the affairs pertaining to temporal pursuits that nothing escaped his notice. Although when single and alone, he migrated from the Ur of the Chaldeans, he exercised the utmost care in his worldly affairs, and thus became accounted among the highest men of affluence in Syrian lands; and notwithstanding he contributed personal watchfulness and attention over every single sheep in case of sickness, yet he was not for a single moment heedless of the commemoration of God; so much so, that among all the inhabitants of the world, at that time, he alone was chosen by God as His friend.

Consequently, we and you must likewise exert ourselves, in order to reach such a point in the love of God that the world and its occupations, no matter

how involving they may be, may not prevent us from the praise of God, nor make us heedless of His commemoration.

Mohammed, the Prophet, has said: "Man in this world must be so attentive to his worldly affairs and temporal necessary pursuits, that it may seem as though he thinks he is going to live forever in this world, and he must, at the same time, be so submerged in the love of God and occupied with the thoughts of the hereafter, that it may seem as though he is going to die and leave this earth at the very moment."

Moreover, one of the great elements in the laws of every religion, deals with the rules concerning the orderly arrangement and preservation of human society. One of their solid commands is this: That man should be engaged in a trade or profession, and should by this means be a cause of tranquillity and peace to others. BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH has so emphatically laid down rules concerning the orderly management of mercantile pursuits and professions that he has accounted occupation in such professions as an act of worship on the part of a believer (i. e., according to BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, to be engaged in an honorable art, trade or profession, by which ourselves and humanity can be benefited, is an act of worship).

O my dear sister: Endeavor that man may reach such a point that nothing of this world can prevent him from the love of God, to such an extent that if he goes to sleep, he may have God in his thoughts; if he engages in trade or temporal occupation, he may do it for the purpose of benefiting his fellow-men; and if he walks, he may walk to perform that which is best for the people of the world, and that the more he increases in spirituality, the more he may learn about the well-management of his affairs. Man must love the world and all the people therein for the sake of its Maker. Even as the Persian poet sung six hundred years ago:

"In this world I am rejoiced over the
One
Through whom the world is rejoiced;
I am in love with all the people of the
world,
For all the world belongs to Him."

For a believer, even his worldly and professional pursuit is an act of worship; for an unbeliever, even his activity in the acts of worship is no other than entire occupation with the world and worldly things. This you have realized in the church, and in the spirit in which many in the church performed their acts of worship.

The Light of Truth

(Continued from page 11)

He has said, the gist of which is the following: "Say, O friends: The tent of the Cause of God is great and it will soon overshadow all the nations of the world. The day is yours, and a thousand tablets are your evidence. Arise to assist the Cause, and gird up the loins of endeavor and conquer the hearts and souls of men with the sword of good deeds. The assister of the Cause is good deeds and their meaning is good morals." Likewise, "Blessed are those who are adorned with the garment of good deeds."

So in this day Abdúl-Baha is teaching the same lesson. His everyday life proves that his only aim is the unification of the world, and his only purpose is to emancipate all mankind from bondage and link them together with the chain of brotherhood. His favorite teaching to young and old, high and low, is the severance from all else save God, and the reliance upon Him which is the only source of goodness, the axis around whom mercy and bounty revolve. His greatest hope is to sacrifice his life for the sake of the Father, and to be a tar-

get for thousands of arrows in love for humanity. Through his endeavor the Word of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH is spread broadcast in the world and the voice of the Lord's Manifestation has reached all nations and communities. The words of Abdul-Baha impart the spirit of life and develop the barren soil of hearts into a delectable paradise of faith and knowledge.

O my brothers, sisters and spiritual friends: The day is yours. Avail yourselves of the opportunity and exert yourselves to spread the spirit of love and peace among your fellow creatures, and assist the Cause of your Lord with the hosts of harmony. A Glorious Sun is shining and the vernal shower is pouring. The breeze of God is wafting by and the Ocean of Divine Bounty is rolling. The Ark of Deliverance is sailing upon the Sea of Truth and thousands are reaching the cheerful haven of assurance. This is a day which was longed for by the holy souls and chosen ones in former cycles, and thousands of kings and queens died in expectation of its appearance. The same Word which became incarnate thirty-five hundred years ago and quickened the mouldering bones of the Israelites with the spirit of eternal life, is again in this day manifest in the temple of man, ready to fill the men of capacity with the bounty of regeneration. The same Sun which appeared nineteen hundred years ago from the horizon of the Man of Nazareth and made an humble fisherman the custodian of the Unseen Treasury, is again shining and illuminating the whole world with the light of salvation.

In order to thank God for His great bounty, we must co-operate night and day in union and harmony to raise the tent of this Truth among mankind and to plant the banner of Universal Peace upon the summit of the contingent world. We must cast every enmity and discord into the pit of oblivion and purify our hearts and souls from the least trace of hatred or animosity. We must

see only good in our fellow men, and withstand the hosts of denial with the sword of indifference and kindness. We must beg of God to endow us with a discerning sight, so that we may see and appreciate the greatness of this day, and thank Him for having mentioned our names in His Book. We must pray night and day to endure unto the end and be protected from the shock of tests and trials. Prayer is the wing whereby the soul of man soars upward to the heaven of nearness. I beg of God to overshadow this great country and its inhabitants under the tent of His mercy, and to protect them from all that is contrary to His good pleasure. I beg of God to assist them through the angels of His supreme kingdom and enable them to transmit the light of the beauty of El-Baha to all parts of the world.

O God! O God! Suffer us to live in perfect peace and harmony, to turn our hearts and souls unto the face of Abdul-Baha, and to enjoy his presence in the kingdom.

Grant that we may serve our fellow men and remove discord and religious fanaticism from among nations. We are humble; confirm us with the power of Thy Spirit. We are weak; strengthen us through Thy might, and protect us against that which is contrary to Thy good pleasure. Quicken us with the spirit of regeneration and deliver us from the pitfall of superstition.

Verily, Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful, the Beneficent, the Source of Great Bounty. Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Merciful!

We rely upon Thy beneficence and trust in Abdul-Baha!

Blessed are those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

The servant of Abdul-Baha,

(Signed) ALI KULI KHAN.

Read before the Bahai Assembly of West Hoboken, N. J., September 28, 1902.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Jamal 1, 72 (April 28, 1916)

No. 3

Explanation of Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Lesson given by Mirza Abul Fazl, Sunday, October 6, 1901, Chicago

Interpreted by Mirza Ali Kuli Khan

Taken stenographically by Miss Gertrude Buikema

THE Holy Scriptures, including the Old and the New Testament, bear and contain prophecies concerning the coming of the Lord in the latter days. Some of these books contain prophecies which show the exact date of the appearance of the latter days, while some others simply give signs and tokens of that glorious day.

Among the books of the Old Testament only the book of Daniel contains dates of the Manifestation (of BAHA'O'LLAH) in this great day, and of the books of the New Testament only the book of Revelation contains the date of the coming of this great day; while the other scriptural records, containing prophecies and writings, refer to that event as the coming of the Lord. One of the prophecies refers to the coming of the great day and gives signs of its coming, not dates; and by reading this prophecy all can judge for themselves that it refers to the day of the Lord and to the coming of the Lord of Hosts in the latter days.

Now I will read that prophecy to you (Isaiah 25:6-7): "And in this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all

people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." This is a prophecy of things which were to happen in the mountain of God, that all the nations of the earth, including the Jews, Zoroastrians, Mohammedans, et al., should come together on that holy mountain to partake of food, both spiritual and material; and we find this prophecy was not fulfilled in the day of Jesus nor in another day, but it is only in this day of BAHA'O'LLAH, since his departure, that all the nations of the earth have come to Acca and Haifa, and have partaken of this food, both materially and spiritually. By the mountain mentioned in this verse is meant Mt. Carmel, which fact is unanimously agreed upon by the learned doctors and others among the Christians, Jews, and all the other nations who believe in the scriptures. The cities of Haifa and Acca are at the foot of Mt. Carmel. Since the exile of BAHA'O'LLAH and Abdul-Baha to Acca, Haifa and Mt. Carmel, all the different nations of the earth have partaken of spiritual life and spiritual food on that mountain, which has no other meaning than that of the blessings and teachings showered upon them by BAHA'O'LLAH and Abdul-Baha. By the seventh verse: "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all

nations," is meant that by the words of BAHÁ'O'LLÁH attracting the hearts of the different nations to the Great Cause, they will become united and the veils and coverings of religious divergences will be rent asunder.

In the eighth verse, of the same chapter, it says: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it." By this is meant that he, in his day, will swallow up death, and through the power of his teachings and through the power of his Word will save the people from darkness and ignorance, and thus they will be spiritually saved from unbelief, doubt and suspicions. By saying, "The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth"—the people referred to in this verse are the Jews. The Jews were rejected by all nations because of their disbelief and their denial of Jesus Christ in his day; they were humiliated, their kingdom was taken out of their hands, and they fell into a condition of despair; but God promised them that he would bring them together again and would wipe away all tears from their faces. They will believe in the Word of God, and thus their hearts will be comforted and consoled by the new teachings of God, and they will no longer be humiliated as they were before this great day. The humiliation of the Jews was caused by the fact that they rejected Jesus Christ and that they did not believe in him; but in this great day, when they believe in the Manifestation of BAHÁ'O'LLÁH, and through his Words they believe in Jesus Christ, then the shame will be taken away from them. This prophecy concerning the Jews is already fulfilled, even though we are still in the first century of the rise of this dispensation, inasmuch as up to the present day thousands of the Jews

have believed in the Manifestation of God, and by so doing they also believe in Jesus Christ and in the other prophets, and are teaching the Truth of God.

Ninth verse: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Inasmuch as the Jews are awaiting the coming of the Messiah, of the Lord, in order to be saved from the humiliation into which they fell because of their denial of Jesus Christ, now we find those of them, who have believed in God, declaring that the Lord has come and that they are saved.

The same kind of prophecies are given in the books of the other prophets in the Old Testament, but they do not give the date of the coming of the Lord. The only one in the Old Testament who points to the exact appearance of the Lord is Daniel, while the others prophesy concerning the signs of the appearance of the day of the Lord, and by all of these prophecies is meant the coming of the Lord in the latter days. These prophecies cannot refer to the coming of Jesus Christ inasmuch as with his coming the Jews were not saved. The prophecies in the book of Daniel, which we are going to interpret now, clearly point to the date when the Lord should appear. The book of Daniel is based on an historical point of view, especially the second chapter concerning the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and the interpretation made by Daniel which clearly indicates the coming of the Lord in the latter days. The first chapter of Daniel has no prophecies. (Here Mirza Abul Fazl gave a summary of this chapter.)

Now, the second chapter refers to the dream and the other prophecies. The second chapter begins with this, that Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and when he awoke, in order to get the interpretation thereof, he sent for the wise men to interpret the dream for him. In that day Babylon was the center of the east-

ern civilization and the largest city in the world, and there were many schools where learned men and educated doctors were teaching all classes of people. When Nebuchadnezzar had this dream he sent for all the learned men to come and interpret it, and when they came forth they wanted Nebuchadnezzar to explain his dream first, but he said, "No, I am not going to explain the dream," etc. The Chaldeans answered, "This is something that is beyond the power of the people of the world and beyond the power of the angels, and it is God only who knows how to tell the dream and the interpretation thereof. If you want to have the dream interpreted, explain it to us so we may know how to interpret it." This answer, made by the learned men, made the king angry and he commanded that all the wise men in Babylon be destroyed, saying, "I have spent much money to educate these people, and now they cannot interpret my dream. What is the use of spending money and educating them?" Then the guard of the king went forth and brought all the learned men, to slay them, and among them was Daniel and his three friends who were brought to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. Although the Jewish tribes were also holy and chaste people in that day, still the divine spirit was only manifested in Daniel. As the people, who are the Manifestations of the Spirit or the Word of God, are grand and glorious, and as Daniel manifested the Great Spirit in that day and was, therefore, a glorious man to look upon, the king's guard did not want him to be slain, and went to him to know what should be done. Daniel asked the king's guard why the king wanted to slay all the learned men. Then Daniel said, "Go forth to the king and say that I will interpret this dream for him." As the king's guard, himself, was in favor of the learned men and did not want so many great people to be slain, he went to the king and told him that there was a man among the cap-

tives of the Israelites who said he would interpret the dream for him.

Then the king said they should not kill the learned men, but wait until tomorrow. The king's guard then went to Daniel and said that the king wanted him to explain the dream. When Daniel and his three friends were saved from this imminent danger they went home, and he said, "Let us pray this evening and not sleep; let us beg of God to enlighten me." God made himself manifest to Daniel and told him about the dream and its interpretation. He prayed that night, and after he went to sleep he had a dream in which God explained to him everything concerning the dream. The next morning he went with the king's guard into the presence of the king, and after chanting praises and thanks to the king, he began to explain to him concerning the dream. Then he said: "O king, thou hast seen in the dream a grand looking image. The head of that image was gold, his breast was silver, his belly and thighs were of brass, his legs of iron and his feet part of iron and part of clay. And when thou wert looking at the image, a large stone was cut out of heaven, without hands, and came right on the image and destroyed it. Then all the parts of the body of the image were broken in pieces and scattered. It was utterly broken and destroyed." He said, "This dream is true and this will happen. God has explained to the king, in this dream, the events which will happen in the latter days. Know thou, O king, that that golden head is thine, that is to say, the Chaldean kingdom, and then after thy kingdom will come another kingdom which is inferior to thine, but it will also be a great kingdom, and that represents the breast which is of silver. Then will follow another kingdom which will be still smaller than the two, and it is represented by the brass of which the belly and thighs were made. The fourth kingdom shall be as strong

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Jamal 1, 72 (April 28, 1916)

No. 3

An Interview with Abdul-Baha

From Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
June 30, 1914.

Dear Friends:

Mr. Hans Springer of Stuttgart, who is twenty-three years old and is a globe trotter, called on Abdul-Baha this morning. He makes all his tour afoot, and has already covered a distance of 35,000 km. He is an Esperantist, and as he puts on the dress of the inhabitants of the country through which he travels, he was today an Arabian gentleman, but his blue eyes, white skin and brown vandyke beard heralded from afar off his European origin. He spoke German, Italian and Esperanto but I could not speak with him in any of these languages. Finding that he understood a little French, we struck on that. At first glance Abdul-Baha liked him. I will record herein his conversation with Mr. Springer, in its natural form of dialogue.

Abdul-Baha: "Thou art welcome. Where didst thou come from?"

Hans Springer: "I come now from Jerusalem. From Egypt I walked to Gaza and Jaffa. On the way fifteen

Arabian Bedouins surrounded me and carried away my belongings, even my shoes. When I reached Jerusalem I was assisted by a number of Germans."

A. B. "What is the object of thy world tour?"

H. S. "First to spread the knowledge of Esperanto because I believe it will help to unify mankind. Second, to see the world, to meet men of various nationalities and learn their manners and customs."

A. B. "With what means dost thou travel?"

H. S. "The sale of these postal cards containing my picture on one side and the benefits of the knowledge of Esperanto on the other, is the sole source of my revenue. My needs are very few in number. I seldom eat meat. I eat vegetables, bread and nuts."

A. B. "Dost thou travel always on the surface of the earth? Would it not be excellent if thou couldst take a trip toward heaven?"

H. S. "Heaven! I have never heard of anyone going to heaven. This is impossible."

A. B. (smiling). "Why impossible? Did not Elijah go to heaven, and did not Christ ascend to heaven after his crucifixion and burial?"

H. S. (puzzled). "I am neither Elijah nor Christ. I have not two wings to fly with. It seems to me there must needs be a pair of wings."

A. B. "Everything is possible. Christ says: 'Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' Thou canst have the pair of wings. One is the love of God and the other is renunciation of aught else save him."

H. S. "Then you do not mean this phenomenal heaven?"

A. B. "I mean the heaven from which Christ descended and to which he ascended—the heaven of the divine will, the heaven of spirituality."

H. S. "How can one ascend to that heaven? Is it not most difficult?"

A. B. "It is no more difficult than touring the world on foot. When the spirit of the teachings of Christ takes possession of the heart and suffers man to become a servant of the world of humanity, then it will be very easy for him to ascend to heaven."

H. S. "But in this age the Christians have forgotten the commandments of Christ."

A. B. "What hast thou to do with others? Live thou according to the teachings of Christ."

H. S. "You are right. I will do my best."

A. B. "Whom dost thou think Christ was?"

H. S. "I believe he was a great philosopher."

A. B. "Oh, no! He was much greater than a philosopher. He was the Word of God, the Spirit of God."

H. S. "Whew! There are many scholars in Europe who do not believe that there was ever such a person as Christ. On the other hand there is an increasing host of people whose faith in Christianity is shaken because the ministers

of the Gospel do not live in accord with the behests of their Master. They have become worldlings wrapped up in traditions and dogmas. When I was in Jerusalem, I observed that the Christians have divided the Church of the Resurrection into many sections, like a bazaar, and they are always engaged in acrimonious controversies and factional fights, while they claim Christ brought peace and salvation. Where can one find peace, and how can one be saved? Through their religious hatred for each other they have shut the door of salvation."

A. B. "What thou sayest is true. But we are not looking at the present conditions. Let us look at the glorious life of Christ and those sanctified souls who came after him. Did they not embody in their deeds the ideals of their words? There have appeared many philosophers in the world, but they are all forgotten. But because Christ was the Spirit and the Word of God, he and his disciples through him, became the fountains of the water of life. Now I hope that like unto them thou wilt be the means of the illumination of the world of humanity and serve God."

H. S. "Serve God? There is no one in this world who can serve God, because we are not able to see Him. He is above our human ken. In my mind the only way we can serve Him is to serve mankind and try to alleviate the sorrows and sufferings of the people."

A. B. "Christ served God and his apostles served God. Their service was to humanity, which was a reflection of their service to God."

H. S. "What are you doing?"

A. B. "I am serving God. I am the servant of God. I give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, the power of speech to the mute, and knowledge to the ignorant. I raise the dead, deliver those who are in darkness and guide them into the realm of light. I make the poor rich, and the weak powerful. I satisfy the hungry ones with the Bread of Life and allay the thirst of the thirsty ones

with the pure Water of Immortality. This is my work."

H. S. "When I was in Stuttgart I attended an Esperanto meeting addressed by Abdul-Baha. Does Abbas Effendi know him? He is a wise man and is in great sympathy with the Esperanto language. He has many followers in Stuttgart. His religion is called Bahai." (The translator here informed Hans Springer that he is speaking with Abdul-Baha; that he is in his presence. Immediately he became more respectful and expressed great joy and happiness.)

H. S. "Is it possible that I am in the presence of Abdul-Baha?"

(Taking in his hand the last book of tablets to correct, Abdul-Baha became silent. After a few minutes, conversation started again.)

A. B. "Even a bird can fly around the world. It is not a difficult accomplishment. Therefore, become thou a royal bird of the kingdom, and like unto an angel soar toward the heavenly worlds. I can assure thee that the experiences will be more than marvelous."

H. S. "I hope to get a pair of strong wings to accomplish this difficult task."

A. B. "I pray that when thou goest to Nazareth, the place of Christ's nativity, the Spirit of God may descend upon thee and wings of light be granted thee, so that thou mayst soar in the immensity

of God's space and behold the wonders of His creation."

H. S. "I will also pray for this."

A. B. "Where dost thou go from here?"

H. S. "From here I shall leave tomorrow on foot for Nazareth, then Tiberias, Beirut, Damascus, Constantinople, Caucasus and then entering Persia from the north, I will go out from the south via the Persian Gulf. Then to India, Japan, China, Australia, Hawaiian Islands and the United States. . . ."

In short, this was the outline of the talk; meanwhile, Khosro brought for him coffee, tea and cake. Then Abdul-Baha asked someone to bring him a dish of pistachios, which in turn he shelled and gave the meats to him. The time of parting drawing nigh, he placed in the palm of his hand an English pound, and wished him much success in his long undertaking. The cake and pistachios were also put in a paper and given to him for his lunch.

In the afternoon, two Arabs called on Abdul-Baha, staying with him for half an hour. Then he dictated a number of tablets for the believers in Baku. It was moonlight when he returned from his walk. "How beautiful this moonlight night," he said to us, as he entered the house.

Explanation of Daniel's Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

(Continued from page 19)

as iron, etc. But the fourth kingdom will be divided into two parts, one part will continue to be strong and firm like iron, while the other will be weakened, like clay. At the time of this fourth kingdom, God, himself, will come and will break all the fourth kingdom into pieces and then he will build up; and that stone, which was cut out of heaven, without hands, and came down, is no other than the kingdom of God itself, which will fill all the earth. And it is written here that that stone grew so large

that it filled all the earth." This was the dream of the king, and the king, hearing Daniel, fell down and worshipped him. Then, after he had explained to him the dream, he said, "I will give you the interpretation of the dream."

In all the writings and prophecies, both in Revelation and in Daniel by "kingdom" is meant the appearance of a religion of God. A worldly government and a worldly kingdom, according to the terminology of Revelation and Daniel, is represented by "beast." For

instance, Daniel says: "I saw a lion in a dream." By "lion" is intended a government, and by "sheep" was intended the old Persian government. By the word "kingdom," as recorded in Revelation and in the book of Daniel, is intended a religion, and by a "beast" is intended an earthly government. In this dream Daniel explains to the king that from the days of that king until the day of the appearance of the kingdom of God four great kingdoms will appear on the earth, i. e., four great worldly kingdoms. Since the day when the king saw this dream and Daniel interpreted it to him, until the dawn of BAHĀ'ŪLLĀH, four great kingdoms appeared, both in Chaldea and in Syria, and by these four governments is meant four religions. According to history, from the day of Daniel until the appearance of BAHĀ'ŪLLĀH, four kingdoms appeared in Chaldea and Syria, in those eastern lands. The religion held by the people in the time of Nebuchadnezzar was the Sabian religion and that religion prevailed throughout the world among all nations except the Chinese and the Hindoos. This religion was prevalent in the world until the day when Chaldea was subdued by Kirsh, the king of Persia. Then this religion was crushed by the appearance of the Christian religion which was furthered through the instrumentality of Roman kings. Then the kings of Persia came forth and waged war with the Roman emperors and then they subdued them and took possession of their lands and Syria and the Holy Land. Even Chaldea was subdued by the Persian kings, even this land where Nebuchadnezzar had his dream, was subdued by the Persian kings, and then the kings of Persia, who were always in war with the Roman emperors, brought the religion of Zoroaster and made it a prevalent religion in those parts for four hundred years. After four hundred years the Zoroastrian religion was destroyed by the appearance of Islam, the rise of Mohammed, when

the Zoroastrians were subdued by the Islam armies. Islam was such a violent religion that it destroyed and ruined most of the countries. This religion was afterwards divided into two religions, the Sunites, of Turkey, and the Shiites, of Persia, but both of them were Mohammedan. The religion of Mohammed was divided into two divisions—and then the kingdom of God appeared in this day. This heavenly stone, this stone which was cut without hands, first destroyed the toes made of clay, which refers to the religion of the Shiites.

Now I have told you about the dream and have given you the history of the kings who ruled in the lands of Chaldea and Syria. Now we will read the words of Daniel, beginning with the thirty-seventh verse of the second chapter of Daniel, interpreting the dream of the king. The thirty-eighth verse reads: "And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." It is said in this verse that all the fowls of the heaven and the beasts of the field were given in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, while he was only the king over Chaldea and he did not take possession of Europe or Africa. By this is meant the religion which was prevailing in the day of Daniel—the Sabian religion. It refers to his religion and not to his material kingdom. Enoch was the institutor of Sabianism, and from the time of Enoch until the time of Moses all the people were under this religion. Their religion was first founded on unity and in the worship of God, but by and by they began to think that by worshipping and praying to the stars they would attain to glories. They used to bring images of the stars and hang them in their churches and worship them. This religion was also prevalent in Europe and they also had large temples built in the name of Venus and the stars. Then Christianity crushed out this religion.

Its destruction in the eastern part of the world and in Persia was made by the appearance of the religion of Zoroaster. There are only about five thousand families of this religion still living in the western part of Persia. Some of the people of Africa are also believers in Sabianism. The point that I want to get at is this thirty-eighth verse. By the ruling of Nebuchadnezzar is not meant his material government, inasmuch as his material government was not a prevalent government throughout all the world, as is understood by this verse, but by this is meant his religion which was the prevalent religion of the world in that day.

Then the thirty-ninth verse: This second religion was Christianity. Although Christianity was pure and exactly like gold, which was seen by the king in his dream, its number did not subdue the number of those who were believing in the Sabian religion; therefore Christianity is interpreted by silver. Christianity was pure, glorious and grand, but the number of people who believed in Christianity in those days was less than the number who believed in Sabianism, and although Christianity subdued Chaldea, soon after it was removed from that part of the country. In this thirty-ninth verse we read: "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over the earth." By brass is meant the condition of the religion of Zoroaster; although it was inferior to Christianity, still it was a prevalent religion, next to Christianity in those days. If you want to know the extensive country over which Zoroaster's religion was ruling, you should take up the history of Darius and Cyrus. This will give you an idea of the prevalence of Zoroastrianism in those days. Verse forty: "And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron," etc. By the fourth kingdom is meant the religion of Mohammed, inasmuch as it was so strong as to bruise Zoroastrianism and Sabianism, and this religion also turned the Christians out of

those lands. As it is said here: "Forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise," so that the religion of Islam, by conquering a country, would crush it and break it down.

Then read the forty-first verse. The fourth religion shall be divided, which was Islam, and these two divisions of the religion of Islam were the Sunites and the Shiites. One of them continued to be firm and strong as iron. By this is meant the Sunite branch in Turkey, which used to be in a strong condition until the dawn of this great dispensation. But part of the fourth religion was of clay and was broken. This refers to the Persians, where the Shiite religion is prevalent, which was brought low. If you study the history of the world you will find that for six hundred years until the present time, which was the duration of the constitution of Turkey, the Sunite religion has been a prevalent religion, while the Shiite branch of Persia has always been in abasement and desolation. Although you will find that the Shiites and the Sunites belong to the same religion, are extended from the same root, still they do not mix, just as iron never mixes with clay. As a proof of this you will find that enmity has always existed between the Shiites and the Sunites. They have never intermarried; they never communicate with each other; they never even eat with each other; they will not mix.

Read the forty-fourth verse. This refers to the appearance of this great dispensation, the great Bahai religion, during the time of these two communities, the Shiites and the Sunites. The religion of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH appeared during the time of these two nations. This religion will remove the differences, disunion and inharmony from among the world. Read verse forty-five. The stone was BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH which came from the heaven of the Glory of God.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Azamat 1, 72 (May 17, 1916)

No. 4

Tablet to India

From Abdul-Baha to Mr. Bannerjee, the founder of the Devalaya Society in Calcutta, India

O thou wooer of Reality!

His Highness the Merciful One hath caused the appearance of the splendors of love and affinity in the world of humanity, so that the individuals of mankind might be perfectly united and the rays of unity be revealed amongst the children of man. Hence he sent forth the holy Manifestations, inspired their hearts with the contexts of the heavenly books and instituted divine religions, in order that these sanctified personages, these revealed books, these religions of God might become the means of unity and accord, love and good fellowship in the human world.

Should we study the divine religions with the perception of truth, we would then conclude that their underlying principle is the One Reality. All the religions of God are the reality. Reality does not accept multiplicity and division. But alas! that the fundamental reality is laid aside and forgotten and a catalogue of creeds, dogmas and rites have taken its place which are the basis of difference, the cause of hatred and prejudice and the establishment of the religion of God is totally forgotten and quite neglected.

When this impenetrable gloom—that is, the gloom of the traditions of forefathers and ancestors—surrounded the world and the pristine, primal light of

the divine religions was changed into the darkness of the ideas of men, then the true morn dawned and the Sun of Reality (BAHA'O'LLAH) arose from the horizon of Persia, reflecting in the mirror of the world of humanity the effulgence of the heavenly unity. Thus he destroyed the foundations of the structure of blind dogmas, and man-made creeds and rituals which are the results of ignorant prejudices. It is owing to this fact that this light is spreading with the greatest rapidity in all the countries of the world. The influence of these divine teachings in the heart of the world is like the influence of the spirit over the bodies.

Consequently, through the breaths of this divine spirit, the followers of the different religions in Persia have rent asunder the veil of superstitions, are freed from the effect of unenlightened doctrines and have attained to the Beloved of Reality. These antagonistic faiths are united with the bond of perfect love and amity. For this reason great meetings are organized, in which are represented Mohammedans, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Turks, Arabs, Parsees, Persians, Kurds, English, French and Americans, who associate and mingle with each other as brothers. Like the sheep of God they are grazing in the meadow of truth under the pro-

tecting staff of the heavenly Shepherd.

Shouldst thou reflect with the insight of reality, thou wilt observe that these antiquated and superannuated dogmas have ever been the cause of massacre and carnage amongst the nations and peoples.

As this cycle is the cycle of sciences, there must needs be *new* teachings, a *new* revelation is required and a *new* life is wanted. The minds and hearts refute the veracity of ancient opinions. *New* ideals are called for and *new* principles are urgently demanded which may fill the requirements of this age, be as the

spirit of this century and as the light of this period.

Search, labor, investigate, work and show extraordinary effort, so that the center of the light of Reality, like unto the witness of love, may become revealed in the assemblages of mankind. Arise thou with such heavenly power and such divine confirmation as to move and stir that great continent of India.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Copied from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's Diary Letter of July 7, 1914.

Extracts from Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Dear friends: We have an old Bahai by the name of "El Yahou." His former religion had been Jewish, and his devotion to the beloved is unquestioned. The other day he went to the house wherein Abdul-Baha lives and started to weep and cry near the door. The members of the blessed family heard the crying and weeping of the man and informed Abdul-Baha of it. He called him in and consoled him, and told him that in this day no one must cry for any reason, nay rather we must be very happy and contented with our lot, and know of a certainty that the Lord of Hosts is with us, ready to restore our health and alleviate our burden. We must not let anything disturb the balance of our minds. Under all circumstances we must control our feeling, and curb our inclinations. We must fulfill our duty, attain to the highest station of perfection, and close our eyes to all imperfections. Then Abdul-Baha took pen and paper and wrote for him the following holy tablet:

"O thou my kind friend! It is my hope that through the bestowals of the Blessed Perfection thou mayest ever become assisted and confirmed, happy and joyous; that thou mayest not cry and lament, nay rather thou mayest sing and chant. It

is said that the son of the glorious Friend had a wonderful melody and a sweet voice. The Psalms of David are famous and not lamentation and mourning or crying by day and night. Therefore be thou happy and let the songs and anthems of joy be on thy lips."

Our El Yahou was back in the possession of a new happiness, a new inspiration, a new serenity. We all felt his joyful vibrations and watched delightedly his calm face. Then he drew his book of poetry from his pocket and sang a stirring Bahai song with the energy and zest of a youthful singer.

October 1, 1913.

Words of Abdul-Baha:

"The greatest proof of BAHÁ'O'LLAH—may my life be a ransom to him—consists in the fact that he was always manifest and evident under all conditions and circumstances. He was never concealed nor was he disguised for one day. In Persia, in Bagdad, in Constantinople, in Adrianople and in the most great prison, BAHÁ'O'LLAH ever withstood the persecutions of the enemies and kept his own ground in the face of all the world. He never attempted to

protect or shield himself for one second. Before all nations and all religions he proclaimed his cause and declared his teachings. The foes were resisting the spread of the cause with the greatest hostility and his blessed breast was the target for an hundred thousand arrows. It is revealed in the Visiting Tablet: 'Verily I bear testimony that the eye of creation has not witnessed a wronged one like unto thee. Once thou wert surrounded by the armies of hardships, again thou wert under chains and fetters and then thou wert beneath the sword of the enemies.' Continually he was threatened with the darts and javelins of the adversaries. He cried out: 'We have burned away the veil and the shroud and are enkindled with the fire of love. Like the candle we are set aglow and like the beloved we are ever present in the gathering of the lovers.' It is well-nigh beyond belief that notwithstanding all these dangers, BAHÁ'O'LLAH was protected. The condition was like that of a deer: although surrounded by a hundred thousand hounds, attacking it from every side, yet protected by an invisible power."

March 7, 1914.

Words spoken by Abdul-Baha to some pilgrims who had just returned from a trip to the place of sacrifice of Elijah:

"The altar of sacrifice is the living heart of man, and not a few pieces of dead stones. The fire that came down from heaven was no other than the fire of the love of God descending from the heaven of the divine will; the bullocks are human and carnal desires and appetites which are entirely burned away by this ideal fire, leaving the spiritual altar cleansed and pure, and then celestial qualifications and attributes will take the place of former blameworthy qualities. The killing of the priests of Baal means that the enemies of truth were so filled with wrath against the triumph of the cause of righteousness that they perished by their own defeat."

" . . . The Bible and the Gospel are most honored in the estimation of all the Bahais. One of the spiritual utterances of his holiness Christ in his sermon on the mount is to me preferable to all the writings of the philosophers. It is the religious duty of every Bahai to read and comprehend the meanings of the Old and New Testaments."

" . . . Whosoever desires to know the history of this cause and its tenets must come to us and not go to those who are prejudiced and biased. For if the seeker for information goes to the latter people he will surely deprive himself of the real facts."

Words of Abdul-Baha to two young college men from the orient as they started west to "promote the glad tidings of the kingdom of good-will and peace":

"You are the angels of the kingdom of Abha; guide the people. You are the rays of the Sun of Reality; bestow upon them light. You are the trees of the orchard of God; produce loving fruits, You are the water of eternal life; allay the thirst of mankind. You are the guides of the royal path of the kingdom; lead the wandering ones back to the fold. On this trip, through the assistance and providence of God, you must perform miracles. Your speeches must be delivered with the utmost spirituality. . . . Speak in public meetings. God will support you. Deliver talks on universal love, the greatness of the cause of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, the penetration of the Word of God, and the general principles of the Revelation of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. I hope you will fill the minds with the tumult and acclamation of the kingdom, set aglow the hearts with the fire of reality and spread far and wide the good news of the King of eternal life. . . ."

July 19, 1914.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Azamat 1, 72 (May 17, 1916)

No. 4

News from Abdul-Baha

Contents of a postal card received by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, dated Haifa, Feb. 26, 1916:

“I hope you and all the members of your family are well and in good health. A number of days ago I wrote you a post card from Acca with the translation of Abdul-Baha’s tablet. On our return to Haifa, he has so far dictated tablets to the following: Mrs. Ella Cooper, Mrs. Magee, Mrs. Dodge and three sons, Mrs. Parsons, Miss M. Barnitz, Mrs. L. Kirchner and her associates of the Inquirers’ Library. The originals of these tablets are kept here, and their translations are not signed for obvious reasons. Including Mirza Ali Kuli Khan’s and Mrs. Parsons’ messages in my recent letters to them, as well as Mrs. Goodall, Mr. and Mrs. Ralston, Mr. and Mrs. Latimer and son, I have mailed so far eleven tablets and two long messages. Two days ago six more tablets were dictated, to the following friends: Mrs. F. Krug, of N. Y.; Miss Nellie Raney, of Spokane; Miss Mar-

garet Green, of Juneau, Alaska; Mr. and Mrs. Frankland, Tropico; Miss Edna McKinney, of Boston, and H. H. Topakyan, of New York. These last six will be forwarded in the course of this week, thus bringing the number of tablets up to seventeen. Is not this splendid that at last you have direct word from the source of light? Now that the door is open, I hope it may not be closed in the future. Except the number of the STAR OF THE WEST that you mailed with your last letter, I have received no other. One day Abdul-Baha asked me whether the STAR OF THE WEST was continuing its good work, or had stopped its publication. He was glad to know that its rays were not dimmed and the sphere of its activity was expanding. He hopes that in the course of future years it may become of great influence in the shaping of public opinion, its services to the world of humanity become manifold, its light penetrating, its pages mirroring forth the ideals of the kingdom, and its articles portraying the majestic progress of the Cause of God.”

In Memoriam

Mrs. Lua Moore Getsinger

A CABLEGRAM from Cairo, Egypt brings sad news. It states that, "Lua Getsinger died of heart failure May first and was buried at Cairo."

Mrs. Getsinger was one of the first persons in America who realized that a Great Light was shining again from the horizon of the Holy Land. And for many years she has been a brilliant voice to proclaim the Glad Tidings.

She was married to Dr. Getsinger in 1896 and they were members of the first party from America who visited Abdul-Baha in Acca. Dr. Getsinger tells of how, on this memorable visit, Abdul-Baha seeing, with his spiritual vision, Lua Getsinger's capacity, stepped up to her and put something in her mouth. A little later he said to her: "I have given you the power to speak and loosened your tongue. 'Lua' in Persian means 'Flag' and you must be my flag and wave it in the East and the West." Then the glorious servant of God gave an exhortation, as Dr. Getsinger says: "into which he put such spiritual force and emphasis that it seemed as though the very walls trembled and we were hardly able to stand on our feet. Abdul-Baha was declaring that the millennium had come and the Kingdom of God was to be established on earth. He wanted Lua thus to proclaim it everywhere in a loud voice."

This was the first of many visits she made to the home of light at Acca. Long and carefully did Abdul-Baha in his great loving kindness tell her how to teach the Most Great Cause. She travelled far and wide in her teaching. She was often ill. In referring to one of these illnesses her husband tells how Abdul-Baha said: "I told the angel of death to stay away."

Abdul-Baha entrusted to her many missions of trust and responsibility. For

instance, when "Mozaffar-ed-Din Shah, of Persia, visited Paris, Abdul-Baha sent her with a petition asking the Shah to stop the martyrdoms of Bahais in his kingdom,—which he promised to do." Her last great mission was to India.

To further quote Dr. Getsinger: "When Abdul-Baha desired further to acquaint the Maharajah of Jalowar with the Bahai teachings he sent Lua from Bombay to this enlightened personage who received her most graciously. He had invited Abdul-Baha to breakfast with him in London and is a staunch friend of the Bahai cause. The Maharajah continued to exchange letters with Lua. In all these journeys," as her husband says, "she never spared herself. Time and time again I have seen her in a state of utter exhaustion yet she would pull herself together by sheer will power in order to keep her appointments. To this perhaps many friends can testify who have had occasion to entertain her during the past ten years. She knew but little rest for Abdul-Baha had said: 'Day and night thou must engage in spreading the message. Nothing else will avail thee.' She never lost sight of her Master's business. When once a complaint was made of Lua to Abdul-Baha he turned to the person who had made it and with a benign smile, said: 'But she loves her Lord.' She was generous to a fault, depriving herself often that others might have. She had a rare vitalizing power in serving others. She spoke with ease and brilliance and feared no one in debate. Her gift from Abdul-Baha made her confident and victorious."

She returned from her mission to India in January, 1915, spent seven months with Abdul-Baha's family at Haifa and there sailed in trying times on an American warship to Cairo. But much of the

time in Cairo she was ill with that illness that at last permitted her to ascend into the "city of light."

Thus passed a brilliant maid-servant of God from the service of the earth world to that of the unseen Kingdom.

The Editors.

Mrs. Fannie Dunn

ON March 9, 1916, Mrs. Fannie Dunn, wife of Hyde Dunn, passed on.

With the passing of Mrs. Dunn the San Francisco Assembly registered its first "In Memoriam,"—an occasion of quickened human sadness, but a season of great spiritual illumination.

In Bahai experience the San Francisco Assembly has indeed had its days of beginning, days of feebleness, when in very truth but two or three would gather together. But, whether in those days or these of greater fullness, none has woven more closely the bonds of love and steadfastness than Hyde Dunn. Of him, it was conceded that he was kind and served with love.

To his good wife, the object of his yearning and devotion, for a long time the "tales of the past" were the words of leading; for her, the *Hidden Words* were still a sealed book.

The sign of love is patience.

Then came the days of the end: The

pilgrimage in "the valley of the shadow" was long, painful, overburdened. Bahai arms upheld the stricken one; Bahai love whispered "Be strong!"

Praise be to God, as the journey shortened, the Light became clearer, brighter, purer, and in the finality the dominance of the Spirit heralded a triumph which despoiled death of its prowess and the grave of its victory!

The end was glorious: It was Bahai. To the Assembly, this consecration of the first fruits was a wonderful teaching, a conviction that "freedom from the riches of self" is the wealth that transforms "My Calamity into My Providence," whereby the Children of the Spirit become "the Stars of My Omnipresence forever."

"Herein there is no death, no trouble, no burden."

BAHAI ASSEMBLY,

San Francisco, April 18, 1916.

Letter from India

Received by Miss Martha L. Root

Bahai Assembly, Mandalay,
Nov. 27, 1915.

Miss M. L. Root,
Pittsburgh, Pa.

My dear spiritual sister in his supreme Covenant of love and servitude: With utmost pleasure and heartfelt thanks, I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favor so kindly and affectionately sent after your return home, acknowledging the receipt of my registered letter with its enclosure—the tablet from Abdul-Baha.

It was read in the assembly. A copy of it was sent to Rangoon friends, and also a translation of same to Kungyan-gon Bahais. All expressed their pleasure and thanks exceedingly, which they asked me to convey to you. Really, we are missing you in all our assemblies, and remember you for your pure love, affection and most high qualities. In the letter of sister Agnes Alexander from Japan with your group photograph, which she so kindly sent to us, we had the good news of your excellent

health, your high services in the holy cause, and your movement towards your home, for which we have expressed our due thanks to her. Really, I have no words at my command to express my heartfelt love and thanks to you for your kindly mentioning this humble servant's name and address to so many Bahai friends of every country visited by you. I know I am not worthy to be mentioned in the exalted presence of holy souls, nor am I deserving of such kindness bestowed by you and the spiritual friends. I have no such good qualities, nor do I possess any knowledge. I am in need of your prayers so that, please God, I may become a useful servant to the world of humanity and be enabled to abolish the differences of nationality, of race, dogma and creed. These prejudices are the chief cause for preventing mankind from uniting and harmonizing with each other. Nay rather it is a destructive power, creating malice, hatred and animosity toward his own kind and brother. This is the world-wide disease of the present day, and a great sickness of the world of humanity—for the remedy of which so many holy and divine doctors have already come and are still coming. But this extraordinary creature, man, abuses the remedy and treatment; contradicts, laughs, scorns and rejects the medicine. We cannot heal these various chronic diseases, except through divine confirmation and assistance.

Indeed, I am most grateful to you for sending me the prayer from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's Diary, and to the dear friends of God, who have also so kindly sent me the Bahai hymns, which are more than sufficient for the present; also some papers on Esperanto—the future probable language of mankind—and the exalted Bahai News, the STAR OF THE WEST. . . . I am sorry to

say that although my dear brother, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, has sent me many copies of the STAR OF THE WEST before and after my arrival from the Holy Land, yet I am unable to procure more subscribers for the paper owing to the war and not traveling anywhere at present. I am exceedingly glad to express my utmost thanks to him and to the Bahai News Service.

I am sorry to inform you of the loss of our good and beautiful friend Agha-Syed-Ismail-Shirazi of Rangoon. He ascended to the Supreme Concourse with the wings of faith and spiritual deeds on the forenoon of the 14th of August, 1915. This was a great blow to the friends and relatives. May God bless his soul and may he rest and repose at the threshold of the gate of His Holy Throne. His father was unconscious for many days, owing to old age, and as they summoned me to Rangoon immediately after his last breath, I went at once, and arranged everything in order, and consoled the survivors. Now all of them are in the utmost tranquillity and rest.

All are conveying to your good self and to the brothers and sisters in your region, their best love, Bahai affection and greetings.

Please accept and convey my Bahai love and affection, also excellent greetings and thanks to all friends of God.

Owing to the present difficulties in the western world—upon which all our assemblies are praying the descent of divine mercy and peace—I cannot communicate to all addresses, so kindly sent me by you. I tender my apology and ask forgiveness.

With pure spiritual love and affection for you, my dear sister in Abha's Covenant,

Ever yours affectionately,

Syed Mustafa.

Baha'o'llah in Chains in Teheran

Extracts from a talk given by Abdul-Baha at Los Angeles, Saturday evening, October 19, 1912

THE Blessed Beauty (BAHA'O'LLAH) appeared in Persia, in Teheran. He was in the utmost of ease and affluence. He was most influential and surrounded with luxury. All the pleasures of the transitory world were provided for him, and all the grandees of Persia longed to enjoy the influence and affluence, the things of wealth and position of BAHA'O'LLAH. But consider that he suffered all these things to be separated from him. He sacrificed his honor, his fame and his station amongst men, sacrificing all, even his life. Ever was he subjected to the sword, and many were the ordeals which he endured, and many were the indignities to which he was subjected. How many nights he passed beneath chains, how many days in dark dungeons!

When I visited the dungeon in Teheran, as a child, in order to see BAHA'O'LLAH—when the door was opened there were some steps leading down into the place. They took me as far as midway. I peered through the darkness; I could not find anyone; it was exceedingly gloomy. Then I heard the blessed voice saying, "Take him away." When I heard his voice I tried to see the Blessed Beauty, but because of the great darkness I could not. Then I was taken out; they seated me. They said it was customary about midday to take the prisoners out for their meals; so there I sat. About noon the jailers were all ready and the prisoners were taken out. I saw BAHA'O'LLAH's neck in chains, and another, both chained to the same links, a link about his neck and another about the person who was chained with him. The weight of the chain was so excessive that his neck was bent; he walked with great difficulty, and he was in a very sad condition. His clothes were tattered and battered; even the hat on his head was torn. He was in the most severe ordeal and his health

was quite visibly failing. They brought me and seated me, and they took him to the place where there was a pond, in order that he might wash his face. After that they took him back to the dungeon and, although I was a child, I was so overcome I was unconscious. And then BAHA'O'LLAH said, "Take the child to the house," therefore I was taken away.

This shows one of the ordeals of his life, and you can judge of the others accordingly. During fifty years, many were his vicissitudes. He suffered all these catastrophes for us, that we may turn to God; that we may attain to faith; that we may attain to certainty; that we may act in accordance with his teachings that we may be the cause of the illumination of the world; that we may be the means of guiding the people. And now I wish that you in the light of these sufferings of the Blessed Beauty for our guidance, for our illumination—likewise may be self-sacrificing. We must not forget his favors; we must not forget his troubles; we must not forget his catastrophes. We must ever remember them, striving that perchance, in thanksgiving for these favors, we may offer worthy service; we may be the cause of guiding the people; we may act in accordance with his instructions; we may live in accordance with his behests; we may forget ourselves; and that, like those holy souls who have sacrificed their lives, we may sacrifice our lives; we may be the cause of the heavenly peace; be the cause of the spreading of his fragrances; be the cause of the spread of his teachings. His teachings are the cause of the life of humanity; his teachings unify mankind; his teachings render eternal honor to man; his teachings are the cause of the sublimity of human nature; his teachings cause man to attain to progress and prosperity. His teachings are conducive to man's entrance into the Kingdom of Salvation.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Nur 1, 72 (June 5, 1916)

No. 5

"Two people are equivalent in strength of character to the whole world"

Extracts from a talk given by Abdul-Baha at Los Angeles, Saturday evening, October 19, 1912

DO NOT look at your small number. Plurality of numbers is not of importance. It is rather the bounty of God that is essential—it is the confirmation of the heavenly kingdom. Consider past times. How often it has happened that a limited meeting, a small number, has finally widened its circle and grown in proportion, until it included all nations and religions. Therefore, the hearts must be looked at, not the pluralities. If a limited number of souls are possessed of hearts which are pure and tender, that limited number is equivalent in strength of character to the whole population of the earth.

Consider how, after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ—fifty days thereafter—a limited number of disciples gathered together on the Mount of Transfiguration, not far from Jaffa. The number of these was eleven. They gathered there with hearts pure, with intentions sincere, with spirits exhilarated. In the utmost of sincerity, without any care, without any intention of self-desire did they gather together, this limited number, and there held a meeting upon the Mount. Because of the purity of the hearts of those souls, because of the trustworthiness of those souls, because of the reliance of those souls, because of the attraction of the hearts of those souls, the world was illumined, Christianity was advanced,

the Roman empire became Christianized; the Assyrians were converted,—also the Chaldeans. In other words, the illumination of his holiness Christ illumined all regions. All these were the blessed results of that meeting of eleven souls on the mountain. They held that meeting in the utmost of purity and sincerity, in the utmost of faith and assurance; in the utmost of attraction and zeal was that meeting held. And these colossal results were attained, these wondrous lights were expressed, this heavenly affair was promulgated.

Therefore do not look at your limited number, that you are not capable of having a meeting the same as other people. Remember that importance is not attached to numbers. Importance concerns faith, concerns assurance, concerns veracity, concerns firmness, concerns attainment to the Kingdom of Abha, concerns self-sacrifice in the path of the Kingdom. If you attain to this, though there be but two people, *remember that two people are equivalent in strength of character to the whole world.*

Therefore, I pray, asking for your confirmation and assistance, that the aid and uplift of BAHA'O'LLAH may reach you, the hosts of the Kingdom of Abha may reinforce you, that the powerful angels of God may assist you. Be assured of the victory; rest assured that you will be

confirmed. That which is of essential importance is your unity and agreement. You must be in the utmost state of unity and agreement. You must love one another; you must be self-sacrificing for one another. If you observe any shortcomings on the part of any, as much as you can, be forgiving and do not be harsh. Even if you wish to admonish, let your admonition be in symbols; do not express it explicitly lest any heart should be saddened. Remember that in the world of existence there is nothing so bad as injuring a heart, for the heart of a man is the place of the descent of the Merciful and man must not at all disquiet or harm the place of the Merciful. Man must ever strive to make the hearts grateful, to rejoice the spirits, to render the thoughts radiant, to be the cause of the comfort and ease of others. This is the station of the Bahais and this is the utmost desire of those who are divine.

Now, the friends of God in Persia have reached such a stage that each is willing to sacrifice his life for the others, each one accounting himself the servant of the others. How many of the nobles are occupied with the service of the poor. How many of the dear ones are most humble and submissive in the presence of the lowly! What is this for? It is for the love of God. It is for sincerity. It is for faith. It is for certainty.

All the people of the world look at us to see how we act; what our characteristics are; what our attributes are; what our mode of procedure is. They all look toward us, and we must act in such wise that we may not be the cause of the deg-

radation of the Cause of God. Nay, rather, that we may be the cause of the glory of God and if we do not do so, how can we behold his face in his kingdom? What shall be our apology? Did BAHÁ'Ó-LLAH not teach us by his deeds? Did he not teach us through self-sacrifice? Did he not teach us through his ordeals and difficulties? Is it meet that we should forget them?

Thank God that he has suffered you to attain this great bestowal. Let us thank God that he has suffered us to be sheltered beneath the Tree of Life. Let us thank God that he has accepted us in his kingdom. Let us offer thanks to God that he has specialized us for the favor which was the utmost aim of the holy saints. Let us thank God that, notwithstanding the lack of capacity, he bestows every favor upon us, every grace is showered upon us, and every bounty is revealed to us. He prepared for us the good of both worlds; he prepared for us eternal honor; he gave unto us the life everlasting; he chose us out of all the nations of the world and he caused us to attain to that which is the sublimity of the human world. Praise God for such an attainment as this! Thank God that such a guidance is yours! And strive with life to hold aloft the banner of the great guidance, to be the cause of the illumination of the east and west, the cause of unity of all nations, that you may be the means of manifesting the spiritual attributes, that you may become imbued with the qualities of the faithful, that you may be distinguished in all virtues, that you may be set aglow with the fire of love of God and attracted by the love of God.

“There is a power in this Cause, a mysterious power, far, far, far away from the ken of men and angels. That invisible power is the cause of all these outward activities. It moves the hearts. It rends the mountains. It administers the complicated affairs of the Cause. It inspires the friends. It dashes into a thousand pieces all the forces of opposition. It creates new spiritual worlds. This is a mystery of the Kingdom of Abha.”—Abdul-Baha.

The Glad Tidings in Japan

WHEN the war broke out the first of August, 1914, Miss Agnes Alexander was in Switzerland. She had left her home in Honolulu the previous October and had been, as she says, "a wanderer ever since, guided alone by Him." She hoped she might visit the Holy Land and see the most glorious servant of God. On the twenty-first of August she received, in Geneva, the following tablet:

To the maid-servant of God, Miss Agnes Alexander:

Upon her be BAHA'O'LLAH!

He is God!

O thou my dear daughter!

Thy letter was received. It imparted great happiness. Praise be to God, that that dear daughter is sacrificing herself in the path of BAHA'O'LLAH and enduring every difficulty.

It is now more advisable for thee to depart directly to Japan and while there be engaged in the diffusion of the fragrances of God. . . .

Today the greatest of all divine bestowals is teaching the cause of God, for it is fraught with confirmations. Every teacher is confirmed and is favored at the divine threshold. In the estimation of the Ideal King, the army which is in front of the battlefield is encircled with the glances of his mercifulness and in the sight of the Divine Farmer, the sower of the seed is accepted and favored.

I hope that thou mayest be like unto a realm-conquering army and a farmer. Therefore, thy voyage to Japan is preferred to everything else. Still thou art perfectly free.

Upon thee be Baha-el-Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

(August 4, 1914, Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria.)

On the receipt of this commission Miss Alexander started for Japan where her service has borne radiant fruit as will appear from the following letter:

31 Nichome Fujimicho, Kudan ue,
Tokyo, Japan, March 10, 1916.

Dear Bahai friends:

This week it has been a very great joy to me to receive beautiful letters from many parts. In truth the great unity between the east and the west is growing rapidly and we are all drawing closer to one another.

Our weekly Friday Bahai meeting has just closed. Every week new souls come and hear the Message. One of those who came today, said he had heard of it once before, through a journalist lady who spoke in the Y. M. C. A. I told him it was our Martha Root, and then read from a letter received this week from her. So we never know when the seed will spring up. There is a rich vineyard to work in here in Japan, and many, many workers might be laboring in it. I do not seek the people out, but they continually come to me. Four university students who cannot come on Friday afternoon, are coming on their only free afternoon, that is Saturday. As I am to be in Yokohama, at an Esperantist meeting this Saturday, they came instead last night. Such earnest, nice young men, and so eager to learn the truth. I loaned one of them Abdul-Baha's *Talks in Paris*. He sent it back with these words: "Many thanks for your *Talks in Paris*. 'Strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God and seek always to do that which is right and noble.' This is Abdul-Baha's saying. I was astonished at this, and very much delighted. The book is a mere collection of his sayings, but there is one Spirit through it. . . ."

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Nur 1, 72 (June 5, 1916)

No. 5

A Call to Heroic Teaching Tablet from Abdul-Baha

HE IS EL-ABHA!

O ye who are turned to the Supreme Appearance!

Day and night, morn and eve, at sunrise and at sunset we are remembering, with all our hearts and souls, the friends of the Merciful One, asking God's help and confirmation that the believers of the pure territory, the Holy Land, may become excellent in all conditions of morality, characteristics, behavior, manners, conduct and actions, that they may appear with ecstasy, enthusiasm, love, consciousness, assurance, steadfastness, firmness, concord and harmony, with bright faces and splendid beauty in the community of the world.

O ye friends of God! Today is the day of union and this age is the age of harmony in the world of existence. "Verily, God loveth those who are working in his path *in groups*, for they are a solid foundation." Consider ye that he says "in groups," united and bound together, supporting one another. "To work," mentioned in this holy verse, does not mean, in this greatest age, to perform it with swords, spears, shafts and arrows, but rather with sincere intentions, good designs, useful advices, divine moralities, beautiful actions, spiritual qualities, educating the public, guiding the souls of mankind, diffusing spiritual fragrances, explaining divine illustrations, showing convincing proofs and doing charitable deeds. When the holy souls, through the angelic power, will arise to show forth these celestial characteristics, establishing a band of harmony, each of these souls shall be regarded as one thousand persons and the waves of this greatest ocean shall be considered as the army of the hosts of the Supreme Concourse.

What a great blessing it is that when the torrents, streams, currents, tides and drops are all gathered in one place, they will form a great ocean and the real harmony shall overcome and reign in such a manner that all the rules, laws, distinctions and differences of the imaginations of these souls shall disappear and vanish like little drops and shall be submerged in the ocean of spiritual unity. By the Ancient Beauty, in this case and condition, the blessings of the

great ocean will overflow and canals shall become as spacious as an endless ocean and each drop shall become as a boundless sea!

O ye friends of God! Strive to attain to this high and sublime station and show forth such a brightness in these days, that its radiance may appear from the eternal horizons. This is the real foundation of the Cause of God; this is the essence of the divine doctrine; this is the cause of the revelation of the heavenly scriptures; this is the means of the appearance of the Sun of the divine world; this is the way of the establishment of God upon the bodily throne.

O ye friends of God! Notice that his holiness the Bab—May the souls of all the creatures be a ransom to him!—for this very eminent intention, exposed his holy breast to the arrows of all casualties. So, as the principal design of the Blessed Perfection—May the souls of the people of the Supreme Concourse be a ransom to him!—was the same great intention, therefore his holiness the Bab made his blessed breast the target for thousands of bullets from the people of enmity and rancor in this path, and was martyred with great oppression. The pure blood of thousands of divine and holy souls was shed and poured in this path, and how many blessed bodies of the sincere friends of the divine God were hanged on the scaffold!

The Blessed Beauty of El-Abha—May the divine souls of the existence be a ransom to his friends!—endured personally, all kinds of calamities and bore the most violent ordeals. There remained no torture which did not come to his holy body and no suffering which did not descend upon his pure spirit. How many nights he could not take rest, under the chains and heaviness of fetters, and how many days he gave himself not a minute's repose because of the burden of fetters and chains!

From Neyaveran to Teheran that pure spirit, who was brought up on a bed of down, was forced to run, with bare head and bare feet, under chains and fetters, and, in a dark and narrow subterranean prison, he was put with murderers, thieves, criminals and malefactors; at every moment a new torture was inflicted upon him and at every moment his martyrdom was expected by all.

After a long time, he was sent from the city of his residence to foreign countries. For many years, in Baghdad, at every moment a new arrow was darted toward his holy breast, and at every instant a sword was bent on his pure body. At no instant was there any hope for safety and security, and the enemies, with utmost dexterity, were attacking the blessed soul from all sides, and he alone, personally, resisted them all.

After all these hardships and calamities, he was sent from Baghdad in Asia to Europe, and in that terrible exile, great affliction, vehement torture and constant attack, the plots, calumniations, enmity, rancor and hatred of the people of the Beyan were added to those which came from the people of the Koran. The pen is unable to explain it all, but surely you have heard and learned about it.

After twenty-four years in the greatest prison, Acca, his life was ended in great trouble and hardship.

In short, all the time of the sojourn of the Blessed Perfection (BAHA'O'LLAH)—May the souls of all existence be a ransom to his forbearance!—in this mortal world, he was either restrained with chains or kept under hanging swords, enduring the most painful afflictions. At last, in this greatest prison, his holy

body was extremely weakened from the intense sufferings and his beautiful person became as weak as a web from this continual hardship. His main purpose in bearing this heavy burden and all these troubles, which gave forth their waves like an ocean, accepting the chains and fetters and showing forth the greatest forbearance, was for the sake of harmony, concord and union among all the people of the world and for the establishment of the signs of the real unity among all nations, until the essential Unity (of God) might (at last) appear in the existing realities, and the light of the saying: "Thou seest no difference among the creatures of God" might shine forth upon the whole world.

O friends of God! Now is the time of movement and striving—then try and endeavor! As the Blessed Perfection—May my soul be a ransom to the dust under the feet of his friends!—was constantly in the field of martyrdom, we, also, must endeavor to pour out our lives, and to hear, with our spiritual ears, the divine advices and exhortations, leaving our limited beings and forsaking the vain ideas of differences of the physical world, in order to serve this eminent purpose and this principal design, which has been planted by the hand of divine favor; and not veil, with the dark clouds of self-interest and superstition, the light emanating from the Kingdom of Abha, nor become as barring dikes to the waves of the supreme ocean, nor to prevent the diffusion of the fragrances of the garden of the glorious beauty, nor stop the inundation of the rains of the divine grace in this day, nor to hinder the rays of the Sun of Reality.

This is what God has commanded in his scriptures, books and holy tablets, declaring his commandments to his sincere servants.

Upon ye be the mercy and the blessings of God!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

The Truly Blessed

Words of Abdul-Baha from Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab to Miss Harriet Magee,
May, 1913

Blessed is he who is charitable, for he shall inherit eternal life.

Blessed is he who overlooks the faults of others, for he shall enjoy divine beatitude.

Blessed is he who associates with all with joy and fragrance, for he has obeyed the commands of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

Blessed is he who loves mankind, for he has heeded the advice of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

Blessed is he who is kind to his enemies, for he has walked in the footsteps of Christ.

Blessed is he who proclaims the doctrine of spiritual brotherhood, for he shall be the child of light.

Blessed is he whose heart is tender and compassionate, for he will throw stones at no one.

Blessed is he who will speak evil of no one, for he hath attained to the good pleasure of the Lord.

Blessed is he who will not uncover the sins of others, for he will become favored at the threshold of the Almighty.

Blessed is he who hath a forgiving nature, for he will win the spiritual graces of God.

Blessed is he who diffuses only the sweet fragrance of the flowers of friendship and mutual association, for he will obtain a goodly portion of the bounties of the Merciful.

Blessed is he who teaches union and concord, for he will shine like unto a star in heaven.

Blessed is he who practices loving-kindness and co-operation, for he will be encircled with celestial benedictions.

Blessed is he who comforts the downtrodden, for he will be the friend of God.

The Glad Tidings in Japan

(Continued from page 35)

Your letters all bring such joy and are a great stimulus in the work. In truth it is as if you were all working here with me, and though you cannot be here personally to speak the word, yet it is the same, for I am the instrument you speak through, and I feel the power and love you send to me.

Today we read in the meeting, the splendid article by Mr. Latimer, "The Call of God," in the December 12th STAR OF THE WEST. Mr. Remey has sent us some of his books to place in libraries. Fukuta San (the first Japanese Bahai in Japan) placed two in a library near where he lives. The librarian became much interested and thanked Fukuta San warmly, but he suggested placing them in a larger library where they would find more English readers, which was done. Last night, Mr. Eroshenko told me that a Japanese had come to him with one of these books, which he had found in the library and was deeply interested.

I am reading *Some Answered Questions* to Mr. Eroshenko, a blind Russian boy, and he is very enthusiastic about it. He says it ought to be translated into Russian, as it is just what the Russian people need, and above all into Esperanto. Who is there to do this work? Surely *now* is the time.

A magazine here called *New Tide* had reproduced the picture of Abdul-Baha, which appeared in the December number of *Everywoman*, with an article on the Bahai movement, containing a translation

into Japanese of the twelve Bahai principles. Each principle is first given in Esperanto, and then in Japanese. The author is a well-known literary writer and this is the third article he has written on the Bahai Movement. In each article, he has combined Esperanto with the Japanese. He first became interested in Esperanto through meeting Mr. Eroshenko. He said when he found Mr. Eroshenko, who was blind, doing three different things, he resolved that he would study Esperanto for three hours every day, and very soon after, to Mr. Eroshenko's astonishment, he began to write in it.

In the *Japanese Magazine*, an English monthly, published in Tokyo, there is an article by the Japanese pastor of the one Unitarian church in Japan. He is the one who invited me to speak in his church on the Bahai Movement. The article is entitled, "Religion in Japan." It deeply interested me, and I must quote a paragraph from it. He writes: "Perhaps if some prophet would arise, able to transmute the truths of universal religion into a form acceptable to the Japanese mind, there would be a wonderful revival of religion. What Japan thinks most about when she thinks at all, is the science of religion itself, not of creeds, sects and prejudices. Pure religion cannot be a superstition, nor can it savor of superstition . . . What should be avoided is bigotry and stubbornness. The religion that appeals to the people of thought

and education must be fresh and true and free, and its truth must have the convincing power that all truth has I believe in a system of national education imparting all truth to the rising generation, and in international amity which is the ultimate purpose of the Creator. All relations should thus be friendly and have a common aim” These ideas of an advanced Japanese thinker, I thought would interest the Bahais and it is a true expression of what the Japanese people want.

I have received a letter from Mr. Shirazi from India written in Japanese by a Japanese friend of Mr. Shirazi's. Fukuta San has replied to it in Japanese, but gave me a translation of his letter, and I am going to quote it here. I had to give a copy of it to Mrs. Auger, who desired it so much. He writes:

“Dear Bahai Brother, the country where I live is, as you say, gradually awaking from its sleep. You see, as the spring rain comes softly and noiselessly, but its message is so great that all the trees and grasses become awakened from their wintery sleeping and restore their freshness, so there have come here the messengers sent by him to awake us. The meeting has, for nearly a year and a half, been held on Friday, and I am now one of those who are enjoying the life, as you are, in the shelter of the bounty of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. Your letter, which has been received by Miss Alexander, surprisingly pleased me, so that I hasten to convey my greeting to you and also the other brother there.

Dear Bahai Brother, we are separated from each other so far, but the distance is of no account in spiritual communication. Let us work hand in hand for the establishment of the Kingdom of God. . . .”

I have given this letter just as it was translated by Fukuta San for me.

This afternoon I go to Yokohama to speak in an Esperanto meeting, which is a public meeting for propagating Esperanto. With Mr. Eroshenko's help I have translated some of Abdul-Baha's

words concerning Esperanto, which I am going to read. . . Many Esperantists are going from Tokyo, and we all go together. Of course, I shall be the only lady and perhaps foreigner, but I go for his sake. Mr. Eroshenko is going to speak on “Universal Love” from Abdul-Baha's words in the *Paris Talks*. All talks will be translated into Japanese.

Bahai greetings to all from your sister,
Agnes Alexander.

One of the Japanese young men writes to Mr. George Latimer:

“It was only a few months ago that I was introduced to Miss Alexander, by whom I was taught the revelation of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, and, for the first time in my life, *universal religion*. Indeed, since then, I have been a regular and enthusiastic student of this most pleasant and peaceful Bahai Assembly conducted by Miss Alexander who is all benevolence and kindness to us, young men; and my efforts, I am very happy to add, have been duly reciprocated in so short a time, for I am within the boundary of understanding the Message of the Bahai Movement through which I shall be able to seek the great truth which emanated from the One Source—God.”

During the year Dr. and Mrs. Auger, of Hawaii, have gone to Japan to spread the glad tidings.

A recent card from Miss Alexander to Miss Martha Root gives further news. Miss Alexander says: “A letter has just come to me from Miss Dorothy Hodgson, an English Bahai with whom I have corresponded for years. She writes, ‘By the time you receive this I shall be on my way to Yokohama—thence to Tokyo. I am coming with dear French friends who feel the call for Japan. Isn't it wonderful! I feel a great inspiration about the Mashrak-el-Azkar (in Chicago), that Japan must do a part and thus cement east and west by unbreakable bonds. I marvel when I think of all your trip around the world has done.’”

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Rahmat 1, 72 (June 24, 1916)

No. 6

The Way to Universal Peace

Extracts from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May, 1914

"**W**HAT is the greatest need of the world of humanity?"

Abdul-Baha answered:

"Today, in the world of humanity, the most important matter is the question of universal peace. The realization of this principle is the crying need of the time. People have become restive and discontented. The political world of every civilized nation has become a vast arena for the exhibition of militarism and the display of martial spirit. The minds of the statesmen and cabinet ministers, of every government, are chiefly occupied with the question of war, and the council chambers are resounding with the call to war. Self-interest is at the bottom of every war. Greed, commerce, exploitation, the pushing further of the boundaries of the kingdom, colonization, the preservation of the treaty rights, the safeguarding of the lives and interests of the citizens, are a few of the many pretexts for going to war. And it has been proven by experience that the results of war are ruinous, both to the conquerors and the conquered. Countries are laid waste, public property trampled under foot, commerce is paralyzed, fields crimsoned with the innocent blood and the progress of the world retarded. How can a person rectify a wrong by committing a greater wrong, shedding the blood of his brothers? The major part of the revenue of every country is expended upon military preparations—infernal engines, the filling of arsenals with powder and shot, the construction of rapid-firing guns, the build-

ing of fortifications and soldiers' barracks and the annual maintenance of the army and navy. From the peasants upward every class of society is heavily taxed to feed this insatiable monster of war. The poor people have wrested from them all that they make with the sweat of their brows and the labor of their hands.

"In reality war is continuous. The moral effect of the expenditures of these colossal sums of money upon military purposes is just as deteriorating as the actual war and its train of dreadful carnage and horrors. The ideal and moral forces of the contending parties become barbaric and bestial, the spiritual powers are stunted and the laws of divine civilization are disregarded. Such a financial drain ossifies the veins and muscles of the body politic, and congeals the delicate sensibilities of the spirit.

"There is not the least doubt that the nation or government which puts forward an extraordinary effort in the promotion of universal peace will be encircled with divine confirmations, and will be the object of honor and respect amongst all the inhabitants of the earth. Such an action will be conducive to the prosperity and well-being of mankind. Concerning this question of universal peace, fifty years ago his holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH wrote to all the sovereigns and monarchs of the world explaining in detail the benefits of peace and the evils of bloodshed. Amongst other things he hath said: Originally mankind was one family, united and compact; later on the members of

this happy family were divided and subdivided through ignorance and prejudice. Now the time has come again for their final unification. Universal peace will bring this long-wished for consummation.

“Once the parliament of man is established and its constituent parts organized, the governments of the world having entered into a covenant of eternal friendship will have no need of keeping large standing armies and navies. A few battalions to preserve internal order and an international police to keep the highways of the seas clear will be all that is necessary. Then these huge sums will be diverted to other more useful channels, pauperism will disappear, knowledge will increase, the victories of peace will be sung by poets and bards, knowledge will improve the conditions and mankind will be rocked in the cradle of felicity and bliss. Then, whether a government is constitutional or republic, hereditary monarchy or democratic, the rulers will devote their time to the prosperity of their nations, the legislation of just and sane laws and the fostering of closer and more amicable relations with their neighbors; thus the world of humanity may become a mirror in which are reflected the virtues and attributes of the kingdom of God.”

“What is your opinion concerning disarmament?”

Abdul-Baha answered: “By a general agreement all the governments of the world must disarm simultaneously and at the same time. It will not do if one lays down arms and the others refuse to do so. The nations of the world must concur with each other concerning this supremely important subject, that they may abandon together these deadly weapons of human slaughter. As long as one power increases her military and naval budget, another power will be forced into the crazed competition through her natural and supposed interests. For example, Germany has increasingly added to a vast sum for the

maintenance of her army. This alarms the French statesmen and volatile patriots, and affects the calm and steady nerves of the Britishers across the channel. Immediately there will be rumors of war, talk of German aggression, German ambition. The yellow journals write searing editorials, jingoism becomes the topic of the capitals, the air is filled with suspicions. Someone will see, for the purposes of expediency, a German dirigible flying over French fortifications or English forts making observations. A hue and a cry will be raised from every quarter of the country and thus there will be a corresponding increase in the estimates of the Minister of War for the defence of our homes and our hearths, our women and our sweethearts from the attack of strangers. The same argument is resorted to when the French nation adds one or two years to her military conscription and the English imperialists emphasize in public meetings the doctrine of the double standard power. Now as long as Germany continues in her own military perfection the French will walk in her footsteps trying at every turn to increase their own war ammunitions in order to be prepared for any national crisis or sudden attack. Hence it seems the only solution lies in the fact of universal disarmament on the part of all the nations.

“When we speak of universal peace we mean that all the governments must change their fleets of battleships and dreadnaughts to a mighty fleet of merchant marine, plying the oceans of the world, uniting the distant shores and interweaving the commercial, intellectual and moral forces of mankind. But should England alone transform the character of her warships she will be at the mercy of her enemies and will remain powerless and defenceless. The British Isles will be unquestionably threatened by a powerful invading, well-disciplined host. Hence, aside from any national prowess, the English people are pushed into this weltering whirlpool of military and naval expenditures and are strug-

gling to keep their heads above the seething water all around them which, unless calmed down, will drown all of them, irrespective of any nationality.

“Once a person met his friend in the street and after the exchange of courtesies gave him a hard blow in the face. ‘Why dost thou do this?’ ‘Hast thou not read in the Gospel wherein Christ says, ‘Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also?’” Now according to this admonition let me smite thee on thy left cheek also.’ The man submitted to the second blow quite willingly and they parted. Next day they met each other again and the man received two more blows on his cheeks without any evident murmur. They met the third day and he was going to inflict upon him the same blows. ‘Wait a minute, my friend. I am not the only person in the world to live according to the teachings of Christ. Thou also art one. I have obeyed him two days and the next two days will be my turn.’ With these words he smote the man on his cheek and asked him to turn the other side also.

“Now the question of disarmament must be put into practice by all the nations and not only by one or two. Consequently the advocates of peace must strive day and night so that the individuals of every country may become peace-loving, public opinion may gain a strong and permanent footing, and day by day the army of international peace be increased, complete disarmament be realized and the flag of universal conciliation be waving on the summit of the mountains of the earth.”

“How can Universal Peace be realized?”

Abdul-Baha answered: “The ideals of peace must be nurtured and spread amongst the inhabitants of the world; they must be instructed in the school of peace, so that they may fully comprehend the benefits of peace and the evils of war. First: the financiers and bank-

ers must desist from lending money to any government that contemplates waging an unjust war upon an innocent nation. Second: the presidents and managers of the railroad and steamship companies must refrain from transporting war munitions, infernal engines and guns and cannons and powder from one country into another. Third: the soldiers must petition through their representatives, the ministers of war, the politicians, the congressmen and the generals to put forth in a clear, intelligible language the reasons and the causes which have brought them to the brink of such a national calamity. The soldiers must *demand* this as one of their prerogatives. ‘Demonstrate to us,’ they must say, ‘that this is a just war and we will then enter the battlefield; otherwise we will not take one step. O ye kings and rulers, politicians and war-mongers; ye who spend your lives in most exquisite palaces of Italian architecture; ye who sleep in airy, well-ventilated apartments; ye who decorate your reception and dining halls with lovely pictures, sculptures, hangings and frescoes; ye who walk in perfect Elysiums, wreathed in orange and myrtle groves, the air redolent with delicious perfumes and vocal with the sweet songs of a thousand birds, the earth like a luxuriant carpet of emerald grass, bright flowers dotting the meadows and trees clothed in verdure; ye who are dressed in costly silk and finely-woven textures; ye who lie down on soft feathery couches; ye who partake of the most delicious and savory dishes; ye who enjoy the utmost ease and comfort in your wondrous mansions; ye who attend rare musical concerts whenever you feel a little disconcerted and sad; ye who adorn your large halls with green festoons and cut flowers, fresh garlands, and verdant wreaths, illuminating them with thousands of electric lights, while the exquisite fragrance of the flowers, the soft, ravishing music, the fairy-like illumination lend enchantment; ye who are in such enviro-

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Rahmat 1, 72 (June 24, 1916)

No. 6

The Divine Immanence

In the Tablet of Ahmad, BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH says:

O MY servants! The Ancient Beauty commands: Hasten to the shadow of immortality, nearness and mercy, from the shadow of desire, remoteness and heedlessness. Be ye resigned like unto the earth, so that the fragrant, sacred, multicolored myrtles of my knowledge may grow in the soil of existence. Be ye ablaze like unto fire, so that ye may consume thick veils, and immortalize the cold and veiled bodies through the heat of divine love. Be ye pure like unto air, so that ye may enter the secret abode of my friendship. . . .

O servants! If ye be informed of the wonders of my generosity and grace, which I have deposited in you, ye will certainly be cut from all directions and, seeking to know your own selves, which is identical with knowing myself, will find yourselves independent of all save me, and will see the ocean of my providence, and the depths of my beneficence in yourselves with your outward and inward eye, as manifest and clear as the sun shining from the name of Abha.* Do not waste this most holy, most wonderful station through the promptings of fancy and desire, and through the falsehood of superstition and blindness. Ye are in likeness as a bird which, with all joy and fragrance, soars with the utmost security in the cheerful air of the praised One. Then in the imaginary hope of grains (of food) it inclines toward the mud and water of the earth and, with all eagerness, besmears itself with dust and mire. Then, when it attempts to reascend, it finds itself unable and a captive, forasmuch as wings besmeared with water and clay are not capable of flight. At that time the bird of the exalted heaven finds itself a dweller in the mortal earth. Now, O servants, do not besmear your wings with the mire of heedlessness and imagination, and with the earth of animosity and rancor, that ye may not be deprived, and prevented from soaring in the sacred heavens of knowledge. . . .

O servants! If ye are the messengers of sight, enter the city of the seeing! If ye are the people of hearing, step into the land of the hearing. If ye are the possessors of heart, choose an abode in the fortress of the assured ones, so

*Abha means: The Most Glorious; it is a name for God, like "The Ancient Beauty" in the first line.—*The Editors.*

that in these dark days ye may not be veiled from witnessing the lights of the beauty of Abha. For this year is the year of the most mighty purification and the most great tests.

O servants! Inscribe the exhortations of the Spirit with the pen of resignation and the ink of submission and assurance upon the tablet of the heart, and turn thereto in every instant, lest ye neglect a single letter thereof, and advance towards the True One with all exertion, turning away from all save him. For this is the root of the leaf of command grown upon the divine Tree. . . . This world is a show without reality, and is a non-existence adorned in the form of existence. Do not attach your hearts thereto. Do not sever yourselves from the Creator, and be not of those who are heedless.

Truly I say, the world is like unto a mirage which has the shadow of water. The athirst make abundant efforts in its search, but, when reaching it, remain deprived and portionless. Or, it is like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul. When the lover reaches it he finds it of no worth and value, and finds no gain save great pain and despondency.

O servants! If in these visible days and present world matters appear from the realm of decree contrary to your wish, be ye not depressed for happy and divine days shall come and spiritual worlds of holiness shall become manifest. In all those days and worlds for you a portion is ordained, a sustenance is determined, and a food is established. Ye shall certainly attain to all these, were ye to exchange the garment of mortality for the garment of immortality, and enter the station of the paradise of Abha, which is the everlasting abode of glorious, sacred souls!

All things are a proof of your existence—if ye emerge from the gloomy dust of non-existence. Be not grieved at the hardships of these numbered days, and be not dejected if your outward bodies are destroyed in the path of the Beloved One. For every destruction is followed by a construction, and a paradise of rest is concealed in every hardship.

News from Abdul-Baha

Extracts from Letters of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Haifa, Syria, Jan. 30 and Feb. 1, 1916.

Mr. Joseph H. Hannen,
My Dear Brother in the Faith:

After a very arduous trip through rain, storm, gale and cold, I arrived at Haifa. Abdul-Baha greeted me warmly and tenderly, and inquired about the health of the Beirut friends. My highest desire was realized, because I was permitted again to look into his divine and spiritual face. For three days I was in bed as a result of my cold, but, praise be to God, I am much better, and this morning I was permitted to be with Abdul-Baha for about one hour. . . .

Still one hour before the glorious sun rises from the east. I have been up for the last sixty minutes, packing my clothes, books and papers, and making myself ready to depart in three hours for Tiberias. I will be alone on this sacred voyage, travelling in the personal carriage of Abdul-Baha, while he and his family will depart this evening with the train—thus I will have the privilege of walking behind him again around the sacred shores of the Sea of Galilee. On my way, I shall stop one night in Nazareth, the residence of Joseph and Mary. (Luke 1:26-27.) It is said that when

Jesus returned from Egypt, he lived in this town until he entered upon his great work of spiritual love. All the scenes that are directly related to the Manifestations of God are precious in the sight of men—especially in the estimation of those who are born generations afterwards. They look upon such scenes with the eyes of faith; they spiritualize every event connected with their lives; they kiss the very stones upon which they imagine these Godlike men have walked; they carry away its soil as a sacred memento, and they keep its memory fresh in their minds all through their lives. . . .

Yesterday afternoon, Abdul-Baha came up to the Pilgrims' Home to visit the holy tomb of the Bab before his departure for Tiberias. As it was Sunday, all the friends had come up also. He sat for half an hour in the sun, and I was glad to translate for him and others the general contents of your last letter of December 2, 1915. Everyone was pleased to hear the good news of the progress of the Cause of human brotherhood and international peace. "Very good! Very good!" Abdul-Baha said. After drinking tea, we followed him into the sacred tomb and as each person entered the holy room, he gave him the rosewater. It was a beautiful, quiet service. Abdul-Baha prayed for all the believers in Europe and America, and hoped that the outpourings of the Holy Spirit may descend upon every one of them. Never did we pray for and remember the believers as we are doing in these days. I am,

Your faithful brother,
Ahmad Sohrab.

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
August 12, 1915.

To Arthur Pillsbury Dodge.
My Dear Spiritual Brother:

What are the Pacifists doing? Why do we not hear their voices? We always hoped America would play a most important part in bringing about the question of International Arbitration and our hope is still undimmed and our faith strong. This glorious service must assuredly be rendered by the Americans, and this Sun must arise from the horizon of that liberty-loving country.

Praise be to God that the health of Abdul-Baha is good and all the friends in Acca and Haifa are under the shade of the tree of his divine protection. For about a month he stayed with us on the high and breezy slope of Mount Carmel, but it is now three days since he has gone down to visit the family. We are so fortunate as to have the privilege of seeing him three or four times a day, listening to his elevating talks and being uplifted by his spirituality and joyousness. . . .

As you know things move slowly in the east and the people walk in the beaten track of their ancestors; consequently nothing happens in these days worth relating. All the news imparts sadness and sorrow. . . .

Abdul-Baha sends to you and all, his heartfelt greetings. I wish so much I could write a letter to each one of the friends, but this cannot be done nowadays.

I am as ever, your faithful brother,
Ahmad Sohrab.

In a recent letter to the financial secretary of Bahai Temple Unity, a friend writes:

"There are about twenty ways in which we could spend a given dollar these days without being convicted of extravagances. But, as my husband said last month, "When we deprive ourselves, it is a small matter, even if it means serious personal discomfort; if we deprive the Mashrak-el-Azkar, the whole race will be deprived of the wonderful lessons it is going to teach."

The League to Enforce Peace

Letter from C. Mason Remey

June 1, 1916.

Dear Friends:—

On May 26th and 27th we had convening here in Washington the first annual Congress of the League to Enforce Peace. As the Bahai Movement was represented by delegates to this convention, I am sure it would interest you to know about the matter.

The platform of the League is very much along the lines of universal peace as outlined by Abdul-Baha in *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*. At the invitation of Mr. Wm. H. Short, secretary of the League, Mr. Lunt, president of the Bahai Temple Unity, appointed a committee of us to represent the Unity at this convention. We sat during the better part of two days listening to speeches by the greatest thinkers and foremost progressivists of this country. The spirit of the sessions was most inspiring. In all of the proceedings we saw the Bahai spirit manifesting itself for principles of world peace, which were voiced, as far as they went, in accordance with the constructive spiritual teachings of Abdul-Baha.

Toward the last of the convention the chairman of our committee, Mr. Hannen, was called upon by Mr. Taft, president of the convention, to deliver the greeting of the Bahais. Mr. Hannen read the following words which had been prepared by our committee:

“The delegates to this assemblage representing the Bahai Temple Unity are in sincere sympathy with the objects of the League to Enforce Peace.

“The Bahai Movement is for the Oneness of Humanity along religious, economic and social lines.

“In the words of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, the founder of this movement:

“ ‘These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall cease, and the Most Great Peace shall come. Let not a man glory

in that he loves his country; let him rather glory in that he loves his kind.’ ”

This quotation from the words of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH came as a benediction and a summing up of everything which had gone before. The audience was moved and the applause was not only strong, but sustained for several moments; not a spasmodic outburst of applause such as had greeted some of the speakers, but rather an applause which started and swelled slowly attaining the maximum, and then gradually diminishing.

A banquet followed the proceedings, the last speech of which was made by the President of the United States, who brought out the following points, which were such as to have brought joy to all of us who are striving to establish the cause of universal peace.

During his remarks the President said:

“To preserve the peace of the world against political ambition and selfish hostility, in service of a common order, a common justice and a common peace, the United States is ready to join in any association of nations.”

“Only when the great nations of the world have reached some sort of agreement as to what they hold to be fundamental to their common interest, and as to some feasible method of acting in concert when any nation or group of nations seeks to disturb those fundamental things, can we feel that civilization is at last in a way of justifying its existence and claiming to be finally established. It is clear that nations must in the future be governed by the same high code of honor that we demand of individuals.”

“The nations of the world have become each other's neighbors. It is to their interest that they should understand each other. In order that they may understand each other, it is imperative that they should agree to co-operate in a common cause, and that they should so act that the guiding principle of that com-

mon cause shall be evenhanded and impartial justice.”

“We believe in a universal association of the nations to maintain the inviolate security of the highway of the seas for the common and unhindered use of all the nations of the world, and to prevent any war begun either contrary to treaty covenants or without warning and full submission of the causes to the opinion of the world as a virtual guarantee of territorial integrity and political independence.”

“I came to avow and to give expressions to the confidence I feel that the world is even now upon the eve of a great consummation, when some common force will be brought into existence which shall safeguard right as the first and most

fundamental interest of all peoples and all governments, when coercion shall be summoned not to the service of political ambition or selfish hostility, but to the service of a common order, a common justice and a common peace. God grant that the dawn of that day of frank dealing and of settled peace, concord and co-operation may be near at hand.”

When we compare these ideas with the great principles of Abdul-Baha expressed in *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, we can see the marvelous working of the Divine Ordinances in the souls of humanity. May the hope of Abdul-Baha soon be realized—that America may uphold the standard of Universal Justice among nations.

C. Mason Remey.

The Way to Universal Peace

(Continued from page 43)

onments, while holding the ladies in your arms dance to the tune of lively music: Come forth from your hiding-places, enter into the battlefield if you like to attack each other and tear each other to pieces if you desire to air your so-called contentions! This discord and feud are between you; why do you make the innocent people a party to it? If fighting and bloodshed are good things then lead them into the fray by your presence!

“In short, every means which produces war must be checked and the causes which prevent the occurrence of war be advanced, so that physical conflict may become an impossibility. On the other hand every country must be properly delimited, its exact frontiers marked, its national integrity secured, its permanent independence protected, and its vital interests honored by the family of nations. These services ought to be rendered by an imperial, international commission. In this manner all causes of friction and differences will be removed. And in case there should arise some disputes between them they may arbitrate

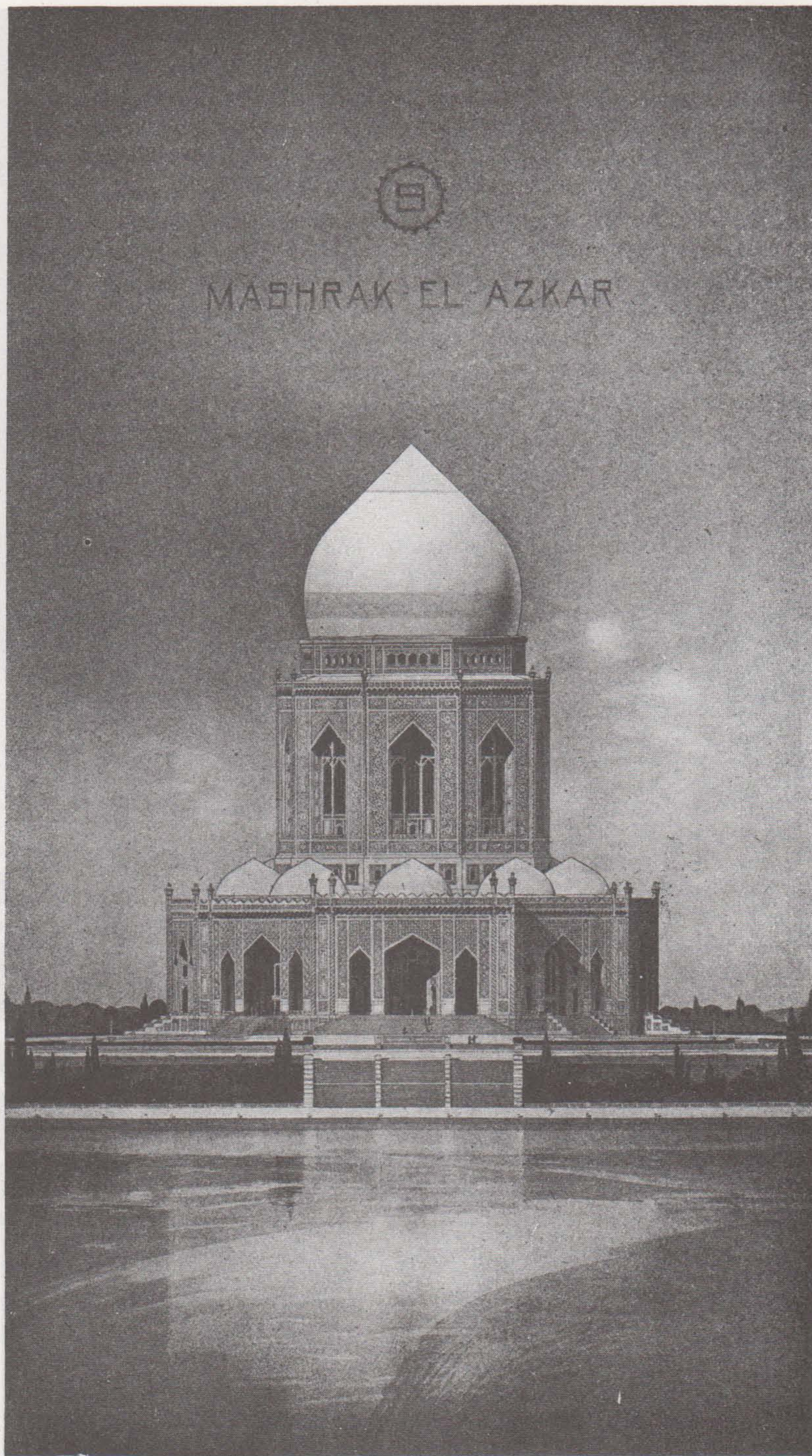
before the parliament of man, the representatives of which will be chosen from amongst the wisest and most judicious men of all the nations of the world.”

(Alhammeh, Lake Tiberias, Syria, May 11th and 12th, 1914.)

While in London in 1912, Abdul-Baha was asked:

“By what process will this peace on earth be established? Will it come at once after a universal declaration of the truth?”

“No, it will come about gradually,” said Abdul-Baha. “A plant that grows too quickly lasts but a short time. You are my family,” and he looked about with a smile, “my new children! If a family lives in unison, great results are obtained. Widen the circle; when a city lives in intimate accord greater results will follow, and a continent that is fully united will likewise unite all other continents. Then will be the time of the greatest results, for all the inhabitants of the earth belong to one native land.”



Preliminary design inspired from the Persian.



Preliminary design inspired from the Arabian and Moorish.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Kalamat 1, 72 (July 13, 1916)

No. 7

The Bahai Congress in Chicago

April 29 to May 2, 1916

EDITORIAL

THE Bahai Congress and Convention to which this issue is devoted was like four days of Pentecost. We have not the space to outline each of the addresses or even to give the names of the speakers who thrilled the hearts of the hearers and opened to their minds visions of the new kingdom which is to appear upon the earth. But names are really unimportant. The speakers were effective only because they forgot themselves and let the Abha spirit speak through their lips and glow through their faces. To rise before that convention was to stand in the midst of the gales of the Holy Spirit which swept the room at times like the rushing of a mighty wind. Tongues of spiritual fire settled over the speakers as they rose, setting their hearts ablaze and their words aflame with the love of the Kingdom.

All the discussions centered about the building of a great temple north of Chicago by the lake shore, where men and women of all races may meet and receive day by day this baptism of fire. This temple is to be the ideal expression of the church universal. At present the Bahais lay little emphasis upon organization. They desire but to diffuse in existing churches and societies the spirit of universal love. But when this love bears its fruits the denominations will want to unite in one universal church. What shall it be like? When the question is asked the Bahais will point to the temple at Wilmette. There is the ideal. There is the central house of prayer where men will worship God every morning and evening. Around that spiritual center there will be gathered, in a great circle, a group of philanthropic institutions, an orphanage, a hospital, a hospice, a home for the aged and infirm, a university. The center of the circle is the love of God, but its circumference is the love of man. At the temple center man turns the mirror of his heart to God. When he leaves the door he reflects the light of the love which God has given to him in service to his neighbors.

God's Holy Spirit is first manifest in the bodily temple of the great prophet. Then it reveals its glory to the world through the temple of his writings. At last it sheds its splendor on the world through the temple of the lives of his followers. But the symbol and the avenue for their united service to the Kingdom will be the temple of stone, this holy place of prayer called the Mashrak-el-Azkar. There they will meet and become one. There the generations will meet from age to age, and, turning their hearts to the same God, will become one.

A foretaste of the unity which this physical temple is to promote in the lives of the children of the Kingdom was revealed in all the deliberations of this recent convention. Self was forgotten, personal ambitions vanished away and the hearts of those present were fused into a divine oneness by the common love of the coming temple and the common will to lay its cornerstone in the days while Abdul-Baha is still on earth.

If this thought of the temple can unite the hearts of his spiritual children into a oneness so beautiful, so dynamic, so sublime, what will not the temple itself do for the uniting of the future generations?

The Opening Session

By JOSEPH H. HANNEN.

RESPLENDENT in the spiritual radiance which is distinctly characteristic of Bahai Conventions, was the Feast of Rizwan, the first session of the International Bahai Congress in Chicago and of the eighth annual Mashrak-el-Azkar Convention. The large assembly room of the Auditorium Hotel, the use of which was given for this and other sessions of the Convention and Congress, was filled with delegates and friends to the number of about two hundred and fifty. Every section of the United States was represented, with delegates from Canada, from Syria and Persia. Quite typically, the illumination was furnished by nine rows of nineteen incandescent lights. The speakers' table extended the length of the room with smaller tables in front of it around which were gathered the friends who, like members of a scattered family, were celebrating a happy reunion. Never was the spirit stronger, and the spiritual fragrance of the hour was

typified by the perfume of the red roses which abundantly decked the tables. The Feast was wonderfully served and the occasion stands out in every detail as perfect and memorable.

Albert R. Windust presided and at intervals read selections from the holy utterances, thus interspersing the material with the spiritual feast. The supper was announced for 6 o'clock and by 8 the tables had been cleared and the speakers of the evening were introduced. Dr. Bagdadi first presented a history of the Rizwan Day. Standing as he did under the crossed American and Persian flags at the head of the speakers' table, his radiant countenance typified the union of the East and the West.

The subject, "Investigation of Truth," was presented eloquently by Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn, of San Francisco, the next speaker, who took at short notice the place of Mr. Howard MacNutt who had been announced but could not be present. Another substitute was

Joseph H. Hannen whose topic was "Fundamental Unity of All Religions." Mr. Blaaha played delightfully on the violin and was followed by the spiritual melodies of an address by Mrs. Claudia Stuart Coles of Washington whose subject was "Harmony Between Religion and Science."

The next subject, "Demonstration of Divinity and Inspiration—the Word," was presented by Louis G. Gregory of Washington who took the place of Mr. Edward B. Kinney of New York. His logic and fluent utterance proved most refreshing to the hearts of all.

With graceful humility the chairman, Mr. Windust, spoke briefly upon the topic "The Bahai Revelation, The Bab, BAHÁ'O'LLAH and Abdul-Baha."

Mme. Ragna Linne, whose beautiful voice is often heard at Bahai Conventions, sang for her solo "The Lord Is My Salvation." She also sang the interlude to the "Benediction" by Mrs. Waite, all present joining in the chorus. Thus closed the evening.

The heavenly fragrance of this annual gathering, so dear to the Bahais of the world, will linger always in the hearts and souls of those present. And who can say where these circles of unity and love which were started at this time shall cease to eddy and spread?

Surely the ripples of this peaceful session will attain to the magnitude of great waves of harmony and will reach to the uttermost parts of the earth, spreading even to the celestial realms.

The First Session of the Convention and the Third Session of the Congress

By LOUIS G. GREGORY.

THE first session of the eighth Mashrak-el-Azkar convention was opened with a prayer, after which organization was effected by the election of Mr. Alfred E. Lunt as president and Mr. Harlan F. Ober as secretary. The usual order of business, such as the presentation of credentials, appointment of committees, etc., was soon completed and the assembled friends gave themselves over to the spiritual joy of hearing reports from various centers. Those who spoke gave accounts of activities in connection with the spread of the teachings and the raising of funds for the building of the great edifice. A spirit of heavenly harmony brooded over the meeting and the words of the speakers were followed with deep interest. This was the romance of reality.

These reports varied in many ways but all struck a common note of ringing sincerity as they told of faith, assurance

and sacrifices in the path of God. Incidents related sometimes stirred the deepest emotions. Heartfelt interest was apparent as listeners were moved to tears or laughter. The radiant hearts and happy faces were a visible expression of the outpouring of divine love. The confirmations of BAHÁ'O'LLAH were manifest. The might of his Covenant made such a gathering possible. One friend told how she had prayed for the resources to attend the convention, if, in accordance with the will of God, there was a work for her to do. At the eleventh hour the means had come to her from a foreign land and her prayer was thus answered. Another reported the devotion of the friends in a young assembly and spoke of the great war which is the Armageddon of the nations as the smoke arising in this day to conceal the Ark of the Covenant, and the glorious new light of our age. But

when the smoke has subsided men shall begin to see it with clear and joyous vision.

A friend from Canada voiced the oneness of the world of humanity in so wonderful a way that one might well have thought our beloved Abdul-Baha was using this wonderful soul to convey a message to the convention. "We are one in purpose," she declared. "It is such happiness to know that we are all one, one in origin, one in destiny." This message was realized in spirit and in truth. A Hebrew from Pittsburgh, one of the children of Abraham, expressed wonder and admiration at the power of attraction. If thoughts of the Mashrak-el-Azkar could produce such a gathering, what marvels would the completed structure accomplish? He seemed to catch the vision of universal freedom and although it was his first address, spoke like a veteran in service. A voice from the far South told with rude eloquence of the sowing of seed and the growing illumination of that region. From the Pacific coast came reports of high faith and noble courage. Thus from many assemblies voices were raised, "not feeble nor lamenting," but pitched in the key of triumphant faith. It is this spirit that moved the martyrs in Persia to the sacrifice of lives. Now it focuses the thoughts and energies of the friends of God upon the building of his temple in this his Greatest Day. Many proofs of devotion were thus realized. The presiding officer served with great wisdom, allowing the meeting to follow that guidance which he himself sought and found. Thus the various notes were blended in a mighty chorus of harmony like the music of the Supreme Course.

The first session of the convention was in the evening followed by the third session of the Congress over which Mrs. Theron C. Rice-Wray of Detroit, Mich., presided. The audience was large, completely filling the hall, which the archi-

ture, the arrangement of lights and the variegated perfumes of plants and flowers combined to make most beautiful. The chairman announced as the subject of the evening, "The Oneness of the World of Humanity," and read from the words of Abdul-Baha as follows: "BAHA'O'LLAH addresses himself to the world of men, saying, 'Ye are all the leaves of one Tree, and the fruits of one Arbor.' That is, the world of existence is no other than one tree and the nations or peoples are like unto the different branches or limbs thereof, and human individuals are similar to the fruits and blossoms thereof."

Louis G. Gregory spoke on "The Interdependence of Individuals, Nations and Races." He began by saying, "These meetings of the past few days bear eloquent testimony to the coming oneness of the world of humanity. Never has music been sweeter nor have voices telling of realities been more eloquent."

In conclusion he pointed out the great law: Pride is a cause of discord, while humility is conducive to harmony and peace. The highest expression of humility is service to God and man. Only the divine educator who sets the example can restore the lost virtue of humility through which the kingdom of God will be firmly established in the hearts of men.

Mr. George O. Latimer, of Portland, Ore., spoke on "The Solution of Economic Difficulties." He said, "Natural civilization is the lamp. Divine civilization is the light. Universal peace will bring a readjustment of financial relations. Economic peace can then be realized. Specific laws for the solution of economic difficulties are revealed in the Bahai teachings." He presented these laws in detail. He showed how BAHA'O'LLAH has exalted labor until he has given it the station of worship.

He concluded with two quotations from Abdul-Baha: "Divine civilization is a

symposium of the perfections of the world of humanity. Divine civilization is the improvement of the ethical life of a nation. Divine civilization is the spiritual philosophy. Divine civilization is the knowledge of God with rational and intellectual evidence. . . . Consequently, consider what a difference and distinction there is between the natural civilization and the divine civilization! The natural civilization prevents men from doing harm and wrong, through force and punishment; but the divine civilization so trains men that the human individuals avoid sins without any fear of (material) punishment and the very sin itself becomes unto them as the severest punishment. And they will engage in acquiring human virtues, gaining that by which mankind will be uplifted, and that which will enlighten the human world, with the utmost zeal and fervor."

"Where thousands are considering these questions, we have more essential questions. The secrets of the whole economic question are divine in nature and are concerned with the world of the heart and spirit. In the Bahai teaching this is most completely explained, and without the consideration of the Bahai teaching it is impossible to realize a better state. All this will come to pass. The Bahais will bring about the better state, but not in a way that will have anything to do with corruption and sedition—not warfare, but perfect welfare. In short, the hearts must be so connected together, love must become so dominant that the rich shall most willingly, out of the will of the heart, help and extend assistance to the poor, and should take a step in the way of adjustments. You must strive as much as possible to create love in the hearts, in order that love may become shining and radiant. When that love shines in the hearts even as this (electric) light, then it will permeate other hearts, and when the love of God obtains everything else will be realized. This is the foundation. Be thoughtful of this. Think of becoming the cause your-

selves of the attraction of the souls; show the people what (the true) economics is, what love is, what kindness is, what severance is, what giving is."

Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, of Washington, D. C., spoke on the need of "A Universal Language." He also presented effective quotations from Abdul-Baha. Just before leaving this country for Europe, Abdul-Baha made careful inquiry about Esperanto here, and soon after arriving on the other side said publicly: "His holiness BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH many years ago wrote a book called 'The Most Holy Book,' one of the fundamental principles of which is the necessity of creating an auxiliary language, and he makes clear the good and profit which will come because of its use. Now let us thank the Lord because this language, Esperanto, is created. We therefore have bidden all Bahais in the East to study this language very carefully and ere long it will be spread through the entire East. I also beg of you all, Esperantists, and non-Esperantists, that you will energetically work for the spread of this language, for it will hasten the coming of that day, the millennial day, foretold by prophets and seers, in which it is said that the wolf and the lamb shall drink from the same fountain, the lion and the deer shall feed in the same pasture. The meaning of this holy writing is that hostile races, warring nations and differing religions shall become united in the spirit of love and will become bound together one with the other."

At Clifton, England, Abdul-Baha said: "The tenth principle is the establishment of a universal language, so that we will not have to acquire so many languages in the future. In the schools they will study two, the mother tongue and the international auxiliary language. The use of an international auxiliary language will become a great means of dispelling the differences between nations." Mr. Hannen spoke in conclusion of how "Miss Alexander, our Bahai sis-

ter, has rendered great service in Japan through her knowledge of Esperanto and is anxious that it be taken up by the Bahais of the United States in order that they may be in closer touch with their fellow-workers in Europe and the East."

The chairman read "The nine proofs upon which the coming of the Great Master is based," quoting the words of Abdul-Baha:

1. That Great Master will be the educator of the world of humanity.

2. His teachings must be universal and confer illumination upon human kind.

3. His knowledge must be innate and spontaneous, and not acquired.

4. He must answer the questions of all the sages, solve all the difficult problems of humanity and be able to withstand all the persecutions and sufferings heaped upon him.

5. He must be a joy-bringer and the herald of the kingdom of happiness.

6. His knowledge must be infinite and his wisdom all-comprehensive.

7. The penetration of his word and the potency of his influence must be so great as to humble even his worst enemies.

8. Sorrows and tribulations must not vex him. His courage and conviction must be God-like. Day unto day he must become firmer and more zealous.

9. He must be the establisher of universal civilization, the unifier of religions, the standard-bearer of universal peace, and the embodiment of all the highest and noblest virtues of the world of humanity. Whenever you find these conditions realized in a human temple, to him look for guidance and illumination."

Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn, of San Francisco, was introduced to speak on the "Coming of the Great Master." He

testified with intense earnestness to "the penetrative power in the arteries of the world," which is the power of the Covenant. The great spiritual manifestation of God hath appeared. His command is manifested and his Covenant revealed. In this power "rest assured! Be confident! The doors of the kingdom are opened. The sun of truth is shining upon the world. The fountains of life are flowing! The day springs of mercy have appeared!"

"This power is the source of all life, and the oneness of the world of humanity is thereby established. This oneness or unity does not imply the absolute equality of mankind and the obliteration of all ranks based upon capacity. But the crown of humanity rests upon the heads of all. All are partakers of the divine bounty. All share the divine protection. All are invited to the table upon which the heavenly manna is spread. All are brothers and the purest heart is that most acceptable to God." In heralding the Covenant he seemed under divine confirmation. His eloquence flowed with irresistible force and aroused great enthusiasm.

The last speaker was M. Eshte'al Ebn Kalanter, who spoke on "The Equality of Men and Women." He began his philosophical address by a few pleasantries which relieved the tensivity caused by the occasion and were appreciated by the audience. He then spoke of how Abdul-Baha has compared the sexes to the two wings of a bird. As a bird cannot soar with one wing, so man's development depends upon woman's and woman's upon man's. In reality, if there is any difference it is in favor of women. The responsibilities of her position in the nurturing and training of children make her education more essential than man's. In the spiritual world man owes also a deep debt of gratitude to woman, for to her is due his first impulse and incentive to love. This attraction is a ray of the divine love which is universal."

The Main Sessions of the Convention

A Digest from the Minutes

The Session, Monday, May 1st, Mr. Lunt presiding

THE Chairman: Perhaps you have noticed the beautiful shining gift on the table, (pointing to a large copper chest). Perhaps you do not know just what the intention is, but I am going to ask six of the friends, one after another, to go to that table and read, each, an inscription which you will find engraved upon that beautiful box. The first inscription which I will ask you to read is the one on the side facing the wall. Then, after that, in order, taking either side and on until you have covered the surface. I am going to ask Mrs. Ober to read the first inscription.

Mrs. Ober: "A friend offers this copper chest to the Center of the Covenant of El-Abha, with the hope that it may be used to enclose any records which Abdul-Baha may desire to place within the cornerstone of the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in America.

"Entrusted to the Bahai Temple Unity, El-Rizwan, in the year Seventy-Two of El-Baha."

Mrs. Parmerton (reading the second inscription): "O Concourse of Creation! O People! Construct homes (or houses) in the most beautiful fashion possible in every city, in every land, in the name of the Lord of Religions. Adorn them with that which beseemeth them, not with pictures or paintings. Then commemorate the Lord, the Merciful, the Clement, in spirit and fragrance. Verily, by his mention, by this commemoration, the breasts shall be dilated, the eyes illuminated, the hearts gladdened, and thus shall you pray the orient of praises in the Mashrak-el-Azkar (*i. e.*, the dawning point of praises.)

"Teach your children what hath been revealed through the Supreme Pen. Instruct them in what hath descended from the heaven of greatness and power. Let them memorize the tablets of the Merciful and chant them with the most melodious voices in the glorious building, in the Temple of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. The prayers of the Lord shall be chanted in a manner to attract the hearts and souls. Blessed is he who listens unto the River of Life."—*Baha'o'llah.*

Mrs. Claudia Stuart Coles (reading the third inscription): "O God! O God! Verily I implore thee with throbbing heart and streaming tears to aid every one who endeavors for the erection of this edifice in the building of a house wherein thy name is mentioned every morn and eve. O Lord, send down thy benediction upon whosoever served this edifice and endeavored in its uprising among the sects and religions and confirm him in every good of mankind; open the doors of riches and wealth unto him and give in heritage the treasures of the kingdom which perish not; make him the sign of giving among the people and reinforce him by the sea of generosity and bounty which is surging with the waves of the greatest of favor. Verily Thou are the Generous, the Merciful, the Bountiful."

—*Abdul-Baha Abbas.*

Mr. Charles H. Greenleaf (reading the fourth inscription): "Now the day has arrived in which the edifice of God, the divine sanctuary, the spiritual temple shall be erected in America.

"I entreat God to assist the confirmed

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

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believers in accomplishing this great service and with entire zeal to rear this mighty structure, which shall be renowned throughout the world. The support of God will be with those believers in that district, that they may be successful in their undertaking. For the cause is great because this is the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in that country, and from it the praise of God shall ascend to the kingdom of mystery and the tumult of his exaltation and greeting from the whole world shall be heard.

“Whosoever arises for the service of this building shall be assisted with great power from his supreme kingdom and upon him spiritual and heavenly blessings shall descend which shall fill his heart with wonderful consolation and enlighten his eyes by beholding the glorious and eternal God.

“O God, my aim, my hope! With heart full of longing and breast full of yearning, we beg of thee and we supplicate at the threshold of thy might to raise the foundation of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Chicago, in the most speedy manner. Make its basis firm and its structure enduring, suffer its pillars to remain unshakable and make its columns of the steel and iron of firmness. Glorify its

servants, beautify the characters, and make the worshippers beloved, suffer the nightingales to sing ‘Ya Baha-el-Abha’ and warble the praises of our Lord, the most Supreme. Make its men the standards unfolded on the mountains of the world and its women the sanctified angels of the tabernacle of the world.”

—Abdul-Baha Abbas.

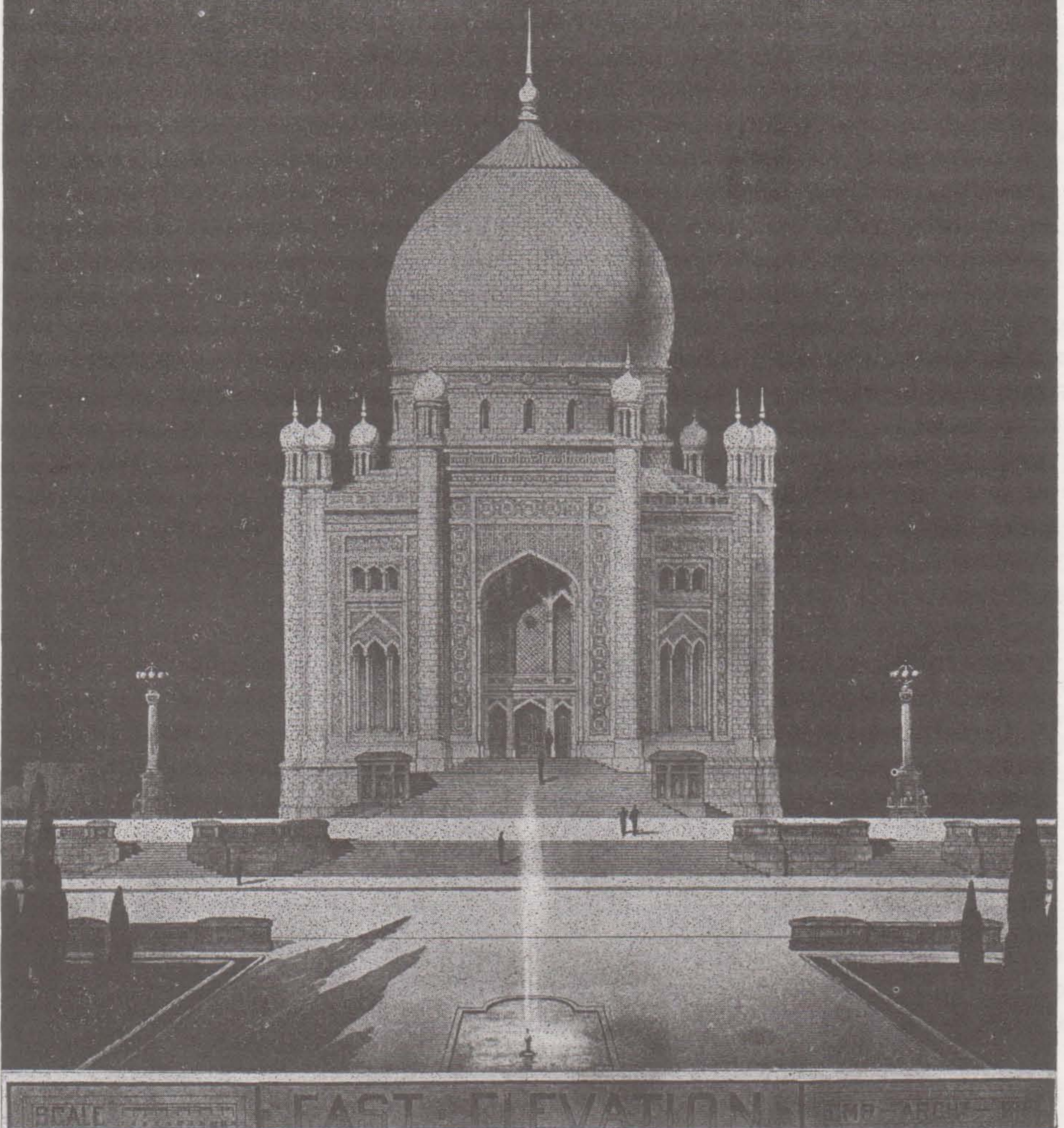
Dr. D’Evelyn (reading the fifth inscription): “O Lord, make these holy souls the dawning points of the lights and manifestations of (thy) signs. Make every one a leading cornerstone in this great edifice, a pillar of its pillars. O God, although the friends are needy, yet thou art the Helper, the Supporter, the Rewarder. These souls have arisen to serve thee well and have begun servitude. Confirm them and aid them, encourage them by promises of thy divine favors, and make them of the elect. Thou art the Mighty, the Powerful, the Able, the Giver, the Shining, the Hearer, the Seer.”

—Abdul-Baha Abbas.

Mr. Remey (reading the final inscriptions): “Some material things have spiritual effect and the Mashrak-el-Azkar is a material thing that will have



MASHREK EL-AZKAR



Preliminary design inspired from the Indian style.

great effect upon the spirits of the people.”

“The Mashrak-el-Azkar, though outwardly a material foundation, is possessed of spiritual effect and causes the union of hearts and the gathering of souls.”

The Chairman: Mr. Remey tell us about this chest.

Mr. Remey: Some time ago I had an idea that when the time came for the laying of the material cornerstone Abdul-Baha might have some papers to put in it and it occurred to me that I would like to make a chest for that purpose.

Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm: Abdul-Baha said to me in New York, that if from the beginning we had lived up to the Bahai principles in New York and had actively delivered this message to others—yes, if we had lived and proclaimed one of the Bahai principles, it would have made such a spiritual impression that by this time one-half of New York City would have been Bahai. So I sharpened my pencil and figured out that if I had done my part 7183 would have caught the Bahai spirit.

Dr. D'Evelyn: When he was in America a small group of people gathered around Abdul-Baha and asked: “What are we to do? We want to go out and teach.” Abdul-Baha said: “The gardener must first have tools before he can cultivate the soil. The first tool that you require is severance; the second is knowledge; then the love of God, and then eloquence.” By using all these tools, he said, they would become successful gardeners.

Abdul-Baha also told us the banner of BAHÁ'O'LLAH will be extended to all kingdoms, and the knowledge of God will illumine all climes, and the words of God will reach the hearing of the great American people. Be confident and have no doubt about it, he said; rest assured

and day and night be ye striving that ye may be the people to spread these lights, for if ye are not the people, God will raise up a people who shall unfurl the banner of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, who shall carry this gospel of light and peace into the city of the hearts and make *one* all the people of humanity.

Mrs. Cooper in the chair.

Mr. Lunt: I feel the most incapable of any of you to voice the word or even a letter of the word which must be uttered in this convention. There is a burning issue and one only which this convention must solve before it adjourns. We must answer the call of Abdul-Baha and provide the material means which will build the temple.

Some eight years ago certain Bahai souls, swayed by the call of Abdul-Baha, although they had no means, no money, met together in faith and assurance and said: “We will start this great work.” Albert Hall, Corinne True and others met together and guaranteed a bond with which to buy the temple land on mortgages. The sacrifice was accomplished and the East and the West contributed until in 1913 a sum of \$75,000 had been raised and the last mortgage paid off. We now have the land free and clear for the erection of this great edifice.

Then what happened? Abdul-Baha came in 1912. He said: “You will find that very soon the subscriptions will fall, will diminish. Then of a sudden they will rise and you will become victorious. This is necessary, this is wisdom, this is ordained.”

His prophecy has been fulfilled. In 1914 and 1915 the funds began to shrink and shrink. But now, praise be to God, they are rising! On February 4th there was sent out, with the approval of the Executive Board, a letter which you have all received. It sought a universal expression of the Bahai ideal of unity. It sought to bring every Bahai into a relation of oneness in service and sacrifice with every other Bahai. What

has been the result? In two months there has been pledged, together with what was on hand in the treasury, two-thirds of the entire amount which had been raised in eight years. So I can say to you today, we have already pledged or paid in \$54,000, not yet including anything from New York, Chicago or the Pacific coast.

We have \$54,000 pledged to be paid in two years. What shall we do next? What shall we do with the divine fire that has sprung up in our breasts? Shall we not let it spread until it encircles this whole country and the world? It may require sacrifice if we are to raise \$200,000 so we may lay the corner stone in 1917. But if I could utter one thousandth part of what I *should* say there would arise in us such a consciousness of the love of God, such a realization of the presence of the Supreme Concourse in this place that this task would be accomplished in a moment.

Mr. Ober: When Abdul-Baha was in America, a friend, a very lovely soul, said to him, "My Master, I wish to give a great gift and I wish to assist in some material way." Abdul-Baha said to the interpreter: "Why does she not build the Mashrak-el-Azkar?" The interpreter said, "Will you permit me to tell her this?" Abdul-Baha said, "No, she must know it in her own heart." Then he added, "If Abdul-Baha was to build this temple it would be built at once. But I have left the entire matter in the hands of the Executive Board."

Abdul-Baha has said that at the very beginning of the building of the temple there will be wonderful results. We cannot comprehend the universal significance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. It is a forerunner of the new universal world order, with its abolition of prejudice, its union of the races, the sects, the religions, the nations. It is the symbol of the coming of the universal peace, peace among religions, among races, peace between science and religion, the peace

which is the peace of God. The people of the world assume liabilities, make sacrifices for their enterprises. Cannot we take the step of faith? We are not alone for Abdul-Baha has said the hosts of the Supreme Concourse are drawn up in battle array to assist those who arise to accomplish this divine purpose.

Mrs. Ober: When Abdul-Baha was in America I told him I had rented a house at Green Acre for five years. "You do not need a house," he said, "spread a tent over you." Now I understand what he meant by saying you do not need a house. He was teaching me to spread over myself the tent of God's oneness, he was taking me out into the realm of faith, the realm of that spiritual consciousness where the manna falls down from heaven. I am now learning what he meant. The manna comes from heaven when we have the faith to give all we have to the service of our God.

Mrs. Herrick: The artist first has a picture in his mind before it is painted. Let us picture on the canvas of our spirits the Mashrak-el-Azkar, its glorious house of prayer for all the nations, its hospital for the sick, its school and orphanage for little children, its university for scientific research, and the higher education. Oh, friends, do you hear Abdul-Baha calling you? Can you not see him with his ear turned to America listening to know what the friends are going to do? I know we are not going to disappoint him. When we have given our lives God will take care of us. He has plenty. We have God. Is not that sufficient?

Mrs. de Lagnel: If we have faith we can accomplish anything. I went to Acca on faith and prayer. By faith I was able to enter the glorious presence of Abdul-Baha.

When in the orient I heard this little story. There was a very dear old lady. All her property had been confiscated except one little piece of land. She sold

that and gave the money to the Mashrak-el-Azkar. "But who will take care of her?" I asked. "Oh, the friends of God will take care of her," was the answer. "It doesn't take much to take care of one little lady."

Mr. Lane: When we try to say a word about God's glorious new revelation it is like dropping a pebble in a pond of water. The circles grow and grow. But whenever I try to drop a pebble in our pond down in Florida I find my mother-in-law, Mrs. Charlotte Rosenhauer, has been ahead of me and thrown a mill-stone. She is surely inspired of God to spread this message. If we depend on our material ability or the knowledge of books we will do nothing in spiritual service. But if we put our dependence upon God and let him use us as an instrument we can almost work miracles.

Dr. Guy of Boston: If the power of God is with us we can do anything. The United States today is the hope of the world. The nations are looking to us for the solution of the war problem, the strife between labor and capital. If we can catch the new universal spirit of the age as it is to be manifest in this temple we can bring peace on earth. Let every one be given a pledge card to do what he can toward laying the foundation.

Mrs. Rice-Wray: There are two ways to build the Mashrak-el-Azkar: one is through teaching; the other through the raising of funds. We are only about two years old in Detroit but we have nineteen confirmed souls and a great many interested people. The message of the new age has been given to hundreds of people.

Abdul-Baha has told us that all our future service to the world as light bringers of the new age depends on unity. That unity has come. I am sure that no one who has entered this convention could doubt that we have attained to perfect unity here as a convention. Now

that we have obtained the unity we must take the step of faith and build the temple.

Mrs. Boynton: Abdul-Baha has said that when we make a gift for a good object in the name of one we love, a father, mother, sister, brother, or friend who has passed over to the other side, that loved one in the world of light rejoices in that gift. If in this way we pledge to the building of the temple it will be twice blessed because it will open our hearts and rejoice the friends who are only waiting for us in that beautiful land.

Mrs. Hotchkiss: I move that the chair appoint a committee which shall raise the call to prepare for the laying of the cornerstone of the Mashrak-el-Azkar on the 100th birthday of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, Nov. 12, 1917. (Seconded and unanimously carried.)

M. Eshte'al-Ebn Kalanter: The Mashrak-el-Azkar is the visible expression of the law of God as taught by BAHÁ'O'LLAH. This law is a divine covenant by following which men shall enter all good. The Center of this Covenant is the life and words of Abdul-Baha. It is also the perfected expression of those words and deeds in the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Seventeen years ago Abdul-Baha said the last thing for him to do was to see that the words of BAHÁ'O'LLAH concerning the erecting of the Mashrak-el-Azkar and the instituting of that great law be realized. Friends, you are building the edifice of God's Covenant, of his universal law through which his truth shall flow for the enlightenment, for the uplifting of the race. And truly, friends, if the test of unity is united action, if the standard of unity is sacrifice, you have achieved the very pinnacle of unity.

If we can bring together the means for laying this foundation we shall create a force of attraction that will, perhaps, bring the very presence of Abdul-Baha upon this soil to lay the cornerstone and give in America the first material expres-

sion of that new order and new day for which all the prophets have dreamed.

Mrs. May Maxwell read a few words which the Spirit had given her describing the true spiritual temple for which the temple of stone is but a preparation and symbol:

We are all incomplete—parts of a whole—a house divided against itself. God is one; the Spirit is one; the universe is one; and we are one in origin both spiritually and physically; one in the very essence of our nature, of our being—one in destiny. "From God we came and to God we shall return."

Humanity is one great ocean of being, of love, of truth, of consciousness; but these drops are scattered—hence all weakness, discord and disorder. These units are imperfect, incomplete, because, being in reality parts of an infinite whole, their separation makes them weak, impotent and imperfect.

Can we think of any evil that is rending the world today for which unity is not the one, the only remedy?

Not until mankind has attained the realization and consciousness that it is one temple, one spirit, one life, can all the ills which today are destroying the human race find a perfect and eternal remedy. God has not deposited the treasures of his infinite spirit in any one soul, but he has deposited a portion of his bounty and treasure in every soul that was ever created, and in order to have access to this infinite source of his treasures, all these souls must flow into one mighty spiritual unit.

How wonderful to think that you and I and all of us are *one*. Your love is my love, my joy is yours, our sorrow and longing, our striving and aspiration are one! The very thought brings a nameless and boundless strength. Oh! if we knew the reality, the mystery of oneness, we should be standing in the full light of God—living in his presence; and we should all be to each other an inex-

haustible source of life, strength, healing, joy and blessedness.

The supreme attribute of God is love; love is the essence of his being, and his love flows out through his universe and is the source of all life, truth and beauty. He created us through love and created us for his love and for each other. We belong to each other; we need each other; we are exhausted and dying with the love and longing and need of each other, of the spirit of God, of our Eternal Beloved, which we must seek and find in each other. This love which is pulsating through our hearts at this moment is the fire of God in us and when it becomes a pure flame it will burn all the separating veils and we shall be one mirror reflecting the One God. Ya Baha-el-Abha!

We attain oneness with each other and with all the great movements of the age, which are but so many rays of the sun of truth, by becoming one with the Center of the Covenant. The Center of the Covenant means to me that spiritual law which is the path that leads to God. It is the path of love and knowledge, of love for each other and servitude to God, and to mankind, the path of all beauty and perfection. Its perfected image is Abdul-Baha. We become one with that Center by obedience. We become one with the path by walking therein. If we obey the natural law we attain to fullness and growth in the physical world. Just so if we walk in perfect obedience to the spiritual law we come into the full image of Abdul-Baha who is a perfect image of the law of God as it is lived in servitude to mankind. We fulfill the command of our Lord, the Christ, and become perfect as God is perfect.

Mr. Lunt: So much spiritual love, has been showered upon us that surely the blessing of the Covenant must have attended this meeting. Shall we sing the benediction?

The Session, Tuesday, May 2nd

All joined in singing Mr. Edward Kinney's "International Anthem." Then all prayed together for the friends who were lying ill. At the close of the prayer Mr. and Mrs. Ober chanted with glorious melody and exaltation of spirit the Persian commune of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, "Is There Any Remover of Difficulties save God?" As they chanted the vibration of the spiritual splendor and its rays of healing swept through the convention hall.

Mr. Lunt: With the power which was generated in this convention yesterday and which is with us at this moment, with the unity which is brought about by the blessing of BAHÁ'O'LLAH the friends scattered throughout the country can go forward and accomplish that for which we have been called, even though the whole world stands against them. There has been lighted on the altar of this country an eternal flame, a fire which can never die. The unity which has come to us is really attainment to firmness in the Covenant, which, as Abdul-Baha says, is the magnet which attracts divine confirmation. And divine confirmations are what we need to erect the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Now they are upon us. Let us now go forward in that spirit, beginning with the call of delegates.

Mrs. Parmerton: Greetings and love from the Cincinnati Assembly. When the appeal came from Boston our little group pledged \$50.00. Since that time we have added \$200. I am increasing my pledge to \$1000. I know God will enable me to find the money with which to pay it.

A young man from the East had been for months in search of the Holy Spirit. In yesterday's meeting he found it. Before he left he signed a pledge card for \$1000. He was confirmed in the path of the spiritual glory.

Mrs. Goodall: I want to add a word about the number of meetings we hold in San Francisco. We have a study class on Monday evenings of which Dr. D'Evelyn has charge, which is studying some wonderful subjects. Our friends are all waking up; all are studying. In a few months we will be prepared to teach the friends throughout the state. Monday afternoon we have meetings in Oakland. On Wednesday evenings we have, under the guidance of Dr. D'Evelyn, meetings at our rooms in San Francisco. And on Thursday afternoons we have devotional meetings to intensify the inward spiritual life.

Mrs. Cooper: When we had the letter from Mr. Lunt setting forth the plan for raising \$200,000 in two years it was like a flame across the country. Why should we be afraid of \$200,000 or even \$2,000,000 any more than of two cents? All the treasuries of this world belong to God. Abdul-Baha with his words of truth and servitude holds the keys that can unlock all these doors. We are going back to San Francisco and carry, if we can, something of the wonderful spiritual wave that has swept this convention. We hope to send back next month a substantial pledge.

(Mrs. Cooper also spoke of the splendid spread of the Bahai teachings in California.)

Mrs. Claudia Coles: When I looked this morning, in my bag of tablets, with a big desire to give something to somebody I found these words of Abdul-Baha uttered in Europe in 1912, a message to every soul upon the earth: "Come ye together. Concentrate your spiritual forces. Arise with much fervor and enthusiasm. Show ye a united effort. Let a new attraction take possession of your hearts. Let a new spirit sweep over your temples, so that the fire of the love of God which is enkindled in your

holy of holies may flame forth and set up a spiritual conflagration in the whole of the world. You must not rest day or night until you have breathed into this body a new spirit and ignited a light in this lamp."

Many of us, like Paul on the road to Damascus, have seen a great light. When I first heard of the Mashrak-el-Azkar I prayed to God for prosperity that I might help build this glorious temple. Since then I have walked the way to Damascus. I have seen a new light. I have learned that the way is to pray for the prosperity of the whole world. I pray that this spiritual fire of God's Holy Spirit may go forth over the world burning away all human ignorance and limitations, that it may burn in us as in the apostles of old until we go forth with such spirituality that the material things vanish before our eyes, and we set men's hearts aflame with the fire which has descended upon us from heaven. Then shall we transmit to the people of our age that spirit of the new birth which shall of a truth build the Temple of the Lord.

Mr. Lunt: When Abdul-Baha was in America he spoke of various centers for the diffusion of the light of universal brotherhood and peace. One of those of which he spoke most often was Green Acre. Mrs. Fraser-Chamberlain will speak to us of the plans for spiritual conferences this summer at Green Acre.

Mrs. Fraser-Chamberlain: Green Acre has always been an open Forum for the free presentation of universal ideas. May it never be narrowed to any one cult or sect. We as Bahais must help to make it more and more universal and spiritually free until it finds the liberty of the sons of God.

Let me read you some of Abdul-Baha's words concerning Green Acre:

"In Green Acre you must concentrate your forces around the all-important fact—the investigation of reality. Ex-

pend all your thoughts on this, that the union of opinions and expressions may be obtained.

"If the circle of the activities of Green Acre be expanded so that each year the leaders of every religion and thought may associate with each other with perfect love and amity there will be good results.

"Personal ambitions must be thrown to the winds and all the available will-power directed toward the realization of the universal objects. If you outline such a practical, universal, all-inclusive program and then invite me I will come again to Green Acre."

Green Acre is the place to discuss a plan of such universal spiritual teaching. Let us come to Green Acre and do it this summer. As Abdul-Baha said in New York in 1912:

"I desire to make manifest among the friends of America a new light, that they may become a new people and that a new foundation shall be established, that concord and harmony may be realized, for the foundation of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH is love.

"When you go to Green Acre, you must have infinite love for each other, each one preferring the other before himself. The people must be so attracted to you that they will exclaim, 'What happiness exists among you!'; that the people may see in your faces, the lights of the Kingdom; that the people may wonder at it all, and will turn to inquire the cause of your happiness. You must give the message through action and deed, not alone through word. Word must be coupled with deed. You must love your friends better than yourself—yes, be willing to sacrifice yourselves.

"The Cause of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH has not yet appeared in this country.

"I desire that you be ready to sacrifice everything for one another, even life itself; then, I will know that the Cause of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH has been established.

"I will pray for you, that you may become the cause of raising the lights of God. May everyone point to you and ask, 'Why are these people so happy?'"

"I want you in Green Acre to be happy, to laugh, smile and rejoice, that all may be made happy by you.

"I will pray for you."

Mr. Ober: Abdul-Baha expects us as a convention here assembled representing forty-five to fifty of the assemblies of this country, to do definite things. And should not we now undertake to raise this money to lay the foundation of the Temple by November 12, 1917? We are the people to raise it. By depending upon spiritual power we could raise two millions. If we counted it important enough to sacrifice two years for the sake of bringing a wonderful bestowal to humanity we could do it with ease. Therefore I move that we who are here assembled hereby dedicate ourselves to raise by a great universal pledge the required \$200,000 so that it may be ready for use by November 12, 1917, to lay the foundation of the Temple of the Covenant.

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Rice-Wray and carried.

Mrs. Greenleaf: As I have listened, my thoughts have crystallized themselves into three sentences. The first is, "Lift up thy heart with delight that thou

mayest be fitted to meet me and to mirror forth my beauty" (the voice of God speaking in the *Hidden Words*.) The second is what Abdul-Baha said to Isabel Fraser: Attainment is not through renunciation but through radiant acquiescence. The third is the word "sacrifice." We use the great word and have heard much about the "mystery of sacrifice." Now what is the mystery of sacrifice? The mystery of sacrifice is that there is no sacrifice.

Mrs. Rice-Wray: We must have faith, collective and individual. We must make our pledges as a whole and as an individual. I am going to pledge \$1,000.00."

Mrs. Herrick pledged \$500.00.

Last year's board of directors for the Bahai Temple Unity were re-elected.

A motion of brotherly fellowship with the Esperantists was made and carried.

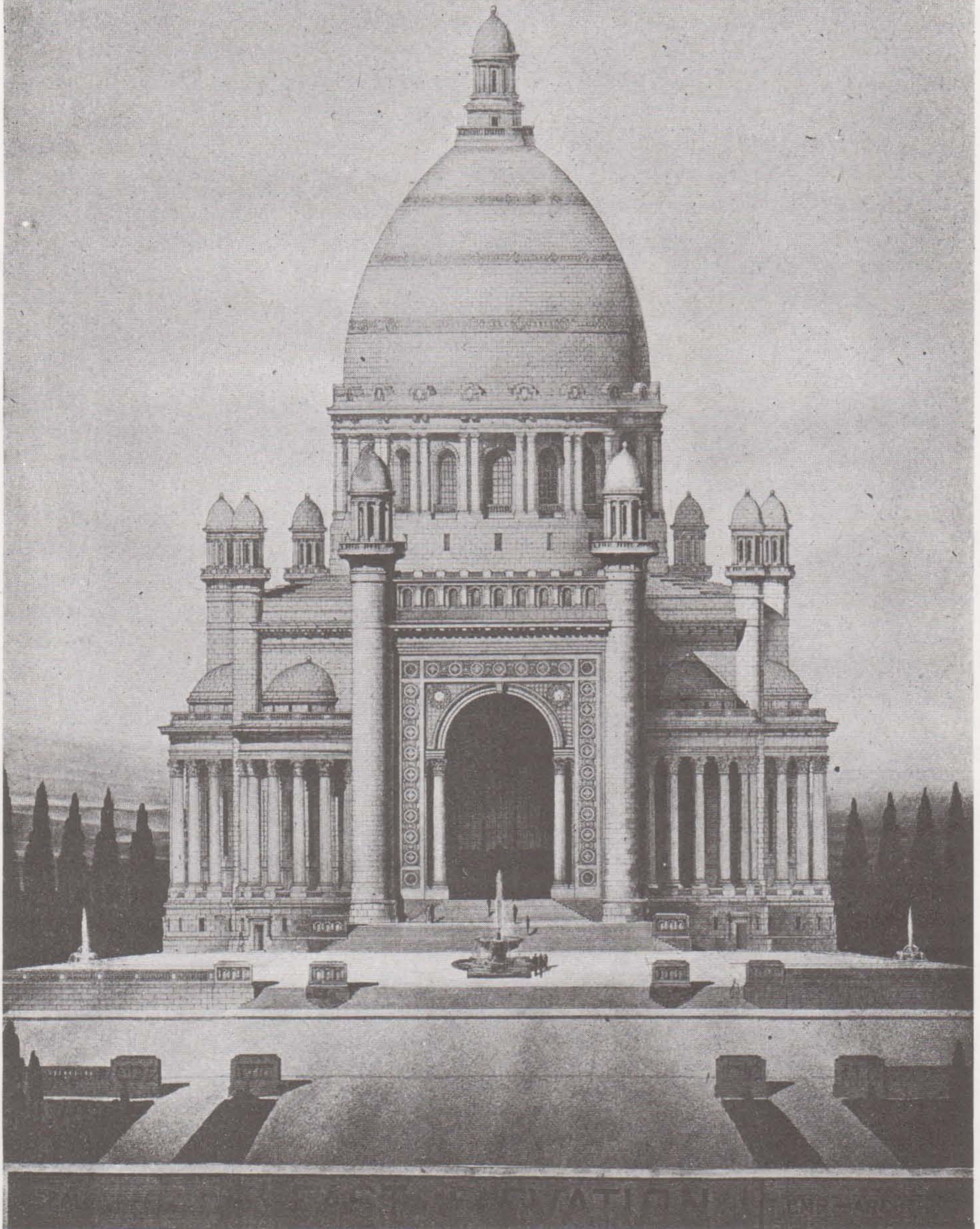
Delegates were appointed to represent the Bahai Temple Unity at the coming meeting of the League to Enforce Peace.

M. Eshte'al-Ebn Kalanter then chanted a supplication, in Persian, a prayer given to Mirza Abul-Fazl by BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH just before he ascended to the glorious course.

And thus the session was closed.



MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR

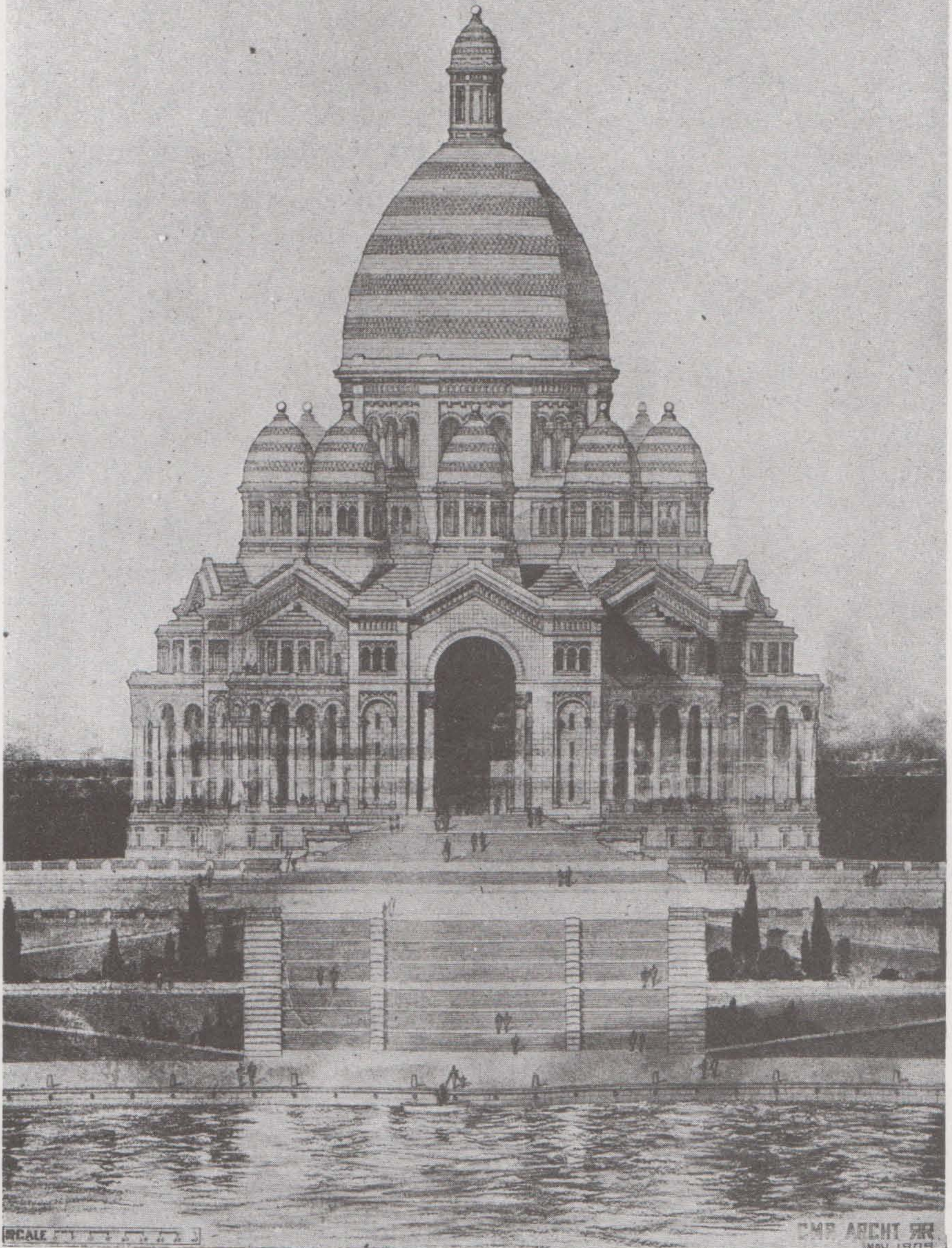


Preliminary design inspired from the Roman Classic.



MASHRAK EL AZKAR

EAST ELEVATION



Preliminary design inspired from the Byzantine Romanesque.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Asma 1, 72 (August 1, 1916)

No. 8

The Need of the Great and Perfect Master

An Address by Abdul-Baha at the Theosophical Society,
2228 Broadway, New York City, December 4, 1912

(Taken stenographically by Miss Esther Foster from the interpretation of Ish'te'a'l Ebn-Kalanter.)

ABDUL-BAHA: It is my hope that you are all well. It is my hope that you are happy, that you are in perfect health, in the utmost degree of joy and gladness.

Ish'te'a'l Ebn-Kalanter: The President of this Society wished me to present to you Abdul-Baha. You all know him. He needs no introduction. I shall say nothing.

Abdul-Baha: Those who are uninformed of the world of reality, who do not comprehend the existent beings, who do not perceive the realities of things, who do not discover the real mysteries of the existent objects, and who have but a superficial grasp of things—such persons are but embodiments of pure ignorance. They believe only in that which they have heard from their fathers and ancestors. They of themselves have no hearing, no sight, no reason, no intellect; they rely upon tradition. They are after the thoughts of their fathers and forebears. Such persons imagine that the dominion of God is an accidental dominion or kingdom.

For instance, they imagine that this world of existence was created but six or seven thousand years ago—as though God did not reign before this period of seven thousand years, had no creation before this, had no world before this. They think that Divinity is accidental, for to them Divinity is dependent upon existent things, while, as a matter of fact, as long as there has been a God, he has had a creation. As long as there

has been light, there have been recipients of that light, for the light does not have a manifestation unless there are those who perceive and appreciate it. The world of divinity presupposes creation, presupposes recipients of bounty, presupposes the existence of worlds.

No Divinity can be conceived as separate from creation, for otherwise it would be like imagining an empire without a people. A king must needs have a kingdom, must needs have an army, must needs have subjects. Is it possible to be a king and have no country, no army, no subjects? This is an absurdity. Were we to say that there was a time when there was no country, no army, and no subjects, how then could there be a king, a ruler? For a king must needs have a country, an army and subjects.

Consequently, just as the reality of Divinity has no beginning—that is, God has ever been the Creator, God has ever been the Provider, God has ever been a Quickener, God has been a Bestower—so there never has been a time when the attributes of God have not had expression. The sun is the sun because of its rays, because of its heat. Were we to conceive of there ever having been a time when there was a sun and yet it had no heat, no light—that would imply and prove that there had been no sun at all, and that it became the sun afterward. So, likewise, were we to say that there was a time when God had no creation, had no created beings, had no

recipients of his bounties, that his names and attributes had not been manifest—this would mean a thorough denial of the Divinity, for it would mean that Divinity is accidental. To put it still more clearly, if we think that fifty thousand years ago—or one hundred thousand years ago—there was no creation, that there were then no worlds, no human beings, no animals—this thought of ours would mean that previous to fifty thousand years ago there was no Divinity. For were we to say that there was a time when there was a king but there were no subjects, no army, no country for him to rule over, it would be assuming that there was a time when there was no king, and that the king is accidental. So just as the reality of Divinity is without a beginning, so is creation without a beginning. This is as clear as the sun. When we contemplate this machinery of power and perceive this infinite space and its numerous worlds, then it will easily become clear to us that the lifetime of this great creation is more than six thousand years—nay it is very ancient.

But we read in Genesis, in the Old Testament, that the lifetime of creation is but six thousand years. Now this has a meaning. This is not to be taken literally. For instance, it is said in the Old Testament, in the first day such and such a thing was created—in the first day! Then the narrative shows that the sun was not yet created! How could we conceive of a *day* if there were no sun created? For the day depends upon the existence of the sun. While no creation of the sun was yet made, how then was the first day realized? Therefore, these things have significances other than literal.

To be brief: my purpose is to say that the kingdom of God, the divine sovereignty, is an ancient sovereignty. It is not an accidental sovereignty, and that sovereignty presupposes the presence of subjects, of an army, of a country; for otherwise, the state of dominion, authority and kingdom cannot be conceived of.

So, were one to imagine that this creation is accidental, one would be forced to imagine that the Creator is accidental, while the divine bounty is ever flowing, and the rays of the Sun of Truth are continuously shining. No cessation is possible to the Divine Bounty, just as no cessation is possible to the rays of the sun. This is clear and obvious.

Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago, the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was reigning.

Why do these holy Manifestations of God become manifest? What is the wisdom of their coming? What is the result obtained through them? It is clear that human personality is endowed with two aspects. One is the aspect of its being the image of God, and the other is the satanic aspect; and the human reality stands between these two aspects—the divine and the satanic. It is manifest that beyond this body man is endowed with another reality, which reality is the world of exemplars, and which is the heavenly body of man. At the time of speech man says: “I said,” “I saw.” Who is this “I?” It is obvious that this “I” is different from this body. It is clear than when man is thinking, it is as though he were consulting with some other person. Whom is he consulting with? It is evident that it is another reality or one aside from this body with whom he enters into consultation when he thinks to himself, saying, “Shall I do this work or not?” “What shall be the fruit of my doing this?” Or when he asks the other reality, “What is the harm of this work if I do it?” And then that reality in man communicates to him its opinion concerning the point at issue. Therefore, that reality in man is obviously and clearly other than this body, with which man enters into consultation and whose opinion man seeks.

Many a time man makes his mind up positively about a thing; for instance, he makes up his mind and determines to undertake a journey. Then he begins to think, that is, he consults his inner reality, and finally concludes that he will give up his journey. Why is it? How is it he gave up his original purpose? Thus it is evident that there is a reality in him and he consults that reality, and *that* reality expresses to him the harm which such a journey would cause. Therefore the man minds that reality and gives up the plan of the journey.

Furthermore, in the world of dreams man sees things. He travels in the east, he travels in the west, although his body is stationary. His body is here, yet it is that reality in him which makes the journey to the west while the body sleeps. There is no doubt that a reality is there other than the outward, physical reality. For instance, a person is dead, is buried in the ground. We see him in the world of dreams, we speak with him. While that person's body is interred in the ground, who then is the person whom you see in your dreams, talk to, and who also speaks to you? Therefore, this again proves that there is another reality, different from this physical one which dies and is buried. Thus it is evident that in man there is a reality other than this physical one which is not this body. For instance, the body becomes weak, but that reality is in its normal state of existence. This body becomes strengthened, but that reality in man is in its normal state, unchangeable. For instance, the body of man may lose one arm, but the reality of man, which is not visible, loses nothing and is in its own normal state. This body goes to sleep, becomes as one dead, but that reality in that body which is asleep is moving about, is comprehending things, is expressing them, is discovering the realities of things.

Consequently, it is known that in man there is a reality other than this material

one which is called body, and that reality which is other than this physical one is called the heavenly body of man; and we call that body the ethereal form which corresponds to this body. It is that reality which discovers the inner meaning of things; otherwise, this body of man does not discover anything. That reality grasps the mysteries of existence. It discovers scientific facts. It discovers technical points. It discovers electricity, telegraphy, the telephone, and so on, discovering all the arts—and yet the reality which makes all these discoveries is other than this body, for, were it this body, then the animal would likewise be able to make these scientific and wonderful discoveries, for the animal shares with man all physical limitations and physical powers. What then is that power which discovers the realities of things, which is not to be found in the animal? There is no doubt that it is the inner reality of things; and that reality comprehends all things, throws light upon the inner mysteries of existence, discovers the Kingdom, grasps the mysteries of God, and distinguishes man from the brute. That reality penetrates the inner core of beings; and it is evident that man is endowed with that reality and there is no doubt therein.

This human reality stands between two grades, between the world of the animal and the world of Divinity. Were the animal in man to become predominant, man would become even lower than the brute. Were the heavenly powers in man to become predominant, man would become the most superior being in the world of existence. For instance, consider in man there is rancor, in man there is struggle for existence; in the nature of man there is propensity for warfare; innate in man there is love of self; in him there is jealousy, and so on with all the other imperfections and thus, in a word, all the imperfections found in the animal are to be found in man. For instance, in the animal there is fer-

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Asma 1, 72 (August 1, 1916)

No. 8

Greetings the New Year and the New Spring

Haifa, Syria, March 21, 1916.
New Year's Day.

To the Editors, STAR OF THE WEST,
Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

My dear spiritual friends:

The great astronomer Flammarion says somewhere in his book: "Should not the real renewal of the year coincide with the awakening of nature, with the spring of the terrestrial hemisphere occupied by the greater portion of humanity, with the date of March 21st? Should not the months be equalized and their names modified? Why should we not follow the beautiful evolution dictated by the sun and by the movement of our planet? But our poor earth may roll on a long time yet before its inhabitants will become reasonable."

Thus we observe that this wise sky-gazer has realized the necessity of a change in calendar—a change which the ancient Persians understood and celebrated from the time of King Jamshed many thousand years ago. The 21st of March, the first day of spring, is the real beginning of the year, both physically and spiritually. For this reason the Bahais all over the world are holding a feast of thanksgiving and

friendship. His holiness the First Point has given great importance to the significance of this day and there is a chapter in the book of Beyan on the beauty and merit of this universal renewal of nature and things. Therefore, we who are living on Mount Carmel and you who are serving the Cause in America, today are holding the same thoughts, are celebrating the same feast and looking toward the same sun. Although we are living in latitude 30° 50' and Chicago is near latitude 42°, yet our days and nights are equal and we feel in our constitutions the tingling blood of the new life and the new spring.

This morning we had a beautiful meeting in the house of Abdul-Baha and he spoke to us more than an hour, and this afternoon a glorious feast was held on the green slope of Mount Carmel. Beautiful and sublime it was to see Abdul-Baha climb the holy mountain surrounded with his tried and faithful disciples. While he walked through the terraced garden in front of the building and watched the blue sea, he spoke on the graces of the Lord who has protected us and guarded us from all evils and misfortunes. Truly this is one of the special bounties of the Blessed Perfec-

tion; otherwise, by this time, circumstances over which one has no control would have thrown each one of us to a different part of the earth. While we prayed at the threshold of the tomb of the Bab, we remembered you and now send you our sincere and heartfelt greeting.

Ever your faithful servant,
Ahmad Sohrab.

To my dear brothers and sisters in the United States of America and Canada. My dear spiritual friends:

This is the morning of the New Year; the sun is shining upon our planet earth from pole to pole, nature is enchanting and enchanted, the signs of new life, new revelations, new unfoldment of inner mysteries are becoming apparent everywhere; the physical world is being renovated and the joyous birds of our spiritual greetings are opening their white wings to fly through the open space toward the rose gardens of your hearts. They bring to you our love and affection, our hopes and remembrances—the love which is deep, the affection which is high, the hopes which are imperishable and the remembrances which are celestial. With the believers of God I have just come out of the Abdul-Baha's presence. For more than an hour we floated in that pure, ineffable atmosphere of divine sanctity and listened to the joy-creating notes and symphonic melodies of the nightingale of the paradise of glory! He told me to send you his spiritual greetings, to convey to you

his yearning salutation and assure you that his love for each and all of you remains constant and invariable. He prays at the holy threshold that the coming years may bring you many blessings, that you may ever and all through the year live in the line of the spiritual equator—thus receiving the direct rays of the Sun every day, and all your days be complete. He hopes that you may be the means of bringing all the people who live in the complete darkness of the Arctic circles of ignorance and dwell in the frozen countries of the frigid zones of superstitions, to this equatorial line of illumination and enlightenment. He desires that you may be counted amongst those people who travel always with the sun, and have it always shining over your heads;—thus traveling from west to east you will always gain one day—this is one spiritual day—you will be ahead of other nations and peoples, you will lead them in spirituality, in attraction, in enkindlement, in the knowledge of God, in the love of humanity, in philanthropic activities and glorious, heart-throbbing ideals. This is your sublime station, your exalted destiny; sunward we must all face—so that our hearts and minds may be filled with the rays of the divine luminary of this radiant century. Men and women—all of us—upward and forward from this day on to the end of our lives and throughout all eternity. May we ever be mirrors reflecting the effulgences of the orb of the Covenant!

Your sincere brother,
Ahmad Sohrab.

Abdul-Baha at Bahajee

Haifa, Syria, April 9, 1916.

Mr. Joseph H. Hannen,
Washington, D. C.

My very dear brother:

Since March 22nd I have not been able to write anything to American friends, because on that day, in the afternoon, I came with Abdul-Baha to Bahajee. We

are now living next to the Holy Tomb, and have a most ideal time with Abdul-Baha. This is the nineteenth day of our stay in this most blessed spot, and we may continue to stay for a longer time than we expected on our arrival. Our days are spent most quietly, retired wholly from the world and its mad and

maddening activities. Morning and evening, led by Abdul-Baha, we offer our heartfelt prayers at the threshold. In the rose-garden of the Holy Tomb, so far nearly forty tablets have been dictated for the friends in the United States. Some of them are most important in their future results and imports. Little by little I will translate and mail them. The originals cannot be sent for the present, but I am keeping them for future delivery, either personally or by post. The health of Abdul-Baha is perfect, and all the friends are well and thankful to the Lord for his boundless

mercy and bounty. I hope you have received, by this time, all the letters and cards containing tablets. Here the country is very beautiful. It has been full of red tulips, yellow and white daisies and other pink, violet and red flowers, changing the black soil into a lovely Persian carpet. Many happy and spiritual incidents transpire in these calm and peaceful days of our uninterrupted association with Abdul-Baha. I am with him practically all the time. Love to all the friends.

Your devoted brother,

Ahmad Sohrab.

Mrs. Ford on the Pacific Coast

FOR the last year Mrs. Ford has been lecturing at the Panama-Pacific Exposition on art, portraying the vision of beauty she sees at the dawn of this new age. She has also often spoken on the Bahai Movement, which she beholds bringing to the world the beauty of an undreamed of spiritual glory in the age that is to be.

Recently she gave a series of lectures in Portland and Seattle. She spoke before federations of women's clubs on the new station of women. She spoke before the Portland Civic League on "The New Preparedness." She gave an address before the Portland Art Association on "The New Tendencies of Modern Art." She gave a beautiful lecture on the architecture of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, the Bahai ideal of the universal church. She spoke on "Modern Economics."

One of her most interesting talks was

upon "The Bahai Movement and Spiritual Healing." In this she said:

"Deny injury and illness, and then lift yourself up to the Divine One, and thus bring yourself health and healing. Instead of dwelling upon your injury or your ailment, talking about it and pitying yourself, call upon God for strength, health, wisdom, ideals, courage and a renewal of the soul and body. The power of the spiritual belongs to the whole world, and not to a few. It is easily acquired, and will often restore both body and soul. One must become as a little child to receive the Kingdom of heaven into the heart."

Soon Mrs. Ford is planning to come east. She is carrying out in her beautiful way the words of Abdul-Baha to her: "Go to all peoples and nations and give the glad tidings—go continually."

The Need of the Great and Perfect Master

(Continued from page 71)

ocity; there is also ferocity in man. In the animal there is what is called hypocrisy or slyness, like unto that in the fox; and in the animal there is greed—and there is ignorance. So there are all these in man. In the animal there are injustice and tyranny; so likewise are they in man. The reality of man, therefore, is

clad, you might say, in its outer form in the garment of the animal, in the garment of the world of nature, of the world of darkness; that is the world of imperfection, that is the world of infinite baseness.

On the other hand, we find that there is justice in man, there is sincerity in

man, faithfulness, knowledge, wisdom, light, and that there is mercy and pity in man, that there is in him intellect, comprehension, the power to grasp the reality of things, the ability to discover the reality of existence. All these great perfections are to be found in man. Consequently, we say that man is a reality which stands between light and darkness, that he has three aspects, three phases; one is the human aspect, one is the divine, heavenly aspect, and one is the natural or animal aspect. The animal or natural aspect is darkness. The heavenly aspect is light in light.

Now to return to the point: The holy Manifestations of God come into the world in order to effect the disappearance of the physical, the animal, dark aspect of man, so that the darkness in him may be dispelled, his imperfections be eradicated, his spiritual, heavenly phase may become manifest, his God-like aspect may become paramount and his perfections might become visible, his innate great power may become known, and that all the virtues of the world of humanity potential within him may come to life. Thus these holy Manifestations of God are the educators and trainers of the world of existence and they are the teachers of the world of humanity. These holy Manifestations of God liberate men from the world of darkness and nature. They deliver him from gloom, from error, from hideousness, from ignorance, from imperfections, and likewise from all the evil qualities. Then they cause him to be clad in the garment of perfection and high virtues. Men are ignorant; the Manifestations of God make them wise. They are animalistic; the Manifestations make them human. They are ferocious; the Manifestations cause them to become kingdoms of light. They are unjust; the Manifestations cause them to be just. Man is selfish; they cause him to be severed from self and desire. Men are haughty; the Manifestations cause them to become meek and amiable. They are earthly; the

Manifestations cause them to be heavenly. They are material; they cause them to become divine. They are immature children; the Manifestations cause them to become mature. Men are poor; they cause them to become wealthy. They are base; they cause them to become noble. Men are mean, and they cause them to become lofty.

To be brief; these holy Manifestations liberate the world of humanity from the imperfections which beset it and cause men to appear in the garment of heavenly perfections. Were it not for the coming of these holy Manifestations of God, all men would be found on the plane of the animal. They would be similar to ignorant individuals who have never seen a school, who have never had a trainer. For such individuals will undoubtedly remain ignorant.

Leave these mountains, these hills, to the world of nature and they will remain a jungle, and you will not find any fruitful tree among them. But a true gardener changes this forest and jungle into a garden, training its trees into fruitful ones, and causing numerous kinds of flowers and myrtles to grow therein. In the same way these holy Manifestations of God are the ideal gardeners. The world of existence is but a jungle of confusion. The state of nature is confusion such as that of a jungle, producing fruitless, useless trees. As the holy Manifestations of God are the ideal gardeners, they, therefore, train these human trees and cause them to become fruitful and bestow upon them freshness and verdancy in order that they may grow day by day and produce every kind of pure fruit, and thus become the cause of adorning the world of being and continue flourishing and in the utmost purity.

Consequently, we cannot say that the divine bounty has ceased, that the glory of the Divinity is exhausted, or the Sun of Truth has sunk down into eternal sunset—into that sunset which is not followed by a dawn, into that darkness

which is not followed by light, into that death which is not followed by life, into that error which is not followed by truth! Is it conceivable that the Sun of Truth should sink into an eternal sunset? No, the sun was created in order that it may shed light upon the world, and train all existing things. How then can the Sun set forever? For this would mean the cessation of the divine bounty, and the divine bounty is ceaseless; it is continuous. Its Sun is ever shining; its cloud is ever producing rain; its breezes are ever blowing; its bounties are all-comprehending; its gift is ever perfect. Consequently, we must always anticipate and always be hopeful and pray to God to send unto us his holy Manifestations in the most perfect might, with divine, penetrative power, with the Divine Word, so that these divine Manifestations may be distinguished above all other beings in every respect, in every phase; in the same way as the sun is distinguished above all stars.

Although the stars are scintillating, yet the sun is superior to them in luminosity. Likewise these holy, divine Manifestations are and must always be distinguished above all other beings in every attribute of glory and perfection, in order that it may be proven that the Manifestation is the true teacher, that he is the real trainer, that he is the Sun of Truth, that he is endowed with a great light, and in order that it may be proven that he is endowed with a heavenly aspect. For, otherwise, it is not possible for us to train any one human individual, and after training him to believe that he is the holy, divine Manifestation. The holy, divine Manifestation must be endowed with divine knowledge and not be one instructed in school learning. He must be the educator and not the educated. The holy Manifestations of God must be perfect and not imperfect. They must be great and not weak and impotent. They must be wealthy and not indigent. In a word, the holy Manifestation of God must be

in every great aspect distinguished above all else in order that he may be able to train the human body politic, in order that he may have power to eliminate the darkness, cause the advancing of the world of humanity from one plane to a higher one, be able through the penetrative power of his word to promote and spread broadcast the Universal Peace among men, bring about the unification of men and religions through a divine power, harmonize all sects and branches, and convert all nativities and regions into one nativity and fatherland.

Thus it is our hope that the bounties of God will encompass us all and the gifts of the divine will become manifest, the lights of the Sun of Truth will illumine our eyes and inspire our hearts and convey to our souls cheerful glad-tidings of God and cause our thoughts to become lofty, and our efforts to be productive of glorious results. In a word, it is my hope that we may attain to that which is the summit of human aspirations and wishes.

I have been in America nine months and have traveled in all the large cities, and have spoken before all kinds of assemblies, and have proclaimed to them all the oneness of the world of humanity; have called them all unto union, harmony and oneness. Indeed I have received the utmost kindness from the American nation, and indeed I look upon them as a noble people, and consider them a nation capable of every perfection.

Tomorrow I am going away to Europe, and thus I bid farewell to you all, and seek for you all the divine mercy, the eternal glory, everlasting life—and I pray that you may attain unto the highest station of humanity.

I am greatly pleased with you. My joy is great over you. I shall never forget you. You shall always be in my thought, and I shall always pray and supplicate before the Kingdom of God and seek heavenly blessings for you all.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Kamal 1, 72 (August 20, 1916)

No. 9

Abdul-Baha Speaks on Divine Politics and Other Topics

Some Questions Answered by Abdul-Baha at the Summer Home of a
United States Government Official, June 4, 1912

(Translated by Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, June 15, 1916)

WE hope that in this gathering we shall partake of the heavenly table. We are pleased with this assembly because it has been united through love. Undoubtedly, the heavenly table is present in every meeting that is gathered through love. In the Gospel it is mentioned that the heavenly table descended upon Peter. Among the people of the Orient it is known that it descended upon his holiness Christ. Also, it is mentioned that the divine table descended upon her holiness Mary. Unquestionably, the heavenly table descended upon both Christ and Mary. The heavenly table concerns heaven, the spiritual table concerns the spirit, and the table of mind concerns the mind. That table which descended upon his holiness Christ and upon Mary was the love of God. From it the human spirit is made alive. It is the sustenance of the hearts. The effects of the physical food are temporal, but the effects of the heavenly food are eternal. Physical food is the life of the body, but in spiritual food is the life of the spirit."

Someone asked: "What will become of the soul of man after death? Abdul-Baha answered: "The body goes under the earth. Thence it came and thither it goes. Everything that you see returns to its own place. As the human body comes from dust, to dust it returns. But the human spirit comes from God and to Him does it return. . . .

One of those who was present said that it was reported in the papers that Abdul-Baha had bought a house at Montclair (N. J.), and intended to live there. Abdul-Baha answered: "They are right in their report, but they did not understand what kind of a home it is. All the world is my country and I am living everywhere. Wherever such souls as you are found, there is my country. Hearts are the real country. Man must live in the hearts and not on the earth. This earth belongs to no one. It will pass away from the hands of all. It is an imagination. But the hearts are the real country."

Praise be to God, you are happy. Here is a paradise. The views are beautiful. It is a superb spot. It has great spirituality. In this place the human soul finds spiritual vibrations. Great happiness is manifest. You have chosen a delightful place."

A woman asked if such a solitary place was also good for children, or if it would be better for them to have company of their age. Abdul-Baha answered "It is very good for children. It is good for their eyes, thoughts, minds, etc. But sometimes it is necessary for them to be with other well brought up children. Consider—when a child becomes two years old, it likes to associate with other children. Consider

the birds how they gather and fly together. Do you remember when you were a child how pleased you were with the children who were of your age and how happy you were?" . . .

“His holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH liked such natural scenery. He said: ‘The city is the world of the bodies but the mountains and the country are the world of the souls.’ Yet all of his life he was a prisoner and fell under great calamities. You must be very grateful to Columbus who discovered such a great country. It is exceedingly astonishing that though he was the discoverer, yet it became known by the name of America. Indeed this country should be called Columbia, which is true and just. Every existing being of the nether world, although it is useful, has still its harmful side. But the thing to be considered is, which is the greater, its usefulness or harmfulness? For example, although by the discovery of Columbus the world seemingly suffered weariness and hardships,—for instance, if Columbus did not discover America the Titanic would not have been built and so many souls drowned—yet these evils in comparison with the benefits are as nothing. Therefore, the usefulness of other things must be considered. In this day the things which are all good are those which pertain to the spirit. They are all good and for the good of all. From them no harm ever comes, for they are light and there is no harm in light.”

Someone asked what Abdul-Baha thought of New York city. Abdul-Baha answered: “Its houses are somewhat close to each other. They are like cages. They are like bee-hives. But here all is good. When we rode in the carriage and came to this summer resort it was as though we came out of a hell into paradise.

“Today after our arrival we went to the waterfalls. On returning we were caught by rain and we got somewhat wet;

we ran to a house nearby. In the tablets of his holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH, it is written that once his holiness Christ was in the desert. It was a dark night and it began to rain in torrents. He went to a cave but he saw ferocious animals therein. He stopped outside and the rain poured upon his head fearfully. He said: ‘O God, to the birds thou hast given a nest, to the wild animals a cave, and to the sheep a valley, but for the Son of Man thou hast not created a place wherein he can shelter himself from the rain. O Father, thou seest that the earth is my bed, grass is my food, and the stars are my lamps by night.’ Then he said: ‘Who is richer than I? Thou hast bestowed upon me a bounty which was not given to the kings, princes, philosophers, and the rich. Who is more wealthy than I?’ ”

“In the writings of BAHÁ'O'LLAH there are events which were not mentioned in the Gospels. These traditions are from the life of Christ. They show the genius and sublimity of Christ. I would like to tell you another story. It is said that one day Christ arrived in a village where the government made a law that the inhabitants must not allow strangers to enter their homes. This was because in those regions robbery was increasing. His Holiness went to the house of an old woman. When she saw his beauty and majesty she was ashamed to refuse to receive him, and did not want to reject him. So she admitted him with the utmost respect. Then when she looked at him and realized by his manners the greatness of his Holiness, she stepped forward and kissed his hand. And she said to him: ‘I have only one son and nobody else. He was wise, perfect, and we were living very happily. Now, for some time he has been worried; he is mourning; he fills our home with sorrow and sadness; he is working daily, but at night he comes home worried; he does not sleep,

and whenever I ask him what the matter is, he does not answer.'

His Holiness said to her: 'Send him to me.'"

Her son came in the evening. The mother said: 'O my son, this is a great personage, and, if you have any trouble, tell him about it.' Then the son went and sat down in the holy presence.

Jesus said: "Tell me what art thou suffering from."

The son: "I am not suffering."

Jesus: "Do not speak a lie. Thou hast an incurable malady. Tell it to me. I am trustworthy. I do not tell the secrets of anyone. I keep them. Have confidence. Tell it to me. I will not reveal your secret."

The son: "My sickness has no remedy."

Jesus: "Tell me about it; I will remedy it."

The son: "Because it has no remedy it cannot be cured."

Jesus: "Tell it to me. I have the remedy."

The son: "For any kind of disease?"

Jesus: "Yes, for any kind of disease."

The son: "I am ashamed to tell you. I am mortified to tell you."

Jesus: "Thou art my son."

The son, thinking for a moment, said: "I cannot mention it with my tongue. It seems to me that I will be impolite if I do."

Jesus: "I will forgive thee."

The son: "I am in love with the daughter of the king who is in a city nearby. My work is the selling of thorns. What can I say more than this?"

Jesus: "Have confidence. God willing I shall send thee what thou wishest." Briefly, his Holiness arranged it for him so that he might marry the young woman. On the night of the wedding, just as he entered her room, which was full of ornaments and splendor, something

came to his mind and he said to himself, this person (Jesus) has brought to consummation so great a matter for me. Why did he not do it for himself? Inasmuch as he performed such good fortune for me, he could have performed the same thing for himself. Yet with such ideal powers he wanders in the desert; he eats grass; he sleeps on the earth; he sits in the dark; he is in the utmost poverty. When this thought came to him he said to the young woman: "Remain thou here. I have a little business to attend to; I go and will return." He went out into the night in pursuit of his Holiness. Finally he found him and said: "O, my Lord. Thou hast not treated me fairly."

Jesus: "Why?"

Son: "Thou hast obtained for me that which thou desired not for thyself. Undoubtedly thou hast something which is greater than this. And if this were the acceptable thing thou wouldst have chosen it for thyself. It is evident thou hast something which is greater than this. Therefore thou art not just. Thou hast given me that which thou desirest not for thyself."

Jesus: "Thou art right. Hast thou the capacity and the preparation for it?"

Son: "I hope so."

Jesus: "Canst thou leave everything?"

Son: "Yes."

Jesus: "It is the divine guidance which is greater than all things. If thou art able, come."

He followed him. Then his Holiness went to his disciples and said: "I have found, in this village, a hidden treasure. Now I have saved it. This is my treasure. I have taken him out of the earth and I give him to you."

One of those who were present said that he was sorry he could not speak the Persian language.

Abdul-Baha replied: "Praise be to

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Kamal 1, 72 (August 20, 1916)

No. 9

Abdul-Baha on Spiritual Happiness

IT is natural that a passenger on board the steamer and sailing the great ocean may now witness the tumultuous waves of a wild storm and in the freedom and joyousness of his heart ride on the white crest of the iridescent and pearly foam, watching a world of surging waves battling against the sky, and again behold the sea tranquil, its surface like a mirror, reflecting therein the blue dome of heaven. These experiences are the natural requirements of one's journey. They have always been conducive to the enrichment of human nature. But on the other hand, if the tranquillity become permanent and the traveler deprived of the wonderful sight of the waves, the sea not being stirred by the blowing of winds, this state is undesirable, for it is indicative of the fact that one's journey has come to an end. . . . Today my joy and happiness consists in the firmness and steadfastness of the believers of God, the attraction of the hearts with the fragrances of God, the detachment of the people from the inordinate desires of passion and self and

their complete dependence on and communication with the kingdom of God.

. . . There is no doubt that we do not find real joy and happiness through the songs of the singers, the music of the musicians and the flowers of the rose garden, nay rather our delight and exhilaration consists in the anthems of unity and the chorus of harmony raised from the assemblages of the friends of God, singing in the heavenly rose garden, their voices reaching to the ears of the people of the world and creating a divine attitude of beatitude and ecstasy. . . ."

(A portion of a tablet received from Abdul-Baha, through Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, dated March 20, 1916, by Mr. Horace Holley.)

"In the morning," writes Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, "I was busy reading an article in an American newspaper concerning the society organized in Cleveland to 'make happiness epidemic'. Abdul-Baha came out of his room and walked in the garden for a few minutes. I went out of the room

and joined him. When I told him of the organization of such a society in America he laughed heartily and said: 'It is very good—the world needs more happiness and illumination. The star of happiness is in every heart: we must remove the clouds so that it may twinkle radiantly. Happiness is an eternal condition. When it is once established, man will ascend to the supreme heights of bliss. A truly happy man will not be

subject to the shifting eventualities of time. Like unto an eternal king he will sit upon the throne of fixed realities. He will be impervious to outward changing of circumstances and through his deeds and actions, impart happiness to others. A Bahai must be happy, for the blessings of God are bestowed upon him'."

(From Mirza Ahmad Sohrab's Diary, January 7, 1914.)

Abdul-Baha Speaks on Divine Politics and Other Topics

(Continued from page 77)

God, this veil does not exist in the world of spirit. The hearts speak with each other. There was once organized in Persia a society whose chief characteristic was that they spoke without the tongue, and with the slightest sign could communicate many important matters. This society progressed to such a degree that with the motion of a finger abstruse matters could be understood. The government feared that they might organize a society against the government and since none could understand their purpose they might work great mischief. Therefore they suppressed them.

"I wish to tell you a story about this society. Anyone who desired to join it had to stand at the door. Then they consulted with each other by signs and gave their opinions without speaking. Once a person with an awful looking visage stood at the door. The president looked at his face and saw what an awful looking figure he had. There was a cup on the table containing water. The president poured in some water until it was full to the brim. This was the sign of rejection. It meant that there was no room among them for that person. But the man was intelligent. He took a tiny piece of a flower leaf and with the utmost deference entered the room and put it on the surface of the water in the cup. He laid it so carefully that the water in the cup did not move. All were de-

lighted. He meant that he did not need a big place, that he was like a flower leaf which does not need a place. They clapped their hands and accepted him. All their conversation was with signs; they progressed very much and by this method intelligence and memory became keen and their power in reading the face increased. Often they spoke to each other with their eyes. With the utmost clearness they conversed with each other by the motions of their eyes." . . .

Someone asked about the future of America. Abdul-Baha answered that "In the future all the countries of America such as Mexico and Canada, and even South America will join the Union."

Some one asked about the great universal war among the nations. Abdul-Baha replied: "It must come, but America will not be involved. This war will be in Europe. You have taken a corner for yourselves. You do not interfere with others' business. You are not thinking of taking the European countries, and there is no one who is greedy to take your land. You are safe because the Atlantic ocean is a very strong, natural fort."

Someone asked regarding the forms of government, such as the republican, the constitutional, etc.

Abdul-Baha answered: "Europe and other countries will be compelled to apply the same order that you have. In all Europe great changes will take place. Their states will be independent, ruled by local governments. Indeed it is not just that a country should be ruled by one central government, because no matter how just and good the members of that center may be, they are not fully acquainted with the necessary details of other localities and cities, and they do not strive for an equal progress in all the regions of the country. For example: Now all the Germans serve Berlin; all the French serve Paris; all the English kingdoms and colonies adorn London. But your government has a good political order."

Someone asked about the economic question.

Abdul-Baha answered: "America cannot be compared with Europe. The problems of America in comparison to those of Europe are as nothing. One of the problems of Europe is to maintain a great army. All the French and German nations are soldiers. But you are free from this great calamity. You must thank God for saving you. In the interior of America there is protection and safety. The first banner of peace will rise here. Know for a certainty that this will come to pass. For man knows the result from the beginning. The result will be that the peace which you have here among your people will, from here, be spread to other regions."

Someone else asked regarding election and whether the country should be ruled by the people or by the wise ones among the people.

Abdul-Baha answered: "It is evident that it is better if the people elect the noble ones among them, and then these elect the president of the republic. That is to say, the president should be the elect of the elect, because the public in general are not as well informed as they

should be in regard to political affairs. The common people follow same. In reality, whatever affair the wise people desire to execute, the common people agree to. The affairs should be in the hands of the wise and not of the common people. But the wise people must be in the utmost faithfulness and sincerity of purpose; they must serve all the people, and protect and safeguard their welfare. Consider, if you put the general affairs into the hands of the common people they will be ruined. If you put all the work into the hands of the laborer the house will not be built. A wise architect is needed. The work is done by the architect, but the common laborer suffers the hardships. The general draws the map of war, but the common people do the fighting. We cannot give them the map. Is it possible to leave a regiment in the hands of a soldier? But if we want to be victorious and conquerors, a wise, experienced person must be made commander."

Someone asked in regard to the question of capital and labor.

Abdul-Baha said: "The solution of this problem is one of the fundamental principles of his holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH. But it must be solved with justice and not with force. If this problem is not solved lovingly it will result in war. Perfect communism and equality are an impossibility because they would upset the affairs and the order of the world. But there is a fair method which will not leave the poor in such need, nor the rich in such wealth. The poor and the rich, according to their degrees, can live happily, with ease and tranquillity. The first person in the world who had this idea was the king of Sparta. He sacrificed his kingdom for this work. He lived before Alexander the Great was born. This thought came to his mind, that he could render a service which would be higher than all services and become the cause of happiness to many. Thus he divided the people of Sparta

into three divisions. One division consisted of the ancient inhabitants, and they were the farmers. Another division consisted of the industrial people; another were the Greeks, who were originally from Phoenicia. The name of this king was Lycurgus. He desired real equality among these three divisions, and in this manner established a just government. He said that the ancient people, who were the farmers, were free from any obligation except that they had to pay one-tenth of their products and no more. The people of industry and commerce had to pay yearly taxes and nothing else. The third class, who were the nobles and descendants of the rulers, whose occupations were in politics, war and the defense of the country, had all the land of Sparta. He measured the whole land and divided it equally among them. For example, there were nine thousand of them. He divided all the land in nine thousand equal parts and gave one part to each one of them. He gave one-tenth of the product of each piece of land to the one who owned it. He also made other laws and ordinances for the citizens. When he found that he had accomplished what he wanted, he said: 'I am going to Syria, but I am afraid that after I go away you will change my laws. Therefore, take an oath that you will not make any change before my return.' They took an oath in the temple and assured him that they would never make any change and that they would maintain these laws always until the return of the king. But the king left the temple, traveled and never returned. He gave up his kingdom in order that these laws might be preserved. This equality of distribution, in a short time, became the cause of discord, because one of the men had five children, another three children, and another two children. Differences accrued and the whole thing was upset. Therefore the matter of equality is an impossibility.

"But here is the real solution. The rich should be merciful to the poor, but

with their free-will, not with force. Should it be with force it would be useless. It should be according to law and not by violence, so that through a general law everyone might know his duty. For example, a rich person has a large income and a poor person a small income. To put it in a more explicit way: a rich person has ten thousand kilos of products, and a poor person has ten kilos. Now is it fair to tax them equally? Nay, rather, the poor person in this case must be exempt from taxes. If the poor person gives one-tenth of his income and the rich person one-tenth of his income, it will be unjust. Thus in this way a law should be made that the poor person who has only ten kilos and needs them all for his necessary food, be exempt from paying taxes. But if the rich person, who has ten thousand kilos, pays one-tenth or two-tenths taxes on his products, it will not be a hardship to him. For example, if he gives two thousand kilos, he will still have eight thousand kilos. If a person has fifty thousand kilos, even though he gives ten thousand kilos, he will still have forty thousand kilos. Therefore, laws must be made in this way. These laws must do away with the present system of wages and earnings. If today the owners of factories increase the wages of their employees, after a month or a year, they will again cry and strike and ask for more increase. This work has no end.

"Now I want to tell you about the law of God. According to the divine law no wages should be given to the employee. Nay, rather, indeed they are partners in every work. For example, the farmers plant near a village. They get products from their cultivation. They take one-tenth from the rich and the poor according to their income. A general store may be built in that village for all incomes and products to be brought therein. Then it will be considered who is rich and who is poor. The farmers whose incomes are sufficient only for their food and ex-

penses must be free from paying taxes. All products and incomes gathered and collected must be put in the general store. If there is a helpless one in that village his daily needs must be given to him. On the other hand, a rich person who needs only fifty kilos of products and still has five hundred thousand kilos, after all his expenses are paid, should be taxed two-tenths and at the end of the year whatever remains in the store should be distributed for the general expenses.

“The question of socialization is very important. It will not be solved by strikes for wages. All the governments of the world must be united and organize an assembly, the members of which should be elected from the parliaments and the nobles of the nations. These must plan, with utmost wisdom and power, so that neither the capitalists suffer from enormous losses, nor the laborers become needy. In the utmost moderation they should make the law, then announce to the public that the rights of the working people are to be strongly preserved. Also the rights of the capitalists are to be protected. When such a general plan is adopted by the will of both sides, should a strike occur, all the governments of the world collectively should resist it. Otherwise, the work will lead to much destruction, especially in Europe. Terrible things will take place. One of the several causes of a universal European war will be this question. For instance, the owners of properties, mines and factories should share their incomes with their employees, and give a fairly certain percentage of their products to their workingmen, in order that the employees may receive, beside their wages, some of the general income of the factory, so that the employee may strive with his soul in the work.

“No more trusts will remain in the future. The question of the trusts will be wiped away entirely. Also, every factory that has ten thousand shares, will give two thousand shares of these

ten thousand to its employees, and will write them in their names, so that they may have them, and the rest will belong to the capitalists. Then at the end of the month or year, whatever they may earn after the expenses and wages are paid, according to the number of shares, should be divided among both. In reality, so far, great injustice has befallen the common people. Laws must be made because it is impossible for the laborers to be satisfied with the present system. They will strike every month and every year. Finally, the capitalists will lose. In the ancient times a strike occurred among the Turkish soldiers. They said to the government: ‘Our wages are very small and they should be increased.’ The government was forced to give them their demands. Shortly afterwards they struck again. Finally all the incomes went to the pockets of the soldiers, to the extent that they killed the king, saying: ‘Why didst thou not increase the income, so that we might have received more?’

“It is impossible for a country to live easily without laws. To solve this problem strong laws must be made, so that all the governments of the world be the protectors thereof.

“The essence of this matter is that strikes are conducive to destruction, but laws are the cause of life. Laws must be framed. Demands should be according to the laws, and not with strikes, force and harshness. Tonight you have spoken of politics, but we are not accustomed to talk on politics. We speak about the world of spirit. We speak of the wealth of the kingdom, not of the wealth of the nether world. Politics are obligatory matters, but eternal happiness cannot be obtained by force. Happiness and force are impossible. What is meant by happiness? It means that the people should live according to the most perfect virtues of the world of humanity, and the power of the divine kingdom. This is one story and that is another story.”

“This is the Time!”

IT is recorded in the blessed Gospel: *Travel ye throughout the world and call ye the people to the Kingdom of God!* Now this is the time that you may arise and perform this most great service and become the cause of the guidance of the innumerable souls. Thus through this superhuman service the rays of peace and conciliation may illumine and enlighten all the regions and the world of humanity may find peace and composure.

During my stay in America I cried out in every meeting and summoned the people to the propagation of the ideals of universal peace. I said plainly that the continent of Europe had become like unto an arsenal and its conflagration was dependent upon one spark, and that in the coming years, or within two years, all that which is recorded in the Revelation of John and the Book of Daniel would become fulfilled and come to pass.

—ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS
From Tablet to the West

A Trumpet Call to Action

THE stirring Tablets published in this issue of the *STAR OF THE WEST*, urging the Bahais to illumine those sections of the United States and Canada that have not yet received the Light, are a trumpet call to action.

It is evident that Abdul-Baha in his love and wisdom is now giving each and all of the American Bahais a special opportunity to awaken to their responsibilities and to arise in love and sacrifice for this "superhuman service."

A spontaneous uprising of the whole body of believers to this call is the first step necessary to the success of this great undertaking.

The realization of the supreme importance of this work will create such a wave of spiritual response that great power will be felt throughout the country, and the friends will be encouraged to offer mites as well as dollars to the teachers' fund in order that needy souls may be blessed with the Glad Tidings.

The manner of collecting this fund—which should be separate from the Mashrek-el-Azkar fund—should be left to the discretion of each assembly, and isolated Bahais should report to the nearest center as soon as possible.

It is suggested that the selection of teachers and the apportioning of territory to be covered might be the combined work of the assemblies belonging to that section to which one of the five Tablets has been addressed.

It is also suggested that those who have friends or correspondents not necessarily believers in states mentioned in the Tablets, should send their addresses to assemblies where Tablets have been received that points of contact may be made in those new places to open the way for the work.

We cannot over-estimate the effect of this united service. The spiritual and practical results of our efforts will depend upon our joyous, enthusiastic and prompt obedience to the command of the Center of the Covenant.

What an inspiring thought that in responding to this call the Bahais may be instrumental in helping to bring to pass the prophecy of Abdul-Baha that the Cause will be known the world over by 1917!

—*The Editors.*

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Eizzat 1, 72 (September 8, 1916)

No. 10

Tablets Revealed by Abdul-Baha to the Bahais throughout the United States and Canada

TABLET TO THE NORTHEASTERN STATES

To the friends and maid-servants of God in the Northeastern States:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heavenly heralds!

These are the days of Naurooz. I am always thinking of those kind friends! I beg for each and all of you confirmations and assistance from the threshold of Oneness, so that those gatherings may become ignited like unto candles in the Republics of America, enkindling the light of the love of God in the hearts; thus the rays of the heavenly teachings may begem and brighten the states of America like the infinitude of immensity with the stars of the most great guidance.

The northeastern states on the shores of the Atlantic—Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York—in some of these states believers are found, but in some of the cities of these states up to this date people are not yet illumined with the lights of the Kingdom and are not aware of the heavenly teachings; therefore, whenever it is possible for each one of you, hasten ye to those cities and shine forth like unto the stars with the light of the most great guidance. God says in the glorious Koran: "The soil

was black and dried. Then we caused the rain to descend upon it and immediately it became green, verdant, and every kind of plant sprouted up luxuriantly." In other words, he says the earth and the soil is black, but when the spring showers descend upon it that black soil is quickened, and variegated flowers are pushed forth. This means the souls of humanity belonging to the world of nature are black like unto the soil. But when the heavenly outpourings descend and the radiant effulgences appear, the hearts are resuscitated, are liberated from the darkness of nature and the flowers of divine mysteries grow and become luxuriant. Consequently man must become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity and propagate the holy teachings revealed in the sacred books through divine inspiration. It is stated in the blessed Gospel: Travel ye toward the East and toward the West and enlighten the people with the light of the most great guidance, so that they may take a portion and share of the eternal life. Praise be to God, that the northeastern states are in the utmost capacity. Because the ground is rich, the rain of the divine outpouring is descending. Now you must become heavenly farmers and scatter pure seeds in the prepared

soil. The harvest of every other seed is limited, but the bounty and the blessing of the seed of the divine teachings are unlimited. Throughout the coming centuries and cycles many harvests will be gathered. Consider the work of former generations. During the lifetime of his holiness Christ the believing, firm souls were few and numbered, but the heavenly benedictions descended so plentifully that in a number of years countless souls entered under the shade of the Gospel. God has said in the Koran: "One grain will bring forth seven sheaves, and every sheaf shall contain one hundred grains." In other words, one grain will become seven hundred; and if God so wills he will *double* these also. It has often happened that one

blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not look at our own ability and capacity; nay, rather we must behold the favors and bounties of God in these days, who has made the drop to find the expression of the sea and the atom the importance of the sun.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 26, 1916.

Original addressed to Mr. Hooper Harris, New York City, N. Y., care J. H. Hannen, Washington, D. C. Received August 19, 1916.

TABLET TO THE WESTERN STATES

To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Western States:

O ye sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

Day and night I have no other occupation than the remembrance of the friends, praying from the depth of my heart in their behalf, begging for them confirmation from the Kingdom of God and supplicating the direct effect of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. I am hopeful from the favors of his highness the Lord of bestowals, that the friends of God during such a time may become the secret cause of the illumination of the hearts of humanity, breathing the breath of life upon the spirits—whose praiseworthy results may become conducive to the glory and exaltation of humankind throughout all eternity. Although in some of the western states, like California, Oregon, Washington and Colorado, the fragrances of holiness are diffused, numerous souls have taken a share and a portion from the Fountain of Ever-

lasting Life, they have obtained heavenly benediction, have drunk an overflowing cup from the wine of the love of God and have hearkened to the melody of the Supreme Concourse—yet in the states of New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Arizona and Nevada, the lamp of the love of God is not ignited in a befitting and behooving manner, and the call of the Kingdom of God has not been raised. Now, if it is possible, show ye an effort in this direction. Either travel yourselves, personally, throughout those states or choose others and send them, so that they may teach the souls. For the present those states are like unto dead bodies; they must breathe into them the breath of life and bestow upon them a heavenly spirit. Like unto the stars they must shine in that horizon and thus the rays of the Sun of Reality may also illumine those states.

God says in the great Koran: "Verily God is the helper of those who have believed. He will lead them from darkness into light." This means: God loves the believers, consequently he will deliver

them from darkness and bring them into the world of light.

It is also recorded in the blessed Gospel: *Travel ye throughout the world and call ye the people to the Kingdom of God.* Now this is the time that you may arise and perform this most great service and become the cause of the guidance of the innumerable souls. Thus through this superhuman service the rays of peace and conciliation may illumine and enlighten all the regions and the world of humanity may find peace and composure.

During my stay in America I cried out in every meeting and summoned the people to the propagation of the ideals of universal peace. I said plainly that the continent of Europe had become like unto an arsenal and its conflagration was dependent upon one spark, and that in the coming years, or within two years, all that which is recorded in the Revelation of John and the Book of Daniel

would become fulfilled and come to pass. This matter, in all probability, was published in the *San Francisco Bulletin*, October 12, 1912. You may refer to it, so that the truth may become clear and manifest; thus ye may fully realize that *this is the time* for the diffusion of the fragrances.

The magnanimity of man must be heavenly—or, in other words, it must be assisted by the divine confirmation, so that he may become the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 26, 1916.

Original addressed to Mrs. Helen S. Goodall, San Francisco, Calif., care J. H. Hannen, Washington, D. C. Received August 8, 1916.

TABLET TO THE DOMINION OF CANADA

To the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada:

O ye daughters and sons of the Kingdom!

Although in most of the states and cities of the United States—praise be to God—the fragrances of God are diffused and innumerable souls are turning their faces and advancing toward the Kingdom of God, yet in some of the states the flag of oneness is not upraised as it ought to be and must be, and the mysteries of the Holy Books, like the Bible, the Gospel and the Koran, are not promulgated. Through the unanimous effort of the friends, the banner of oneness must be unfurled in those states, and the divine teachings be promoted, so that they may also receive a portion and a share of the heavenly be-

stowals and the most great guidance. Likewise in the Provinces of Canada, such as Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ungava, Keewatin, Mackenzie, Yukon and the Franklin Islands in the Arctic Circle—the believers of God must become self-sacrificing and like unto the candles of guidance become ignited in the provinces of Canada. Should they show forth such a magnanimity, it is assured that they will obtain universal divine confirmations, the heavenly cohorts will reinforce them uninterruptedly, and a most great victory will be obtained. Perchance, God willing, the call of the Kingdom may reach the ears of the Eskimos, the inhabitants of the Islands of Franklin in the north of Canada, as well as Greenland. Should in Greenland the fire

of the love of God be ignited, all the ices of that continent will be melted and its frigid climate will be changed into a temperate climate—that is, if the hearts will obtain the heat of the love of God, that country and continent will become a divine garden and a lordly orchard, and the souls, like unto the fruitful trees, will obtain the utmost freshness and delicacy. Magnanimity is necessary, heavenly exertion is called for. Should you display an effort, so that the fragrances of God be diffused amongst the Eskimos, its effect will be very great and far-reaching. God says in the great Koran: “A day will come wherein the lights of unity will enlighten all the world. The earth will be irradiated with

the light of its Lord.” In other words: “The earth will become illumined with the light of God. That light is the light of unity.” “There is no God but God.” The continent and the islands of Eskimos also are parts of this earth. They must similarly receive a portion of the bestowals of the most great guidance.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 26, 1916.

Original addressed to Mrs. May Maxwell, Montreal, Canada, care J. H. Hannen, Washington, D. C. Received August 19, 1916.

TABLET TO THE SOUTHERN STATES

To the friends and maid-servants of God in the Southern States:

Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye heralds of the Kingdom of God!

A few days ago an epistle was written to those divine believers, but because these days are the days of Naurooz therefore you have come to my mind, and I am sending you this greeting for this glorious feast. All the days are blessed, but this feast is the national fete of Persia. The Persians have been holding it for several thousand years past. In reality every day which man passes in the mention of God and in the service of the Kingdom of God that day is his feast. Praise be to God, that you are occupied in the service of the Kingdom by day and by night. Therefore all your days are feast days. There is no doubt that the assistance and bestowal of God shall descend upon you. In the southern states of the United States the friends are few, that is, in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Missis-

sippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Consequently you must either go yourselves or send a number of blessed souls to those states, so that they may guide the people to the kingdom of heaven. His holiness Mohammed, the messenger of God, says: “If a person becomes the cause of the illumination of one soul it is better than a boundless treasury.” Again he says: “O Ali, if God guide, through thee, one soul it is better for thee than all the riches.” Again he says: “Direct us to the straight path,” that is, show us the direct road. In brief, I hope you will display in this respect the greatest effort and magnanimity. It is assured that you will become assisted and confirmed.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 26, 1916.

Original addressed to Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, Washington, D. C.

TABLET TO THE CENTRAL STATES

To the friends of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the Central States:

O ye heavenly souls, O ye spiritual assemblies, O ye lordly meetings!

For some time past correspondence has been delayed, and this has been on account of the difficulty of mailing and receiving letters. But because at present a number of facilities are obtainable, therefore, I am engaged in writing you this brief epistle so that my heart and soul may obtain joy and fragrance through the remembrance of the friends. Continually this wanderer supplicates and entreats at the threshold of his holiness the One and begs assistance, bounty and heavenly confirmations in behalf of the believers. You are always in my thought. You are not nor shall you ever be forgotten. I hope by the favors of his holiness the Almighty that day by day you may add to your faith, assurance, firmness and steadfastness, and become instruments for the promotion of the holy fragrances. In the great book, the divine Koran, God, addressing his messenger, his holiness Mohammed (upon him be greeting and praise!) says: "Verily thou dost guide the people to the straight path." In other words: Thou dost show mankind the direct road. Consider how guidance is a matter of infinite importance; for it points to the loftiness of the station of his holiness the Messenger.

Although in the states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota—praise be to God—believers are found, are associating with each other in the utmost firmness and steadfastness—day and night they have no other intention save the diffusion of the fragrances of God, they have no other hope except the promotion of the heavenly teachings, like the candles they are burning with the light of the love of God, and like thankful birds are singing songs, spirit-imparting, joy-creating, in the rose gar-

den of the knowledge of God,—yet in the states of Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas few of the believers exist. So far the summons of the Kingdom of God and the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity has not been made in these states systematically and enthusiastically. Blessed souls and detached teachers have not traveled through these parts repeatedly; therefore these states are still in a state of heedlessness. Through the effort of the friends of God souls must be likewise enkindled, in these states, with the fire of the love of God and attracted to the Kingdom of God, so that section may also become illumined and the soul-imparting breeze of the rose garden of the Kingdom may perfume the nostrils of the inhabitants. Therefore, if it is possible, send to those parts teachers who are severed from all else save God, sanctified and pure. If these teachers be in the utmost state of attraction, in a short time great results will be forthcoming. The sons and daughters of the kingdom are like unto the real farmers. Through whichever state or country they pass they display self-sacrifice and sow divine seeds. From that seed harvests are produced. On this subject it is revealed in the glorious Gospel: When the pure seeds are scattered in the good ground heavenly blessing and benediction is obtained. I hope that you may become assisted and confirmed, and never lose courage in the promotion of the divine teachings. Day by day may you add to your effort, exertion and magnanimity.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 26, 1916.

Original addressed to Dr. Zia Bagdadi, Chicago, Ill., care J. H. Hannen, Washington, D. C. Received August 19, 1916.

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Eizzat 1, 72 (September 8, 1916)

No. 10

Tablets from Abdul-Baha

“What wonderful and joy imparting songs are raised from the pages of the
STAR OF THE WEST!”

Haifa, Syria, June 21, 1916.

Miss Gertrude Buikema and Mr. Albert R. Windust, Chicago, care J. H. Hannen, Washington, D. C.

My dear Gertrude and my dear brother Windust:—In the midst of the great whirlpool of the world's broken faithfulness, shattered promises of loyalty and tottering foundations of friendship, the sun of devotion and the stars of constancy which are shining in the heavens of the hearts of the believers of God are illuminating the dark passages of life and causing the growth of the flowers of love and amity. This is indeed a heavenly bestowal and the Lord's remnant on the earth. This is the consolation of the souls in the time of trials and the fulcrum of activity to those whose minds are permeated with the divine principles of spiritual brotherhood. Thus, although the outward means of communication are not regular, yet the inward circle of union is increasing its dimension and circumference. Abdul-Baha thinks of you both sincere workers in the Cause and

when the other day your names were mentioned to him, he dictated the following Tablet for both of you:

To Mr. Windust, Miss Buikema.

O ye two servants of the Kingdom of God!

Praise be to God, that your services are accepted in the divine threshold and your songs impart joy and happiness to the ears of the dwellers of the Kingdom.

Persia praises your articles and is praying to God that the ways may be opened and correspondence between Persia and America find the utmost expression and facility, so that your melodies and anthems may become conducive to the exhilaration and cheerfulness of the meetings of the spiritual ones. What wonderful and joy imparting songs are raised from the pages of the STAR OF THE WEST! Truly, I say, they are the means of the happiness of many hearts.

Endeavor ye, as far as possible, to publish such valuable, interesting and instructive articles as to give joy and fra-

grance to the friends in all parts of the world.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

Abdul-Baha is well and everything is as usual.

“The construction of this great building (Mashrak-el-Azkar) is the first divine foundation of the people of Unity in America.”

Haifa, Syria, July 10, 1916.

To Mrs. Corinne True, Chicago.

Care of Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, Washington, D. C.

My dear sister in the Cause of God:—Days and months are slowly creeping on and the hearts of millions of people are longing for peace, praying for peace and calling fervently and ardently on the powers of peace. During such days Abdul-Baha has not forgotten you and he has revealed a Tablet for you, the translation of which is as follows:

O thou my daughter of the Kingdom!

Praise be to God, that thou art assisted and confirmed in the service of the Mashrak-el-Azkar and art spending thy effort in the erection of this edifice. The construction of this great building is the first divine foundation of the people of Unity in America and it will be like unto Mother unto the temples of God. All the temples which will be built in the future are born from this great Temple.

God says in the great Koran: “The building of the Mosques of God is carried along by those souls who believe in God and in the day of judgment.” In

“Praise be to God, that under the shade of divine providence we are safe and enjoy good health.”

To Dr. Zia Bagdadi and Zeenat Khanum, (Mrs. Zia M. Bagdadi,) Chicago.

O ye two doves of the nest of the Love of God!

Although it is a long time that no news has reached us from you, yet we are continually thinking of you. You must at least send us a monthly post

My sincere love to you and all the believers in Chicago and Kenosha.

Your faithful brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad Sohrab.*

other words: The construction of the divine mosques is undertaken by the believing, pure and blessed soul. It is my hope that thou mayest become assisted in building this edifice and become conducive to the firmness of the people in the Covenant and Testament.

Endeavor thou as much as thou canst so that the members of thy household become believers in the Unity of God and declare: “Verily, God is single!” become attracted to the Kingdom of God and the promoters of the divine teachings.

Convey my respected greeting to thy daughters.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

This is the early morning that I am writing you this card. Abdul-Baha has again come up to dwell near the blessed tomb of the Bab, and his health is all that is expected. Please present my sincere spiritual love to all the dear friends in Chicago; we hear heart-cheering news about the work of the Temple and the effort of the believers to raise contributions has electrified us with a new energy.

Your faithful brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad Sohrab.*

card giving us in brief the news of your health and safety and the spirituality of the friends of God. For this will become conducive to the happiness of the hearts. Praise be to God, that under the shade of divine Providence we are safe and enjoy good health, expressing our thanks at the threshold of the Al-

mighty. In the great Book, the divine Koran, God says: "If ye offer praise unto me, I will increase my favors unto you." Therefore we have unloosened our tongues in continual thanksgiving, supplicating confirmation and assistance from the spirituality of his holiness Mohamed El-Mostafa, the Messenger of God—upon him be praise. We are likewise

praying for your success and prosperity. The mother of thy respected wife, her brothers and sister are all well and in good health.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Haifa, Syria, June 22, 1916.

"The sweet breezes which are wafting toward us from America and the perfumed air which reaches our nostrils from that far off region are most fragrant."

To Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, Washington, D. C.

Upon him be greeting and praise!

O thou who art firm in the Covenant!

Praise be to God, that the friends of God in Washington are occupied in the service of the Kingdom and are displaying perfect firmness and steadfastness in the faith. The meetings which are being organized are in reality the reflections of the Supreme Concourse. The sweet breezes which are wafting toward us from America and the perfumed air which reaches our nostrils from that far off region are most fragrant; therefore

they impart joy and happiness to all the hearts.

Convey to his honor Doctor my longing greeting and say to him: I have not forgotten his kindness, and it is my hope that, in accord with the divine teachings, he may become the ensign and the flag of the oneness of the world of humanity.

Announce to the maid-servant of God, thy respected wife, my wonderful, glorious greeting.

Upon thee be greeting and praise.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 10, 1916.

"In these days great capacity is witnessed in America and the population is ready to listen to the divine teachings."

To his honor Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Washington, D. C.

Upon him be greeting and praise!

O thou herald of Reality!

Thou hast written that thou art spending the winter with thy parents, but thou dost not know thy duty for the spring and summer. The best way is this, in company with his honor Mr. George Latimer travel thou throughout America and the Hawaiian Islands and summon thou the people to the Kingdom of God. The doors of investigation are open and the people of reality are running to and fro. In these days great capacity is witnessed in America and the

population is ready to listen to the divine teachings. Synthesize and compose ye in a simple and effective manner the heavenly principles and present them to the listeners in meetings and gatherings. Through the ideal glad-tidings and the lordly suggestions breathe ye a new spirit into the hearts of the friends of God and encourage and incite them in the promotion of the word of God. Convey to all the friends my longing greeting, especially his honor Mr. George Latimer.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, at Haifa, Syria, April 14, 1916.

“Truly I say the believers of God in that Congress became assisted in the accomplishment of most great services.”

To the maid-servant of God, Mrs. J. P. Addison, Portland, Oregon.

Upon her be greeting and praise!

O thou respected maid-servant!

The letter that thou hast written to his honor Sohrab was perused. Praise be to God, that it contained the good news of the health and safety of the friends of the Almighty. It was also a proof of their firmness and steadfastness in religion and faith. Thank ye God that ye presented yourselves in the divine International Congress in California and were engaged in the service of the word of God. Consider ye the power and the influence of the celestial teachings that the President of the Exposition expressed his gratitude and thankfulness for your services to the world of humanity. Truly I say the believers of God in that Congress became assisted in the accomplishment of most great services. The photograph of the Congress was also received and imparted great happiness. The persons who delivered speeches at its sessions, such as Dr. F. W. D'Evelyn, Mr. Hooper Harris, Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Mr. Howard MacNutt, Mr. William H. Randall, Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm,

Mr. Howard C. Ives, Mr. William H. Hoar, Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, Mr. Albert R. Windust, Mr. Alfred E. Lunt, Mr. Albert H. Hall, Mr. Edwin T. Cooper, Mr. Harlan F. Ober, Mr. J. A. Britton, Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford, Mr. William C. Ralston and Mirza Khan—were assisted with divine confirmations and inspired with the powers of the Holy Spirit. The results and spiritual influences of those talks are endless and eternal. They will become apparent in the future.

Likewise the meetings which were held in the city of Portland and the persons who spoke to the various audiences were supremely assisted by the angels of the Supreme Concourse. They scattered pure seeds in that virgin western soil. Truly, I say, Mr. Remey and Mr. Latimer are displaying the utmost effort in the diffusion of the fragrances of God. I supplicate and entreat toward the Kingdom of God and beg for each and all heavenly confirmation and assistance.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab at Haifa, Syria, March 18, 1916.

The Importance of Teaching

From *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, October 31, 1913.

MIRZA Ali Akbar, the friend of Abdul-Baha, and the friend of the friends, left the “headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief for an active engagement at the front.” Abdul-Baha took him into the rose garden this morning, and while walking among the flower beds spoke to him these words of kindness and love:

“Thou hast been with me for a long

time, and I have grown to love thee very much. When I love people I do not tell them to their faces. You know how much I love Mirza Abul Fazl and Haji Mirza Heydar Ali, but I have seldom told them to their faces. I am sending thee away. Thou art not alone. The hosts of the Supreme Concourse are with thee. They will assist thee and reinforce thee under all conditions. Doctors tell me

I must completely rest (and he turned his wondrous eyes straight to him). I don't listen to them. When I hear good news from the believers, then my health is improved. Now, if thou longest to see me in good condition, go away and serve the Cause and teach the souls. The news of the spiritual conquest will make me well. Wherever thou goest announce my wonderful Bahai greeting to the teachers of the Cause, and tell them on my behalf:

“ ‘The responsibility for the steady progress of the cause depends upon you. You are the physicians of the sick body of the world of humanity. You must not stay anywhere for a long time. Travel from land to land like the apostles of Christ, and carry with you the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Abha to the remotest corners of the earth. Why are ye silent? Shout! Why are ye sitting? Move! Why are ye quiet? Stir! This is not the day of rest and comfort. Travel ye constantly, and spread far and wide the teachings of God. Like unto the stars arise ye every day from a new horizon. Like unto the nightingale, sing every day from a different rose bush. Like unto the breeze, waft every morning from a new garden. Do not stay a long time anywhere. Let the world profit by your lessons and learn from your example. My health consists in the progress of the Cause, and the progress of the Cause depends upon the energy and wisdom of the teachers.’ ”

Later, he said: “ ‘The friends of God must devote all their time to teaching the Cause, and spreading the rays of the Sun of Truth. You see how dark the world is; they must illumine it. How materialistic are the people; they must spiritualize them. How negligent they are; they must make them aware.’ ”

I bring this letter to a close by giving you the translation of a Tablet revealed the other night to a believer in Persia,

showing again how important is teaching the Cause in these days:

O thou who art chosen by Abdul-Baha for the diffusion of the fragrances of God!

Thy letter was received. Praise be to God, that in Moraghe thou hast become confirmed and assisted. Today no praiseworthy action can be compared with teaching the Cause of the forgiving Lord. For this is the seed sowing time. Every real farmer engages his time, at this season, in seed sowing. But the heedless ones during the seed sowing period think of the time of harvest. Harvesting is one of the departments of agriculture, but not in the time of seed sowing. The crop is the result of farming, but not at the time of irrigation. Now—praise be to God!—that thou hast occupied all thy time in seed sowing, unquestionably thou shalt become assisted and aided. Travel thou in all the cities of Azarbayjan and guide the souls to the fountain of light. And when thou findest time, journey through Caucasia and guide the people to the religion of God. All the countries have attained to the greatest capacity, but very little teaching is done. . . .

In another Tablet, to the Assembly of Teaching in Hamadan, he says:

O ye blessed souls!

Many assemblies are formed and organized in this world, but the name of this assembly is the hope of the people of heart. It is indicative of teaching, and from the Kingdom of Abha is honored with the eloquent Firman.

“ ‘Assembly’ ” means the diffusion of the fragrances of God. “ ‘Assembly’ ” means humility and friendliness toward the believers of God. “ ‘Assembly’ ” means the promotion of the word of God. “ ‘Assembly’ ” means to be sanctified and holy from all else save God. Such is the *spiritual* assembly. Such is the divine meeting. Such is the Lordly congregation. The ultimate desire of Abdul-

Baha is the organization of *such* assemblies, and he is their servant. For this servitude is the crown of eternal sovereignty, and this thralldom is freedom in both worlds.

Therefore, O friends, strive with heart and soul, so that you may become a life member and an eternal organ of the Heavenly Assembly, and the meeting of the Kingdom of Abha!

“The teacher’s utterance must be like a flame of fire”

Portion of Tablet from Abdul-Baha to the Persian Bahais

AFTER my return from America and Europe, owing to the difficulties of the long voyage and the innumerable inconveniences of the journey, a reaction set in and I became sick. Now, through the favor and bounty of the Blessed Perfection, I am feeling better; therefore I am engaged in writing to thee this letter, so that thou mayest realize the friends of God are never forgotten under any circumstances. Now is the time that the believers of God may imitate the conduct and the manner of Abdul-Baha. Day and night they must engage in teaching the Cause of God, but they must be imbued with the same spiritual state that Abdul-Baha manifested while traveling

in America. When the teacher delivers an address, first of all his own words must have a supreme and powerful effect over himself, so that every one in turn may be affected. His utterance must be like unto the flame of fire, burning away the veils of dogmas, passion and desire. Moreover, he must be in the utmost state of humility and evanescence, that others may be mindful. He must have attained the station of renunciation and annihilation. Then, and not until then, will he teach the people with the melody of the Supreme Concourse.

From *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, July 27, 1913, Ramleh, Egypt.

Words of Abdul-Baha on Teaching

Extracts from His Utterances.

O THOU seeker of the Kingdom of God, if thou wishest thy speech and utterance to take effect in hardened hearts, be thou severed from all attachment to this world and turn unto the Kingdom of God. Enkindle the fire of the love of God in thy heart with such intensity that thou mayest become a flame of fire and a luminous lamp of guidance. At that time thy speech and utterance will take effect within the hearts through the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

I wish you to become detached from

the entire world of existence, to turn to the Kingdom of Abha with a pure heart, with a pure breath to teach the people.

The daughters of the Kingdom should not have a desire.

Verily the Holy Spirit breathes in this day into the hearts which are moving, breathing, pure and attracted by the love of God.

The penetration of the word of man depends upon the heat of the fire of the love of God. The more the splendors of

the love of God become manifest in the heart, the greater will be the penetration of the word.

I declare by the bounty of the Blessed Perfection, that nothing will produce results save intense sincerity! Nothing will be productive of fruit save complete advancement toward God! Everything is condemned save severance, and every idea is fruitless and unacceptable save supplication, communion, prayer and obedience. We must entirely collect our scattered thoughts, purify and sanctify the house of our existence from every attachment, and make the palace of our hearts the nest and shelter of the dove of holiness. Then, and not till then, will the significance of confirmation and assistance become evident and known, the power of the Kingdom become apparent, and the hosts of the Supreme Concourse run swiftly into the arena of heavenly conquest, to gain victory over the east and west of the hearts, and make the north and south of the spirits of men the flowery regions of the love of God.

We must entirely focus our thoughts upon the diffusion of the divine light and the building of the heavenly foundation.

O God, make all my ideals and thoughts one ideal and one thought and suffer me to attain to an eternal, unchangeable condition in thy service!

I ask of God, and I supplicate and entreat at the threshold of Oneness, that thy utmost desire may become realized. The desire of the sanctified souls is always sacrifice in the path of God, attraction to the merciful fragrances, the vivification of the souls, the proclamation of the universal peace, the establishment of the oneness of humanity and the enkindlement of the fire of the love of God in the souls of men. It is my hope that the desire of the friends of God be as such, so that they may be released from the influences of the ephemer-

eral world, shine in the kingdom of eternity, be exhilarated by the wine of the love of God, and, like unto the tempestuous sea, rage and roar with the ardor of the love of God. I desire this station for thee.

Today the greatness of the believers of God depends upon delivering the Cause of God, diffusing the fragrances of God, self-sacrifice in the love of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, and attainment to attraction, love, knowledge and wisdom. This door is open before the face of everyone and this arena is spacious for the skill of all. Everyone must think of this alone, and know that success and prosperity depend upon it.

Whenever the heart finds attraction, the spirit seeks ecstasy and exultation and turns itself toward the Kingdom, the confirmation of the Holy Spirit will descend. Thou wilt be taught and encouraged; thy tongue will be loosened, uttering clear and decisive explanations. Therefore, when one has attained to spiritual success and prosperity, material advantage will not be of much importance. Consequently, if thou art desiring to become assisted in the service, detach thyself from the world, and become thou attracted to the merciful fragrances. Seek his (God's) remembrance day and night, discover his path and announce his mystery. Then thou wilt find thyself in such a condition that thy breath will become effective in every soul.

I now assure thee, O servant of God, that if thy mind becomes empty and pure of every mention and thought and thy heart attracted wholly to the Kingdom of God, forgetting all else besides God and becoming communicative with the Spirit of God, then the Holy Spirit will assist thee with a power which will enable thee to penetrate all things, and a dazzling spark which enlightens all sides, a brilliant flame in the

zenith of the heavens will teach thee that which you do not know of the facts of the universe and of the divine doctrine. Every soul who ariseth today to guide others to the path of safety and imbue in them the spirit of life, the Holy Spirit will inspire that soul with evidences, proofs and facts and the lights will shine upon it from the Kingdom of God.

Rest assured . . . the breaths of the Holy Spirit will aid you provided no doubts obtain in your heart.

To be engaged in diffusing the fragrance of God (teaching the Truth) in one hour of time, is better than the dominion of the world and all therein; for the latter is mortal and temporary, while the former is permanent and endless.

Thou hast written what shouldst thou do and what prayer shouldst thou offer in order to become informed of the mysteries of God: Pray thou with an at-

tracted heart and supplicate with a spirit stirred by the glad tidings of God. Then the doors of the kingdom of mysteries shall be opened before thy face, and thou shalt comprehend the realities of all things.

I desire every Bahai to be severed and detached. If he passes between two mountains of gold, he must not look to either side. These souls who have entered under the shade of the Blessed Perfection must show such independence as to astonish the people of the world. If men come to them with money and supplicate to them to accept it, they must reject it.

He who is filled with the love of the Glory (of God) and forgets all things, the Holy Spirit will be heard from his lips and the spirit of life will fill his heart, the light of the sign will shine forth from his face, the words will issue from his mouth in strands of pearls, and all sickness and disease will be healed by the laying on of his hands.

How may we move and transform the hearts?

TEACH as if offering a gift to a king, humbly and submissively, not with the force of insistence—imperatively, strenuously—but with gentleness and sweetness, submitting the arguments and truths to the heart and intellect of the hearer. Be as the servant of God, and therefore the servant of the hearer, taking care at all times to adapt the offered food to the condition and station of the listener, giving milk to babes and meat to those who have grown stronger. This food is to be offered for the sake of God only, not for the love of the hearer nor for the benefit of oneself but simply because God wishes his Manifestation to become known and to be loved by those who come to know him.

If one teaches one whom he loves be-

cause of his love, then he will not teach him whom he loves not and this is not of God. If one teaches in order to derive the promised benefit himself, this, too, is not of God. If he teaches because of God's will, that God may become known and for that reason only, he will receive knowledge and wisdom and his words will have effect and will take root in the souls of those who are in the right condition to receive them, for they will have been made more powerful by the Holy Spirit. In such a case the benefit to the teacher in growth is as ninety parts compared to the ten parts of gain received by the hearer; for the teacher becomes like a tree bearing fruit through the power of God.

A Compilation.

The Cause of the creation of all contingent beings has been love, as it is mentioned in the famous tradition: "I was a hidden treasure, and I loved to be known. Therefore I created the creation in order to be known." Thus all must gather on the (shores) of the river of the love of God in such wise that there should not blow any wind of discord among the friends and companions. All should look to love, and conduct (the life) in the utmost of unity so that there should not be seen any difference among them (the friends), and they should share with one another loss and gain, hard time and welfare, and accidents. We hope, God willing, that the breeze of unity will waft from the city of the Lord of the servants, and all be clothed with the raiment of unity, love and resignation.

—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Translated by Bozorgzadeh E. Kahn.
Pittsburgh, Pa., May 23, 1916.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Masheyat 1, 72 (September 27, 1916)

No. 11

The New Work Now Before Us

Extracts from a letter written by Mrs. Ella G. Cooper of San Francisco to the President of the Bahai Temple Unity, regarding the Tablets published in the last issue of the STAR OF THE WEST.

THE great Tablets have come. Abdul-Baha himself gives us the plan, and it is as clear as daylight—that we should instantly drop every other consideration and concentrate all our energies and resources upon this great work. This is a call to the whole body of believers. The very first thing to do is to arouse all the friends to the tremendous significance of this new work, this "superhuman service" as Abdul-Baha so justly calls it. Indeed it is so big that we should lose no time getting at it. The friends here in the West are alive to the supreme opportunity and we feel sure that their joyous enthusiasm is going to carry them through and make their work effective.

It seems to me that the natural division of the work is just as Abdul-Baha himself has divided it, East, West, South, Central States and Canada. Of course we should have general consultation and mutual assistance but for a beginning at least, each section can be cared for by combined assemblies in that section. If each Assembly would appoint simply a treasurer, to collect this teachers' fund (which of course must be separate from the Temple fund) and then forward it to the larger centers, as San Francisco for the West, New York for the East, etc. that would be the most expeditious, as well as the most simple way. The groups of assemblies in each section could then decide upon their teachers and direct their itinerary. Conditions are changing so rapidly now that not only are the hearts ready to hear the Glad Tidings, but the Bahais themselves are "growing" so fast that the time of fruitage is much nearer than we have believed.

It seems to me we cannot hope to measure the tremendous effect this new work is going to have upon the fortunes of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, in fact, upon all of our hopes and plans. All reforms are *bound* to follow it as *natural results*—peace among them. Therefore it stands to reason that if we lay everything else aside and plunge at once into this glorious new work we will be confirmed to establish very quickly the one basis upon which the Temple will be built and universal peace be founded.

Regarding the teachers: It might be well if they could go two by two. Abdul-Baha approves of that. Our idea is that if two or three relays were to follow one another a few weeks apart perhaps, it might be a very good thing, because that always keeps up the interest in the subject among the people.

Naturally we have not made any very definite plans yet, waiting to hear from the Eastern friends but this is what has developed already. It may serve as a "starter." Beside Mrs. Gillen's settled plan to go to Idaho's largest

city, Mrs. Latimer wrote that she wished she might go to Wyoming a little later, as she knows that state so well. It may be possible for her to meet Mrs. Brittingham there and open the way for both of them to give the Message. A very fine woman has lately gone to Arizona (a pupil of Mr. Dunn's) with her hands full of Bahai literature as her heart is full of the spirit of Abdul-Baha; she can open the way perhaps. Then as Nevada is on our "list" mother* wrote to Mrs. Ralston, who spent the summer there, asking her if she couldn't "mount a mule" and take the message over the country. She answered in a most beautiful and enthusiastic letter that she had been busy giving the Message for the past months,—seemingly she caught the vibration from the wonderful Tablets even before they were received,—and that the way was prepared for some one to come and carry it further. Mr. Dunn has been in Reno from time to time and a Mr. Baker, (formerly of New York) is at Virginia City; at both these places it will be easy to get openings for public talks. So probably Mr. Dunn and Dr. D'Evelyn can go there and to Carson City which will just about cover the state of Nevada. Already a good beginning is made at Salt Lake City, but the dear Killius people are already stopping there. When they received mother's letter at Spokane, they were just on the point of leaving for the East. They would have left the day before only they were not able to get accommodations. Upon receiving the Tablet, which stirred them to the depths of their hearts, they changed their route and instead of going further east determined to spend their short time in the middle West, taking in Salt Lake City and Denver. They wanted to visit Springfield, Ill., their old home and York, Kansas, where they had given the Message last spring (you remember they were so busy doing that, that they did not get to the Convention at all) so they did not lose one minute, you see, in responding to this call. Another response all on fire with enthusiasm comes from Denver and another from Los Angeles, all eager to serve as two dear maid-servants who are footloose, offer themselves as teachers to go into the states mentioned in the Tablet, earning their living as they go, one as stenographer and the other as nurse. I tell you this to show you what an effect just one of the series of five Tablets has had upon the friends already. One of our dearest Bahais, Mrs. Susan Rice, spent her vacation in Alaska, and her account of her trip all alone way up the Yukon to Dawson is most interesting. At the little town of Eagle (I think) near by, she gave the Glad Tidings to everybody there. This may prove to be a beginning which will eventually lead to our reaching the Eskimos (mentioned in the Canada Tablet and perhaps even to Greenland) who knows? Mrs. Rice left believers and interested inquirers at Fairbanks, White Horse and Dawson, as well, and one lady who traveled with her and heard the Message with great eagerness went to stay at Wiseman, the most northerly point that is now inhabited. Mrs. Rice is in touch with all these places. Mr. Dunn has also a sister-in-law in Alaska.

Right here another suggestion—any of the friends who have points of contact in any state should write to the sections where the Tablets have been received, so that all such information can be in hand as soon as possible.

Like all Bahai work planned for us by Abdul-Baha, it is so much bigger than we realize, that we will have to grow up to it, and do it quickly too. It will take every bit of energy, every bit of money (pennies and dollars) available, every bit of all the resources we can muster to make even a beginning of the great work he is calling us to do. Unless we have "an eye single" to this one

*Mrs. Helen S. Goodall, San Francisco.

command (which in reality includes all other commands) we will not fulfill his desire that the whole of America even to the Arctic Circle shall be set ablaze with the divine fire of the Most Great Glad Tidings, and we cannot divide our attention among a multitude of activities. This new command should supersede all former commands (except the Temple work) for surely it is the greatest and the most inspiring work he has yet given us to do. Considering what we hope for 1917 it is simply overwhelming in its possibilities! Those who can give money will joyfully do so, those "pure and severed souls" who are free to travel and teach will serve that way, and those who can do neither of these things can remain at home and enthuse the others, and all can pray. In the meantime many of us in all centers can do an immense amount of local work for the opportunities right around us are increasing at an astonishing rate.

How marvelous is Abdul-Baha! He never asks us to do what is impossible even though he does set us some tasks worthy of our *maturity*! How impossible it would be for us to unite on every tiny point of detail in any matter, but he gives us in this great day two big points upon which it is easy to unite. In reality they are one. First he bids us "build the Temple." Now in his love and wisdom and pity for our human limitations he sends us this new word, in which he shows us *how* to build the Temple! Dividing up the country into sections is his plan. Let us embrace it quickly, joyfully. Let us recreate our own ideas anew to keep up with him! "This is the time!" Let this be our watchword. Let us everyone engrave it on our hearts and run to meet the descent of the heavenly confirmations just waiting to pour down upon our obedient heads, the moment we all arise to answer his thrilling call!

Ella G. Cooper.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

Letter from India

Gratie Azam Khan, Agra, India,
July 9, 1916.

My dear brother Latimer:

Thank you for yours of the 29th. The glad tidings of the departure [death] of Lua have been coming to me from various quarters during the last week. Blessed is her lot. You perhaps know that she bestowed her blessing upon my marriage, and I consider that as she was in India in response to the invitation of Abdul-Baha, it was he in her person. It was both her and my wish then that the first daughter born to me should be named Lua after her.

The news of the [proposed] building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar on the 100th anniversary of the birth of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH was a piece of real good news. I am writ-

ing to the Bombay assembly asking them to allow me to join them in sending some little mite towards the building fund. I am very sorry that I did not begin earlier, for I should have taken the first opportunity of submitting the 1/19th of my inheritance, but now it is not practicable. I am therefore only able to submit one thousand rupees, which is about 1/15th of my possessions, but about 1/30 of what I had inherited. My wife however has subscribed the full 1/19th, i. e., one hundred and twenty-five rupees. I know that this is nothing for the building fund, yet I at least shall have the satisfaction to think that I have tried to add my mite.

Yours in His love.

Hashmatullah.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Masheyat 1, 72 (September 27, 1916)

No. 11

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“Let not these Golden Days slip by without Results”

From *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*

Ramleh, Egypt, October 29, 1913.

Dear friends:

Mrs. Stannard left this morning for Cairo, to prepare herself for the trip to India. Before her departure Abdul-Baha called her into his presence and spoke to her as follows:

“Consecrate all thy time to the service of the Kingdom of God and the propagation of its principles. Let thy one supreme concern be the promotion of the word of God. Thou wilt ever be surrounded by the invisible angels of confirmations and they will always come to thy assistance. Whenever thou dost enter a meeting, raise thy voice and say:

“O ye believers of God! This day is the day of your attraction! This day is the day in which you must diffuse the fragrance of God! This day is the day that you must unfurl the banner of the kingdom of Abha! This day is the day of peace and concord! This day is the day of the proclamation of the Oneness of the world of humanity! This

day is the day of forgiveness and leniency! This day is the day of truth and righteousness! This day is the day of conciliation and beatitude! This day is the day of awakening and enkindlement!

“Waste not your precious time in fault-finding and backbiting. Polish the surface of the mirrors of your hearts from the dross of human frailties. If you live according to the standard of other communities, then what difference does there exist between you and them? BAHÁ'O'LLAH has summoned you to such a lofty summit that the very thought thereof is too dazzling a prospect! He has not chosen you to be satisfied with water and clay!”

“Thou must live in such a spiritual condition that thy very presence in the meetings may transform the audience into the congregations of the elect and set aglow in the hearts the fire of the love of God. Exalt thy ambition. Universalize thy ideals. Spread thy wings of compassion over all the regions of the

globe. If some people come to thee alone complaining against each other, don't listen to them, don't let them breathe the faults of others in thy presence. Tell them: 'I have not come here to engage my time with these things. I am not a judge. I have come to summon the people to the Kingdom of Abha, to call you to unity and accord, to raise the dead, make mindful those who are unaware, awaken those who are asleep, breathe new life into the mouldering bones and sound the trumpet of resurrection. Friends, it is high time for you to throw away these tales, these barren stories. God is not pleased with them, humanity is not pleased with them. Your time is too costly to be expended on these trifling events. You are made in the image and likeness of God. Your birthright is more valuable than all the treasures of the empires. Arise with heart and soul and let not these golden days slip by without results. This day is the day of the splendors of the Sun of Reality. This day is the day of the Lord of the Kingdom. This day is the day of the fulfillment of glorious promises. This day is the day of joy and fragrance. These petty backbitings and jealousies make one lose all the traces of spirituality, excommunicate a person from the divine company of the worthy ones, submerge one in the sea of phantasms, suffer one to become cold and pessimistic and throw him headlong into the death of despair and haunting hopelessness.'

"You must not listen to anyone speaking about another, because no sooner do you listen than you must listen to someone else and thus the circle will be enlarged endlessly. Therefore, O friends! Let us come together, forget all our self-thoughts and be in one accord, and cry at the top of our voices 'Ya-Baha-el-Abha!'"

Later someone spoke of recent news from the Persian Gulf and how one of the Bahais has been persecuted. Abdul-Baha said:

"Happy is his condition, for in this latter part of his life he has become the object of sufferings in the path of God! May we all attain to this great gift!"

In the afternoon Abdul-Baha started off for a walk. Having reached the telegraph office at the Bacos station, he ascended the few steps of the modest building and sat on the chair which was offered him by the chief operator. Abdul-Baha used to come often to talk with him, or in other words, to "elbow with men and mix with them," right in the market place. How wonderful it seems to me, his power of adaptability to all people, under most peculiar circumstances! How he brings himself to the intellectual or moral level of the listener and how he enjoys the free and unimpeded association of men! Here was Abdul-Baha sitting in a small telegraph office of Ramleh, talking heartily in Arabic with an operator and how he listened to him. First he spoke about the brother of the Khedive, and how he met him in America and France, praising his progressive ideas and intelligence. Then he said:

"When I was in America I was most busy. Often I addressed three meetings a day, and gave innumerable interviews from early morning till midnight. In Europe I spread certain divine teachings which will insure security to the human world, and taught them that the foundation of the religions of God is one and the same. Now I have returned to Egypt in order to rest from the effects of this arduous journey; but while I am here correspondence is uninterrupted with all parts of the West. All the newspapers and magazines published my addresses and the western world is ringing with this call. I have done this, not because I expected the praise of men. Far from it! How foolish are some people who may think that we have accepted all these hardships and undergone forty years of imprisonment by Sultan Abdul Hamid, in order to receive the commendations of men! How

thoughtless they are! Neither their adulation or blame shall reach me. I have done my work! I have sown my seeds, and leave it to the power of God to cause their growth! You wait a few years longer and you will then hear the notes of this melodious music!

“Once upon a time there was a poor fellah (farmer) who cultivated a patch of ground with cotton. His neighboring farmers were all rich landlords and Pashas and so they prevented in a high handed manner this poor fellah from receiving his just share of water wherewith to irrigate his parched farm. He appealed several times to their fair sense of justice but they laughed him out of their presence. Finally, realizing that his cotton would dry and his labors fail, he went one midnight and changed the current of the stream toward his own farm and irrigated it most thoroughly. When in the morning the landlords saw what their daring neighbor had done, they sent for him and rebuked him severely. Not being satisfied with this, they bastinadoed him very hard. While he was undergoing this cruel punishment he cried out: ‘O ye men! I have already irrigated my farm; this will do you no good. I have saved the destruction of my crop by the drought! Why do you inflict upon me such a useless torture? The earth is watered.’

“In a similar manner we have done

our work; the censure and criticism of all mankind will not undo it. It is said that late at night a man was passing a house. He saw a man digging patiently and laboriously and quietly at the wall. ‘What art thou doing?’ he asked. ‘Oh, I am digging away the foundation’ the man in the dark answered. ‘For what purpose?’ ‘To rob the house.’ ‘But no one hears the noise of thy hammer, how is that?’ ‘There is yet time; tomorrow they will hear it. Its noise shall fill the whole town.’ Now, before long the people of the Orient will be awakened and hear the great tones of the new music of God!”

Bidding the delighted operator good-by, he arose from his seat and returned homeward.

Mrs. von Lilienthal and Mrs. Beede called on Abdul-Baha and had many spiritual questions to ask. One question was about the fishes and the five loaves.

“The five loaves,” he explained, “are the five different kinds of teaching with which Christ satisfied a hungry multitude and the twelve baskets left over were the disciples.”

When the interview came to an end, he said:

“My hope is that in this dark world you may become like brilliant torches, illumining the gloomy path of the wandering travelers.”

(Signed) *Ahmad Sohrab.*

—————“THIS IS THE TIME”—————

Let There be Peace

Talk by Abdul-Baha given in Paris, France, November 23, 1911, during the war between Italy and Tripoli.

THEY say that a train fell in the Seine river and twenty-five persons were drowned. Today on account of this tragedy there will be a detailed discussion in parliament. They have arrested the manager of the railroad. Great disputes will take place—fierce disturbances! I was very much

astonished that for twenty-five persons who fell in the river and drowned, such a strange tumult appeared in the parliament; but for Tripoli, where thousands are being killed in a day, they never say a word. Undoubtedly, so far at least, five thousand persons have been killed. It never occurs to the parliament that these

persons are human. It is as if they were stones. What is the reason that the parliament is in this way disturbed over twenty-five persons and never speaks of the five thousand? The twenty-five are human and the five thousand are human. All are descendants of Adam. The reason is that the five thousand are not of the French nation. It does not matter if *they* are cut in pieces. Behold, what injustice, what senselessness, what ignorance! Although these helpless ones in Tripoli have father, mother, son, daughter and wife, they cut them into shreds. What harm have they done? I read in the paper that even in Italy the cry and the wailing of the people is rising. The weeping and wailing of both the Arab and Italian women are rising. The eyes of the mothers are filled with tears; the hearts of the fathers are drowned in blood; the weeping and crying of the children reach to the summit of heaven. Behold, how bloodthirsty are human beings! Behold, how deceitful is man, how heedless of God! If, instead of using knives, swords, bullets, guns, men should rejoice, be glad, feast and associate with one another in harmony and love; if, in the state of tranquillity, they should become intoxicated

with the wine of happiness, if they should become friends and companions and embrace each other, would it not be better? Which is better: to be like thankful birds and fly together, or to be as bloodthirsty wolves and attack, and devour one another and shed each the other's blood?

Why should man be so heedless? It is because he does not know God. If men knew God they would love one another: if they had spiritual susceptibilities they would have unfurled the banner of the great peace and if they had listened to the exhortations of the prophets unquestionably they would have established justice. Therefore, pray, implore and supplicate God to guide them, give them mercy, give them reasoning minds and give them spiritual susceptibilities. Perchance these helpless human beings may live in peace. The wise man weeps day and night over the condition of mankind. He cries and sighs that perchance the heedless ones may be awakened, the blind may see, the dead become alive and the oppressors grant justice. I will pray. You must also pray.

Translated by Dr. Zia Bagdadi, June, 19, 1916, Chicago, Ill.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“Love is the foundation of everything”

Notes of Miss Ethel J. Rosenberg, London, England,
taken in Akka, January, 1909.

I ASKED Abdul-Baha what could be done to increase our numbers and make the work more effective.

He said the one essential, the only thing to do was that the members of the little groups should love each other very much and be devoted friends. The more they loved each other, the more the meetings would attract and draw others, and the more they loved, the more their influence would be felt. He said we must consider all people—not only be-

lievers—to be good. He hoped every one would be good.

He added, “I say this for you in English. I do not often do that; but I say also in English, that you may understand how much I mean it, that love is the foundation of every thing and that all must be good.”

While looking from the window, Abdul-Baha said: “We hear the murmur of the sea always continuing. It never ceases. Were it to cease, the world would

be dead, stagnant, lifeless. But the waves of the mind of man are far greater than those of the sea; they also are ceaseless. They never stop for one instant. This movement is good. If these waves of the mind are few, the man is dull and quiet. What pearls and jewels are contained in the depths of the sea! But the pearls and jewels hidden in the mind of man are the knowledge, virtues, capabilities, etc. These pearls can grow and increase in lustre forever, but the pearls of the sea remain always the same. These waves from our minds go forth and create movement and thought in other minds. From one strong thought of love what great results may be produced!"

A question sent by a Bahai: "What is the meaning of Christ's eating the fish and honey after his resurrection?"

Abdul-Baha answered: "All these things, the fish, the honeycomb, etc., are symbols and were meant to be understood spiritually, just as the resurrection itself was a spiritual resurrection. But because the people who received these teachings from the first teachers were ignorant, they understood them literally."

Abdul-Baha said: "We know that the body or form has nothing to do with spirit or spiritual conditions. When the spirit is disconnected from or leaves the body, that is no reason for thinking it can be re-absorbed or joined with the

whole of spirit, as the drops of water are absorbed or lost in the sea. The earth is one unit, yet how many beings and separate parts it contains! The body of man is one unit, yet it has an infinite number of separate and individual parts that compose it—such as eyes, fingers, etc.; so, in like manner, spirit is one, but consisting of many differentiated parts."

During a former visit to Akka, when conditions for the prisoners were most severe, Miss Rosenberg was deeply distressed and asked Abdul-Baha why he, who was so perfect, should have to endure such sufferings.

He answered: "How could they (God's teachers) teach and guide others in the way if they themselves did not undergo every species of suffering to which other human beings are subjected?"

Abdul-Baha says:

"If any troubles or vicissitudes come into your lives—if your heart is depressed on account of health, livelihood or vocation, let not these things affect you. These things should not cause unhappiness. Heavenly food has he prepared for you; everlasting glory has he bestowed upon you. Therefore these Glad Tidings should cause you to soar in the atmosphere of joy forever and ever. You must render thanks unto God forever so that the confirmations of God may encircle you all."

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

A New Friend from Persia

A Tablet introducing Mirza Mahmood Khan of Shiraz, Persia, who is studying at Valparaiso, Indiana:

"Through Mr. Wilhelm to the believers of America—upon them be greeting and praise! O ye real friends, O ye people of unity! His honor Mahmood

Khan is a true friend and is firm and steadfast in faith. He has traveled to the United States for the acquirement of material knowledge. Exercise toward him and show him respect and give him place in great assemblies."

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Elm 1, 72 (October 16, 1916)

No. 12

The Mystery of Sacrifice

Address delivered by Abdul-Baha during his visit to America in 1912.

THIS evening I wish to speak to you concerning the mystery of sacrifice. There are two kinds of sacrifice—one is the spiritual sacrifice. You have, of course, heard of the physical sacrifice. You have heard sacrifice spoken of in the churches but not the real truth.

They explain that reality in the form of superstition. It is recorded in the Gospel that his holiness Christ said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven. He who partakes of this bread shall find eternal life." And that he said the wine was his blood which he had sacrificed for the quickening of the world. Now these verses have been interpreted by the churches in a superstitious way, in such a way that it is impossible for human reason to accept it, nor can any wise man conceive of that interpretation.

They say his holiness Adam acted against the command of God and partook of the forbidden tree; thus he committed wrong and his transgression was transmitted as a heritage to the posterity of Adam. That is, they say that because of the sin committed by Adam, all his descendents have likewise committed transgression, that is, have become responsible, and that sin and transgression were inherited by all mankind; consequently, all men deserve punishment and must receive retribution. And then God spake to his kind Son, "Go thou forth and be a sacrifice, in order that I, the Lord,

shall, through you, forgive all mankind, so that the human race shall be delivered from that transgression."

But now we want you to consider this from the standpoint of reason, through the eye of reason. Can you conceive of his highness, the Divinity, who is Justice itself, punishing the descendents of Adam on account of the transgression committed by that man? Men are human, and yet when we see a governor, a ruler of men, punishing a son of a man who commits wrong, we look upon that ruler as an unjust man. We say, "Even if the father committed wrong, what was the wrong committed by the son?" There is no connection between the two.

Adam's sin was not the sin of posterity, especially as Adam is a thousand generations back of the man of today. When the father of a thousand generations committed a wrong, is it just that the present generation should suffer the consequences therefor?

Still greater proof is this: his holiness Abraham was a holy Manifestation of God. The generations following Adam, who is said to have committed the wrong, which should suffer punishment, included among them his holiness Abraham, his holiness Ishmael, his holiness Isaac, his holiness Jeremiah, and so on along the whole line of prophets who descended from Adam, like David, Solomon, and Aaron,—did all these go to the infernal

realm because of the deed committed by the first father, because of the mistake said to have been committed by the remotest ancestor, his holiness Adam?

The assumption is, that when his holiness Christ came and sacrificed himself, all the holy line of prophets who preceded him from Adam became free from sin and punishment. Consider that even a child could not justly make such an assertion. As they did not understand the meanings of the Bible, they created these interpretations to which we have referred.

Now as to the reality of the matter of sacrifice. It is true that his holiness Jesus Christ sacrificed himself, and he sacrificed himself for our sakes, but how did he suffer sacrifice? The true meaning of sacrifice will become manifest and evident. When his holiness Christ appeared, he saw that he must arise and oppose all the people and nations of this earth. He knew that all men would arise against him and would inflict upon him all manner of tribulations. There is no doubt that a person who would put forth such a claim would arouse the world against him and would not remain protected personally, and that undoubtedly his blood would be shed, nay, that his body would be rent into pieces, and there is no doubt therein.

But his holiness Christ, knowing what would befall him, arose and gave his message, suffered all tribulations, suffered hardships from the people and in the end offered his life as a sacrifice in order to illumine the world of humanity; he offered his blood as a sacrifice in order to guide the world of man. He accepted every calamity and every tribulation and he arose to guide men. Were he to desire to save his own life, and were he without wish to sacrifice himself he would not be able to guide a single soul. There was no doubt that his blessed blood would be shed. There was no doubt that he would be rent into pieces. Notwithstanding this, that holy soul accepted every calamity and offered his life so

that he might guide all men. This is one of the meanings of sacrifice.

As to the second meaning of sacrifice, he said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." It was not the body of Christ which came down from heaven. The body of Christ came from the womb of Mary, but the Christ perfections descended from heaven. The reality of Christ came down from heaven. The spirit of Christ came down from heaven, the body of Christ came not down from heaven. The body of Christ was but human. Is there any question as to that body having come from the womb of Mary? It is obvious that it came from the womb of Mary. But the reality of Christ, the spirit of Christ and the perfections of Christ, all came from heaven. Consequently, by saying he was the bread which came down from heaven, he meant that the perfections which he showed forth were divine perfections which came from heaven; that the blessings within him came down from heaven; that the light within him came down from heaven. "He who partakes of this bread will never die." What is this? It is, whosoever assimilates these divine perfections which are within me will never die. Whosoever has a share and partakes of these heavenly bounties within me will never die. If a man takes unto himself these divine lights, then he shall find everlasting life. Do you see how manifest the meaning is? How evident? For whosoever acquires divine perfections and seeks heavenly lights from the teachings of Christ will undoubtedly live eternally. This is one of the mysteries of the mystery of sacrifice.

In reality his holiness Abraham sacrificed himself, for his holiness Abraham conveyed to men heavenly teachings, conferred upon them heavenly food.

As to the third meaning of sacrifice, it is this: If you plant a seed in the ground, from that seed a tree will become manifest. That seed sacrifices

itself to the tree that will come from it. The seed is outwardly lost, sacrificed, but the same seed which is sacrificed will be running through the tree, will be embodied in that tree, in the branches thereof, in the blossoms thereof and in the fruit. If the personality (I might say) of that seed, if the identical self of that seed had not been sacrificed to the tree which became manifest from it, there would have been no tree, no branches, no blossoms and no fruits forthcoming. His Holiness outwardly disappeared. His personality became hidden from the eyes, even as the personality of the seed disappeared, but the bounties, high qualities and perfections of Christ became manifest in the Christian community which Christ founded through sacrificing himself. When you look at the tree, you will see that the perfections of the seed, the blessings of the seed, the properties of the seed and the beauty of the seed are manifest in the branches, twigs, blossoms and fruit; consequently, the seed sacrificed itself to the tree. Had it not sacrificed itself to the tree, that tree would not have come into existence. Now his holiness Christ, like unto the seed, sacrificed himself for the tree of Christianity, and his perfections, his bounties, his favors, his light and grace became manifest in the tree of the Christian community for the coming of which he sacrificed himself.

As to the fourth meaning of sacrifice, it is this: that a reality shall sacrifice its own characteristics. It is this: that a man must seclude himself from the world of matter, from the world of nature, from the rules of nature and from the laws of nature, for the world of nature is the world of corruption. It is the world of evil morals; it is the world of darkness; it is the world of animalism; it is the world of ferocity; it is the world of bloodthirstiness; it is the world of rancor; it is the world of ambition; it is the world of greed; it is the world of struggle for existence; it is the world

of self-worship; it is the world of being lost in self-desire and lust; it is the world of nature. Man must strip himself of all these imperfections. Man must sacrifice all these characteristics which are peculiar to the world of nature.

Then, on the other hand, man must acquire heavenly qualities. Man must partake of the divine attributes. Man must become the image and likeness of God. Man must seek the bounty of the eternal, become the manifestor of the love of God, the light of guidance, the blessed tree, and become the depository of the bounties of God. Thus man must sacrifice the qualities and attributes of the world of nature for the qualities and attributes of the world of God. For instance, consider the iron. See the qualities that it has. It is black. It is solid. It is cold. These are the characteristics of iron. When the same iron imbibes heat from the fire, then it sacrifices its attribute of solidity for the attribute of fluidity. It sacrifices its attribute of darkness for the attribute of light imbibed from the fire. It sacrifices its attribute of coldness to the quality of heat which characterizes the fire, so that in the iron there remains no humidity, no solidity, no darkness. It becomes illumined; it gains warmth and fluidity, which are the characteristics of the fire. The iron sacrificed its qualities to the qualities and attributes of the fire. Likewise man, when separating himself from the world of nature, sacrifices all the attributes and exigencies of the world of nature, and the perfections of the kingdom become manifest and evident, just as the qualities of the iron disappeared and the qualities of the fire appeared in their place.

Every man trained through the teachings of God and illumined through the light of guidance, who becomes a believer in God and his signs, and is enkindled with the fire of the love of God, sacrifices the imperfections of nature for the sake of the perfections of

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Elm 1, 72 (October 16, 1916)

No. 12

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

The Teaching Campaign—A Suggestion

IT has been suggested that we publish the names and addresses of the individuals through whom the five recent great Tablets were received, as well as the states mentioned in each territory, that all may turn to a center, as it were, in their respective territory as the first step in the Teaching Campaign:

MR. HOOPER HARRIS,
101 West 88th Street,
New York City, N. Y.

EASTERN TERRITORY—Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York.

MRS. HELEN S. GOODALL,
2550 Buchanan Street,
San Francisco, Calif.

WESTERN TERRITORY—California, Oregon, Washington, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, Nevada.

MRS. MAY MAXWELL,
716 Pine Avenue,
Montreal, Canada.

NORTHERN TERRITORY—Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Ungava, Keewatin, Mackenzie, Yukon, Franklin Islands, Greenland.

MR. JOSEPH H. HANNEN,

P. O. Box 1319,
Washington, D. C.

SOUTHERN TERRITORY—Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas.

DR. ZIA M. BAGDADI,

1549 Ogden Avenue,
Chicago, Ill.

CENTRAL TERRITORY—Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas.

It has also been suggested that each one communicate at once with their respective center in order to be informed of the plans of its Teaching Committee, which, doubtless, is already chosen and at work.

—*The Editors.*

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

The Green Acre Conference

Eliot, Maine

THE things which are particular says Abdul-Baha, are human; those which are universal are divine. Judged by this test Green Acre was, this summer, a center for the light of the divine world. The program for its meetings was varied and universal. The new science, sociology, art, education, the new study of comparative religions, the new vision of peace—all were represented as so many rays of the light of the new day.

Nearly everyone felt the spiritual atmosphere which enveloped the place. One man told how he came to Green Acre with prejudice in his heart, but when he stepped off the car at the entrance to the Green Acre grounds he realized that he was on holy soil. He gazed at the Inn on the beautiful hill, he looked at the river, "the river of light." He was thrilled with joy and his prejudice melted away. He met the radiant people at the Inn. He caught their spirit. "At last," he said, "I have found my spiritual brothers and sisters. After much wandering I have come

home." "Why," said another visitor at the Inn, "I never saw so many happy people together, nor people who so loved each other." "It is," said a friend from the Orient, "the most heavenly place I ever visited." "I could not imagine a summer passing without visiting Green Acre," said another who had come for the first time.

Many awoke in the early morning at Green Acre conscious of a marvelous spirit brooding over the place and flooding it with light. They were so happy with joy at the nearness of the divine world that they could not sleep. They were energized by the bread from heaven. They felt all day long as though they were sustained by invisible arms.

But words fail to put in "matter moulded forms of speech" experiences which are so divine. No one can know Green Acre and its spirit until he goes there and with receptive heart drinks "the pure water of life."

Two important events characterized the summer. One was the dedication of the new Fellowship House, a beautiful

building, donated by the late Mrs. Helen Cole. On its broad veranda which overlooks the wide-spreading valley and river many glorious meetings were held. These meetings will grow more and more wonderful as each summer brings a new and divine outpouring of God's bestowals. But the very brightest event of the season was the return to Green Acre of its founder, Miss Sarah J. Farmer. She came back after her years of seclusion with a heart overflowing with thanksgiving to the God who was so good to her.

Every word about the success of Green Acre filled her with joy. She could not express enough gratitude to her Bahai brothers and sisters of the Green Acre Fellowship who had raised Green Acre to this pinnacle of spiritual unity and peace and radiance. She had lived to see her early dream realized, to see many nations and sects, races and religions joined together under the Green Acre flag, the flag of the peace that passeth understanding.

An Editorial Letter.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“The Treasure-Houses of God are filled with Bounties”

Address of Abdul-Baha at the home of Mrs. Krug,
New York City, December 3, 1912.

MRS. Krug is the cause of gathering you together here this afternoon. She has caused you to assemble here in the utmost of love. She has caused you to engage in the commemoration of God. It is my hope that this gathering will increase in number day by day, and that you will become daily more and more attracted, more spiritual and more illumined, that you will make extraordinary progress, that you will acquire from each other knowledge of the teachings of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH, so that you may know how to teach the truth to others, that your hearts may become so attracted that the instant a question is asked, you will be able to give the right answer and that the truth of the Holy Spirit may speak through your tongues. Be ye helpful in the providence and favor of the Blessed Perfection, for his favors change a drop into an ocean, cause a seed to become a tree and make an atom as glorious as the sun. His graces are great. The treasure-houses of God are filled with bounties. God, who showed favors unto others, will certainly show favor unto you. I supplicate to the Kingdom

of Abha and seek extraordinary favors and confirmations in your behalf, in order that your tongues may become fluent, your hearts may be flooded with the rays of the Sun of Truth, even as a clear mirror, that your thoughts may expand, your comprehension become more intense and that you may progress on the plane of human perfections.

Until man himself acquire perfections, he will not be able to teach perfections to others. Unless man attain life himself, he cannot convey life to others. Unless he finds light for himself he cannot give light to others. We must, therefore, endeavor ourselves to attain to the perfections of the world of humanity, gain everlasting life, and seek the divine spirit, in order that we may thereby be enabled to confer life upon others, be enabled to breathe life into others.

You must, therefore, always supplicate before the Kingdom of Abha and seek eternal bounties from him. You must pray that your hearts may become filled with glorious lights, even as a purified mirror, then will the lights of the Sun of Truth shine thereupon. You must supplicate and pray to God every night

and every day and seek his aid and assistance, saying:

O Lord! We are weak, strengthen us. O God! We are ignorant, make us knowing. O Lord! We are poor, make us wealthy. O God! We are dead, quicken us. O Lord! We are humiliation itself, glorify us in thy Kingdom. If thou assistest us, O Lord, we shall become scintillating stars! If thou dost not assist us, we shall become lower than the earth.

O Lord! Strengthen us. O God! Confer victory upon us. O God! Cause us to conquer self and desire. O Lord! Deliver us from the bondage of the world of materiality. O Lord! Quicken us through the breath of the Holy Spirit, in order that we may arise to serve thee, to engage in worshipping thee and to exert ourselves in thy Kingdom with the utmost of sincerity. O Lord! thou art powerful. O God! Thou art forgiving. O Lord! Thou art Compassionate.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

The Mystery of Sacrifice

(Continued from page 111)

the divine. Consequently, every perfect person, every illumined person, every heavenly individual stands in the station of sacrifice. I therefore hope, through the aid and providence of God and through the bounties of the Kingdom of Abha, that from the imperfections of the world of nature you may be entirely

separated and become purified from the selfish desires and receive life from the Kingdom of Abha and acquire heavenly virtues, and that the divine light may become manifest upon your faces, that the fragrances of holiness may reach your nostrils and the breath of the Holy Spirit may quicken you.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“Sacrifice of life is of two kinds”

Words of Abdul-Baha. Extracts from the *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*.

ABDUL-BAHA spoke to us about the lives of several Persian Bahais who have made all sacrifices and yet they think they have done nothing.

“Such souls are the jewels of existence,” he said.

Looking up at the star Venus, which was shining in the horizon like a blazing torch, Abdul-Baha said: “Do you see that brilliant star? I declare . . . that it is my fondest hope to see each one of the believers of God shining like unto this star. I wish for them this illumination; I desire for them this luminosity, so that they may rejoice the hearts and spiritualize the souls. But alas! How often they let the cloud of the ego darken the horizon and thus

prevent the stars of their divine verities from shining.” Here he stopped and looked again earnestly at the brilliant orb, and said: “It shines clearest at the early dawn. So, at this dawn of the Sun of Reality the stars of our lives must glisten and gleam in the darkness of the world.”

Truly I say unto thee, every maid-servant who arises in this day in the mystery of sacrifice in the path of God will become one of the stars of guidance in the supreme horizon; all in the heaven and earth will be illumined by her face; the angels of the Supreme Concourse will speak in her praise and she will be

encompassed with the favors of the Kingdom of Abha.

As long as one has not taken a portion of the mystery of sacrifice, it is impossible for him to attain to the Kingdom of God. So long as you do not have the cup free from every sort of liquor is it possible for you to put good and pure water therein?

Sacrifice of life is of two kinds. To be killed for the Cause is not so difficult as to live for it in absolute obedience to

the commands of God. To attain to the condition of Mirza Abul Fazl who cares for nothing in this world save to write something for the Cause that will be of benefit, or like Mirza Hyder Ali who cares not for money, clothes, or even food, but only to teach someone something about the Kingdom,—is real attainment to the plain of sacrifice! And without attaining this condition all effort is without any final result. One who cares for love, for husband, wife or children more than for the Cause of God has not attained.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

When the Mirror is Free from Dust

Words of Abdul-Baha to nineteen Bahais at Hotel Victoria,
Boston, July 25, 1912.

I AM very happy to greet you here today. This is the second time the breeze of God has wafted over Boston. I am expecting results from this visit. I hope my coming to Boston may not be fruitless. The result is to be this: That the individual may be released from self, also from desire, and may be freed from satanic suggestions. May the mirrors be freed from dust, that the Sun of Truth may be reflected therein. There are two kinds of susceptibilities in man—the natural emotions (these are like dust on the mirror) and the spiritual susceptibilities which are merciful characteristics, heavenly.

There is a power that cleans the dust from the mirror and transforms it into intense brilliancy and radiance, so that these susceptibilities chasten and utterly destroy the dust and the heavenly bestowals may purify the hearts.

What is the dust on that mirror? Love of the world, greed, envy and love of luxury, of comfort, of desire for the self, haughtiness, self-interest—all these are like unto dust. They cover the mirror so

that the reality of the sun cannot reflect its rays. The natural emotions are blameworthy and are like rust and deprive the heart of the bounties of God. But sincerity, justice, humility, evanescence, love for the believers,—these will free the mirror from dust, will make it radiant so that it may receive the rays from the Sun of Truth.

It is my hope that you may consider this matter, that you may search your own imperfections and do not think of the imperfections of anyone else, and strive to be free from imperfections. The souls who are heedless are always trying to find faults in others. Take the hypocrite—what does he know about the faults of others? He must find them in himself. This is the meaning of the *Seven Valleys*. It is for human conduct. As long as man does not find his faults, he can never become perfect. It will be fruitful for man to find his own imperfections and change them into perfections. The Blessed Perfection says: "I wonder at the man who does not find his own imperfections."

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Kudrat 1, 72 (November 4, 1916)

No. 13

The Three Realities

Address by Abdul-Baha at "The White Lodge," Wimbledon, England, Friday evening, January 3, 1913.

HOW beautiful it is to organize such lovely gatherings that are not based upon the pursuit of the material principles of life! Such gatherings belong to the study and the investigation of spiritual facts. . . . The spiritual power has gathered us together. Our aim is to discover the realities of phenomena. When we ponder over the reality of the microcosm, we discover that in the microcosm, or the little man, there are deposited three realities. Man is endowed with an outward or physical reality. It belongs to the animal kingdom because it has sprung out of the material world. This side of life, or the first reality, is darkness and gloom because the world of matter is the world of darkness. This is the animalistic reality of man which he shares in common with all animals.

Man, however, enjoys a second or higher reality which is the intellectual reality that comprehends all phenomena, or is infinite as regards the phenomena. It is a governor, victorious over the world of matter. It discovers and unfolds the realities of sentient beings; it "explodes" the laws of nature, because from a physical standpoint it is superior, above and beyond the laws of nature.

When we ponder over the morphology of the human body we find that man, like any other animal, is subject to the laws of nature. All creation is the cap-

tive of nature; it cannot deviate one hair's breadth from the mandates of nature. For example, the fire is circumscribed and limited within the boundaries of the laws of nature and it cannot transcend any laws laid down by nature. This globe of ours is the captive of the postulates of nature; it cannot deviate one hair's breadth from the laws of nature. All the stellar bodies in this infinite universe, notwithstanding their colossal size, cannot deviate from the laws laid down for their coursings by nature; they are the prisoners of nature; they cannot go out of the circle or the circumference which is allowed for their journeyings. The great shoreless sea is the prisoner of nature. The vegetable kingdom in its entirety is a captive of nature. The animal kingdom is a captive of nature. All this will show you that these phenomena cannot go beyond the limits set by nature. Likewise man, as far as his first reality or his physical life is concerned, is also a prisoner of nature.

But the reasonable or intellectual reality with which man is endowed enables him to transcend the laws of physical nature. For example, according to the laws of nature man is a denizen of the earth; he must walk upon the earth, and, because he is born on this globe, he belongs to this earthly life. This is a regulation of nature. But man, through

his intellectual power transcends this law of nature, discovers the science of aviation and flies in the air like a bird. He becomes like a fish and goes to the very depths of the seas. He builds a great fleet and sails over the seas. It is, therefore, an indubitable fact that man is able to transcend the laws of nature; this intellectual reality of man conquers nature. Through it man is enabled to make a fruitless tree fruitful. He transforms the wild woods into fruitful orchards. He changes the plains of thistles and thorns into lovely meadows and rose gardens. Then there is the electrical energy which breaks the very mountains. Man through the application of intellectual force takes this electrical energy and makes it a captive within the incandescent lamp. According to the postulate of nature his voice is a free activity. Man takes it and makes it a prisoner within a box—a phonograph. Man through this power is enabled again to communicate with the east and the west within a few minutes. Through this intellectual power while he is in Europe he is able to discover America. This is an extraordinary power! He may live all his life in the east and yet through this power may organize great affairs in the west. All these sciences that we enjoy were the hidden and recondite mysteries of nature but man was enabled to discover these mysteries and out of the plane of the unseen he brought them into the world of the seen. All the artistic accomplishments and undertakings which we have today were once the secrets of nature; man discovered them and brought them to the plane of visibility. In short, the exploration of the secrets of nature seem to be very numerous. Therefore the citation of these facts will demonstrate to you that man is superior to nature. He is, in fact, its governor, although his physical reality is a captive of nature. It is then self-evident that in man there exists an intellectual reality which is superior to his physical reality.

There is, however, a third reality in man, that is the spiritual reality. Through that medium come spiritual revelations. This is a celestial power which is infinite as regards the intellectual as well as the physical realms. This power is conferred upon man through the breath of the Holy Spirit. It is an eternal reality, an indestructible reality, a reality which belongs to the divine kingdom. This celestial reality, or the third reality, delivers man from the material world. It is the power which enables man to escape from the world of nature.

This is proven from scientific as well as spiritual evidence. When we ponder and look over phenomena we observe that all have their origin in a single element. This single atomic element travels and has its coursings through all grades of existence. I wish you to ponder over this carefully. This single element has been in the realm of the mineral kingdom. While staying in the mineral kingdom it has had its coursings and transformations through myriads of images and forms. Having completed its travellings through the mineral kingdom it has ascended to the vegetable kingdom and in this kingdom it has had again its travellings and transformations through myriads of images; sometimes it has been a grain, again it was in the form of a leaf, anon it was a flower or an animal, a tree, or a blossom! Then it attains to the stage of fruition and is a fruit. This single primordial element has had its transformations through these infinite forms and images. Again in the human kingdom it has its transferences and coursings through multitudes of forms. In short, this reality or this single primordial atom has had its numerous travellings through every stage of life and in every stage or form it was endowed with a special and peculiar virtue. Therefore the great and divine philosophers have had an epigram as follows: "All things are involved in all things." Every single phenomenon has enjoyed

the favors of God, and in every form of these infinite electrons it has had its perfections or virtue. This, I hope, is evident and clear to you. This flower once upon a time was the soil; the animal eats it; it ascends to the animal kingdom. Man eats the body of the animal and there you have the ascension into the human kingdom, because all phenomena are the eaters and the eaten. This breath we respire is it not true that there are many thousands of infinitesimal microbes in it, each one of these microbes going into the constitution of our body? And this will show you that the lower forms of life can be transmuted into the higher realms of existence. Therefore, every primordial atom of these atoms, single and indivisibly, has had its coursings throughout all sentient creations, going constantly into the make-up and aggregation of elements. Thus you have the conservation of energy and the infinitude of phenomena, the indestructibility of phenomena, changeless and immutable because life cannot become annihilated. The utmost is this; that the form, the outward image, throughout these changes and transformations is dissolved. The realities of all phenomena are immutable and unchangeable. Extinction or mortality is nothing but the transformation of pictures and images but the reality back of these images is eternal.

Every reality of the realities of life is one of the bounties of God. Some people believe that the divinity of God had a beginning. Therefore with this principle they have limited the downpour of the bounties of God. For example, they think that there was a time when man did not live, and that there will be a time in the future when the race of man will be destroyed, that there was a time when this globe did not exist. Such a theory circumscribes the power of God, for how can we understand the divinity of God but through the manifestation of his qualities? How can we understand the fire? Through its physical

heat, through its flame. Were not heat and flame in this fire, naturally we could not say that the fire existed. The illumination of the lamp is through electrical energy and if we believe that there was a time in this world when this electrical energy was not in existence, then that is equal to the statement that there was no life at all. Or, take another example, the sun; let us say that there was a time when the sun was not endowed with rays and heat. That is equal to saying that there was no sun, because the very existence of the sun is demonstrated through its heat and rays. If there was a time when God did not manifest his qualities, then there was no God, because the attributes of God presuppose the creation of phenomena. For example, we say God is the creator. A creator must of necessity create. We say God is the provider. The provider must have someone to provide for. We say God is omniscient. Then omniscient knowledge is the consequence of omniscience. Therefore, as long as God has been God there has been creation, there have been the creatures. God has no beginning and his creation has no ending, for the bestowal of God is never failing. The effulgence of God cannot be suspended. The sovereignty of God cannot be interrupted. If we conceive a beginning for the universe of creation then we have conceived for the dominion and sovereignty of God a beginning which is a false theory. In reality his sovereignty is without beginning and without ending. Can we ever dream or conceive of a king without subjects, without an army, without a kingdom? Is it possible? No. A king is in need of a kingdom; he is in need of an army; a king is in need of wealth. Now as long as the kingdom of God, the sovereignty of God, is eternal, the creation of this universe throughout eternity is presupposed.

When we look at the reality of the subject we will see that the bounties of God are infinite, without beginning and

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Kudrat 1, 72 (November 4, 1916)

No. 11

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

The Teaching Campaign—A Plan

ABDUL-BAHA has inaugurated a new epoch in the Cause and has given a work to the American Bahais which, at this time, is not possible elsewhere.

His new commands in the five stirring Tablets recently received, are *creative*, and they will establish a general unity which will be "the secret cause of the illumination of the hearts of humanity" (Western States Tablet).

The point of unity gained at the Bahai convention last April was only partial, in that only a few, comparatively, could take part. The same condition obtained at Green Acre, where a *foretaste* of the unity that is to come was experienced. Great as this was, the masses of Bahais were deprived. But now, the *general* point of unity established by Abdul-Baha through his Tablets can be recognized by all the friends, and a wonderful opportunity is given for a general response to his Call—spiritually and materially. And, through their sympathy for those who have not yet been illumined, and their desire that the light be carried to the dark places, they will learn what the service of *sacrifice* means, and the mites and dollars will flow into the teaching treasury.

The sum for the teaching-fund, now set aside by only a very few of the friends, will sometime become exhausted, and a reserve fund will be needed.

When all the believers send contributions for the expenses of the *appointed* teachers, the effort of responding to Abdul-Baha by sending them out with the glorious Message of glad tidings will be successful.

This fund should be entirely apart from all offerings that have been pledged to the Mashrak-el-Azkar fund. Surely, the latter will be greatly increased when the Cause is more widely spread.

Would it not be well to divide the responsibility of the care of the teachers fund in the following way?—

At each center where the original Tablets were addressed let a treasury-committee of three be chosen to receive and care for the contributions, and one treasurer be chosen in each assembly to receive and forward contributions to the treasury-committee of the center belonging to its section. For instance, the Northeastern assemblies to forward to the New York center; the Central assemblies to the Chicago center; the Southern assemblies to the Washington center; the Western assemblies to the San Francisco center, and the assemblies of Canada to the Montreal center, and Bahais in all outlying districts belonging to the different sections, sending offerings to their nearest assemblies (to be forwarded to the centers); or, if they prefer, they may send direct to the three treasurers at their center. (Having three treasurers at each center divides the responsibility so that, in the absence of one, the others can act. It is assumed that the Bahai to whom the Tablet was addressed, in each of the five centers, respectively will inaugurate the plan.)

A correspondence between all the believers, called forth by this simple plan, will strengthen the Bahai bond.

If these plans are adopted the STAR OF THE WEST will publish the names and addresses of the five treasury-committees; and will the friends in these centers, as soon as they have chosen the treasury-committee, send the names and addresses to us?—or if other plans are found more suitable, we will be pleased to publish them.

—*The Editors.*

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

Recent Tablet from Abdul-Baha

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Haifa, Syria, March 7, 1916.

Received by Helen S. Goodall and Ella G. Cooper,
August 8, 1916.

To the friends of God, men, women and children in the photograph of the First International Bahai Congress, San Francisco, California—Upon them be greeting and praise!

O you real friends and lovers of the Kingdom of God!

In these days the scroll of the photograph of the blessed faces of those pure souls, which was taken during the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, was received.

Praise be to God, that the faces are radiant, indicating the sanctification of the hearts. All those who have looked at the photograph have obtained immediate joy—outflowing, and inexhaustible.

I beg infinite grace from the Kingdom of God for each one of those friends who were present in that gathering, wishing for them heavenly powers so that the members of that congress may irradiate the white rays of the Sun of Reality to all parts and illumine the cities, counties, towns and villages of the United States.

The magnet whereby to attract these favors and bounties, is firmness and steadfastness.

Upon you be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

“Towards the orphans the utmost consideration must be shown”

Portion of a Tablet revealed by Abdul-Baha for Mrs. Cora Ditmars, of Spokane, Washington.

O thou happy and blessed one!

In this holy Cause the question of the education and the maintenance of the orphans has the utmost importance. Towards the orphans the utmost consideration must be shown, they must be taught and instructed; especially the teachings of his holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH must be given freely to every orphan according to the means at hand. I beg of God

that to the orphaned children thou mayst become a kind father and mother, to quicken them with the fragrances of the Holy Spirit—thus they may attain to the age of maturity, and each one may become the real servant of the world of humanity—nay rather, they may become as bright candles in the assemblages of mankind.

—————“THIS IS THE TIME”—————

“I never ask anyone to send me money”

A Talk Given by Abdul-Baha to Mr. Remey and Mr. Latimer at Haifa, October 15, 1914.

WHEN you return to America say to all the believers in my behalf that whenever a person comes to that country, no matter to what nationality he may belong, and tries to collect money in my name, know that it has no connection with me. I am free from it. Whosoever asks for money for me, does so of his own volition. There are some people who desire to collect money under all kinds of pretexts. I desire to impress upon your minds that I have nothing to do with such affairs. I never ask anyone to send me money.

Whosoever loves money does not love God and whosoever loves God does not love money.

On the other hand, if some of the believers voluntarily desire to help and assist one another or some philanthropic institutions, whose objects are for the public welfare and progress, it is very good and praiseworthy. I do not desire that anyone shall ask money in my name for any affair. The souls must be detached from the world. Those souls who are attached to this world and its wealth are deprived of spiritual advancement.

The believers must live such an independent life that if one comes and begs them to accept money, they should refuse him. As long as the souls are not severed, how do they expect to journey along the ideal path?

On the eve of my departure from New York, I told a number of believers that his holiness Christ has stated that “when you leave a city, shake its dust from off your feet.” So far, very few people have lived according to this behest, but it is my will to live accordingly. Before coming to America, the believers of God, through Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, offered for my traveling expenses \$16,000 but I did not accept one cent. Man must live in the utmost sanctity and purity and he must ever think to assist others and not beg assistance from them.

In short, may you ever be confirmed and assisted. May you ever be illumined; may you ever be the means of the guidance of the people; may you ever breathe the breath of life in the hearts; may you be the signs of mercy to all mankind; may you be the shining lamps of severance and detachment in this dark world.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“We must arise to accomplish that which is required by the Lord”

Talk Given by Abdul-Baha, Tuesday Morning, December 3, 1912, at 780 West End Avenue, New York City.

I HAVE been in your gatherings many times. I have not attended one-tenth of the number of meetings in other cities which I have attended in this city, but with you I have been in meetings day times, during evenings, with you individually, with you collectively, and I have told you the teachings and exhortations of his holiness, BAHÁ'O'LLAH. I conveyed unto you the glad tidings of God, I explained unto you the wishes of the Blessed Perfection; that which is conducive to human progress have I explained to you, and that which leads to the most great humility. I have given you a thorough explanation of the teachings of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

Now the time is well nigh when I shall leave you, and I cannot appear in your assemblages, for I have a great deal to do, and I have to go away day after tomorrow. I therefore look upon this gathering of ours today as the farewell gathering.

I am pleased with you all. I am very much rejoiced because of you all, because you have all shown the utmost kindness towards me; the utmost affection have you demonstrated towards me. I desire that his holiness, BAHÁ'O'LLAH, be pleased with you, that you may keep the promises and confirmations of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. The promises of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, the requirements that BAHÁ'O'LLAH has made of you are these: that your hearts must be illumined, your souls must be rejoiced with the glad tidings of God, your morals must be spiritual morals, your conduct must be an evidence of faith and assurance,

you must be in the utmost of sanctity and purity and in the high degree of love and attraction toward the Kingdom of Abha. You must become the lamps of BAHÁ'O'LLAH so that you may give eternal light, that you may become evidences and proofs of the truth of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, so that as men consider your deeds and conduct they will see the signs of purity and chastity therein and see the heavenly illumination clearly in your deeds, so that all men may say, “Verily, ye are the proofs of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. Verily, BAHÁ'O'LLAH is the true One; he is the one of truth, because he has trained such souls, each of which is a proof of himself.” Ye must so live that they may say to others, “Come and see the conduct of these souls, come and listen to their words, come and witness the illumination of their hearts, come and see the traces of the love of God within them, come and see praiseworthy morals in them, come and find the foundation of the oneness of humanity within them. What greater proof can there be than these persons as to the truth of BAHÁ'O'LLAH?”

It is my hope that everyone of you shall be a crier unto God, proclaiming his truth, either through his words or through his deeds or through his thoughts. Let your deeds and utterances be a proof that you are of the kingdom of BAHÁ'O'LLAH. These are the duties enjoined upon you by BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

His holiness, BAHÁ'O'LLAH endured great hardship, no night did he find rest, no day did he gain peace. He was constantly in great calamity. Now he was

in prison, now under the chains, now an object of threat, brought by a sword, and finally leaving imprisonment he ascended from here to the heaven of God. He endured all these hardships for our sakes; he suffered all these deprivations for our sakes. Therefore, we must be faithful towards him, we must not follow the selfish desires of our fancies. We must arise to accomplish that which is required by the Lord.

It is my hope that you will arise to live in accord with all these teachings

and exhortations, so that we may all be strengthened in accomplishing them, so that we may reach the paradise of the spiritual kingdom, and diffuse the lights of the Sun of Truth and cause the waves of the Most Great Ocean to reach all the souls, so that this world of earth may be converted into the world of heaven, this devastated ground be converted into a delectable paradise, and this jungle of confusion be converted into a paradise of Abha.

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

The Three Realities

(Continued from page 119)

without ending. The greatest bounties of God in this phenomenal world are his Manifestations (i. e. the great prophets). They are the greatest bounty. These Manifestations are the suns of the reality. Therefore, for the appearance of the holy divine Manifestations of God there has been no beginning and for the appearance of the holy divine Manifestations of God in the future there is no ending whatsoever, because God is infinite and his grace cannot be limited. And if we ever dare to circumscribe his grace within certain limited spheres, then we have as a necessity circumscribed the reality of divinity which is all-powerful. Therefore the perfect man ever beholds the rays of the sun, he ever expects the coming of the effulgence of God, he ever gazes at the grace and bounties of God, he ever ponders over the omnipotent God, and he knows of a certainty that the reality of divinity is not finite. His names and his attributes are not finite, his graces and bounties are not limited and the coming of the Manifestations of God are not circumscribed. This fact is self-evident and manifest.

Those people who have harkened to the teachings of BAHÁ'U'LLAH—Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Jews—such people have discarded their past rancour and are associating with the utmost love and unity. Take my example and see with what degree of love I am associating with you tonight, loving you with all my heart and soul. In the same way all those people are living together, with the utmost accord and unity, to such an extent that they are ready to sacrifice their possessions and lives for each other; and to such an extent has the transformation been wrought that they are ever self-sacrificing for each other. Were you to enter into any (Bahai) gathering in the Orient, it would be very hard for you to discover who is a Christian and who is a Jew, or who is a Zoroastrian, for they are just like so many flames which have become one big flame. (Applause) All these different faiths are merging into one great faith.

—————
(Reprinted from *The Path* of February, 1913.)

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

“O ye people! Draw nigh unto It
(*The Branch*) and taste the fruits of
Its Knowledge and Wisdom”

O YE PEOPLE! Do ye flee from the mercy of God after it hath encompassed the existent things created between the heavens and earths? Beware lest ye prefer your own selves before the mercy of God, and deprive not yourselves thereof. Verily, whosoever turneth away therefrom will be in great loss. . . .

Verily, the ocean of pre-existence hath *branched* forth from this most great ocean. Blessed therefore is he who abides upon its shores, and is of those who are established thereon. Verily, this most sacred temple of Abha—*the Branch of Holiness*—hath branched forth from the Sadrat-el-Muntaha.* Blessed is whosoever sought shelter beneath it and is of those who rest therein!

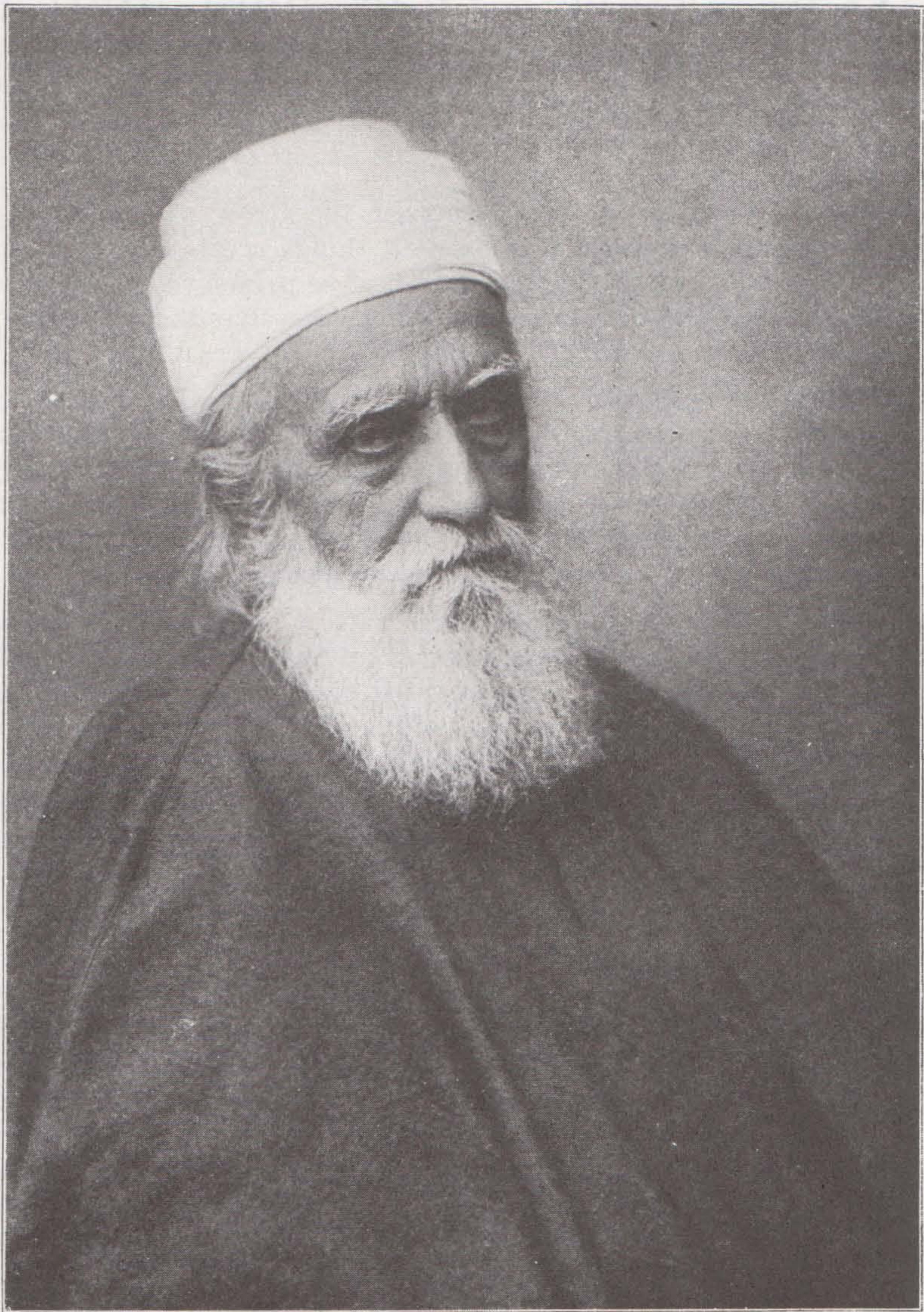
Verily, the *Branch of Command* hath sprung forth from this *Root* which God hath firmly planted in the ground of the will, the *Limb* of which hath been elevated to a station which encompasses all existence. Therefore, exalted be He for this creation, the Lofty, the Blessed, the Inaccessible, the Mighty!

O ye people! Draw nigh unto it (*The Branch*) and taste the fruits of its knowledge and wisdom on the part of the Mighty, the Knowing One. . . .

O people! Praise ye God for its manifestation (*The Branch*), for verily it is the most great favor unto you and the most perfect blessing upon you; and through him every mouldering bone is quickened. Whosoever turns to him hath surely turned unto God, and whosoever turneth away from him hath turned away from my beauty, denied my proof and is of those who transgress. Verily, he is the remembrance of God amongst you and His trust within you, and His manifestation unto you, and His appearance among the servants who are nigh. Thus have I been commanded to convey to you the message of God, your Creator; and I have delivered to you that of which I was commanded. Whereupon, thereunto testifieth God, then His angels, then His messengers, and then His holy servants. . . .

Extracts from *The Tablet of The Branch*.
From the Supreme Pen of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

*A tree planted at the end of the road for the guidance of the traveler. Here it refers to the Manifestation of God, BAHÁ'O'LLAH.



THE CENTER OF THE COVENANT
THE GREATEST BRANCH
ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS

"When the ocean of My Presence hath disappeared and the Book of Origin is achieved to the end, turn your faces toward Him-Whom-God-hath-purposed, who hath branched from this Pre-Existent Root." — Words of BAHÁ'O'LLÁH.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Kowl 1, 72 (November 23, 1916)

No. 14

"This Movement is Stupendous and of Paramount Importance"

Tablet Revealed by Abdul-Baha, the Center of the Covenant.

HE IS GOD!

O God! O God! Thou dost behold me, how my forehead is laid upon the dust of humility and submission and how my face is covered in the ground of the threshold of thy singleness. O thou my Lord, the Unconstrained! Thou seest me lowly and contrite, supplicating, entreating and imploring toward the Kingdom of thy light by day and by night, that thou encircle us with the eye of thy providence and the glances of the outlook of thy mercifulness.

O Lord! Forgive our sins, pardon our shortcomings and deal with us through thy grace and generosity under all circumstances. O our Lord! We are sinners, but thou art the merciful forgiver. We are transgressors, but thou art the clement pardoner. Absolve our iniquities, remove our sorrows, destine for us through thy bestowal severance from the world, occupation with thy mentioning, enkindlement with the fire of thy love, perpetual contemplation of thy signs, the knowledge of thy words, meditation over thy verses and the attraction of thy lights.

O Lord! O Lord! These are thy servants; they have turned their faces toward thy countenance and they have resolved their joy and happiness in thy favor and bounty. Strengthen their backs in thy obedience. Reinforce their lives in thy adoration. Perfume their hearts with the fragrances of thy holiness. Ordain for them presence in the paradise of thy meeting. Suffer them to become such servants as peruse the verses of unity in the assemblages held in thy name; that attract the rays of singleness from the lamp of thy bestowal; as those drawn towards thy beauty, humble before thy glory; who have abandoned aught else save thee and are relying upon thy protection and preservation; as those rendered meek by the sway of thy Word, made submissive before thy beloved ones; as those diffusing thy fragrances, disclosing thy mysteries, informing people with thy teachings and suffering mankind to become rejoiced through thy glad-tidings. Verily, thou art powerful over that which thou willest and thou feedest whomsoever thou desirest with thy hand. The world and the Kingdom belong to thee and thou art the mighty, the omnipotent and the beloved!

O ye believers of God! O ye dear friends of Abdul-Baha!

The goblet of the Covenant is overflowing and the outpouring of the bestowal of the Luminary of Effulgence is manifest and apparent in the regions from behind the invisible world, like

unto the radiant moon. The twilight of the Moon of Guidance is scattered and the grace of the Orb of the Beauty of Abha is continuous and renowned. The fame of the grandeur of the Most Great Name hath reached the East and the West and the call of the Cause of the

(Continued on page 130)

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Kowl 1, 72 (November 23, 1916)

No. 14

Latest Word from Abdul-Baha

In a letter dated October 25, 1916, to Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, recently received, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab advises Khan that the beloved Abdul-Baha has addressed three Tablets to Khan, one in his own name, one to Khanom, his wife, and one to the American Bahais, concerning him, his family and household, and his relatives.

The last of the three Tablets has just been received by Khan, through Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, of Washington, D. C., in a letter from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, in which Abdul-Baha addresses himself to the American believers as follows:

To the Believers of God in America!—Upon them be greeting and praise!

O ye believers of God!

It is a long time that his honor Ali Kuli Khan is engaged in the service of the Cause of God; therefore I love him. Regarding the niece and the relatives of Khan who are in America, their aim is likewise good, and the believers of God must exercise toward them the utmost kindness. For these souls are strangers, and hospitality must be shown towards strangers. Should you hear contrary and conflicting stories concerning them, do not accept those stories. I beg of God that that family—that is Khan, and the relatives of Khan—may be happy in that strange country, and that the believers may show them kindness and consideration.

Man is worthy of honor and merits respect, especially a stranger. The friends of God must become the cause of the consolation of every stranger—unless he is a corrupt and wicked person. They must be the means of joy for every sorrowful one, a protective shelter for every fearful one, and a true friend and sympathizer to every friendless one. This is the reward and compensation of every human being. I hope you may become assisted therein. Upon ye be greeting and praise.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Then Mirza Ahmad says: "Praise be to God, that the health of Abdul-Baha is well. At present he lives in Bahjee with his holy sister; Monnavar Khanom, his daughter, and one of his grand-daughters."

[Following its usual custom this issue of the STAR OF THE WEST emphasizes "The Center of The Covenant" in the person and function of ABDUL-BAHA, inasmuch as the Twenty-sixth of November is the "Feast of the Appointment of The Center of The Covenant."—*The Editors*]

The turning of the pages of the "Book of the Covenant"

Extracts from an Address delivered by Mrs. Isabella D. Brittingham, in Chicago, November 5, 1916.

THERE are two parts to this Book. There is the collective Book; but back of it is the reality—that creation which made the "Center" of the Covenant—Abdul-Baha, the real Book. He tells us that the Covenant means, "the power and authority that BAHÁ'O'LLAH has given to him.

Nine days after the great ascension* of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, Abdul-Baha took a few Oriental believers into the Holy Tomb, and in their presence, the "Book of the Covenant" (*Kitab-el-Ahd*) was read. That turned for the world the first page of the real "Book of the Covenant." Hadjai Hassan Khorassani, who was one of those present, told me of this when en route to Akka in 1901.

In 1893 another page was turned. The Message of the Kingdom was first heard in America, covering a period of several clouded years.

Again a page of that Creative Book was turned when, for several years following this Message, American believers visited (at Akka) the presence of that Book shining from the mirror of Abdul-Baha and returned, confirming the glad tidings.

Another turned page followed: The page of the pioneer work in America—in which period the proclamation of those wonderful glad tidings was made in assemblies, in assembly vicinities, from east to west, from north to south, blazing a trail and hewing the way in the wilderness, as it were, for the coming of the Great Seed-sower. During that period, in order to meet the limitation of any human conceptions, Abdul-Baha ever described himself as the servant, or slave, of the servants of God.

In 1912 that Seed-sower came to America, and his presence changed the face of our country as well as that of the world. He turned another page of the real "Book of the Covenant," at that time adorning it with the *Tablet of the Branch*, which the Infinite Creator had revealed through BAHÁ'O'LLAH for the world. In that Tablet Abdul-Baha is proclaimed: "The most sacred Temple of Abha." What is the meaning of the title, "BAHÁ'O'LLAH?" It is "THE GLORY OF GOD." That "Glory," continued in manifestation, is shining in this hour from "the most sacred Temple of Abha." The "Branch" is dependent upon the "Pre-existent Root," as the divine sap pours upward through the Greatest Branch (or Trunk) and finds its greatest expression thereupon, in the fruit which contains the *Creative Seed*.

We must always call him "Abdul-Baha," for he has chosen that title for himself. This has to do with his individual offering of servitude and sacrifice. This is his personal station. But seeing eyes behold this station as the altar upon which burns the flame of the Covenant, and which is the "Book of the Covenant."

Upon all of the pages of this Book is unfolded in golden words and letters the Mashrak-el-Azkar. The presence of the Covenant is the one who calls himself "Abdul-Baha" is the spiritual Mashrak-el-Azkar—of which the edifice soon, God grant, to be built in Chicago, is the outer symbol—and he has said that radiant pure hearts are (to build) this Symbol Temple. That is, he is building

*Death of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, May 28, 1892.

a Temple, not made with hands, of hearts who are becoming severed and molded by the fire of the love of God. This spiritual Temple of severed souls, this spiritually purified collective unit of radiant hearts, will receive the descent of his spirit after his great departure, and be confirmed to complete this outward and visible symbol, the foundations of which he is now laying.

The latest page of the "Book of the Covenant" has just been turned. Upon it is inscribed the five great Tablets to North America containing the greatest call which has ever come from that presence, to arise and awaken and summon all the sleeping portions of this country, to the Kingdom of God.

Never has there been heard upon the earth such a call! We, as Bahais, are all in one station. This has long been stated by Abdul-Baha. Thus there rests equally upon each and all responsibility to respond in some way, to this great command. How is it to be met? Through the mystery of sacrifice. What is this mystery of sacrifice? It consists of the absolute evanescence and laying down of every hindrance upon the Holy Threshold, and thus arising in pure response; and *in arising not at some future period, but NOW*. Thus determining to burn every veil of delay or hindrance of the (subtle) self, the confirmations appear out of the invisible horizon "whereof the spirits receive the Light," and sacrifice becomes transformed into a chalice of bestowal. Only in this way will all of the barren parts of North America become illumined.

A superhuman effort is demanded. This proves the greatness of this page, and the test of fidelity to its call. *It is not to be postponed to some indefinite future*. When Abdul-Baha left America in 1912 he said he had sown the pure seeds and that it was now the turn of the believers to "Act! Act! Act!" It is the time for the teaching of *new souls!* Each one of the older believers should be teaching a class of NEW souls. Our responsible response to those Tablets is only limited by ourselves. This new call has nothing to do with our past services. Past calls and the responses thereto are recorded on the earlier (turned) pages of the "Book of the Covenant" and belong to those past periods.

A new page demands a new arising, to which the offering must be that of fuller consecration and greater activity than ever before! It involves this response from us, and this definite proof of our spiritual life. *The days of negation* are ended. The presence of the "Center" of the Covenant will not be with us very much longer. His departure will judge our deeds, as to real severance and *actions, NOW!* This constitutes our firmness in the Covenant. Abdul-Baha has given us its definition. He tells us it "is love, and obedience to his commands." And "It is not mere words. The command is explicit."

—————"THIS IS THE TIME"————

"This Movement is Stupendous and of Paramount Importance"

(Continued from page 127)

Blessed Perfection (BAHA'O'LLAH) hath encircled the North and the South. The fragrances of sanctity are being wafted and the breeze of life is passing by. The Word of God is upheld and the everlasting glory is revealed. The lamp of divine unity is ignited and the flame of clemency is glowing. From every direction the call of "Ya-Baha-el-Abha!" is raised and in the Orient and in the Occi-

dent the teachings of God have struck wonder to the heart of every thinker. Pamphlets and periodicals are being published and circulated in America, Europe and Africa. A section of the press is engaged in praise and eulogy, and another section of the press is awakening the interest of the nations by exclaiming: "This Movement is stupendous and of paramount importance."

Some people express wonder and astonishment; others complain bitterly on account of their intense prejudices. One of the nations says: "After the departure of his holiness Christ only a limited number of people were his disciples; notwithstanding this his fame became world-conquering and his song reached the sphere of ether." But, the Blessed Perfection—May my life be a ransom to his believers!—on the eve of his ascension, hundreds and thousands were associating together under the shade of the flag of his majesty. From this illustration you can draw the conclusion that a mighty resurrection will be witnessed in the not-far distant future. One of the greatest apostles of his holiness the Spirit was the great Peter; but, notwithstanding this, before Christ's crucifixion he became agitated and was harassed with fear; while thousands of souls, singing, dancing and clapping their hands, have given up their lives and hastened toward the city of martyrdom, for the sake and in the path of the Most Great Name—May my identity be a sacrifice to his friends!

In short, the affairs of the Cause revolve around just such a center of self-abnegation. How self-evident it is that the believers of God must clothe themselves in these days with the attributes of self-sacrifice, consecrate their time to the teaching of the heedless ones, diffuse the sweet aroma of the teachings, rekindle the white flame and make apparent the splendor of the Merciful.

O ye friends of God! Is it befitting that we rest for one moment after the departure of the Beauty of the Clement, or seek the organization of committees, or exhale one breath of comfort, or taste the honey of fleeting pleasure, or lay our heads on the cushions of repose, or pursue the luxury and affluence of the world of creation? No! I declare by God! This is not the condition of loyalty nor the state of faithfulness and appreciation.

Therefore, O ye friends! With heart

and soul yearn for the service of the divine threshold and like unto the righteous ones become ye the guardians of the court of the merciful. Servitude at the holy threshold means the spread of the fragrances, the explanation of signs and verses, thralldom at the hall of unity and attachment to the palace of mercifulness. Consider with what severance, attraction and enkindlement the apostles of his holiness the Spirit—May my life be a ransom to him!—arose in the promulgation of the Word of God after his crucifixion. We hope from the bestowal of the True One that we may likewise walk in the footsteps of those pure ones and hasten unhesitatingly and rejoicingly toward the arena of love and sacrifice. This is the inexhaustible outpouring. This is the grace of His Highness the forgiving Lord.

In these days the progress of the divine principles are impeded in some parts and retarded in others, and this has become conducive to the sorrow and grief of the Supreme Concourse, because the dwellers of the Kingdom of Abha are expecting to see each one of us fulfilling the conditions of loyalty and for the sake of the love of the Most Great Name suffer every form of persecution. A number of the merciful friends forsook their material tranquillity and composure and traveled from city to city, nay, rather, village to village, in order to diffuse the fragrances of God. These souls, endowed with such pure spirits, became the objects of the commendation of the Supreme Concourse—May my life be a ransom to them!—for they became confirmed with this most exalted grace. They spent their days amidst the greatest difficulties and hardships, and employed their time in the guidance of the negligent ones.

O ye friends! This is not the time of rest and tranquillity! This is not the season of silence and stillness. The nightingale of the rose-garden of uprightness must display its wonderful melodies and trills. The bird of guid-

ance must exhibit its eloquent speech. The light and the heat are the concomitant results of the lamp. The brilliancy of the stars must be everlasting. The existence of the ocean connotes the waves. The birds must soar toward the apex. The pearls are inseparable from their lustre and sweet fragrance must qualify the blossoms of the rose-garden of knowledge. It is hoped that through the favor of the living, Self-subsistent, we may become assisted in a befitting manner.

O ye believers of God! Divine teachings are conducive to eternal life, the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity, the means of peace and conciliation, love and salvation, the basis of fellowship, uprightness and friendship in the world of creation and the instrument of unity and accord, solidarity and inter-dependence amongst the individuals of the body politic. Consequently you must lay the foundation of this structure in this mortal world; thus you may confer upon it infinite and abundant life and become the source of the enlightenment of the world of existence. It is incumbent upon you to consort with all the nations and people of the world with the utmost love, kindness and show affection, justice, assistance, consideration and courtesy to all the different communities and sects. Become ye a remedy to every pain, a balsam of healing and recovery to every wound, to every weak one become ye a support and aid and succor every poor one. Become ye to the fearful ones the impregnable cave of safety and to the agitated ones a sure asylum. . . . In this great cycle it is more acceptable and beloved to close one's eyes to all the limitations. The friends may become the manifestors of the qualities of the Merciful and Clement and arise in the service of all humanity; nay, rather they must be most kind toward the animals; for verily His mercy hath encompassed all things. . . .

O ye believers of God! This is the

time of self-abnegation and renunciation and the era of servitude and loyalty. The utmost height of this servant is the station of Servitude to His Highness the Almighty. If he becomes accepted at the threshold of servitude how glorious will be this most great gift. Otherwise he will be deprived of the mercy of God. Therefore the utmost hope and aspiration of Abdul-Baha is to open his wings in this space, to run toward this field, obtain infinite exhilaration from this wine, be intoxicated with this cup and acquire the longing of heart and spirit. Every other mention save this unchangeable, beloved name (Abdul-Baha) will become the cause of grief and sorrow and the source of the greatest regret and illimitable remorse. I request from the friends of God that day and night they may supplicate and implore at the divine Kingdom so that my servitude might become accepted in the threshold of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH.

O ye believers of God! If you wish the joy, happiness and the composure of the spirit and the peace of the conscience of Abdul-Baha, strengthen the bonds of union and harmony amongst yourselves so that all of you may become the waves of one sea, the drops of one river, the flowers of one garden, the links of one cuirass, soaring in the atmosphere and breaking forth into one glad song. This is the cause of my everlasting joy! This is the motive of the repose of my mind and heart in the eternal world! . . . Today there is no greater service than union and accord amongst the believers. This is the imperative need! This is the happy consummation. This is the most great attainment and the manifest bestowal for those who are sheltered beneath the shade of the Blessed Tree!

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab; copied from the *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, dated January 9, 1914.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become 'one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

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The Social Teachings of the Bahai Movement

A COMPILATION BY GEORGE O. LATIMER.

"Certain regulations are revealed which insure the welfare and well-being of all humanity. Just as the rich man enjoys his rest and his pleasures surrounded by luxuries, the poor man must likewise have a home, be provided with sustenance, and not be in want.

"Until this is effected happiness is impossible. All are equal in the estimation of God; their rights are *one* and there is no distinction for any soul; all are protected beneath the justice of God." —ABDUL-BAHA.

THE solution of our economic problems has long been considered a matter for the minds of philosophers and theoretical thinkers—a matter apart from religion. But social and economic questions are as much a part of religion as are prayer and worship, for true religion is the cause of the advancement of civilization and progress in the world and "the nobility and glory of man consists in the fact that, amidst the beings, he is the dawning place of righteousness. Can any greater blessing be imagined by man than the consciousness that by divine assistance the means of comfort, peace and prosperity of the human race are in his hands? How noble and excellent is man if he only attain to that state for which he was designed. And how mean and contemptible if he close his eyes to the public weal and spend his precious capacities on personal and selfish ends. The greatest happiness lies in the happiness of others. He who urges the matchless deed of endeavor on the race course of justice and civilization alone is capable of comprehending the wonderful signs of the natural and spiritual world."*

Civilization in its most general idea, is an improved condition of man resulting from his relation to the social order rather than the expression of his individual independence, and has a twofold aspect. One, a natural and material civilization which serves the physical world and the other a divine and heavenly civilization which renders service to the world of morality. One is founded by the philosophers and scientists of the world, the other is established by the Prophets of God. Material civilization may again be subdivided into those affairs which have no direct relation to life, producing luxury, indolence and effeminacy, and those affairs which contribute toward the maintenance of livelihood and to the happiness, welfare and comfort of mankind.

"In the world of nature the greatest dominant note is the struggle for existence—the result of which is the survival of the fittest. The law of the survival of the fittest is the origin of all difficulties. It is the cause of war and strife, hatred and animosity, between human beings. In the world of nature there is tyranny, egoism, aggression, overbearance, usurpation of the rights of others and other blameworthy attributes which are the defects of the animal world.

*All quotations unless otherwise specified are from the words of Abdul-Baha.

Therefore so long as the requirements of the natural world play paramount part among the children of men, success and prosperity are impossible; for the success and prosperity of the human world depend upon the qualities and virtues with which the reality of humanity is adorned while the exigencies of the natural world work against the realization of this object." Thus material civilization alone does not insure the safety and progress of mankind, but brings into existence the greatest instruments for human fratricide and destruction of property, and animalistic propensities reach their height under its influence.

Divine civilization, on the other hand, assists man in acquiring heavenly virtues, thus freeing him from oppression, cruelty, and greed brought about by the exploitation of his fellow-man for his own gain. "Divine civilization is a symposium of the perfections of the world of humanity. Divine civilization is the improvement of the ethical life of a nation. Divine civilization is the discovery of the reality of phenomena. Divine civilization is the spiritual philosophy. Divine civilization is the knowledge of God with rational and intellectual evidences." "Consequently consider what a difference and distinction is there between the material civilization and the divine civilization! The natural civilization prevents men from doing harm and wrong through force and punishment, and thus withholds them from committing crimes. But the divine civilization so trains men that the human individuals avoid sins without having any fear from (material) punishment; and the very sin itself becomes unto them as the severest punishment. And with the utmost zeal and fervor they will engage in acquiring human virtues, gaining that by which mankind will be uplifted and that which will enlighten the human world."

Thus divine civilization is in the same relation to material civilization as the light is to the lamp. Natural civilization

is the body which is in need of the spirit of heavenly guidance for its life and advancement. Therefore the real and true civilization exists only when the material and spiritual combine to reach their highest development. A good man without any development along material lines does not represent true civilization; while on the other hand, the man who has developed only his material side, with no regard for the spiritual does not stand for *real* civilization. Man must first understand that "the outward trappings of civilization, without inward moral advancement, may be likened unto confused dreams which cannot be interpreted; and sensual enjoyment, apart from spiritual perfection, is like unto the mirage which he that is athirst believes to be water." (M. F. P. 126) The Bahai teaching awakens within him the realization of his duty to society by sowing such seeds of (divine) truth in his heart as these:—

"The poor among you are my trust. Therefore guard my trust, and be not wholly occupied with your own ease."

"Ye are the trees of my garden; ye must bear fresh and beautiful fruits, that ye and others may be profited by them. Therefore it is necessary for ye to engage in arts and business. This is the means of attaining wealth, O ye possessors of intellect. Affairs depend upon means, and the blessing of God will appear therein and enrich you. Fruitless trees have been and will be only fit for fire."

"Deeds reveal the station of the man."

"Let the rich learn the midnight sighing of the poor, lest negligence destroy them and they be deprived of their portion of the tree of wealth. Giving and generosity are qualities of mine. Happy is he who adorns himself with my virtues."

"Thy heart is my home; purify it for my descent: thy spirit is my out-

look; prepare it for my Manifestation." (*Hidden Words* of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.)

Thus the first and fundamental, and most difficult step toward the establishment of the new social synthesis, is a change of heart in man.

And to effect this change in conscience the Bahais are today striving with all the power of their spiritual enthusiasm and wisdom. The result is already a multitude of men and women in many lands, and of many races who have been reborn of the spirit and united by the fire of the love of God into a world-wide spiritual brotherhood.

But the Bahais are also presenting to the world certain great principles of social reconstruction. Part of these principles are general and fundamental; some are very specific—a clean cut program of social laws for a new social order.

These principles include: The oneness of all humanity, a universal language, universal peace, education, the House of Justice, specific laws.

THE ONENESS OF ALL HUMANITY

The world is perishing through lack of the spiritual realization of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Therefore BAHÁ'O'LLAH addressed the world as follows: "Ye are all leaves of one tree and the fruits of one branch." With the full realization of this one principle the shackles of capitalism, industrialism, and militarism will be broken down and mutual helpfulness and co-operation, the cornerstones of economic freedom, will be laid. In a talk given April 14, 1912, in New York city, Abdul-Baha said: "Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. This great foundation needs a propelling power to spread these principles. It is self-evident that unity of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through material means. It cannot be established through political

power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. It cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this unity and agreement. Therefore it is established that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of the holy Manifestations of God, is impossible except through the power spiritual and the breaths of the Holy Spirit."

There was a time in the history of the world when the family tie was the greatest unit. Out of this grew the common interest of the community, and later as the circle widened the people became united as a nation. Thus the keynote of the last century was nationalism; but now a new and higher ideal has been given to the world by BAHÁ'O'LLAH—internationalism or humanitarianism. "Let not a man glory in this that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this that he loves his kind." All problems are world problems and a solution must needs be based upon this fundamental truth, the oneness of all mankind.

A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

For the establishment of this principle, a common auxiliary language is of paramount importance as it will facilitate the intercourse of all peoples and bring about an understanding and interchange of their ideas. Upon this matter Abdul-Baha said in Paris that "An international congress should be formed, consisting of delegates from every nation in the world, Eastern as well as Western. This congress should form a language that could be acquired by all, and every country would thereby reap great benefit.

"Until such a language is in use, the world will continue to feel the vast need of this means of intercourse. Difference

of speech is one of the most fruitful causes of dislike and distrust that exists between nations, which are kept apart by their inability to understand each other's language more than by any other reason. If everybody could speak one language, how much easier would it be to serve humanity!"

UNIVERSAL PEACE

"Every century holds the solution of one predominating problem. Although there may be many problems, yet one of the innumerable problems will loom large and become the most important of all. In the past century, the most important question that occupied the mind of man was the establishment of political freedom and this aim was more or less broadcast. But in this luminous century the greatest bestowal of the world of humanity is Universal Peace, which must be founded, so that the realm of creation may obtain composure, the East and the West, which include in their arms the five continents of the globe, may embrace each other, mankind may rest beneath the tent of oneness of the world of humanity, and the flag of universal peace may wave over all the regions. As long as this sentiment has not become the light of the assemblages of the world of humanity, eternal prosperity will not be obtained and estrangement will not be changed into good-fellowship. Like unto a spirit, this ideal must run and circulate through the veins and arteries of the body of the world."

Today the commercial and financial relations of the various countries of the world are so closely interwoven that the slightest rumor of war affects the markets and upsets the equilibrium of business everywhere. This relationship is such, that when two nations go to war, the result is inevitable—both the victor and the vanquished are losers. "The two combatants are like unto two ships which collide with each other. One may sink to the bottom of the sea, but the other will also carry away its injuries

and bruises." In fact international ties are so delicate that not only the combatants suffer but all the nations are affected. What a shock business received in the United States during the Boer War when England withdrew two hundred and fifty merchant ships from active trade to assist in military operations! No one denies the devastating and paralyzing shock to the trade, commerce and industry of the entire world resulting from the present war, yet man, suffering from the results, does not attempt to remove the causes. He is blinded by the illusion of racial, patriotic, political and religious prejudices, and by his greed for the control of the economic surplus—produced at the expense of the masses—even though he bears a burden of taxation for military purposes which deprives him of the means of proper livelihood. Truly man today knows no peace for, "in reality war is continuous. The moral effect of the expenditures of these colossal sums of money for military purposes is just as deteriorating as the actual war and its train of dreadful carnage and horrors." "Such a financial drain ossifies the veins and muscles of the body politic and congeals the delicate sensibilities of the spirit."

"Today the true duty of a powerful king is to establish a universal peace; for verily it signifies the freedom of all the people of the world. Some persons who are ignorant of the world of true humanity and its high ambitions for the general good, reckon such a glorious condition of life to be very difficult, nay rather impossible to compass. But it is not so, far from it."

Alas, however, "the kings and rulers of the world are not yet ready to acknowledge that universal peace is conducive to the life of the world of humanity. In a similar strain the nobles, the demagogues, and those in authority find their glory and reputation in naval and military preparedness. Consequently it is impossible that '*economic contentment*' be realized by the people of the world

save through the transforming power of faith. For faith is the solvent for every problem."

For the establishment of universal peace, we need an International Board of Arbitration, composed of representatives from all the nations of the earth. This Board would decide upon questions of boundaries, of national honor and property, the size of armaments for each government, and all questions of an international and justiciable nature, having the backing of the *united powers* to make its rulings effective. Together they would furnish an international police force. Most of the battleships should be turned into a mighty merchant marine. "If so great a remedy would be applied to the sick body of the world, it would certainly be the means of continually and permanently healing its illness by the conciliation of universal moderation. Reflect that, under such conditions of life, no Government would need to prepare and accumulate war materials, or would need to pay heed to the invention of new weapons of defense for the vexation and hurt of mankind. On the contrary they would require only a few soldiers, as a means of assuring the safety of the state and punishing the wicked and rebellious and preventing the growth of civil sedition. Not more than these few would be needed. In the first place, therefore, the servants of God—that is to say, all the inhabitants of a state—would be freed from bearing the burden of the tremendous expense of an army; in the second, the many persons who now devote their lives to the invention of fresh instruments of war would no longer waste their time on such work, which but encourages ferocity and bloodthirstiness, and is repugnant to the universal ideal of humanity. On the contrary, they would then employ their natural gifts in the cause of the general well-being and would contribute towards the peace and salvation of mankind. All the rulers of the world will then be set-

tled on peaceful thrones amid the glory of a perfect civilization, and all the nations and peoples will rest in the cradle of peace and comfort."

EDUCATION

"The most important of all matters in question, and that with which it is most specially necessary to deal effectively, is the promotion of education. And no freedom or salvation could be imagined in the case of any nation which had not progressed in this greatest and most important point; just as the greatest cause of degradation and decadency of every nation is bigotry and ignorance." "Another characteristic of progress consists in the earnest and sincere development of public education, in the teaching of all the useful sciences and in encouraging the people to adopt the modern inventions, in extending the spheres of arts and commerce, and endeavoring to induce them to adopt the methods by which the country may be enriched."

"If necessary, make this (education) even compulsory, for not until the veins and tendons of the nation stir with life, will any study and adoption of improvements be of any avail, because the nation is like unto the body, zeal and resolution are like unto the soul, so that the soulless body cannot move."

"In the scheme of human life, the teacher and his system of teaching plays the most important role, carrying with it the heaviest responsibilities and most subtle influence. A teacher is like unto a gardener. Just as a gardener sows the seeds and watches carefully over their sprouting, looks after their growth and progression—so also a teacher must watch over the education of the children and inculcate in their young lives the highest ideals of truth and justice."

BAHA'O'LLAH writes (in the *Kitab-el-Akdas*): "The first obligation of all the Bahais is to strive by all means to bring up and instruct their children, male or female. The girls are like the boys; there is no difference. Ignorance in both

is censured, and in both stupidity is hateful. In reality, looked at with the eye of truth, the education and instruction of the girls is more useful than that of the boys; for in time these girls will become mothers and will have children. The first educator of the child, is she not the mother? Children are like green and tender branches; as they are cultivated, they grow and increase. If the cultivation is right, they grow straight, and if it is wrong they grow crookedly, and until the end of their lives they advance upon the same path. It is thus proved that if girls without education or instruction become mothers, it is they who are the cause of this loss, the ignorance, the stupidity, the want of education of many children. Strive then with all your souls to train and educate all children, above all your daughters. On this point no excuses can be accepted." "In the divine book of this cycle, instruction and education are not optional, they are obligatory. He who educates his child or any other's children, it is as though he educated one of my children."

Abdul-Baha has declared: "If women were educated with the same advantages as men, their capacity is the same and the result would be the same; in fact women have a superior disposition to men, they are more receptive, more sensitive, their intuition is more intense. The only reason for their present backwardness in some directions is that they have not had the same educational advantages as men. If a mother is well educated, her children will also be well taught. If the mother is wise, the children will be wise; if the mother is religious, the children will also be religious. If the mother is a good woman, then the children will also be good. The future generation depends then on the mothers of today. Is not this a vital responsibility for women? Surely God does not wish such an important instrument as woman to be less perfect than she is able to become! Divine justice demands that men and women

should have equal rights; there is no difference between them, neither sex is superior to the other in the sight of God."

"The dissemination of high thoughts is the motive power in the arteries of this transitory world; yea, it is the soul of all peoples. Thoughts are infinite as the sea and the ways and manners of life are like embankments and dykes against the waves; and not until the sea moves do the waves rise up and cast on shore the pearls of wisdom." (M. F. p. 228)

"It is most clear and manifest that the national affairs will never revolve around their proper axis until the whole people have received instruction, and public thought has been directed to a single end."

THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE

"Two things are most urgently necessary to the political realm:

1. The Legislative Power.
2. The Executive Power.

The center of the executive power is the government, and the legislative power lies in the hands of thoughtful and wise men. On the other hand, if these strong pillars and firm foundations are not complete and comprehensive, how can it be supposed that there will be safety and salvation for the nation? But as, in these latter days, such excellency is rare, the government and the whole body of the nation are in sore need of just and discerning directions. Thus it is of the utmost importance to establish an assembly of learned men, who, being proficient in the different sciences and capable of dealing with all the present and future requirements will settle the questions in accordance with forbearance and firmness."

After pointing out the necessity for the establishment of "Councils" and "Deliberative Assemblies" as the solid basis of politics, Abdul-Baha lays down certain rules that will make these organizations permanent. "Firstly: The

elected members must be religious persons, God-fearing, high-minded and followers of the law. Secondly: They should have an accurate knowledge of the divine commandments, of the most important fundamental matters and of the rules of the loosing and binding of domestic affairs and foreign relations; they should possess a knowledge of the sciences and arts necessary to civilization, and finally be contented with the income derived from their personal property."

As to the election of such men he says: "The election of temporary members of the assemblies of the kingdom should depend upon the choice and satisfaction of the public, for members elected by the people are pledged to carry out their will, and to follow out their instructions. Consequently they are careful to administer impartial justice, and to live according to true religion, so that they may establish a good reputation and keep their dignity in the eyes of the people."

These Councils are called Houses of Justice and every community, village, town, city, and nation will be under the control of one of these bodies. From all the different National Houses of Justice members will be chosen to compose an Universal House of Justice, to have charge of the international problems.

"All the civic affairs and the legislation of material laws for the increasing needs of the enlightened humanity belong to the House of Justice. This, the House of Justice, will be not only a body for the legislation of laws according to the spirit and requirement of the time, but a board of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes arising between peoples. When the Universal House of Justice is organized the members will do their utmost for the realization of greater cordiality and comity amongst the nations. The laws of BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH are the unchangeable, organic laws of the Universal House of Justice. They are the very foundation upon which the

structure of additional legislation is built." "As regards the places for the convening of such a general body, it will be decided by the members. The Universal House of Justice has only the legislative function; the executive power belongs to the administrative department of government. At first, National Houses of Justice will be established in every country, and they will elect in turn members to the Universal House of Justice. Again I repeat, the House of Justice, whether National or Universal, has only legislative power, and not executive power. For example, in Europe and America the Parliament or Congress enact laws, while the Government executes these laws. The House of Justice cannot fulfill two functions at the same time—legislative and executive."

The chief concern of the government is the establishment of equal justice and equal opportunity amongst its citizens. Therefore the members of the House of Justice must close the door to political pirates and their bribery, abolish their personal hatreds and crown themselves with wisdom, piety, truthfulness, capability, benevolence and zeal and such attributes that will prevent oppression, injustice and mismanagement of affairs. As they are to be under the inspiration and protection of God, they must hearken to his call.

"Friends of God, set forth the example of Justice! Justice is a universal quality. From the highest to the lowest, justice should be sacred; from the sovereign to the merchant, the minister of state to the artisan all must be just. Be just, respect the rights of each man, 'do unto others what you would have them do unto you.' A workman who commits an injustice is as much to blame as a tyrant. Each one of us can choose between justice and injustice. I hope you will be just in your relations with others, that you will never harm your fellows, that you will respect the rights

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Massa'ul 1, 72 (December 12, 1916)

No. 15

The Teaching Campaign—Selections from the Words of Abdul-Baha

Extract from the *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, February
24, 1914.

Extract from a Tablet: "O thou maidservant of God! The penetration of the word of man depends upon the heat of the fire of the Love of God. The more the splendors of the Love of God become manifest in the heart, the greater will be the penetration of the Word."

Words of Abdul-Baha: "Any undertaking by the believers of God and which directly or indirectly helps the promotion of the Cause, and the diffusion of Brotherhood between the East and the West, is commendable. This is the Standard."

AS THIS Bahai Cause is in the nascent stage and its basic doctrines are universal, uniformity of rules and forms are not only impossible but undesirable.

A Bahai teacher is a Constructionist. He avails himself of the unimpaired materials in the past religions, reinforces the faith of the inquirer by simply holding before his path a greater and brighter light.

He has come not to destroy but to build. The inquirer will discard the superannuated and unnecessary rituals of his former religion along the road of his search.

The teacher holds aloft the flambeau

of truth, and little by little the darkness vanishes. The teacher before attempting to take hold of the search light of Truth must learn two lessons:—First, the art of manipulation, and second, the inflexibility of the will.

Just as the searchlight revolves around its axis on its hightower, sending forth into dark space a continuous stream of white, piercing light, so also the teacher must learn how to manipulate the searchlight of Truth—so as to scatter *not only the forces of spiritual darkness, but mental, intellectual, social, physical, and economic* darkness as well.

A teacher is a physician. A physician does not give the same kind of medicine

to every patient. What is good for one may cause the death of another. What alleviates one kind of sickness may aggravate the other.

The pharmacopœia of a Bahai teacher must be well supplied. If he sticks to *one kind* of prescription I do not say he shall fail, but he will *not* accomplish universal results.

He must be fairly well informed with the Scriptures, the history of the Cause, and its principles, the underlying spirit of the age, and the longings of the hearts for vaster and more spacious fields of noble labor and elevating thoughts.

There is an Oriental saying: "There are as many roads to God as the number of His creatures!"

A teacher must know these roads and strive to put himself in sympathetic touch with the weary pilgrims who are struggling along each road, and little by little teach them that what they call a road is not a road but an unbeaten hard trail leading to jungles and deserts and precipices. *When they are prepared*, he might *then* cry at the top of his voice: "O men! The Highway of the Lord of Hosts hath appeared. The Broad Boulevard of the Kingdom of God is paved. Lo! Behold!"

There are many people who have left

their trails and are walking along this Celestial Path.

Do you not see them? Are you not learning by their example? Open your eyes! Look! Look! How many companies of people composed of ever so many nationalities are thronging the Golden Way of the Kingdom!

They are marching on and on, and with every step they take they come nearer to the goal. Their path is strewn with the lilies of love, and the hyacinths of affection. In their white hands are the harps and lyres of divine music, and on their lips the songs of thanksgiving and anthems of glorification. Listen! Listen! Now they are singing in soft, harmonious murmur and anon raise their voices, flushed and inspired with rejoicing and happiness. Is it not better for thee, my brother, my sister, to leave thine own narrow trail over which is grown thorns of dogmas and underbrushes of creed, and walk on this broad, brilliantly lighted Path of the Kingdom? Here thou wilt enjoy the companionship of spiritually minded men and women who have given up everything to serve their God and the world of humanity. This golden hour is slipping by; this divine opportunity is passing away. Avail thyself of it!

Necessity of Education—Training of the Children

Words of BAHÁ'O'LLAH and Abdul-Baha.

Words of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

"It is decreed that every father must educate his sons and daughters in learning and in writing and also in that which hath been ordained in the Tablets. He who neglects that which hath been commanded (in this matter), if he is rich, it is incumbent on the trustees (of the House of Justice) to recover from him the amount required for the education of the children; otherwise (i. e., if the parent is not capable) the matter shall

devolve on the House of Justice. Verily We have made it (The House of Justice) an asylum for the poor and needy."

Words of Abdul-Baha.

"It is most clear and manifest that national affairs will never revolve around their proper axis until the whole people have received instruction, and public thought has been directed to a single end."

"The most important of all the mat-

ters in question, and that with which it is most specially necessary to deal effectively, is the promotion of education.”

“No freedom or salvation could be imagined in the case of any nation which had not progressed in this greatest and most important point; just as the greatest cause of degradation and decadence of every nation is bigotry and ignorance.”

“If necessary, make this even compulsory, for not until the veins and tendons of the nations stir with life, will any study and adoption of improvements be of any avail, because the nation is like unto the body, zeal and resolution are like unto the soul, so that the soulless body cannot move.”

Talk by Abdul-Baha given in Stuttgart, Germany, April 28, 1913.

“Among the children many blessed souls will arise, if they be trained according to the Bahai Teaching.

“If a plant is carefully nurtured by a gardener, it will become good and produce better fruit. These children must be given a good training from their *earliest* childhood. They must be given a systematic training which will further their development, in order that they may receive greater insight, so that their spiritual receptivity be broadened. Beginning in childhood they must receive instruction. They cannot be taught through books. Many elementary sciences must be made clear to them in the nursery; they must learn them in play, in amusement.

“Most ideas must be taught them through speech, not by book-learning. One child must question the other concerning those things and the other child must give the answer. In this way they will make great progress. For example, mathematical problems must also be taught in the form of questions and answers. One of the children asks a question and the other must give the answer. Later the children will of their own ac-

cord speak with each other concerning these same subjects. The children who are at the head of their class must receive premiums. They must be encouraged, and when one of them shows good advancement, for their further development they must be praised and encouraged therein.

“Even so in God-like affairs. Verbal questions must be asked and the answers must be given verbally. They must discuss (these affairs) with each other in this manner.”

Excerpt from the Notes of Mrs. Sara Herron, taken at Acca in 1900.

Abdul-Baha said: “BAHA’O’LLAH said the children are of two kinds—the mature and the immature. The mature are the children of believers, and the immature of the unbelievers. Some attain to the highest station because they are so well prepared that they can enter the highest station without earthly preparation. When we see a child wise beyond his years, it is a sign of this preparation, so we cannot question the justice of this. All are created in the same station by the Justice of God, but if some of these have become prophets and some teachers, this is from the favors and bounty of God.”

From the Notes of Miss E. J. Rosenberg, London, at Haifa, February and March, 1901.

“We must be guided entirely by the intelligence and development of the child, as to how soon we should begin to teach it.

“A woman reaches her maturity at the age of twenty, and must then certainly receive the full teaching.

“Many a child of ten is sufficiently developed and advanced to receive some teaching, and some are ready for it at the age of eight or nine.

“The great thing that is necessary to teach children is to be characterized with

the attributes of God, and to be good. Their hearts and minds must be prepared to receive the truth as soon as they are old enough to be taught anything—but children should not be taught facts and details which they may not speak of openly to their fellows and companions.

“But they *must on no account allow their children to drink wine or alcoholic drinks.* Abdul-Baha spoke of the Druses who never drank wine or smoked, and in consequence of this, many diseases were quite unknown to them.”

Excerpt from *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, June 16, 1914.

“Think of God, and let thy thought be of God, and let thy brother be trained according to the highest moral standard. In the tenderest years of their youth the pure hearts of boys and girls must be illumined with the light of love of God. Then when they grow up, most astonishing results will be produced, because the maps of their whole lives would be drawn with the hand of the spiritual Educator. A Bahai child must be trained according to the moral precepts of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, he must be taught daily of the love of God: the history of the Movement must be read to him, the love of humanity must be inculcated into every fibre of his being and the universal principles be explained to him in as easy a manner as possible to be devised. Then the power of great faith will take possession of his heart. But if these supreme precautions are not taken in the earliest stages of the child's growth, it will be most difficult to curb later on his growing manifold appetites. For then he will live according to the requirements of the world of nature and uncontrolled self. Once the lower and sensual habits of nature take hold of him, it will be very hard to reform him by any human agencies. Hence children must be brought under the control of the love of God and spiritual influence from their earliest youth. The lower appetites

of nature are like kings over men, one must defeat their forces, otherwise he will be defeated by them.”

Excerpt from *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, September 2, 1913.

As though preordained, the subject of his (Abdul-Baha's) informal talk was on education, and the duty of the mothers toward their children, a most appropriate message to go out to the world of motherhood:

“The fathers, and especially the mothers, must always think how they can best educate their children, not how to fondle and embrace them and thus spoil them. By every means at their disposal they must inculcate into their growing bodies, souls, minds and spirits, the principles of sincerity, love, trustfulness, obedience, true democracy, and kindness toward all the races, thus hereafter the world of civilization may flow in one mighty current and the children of the next generation may make secure the foundations of human solidarity and goodwill. From the tenderest childhood the children must be taught by their mothers the love of God and the love of humanity—not the love of the humanity of Asia, or the humanity of Europe, or the humanity of America, but the humanity of humankind.

“There are some mothers who have a strange, inexplicable love for their children. One may call it the inversion of love, or, as we call it in Persia, ‘Bearish love.’ This kind of love does more injury to the child than good. When I was in Acca, during the life of the Blessed Perfection, he intrusted the son of one of the believers to a German carpenter. After a month, his mother went to BAHÁ'O'LLAH and lamented and be-moaned, saying: ‘I want my son, because he is unhappy with this carpenter, for he curses his religion.’ BAHÁ'O'LLAH told her, ‘Go to Aga (the Master) and act according to whatever he

says.' She came to me, and after hearing her side of the story I said to her: 'The Germans never curse any one; they are not accustomed to it.' She went away, and after another month she came again to BAHÁ'O'LLAH with another complaint, that this carpenter had forced her son to carry on his back a load of wheat. Again I told her that if he had done so it was for discipline. I satisfied her, but she was murmuring inwardly. A few months rolled by and she returned with another set of complaints, frankly confessing that she did not want her son to be away from her, that he was the apple of her eye.

"Realizing how selfish her love was for her son, I told her at last that I would not take him away, that he must stay with the carpenter for eight years until his apprenticeship was over. Well, she yielded to the inexorable situation. After eight years of study he left his master, and his mother was very proud of him, everywhere praising his industry because his work was demanded on every hand. In short, the mothers must not think of themselves, but of the progress of their children, because upon the children of today—whether boys or girls—depends the moulding of the civilization of tomorrow."

Excerpt from *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, October 18, 1914.

"The children must receive divine and material education at the same time, and be protected from temptations and vices. How wonderful will it be if the teachers are faithful, attracted and assured, educated and refined Bahais, well-grounded in the science of pedagogy and familiar with child psychology; thus they may train the children with the fragrances of God. In the scheme of human life the teacher and his system of teaching plays the most important role, carrying with it the heaviest responsibilities and most subtle influence. A teacher is

like unto a gardener. Just as a gardener sows the seeds and watches carefully over their sprouting, looks after their growth and progression—so also a teacher must watch over the education of the children and inculcate in their young lives the highest ideals of truth and justice."

Excerpt from *Diary Letter of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, November 12, 1913.

Abdul-Baha is discussing the necessity of banishing superstitions and explaining how the apparent "lethargy" in the Mohammedan world is not because the religion of the Arabian prophet was or is false, but it is because the Mohammedans have forgotten the pure democratic principles of the first age of Islam, and have taken hold of spurious ceremonies and false premises, and are spending their time in the study of dead theology and worthless metaphysics. It is written in the Koran: "There is no virtue in this, whether thou mayest turn thy face (at the time of prayer) toward the East or the West; but the virtue lies in this, that thou mayest adorn thyself with righteousness and practise philanthropy." Take the example of the theological students of the University of Al-Azhar. They spend all their lives in that institution with no visible results. When a young man enters a western college he comes out after a few years, either an engineer, or an electrician, architect, physician, or any of the many technical and practical professions. But those students of Azhar waste their wonderful lives and are a heavy burden on the shoulders of the state. This is a crime, an unpardonable crime. Then, turning to a Bahai who has two of his children in a French school, Abdul-Baha said:

"Give to your children a manual profession, something whereby they may be able to support themselves and others. Let polite literature take care of itself. Teach them a technical art or profession."

The Social Teachings of the Bahai Movement

(Continued from page 139)

of all men, and above all, consider the rights of others before your own."

SPECIFIC LAWS.

The spiritual principle in the establishment of the Bahai regulations and economic laws is the exaltation of *work*. "It is incumbent on every one to engage in some one occupation, such as arts, crafts, trades and the like. This, the occupation, is identical with the worship of God. Waste no time in idleness and indolence, but occupy yourselves with that which will profit yourselves and others beside yourself. The most despised of men before God is he who sits and begs. Every soul who is occupied in an art or trade, this will be accounted an act of worship before God." (BAHA'O'LLAH).

Thus the acquisition of wealth is not a sin, provided it is not accumulated at the expense and deprivation of another, for, "riches earned by personal effort with divine assistance, in various trades, agriculture and the arts, and rightly administered, are justly deserving of praise, forasmuch as if a wise and discerning man acquires them, they become a ready means of benefit to the state." Poverty must be eliminated and the surplus wealth devoted to the establishment of schools and colleges, in the propagation of science and for the public benefit, but man is warned by BAHA'O'LLAH: "Be not engrossed with this world, for with fire we test the gold, and with gold we try the servants."

The prevention of monopoly in the control of wealth is one of the most vital questions of social philosophy and the distribution of the vast fortunes has been theorized upon from many angles. The method presented by BAHA'O'LLAH is both direct and simple. It is based on the distribution of estates into the following seven divisions:

1. Children.
2. Husband or wife.
3. Fathers.
4. Mothers.
5. Brothers.
6. Sisters.
7. Teachers.

If anyone dies without heirs, the House of Justice has the right to the legacy in order to spend it for the good of the commonwealth.

If one dies without any heirs excepting children, two-thirds goes to them and one-third to the House of Justice. If there is no one to inherit the property and there are other relatives such as nephews or nieces, two-thirds goes to them; otherwise the two-thirds will go to the uncles and aunts (fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters) and after them to their sons and daughters; and the other one-third to the House of Justice. If one dies while his father is still alive, and he has children, the children will inherit what was allotted to their father. In the case of children who are under years or incapable of managing their affairs, their legacy should be put into the hands of a trustee or the "House of Partnership" to be invested until their maturity, the trustee receiving part of the acquired profits as his compensation, after deducting the portion for God's work, debts of the deceased if any, and funeral expenses—with honor and deference.

Thus a very clear method is given for preventing of the handing down of vast fortunes in one family from generation to generation, the evils of which are very manifest, and the results of which will be the abolition of monopoly and more equal distribution. Attention may be called to the fact that teachers, always underpaid, are especially provided for in this arrangement.

Closely allied to this question is the

problem of the maintenance of the commonwealth, for the House of Justice would not receive sufficient revenue from the inheritance tax alone to carry on the duties and responsibilities of the state. In the reorganization of affairs Abdul-Baha begins with the land. He says: "The question of economics must commence with the farmers and from them proceed to the other classes, inasmuch as the number of farmers is greater than all other classes, many, many times greater. Therefore, it is becoming that the economic problem be solved with the farmer, for the farmer is the first active agent in the body politic. In brief, from among men of every village, a board should be organized and the affairs of that village be under the control of that board. Likewise, a general storehouse should be founded with the appointment of a secretary. At the time of harvest, with the approval of the members of that board, a determined percentage of the entire harvest should be appropriated for the storehouse. This storehouse is to have seven revenues. They are:

1. Tithes.
2. Taxes on animals.
3. Wealth without inheritors.
4. All things found whose owners cannot be discovered.
5. A third of all treasures (money) found in the earth.
6. A third of all mines.
7. Voluntary contributions.

"On the other hand there are seven expenditures:

1. General running expenses of the institution, salaries, etc., and the administration of public safety, including hygiene department.
2. Tithes to the general government.

3. Taxes for animals for the state.
4. Support of orphanages.
5. Support of cripples and incurables.
6. Support of educational institutions.
7. Supplying any deficiencies in the expenses of the poor."

Thus the first revenue is the tithe based upon a man's income. A person having an income, for example, of \$500.00 and his necessary expenses being \$500.00, he will not be required to pay any tithe. If his expenditures are \$500.00 and his income is \$1,000.00, then a tenth will be required of him. And so on in an increasing ratio according to the difference between the income and necessary expenditure, for man will have everything that he needs for his welfare and a large surplus besides. On the other hand, a person, owing to illness, poor crops and through no fault of his own, may be unable to earn a sufficient income to meet his necessary expenses for the year, then what he lacks for the necessary maintenance of himself and family will be supplied by the general storehouse. After certain amounts have been set aside for each of these seven expenditures, then any surplus will be transferred to the general treasury of the nation for general expenses.

"When such a system is established each individual member of the body politic will live in the utmost comfort and happiness and the degrees will be preserved. There will be no disturbance of these degrees whatever, for these degrees are the essential needs of the body politic. The body politic is like unto an army. An army needs a commander-in-chief, colonel, captain, lieutenant and private. It is impossible that all of them enjoy the same rank. Preservation of degrees is necessary but each member of that army must live in the utmost comfort and ease. Likewise, a city is in need of a mayor, judge, merchants, bankers, tradesmen and farmers. Undoubtedly these degrees should be

preserved, otherwise the public order will be disturbed.”*

Another specific law is the prohibition of slavery. Up to the present time the governments have been engaged with the establishment of political freedom and the liberation of the chattel slave, but now a new and greater problem confronts the world,—industrial emancipation. When in San Francisco in 1912, Abdul-Baha said to the American people: “Between 1860 and 1865 you did a wonderful thing; you knocked the shackles from chattel slavery; but today you must do a much more wonderful thing: you must destroy *industrial slavery*.”

Under our present system the public is safeguarded through the force of laws based upon retaliation and correction, generally inadequate, but when the divine civilization is established man will be so trained and enlightened that he will shun crimes and evil deeds without any fear of material punishment. He will consider the very crime itself to be the greatest retribution and punishment. Until man is advanced to this condition, inasmuch as crime is due chiefly to ignorance, it will be the duty of the community to execute penal laws through its right of defense and self-protection, not through the spirit of revenge which breeds hatred and animosity. It is therefore incumbent upon man to be a dutiful, law abiding citizen of his country.

“The solution of economic questions, for instance, will not be accomplished by array of labor against capital and capital against labor in strife and conflict, but by the voluntary attitude of sacrifice on both sides. Then a real and lasting justness of conditions will be brought about. If a capitalist is forced to give

up a portion of his income and possessions there will be no love in his heart, no permanent benefit in his action. But if it be given in the spirit of God, everything will be accomplished. As it is now the forces of labor strike and the capitalists retaliate. If the latter should voluntarily add to the scale of wages, love is evident and the greatest good results. Briefly: among the Bahais there are no extortionate, mercenary and unjust practices, no rebellious demands, no revolutionary uprisings against existing governments.”

The question of wages, which is the cause of nearly all industrial warfare at the present time, is so solved by Abdul-Baha that: “It will not be possible in the future for men to amass great fortunes by the labor of others. The rich will willingly divide. They will come to this gradually, naturally, by their own volition. It will never be accomplished by war and bloodshed. The ruling power or government cannot treat the rich unjustly. To force them to divide their wealth would be unjust. In the future, proportionately about three-quarters of the profits will go to the workmen and one-quarter to the owner.”

The evolution of the body politic cannot take place overnight but just as the new life of the physical world requires the spring winds, the April showers and the heat of the sun in order to grow and develop, so “in like manner, when the sincere purposes and the justice of the sovereign, the knowledge and perfect political efficiency of the ministers of state and the ambition and enthusiasm of the people are all realized at the same time, then indeed, the millennium of progress and human perfection, the consummation of the glory and the prosperity of state and nation will be accomplished.”

Work and worship go hand in hand and the Bahai Temple of worship, known as the Mashrak-el-Azkar, an Arabic expression meaning the “Dawning Point of Mention (of God),” holds an unique

*This is a recognition of the difference in degree of human capacities but the vital point is that to everyone is granted an equal opportunity for the development of his own ability.

position, for it combines both the material and the spiritual. "The arrangement of the Mashrak-el-Azkar is such that it will exert the greatest influence upon the civilized world on account of its many accessories. Among them are the following: School for Orphans, College for Higher Scientific Education, Hospital, Home for the Cripples, and Hospice. When the Mashrak-el-Azkar, with its accessories, is founded in the world, aside from the religious and spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization." The doors of these institutions will be open to all nations and religions.

Abdul-Baha recognizes the fact that in order to establish a better economic and social condition certain laws and regulations are necessary for the best welfare of humanity, but he goes on to say: "Where thousands are considering these questions, we have more essential questions. The secrets of the whole economic question are divine in nature and are concerned with the world of the heart and spirit. In the Bahai teaching this is most completely explained, and without the consideration of the Bahai teaching it is impossible to realize a better state. All this will come to pass—the Bahais will bring about the better state,—but not in a way that will have anything to do with corruption and sedition; not *warfare*, but *perfect welfare*. In short the hearts must be so connected together, love must become so dominant, that the rich shall most willingly, out of the free will of the hearts, help and extend assistance to the poor, and should take a step in the way of these adjustments. . . . You must strive as much as possible to create love in the hearts, in order that love may become shining and radiant. When that love shines in the hearts, even as this (electric) light, then it will permeate other

hearts, and when the love of God obtains, everything else will be realized. This is the foundation. Be thoughtful of this. Think of becoming the cause yourselves of the attraction of the souls. Show the people what economics is, what love is, what kindness is, what severance is, what giving is."

"The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found, and the condition is such that unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power within them there can be no healing, no agreement among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body politic today. Without these there can be no progress or prosperity attained. Therefore the friends of God must adhere to the power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men. Science cannot cure the illness of the body politic. Science cannot create amity and fellowship in human hearts. Neither can patriotism or racial prejudice effect a remedy. It must be accomplished solely through the divine bounties and the spiritual bestowals which have descended from God in this Day for that purpose."

In conclusion since the Bahai Movement is essentially spiritual, attention is called to the significant fact that "these precepts were given more than half a century ago—at that moment no one spoke of universal peace—nor of any of these principles, but BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH proclaimed them to all the sovereigns of the world. . . . They are the spirit of this age, the light of this age; they are the well-being of this age." The Bahai Movement has breathed a new spirit into the dead body of the world of humanity and a new universal and divine consciousness has been presented to mankind for investigation.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Sharaf 1, 72 (December 31, 1916)

No. 16

The Divine Art of Living

A COMPILATION BY MRS. MARY M. RABB

EDITORIAL

TOO often we think of religion as a set of creeds and beliefs, as merely a beautiful philosophy, subject-matter for intellectual speculation. And true religion, of course, is a philosophy divinely luminous in its completeness. Yet the philosophy is but a light which points the way to a radiant life. To see the light on the path is of value only when we walk in the path and, climbing its shining steps by acts of will and deeds of love, ascend into the Kingdom.

In his tablets, those glorious outpourings of the essence of the Bahai revelation, Abdul-Baha always speaks of love, of unity, of life abounding. He mentions philosophy only when he is questioned.

The Bahai Movement will sweep through America when it is presented by its followers and teachers as a way of life. And we are effective teachers of spiritual truth only when our own hearts are pure flames of love and our words fall as a consuming and holy fire. But how may we attain to this life which is so pure and radiant that its love shall burn away the darkness and sin which envelope our world? How may we win this exalted station of the true teacher?

With this issue of the STAR OF THE WEST we print the opening chapter of a wonderful compilation by Mrs. Mary M. Rabb of Portland, Oregon, on this the most important topic known to the human soul. Successive chapters of this compilation on "The Divine Art of Living" will appear throughout the year presenting the steps on the path to the exalted station to which every soul is called. Here is the way "to live the life" which "the people of reality" today are seeking. Here is the path revealed by those who are themselves the way, the truth and the life.

CHAPTER ONE

"Welcome to the Kingdom of God"

GRACE and welcome unto you. I wish you not the temporal strength of the passing body, but the eternal strength of the immortal soul. Some (persons) can be compared unto prepared lamps, only waiting the Spirit's breath to illumine them; while others are still unprepared. There is some wood that is inflamed at once; there is a damp, wet wood that has to be warmed before the flame can pen-

etrate the heart. Again there is wood as hard as stone and verily, in vain the heat and flame caress it. Some earth must be tilled before the seed can be planted. Some plants absorb water in the earth and others remain dry. Open your hearts that they may be filled; open your souls that the divine light may shine therein. Strive, strive to receive the Spirit of Truth. Truth awaits your call.

Some (persons) with serious ills go

from celebrated doctor to celebrated doctor, but they all fail to cure for the power is with the Divine. So it is with your soul. Your heart is pure and the Spirit can enter therein. Cut yourself from the world. Pray in the Greatest Name, then the breeze of truth, the flood of light will enter your searching soul. There is nothing else to be sought on earth or in the universe.

Yes, remain here. Your room will have no worldly comforts, but will be filled with the love of God. During a terrible storm Christ wandered on the mountain seeking shelter; a den of wild beasts was all he found and that was the beloved Son of God. All the world was his, but no worldly riches.

The Spirit will come to you with increased force, for your being must become as a temple in which the truth of God can dwell.

Welcome to the Kingdom of God. Even if every moment you thanked God a thousand times for the grace of being born in this, the most marvelous century and for the great favor of being allowed to reach the Promised Land, even that would not be sufficient thanks.

Your faith comes like rain; the first drops are far between, but soon it will pour in torrents. Your faith is also like a seed that will bear its fruit. In a tree we judge of its life and vigor by the way it grows; so it is with man. The knowledge of God rises in the heart like the sun; it mounts, mounts, always casting an immortal light.

You must be reborn by the Spirit. A child in the matrix has eyes and ears but only learns their use when it is born. A man cannot comprehend the Spirit before he has put aside earthly things.

All the centuries are the bringing forth of the twentieth. The deepest wish of many great men was to live in the latter day. . . . In past times people esteemed themselves blessed to live in the same time as one of the saints. How much greater is your privilege! To the

people then a candle was given, while to you the sun.

The Spirit resembles a rivulet when the earth fills the soul. Put away the terrestrial and the mighty torrent of living water will rush through your freed body.

(Words of Abdul-Baha to Miss..... October 19-14, 1900, on the occasion of her visit to Acca.)

Although the life of the creature is called life, in reality, compared to the life of the children (of the Kingdom) it is not life; on the contrary it is death.

For instance, a mineral substance contains life, but this life compared to the life of the vegetable is death; in like manner the life of the vegetable compared to the life of an animal is death; in like manner the life of human beings compared to the life of the children of the Kingdom is death. As his majesty Christ said: "Let the dead bury their dead, because he who is born of the flesh is flesh and he who is born of the spirit is spirit."

Therefore, it is evident that life (in its true sense) is the life of the spirit and that life is the love of God, divine inspiration, spiritual joys and glad tidings of God. Seek, O servant of God, this life until day and night you remain in limitless joy.

(An early Tablet.)

The life of man will at last end in this world. We must all take out of this life some fruit. The tree of one's existence must bear some fruit. If a tree has no fruit you must cut it down and burn it; it would be useless for other purposes.

Question: "Abdul-Baha, what is the fruit of the human tree?"

"It is the love of God; it is the love of humankind; it is to wish good for all the people of the earth; it is service to humanity; it is truthfulness and honesty; it is virtues and good morals; it is devo-

tion to God; it is the education of souls; such are the fruits of the human tree. Otherwise it is only wood—nothing else.”

(Kinney-Beebe-Thompson Notes of the words of Abdul-Baha, June-July 1909.)

The heart must of necessity be spiritual. A tree *must* be fruitful; it may be very tall, very verdant, but yield no fruits. The fruits of the tree of the human life are the love of God, magnetic, spiritual susceptibilities, heavenly illumination, the knowledge of God, praiseworthy attributes, good morals and conduct. A person whose tree of life produces such fruits is a Bahai; otherwise he is of the earth earthy, self-occupied, and following the dictates of his own desires, and is man only by name. As his holiness Christ says: “Ye shall know the tree by its fruits.”

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 1, 1914.)

If the fruit of the existence of man is not servitude at the threshold of the Almighty I declare by the living, self-subsistent God that life is death, existence is non-existence, non-being is better than being, pleasure is pain, joy is sorrow, immortality is mortality. In this court we must be humble and meek, active and progressive, wide-awake and thoughtful, true and sincere, noble and good, straightforward and zealous. This is the outcome of life! This is the result of ceaseless endeavor! This is the prize to be won! This is the illumination of the world of humanity! This is the eternal life! This is the sublimity of human nature. This is the heavenly glory! This is the radiant crown of the Kingdom of Abha!

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 18, 1914.)

The world is mortal. In one instant it will pass away; but the principle of ease and tranquillity is the soul which is in the eternal world. Real life is the life

of the spirit, while the body has to die when its light has come to an end. Therefore, of what importance is it?

(Extract from Tablet to Mrs. Dealey, revealed July 14, 1911.)

Know thou, verily, God hath preferred the insight to the sight; because the sight sees the material things, while the insight apprehends the spiritual. The former witnesses the earthly world, while the latter sees the world of the Kingdom. The former's judgment is temporary, while the latter's vision is everlasting. . . .

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*; Vol. 3, p. 604.)

I hope . . . certain souls may arise who may prove radiant lamps to the world of humanity and a merciful spirit to the phenomenal body; that they may be the cause of the purification of souls and the means of the sanctification of hearts;—that they may know this mortal world as fleeting shadow and call the rest and repose, the pleasure and blessing, the wealth and sovereignty of the earth the waves of the sea of imagination; that they may arise in such wise to live by the divine teachings and exhortations of (Baha'o'llah) as to sparkle like the morning star from the horizon of holiness.

(Extract from Tablet to a Seattle, Wash., believer; translated at Haifa, August 18, 1909.)

It was my aim that after thy return to . . . thou shouldst hoist the ensign of the great guidance, that like the morning star thou shouldst glisten with the light of the great bestowal and that thou shouldst shout so as to awaken them that are asleep and set aglow all who are in lethargy. *This is work!*

Otherwise the foundation of man is entirely shaky and without immortality. The numbered days of life will come to an end, the bright days will at last become cloudy and at the last breath man,

with limitless regrets, will hasten to the other world.

It is my aim that thou mayst advance to such an extent in the perfections in the realm of man, in the divine manifestations and the susceptibilities of the conscience as to become an angel of heaven and a manifestation of the favors of the Merciful.

(Extract from Tablet to an American believer; translated July 17, 1910.)

O my servants! The Ancient Beauty* commands: Hasten to the shadow of immortality, nearness and mercy from the shadow of desire, remoteness and heedlessness. Be ye resigned like unto the earth, so that the fragrant, sacred, multi-colored myrtles of my knowledge may grow in the soil of existence. Be ye ablaze like unto fire, so that ye may consume thick veils and quicken and immortalize the cold and veiled bodies through the heat of divine love. Be ye pure like unto air so that ye may enter the sacred abode of my friendship.

O servants! If ye be informed of the wonders of my generosity and grace which I have deposited in yourselves ye will certainly be cut from all directions and seeking to know your own selves, which is identical with knowing myself, will find yourselves independent of all save me and will see the ocean of my providence and the deeps of my beneficence in yourselves, with your outward and inward eye, as manifest and clear as the sun shining from the name of Abha.† Do not waste this most wonderful, most holy station, through the promptings of fancy and desire and through the falsehoods of superstition and blindness. Ye are like unto a bird which, with all joy and fragrance soars with the utmost security in the cheerful air of the Praised One. Then in the (imaginary) hope of grains it inclines toward the mud and water of the earth and, with all eagerness, besmears itself with dust and mire. Then, when it attempts to reascend it

*†Names for God.

finds itself unable and a captive, forasmuch as wings besmeared with water and clay are not capable of flight. At that time that bird of the exalted heaven finds itself a dweller in the mortal earth!

Now, O servants, do not besmear your wings with the mire of heedlessness and imagination and the earth of animosity and rancor so that ye be deprived and prevented from soaring in the sacred heaven of knowledge.

O servants! If ye are possessed of sight, enter the city of seeing. If ye are the people of hearing, step into the land of hearing. And if ye are the possessors of hearts, choose an abode in the fortress of the assured ones so that in these dark days ye may not be veiled from witnessing the lights of the beauty of Abha. . . .

O servants! Inscribe the exhortations of the Spirit with the pen of resignation and the ink of submission and assurance upon the tablet of your heart and turn in every instant lest ye may neglect a single letter thereof, and advance toward the True One with all exertion, turning away from all else save him. For this is the root of the leaf of command grown upon the divine tree. . . . This world is a show without reality and is a non-existence adorned in the form of existence. Do not attach your hearts thereto. Do not sever yourselves from your Creator and be not of those who are heedless.

Truly I say, the world is like unto a mirage which has the shadow of water. Those who are athirst make abundant efforts in its search but when reaching it remain deprived and portionless. Or, it is like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul; when the lover reaches it he finds it of no worth and value and finds no gain save great pain and despondency. . . .

(Words of Baha'o'llah, in a Tablet called *Tablet of Ahmad*.)

O Son of Dust! All things in the heavens and in the earth have I ordained

for thee except the hearts which I have appointed as a place for the descent of the manifestation of my beauty and glory; . . .

(*Hidden Words*, Persian, verse 27.)

Asked, "What is true greatness in man?" Abdul-Baha answered:

"His spiritual attributes. No one can destroy his spiritual qualities; they are from God."

(*Ten Days in the Light of Acca*; p. 13.)

The station of man is great if he hold to truth and rectitude and keep firm and steadfast in the command.

A real man is seen before the Merciful One like unto the heaven; his sight and hearing are the sun and moon and his luminous and shining qualities are the stars; his station is the highest station and his traces are the educators of the world.

(*Kitab-el-Ahd*; Baha'o'llah's Words.)

In the beginning of his life man was in the matrix world. In the world of the matrix he obtained capacity and preparation for this world. The forces and powers necessary for this world he attained there. In this world he needed eyes; he received them, potentially, in the other. He needed ears; therefore he obtained them in the world of the matrix. All the powers he needed in this world he attained potentially in the world of the matrix. In the world of the matrix therefore he was prepared for this world; so that when he came to this world he found that all the necessary forces were ready—all his needs for material sustenance were provided.

Therefore in this world also he must prepare himself and get ready for the life hereafter. That of which he is in need in the world of the Kingdom he must obtain here. Just as he prepared

himself by acquiring the forces necessary in this world in the world of the matrix, so likewise it is necessary that all that is needful in the Kingdom, all the forces of the Kingdom—must be acquired in this world.

What is he in need of in the Kingdom after he is transferred from this world to the other world? That world is a world of sanctity; therefore it is necessary that he acquire sanctity in this world. In that world there is need of radiance; therefore radiance must be acquired in this world. In that world there is need of spirituality. In this world he must acquire spirituality. In that world faith and assurance, the knowledge of God, the love of God, are needed. These he must acquire in this world so that after he ascends from this mortal to that immortal world he shall find that all that is needful in that life eternal is ready for him.

It is self-evident that that world is a world of lights; therefore there is need of illumination. That world is a world of love; hence love of God is needed. That world is a world of perfections; virtues of perfection must be acquired. That world is a world of the breaths of the Holy Spirit and in this world must they be acquired. That world is a world of the life eternal. In this world must he acquire it. But how can he? By what means can he acquire these things? How is he to obtain these merciful powers?

First, through the knowledge of God. Second,—through the love of God. Third,—through faith. Fourth,—through philanthropic deeds. Fifth,—through self-sacrifice. Sixth,—through severance from this world. Seventh,—through sanctity and holiness. Unless he obtain these forces, unless he attain to these requirements, surely he will be deprived of the life eternal. But if he attains the knowledge of God, becomes ignited through the fire of the love of God, witnesses the great and mighty signs, becomes the cause of love among mankind and lives in the utmost sanctity and holiness, surely he shall attain to second birth, will

be baptized with the Holy Spirit and witness the life eternal.

(*Star of the West*; Vol. 5, No. 11, p. 11.)

Praise be to God that his holiness Baha'o'llah, has spread before us the heavenly table upon which one finds every kind of food. There is the food of faith and assurance; the sustenance of divine virtues; the bread of the love of God; the meat of the glad-tidings of the kingdom of Abha; the victuals of severance and detachment; the viands of enkindlement and attraction; the nutriment of sanctity and holiness; the dish of attraction with the fragrances of God; the sustenance of the breaths of the Holy Spirit; the food of eternal life; the nourishment of teaching the cause of God and promulgating the religion of God. In short, one finds on this divine table all kinds of spiritual food which constitutes the real Supper of the Lord.

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, October 17, 1914.)

The world and its objects are transitory. Phenomena undergo change and transformation but God and his servants remain unalterable and not subject to transmutation. We must attach our hearts to Him if we desire to be eternally happy.

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, April 9, 1914.)

A material man lets himself be worried and harrassed by little things but a spiritual man is always calm and serene under all circumstances.

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 10, 1914.)

If a person is confirmed in the accomplishment of the services of the Kingdom, his worldly conditions are of sec-

ondary importance. The greatest bestowal that it is possible for a soul to attain in this world is this: that he may spend his life, his forces, his possessions, his body, his heart and his spirit in the path of the service of the Blessed (Glory of God) and that towards the last of his life he may drink the cup of martyrdom. This is indeed the most blessed state, the loftiest pinnacle of perfection!

Is there a greater or more harrowing regret in the world than to spend one's physical energies in the awful road of lust, sinful passions, inordinate desires and the frivolities of the age! No! I declare by God! O how pitiful to watch the last flicker of hope dying out of such a life! Because when the last curtain falls on such a dissipated life he finds to his utter remorse his nerves racked, his resources drained, his fortune wrecked, his hopes unfulfilled, his opportunities lost, his visions unaccomplished, his energies wasted and the light of his spirit extinguished! What were the results of these deeds? What was the sum total of these thoughts? What was the outcome of this sowing of wild oats? Where is the man with his youthful ambitions? In what heap of mud and water did he throw the brilliant gems of his ideals? What has he done with his God-given intelligence? He has indeed lived a fruitless life, surrounded himself with the suggestions of passions and the gratification of selfish appetites. His life is brought to a tragic close, enveloped with regrets, remorse! Verily this is the most evident loss!

But, on the other hand, how glorious is the life of a person when toward the last days of his earthly existence he is able to contemplate with great satisfaction that, praise be to God, through the assistance of the Almighty, he has been fortunate and given his belongings, his life, his spirit, his body and all his faculties in the path of the love of God, accepting all manner of persecutions, revilings and afflictions with serenity of

consciousness and standing firm in the Cause till his very last breath. . . .

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, February 20, 1914.)

While we were living in Bagdad one of the most honorable men in Persia came there. He called on Baha'o'llah and as he used to come and see us often I became attached to him. I grew to love him very much and as he was not a believer I spoke to him about the Cause. I used to tell him:

“My friend, The aim of this life is not the acquirement of wealth, honor and glory, not the display of the animal attributes such as eating, sleeping and chasing worldly pleasures. Such aimless and insipid pursuits do not befit man who is endowed with divine effulgence and radiant longings. The object of this life is the attainment of the spirit, the manifestation of the fear of God, the attainment of the knowledge of God, the acquisition of the love of God, the attaining the good pleasure of the Lord of mankind. If man characterizes himself with these God-like attributes he will become freed from all ties of this mortal world, the light of God will shine in his heart, he will hear the voice of the heavenly angels, he will be surrounded by the confirmations of the Holy Spirit, he will become an irradiating center of the perfect names and qualities of the Merciful and a light through which the darkness of the world of humanity is dispelled!”

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, February 19, 1914.)

When a man is thirsty he drinks water. When he is hungry he eats food. But if a man be not thirsty, water gives him no pleasure and if his hunger be already satisfied, food is distasteful to him.

This is not so with spiritual enjoyments. Spiritual enjoyments bring al-

ways joy. The love of God brings endless happiness. These are joys in themselves and not alleviations. The life of animals is more simple than that of man. Animals have all their needs supplied for them. All the grasses of the meadows are free to them. The birds build their nests in the branching trees and the palaces of kings are not so beautiful. If earthly needs are all then the animals are better supplied than man. But man has another food, the heavenly manna of the knowledge of God. All the divine prophets and Manifestations appeared in the world that this heavenly manna might be given to man. This is the food which fosters spiritual growth and strength and causes pure illumination in the souls of men. They become filled with the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They increase in the knowledge of God and in those virtues which belong to the world of humanity. They attain to the very image and likeness of God.

What greater joy is there than this? When they invoke God's favor at the divine threshold their minds become open, they enter into spiritual pleasures and make discoveries. By this they enjoy ecstasies of the Spirit and see the world illumined. They are filled with insight. They become fully attuned to the bounties of God and see them face to face, acquiring in themselves the virtues of the Manifestations.* Thus it is that man shall attain to the utmost hopes of the holy ones and the saints.

If man could not attain to this illumination and these bounties the mineral world would be better than he for it is not deficient in anything. When man is deprived of the illumination of God he feels a lack and a shortcoming on his part.

* i. e. great, world prophets. “Manifestation” when spelled with a capital “M” signifies in these pages a divinely perfect master who manifests the attributes of God as a pure polished mirror reflects the sun.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

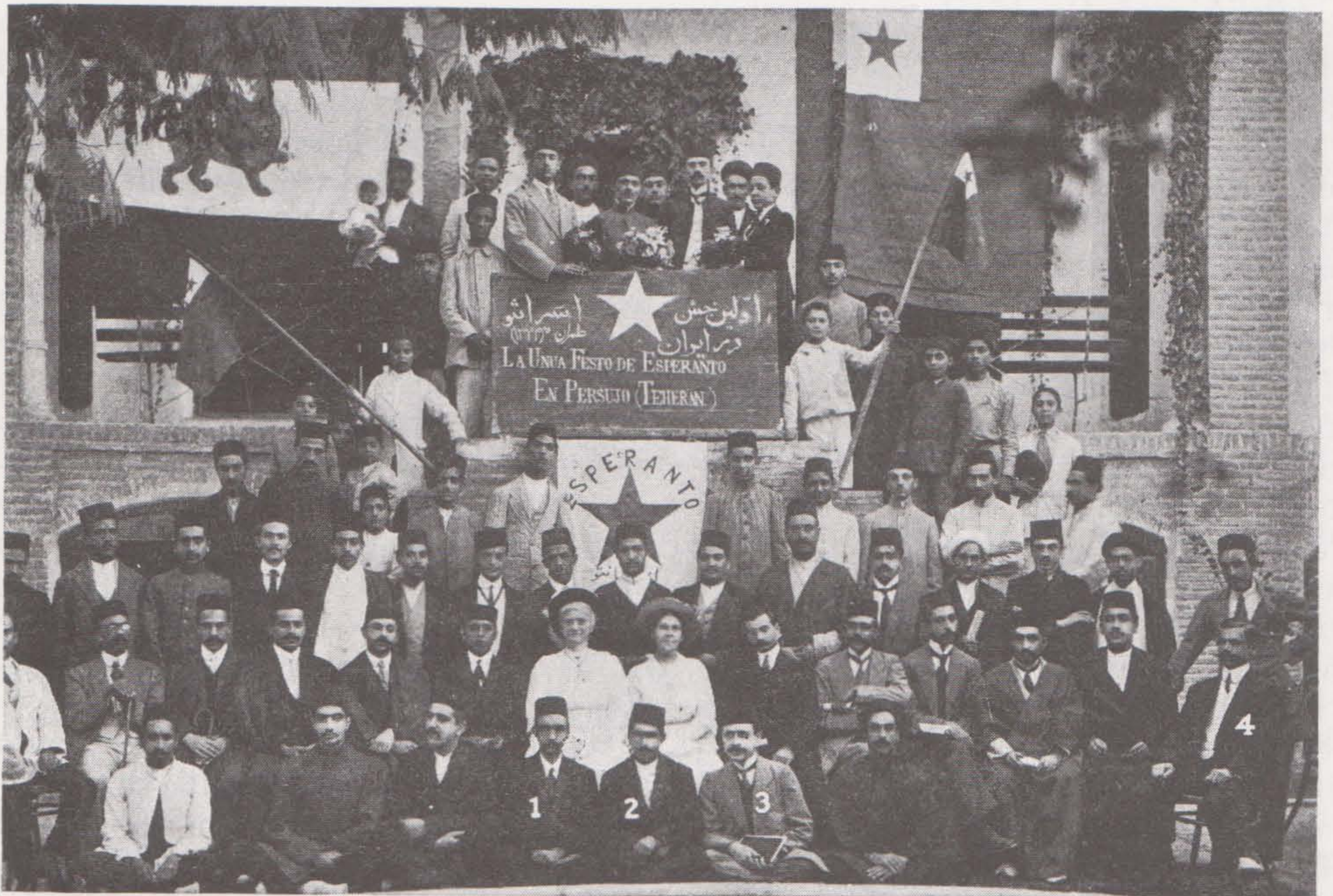
Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Sharaf 1, 72 (December 31, 1916)

No. 16



Esperanto class in Teheran, Persia

To the STAR OF THE WEST:

I am loaning you the photograph of the Esperanto class in Teheran, Persia, for reproduction. It was sent me by Miss Stewart. She writes concerning it:

“No. 1 is Bahman Mirza, a prince; No. 2, Mohammed Yazdi, a bright boy who has just gone to Kazvin to teach school there; No. 3 is Manichair Khan.

These three have given Esperanto its start here. No. 4, sitting in a chair, is a Jew, whose name is Solem. He was in Paris at the same time that Abdul-Baha was there. He is the teacher of the Esperanto class.”

In the center sits Dr. Susan I. Moody to the left, and Miss Elizabeth H. Stewart to the right.

Isabella D. Brittingham.

The Teaching Campaign

“Forward! Forward! my beloved soldiers”

(Extract from letter by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.)

While at Stuttgart, Germany, Abdul-Baha was one day looking out of his hotel window, and, observing a regiment of soldiers passing by in great array, he said:

“They are ready to fight for their fatherland. How barbarous it seems to send men who do not even know each other to the battlefield in order to shoot each other down. The Bahai Grand Army consists of the invisible angels of the Supreme Concourse. Our swords are the words of love and life. Our armaments are the invisible armaments of Heaven. We are fighting against the forces of darkness. O my soldiers, my beloved soldiers! Forward! Forward! Have no fear of defeat; do not have failing hearts. Our supreme commander is Baha'o'llah. From the heights of glory he is directing this dramatic engagement. He commands us! Rush forward! Rush forward! Show the strength of your arms. Ye shall scatter the forces of ignorance. Your war confers life; their war brings death. Your war is the cause of the illumination of all mankind. Your war means victory upon victory. Their war is defeat upon defeat. Their war is the origin of destruction. There are no dangers before you. Push forward! Fire! Fire! Attack the enemy. Your efforts should be crowned with the diadem of eternal peace and brotherhood.

“His holiness the Christ was fighting even upon the cross and his triumphs have continued through ages and cycles.”

News from the “soldiers” at the front

“**A**RISE! Shine for the Light has come”: with unconquerable splendor to the American world. The hour has struck; the heavenly bell has rung. The most blessed year is at hand. A divine charter is spread before us in the form of five Tablets to the East, the West, the North, the South. This charter is given to us by the most glorious Servant of the world. Nothing more is needed. The time has arrived when the soldiers of light must go forth “and shine with such brilliancy as to illumine (the) entire continent.”

Those who arise to serve are surround-

ed with the heavenly hosts of confirmation. At first this was a promise; now it is a verified reality. From all parts of the country come radiant glad tidings of the “majestic onward march of the Cause of God.”

Mrs. Brittingham, Mr. Remey, Mr. Latimer, Mrs. Killius, Mr. Dunn, Mrs. Ralston, Mrs. Gillen and many others have entered the vast expanses of the Western States and are planting the pure seeds of the Kingdom in the prairie and the mountain regions of the untilled West. Mrs. Ford, Mr. William H. Randall, Mrs. Greenleaf, Dr. Bagdadi, Mrs. Brush, Mrs. Parmerton, Mrs. True and others

are proclaiming the new era and its glory in the states of the Central West. Mrs. Ford has spoken to large gatherings in Chicago, St. Paul, and Minneapolis. Mr. Randall has addressed splendid gatherings in St. Louis where hundreds were attracted and has started us thinking of Abdul-Baha's predictions for that city. To a believer in St. Louis, Abdul-Baha wrote a few years ago:

"Thy letter was received. Thou hast written that in these days the establishment of the meeting has become impossible in that city. Be thou not unhappy. A day shall come when innumerable meetings in the utmost grandeur shall be established in that city. The cause of God shall be raised and the breath of the Holy Spirit shall impart eternal life. Be thou not sad. This indifference is temporary. Ere long the fires of the love of God shall raise a flame in that city and the splendors of the sun of truth shall cast intense rays and the melody of the Kingdom shall be heard."

Mrs. May Maxwell and Mrs. Ober are on their way to the far Northeast to sow the seeds in the provinces of Canada. New centers have appeared over night as it were in Springfield, Massachusetts and in New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut. They were organized after inspiring peace meetings. Dr. Strong, Dr. Shook, Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Hannen have been doing great service in these cities.

The Bahais about Boston have trebled in numbers in the last six months. Group meetings are held throughout the suburbs.

Wonderful responses to the divine call have come also from the South. "Mother" Beecher has just gone into Virginia and Kentucky. For the past two months Rev. Mr. Tate and Mr. Louis Gregory have been scattering the heavenly seeds broadcast in the vast regions from the Atlantic Ocean to Texas. Mr. Tate has spoken to 15,000 and Mr. Gregory to 15,000 people this autumn. Mr. Gregory

writes a friend from Tulsa, Oklahoma:

Tulsa, Oklahoma, Nov. 25, 1916.

Dear Bahai brother:

I do not now recall whether or not I told you a dream I had during the days of preparation for this journey. Abdul-Baha was standing before an audience in the attitude of teaching. By his direction I was serving as a waiter, passing to the people bread from a tray. When the wafers reached the people, they were transformed into tablets and upon them they were to indicate how many of them accepted the teachings and became Bahais. An overwhelming number of those who received the tablets thus signified by writing their acceptance. I awoke feeling very happy.

By the way the doors are opened to deliver the Message and the happiness manifested among those who give ear, this dream becomes a glorious reality.

I think I wrote you last from New Orleans. Since then the following points have been visited: Galveston, Prairie View, Austin, Waco, Corsicana, Dallas, Texas, and Langston, Oklahoma. At Langston, after hearing the Message, the school sang, "Arise! Shine for the Light has come and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" Several thousand have heard the glad tidings, in these centers, without a word of opposition. Truly great are the divine confirmations from the Kingdom of El-Abha! The might of the Covenant removes all obstacles!

Tonight there is an audience of five hundred in a Methodist church. The pastor has given the right of way. The Bahai address will take the place of the sermon.

Leave for Arkansas and Northern Mississippi tomorrow. Am very happy over the results.

Praise be to God and Bahai greeting to the friends! May you ever be supremely happy!

In His Name, I have the honor to be

Your servant,

Louis G. Gregory.

Other News Notes

Indianapolis, Ind., Oct. 30, 1916.

Indianapolis will get to be an important center if you Chicago people take it into your hand. I talked on the Cause to eighteen hundred people at the Shortridge High School, and to hundreds at the church and other meetings, all of whom appreciate the great Message, and are hungry for further teaching and speakers. I dwelt at length upon the Mashrak-el-Azkar, and in time this will become a fruitful field. . . .

Ali Kuli Khan.

The Shirley Hotel, Denver, Colo.,
November 11, 1916.

I am having nightly meetings, with some new faces nearly always. Two leading Theosophists present last night were greatly attracted. Large advertised meeting for Sunday afternoon—subject, "Universal Peace." George (Latimer) and Mason (Remey) to arrive today, and we will all address the meeting.

Isabella D. Brittingham.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 25, 1916.
To the STAR OF THE WEST:

A line to cheer those striving to spread the knowledge of God and His Covenant. During the recent journey through fourteen Southern states the hearts were found most receptive. The principles of unity and the Great Message were presented in churches, schools, colleges, Y. M. C. A., and social gatherings to a multitude of people. So slight was the opposition, even in the ranks of the clergy, as to be not worthy of mention. The souls of people were rejoiced, and their spirits exhilarated by the glad tidings. In one meeting, held at Memphis, Tenn., over fifty persons, all in sight save one, after hearing the message and proofs, arose and said the Greatest Name. Without exception,

souls were found ready in cities where the message was given. The strongholds of orthodoxy were taken by the fire of divine love. Success was attained through divine confirmations.

The time has come to declare the message from the housetops. Yet with wisdom withhold. The hearts are hungry for the heavenly manna. Let us forget human limitations in the pursuit of divine ideals. The call of God is, work, speak, write, start assemblies, use all proper means of bringing life to the dead body of humanity. The veils are disappearing. The following tablet* shows what Abdul-Baha expects of us:

O ye spiritual friends of Abdul-Baha!

How long are ye silent and speechless? Although ye are speaking, yet in this age the speech of the believers of God must be the soul entrancing melody of the Kingdom of Abha and the harmony of the Supreme Concourse!

Therefore Abdul-Baha is not satisfied with a meek voice and depressing lamentation! He seeks the passionate tumult and joyous clamor and he roars and cries at the top of his voice so that the realities of things may stir into movement and action and the Beloved of Bounty unveil her countenance in the world of creation!

Those friends must, like unto the stars in heaven, shine and gleam in the horizon of Truth with the Light of Guidance so that the realities of the existent beings and the spirit of humankind may find joy and happiness!

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Louis G. Gregory.

*Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Washington, D. C., May 27, 1910.

The Convention of the Mashrak-el-Azkar

Haifa, Syria, October 12, 1916.

Mr. Alfred Lunt, Boston, Mass.

My dear brother in the Cause:

The heavenly beacon of Truth is shining from the horizon of the Supreme Concourse, irradiating to all directions and dispelling the darkness of doubts and ignorance but the majority of mankind are held fast in the grim claws of a sound sleep. In these days of wars and battles many rays of hope and cheer have emanated from the sun of the Covenant. One of these shining rays has appeared in the form of a tablet in your name, the translation of which is the following:

To his honor, Mr. Alfred Lunt—Upon him be greeting and praise!

O thou my friend of the Kingdom!

Praise be to God, that the city of Boston is stirred into cheerfulness and the believers of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful in the utmost firmness and steadfastness in the Covenant and Testament are engaged in the diffusion of the fragrances of God, that the divine favors and bestowals are continually descending upon the assembly of that city, for they have attained to capacity, and capacity like unto a magnet attracts the heavenly graces unto men. Ever do I supplicate at the threshold of the Lord of Hosts and beg for the friends infinite confirmations. It is my hope that supplications toward the Kingdom of God may be answered.

According to what is heard the convention of Mashrak-el-Azkar was going to be held in Boston. The believers of Boston must consider this as one of the greatest divine bounties and strive with all their strength so that all the delegates coming to the

convention from the different cities of America may become attracted, thankful and grateful and spend a few days with the utmost joy and happiness; thus the convention in a behooving manner may become assisted in the promotion of the teachings of God, the hearts may become like unto the clear mirrors, the rays of the Sun of Reality shine therein, the melody of thanksgiving and glorification to the Lord of Hosts may ascend to the Supreme Concourse, the sleepy ones become awakened and the dead ones alive. Convey to each and all the friends longing greeting on my behalf.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

In the course of this year we have received few letters from the American friends although I suppose they have written to us regularly. It is our misfortune that we should not receive their messages of love and affection. Abdul-Baha's health has been more than well, especially after our trip to Tiberias. The medicinal value of the baths there has been known for more than 2000 years and people from all parts of the country go there with their nervous ailments to be cured. The weather also is very dry. Many of us slept in the open air under the glorious heaven studded with luminous stars. The cool western breeze wafting all night lulled the sleeper into sound and refreshing sleep. Only we are so very sorry that the gate of the sacred land is closed before the face of all the lovers of truth but we pray and hope that ere long the obstacles will be removed and free communications established.

Give, please, my love to all the believers,

Your faithful brother,

Ahmad.

Letter from England

Manchester, England,
December 22, 1916.

To the STAR OF THE WEST:

Dear friends: I am enclosing a cheque for two pounds and five shillings which I want you to separate into two parts. One part, twelve shillings and six pence to go towards sending copies of the STAR OF THE WEST for two years to my sister, and one pound and seven shillings to go to the Mash-rak-el-Azkar fund from the Manchester friends. The remainder to go to the STAR OF THE WEST to help against its expenses. I know you will do these two things for me, if at all possible.

I know not where I shall be sent after New Year's day (January 1st), for I am a conscript and under military law, and the war is, perhaps, not nearly over. But I am a follower of Abdul-Baha and a true believer in God, and meet the future with resignation and peace of heart, for with all my faults and mistakes, I have come nearer and nearer the love of God and the radiance of Abdul-Baha. God be praised! I shall hope to be able to do good wherever I get to.

God bless you all.

Ever sincerely,

Edward Theodore Hall.

The Divine Art of Living—Chapter One

(Continued from page 155)

God created in us a divine holy spirit,—the human spirit with its intellectual powers which are above the powers of nature. By this he enjoys the ecstasies of the spirit and sees the world illumined. The tree and the stone have not this power; they have no mind or soul; therefore they are excused. We are not excused. This power gives man effectual control over nature. He is enabled to discover reality and bring invisible things into the courts of the visible. Thus he is enabled to render effective the will of God and give it material station. This is what is meant by his holiness Baha'o'llah when he said, "Verily we have created thee rich, why have ye made yourselves poor?" And Jesus Christ, when he said, "The Father is in me and I in you." It was this power which through Baha'o'llah said, "Noble have I created you, why do ye degrade yourselves?" This power distinguishes you above all other creatures, why do you devote it only to your material conditions? This is that which should be used for the acquisition and manifestation of the bounties of God, that ye may establish the kingdom of God among men

and attain to happiness in both worlds, the visible and the invisible.

(Address given by Abdul-Baha, at Green Acre, August 20, 1912.)

Asked, "How could a man who does not know God feel it a punishment to be without that knowledge?" Abdul-Baha answered:

"No man can be happy without God, though he may not know why he is miserable."

(Extract from Notes of Aline Shane Devin, October, 1900.)

The soul of man must be happy, no matter where he is. One must attain to that condition of inward beatitude and peace, then outward circumstances will not alter his spiritual calmness and joyousness. No one can imagine a worse place than the barracks of Acca.* The

*The prison in Palestine to which Baha'o'llah and his family and some other Bahais were sent in 1868.

climate was bad, the water was no better. The surroundings were filthy and dirty, the treatment of the officials was unbearable and we were looked upon as the enemies of religion and corruptors of morals. The government had given an order that during our stay in Acca no one must talk with us and we must not talk with each other. Having arrived in Acca they found there were not enough rooms in the barracks to imprison us separately so they put us all in two rooms with no furniture at all. The court of the barrack had a most gloomy aspect. There were three or four fig trees over the branches of which several ominous owls screeched all night. Every one got sick and there were neither provisions nor medicine. At the entrance of the barrack there was an undertaker's room. It was a horrible room. Yet I lived there two years with the utmost happiness. Up to that period I had not had time to read the Koran from first to last but then I had ample time and used to read this holy book with fervor and enthusiasm. Going over the incidents and events of the lives of former prophets and finding how parallel they were with that of Baha'o'llah, I was consoled and encouraged. I would read for instance the following verse: "How thoughtless are the people! Whenever a prophet is sent to them they either ridicule him or persecute him." And then I would read this verse, "Verily, our host is victorious over them."

I was very happy all the time because I was a free man. Shut off in that room my spirit traveled throughout the immensity of space. At night I went on the roof and communed with the countless stars. What a divine feast! What a heavenly procession! What a spiritual freedom! What beatific bliss! What celestial sovereignty!

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 3, 1913.)

God has given man a heart and the heart must have some attachment. We

have proved that nothing is completely worthy of our heart's devotion save reality, for all else is destined to perish. Therefore the heart is never at rest and never finds real joy and happiness until it attaches itself to the eternal. How foolish the bird that builds its nest in a tree that may perish when it could build its nest in an ever-verdant garden of paradise!

Man must attach himself to an infinite reality so that his glory, his joy and his progress may be infinite. Only the spirit is real; everything else is as shadow. All bodies are disintegrated in the end; only reality subsists. All physical perfections come to an end; but the divine virtues are infinite. How many kings have flourished in luxury and in a brief moment all has disappeared! Their glory and their honor are forgotten. Where are the sovereigns now? But those who have been servants of the divine beauty are never forgotten. The result of their works is everywhere visible. What king is there of two thousand years ago whose kingdom has lived in the hearts? But those disciples who were devoted to God, poor people who had neither fortune nor position, are today trees bearing fruit. Their banner is raised higher every day.

(*Divine Philosophy*; p. 107.)

The world needs more happiness and illumination. The star of happiness is in every heart; we must remove the clouds so that it may twinkle radiantly. Happiness is an internal condition. When it is once established man will ascend to the supreme heights of bliss. A truly happy man will not be subject to the shifting eventualities of time. Like unto an eternal king he will sit upon the throne of fixed realities. He will be impervious to outward, changing circumstances and through his deeds and actions he will impart happiness to others.

A Bahai must be happy for the blessings of God are bestowed upon him.

(Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, January 7, 1914.)

Know thou that there are two kinds of happiness—spiritual and material.

As to material happiness, it never exists; nay, it is but imagination, an image reflected in mirrors, a specter and shadow. Consider the nature of material happiness. It is something, which but slightly removes one's afflictions; yet the people imagine it to be joy, delight, exultation and blessing. All the material blessings, including food, drink, etc., tend only to allay thirst, hunger and fatigue. They bestow no delight on the mind nor pleasure on the soul; nay, they furnish only the bodily wants. So this kind of happiness has no real existence.

As to spiritual happiness, this is the true basis of the life of man because life is created for happiness, not for sorrow; for pleasure, not for grief. Happiness is life; sorrow is death. Spiritual happiness is life eternal. This is a light which is not followed by darkness. This is an honor which is not followed by shame. This is a life that is not followed by death. This is an existence that is not followed by annihilation. This great blessing and precious gift is obtained by man only through the guidance of God.

Spiritual happiness is light, while sorrow is darkness.

This happiness is glad-tidings, while sorrow is disappointment.

This happiness is the Kingdom while sorrow is the earthly world.

This happiness is life, while sorrow is non-existence.

This happiness is the fundamental basis from which man is created, worlds are originated, the contingent beings have existence and the world of God appears like unto the appearance of the sun at mid-day.

This happiness is but the love of God.

This happiness is but the eternal might the brilliant traces of which are shining forth unto the temples of unity.

Were it not for this happiness the world of existence would not have been created.

(Extract from an early Tablet to a Bahai in Paris.)

Thy letter was received, and its perusal imparted happiness impossible to describe. It was an indication of the loftiness of thy nature, the strength of thy effort and the purity of thy intentions. Abdul-Baha's happiness is caused by such matters. If the material luxuries of the whole earth were available to Abdul-Baha he would not think for one moment that there was such a thing as comfort and luxury in the world. But when a soul-perfuming fragrance is wafted from the rose-garden of the hearts of the friends to the nostrils of Abdul-Baha, such joy is realized that involuntarily I render thanksgiving unto the Blessed Perfection who has trained such servants.

(Extract from a Tablet to an American Bahai; translated December 29, 1912.)

O my brother, when a seeker intends to turn the step of search and journeying into the path of the knowledge of the King of Pre-existence, he must first cleanse and purify the heart—which is the place of the appearance and emanation of the splendor of the hidden mysteries of divinity—and he must cleanse and refine his breast—which is the throne for the accession and establishment of the love of the eternal Beloved—from all gloomy dusts of acquired learnings and from the allusions of satanic appearances. He must likewise sanctify his heart from attachment to water and clay—that is, from all phantasmal forms and spectral images—in such manner that no trace of love or hatred may remain in the heart,

lest that love may cause him to incline toward a direction, without guide, or that hatred prevent him from turning in another direction, just as in this day most are bereft of the immortal Face and of the threshold of meanings because of these two tendencies and are grazing shepherdless in the deserts of error and oblivion. He should at all times trust in God and turn away from the creatures; be severed and detached from the world of dust and united with the Lord of Lords; not preferring his own self before any one but cleansing the tablet of his heart from pride and vain-glory; attaching the heart to patience and self-restraint; observing silence and avoiding useless speech; for the tongue is a smouldering fire and loquacity is a deadly poison. Material fire devours bodies, but the fire of the tongue consumes souls and minds. The effect of the former vanishes in an hour but the latter continues for a century.

He should consider backbiting as error and never step into that court, for backbiting extinguishes the brilliant light of the heart and numbs the life of the soul. He should be content with little and free from avarice; profiting by the companionship of the severed ones and regarding seclusion from haughty and worldly people as a benefit. At dawn he should be engaged in commemorations, seeking for that Beloved One with the utmost earnestness and power; consuming heedlessness with the fire of love and praise; passing over all else save God with the swiftness of lightning; bestowing a portion upon the destitute and not refusing benevolence and favor to the unfortunate. He should show kindness to the animals; how much more to mankind, (especially) to the people of the Beyan; refusing not his life for the Beloved and turning not away from the True One when approached by the creatures. He should not wish for others what he doth not wish for himself nor say that which he will not fulfill; keeping aloof from evildoers with all deter-

mination and asking the forgiveness of God in their behalf; condoning the sinners and despising them not for the end is not known. Many a sinner who is favored with the essence of faith at the time of death drinks the wine of immortality and hastens to the Supreme Concourse; while many a believing and obedient one is estranged at the time of the soul's departure and dwells in the lowest abyss of fire. In a word the traveler and seeker should consider all else save God mortal and account all but the Adored One as nothing.

These conditions form the attributes of the lofty ones and nature of the spiritual ones. This hath already been mentioned concerning the requirements of the striver and the conduct of travelers in the highways of positive knowledge. When these conditions are realized in a sincere seeker and an unrestrained traveler then the term "striver" becomes true concerning him. When he is confirmed in the performance of "those who strive in us," he will surely enjoy the glad tidings of "We will direct them into our ways."

When the lamp of search, effort, longing, fervor, love, rapture, attraction and devotion is enkindled in the heart and the breeze of love blows forth from the direction of Unity the darkness of error, doubt and uncertainty will be dispelled and the lights of knowledge and assurance will encompass all the pillars of existence. Then the ideal herald will dawn as the true morn from the divine city with spiritual glad tidings and awaken the heart, soul and spirit from the sleep of negligence with the trumpet of knowledge. Then the favors and confirmations of the eternal Holy Spirit will impart such a new life that one will find himself the possessor of a new eye, a new ear, a new heart and a new mind and will direct his attention to the clear, universal signs and to the hidden individual secrets.

(*Book of Ighan*, by Baha'o'llah; pp. 137-140.)

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Sultan 1, 72 (January 19, 1917)

No. 17

Recent Tablets from Abdul-Baha

"Should Abdul-Baha soar from this mortal prison to the immortal rose-garden, none of you must be disturbed"

Haifa, Syria, Oct. 9, 1916.

Mrs. Georgia Ralston,
New York City.

My dear sister in the Cause of God:

A few months ago I wrote you a letter which I hope you have received by this time and its contents have become known to you.

Now, after spending nearly forty days with Abdul-Baha in Tiberias, we returned last week to Haifa, finding the friends in good health and everything going along smoothly.

In the outside world there are many changes daily, many new ideals interplaying their forces, many important problems to occupy one's mind and thought, but here the page of our lives is blank; one day succeeds the other quiet, peaceful. Our life in this corner of the world is the life of the valley and the lowland—not the life of the highland and the mountain where the strong winds are blowing from all directions, the whirlwinds requiring iron constitutions and strong muscles.

It gives me great pleasure to give you here the translation of Abdul-Baha's tablet to you:

To the maid-servant of God, Mrs. Georgia Ralston.

O thou spiritual daughter of the Kingdom!

The letter that thou hast written to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab was perused. It imparted exceeding joy, joy to the

heart, for it contained very good news, that, praise be to God, the friends of God, notwithstanding the interruption of the means of correspondence, are in the state of the utmost joy and fragrance. This must indeed be the condition of those souls who have entered the Kingdom. They must not be discouraged by any obstacles, nay, rather, they must, day by day, increase their attraction and enkindlement, for confirmations are descending upon them from the heavenly Spirit. You must be firm and steadfast to such a degree that not only the interruption of the means of communication, but should Abdul-Baha hasten from this world to another world and soar from this mortal prison to the immortal rose-garden, none of you must be shaken or disturbed; nay, rather, moment after moment the strength of heart be augmented and firmness and steadfastness be increased. For when the lamp of the love of God is ignited in the heart, its flame must become purer and whiter day by day—thus from head to foot he may become a torch of flaming fire. When his holiness the Bab and his holiness Baha'o'llah ascended to the Supreme Concourse, the intensity of the fire of the service of the friends of God became an hundred fold and in the assemblages of humanity they shone out with the utmost sanctity and purity. I hope you will likewise attain to such a station.

Convey longing greetings, on my

behalf, to each and all the friends. Should we enjoy life after this war, we shall correspond with all the believers.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

We hope and pray that this sad and dreadful war will soon come to an end and the doors of life and a new order of mutual relations appear. Please give my sincere greetings to all.

Ever sincerely yours,

Ahmad.

Haifa, Syria, October 11, 1916.

Miss A. Boylan,
New York City.

My dear Bahai sister:

A tablet has been revealed by Abdul-Baha in your name, the translation of which is as follows:

To the maid-servant of God, Miss A. Boylan—Upon her be greeting and praise!

O thou who art firm in the Covenant!

Although it is a long time that I have not written a letter to that steadfast one in the Testament, still thou art ever before the sight and never forgotten. Now and then letters are being received from those friends that, praise be to God, they are engaged in service and are holding in their hands the candle of guidance, dispelling the darkness of superstitions and doubts. Convey to the dear daughter, Mrs. Krug, my respectful greeting. Some time ago I wrote her a brief note. It is hoped that her illumined meeting is still continued and the maid-servants of the Merciful gather in that assembly and are occupied in the commemoration of His Highness, the Almighty, are engaged in the establishment of unity and concord. Those days that meetings were held in her home and I used to present myself there and

talk with the friends of God shall never be forgotten.

Upon thee and upon her be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Forty days I had the privilege to spend with Abdul-Baha in Tiberias. I wish there was space to relate for your benefit at least a little of our holy and spiritual experiences, but this pleasure must be given up for the present. Enough to say that I had a most wonderful time and now that we have returned, Abdul-Baha's health is quite improved. This was our second trip to Tiberias; you have the description of the first one and you shall have the second one, only this time there was an added interest to our journey because instead of traveling by railroad we drove in carriage, stopped two nights in Nazareth and saw that blessed and holy town. All along that heavenly journey Abdul-Baha spoke and I have faithfully treasured his etherial words of love and peace. Please convey my faithful greeting to the friends and tell them their thoughts and prayers are much appreciated. Our only joy in these days is to think about their faith and services.

Ever your sincere brother,

Ahmad.

Haifa, Syria, October 12, 1916.

Dr. Pauline Barton-Peeke,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear sister in the Cause of God:

Some time ago your kind and spiritual letter was received and its inspiring contents read with great pleasure and happiness. Abdul-Baha was most glad to know that the friends in Cleveland are enkindled with the fire of the love of God and firm in the Covenant of the Merciful. Abdul-Baha hopes that your home may ever be the nest for the birds of sanctity, that from it,

glorious songs of praise may be raised to the Supreme Kingdom, that the friends of God may become the guides of erring humanity, and that their lives and deeds may bear eloquent testimonies to their faith and knowledge. He dictated the following tablet:

To the maid-servant of God, Doctor Pauline Barton-Peeke.—Upon her be greetings and praise!

O thou the inheritor of the great,
respected Mrs. Peeke!

Although that beloved maid-servant of God ascended from this mortal world to the world of immortality, praise be to God, she left thee behind as a token of herself. All the dwellers of the Kingdom and myself are pleased with thy services to the Kingdom of God. Truly I say the believers of God and thyself are displaying every effort in the promotion of the teachings of God in Cleveland. The evidence demonstrating this fact is that you have not forgotten us, nay rather with the utmost exertion and endeavor you are engaged in the service of Truth. Thank ye God that ye are confirmed therein. Ere long ye shall observe most important results and ye will behold the doors of the everlasting glory open before your faces. I am ever expecting to receive good news from you and the Cleveland believers, and in your behalf I supplicate and entreat toward the Kingdom of God, that every one of you may become ignited with the fire of the love of God and bestow the light of guidance upon that region and continent.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

Abdul-Baha's health is quite well. We stayed for about two months in Tiberias and the dry weather imparted to him invigoration. Now again he is living with his blessed family waiting patiently and quietly for the end of

this world-wide war and praying for the protection of the friends. His thanks and prayers are for them.

Ever your faithful brother,

Ahmad.

Haifa, Syria, July 11th, 1916.

To Mr. and Mrs. Harlan F. Ober.

O ye two firm ones in the Covenant!

Although we are living in the holy land and you are dwelling in the United States, yet the spiritual relations and the communication of the hearts are firm and steadfast because the unity of the Divine Essence has bonded us together. In this material world we are cemented together and, God willing, in the Universe of God, the world of the Kingdom, we will be the associates and intimates of each other. Truly I say Mr. Ober rendered a great service to the Kingdom of God and undertook a long and arduous trip to India, and during our stay in America, Mrs. Ober served with heart and soul. Both of them are encircled with the Divine Favors and are firm and steadfast in the lordly Covenant.

Upon ye be greeting and praise!

(Original received by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen, Washington, D. C., September 25, 1916.)

To Mr. Fred Mortensen, Minneapolis, Minn.—Upon him be Baha'o'llah-el-Abha.

O thou illumined youth!

Thy letter was received. Its perusal produced the utmost joy; for its contents indicated faith and its significances were proofs of firmness in the Covenant. That trip of thine from Minneapolis to Green Acre will never be for-

gotten.* Its mention will be recorded eternally in books and works of history. Therefore, be thou happy that, praise be to God, thou hast an illumined heart, a living spirit and art vivified with a merciful breath. Convey my greeting, longing and respect to the Editor of *Labor Review* and say: "This paper of yours in the future ages will become superior to all the newspapers of the world, because you have published in its columns the proclamation of the kingdom of Abha. I hope thou wilt become assisted to promote the teachings of Baha'o'llah. Then thou wilt observe

that this paper has become a luminous star and the cause of the illumination of the hearts of humanity."

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

(Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, September 12, 1913, Ramleh, Egypt.)

*Refers to his riding on the bumpers between railway baggage cars and on freight trains from Minneapolis, Minn., to Green Acre, Maine, in order to see Abdul-Baha.

"We are ourselves the means of our degradation and exaltation"

Extract from the diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, January 23, 1914

A YOUNG man by the name of Mirza Lotfullah, who has been here (Haifa) for a month, was about to leave this afternoon for Aleppo, so Abdul-Baha addressed him, saying:

"Now that thou hast decided to live in Aleppo, thou must act, speak and conduct thyself with such holiness, sanctity, purity and chastity as to attract to the Cause everyone who comes in contact with thee, that everyone may testify that here lives in our midst an upright and virtuous man, that he has turned his face toward God, that he is spiritual, celestial and divine. A person through his own actions and deeds makes himself loved or disliked by the people; or through his own unselfish conduct and behavior, refined morality and selfless intention, trustworthiness and rectitude he suffers himself to become favored and beloved at the threshold of God.

There is a young man of Jewish origin in the college of Beirut by the name of Mirza Habbibollah Khodabaksh, who has fulfilled these requirements. Formerly he was not known, but now everyone knows him through his sanctity, pur-

ity of life, sincerity of aim and the beauty of his holiness, and he is favored and near the court of the Almighty, and loved and respected by all. From whomsoever you inquire of him the utmost satisfaction and pleasure is expressed concerning him.

Therefore, it is now proven that we are ourselves the means of our degradation and exaltation; that people are attracted to us or repelled by us according to the attributes and deeds emanating from us. In short, I hope that thou mayst live in such wise in Aleppo that all the inhabitants may exclaim: "This man is not a Bahai in a nominal way, but in a real manner; he is a Bahai in deed and not in words alone." For this reason his holiness Baha'o'llah hath said: "My sorrow is not occasioned by my enemies, but by those souls who attribute themselves to me but whose deeds and actions are conducive to the degradation of the Cause."

While Abdul-Baha was walking in the rose-garden he passed by Haji Mullah Abou Taleb, the very old man with stooped shoulders and long beard. He

looked at him, then at others, and smiled.

"Haji Mullah Abou Taleb is my friend," he said. "He looked just as old forty years ago when he came to this blessed spot for the first time. Now he has come never to leave. Are you well and happy? How can you descend and ascend the mountain every day?"

Then he came very near to him and looked at his thin and probably soiled overcoat.

"Hast thou not received thy new overcoat? I have brought one for thee. I will send it up for thee. Man must keep his clothes always clean and spotless."

He answered: "I am not particular about my outward clothes, but the robe

of the virtue of God is necessary for us."

Immediately Abdul-Baha's face lighted up:

"Thou art right, the believers of God must ever strive to clothe their spiritual bodies with the garment of the virtue of God, the robe of the fear of God, and the vesture of the love of God. These robes will never become threadbare. They will never be out of fashion. Their market values do not fluctuate. They are always negotiable and ever on demand. They are the means of the adornment of the temple of man and woman.

"But the outward raiment must be also clean and immaculate, so that the outer may be a faint expression of the inner. Cleanliness is one of the fundamental laws of this religion."

Mashrak-El-Azkar Contribution from Cairo

Cairo, Egypt, November 30, 1916.

Mr. Alfred E. Lunt.

Dear Bahai Brother:

Sometime ago I received a letter from you in regard to the Mashrak-El-Azkar work. You were then Secretary of the Bahai Temple Unity Executive Board, now I believe you are President.

It gives me great pleasure to enclose a check for \$75.00 for the Mashrek-El-Azkar in America. This amount is from the Egyptian Bahais of Cairo and Alexandria, in which two cities I do my Bahai work, as I usually pass the summers in Alexandria. The majority of the Bahais are poor and could not give, but those who have contributed have done so very joyfully. It is sent with Bahai love and greetings from all here to all the Bahai friends in the West. Mr. Mohamed Said helped me in collecting this money. Several years ago a contribution was sent by the older Bahais here.

List of contributors to the Mashrak-El-

Azkar in America, from the Bahais of Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt:

Mr. Mohamed Taki Esphahani.

Mr. Abdul Galeel Saad.

Mr. Ahmed Safwat.

Mr. Mohamed Said.

Mr. Zein El Abeein.

Mr. Abul Futouh.

Mr. Mahmoud Rakie.

Mr. Mahmoud Fahmy.

Mr. Hafiz Nadim.

Mr. Haji Niaz.

Mrs. Edith de Bous.

Miss Morassa Yazdi.

Miss Elinor Hiscox.

Collected and sent (Nov. 30, 1916) by Miss Elinor Hiscox, assisted by Mr. Mohamed Said.

In His Name and Service, faithfully yours in El-Abha,

Elinor Hiscox.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VII

Sultan 1, 72 (January 19, 1917)

No. 17

The Teaching Campaign—News from the South “Fifteen thousand were reached directly”

Extract from a letter by Louis G. Gregory

Washington, D. C.,
December 17, 1916.

The veils are everywhere being lifted and the Sun of Truth is shining with a radiance that will soon penetrate the ends of the earth.

I arrived here Friday morning and am very happy over the journey, which gave wonderful opportunities and privileges for service. Since I last wrote you, Jackson and Nashville, Tenn., Louisville, Lincoln and Lexington, Ky., and Charleston, W. Va., were visited, in all of which addresses were made and hearty responses found in receptive hearts. The Ministers' Alliance at Louisville passed a vote of thanks. In the entire journey probably more than fifteen thousand were reached directly, most of them students, representing

many sections and communities. Less than half a dozen persons in all raised the voice of opposition. Almost without exception in the places visited there were souls ready to receive all that could be told them about Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha. Am returning to Charleston, S. C., to deliver the Emancipation Day address, January 1. This will be an opportunity to tell them of real freedom.

I hope, God willing, that in the future my affairs can be so arranged as to give more time to service of this kind (the opportunities seem limitless). The number of institutions in the south that cannot be reached must be very small.

May God render you victorious, O my brother, in every effort! This is my prayer. Ever yours,

Louis G. Gregory.

“Hast thou Love?”

Extract from the *Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab*, June 9, 1914

“When our American visitors left the house a Christian minister called on Abdul-Baha. . . . Then the minister asked about the mission of Christ. Without pause Abdul-Baha continued, “His holiness Christ came for the promulgation of the law of love; all the prophets were sent, all the books were revealed, so that the law of love might be promoted. But a few self-seeking people subverted the original aims of the religion of God, changed its pure current and made it an instrument of hatred and rancor and quarrel and sedition. Why should we hate the members of other religions? Why should we not love each other? Why should we be tattlers and busy-bodies and gossip-mongers? Why are we not looking at our own shortcomings? Why do we not let people alone? Why do we not search after our own faults? ‘And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine

own eye? O, how wilt thou say to the brother, let me pull the mote out of thine eye and behold, a beam is in thine own eye! Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam that is in thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother’s eye.’ Let us have love and more love, a love that melts all opposition, a love that conquers all foes, a love that sweeps away all barriers, a love that aboundeth in charity, large-heartedness, tolerance, and noblestriving, a love that triumphs over all obstacles, a boundless, resistless, sweeping love. Ah, me! Each one must be a sign of love, a sea of love, a center of love, a sun of love, a star of love, a haven of love, a pearl of love, a palace of love, a mountain of love, a world of love, a universe of love. Hast thou love? Then thy power is irresistible. Hast thou sympathy? Then all the stars will sing thy praise!”

“Earth should be a Paradise”

Part of an Address delivered by Abdul-Baha to a gathering of Socialists in Coronation Hall, St. Lawrence Street, Montreal, Canada. From the *Montreal Star* (Daily), Sept., 1912

“Earth should be a Paradise,” said Abdul-Baha.

“There are certain species of life that seemingly can live solitary and alone. Certain trees, certain animals and even herds wander far from their kind. But man is necessarily ever in need of co-operation and mutual help.

“In reality all mankind represents one family. God desires that each individual member of the body politic should live in the utmost well being and comfort.

“If all do not so enjoy life there is a lack of symmetry in the body politic. ‘Let us look after ourselves,’ the selfish

say, ‘Let others die; so long as I am comfortable, all is going well!’ Such a callous attitude is due to a lack of control and a lack of working law!”

Abdul-Baha then outlined a scheme which had been formulated by Baha’o’llah, the great Bahai Prophet, for ensuring the economic happiness of the people. In this scheme farmers were first to be dealt with for the agricultural industry is the most important and the most useful in the national life. It provides that every village community have a general storehouse to which a number of revenues would come. This income from the communal fund would

include tithes, a certain percentage from the number of animals and one-third from mines and minerals.

Should anyone die without an heir, all his wealth would revert to the general storehouse and any treasure trove that was picked up would become public property.

The scheme further advocates that tithes be collected from the farmers on a graded scale. If a man's (necessary) expenditure equaled his income he would pay nothing. If one had an expenditure of one thousand dollars and an income of two thousand, he would pay one-tenth; from one having an income of ten thousand dollars and expense of one thousand, two-tenths would be exacted. If one had an income of twenty thousand and his expense were two thousand, the taxes would amount to one-fourth. If the income were two hundred thousand dollars and the expense ten thousand, then the community would exact one-half.

From this general storehouse the less fortunate members of the commonwealth would draw to secure their share of the common welfare.

There would be no poverty in the

community. Orphans, cripples, the poor, the blind, the deaf, the aged, the helpless, would be looked after. The people themselves would elect trustees for the administration of the public trust.

Whatever surplus there might be after all were provided for would go to the national exchequer. For the big cities such a scheme would be carried out on a much more extended scale.

"Under this system," said Abdul-Baha, "every member of the community would live in comfort, without fear, and without being under obligations to anyone.

"Degrees or grades would not be abolished. These would be necessary, as in an army it is necessary to have marshals, generals, colonels, sergeants and foot-soldiers. But notwithstanding grades, all would have the right to share in the general well being.

"The earth can be made a Paradise. Let all the servants of God ever strive that such a great happiness may accrue to the world of humanity."

(Prolonged applause greeted Abdul-Baha at the close of his address.)

The Heavenly Tables

To three pilgrims to Acca, September 5, 1901, at supper, Abdul-Baha said:

"We should remember these meetings when we return to our homes. When we go to Paris, London and America we must remember these nights and these gatherings and must show the same spirit of love that is manifested here.

"The meal is divided into two parts, material and spiritual. We hope that this is both. The tables mentioned in the Bible are the spiritual tables. The effect of the material table lasts for twelve hours but that which is divine is everlasting and eternal.

"For example,—'Revelation' is one of the heavenly tables. As an illustration, think of the knowledge revealed two thousand year ago; we feel the effect of it now and that effect will remain forever.

"Some of the heavenly tables are the divine teachings and their power and effect will be everlasting. Another of the godly tables is His love, which is the cause of Eternal Life. Others of these tables are unity and harmony amongst the believers, like as we are gathered here tonight, the effect of which will remain forever and ever."

Divine Teachings

Words of Abdul-Baha, reprinted from *The International Psychic Gazette*, July, 1914

There are two general and principal classes of divine teachings. One is spiritual, and pertains to the moralities. This is the fundamental basis of the divine law, unchangeable and unalterable, which has been reiterated and renewed in the cycle of every prophet. Its commands refer to justice, truthfulness, compassion, faith, love of God, self-devotion, self-sacrifice, steadfastness, including all divine and merciful attributes. This is the unchanging and unmoving law of God.

The second class of divine teachings is material and deals with behaviour, such as divorce, the commandments, the way of worshipping. All these conditions have changed in the cycle of every prophet. The character of divine sovereignty has no change or transformation, but the organization and administration change continually. This is why Jesus Christ said: "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." At the same time there are conditions that are changeable.

Tablet from Abdul-Baha to the Bahais of Germany

Extract from a letter by Azizollah to Mrs. Alice Schwarz, dated June 30, 1916

Three days ago when we were all in Abdul-Baha's holy presence, I delivered to him the translations of your letters, as well as those of Mr. Herrigel and Miss Knobloch. He read them with a ringing loud voice and closed with a happy facial expression making a few remarks about the dear father (Consul Schwarz) and praising him highly.

After a few minutes of rest he said:

"The religion of God has now been proclaimed in Germany. When the divine seed takes root in the soil, they will automatically spread and other roots appear and extend into the depth of the hearts.

"Now the cause of Almighty God has taken root in Germany and its roots are going to radiate like trees in full bloom. In the same manner that pernicious and destructive types of men have a contagious influence, so the spiritual and divine type exerts an influence that is of a far-reaching and permeating nature.

"It is well known, that when once a blessed soul of any nation steps into the religion of God, it is capable of saving the whole community from the darkness of the world, from materialism and animalism. He brings to them divine qual-

ities and frees them from indifference towards God, from prejudices which are founded on ignorance, from animal instincts, and from the attachment to the material world and the surrender of self to it—by attachment to the material world, I do not mean social intercourse and economic relations upon which the progress of the world depends, but I mean the ascendancy of the lower life over the higher ideals of human society. Now, God be praised, shining and divine realities have penetrated into Germany."

After uttering these words, Abdul-Baha gave us permission to leave saying: "Now you are to enjoy yourselves upon this mountain of the Lord (Mt. Carmel) on which the Prophets of God used to dwell or often lingered while on earth—rest and recreate after the arduous tasks and exhaustion of the year's study."

For Germany: To the friends of God—Upon them be greeting and praise!
O ye true friends and ye who are firm in the love of God!

Although it has been a long time since I have written you a letter of any kind, the heart and soul were nevertheless in

constant communication, and I supplicated to the Kingdom of Abha that you might be protected and preserved.

Although the unrests of the world are limitless and boundless, my hope is nevertheless that they may end and the dark clouds disappear from the horizon of the universe and that the sun of peace and unity may shine above all horizons.

We must under no circumstances be prevented from praying and the mentioning of God. We must always be enraptured with the fire of the love of God, be attracted by His Knowledge and

be heralds of His Words, so that His invisible confirmations like unto the breeze of dawn, become the cause of spiritual life.

Pray then, that the universe may become a new universe and this dark world a world of light.

Convey my greatest love and affection, greetings and praise to all the friends.

Upon ye all be greetings and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

(Revealed to Mrs. Alice Schwarz, Stuttgart; translated by Mirza Azizollah Khan S. Bahadur, July 6, 1916.)

Progress of the Cause in Bournemouth, England

It was suggested that when, in compliance with your request, we forwarded to you particulars of the Bahai Assembly in Bournemouth, we should also give you some cheering news of the "majestic progress of the Cause of God" in this beautiful seaside town.

The origin and growth of the Movement here is mainly associated with Dr. J. E. Esslemont of Southbourne, who, after intimate investigation of the Truth as embodied in the Bahai Revelation, started, some eighteen months ago, to deliver a series of addresses and lectures at various Adult Schools, Brotherhood Associations, and the local Theosophical Society. His clear and closely-reasoned expositions of the teachings resulted in sufficient interest being aroused for a special public meeting to be held, at which Mrs. F. George of Chelsea was also a speaker.

The Cause then continued to develop by means of regular weekly gatherings for study and discussion, prefaced by a friendly cup of tea. And to some of us these little meetings will ever remain a hallowed and joyful memory.

During the summer of 1915 Mrs. George paid us a lengthy visit; a series of private talks and addresses were given; earnestly and patiently the sowing of the seed went on.

In the autumn a small room was rented at Cromwell Hall, Southbourne and public Sunday evening services began. It seemed a bold step to take. The nights were dark and stormy and the severe lighting restrictions made traveling difficult. The congregation varied considerably, now swelling to as many as fifteen, anon dwindling to a faithful two. But "this is a Day wherein the gems of steadfastness must appear from the mine of man"—so we persevered. Week by week the Glad Tidings were proclaimed; over and over again the story of the Great Coming had to be recounted; slowly our attendance, with our faith and understanding increased.

About the same time a Sunday School was formed with the happy nucleus of three. Today the scholars number five times three. Bahai hymns are sung, some of the prayers chanted and the Message finds glad response in child hearts.

The following summer again brought us Mrs. George, whose beautiful and convincing presentation of the Truth has been used to attract many a seeking soul and has proved a source of inspiration and strength to us all.

After a while we found it necessary to remove into more spacious quarters. And we rejoice to realize that our assem-

blies have always maintained that warm spirit of brotherly love whereby the humblest member has felt himself of value to the rest and spiritually at home.

Then Mr. W. Tudor Pole came from Bristol, at considerable personal inconvenience, and delivered a vital message in his lecture on "The Things That Matter," bidding us seek for unity with the source of all life within our own consciousness.

We have also had the privilege of the presence and assistance of Mirza Lotfullah S. Hakim.

It seemed a fitting close to the year's work and to a season which has been so richly blessed, that we should have had, on October 1st, the joy of welcoming to our midst Mrs. J. Stannard of India, whose glowing words in her address on "The Ideals of East and West in Religion," thrilled our hearts and illumined our minds, unfolding to us deeper mysteries of the Divine Manifestations and of the underlying realities of a spiritual universe.

This brief resumé would scarcely be complete without reference being made to the Esperanto classes and study circles conducted by Dr. Esslemont throughout last winter and spring, and also to the much appreciated visit of Mrs. Paul Blaise, who is so well-known in the Esperanto world. It is indeed good to see the linking-up of the universal language with the universal religion.

A small lending library has been formed and we find the books and pamphlets very useful in stimulating interest and deepening knowledge.

We are glad to hear of the new effort being put forth by the STAR OF THE WEST, and earnestly pray that it will serve to hasten the coming of the Kingdom of El-Abha.

Cromwell Hall having now been commandeered by the military, we are holding our meetings in various private houses, particulars of which will gladly be supplied on application to the Secretary, care Dr. J. E. Esslemont, Home Sanatorium, Southbourne, Nr. Bournemouth, England.

The Earth and the Heavenly Civilization*

Words of Abdul-Baha to Bishop Birch of New York City, at the Hotel Ansonia:

"Praise be to God, that stupendous material developments are obtained in this country; but material civilization alone does not safeguard the progress of a nation, because through material civilization dynamite, Krupp guns, projectiles and Mauser rifles are invented: thus the infernal instruments of human fratricide are multiplied and constantly perfected. Therefore, natural civilization fosters both good and evil.

"All the wolfish bloodshed, all this feverish multiplication of military armaments are the results of material civilization.

"When material civilization joins hands with spiritual civilization, then it

will be perfect. In former times a wooden box may have protected your possessions from the thief, but now the safes with their complicated keys and combinations do not daunt the robber.

"Consequently, just as 'good' is advancing through material civilization, 'evil' takes the same pace, unless the earthly civilization become the handmaid of heavenly civilization. Natural civilization is like unto the body of man. If the body is animated by the spirit it is alive; otherwise it is a vile corpse which in the long run will become putrid and decayed."

The Bishop expressed his pleasure and

*This interview took place six days after Abdul-Baha's arrival in the United States, 1912.

delight to hear the above words of light. Abdul-Baha answered:

"I am likewise very grateful to you. Praise be to God, that your churches are free from prejudices. They are not so creed-bound as not to be able to breathe. Many Christian churches in Europe are yet extremely dogmatic. But I have already spoken in churches belonging to your denomination. The congregations consisted of most intelligent people. This is a great distinction. Hence I love you with all my heart and soul. My chief aim is to remove the present misunder-

standing between the nations of the East and West, so that we may express cordial love toward each other and promote the essentials of the heavenly civilization. I hope that such a confirmation may be vouchsafed us, so that we may become united."

The Bishop said: "Up to this time no one has come from the East to the West with such power, such lucid teachings and such an exalted aim. Therefore I am very grateful to you and most pleased to have met you."

"We must prepare ourselves for the reception of spiritual favors"

Letter from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

Haifa, Syria, March 5, 1916.

My dear sister in Truth:

Your very kind note of Dec. 21st, 1915, enclosing a brief petition for Abdul-Baha, received and its contents presented to him. He assured me that at the Divine Threshold, he will pray for . . . so that heavenly benediction may descend upon him and the spirit of assurance may encircle him.

The bounties of the Lord of Hosts are limitless but there must also be a willingness to receive and a capacity to absorb those bounties. The rain descends upon the tilled and the untilled soil alike; out of the first useful grains grow, while the second may be covered with thorns and bushes. We must plough the ground of our hearts, not with the old tools of the time of Noah, but with modern agricultural implements, scatter the seeds and wait for the rain. But if we are living far from the ocean and do not receive enough rain, like the many Western States, we must be up and doing, dig canals, construct dams and bring the water within our door, to irrigate our lands and produce an abundance of crops. Under any circumstances a great deal depends upon our own exertion; we hunger and thirst after the bread and

water of God's blessings; we can attract God's benediction upon ourselves by our sincere strivings. Many years ago in Egypt there was hardly any rainfall, the government ordered the farmers to plant a whole lot of trees all over the country, those trees brought atmospheric changes and now its annual rainfall is quite high. Similarly, God has given us the power and strength to attract His blessings and change the desert of our hearts into rose-gardens.

The remarkable growth of Spokane is another example—Fifteen years ago Spokane was a city with about thirty-six thousand inhabitants. In 1910 the population reached to nearly one hundred and five thousand. What has brought this stupendous growth? Of course you and others who live there and enjoy its beautiful scenery know the reasons better than I. My object, however, is this; we must prepare ourselves for the reception of spiritual favors, we must strive and work and be always cheerful and never get discouraged and ever be hopeful, joy-giver, hope-bringer. Soon we shall reach the height—the height of vision and beauty.

Ever your faithful brother,

Ahmad Sohrab.

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

Vol. VII

Mulk 1, 72 (February 7, 1917)

No. 18

The Divine Art of Living

A compilation by Mary M. Rabb—second article under the above title. Chapter One appeared in issue No. 16

CHAPTER TWO

Some Characteristics of Divine Souls

WALK, while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not. He that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light believe in the light that ye may become sons of light. (John 12:35-36.)

I beg of God that the divine light that is spoken of in John, in the twelfth chapter, may shed its rays upon thee forever, so that thou mayst always be in light. The life of man in this world is short and will soon draw to an end; consequently one must appreciate every moment of his life, exerting himself in that which is conducive to eternal glory.

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*, Vol. 1, p. 106.)

The sun is in the utmost effulgence but the surface turned toward it must be a mirror. The clearer it is the more light shall be reflected therein.

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*; Vol. 1, p. 207.)

good, a pure heart. When the heart is pure the Spirit enters and our growth is natural and assured. Every one is better informed of the condition of his own soul than of the soul of others. Our responsibility to God increases with our years.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Ten Days in the Light of Acca*; p. 18.)

When the spirit is confirmed and assisted by the confirmation of the Holy Spirit then it will show its effect in every condition of the world of existence.

(An early Tablet; translator not given. Signed: Abdul-Baha Abbas.)

Unless man maketh spiritual progress in the world of spirit, intellect and heart he cannot gather universal results from material advancements.

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*; p. 525.)

Spirituality is the possession of a

The spiritual life is symbolized by

simplicity and contemplation combined with usefulness and well-guided activity.

(Words of Abdul-Baha from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, March 25, 1914.)

Question: What can I do to become the real servant of God?

Abdul-Baha: *Live* thou in accord with the teachings of Baha'o'llah. Do not only read them. There is a vast difference between the soul who merely reads the words of Baha'o'llah and the one who tries to live them. Read thou the *Hidden Words*. Ponder over their meanings and embody the behests into thy life. All that I might say is only one drop of that illimitable sea. My duty is to explain, to elucidate, to interpret the writings of Baha'o'llah. For example: we must investigate the reality; we must show real love to the world of humanity; we must work for the establishment of universal peace; we must sacrifice our lives in the guidance of mankind; we must be kind to all the creatures of God; we must raise the call of the Kingdom; we must characterize ourselves with spiritual characteristics; we must show forth in our words and deeds the attributes of the holy ones.

I declare by him beside whom there is nought else, if we live in accord with one of the teachings we will become radiant like unto this lamp. If we confess verbally that Baha'o'llah's principles are the cause of eternal salvation and the means of nearness unto the throne of God and yet do not live according to their instructions we are not Bahais. Therefore day and night we must pray for each other, so that we be assisted to express in our lives the universal spirit of Baha'o'llah.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 1, 1914.)

The following is an excerpt from a conversation between Abdul-Baha and

an Esperantist globe-trotter, who was unconscious of the identity of the person he was addressing:

Globe-trotter: 'Serve God!' There is no one in this world who can serve God, because we are not able to see him. He is above our human ken. In my mind the only way we can serve him is to serve mankind, and try to alleviate the sorrows and sufferings of the people.

Abdul-Baha: Christ served God and his apostles served God. Their service was to humanity and was a reflection of their service to God.

Globe-trotter: In this age the Christians have forgotten the commandments of Christ.

Abdul-Baha: What hast thou to do with others? Live thou according to the teachings of Christ.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. As I have loved you that ye also love one another. (John 13:34.)

The cause of God is like unto a college. The believers are like unto the students. The college is founded for the sake of the acquirements of science, arts and literature. If the sciences are not therein and the scholars are not educated the object of the college is not achieved. The students must show the results of their study in their deportment and deeds; otherwise they have wasted their lives. Now the friends must so live and conduct themselves as to bring greater glory and results to the religion of God. To them the cause of God must be a dynamic force transforming the lives of men and not a question of meetings, committees, futile discussions, unnecessary debates and political wire-pulling.

What is the sum-total and upshot of farming, ploughing, sowing the seeds

and irrigating? Is there any other thought behind all these labors save the gathering of crops? If the sheaves are only green and verdant but having no grains of wheat or barley the result is not achieved. The aim has been not the luxuriant verdancy of the field but the richness of the harvest. I hope the believers will do their utmost to crown their lives with abundant harvest.

(Words of Abdul-Baha from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 6, 1914.)

Question: How can one understand the object of his life?

Abdul-Baha: There are two kinds of understanding; objective and subjective. To illustrate: thou seest this glass, or this water and thou dost comprehend in an objective manner their constituent parts. On the other hand, thou canst not see love, intellect, hate, anger, sorrow, but thou dost recognize them in a subjective way through their signs and manifestations. The first is material, the second is spiritual. The first is outward, the second is intuitive. I hope that thou mayst make great advancement in the second kind of understanding. Turn thy face toward God, and say:

O God! Refresh and gladden my spirit! Purify my heart! Illumine my powers! I lay all my affairs in thy hand. Thou art my guide and my refuge. I will not be sorrowful and grieved any more. I will be a happy and joyful being. O God! I will worry no more. I will not let trouble harass me any longer. I will not dwell on the unpleasant things of life. Thou art kinder to me than myself. I dedicate myself to thee, O Lord!

(Words of Abdul-Baha from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 9, 1914.)

Life, life—let us have more life! Let

us have the life of the spirit, a life which is a collective center of the beneficial forces, a life of sympathy, of practical co-operation, of celestial brotherhood. Let our life be an emanation of the kingdom of Christ. He came into this world to minister and not to be ministered unto. His greatest commandment was, "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publican so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect!"

The Bahais must fulfill to the letter the requirements of these holy principles. Every one of them must become the embodiment of these lofty ideals. The thoughts of preference must be banished from the minds. In the sight of the Heavenly Father all are equal. The religion of God is for the equalization of rights and not for the gradation of classes and the distribution of privileges. The religion of God is the leveller of all social inequalities and the destroyer of sacerdotal distinctions. In the court of the Almighty there are no offices or positions. Brotherhood? Yes. Humanity? Yes. Spiritual fellowship? Yes. Self-sacrifice? Yes. Extinction of self? Yes. Class? No. Preference? No. Titles? No. Spiritual superiority? No. Special privileges? No.

In the religion of Baha'o'llah all are servants and maid-servants, brothers and sisters. As soon as one feels a little better, a little superior to the rest he is in a dangerous position, and unless he casts away the seed of such an evil

thought he is not a fit instrument for the service of the Kingdom. The religions of the past have fallen into decay on account of self-seeking leaders who in the course of time appropriated all the rights and powers unto themselves and looked down contemptuously upon the rest of their co-religionists as ignorant and deprived of the knowledge of God.

The Bahais must be always on the alert, so that they may not fall into this pit. They must keep the religion of God pure and uncontaminated, a haven of rest for the despondent souls, a safe harbor for the shipwrecked, a divine antidote for the ailing ones, a torch of light for those who are groping in the darkness, and a spiritual democracy for the down-trodden and the outcast.

Service, social, moral, intellectual service must be the sole aim of a soul. He must be sincere and heartfelt in his profession, otherwise he will not succeed and his simulation will soon be found out by his co-religionists. Every Bahai must be a loyal servant of the world of humanity. Bahais must clothe themselves with the robe of service, sit around the table of service, eat the food of service, drink the elixir of service, talk the problems of service, hold communication with the King of service, walk in the path of service, crown their heads with the diadem of service, be intoxicated with the wine of service, and quaff the salubrious water from the fountain of service.

(Words of Abdul-Baha from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 23, 1914.)

All things were created for man and man for God. Man is distinguished from all other creations. Man, who is in part animal, possesses all the virtues of the mineral, because he has a body; he possesses the added faculty of the vegetable, growth; he has the virtue of the animal

kingdom, sensation; and above all, he possesses reflective and mental power, by which he understands the reality of things. Perceiving and reflecting upon visible things, he realizes the reality of unknown things. When a man gazes at the earth he sees it as if it were level, but by his perception he finds that it is a globe. This power of perception can never be found in the animal kingdom. But man by this power can prove that the sun is a center and that the globe and other bodies revolve around it. This power of judgment, possessed only by man, proves his excellence; for the virtues and faculties of other things and substances are created by man, and, above all, he is given virtues with which the other kingdoms are not endowed. Everything is for man.

We speak now in examples, as Christ spoke in parables. The world is like a tree; the mineral kingdom is like the root; the vegetable kingdom is like the branches; the animal kingdom is like the blossoms; and man is like unto the fruit of that tree. The tree is but for its fruit. If the gardener did not expect fruit he would never plant trees. In the same way everything is for man.

There are two sides to man. One is divine, the other worldly; one is luminous, the other dark; one is angelic, the other diabolic. Man is equal to the animals in all sensuous conditions, for all animal characteristics exist in him. Likewise, divine and satanic qualities are contained in man; knowledge and ignorance; guidance and error; truth and falsehood; generosity and avarice; inclination towards God and tendency towards Satan; chastity and purity; corruption and vileness; valor and timidity; economy and avidity; good and evil: all are contained in man.

If the angelic side becomes more powerful and the divine power and brightness surround man, then the second birth takes place and eternal life is found at this point. Man becomes the noblest

among creatures. On the other hand, if sensuous qualities surround and if terrestrial darkness and sensuous passions predominate; if they meet in man only the worldly feelings, if they find him a captive of evil qualities and fallen into everlasting death, then such a man is the basest and most abject among all creatures. In such a man divine power does not exist. An animal is not considered unjust and evil because of its cruelty and injustice, for it is not endued, as is man, with divine qualities. But if man falls into the same evil condition it is evident that he has permitted his ungodly attributes to overcome the divine qualities with which he was endowed. This shows the baseness and meanness that exist in human nature.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Table Talks with Abdul-Baha*; pp. 10-13.)

The nobility and glory of man consist in the fact that, amidst the beings, he is the dawning-place of righteousness. Can any greater blessing be imagined by man than the consciousness that by divine assistance the means of comfort, peace and prosperity of the human race are in his hands?

No, there is no greater or more complete pleasure or happiness than this. How long then shall we seek our own selfish desires, on the wings of egoism? Senses and inner faculties have been bestowed upon us that we may use them for the good of mankind and that we may become distinguished from the lower nature of man by the solidity and justness of our judgment and that we may continually engage ourselves in well-doing (pp. 9-10).

How noble and excellent is man, if he only attain to that state for which he was designed. And how mean and contemptible, if he close his eyes to the public weal, and spend his precious ca-

pacities on personal and selfish ends. The greatest happiness lies in the happiness of others (p. 11).

He who remaineth idle and indifferent and continueth in his egoism, indulging constantly his carnal appetites descendeth to the lowest abyss of degradation and ignorance, lower is he than the most dangerous of savage beasts. For it is written, "These indeed are worse than brutes; and meaner than cattle in the sight of God are the deaf and dumb who will not understand" (p. 11).

They have not yet understood that the greatest glory of man, the universal happiness of the world, consists in the joy of soul, high ambition, good intentions, virtue and chastity (p. 44).

Unhappily they imagine that greatness and glory follow on the accumulation of worldly riches and similar vanities. Now clearly consider! If a man gives a thought he will see that the omnipotent God has distinguished him from amongst his creatures by the dress of honor, of virtue and intelligence. . . . Man has become the spring of divine wonders and the center of the mysteries of the heavenly Kingdom.

Now why should he pollute this pure mantle with the stain of selfish desires and exchange this eternal honor for the lowest depths of baseness? "Dost thou think thy body a small thing, while in thee is enfolded the great universe?" (pp. 44-46).

By the details which we have already explained we have endeavored to show that the glory, happiness, honor and peace of man do not consist in personal wealth but on the contrary in sublimity of soul, nobility of resolution, extension of education and in the solution of the problem of life. . . . "Verily in the souls of man lieth their only glory" (p. 52).

There is a great difference between an authentic man and an imitator of one.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

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Mulk 1, 72 (February 7, 1917)

No. 18

The former is David himself, the latter is merely the tone of his voice. Knowledge and wisdom, purity and faithfulness and freedom of soul have not been and are not judged by outward appearances and dress (p. 122).

Man should be a constant source of well-being and contentment and a ready help to prosperity for multitudes of people (p. 54).

We ask, what deeds in the world could be greater than working in the public interests? Can any higher career be imagined than this, that a man should devote himself to the cause of the education, progress, glory and prosperity of the servants of God? It is the greatest of pious deeds that the blessed souls should take them that are powerless by the hands and deliver them from ignorance, degradation and poverty and, filled with sincere purpose for the sake of God, should gird up the loins of their ambition in the service of all people, forgetting their own worldly advantage and striving for the common good. As it is written: "And prefer others over thyself, even though there be poverty amongst them; the best of men are those who do good to their fellows, and the

worst are those who do harm to them" (p. 214).

It is plain and evident that the greatest glory of humanity consists in obeying the omnipotent God, and man's nobility and honor depend upon his following the injunctions and prohibitions of the Lord, the Single One (p. 150).

It is quite plain and obvious that the life of this mortal world like the breezes at daybreak is not enduring but passes away. Blessed therefore is the great one who, walking in the path of God's will shall leave behind him a praiseworthy fame and happy remembrance. "When the pure soul is about to pass away, what matter whether it dies on a throne or on the surface of dust" (p. 148).

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Mysterious Forces of Civilization.*)

As to the seven qualifications of the divinely enlightened soul of which thou hast asked an explanation, it is as follows:

Knowledge. Man must attain the knowledge of God.

Faith.

Steadfastness.

Truthfulness. Truthfulness is the foundation of all the virtues of the world of humanity. Without truthfulness progress and success in all of the worlds of God are impossible for a soul. When this holy attribute is established in man all the other divine qualities will also become realized.

Uprightness. And this is one of the greatest divine attainments.

Fidelity. This is also a beautiful trait of the heavenly man.

Evanesence or humility. That is to say, man must become evanescent in God. Man must forget his own selfish conditions that he may thus arise to the station of sacrifice.

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*; Vol. 2, p. 459.)

Blessed is he who is charitable for he shall inherit eternal life.

Blessed is he who overlooks the faults of others for he shall enjoy divine beatitude.

Blessed is he who associates with all with joy and fragrance for he has obeyed the commands of Baha'o'llah.

Blessed is he who loves mankind for he has heeded the advice of Baha'o'llah.

Blessed is he who is kind to his enemies for he has walked in the footsteps of Christ.

Blessed is he who proclaims the doctrine of spiritual brotherhood for he shall be the child of light.

Blessed is he whose heart is tender and compassionate for he will throw stones at no one.

Blessed is he who will speak evil of no one for he hath attained to the good pleasure of the Lord.

Blessed is he who will not uncover the

sins of others for he will become favored at the threshold of the Almighty.

Blessed is he who hath a forgiving nature for he will win the spiritual graces of God.

Blessed is he who diffuses only the sweet fragrance of the flowers of friendship and mutual association for he will obtain a goodly portion of the bounties of the Merciful.

Blessed is he who teaches union and concord for he will shine like unto a star in heaven.

Blessed is he who practices loving-kindness and co-operation for he will be encircled with celestial benedictions.

Blessed is he who comforts the down-trodden for he will be the friend of God.

(Beatitudes of Abdul-Baha; from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May, 1913.)

The believers must be firmly founded in the principles of morality and honesty.

First, in truthfulness. No one should ever tell a lie.

Second, in honesty in all transactions.

Third, forbearance is necessary.

Fourth, the believers must observe the utmost kindness so that all may consider themselves servants of each other and be truthful and honest to all mankind. If they live up to these commandments the confirmations of the Spirit will surely reach them. The Spirit will descend and they will surely make progress.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Flowers from the Rose Garden of Acca*; p. 2.)

From now on you must strive to beautify the moral aspect of your lives. Advise each other with the utmost consid-

eration; watch daily your words and deeds. Thus from the very beginning you may characterize yourselves with divine ideals. The divine ideals are humility, submissiveness, annihilation of self, perfect evanescence, charity and loving kindness. You must die to self and live in God. You must be exceedingly compassionate to each other and to all the people of the world. Love and serve mankind just for the sake of God and not for anything else. The foundation of your love toward humanity must be spiritual faith and divine assurance. Again: you must be most careful that, God forbid, not one single word contrary to truth issue from your mouths. One falsehood throws man from the highest station of honor to the lowest abyss of disgrace. Always guard yourselves against this enemy, so that all you state may correspond with reality. Forever supplicate and entreat at the court of Majesty and beg confirmation and assistance. Make ye an effort that you may win the good pleasure of Baha'o'llah. All the natural and supernatural advancements in the human world revolve around this one problem. If you attain to this supreme goal all the elements of the world of creation will be ready to serve you at your bidding, i. e., they will find their highest attainment in you and through you or, in other words, you will become the fruits of the world of existence. . . . The evolution of the perfect man is a fruit of creation, just as the evolution of the trunk, branches, leaves and blossoms of the tree is the fruit thereof. Exalt your thoughts. Reflect over all your affairs. Magnify your endeavors. Enlarge the circle of your ideals. Open the wings of spiritual wisdom. Let your hope be the accomplishment of most great deeds the results of which may immortalize your names. All that the people are holding fast to are as the mirage and will not last.

(Extract from Address of Abdul-Baha to students of Beirut College. From

Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, April 15, 1914.)

When a person's life is purely moral, when his daily actions are propelled by ethical forces he will influence tremendously the lives of those who come in touch with him. The insincere man learns from him the lessons of sincerity, the faithless becomes faithful, the ignorant, wise, and the cowardly, courageous.

(Words of Abdul-Baha from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, February 24, 1914.)

All these wishes are well worthy of asking, especially the rescue from self-love. This is a strange trait and the means of the destruction of many important souls in the world. If man be imbued with all the good qualities, but be selfish, all the other virtues will fade or pass away, and eventually he will grow worse.

I hope the beloved of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful will be entirely freed from selfishness. Should this become their nature they will indeed become manifestations of great bounties and the doors of divine grace will open.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet to an American believer; November 30, 1904.)

Dissatisfaction with one's self is a sign of progress. The soul who is satisfied with himself is the manifestation of Satan and the person who is not contented with himself is the manifestation of the Clement One. If a person has one thousand good qualities he must not look at them; nay rather, he must strive to find out his own defects and imperfections. For example, a person having a palatial residence furnished with the most expensive furniture and decorated

with the most exquisite arts, unquestionably will forget all these adornments as soon as he finds out there is a crack in the wall or ceiling and without loss of time will set to repair it. On the other hand absolute perfection is unattainable by man. However much a man may advance yet he is imperfect, because there is always a point ahead of him. No sooner does he look up toward that point than he becomes dissatisfied with his own condition and aspires to attain to that. Christ desired to teach us this thing in a concrete manner when some one said, "O thou good Master!" He answered, "Why dost thou call me good? There is one good, and that is God!"

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 1, 1914.)

Praising one's self is the sign of selfishness. Commanding others is not the passport to the realm of spiritual progress. Here is a man who speaks very few words but he is working all the time and attending to all his duties. There is another man who sits down, talks continually, and boasts of his past achievements.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 8, 1914.)

There are some people who make this short span of life miserable to themselves and others because they harbor envy in their hearts. Envy is the most despicable quality in man. Some people are so filled with it that they cannot bear to see any of their friends receive greater privileges and higher promotions in life than themselves. Like poison envy kills all their nobler sentiments. Envy lowers the station of man and makes him a supreme egoist, and self-centered. If man extricates himself from the claws of this ignoble monster he has defeated the powers of Satan. Then he will attain tranquility and peace

of mind. Man must become evanescent and self-denying. Then all the difficulties and hardships of the world will not touch him. He will become like unto a sea, although on its surface the tempest is raging and the mountainous waves rising, in its depth there is complete calmness.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, October 26, 1913.)

To be approved of God alone should be one's aim.

And has thou realized thy own shortcomings? One must always search for his own shortcomings so that he may repent at the threshold of Oneness and become protected and guarded; otherwise, pride and haughtiness will take possession of one's heart and this will cause deprivation of the bounties of the Court of Singleness.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, November 1, 1909.)

Be pure—to be pure is to be selfless.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Divine Philosophy*; p. 13.)

Say! Let your word be one, and agree in your opinions, and make your mornings preferable to your evenings and the morrow better than yesterday. The merit of man depends upon his service and perfection and not upon the ornaments of riches and wealth. Let your words be free from falsehood and lust and your actions sanctified and above suspicion and pure from hypocrisies. Say! Spend not the wealth of your precious lives on lustful desires and do not confine things only to your private interests, but bestow when you have and be patient when you have not. Distress is followed by affluence and con-

fusion by clearness. Shun mendacity and slothfulness and take hold of that whereby the people will be profited, whether young or old, aged or widow.

Say! Beware of sowing the tares of discord among the creatures or the thorns of doubts and suspicion in the pure and brilliant hearts. Say, O beloved of God! Commit not that which will disturb the clearness of the pure water of love or sever the perfumed ties of friendship. By my life, ye are created for love and affection and not for hatred and obstinacy. Boast not of love to your own people, but of love to your fellow-creatures. Glory not in loving your homes, but in loving the whole world.

Let your eye be chaste, your hand faithful, your tongue truthful and your heart instructed. Abase not the glorious station of the learned and do not belittle the honor of the chief men who justly judge among you.

Let equity be your army, reason your arms and forgiveness your character and nature. . . . Regard not the people and their actions, but look to the Truth and his dominion; . . . drink the pure water of pleasure, from the cup of utterance of the day-spring of the Manifestation, who remembers thee in this strong fort. Spare not any effort within thy power to establish the truth with wisdom and explanations and destroy falsehood from amidst the creatures.

(Words of Baha'o'llah: From *Tablet of Wisdom*.)

If a man commit a transgression he has been unjust to himself, and soon he will find that he is in manifest regret and remorse.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, August 16, 1914.)

The thin eyelid prevents the eye from seeing and what is curtained therein. Then think of the result when the cur-

tain of greed covers the sight of the heart. Say, O people! The darkness of greed and envy obscures the light of the soul as the cloud prevents the penetration of the sun's rays.

(Extract from Words of Baha'o'llah: *The Primal Word*.)

A cheerful countenance lends consolation to the beholder.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, February 16, 1914.)

A thankful person is thankful under all circumstances. A complaining soul complains even if he lives in paradise. . . . If we are not thankful who then can be thankful? Are we not encircled with the bounties of God? Are we not enveloped with the bestowals of the Blessed Perfection? Has he not lighted a luminous lamp in our home? . . . Consider how each one of us is surrounded by his favors! How much divine grace descends upon us! How often our hearts respond to his call! . . . If we are not pleased then who is there to be pleased?

Verbal thanksgiving is fruitless. Thanksgiving is rendered in two effective ways. First, through the realization of spiritual susceptibilities which illumine the courts of the hearts with the bright stars of happiness and rejoice the heart by the glad-tidings of the Merciful. Second, through deeds, i. e., living in accord with the good pleasure of the Lord; adorning our being with his heavenly attributes and trying to alleviate the suffering and misery of mankind.

If a man does not do these things, even though he praises God and offers him a hundred thousand thanksgivings every second there will be for that man not the slightest result; it will be but words without light. Consequently, we must be very happy, very glad, very much pleased, very contented, very joyful,

because we are submerged in the ocean of the bestowals of Baha'o'llah. . . . A thoughtful man enjoys the gifts and the blessings of God.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, February 14, 1914.)

Consider thy composure, for composure of thought will become the cause of one's confirmation in the service. If thou hast not composure of mind in Chicago, undoubtedly thou wouldst be more confirmed in service in New York; but, if thy mind is at peace in Chicago, it is better to stay there for perchance difficulties may arise in New York and then thou wouldst not have composure of mind. Thou must first think of thy tranquillity.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet to a Chicago believer; translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.)

Be thou composed in all conditions.

(*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*; Vol. 2, p. 300.)

Live and act thou in the present as far as possible for thee, according to the divine instructions.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet to Portland believer; translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 20, 1907.)

Be not disappointed in thyself; trust thou in the favor and bounty of his highness, the Almighty.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet to Portland believer; translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 17, 1908.)

Afflictions and troubles are due to the state of not being content with what God has ordained for you. If one submits himself to God he is happy.

A man asked another: "In what station are you?" He answered: "In the utmost happiness." "Where does this happiness come from?" He answered: "Because all the existing things move according to my wish; therefore I do not find anything contrary to my desire; thus I have no sorrow. There is no doubt that all the beings move by the will of God, and I have given up my own will, desiring the will of God. Thus my will becomes the will of God, for there is nothing of myself. All are moving by His will, yet they are moving by my will. In this case, I am very happy."

When man surrenders himself everything will move according to his wish.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From Kinney-Beede-Thompson Notes; taken at Acca, July 6, 1909.)

Man, as an individual unit of human society must not base his deeds according to the law of retaliation. He must forgive, just as God forgives the sins and transgressions of his servants.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 5, 1914.)

Man must be a mine of piety and sympathy. He must associate with all mankind with joy and fragrance. He must not turn away his face from any soul. He must raise the fallen and cheer the hopeless. He must treat with kindness both the friend and the stranger.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, July 24, 1914.)

O ye friends of God! Show ye an endeavor that all the nations and communities of the world even the enemies put their trust, assurance and hope in you; that if a person falls into error for a hundred thousand times he may yet turn his face to you hopeful that you will forgive his sins; for he must not become hopeless, neither grieved nor

despondent! This is the conduct and the manner of the people of Baha! You should conform your conduct with the advices of Abdul-Baha!

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet to New York Assembly of Bahais; translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 9, 1909.)

May they attain to such heights of altruism as to be ready to sacrifice their lives for each other! This is the life of the world of humanity! This is in accord with the good-pleasure of the Blessed Perfection!

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, October 12, 1914.)

A man must ever think of the protection of others and not of himself.

(Words of Abdul-Baha; from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, October 12, 1914.)

Man must always associate with those from whom he can get light or be with those to whom he can give light. He must either receive or give instructions; otherwise, being with people without these two intentions, is spending one's time for nothing and by so doing he is neither gaining nor causing people to gain.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From Kinney-Beede-Thompson Notes; taken at Acca, July 5, 1909.)

O thou maid-servant! Have great magnanimity so that thou mayest be favored in the threshold of the Almighty. Have lofty aspirations so that thou mayest attain in the kingdom of God to eternal life.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, June 17, 1914.)

It is possible to so adjust one's self to the practice of nobility that its atmos-

phere surrounds and colors all our acts. When these acts are habitually and conscientiously adjusted to noble standards with no thought of the words that might herald them then nobility becomes the accent of life. At such a degree of evolution one scarcely needs to try to be good any longer; all our deeds are the distinctive expression of nobility.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From notes of Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford; taken in Paris, France, 1911.)

Today the real king is the soul who serves all, and dear is he who exhibits humility toward all humanity. The humbler and lowlier a person shall be the nearer to and more acceptable at the threshold of God is he.

The Beauty of Abha, Baha'o'llah, said that the one nearest the threshold of God is he who serves all and who considers himself evanescent and non-existent; who forgets himself utterly, turns to God alone and for the sake of God serves all mankind.

(From Address given by Abdul-Baha, Washington, D. C., May 12, 1912.)

O people of the world! I command you to that which is the cause of exalting your stations. Hold fast to divine piety and adhere to the hem of that which is just. Truly I say, the tongue is for honorable mention; pollute it not with evil speech. God hath forgiven that which is past. Henceforth ye must all speak in that which is proper. Abstain from cursing, reviling and that which is annoying to man.

(Words of Baha'o'llah: *Kitab-El-Ahd.*)

Work for the sake of God and for the improvement of humanity, without any expectation of praise and reward. The present (is always) unimportant, but we must make our present so filled with mighty and altruistic deeds as to assume

STAR OF THE WEST

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be; these fruitless strifes these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

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Ola 1, 72 (March 2, 1917)

No. 19

Survival and Salvation

Words of Abdul-Baha from Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab
February, 1914

THOU has asked concerning the spirit and its immortality after its departure. Know thou that at the time of its translation it ascends and ascends until it reaches the presence of God, clothed in a temple (body) which will not become subject to the changes wrought by ages and cycles, nor by the contingencies of the world, nor the emanations thereof. It will continue to exist through the eternity of the Kingdom of God—its sovereignty, its dominion, its potency. From it will appear the signs of God and his qualities, the providence of God and his bestowal. Verily the pen is unable to move in a befitting manner in explaining this truth—its exaltation and loftiness. The hand of mercy shall cause it to enter into men's minds, though it cannot be grasped through any explanation, nor be described by those means which are available in the world.

Blessed is the spirit which abandons the body, previously sanctified and freed from the doubts of the nations. Verily, it moves in the atmosphere of the will of its Lord, and it enters into the supreme paradise. It is welcomed by the angels of the Most High. It associates with the prophets of God, and his chosen ones, and it converses with them, and relates to them those events which have happened to it in the path of God, the Lord of both worlds.

Were one to become informed of that

which is pre-ordained for the spirit in the worlds of God, the Lord of the throne and the earth, he would become immediately enkindled with the fire of yearning for this impregnable, exalted, holy, and most glorious state of being.

The prophets and the messengers have come in order to guide mankind to the straight path of the true one. Their aim has been no other than the education of the people, so that at the time of death they may depart to the supreme friend, with perfect sanctification, purification and severance. I declare that the prophets are causative of the improvements and the progress of the nations. They are the leaven of existence and the greatest means for the appearance of sciences and arts in this world.

As to the question concerning the soul, know thou, verily, that "soul" is a term applied to numerous realities, according to the exigencies of the following relations in regard to development in the world of existence:

(1) In the mineral kingdom, soul is called "latent force," silently working for the disintegration of the substance of the mineral.

(2) In the vegetable kingdom it is called "virtue augmentative," or the power of growth, which attracts and absorbs the delicate materials of inorganic substance found in the mineral kingdom of matter, and transforms them into the condition of growth. Thus the inorganic

substance found in the mineral kingdom becomes growing vegetable life through the effect of the word of God. This vegetable soul, i. e. "virtue augmentative," or power of growth, is a quality which is produced by the admixture of elements, and appears in accidental organisms, of which contingency is an essential attribute.

(3) In the animal kingdom it is called "sense perceptions" (or instinct). This soul term, as applied to the animal kingdom, is also a natural quality resulting from the mixture of the elements, and it appears from their mingling and combination, for it is a quality which results from the composition of bodies (organisms), and is dispersed at their decomposition. From this we are to understand that the animal soul is not endowed with the capacity of attaining immortality, as the life force is dispersed at the decomposition of the animal tissues.

All these things up to this point are a contingent reality, and are not a divine reality. But a contingent reality, which is perpetuated by the fullness of existence, will then suffer no corruption, and will thus become a divine reality, for the accidental reality is only distinguished from the existent reality by its subjection to corruption. For transformation is an essential necessity to every contingent reality, and this is what the mature wisdom has deemed advisable.

(4) In the human, worldly soul signifies the "rational being, or mind." This has a potential existence before its appearance in human life. It is like unto the existence of a tree within the seed. The existence of the tree within the seed is potential; but when the seed is sown and watered, the signs thereof, its roots and branches, and all of its different qualities, appear. Likewise, the "rational soul" has a potential existence before its appearance in the human body, and through the mixture of elements and a wonderful combination, according to the natural order, law, conception, and birth, it appears with its identity.

Be it known that to know the reality or essence of the soul of man is impossible, for, in order to know a thing, one must comprehend it, and since a thing cannot comprehend itself, to know one's self in substance or essence is impossible. As the comprehender cannot be comprehended, man cannot know himself in reality or essence. In order to obtain knowledge of any reality, or soul of man, the student must study the manifestations, qualities, names and characteristics of man. This much can be stated, that the reality of man is a pure and unknown essence constituting a depository, emanating from the Light of the Ancient Entity—God. This essence or soul of man, because of its innate purity, and its connection with the unseen Ancient Entity, is old as regards time, but new as regards individuality. This connection is similar to that of the ray of the sun—the effect to the primal cause. Otherwise, the thing that is generated, or the creature, has no connection with or relation to its Generator or its Creator.

Since the pure essence, whose identity is unknown, possesses the virtues of the worlds of matter and of the Kingdom, it has two sides—first, the material and physical; second, the mental and spiritual—which are attributes not found as qualities of matter. It is the same reality which is given different names, according to the different conditions wherein it becomes manifest. Because of its attachment to matter and the phenomenal world, when it governs the physical functions of the body, it is called the human soul. When it manifests itself as the thinker, the comprehender, it is called the mind. And when it soars into the atmosphere of God, and travels in the spiritual world, it becomes designated as spirit.

There are two sides to man. One is divine, the other worldly; one is luminous, the other dark; one is angelic, the other diabolic; man is equal to the animals in all sensuous conditions, for all animal characteristics exist in him. Likewise, divine and satanic qualities are con-

tained in man; knowledge and ignorance; guidance and error; truth and falsehood; generosity and avarice; valour and timidity; inclination towards God and tendency towards satan. Chastity and purity; corruption and vileness; economy and avidity; good and evil; all are contained in man.

(5) If the angelic side becomes more powerful, and the divine power and brightness surround man, then the second birth takes place, and eternal life is found at this point. Man becomes then the noblest among creatures. On the other hand, if sensuous qualities surround, and if terrestrial darkness and sensuous pas-

sions predominate, if they meet in man only the worldly feelings, if they find him a captive of evil qualities and fallen into everlasting death, then such a man is the basest and most abject among all creatures. In such a man, divine power does not exist. An animal is not considered unjust and evil because of its cruelty and injustice, for it is not endowed, as is man, with divine qualities; but if man falls into the same evil condition, it is evident that he has permitted his ungodly attributes to overcome the divine qualities with which he was endowed. This shows the baseness and meanness that exist in human nature.

“Exert yourselves to guide some soul out of the
whirlwind of mortality to the fountain
head of immortality”

Words of Baha'o'llah

I DECLARE by The Greatest Name, it is a pity that in these days anyone should look to unimportant worldly conditions! Stand in the command of God, and deal with each other with the utmost love. Sincerely, for the sake of the Beloved, consume selfish veils with the fire of oneness, and consort with each other with cheerful, shining faces. Ye all saw the manners of the True One with your own eyes. He has never wished that any night should pass while a single one of the beloved of God was offended with this youth!

The heart of the world is ablaze with the divine world! It is a pity that ye should not be enkindled with this fire! God willing, we hope ye will appoint this night as the “Night of Unity” and all become united with each other, and be adorned with the garment of excellent, praiseworthy qualities; and that ye will exert yourselves to guide some soul out of the whirlpool of mortality to the fountain head of immortality, and amongst men conduct yourselves in such a manner that the signs of the True One may become manifest in you. For ye are the first of worshippers, the first of adorers, and the first of those who revolve around the True One!

By the One who gave me utterance to that which he desireth,—in the Kingdom of Abha your names are better known than they are to your own selves! Do not suppose that this statement is an imagination! O that you could see that which your Lord sees as to the loftiness of your rank, the greatness of your worth, and the exaltation of your state! We beg of God that your desires may not prevent you from that which has been ordained for you.

We hope you will deal with each other in the utmost affinity, love and friendship, in such wise that through your unity the banner of oneness shall be hoisted and that of infidelity reversed, and that you will precede each other in good works and good will. His is command and creation. He doeth that which he willeth and commandeth that which he desireth! Verily, he is the powerful, the potent.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

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No. 19

Tablets from Abdul-Baha on Immortal Life

“His spirit flew from this world”

To the maid-servant of God, Miss Mac-Cutcheon—Upon her be greeting and praise!

Thy letter was received. On account of the death of thy father and brother the utmost sorrow and regret was produced. How unfortunate it is that that young man was killed instantly by the sudden shock! But his spirit flew from this world into the world beyond and the spirit of thy father soared toward the heavenly realm. Be thou not sad or unhappy for these two heavenly birds flew toward the rose-garden of eternity and

attained to the infinite immensity of the Kingdom. Although those two lamps were extinguished in the earthly glass yet they became the enkindled lamps in the everlasting lamp of the Kingdom. At this moment they are in the utmost state of joy and happiness and so they shall be throughout all eternity. Consequently do thou not grieve nor be thou dispirited.

Convey my longing greeting to all the friends of God.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

“She is not counted amongst the dead”

To Mrs. A. E. Magee—May her soul be happy!

O thou afflicted one!

In this great catastrophe* the eyes are weeping and the hearts are burning, because that incomparable plant was growing and developing with infinite joy and fragrance in the garden of the love of God. She was stirred into cheerfulness by the wafting of the breeze of

*Refers to the death of her daughter, Harriet Magee.

providence; day by day she was progressing, and she was at all times the cause of the consolation of the hearts of the friends. I will never forget her, for she was one of the most important personages. But it was destined that she might become free from this material world, the world of physical sufferings and tribulations, and hasten toward the heavenly universe, so that through the showers of the cloud of grace she may obtain the utmost freshness and infinite deli-

eacy and yield luscious fruits. Consequently be thou not unhappy, nor be thou grieved, for she is not counted amongst the dead. Nay rather she was dead, she became alive; she was evanescent, she became eternal; she was earthly, she became heavenly; she lived in the material world, she became wholly spiritual. Like unto a bird she was a prisoner and captive in the cage of this body. This cage was broken; that bird winged its way heavenward, and in the celestial rose-garden she became the associate and

companion of other divine birds. Thou shalt find her in that rose-garden with the utmost joy and fragrance.

Convey on my behalf the utmost kindness and love to Mr. and Mrs. Inglis. I beg of God that in this affliction he may bestow upon them patience and consolation, and that they may educate their dear son in accord with their highest and purest standard.

Upon thee be greeting and praise!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

In Memoriam

Mrs. Lua Moore Getsinger

FURTHER word comes from Cairo of the last days of the brave maid-servant of the kingdom, Mrs. Lua Getsinger. Mrs. Getsinger went to Cairo last autumn, hoping to leave soon for America, and carry Abdul-Baha's message of light to the friends in the West. The friends in Cairo loved her devotedly and opened their homes to her. For a number of months she was at the home of Mirza Taki Esphaim, "Abdul-Baha's faithful steward in Cairo," where she suffered a long illness through the winter. He and his wife cared for their American sister most tenderly. "Before and after this illness," Miss Eleanor Hiscox writes, though she never recovered her strength, Lua Getsinger went about with heroic will "giving the Bahai teachings, her work being chiefly among the young men, as they are the only ones among the Egyptians who know English. All listened to her eagerly, and all were wonderfully uplifted and blessed by her inspiring words. The lives of some were completely transformed by her influence. Such was the power of the words of Baha'o'llah upon her lips."

"In the early spring she went to Shoubra, a suburb of Cairo, to the house of another Bahai, who greatly desired that she should remain there for a while

for the sake of her Bahai influence upon his wife and her family, formerly Christian. And she spent her time in giving them all lessons in English, of which they had some knowledge. They all loved her devotedly and treated her as their own sister. It was there her last days were passed. One night (it was the 2nd of May) she awoke with a severe pain in her heart. She called the family, who telephoned for a doctor. But before his arrival she passed into the other world after uttering three times, 'Ya-Baha-el-Abha.'

"The grief and sorrow of all the Bahais was very great, for all loved her as a devoted sister. One of the choicest sites was selected for her tomb. No expense was spared by the Bahai friends for their devoted sister, beloved by Abdul-Baha, in the last acts which could be done for her. How they all loved her! How they still weep when they speak of her!

"Here our sister Lua lies buried in the same city with Mirza Abul Fazl. The prophetic words of Abdul-Baha have come to pass, for Bahai pilgrims and friends already visit her grave with offerings of love and devotion."

In the last days of illness she hovered between the will to serve on earth and the longing to fly away into the glorious

freedom of "the immensity of the kingdom." On April 12th she wrote to Miss Hiscox: "Little by little I am seeing all the reasons *why* many things are as they are and the lessons I have to learn thereby. I am sure until the last day of our lives we will be learning lessons, for this world is a *school*, from which we graduate only when we leave it. I shall be so glad when the last day comes, and the school is forever (so far as I am concerned) dismissed. His will, not mine, be done!"

The lessons of the earth-world she learned beautifully in those last days of illness and trial. As Miss Hiscox says, her suffering "had a purifying influence upon her and seemed to burn away all the dross and to leave her pure gold. She had only love and forgiveness for all." She saw that every experience had been for the best. Like an angel ready to enter the kingdom of light, she turned her face, "a few days before her departure," to the picture of the Center of the Covenant, which hung on the wall, and said, with tears in her eyes but with manifest firmness: "All I want to do is his will and to be severed from ought else save God."

HENRY L. GOODALE.

Oct. 8, 1844—May 15, 1916.

After an illness of much suffering for three weeks, our beloved friend and brother, Mr. Henry L. Goodale, of Kenosha, Wisconsin, passed away most peacefully, realizing that he was going to join the Heavenly Concourse and meet his Glorious Lord.

He was among the first to receive the Message in America and a member of the original House of Spirituality in Chicago. Many of the friends there recall the happy hours spent with "Pa Goodale," in his little shoe shop. His love and wise counsel was freely given to all. Later he removed to Kenosha. He was beloved by all who knew him or had any dealings with him in business; sincere in the Cause of Baha'o'llah, both in his

daily life and by teaching whenever the opportunity offered.

He attended, with his devoted wife, the Convention in San Francisco last year, where he made himself beloved as always. At the wonderful Feast of El-Rizwan, held in the beautiful home of Mrs. Goodall, the talk he gave melted every heart and tears came to the eyes. Everyone instinctively felt that the breezes of the Love of God surrounded him.

Fannie G. Lesch.

MIRZA ALI AKBAR.

On Saturday, June 10, 1916, in the Post-Graduate Hospital, New York City, where he had lain ill for many weeks, the pure and beautiful spirit of our Bahai brother, Mirza Ali Akbar, of Tabriz, Persia, ascended to the supreme home. A Bahai service was held the following Tuesday night and Wednesday morning.

Isabella D. Brittingham.

CHARLES E. BRUSH.

Charles E. Brush, born March 17, 1855, at Carbondale, Ill., passed away in Chicago, October 30, 1916. Mr. Brush was an architect of high standing and left many monuments attesting his fine ability, among which near at home is the DeKalb Normal School, which is considered a model for that type of school, and also the Court House at Sycamore.

Mr. Brush loved his profession and was a man of high ideals and fine integrity. He appreciated merit wherever he found it, and always stood ready to assist those who were worthy either as workmen or as men.

Mr. Brush was a son of the late Col. D. H. Brush, who was a public spirited man and who figured largely in the history of Southern Illinois. He leaves to mourn his loss a widow, Ida Flemming Brush, who is an earnest follower of the Bahai teachings and intensely interested in the Cause.

JOHN HARRISON MILLS.

John Harrison Mills, 75 years old, one of Buffalo's oldest residents and an artist of note, died October 23, 1916. Mr. Mills had been ill only a short time. He had just completed a memorial tablet to Jesse Ketchum, founder of the Buffalo Normal school.

Mr. Mills was born at Williamsville, N. Y., but lived nearly all his life in Buffalo. His home was at No. 494 Elmwood Avenue. He was well known in art circles throughout the country. His bust of Abraham Lincoln and his scenes in the Rocky mountains are considered examples of his best work. He spent fifteen years in Colorado.

Some of Mr. Mills's work is on exhibition at the Buffalo Historical society's room.

As a member of the 21st New York regiment Mr. Mills was a member of the guard of honor when President Lincoln's body passed through Buffalo. He made a sketch of the martyr President, from which he later molded the bust.

Mr. Mills was the only survivor of the editorial staff of *The Buffalo Express* during Samuel L. Clemens's time, when he worked with the humorist as reporter and copy reader. That was from 1869 to 1871.

Besides a widow, he leaves a daughter, Mrs. Margaret Sprague of Buffalo, and a son, William of New York.

Mr. Mills was a Bahai. His supplication addressed to Abdul-Baha, begging acceptance into the Kingdom of God, reveals his clear vision and pure intention. We quote it in part:

“O Greatest Branch!

“I see in thee now that Greatest offshoot of the Tree whereon we may lay hold when the floods come, and not be swept away, and that beneath thee we may dwell when the earth shall be renewed, and I beg that I may be accepted in the Glorious Kingdom, and that my name may be registered in the book of the favorites. And I also beg the blessing of the worlds to come and the present one, for myself and for those who are near and dear to me, and for the gifts and powers to enable me to impart this Great Truth: *The Coming of The Kingdom of God*—to the people of my country, or for the spiritual gifts for which thou seest me best fitted. And I ask that in me the work of human hands may glorify God and that beauty which is His and which He has given as a token may be inward in me and in my work testify of Him.

“Humbly Thy servant,”

(Signed) *John Harrison Mills.*

(Copy made from original, by Henrietta F. Mills, Nov. 19, 1916, at Mrs. Mills' home.)

The Divine Art of Living—Chapter Two

(Continued from page 188)

significant weight and momentous importance in the future.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 13, 1914.)

Will is the center or focus of human understanding. We must will to know God, just as we must will in order to possess the life He has given us. The human will must be subdued and trained into the will of God. It is a great power

to have a strong will, but a greater power to give that will to God. The will is what we do, the understanding is what we know. Will and understanding must be one in the cause of God. Intention brings attainment.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Ten Days in the Light of Acca*; p. 30.)

In the world of humanity “good intentions” is the greatest means of personal development. If a person has

“good intention” he will succeed in all of his undertakings.

(Words of Abdul-Baha, from the Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, April 8, 1914.)

The *worst* human quality and the *most great sin* is back-biting, and most especially when it emanates from the tongues of the believers of God. If some means were devised so that the doors of back-biting could be shut eternally and each one of the believers of God unsealed his tongue in the praise of the other, then the teachings of His Holiness Baha'o'llah would have been spread, the hearts illuminated, the spirit glorified, and the human world would have attained to everlasting felicity.

I hope that the believers of God will shun back-biting completely (gossip-making and fault-finding), each one praising the other cordially, and believe that back-biting is the cause of the divine wrath, to such an extent that if a person back-bites to the extent of *one word* he may become dishonored amongst the people; because the most hateful characteristic of man is fault-finding. One must expose the praise-worthy qualities of the souls and not their evil attributes. The friends must overlook their shortcomings and faults and speak only of their virtues and not their faults.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: From tablet

quoted in Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, August 11, 1913.)

In our physical selves we are like the animals; yet in some ways the animals are even higher than men; they are more restful and composed; more trustful and reliant upon the bounty of God, more in the flow of his will. The birds of Mount Carmel are his creatures. They can fly to the highest branches of the trees and build their nests. From the mountaintops the birds can enjoy the beautiful view of the sea and mountain by their power of sight. All this beauty exists for us as well. The love of God, the beauty of God is everywhere and exists for man if he will but rise to spiritual heights, open his spiritual vision and behold it. Is the king free as the bird is free to fly upward? The king's head is often heavy with anxiety and the things of this world which hold him down. The true pleasure and happiness depend upon the spiritual perception and enjoyment. The powers of mind are the bounties of God given to man to lead him toward spiritual happiness. The highest grace in man is to love God. Love of God, knowledge of God is the greatest, the only real happiness, because it is nearness to God. This is the kingdom of God. To love God is to know Him. To know him is to enter his kingdom, and to be near him.

(Words of Abdul-Baha: *Ten Days in the Light of Acca*; p. 38.)

End of Volume VII