

STAR OF WEST THE

IT HAS been our aim to uplift man, through exalted Words, unto the Supreme Horizon, and to prepare them to hearken unto that which conduces to the sanctifying and purifying of the people of the world from strife and discord resulting from differences in religions or sects.

—BAHA'O'LLAH

O friends! In this day the door of heaven is opened by the key of the godly Name, the ocean of generosity is manifested and is rolling before your faces, and the Sun of Providence is shining and gleaming. Do not be exclusive nor destroy your most precious time through the speech of this or that person. Gird up the loins of endeavor and do your best in training the people of the world. Do not imagine that the Cause of God is a cause of opposition, hatred or wrath. The Sun of Greatness hath said, that which is revealed from the heaven of will in this Supreme Manifestation, is to unite the people with love and friendship toward all. The people of Baha, who have drunk of the pure wine of reality, must associate with all the world with a perfect spirit of joy and fragrance, and remind them of that which is for the benefit of all. This is the Commandment of the Wronged One to his saints and sincere ones.

O people of the earth! Make not the religion of God a cause of variance among you. Verily of a truth, it was revealed for the uniting of the whole world. Blessed is he who loves the world simply for the sake of the Face of his Generous Lord. With perfect compassion and mercy have we guided and directed the people of the world to that whereby their souls shall be profited. I declare by the Sun of Truth and which hath shown forth from the highest Horizon of the world, that the people of Baha had not and have not any aim save the prosperity and reformation of the world and the purifying of the nations.

—BAHA'O'LLAH

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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. VI

Baha 1, 71 (March 21, 1915)

No. 1

"My Purpose and Intention is to Remove from Amongst Men this Enmity and this Religious Hatred"

Address by Abdul-Baha at Eighth Street Temple (Jewish Synagogue)
Washington, D. C., November 8, 1912.

From stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen

GOD is One; and the effulgence of God is one; and humanity constitutes the servants of that one God. God is kind to all. He creates them all, He provides for all; and all doth He nurture, and protect. The sun of God shines upon all mankind. The divine cloud pours down upon all. The gentle zephyrs of His mercy blow toward all, and all humanity is submerged in the ocean of God's eternal mercy. God has created mankind from the same progeny in order that His creatures may associate one with the other in good fellowship, that they may exercise love towards each other, that they may live amicably together.

But we have acted contrary to the good pleasure of God. We have been the cause of alienating humanity. We have separated one from the other, arising in opposition towards each other. How many have been the wars which have occurred amongst men! How excessive has been the bloodshed which has taken place amongst men! How numerous have been the homes which have been laid waste! How numberless are the cities which have been ruined. And all of this has been contrary to the good pleasure of God. For God hath willed love for humanity. God

is clement to all mankind. God hath ordained amity amongst men.

But most regrettable is the state of difference and dispersion we have created amongst men in the name of religion, imagining that a duty paramount in importance in religion is that of alienating peoples; that our religious duty, as it were, is to shun one another and to consider each other contaminated! In reality, let it be known that the foundations of the Divine Religions are one, and the differences which have occurred are due to the blind imitations. His holiness Abraham was the founder of reality. His holiness Moses was the founder of reality. His holiness Christ was the founder of reality. His holiness Mohammed was the founder of reality. His holiness Baha'o'llah was the founder of reality. And this is to be proved; it is not simply an assertion.

Let me ask your closest attention for the consideration of this subject: The divine religions—each one of them—are divisible into two divisions. One division is concerned with the essential or spiritual: to wit, faith in God, the acquirement of the virtues which characterize perfect manhood, praiseworthy morals, the acquisition of the bestowals

resulting from divine effulgences; in short, that division which is concerned with the realm of morality or the ethical plane. This is the fundamental aspect of the religion of God, and this is important, because knowledge is of first importance. Man must know God. He must comprehend the oneness of Divinity. He must come to know and to acknowledge the precepts of God, and he must come to the point of knowing for a certainty that the ethical development of humanity is dependent upon religion. Man must get rid of all defects, and seek the acquisition of virtues. Thus may he prove to be the "image and likeness of God." It is recorded in the holy Bible that God stated: "We shall create man after our own image and likeness." It is self-evident that the image and likeness thus mentioned do not apply to the ordinary form and visage of a human being, because the reality of Divinity is not subject to any form or anatomic figure. Nay, rather, by the "image and likeness of God" are meant the attributes and characteristics of God. Even as God is pronounced to be just, man must likewise be just. Even as God loves all men, man must likewise love all humanity. Even as God is kind to all, man must be kind to all his fellowmen. Even as God is loyal and truthful, man must be loyal and truthful. Even as God exercises mercy toward all, man must prove himself to be the manifestation of mercy. In a word, the "image and likeness of God" constitute the virtues of God, and man must ever become the recipient of the effulgences of divine attributes. This signifies the "image and likeness of God." Again, let it be stated that each religion of God is divisible into two divisions or departments. One division is connected with these virtues, and that is the foundation, and this you will find common to all the divine religions. His holiness Abraham promulgated this. His holiness Moses promulgated this. His holiness Christ upheld this standard. In

short, all the prophets have promulgated this aspect of religion.

The second division, which is non-essential, which has to do with the transactions of humanity and is of no great import, that department is accidental and changes according to the exigencies of time and place. It is not fundamental, it is accidental. For example, during the times of Noah, it was expedient that all the sea foods be considered as lawful, and so God commanded Noah to partake of all marine animal life. But during the time of Moses this was not in accordance with the exigencies of the time, therefore a second command was issued which abrogated partly the law, making unlawful certain of the marine foods. During the time of Abraham—upon whom be peace!—it is well known that camel's milk was considered a very lawful and delicious food; likewise the flesh of the camel. But during Jacob's time, because of a certain vow which Jacob rendered, this became unlawful. These are the non-essential affairs.

In the holy Bible there are certain commandments which, according to those bygone times, constituted the very spirit of the age—the very light of that period. For example, according to the law of the Torah, if a man committed theft to the extent of a dollar they cut off his hand; but now is it possible to cut a man's hand off for a theft of a dollar? There are to be found in the Torah ten ordinances concerning murder. Are these effective today? No; times have changed. According to the explicit text of the Bible, if a man should change or break the law of the Sabbath, if he should touch fire on the Sabbath, he must be killed. Today such a law is abrogated. The Torah declares if a man should say an unseemly word of his father, he must be killed. Is this possible of execution now? No, indeed. Times have changed. Likewise during the time of Christ there were certain minor ordinances which were agreeable for those times.

These remarks show conclusively that the foundation of the religion of God remains permanent and lasting. It is that foundation which ensures the progress of the body politic. It is that foundation which ensures the illumination of humanity. It is that foundation which is ever the cause of love amongst men. It is that foundation which works for the unification and loving fellowship of all men, and that never changes and is not subject to transformation. That which is changeable is connected with the accidental, with the non-essentials. It is that part which has to do with the transactions of society.

Let me ask what is the purpose of prophethood? Why hath God sent the prophets? It is self-evident that the prophet is the educator of men, that he is the teacher of the human race. The prophets come to confer general education upon humanity; to give humanity training; to rescue the human race from the abyss of despair and desolation and suffer them to attain to the high apogee of advancement and glory. The people are in darkness; the prophets bring them out of darkness into the realm of light. They are in a state of utter defect; the prophets cause them to become imbued with perfections. The purpose of prophethood is no other than education; it is the guidance of people. Hence we must regard and be on the lookout for the man who is thus qualified; that is to say, any soul who is the educator of men, who is the teacher of the people, he is undoubtedly the prophet of his age.

For example, let us review the episodes connected with his holiness Moses—upon him be peace! His holiness Moses dwelt in Midian at a time when the Children of Israel were in captivity or bondage in the land of Egypt, subjected to tyranny and severe molestation. They were illiterate and uninformed, and they were subject to very severe ordeals and catastrophes.

They were in a state of utter helplessness and imperfection, to the extent that it was proverbial that one Copt could overcome ten Septs or Israelites. At such a time as this, and in such circumstances, his holiness Moses appeared, and with a heavenly radiance he shone forth. He came and saved the Children of Israel from the bondage of Pharaoh and released them from captivity. He led them out of the land of Egypt and into the Holy Land. Whereas before they were scattered, he unified them. He educated them; he conferred upon them the blessing of erudition. Whereas before they were captives, he rendered them princes. Whereas before they were ignorant, later on he rendered them wise. Whereas before they were imperfect, he caused them to attain perfection. In a word: From helplessness he led them on and suffered them to attain to the highest plane of courage and valor. And thereby they became renowned throughout the world. At last they attained to that plane whereby they were enabled to establish the Solomonic sovereignty. Through the training of his holiness Moses these captivated Children of Israel became the dominant people amongst the nations. And in all the degrees of attainment and refinement they became famous. They at last reached such a degree that the famous philosophers of Greece journeyed to Jerusalem in order to study with the Israelitish prophets and instructors, and many were the lessons of wisdom and philosophy which they carried with them to Greece. Amongst the philosophers was the famous Socrates. Socrates journeyed to the Holy Land and studied with the Israelitish prophets; he acquired lessons of philosophy from them and learned many of their arts and sciences. After his return to Greece, through the information he had obtained, he founded that system which is known as the Unity of God. The Greek people arose against him, and at last,

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. VI

Baha 1, 71 (March 21, 1915)

No. 1

Naurooz Greeting

Allah'o'Abha!

The seventy-first year of the Millennium has dawned. It is still the spiritual springtime of the Bahai Dispensation. The divine fragrances are being diffused. If we are not happy at this time, at what other period shall we be happy?

But springtime brings with it violent storms, the flash of lightnings, the roar of thunders, and the downpour of rain. Young plants are almost uprooted.

It is a day of severe trial. Black clouds have covered the whole horizon; yet the spiritual soul rejoices knowing that after the storm, the air will be pure, the ground sweetened, the plants refreshed, the sunshine glorious.

The doors to the Orient are closed. All communication with Abdul-Baha is severed. Europe is war swept. America has severe problems to be solved. "The world is topsy-turvy."

The STAR OF THE WEST feels the storm. It has had to reef its sails. It will refrain from publishing the Persian section for the time being or until the doors of the Orient are opened. The English section, for a few issues, will contain only eight pages.

In the Tablet to the STAR OF THE WEST (see above), Abdul-Baha says: "Be thou happy; but remain firm." This we are endeavoring to do until the sky clears and the STAR becomes "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."

Until then, let us all "Be happy," for at what other season should spiritually minded souls be happy?
—The Editors.

"My Purpose and Intention is to Remove from Amongst Men
this Enmity and Religious Hatred"

(Continued from page five)

in the presence of the king, he was study the arts and sciences with the poisoned. Likewise Hippocrates and learned Israelitish doctors. many other of the Greek philosophers Now, so long as his holiness Moses, were wont to go to the Holy Land and through the results of his great mission,

was instrumental in releasing or rescuing the Israelites from a low state of debasement and humiliation and led them to a place of glorification and attainment—he taught them in this fashion, he educated them in this fashion—we have to be fair in our judgment in regard to that marvelous teacher, for he was a man, single and alone. Without a heavenly power, could he have made such a change and brought about such a condition? Could he have suffered a people after their humiliation to be thus exonerated, without a power holy and divine in character? It was no other than a power divine in origin. This is a self-evident proof of prophethood, because the mission of the prophets is no other than the education of the human race, and this personage educated people, human beings, and this proves that he was a mighty prophet amongst the prophets, and that his book is no other than the very book of God. There is no doubt of this at all. This is a rational, a circumstantial proof.

In brief, his holiness Moses—upon whom be peace!—founded the law of God and readjusted the morals of the people of Israel, and this gave them an impetus whereby they advanced along the degrees of human attainments. But after the time of his holiness Moses, and after the Solomonic era, during the time of Jereboam, morality suffered a change. These spiritual perfections ceased to exist. Amongst the Israelites there was a state of corruption. These Mosaic postulates did not exist. Then there was a state of warfare amongst them, there was contention amongst them. There was strife amongst them. As a result, their unity passed away. The sect of Jereboam declared themselves to be valid, and the followers of Rehoboam declared themselves to be. At last affairs reached such a state that the Children of Israel suffered dispersion and eventually there was a state of degradation to such an extent that they worshipped the golden calf. They went to the city of Tyre, where they ex-

pressed their devotions to the calf. Thereupon God sent Elijah, the prophet, and Elijah rescued the people of Israel, and renewed the law of God. He re-established a new life for the people of Israel.

In short, when change and transformation took place, that oneness and solidarity was followed by dispersion, for then we know, historically, that Nebuchadnezzar appeared, and as a result of that appearing—namely, the coming of Nebuchadnezzar—the greatest suffering obtained amongst the Israelites, the greatest reverses and trials took place amongst them. Seventy thousand of the Israelites were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar, to the land of the Chaldeans. Then the prophets of God reformed or re-established the laws of God, and the people again followed that law. This renewed or re-established their liberty and, according to the ordinances of the king of Persia, there was a return to the holy city, Jerusalem, and the temple of Solomon was built and the Israelitish glory was reinstated. But only for a time did these affairs continue, when again the morality of the people underwent a change, and conditions reached such a degree that the Roman government came and conquered the Holy Land. At last the era of Titus the Emperor appeared. This Roman general, Titus, utterly destroyed the city of Jerusalem and all the villages and hamlets. Homes were pillaged. Many people were killed, and children were taken into captivity. Palestine became a wilderness, a waste, and all the Jews had to flee from the Holy Land. The foundation of his holiness Moses suffered a tremendous change then, because the foundation of his holiness Moses comprised the virtues of humanity. They spelled morality, love amongst mankind, the acquisition of arts and sciences, the spirit of the oneness of humanity. But because the people lost sight of this, these reversals resulted.

Now, I want you to closely examine the following facts, for they are state-

ments which are worthy of consideration, because my purpose and intention is to remove from amongst men this enmity and this religious hatred which have fettered men, and to have all the religions unified and agreed. Inasmuch as the hatred and enmity which have obtained amongst the religions are results of misunderstandings, if these misunderstandings shall vanish, all the religions will be unified. For I declare that the foundation of the divine religions is one and the same. It is the oneness of instruction or teaching, and oneness of foundation; but alas!—we have relinquished that foundation and have held tenaciously to certain dogmatic teachings and blind imitation, and this has caused enmity and hatred. This has caused bloodshed. This is verily the cause of alienation amongst men. Hence I wish you to be very fair in the judgment of the following statement:

These were the conditions amongst the people of Israel, when, lo and behold,—his holiness Jesus Christ appeared amongst them. Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew amongst the Jews. He was single; he was alone and unique. He had no assistant. They at once pronounced him to be an enemy of Moses. They declared him to be the destroyer of the Mosaic institutes or laws. But let us examine the facts as they are. Let us investigate reality as it is, and we shall find the exact state of affairs. But for the fair investigation of this question, let us lay aside all that we have heard and thus independently shall we investigate. This personage, Jesus Christ, when he appeared, declared his holiness Moses to have been the prophet of God, and he pronounced all the prophets of Israel to have been the prophets of God. He pronounced the Torah the very book of God, and he enjoined upon all to conform or believe in the Old Testament. During a period of 1500 years it is an historic fact that the kings of the Israelites were unable to spread broadcast the fame of Judaism. In fact, the name

and fame of Moses were confined up to that period to the boundary-lines of Palestine, and the Torah was a book well known only in Palestine. But his holiness Christ—through the blessing of the New Testament of Jesus Christ—the Old Testament, the Torah, was translated into six hundred different tongues, and it was spread broadcast in the world. It was through Christianity that the Torah reached Persia. Prior to that time there was no news of such a book as the Torah, but his holiness Christ caused the Torah to be spread everywhere. He caused the name of Moses to be elevated and spread. He was instrumental in publishing broadcast the name and fame of the Israelitish prophets, and he proved to the world that Israel constituted the people of God. Which one of the Israelitish kings were capable of accomplishing this result? Were it not for Jesus Christ, would the Bible, the Torah, have reached this land of America? Would the name of Moses be spread throughout the various parts of the world? Refer to history. For everyone knows that when the time of Christ was at hand, and Christianity was gradually spread, with the onward march of evangelism, with the spread of Christianity there was a spread simultaneously of the Torah and Judaism. Throughout the length and breadth of Persia there was not a single volume of the Old Testament, of the Torah, but Jesus Christ caused it to appear everywhere, to the extent that the holy Bible today is a household book everywhere. Hence it is evident that Christ was a friend of Moses. That he loved his holiness Moses, for had he not loved his holiness Moses he would not have commemorated his name. This is self-evident, that he was his best friend. Therefore the Christians and Jews should exercise the utmost of love towards each other, because Jesus and Moses, the founders of the two, have loved each other. The followers should follow their example.

We have already stated what constitutes a valid proof of prophethood. We find that the very proofs validating the mission of his holiness Moses were virtually advanced by his holiness Christ. His holiness Christ was also a unique and single individual, a member of the revered nation of Israel. But he was able to unite by the power of his word the following nations: The Roman nation, the Greek nation, the Chaldean nation, the Egyptian nation, and the Assyrian nation. He unified them all. Whereas before they were blood-thirsty, they were pillaging the properties of each other, they were taking captive the children of one another, he cemented all of these hostile peoples in a perfect way. He caused all of these to agree and to be well unified. Such colossal effects were the results of the manifestation of one single soul, and this declares conclusively that he was not a person unassisted by God. And now all the Christians do admit that his holiness Moses was a prophet of God. They declare that his book was the book of God. That the prophets of Israel were all prophets true and valid, and that the people of Israel constituted the people of God, and they praise and glorify his holiness Moses. What harm has come from this? I declare: What harm comes from a statement in the very same way, from the hands of the Jews, that Jesus was also an expression of the Word of God? Have the Christians suffered from their investigation of Moses? Have they suffered at all from it? Have they suffered any loss in their religious enthusiasm, any defect in their religious belief, that they declare his holiness Moses was a prophet of God, that the Torah was a book of God, that all the prophets of the Jews were prophets of God? It is self-evident that no loss comes from that. And now it is time for the Jews to declare that Christ was the Word of God, and then this enmity between two great religions will pass away.

For two thousand years there has been this enmity and religious prejudice between the Christians and the Jews. All this blood has been shed, all these ordeals have been suffered. These few words will make them united. What harm comes from this: That just as the Christians glorify and praise his holiness Moses, likewise the Jews should commemorate his holiness Christ, should declare him as the Word of God and consider him as one of the chosen ones of God?

Now, just a few words concerning the Koran and the Mohammedans. When his holiness Mohammed appeared, we find that in the Koran he refers to the sayings of Moses in seven different places. He pronounces Moses as the great man of God. As a prophet of great valor; a prophet and possessor of a book, the founder of a law and spirit of God. He said, "Whosoever believes in him is acceptable in the estimation of God, and whosoever shuns him or any of the prophets is rejected of God." Even, in conclusion, the prophet calls upon his own relatives, saying, "Why have ye shunned and not believed in Moses? Why have ye not acknowledged the Torah? Why have ye not believed in the Jewish prophets?" And he in a certain sura mentions the names of twenty-eight prophets of the Israelites, praising each and all of them. To this extent has he offered commendation. Now let us consider the person of Mohammed: The purpose is this: That Mohammed glorified and praised his holiness Moses and confirmed Judaism. Even Mohammed declared that whosoever denies Moses is contaminated, and this is an exposition which you will find stated in the Koran, that if a person denies Moses or any of the prophets, he is contaminated. Even if he repent, his repentance will not be accepted. He pronounced even his own relatives, just because they had denied the prophets, as contaminated, as infidels. He said: "Because you have not believed in Christ, because you have

not believed in Moses, because you have not believed in the Gospels, therefore you are infidels and contaminated." Thus Mohammed, himself, has praised the prophets of the past. He has praised the Torah and Moses and Christ. He appeared amongst the Arabs, who were a people scattered and illiterate, barbarous in nature, thirsting for the blood of each other. He led them aright. He guided them and trained them until the Arabs reached a high state of development. From the lowest degree of ignorance he suffered them to attain to the highest state of attainment, until they were renowned as masters of erudition and philosophy. Thus we see that the proofs applicable to one prophet are equally applicable to another.

In conclusion, since the prophets themselves, the founders, have been loving, and testified of each other, they have praised each one the other, why are we to disagree? Why should we be alienated? They have been kind to one another—and God is One. He is the Shepherd of all, and we all constitute His sheep, hence we should be in the state of love and amity. We should exercise the utmost of good will. Should this not govern; or shall we pronounce anathema on each other, each one praising himself and condemning the others? What result comes from that sort of thing? What use comes from that?

Naught but the greatest enmity and hatred, turmoil and rancor, amongst men. Do we not see the amount of blood which is shed in this way?

Praise be to God, you are living in a land of freedom. You are blessed with men of learning, men who are well informed, and are well versed in the study of comparative religions. You realize the need of unity, and you know the great harm which comes from prejudice or superstition. I ask in conclusion, is not good-fellowship preferable for a state of society rather than hatred and enmity? The answer is self-evident. Love and fellowship are the things needed, that will win the good-pleasure of God, and we must ever emulate the good-pleasure of God. We must be united. We must love each other. We must ever praise one another. We must ever give commendation to all the people, thus removing discord and hatred, which has suffered alienation amongst men. Otherwise the same state of affairs will continue, each praising his own people and condemning the others; religious wars will continue, and religious prejudice is the cause of this havoc. This must be done away with, and the way to do it is to investigate the reality which underlies all the religions, and which reality is love of humanity. For God is One and humanity is one, and the prophets have brought the creed of amity.

Words of Abdul-Baha concerning the Mashrak-el-Azkar

(Extract from Tablet to Mrs. Corinne True, Chicago, Illinois)

Now it is hoped that the believers of God may show magnanimity and raise a great sum for the building so that the foundation of the Mashrak-el-Azkar may be laid, and perchance, God willing, the corner stone of the foundation may be laid by the hands of Abdul-Baha.

This confirmation will descend upon the people of America if they will arise and endeavor with great courage to establish union and harmony, so that every trace of difference may be uprooted and they may all become as one heart and one soul.

Convey the wonderful Abha greeting to all the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful.

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. VI

Jalal 1, 71 (April 9, 1915)

No. 2

Talk by Abdul-Baha

At the home of Mrs. Parsons, Washington, D. C., November 9, 1912

From stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen

THE address which was delivered last evening in the Jewish synagogue evidently disturbed some of the people, including the revered Rabbi, who, however, called on me this afternoon and I went over the ground with him, which I shall review for your benefit.

It was not possible to make the matter very plain to the Rabbi last night, because he was very much pressed for time; but today opportunity was sufficient for a reconsideration of the matter in detail. The quintessence of the subject is as follows—I wish you to understand this thoroughly and have it well memorized, in order that you may discourse with the Jews—thus perchance you may be instrumental in leading them aright.

The quintessence of the subject, I repeat, was this: The question may well be asked first, "What is the mission of the prophet? What is the object of a divine law?" There is no doubt that the object is the education of the human race. It is for the training of humanity. All human beings may be considered as pupils or children, and they are in need of a divine educator. They are in need of a real teacher. In order that he may teach these children he must be qualified, and the qualification of prophethood is as follows: To

guide people. Hence we shall notice first, the efficacy of their teaching. The question that must be asked is, "Have they taught men or not? Have they proved themselves efficient tutors or not?" Amongst them, I remarked, was your teacher or instructor, his holiness Moses. Did his holiness Moses educate or did he not? Let us find out whether or not he taught the men of his time: We find his holiness Moses was appointed as the educator of the Children of Israel. It was during a period when the Children of Israel were in captivity, were in a state of humiliation and ignorance, in the utmost of inadvertence, living in a very mean or lowly manner in Egypt, a sort of life which was worse than death. Imagine an ignorant people, downtrodden, thoughtless and most senseless and ignorant; so low as to be considered the very lowest. His holiness Moses was appointed for them, he guided them, he saved them from bondage, he took them into the Holy Land, he rescued them from ignorance, he rescued them from inadvertence, he trained them in such wise as to change a condition of lowliness into one of honor and elevation, he suffered them to reach the utmost degree of perfection. They learned the sciences and arts, they were civilized to a superlative degree, they

became honorable and well thought of, whereas previous to that they were lowly and disrespected, whereas before that they were ignorant, later they became wise—reaching at last to that plane of competency when the Solomonic sovereignty was established by them. Their name was widespread throughout the world, and they became famous for distinct virtues. Even the philosophers of Greece went to Palestine to learn from them lessons of wisdom. All of these facts prove that his holiness Moses was a prophet, was a teacher.

As to his holiness Christ, he was a single, unique and lowly individual, who appeared at a time when the Children of Israel were in the lowest state of bondage, subject to the tyranny of the Roman Empire and to the severe yoke of ignorance, utterly negligent of God. The historical information of the holy Book bears this statement out. Refer thereto and find it as it is. His holiness Christ—this single and unique individual—appeared from amongst this lowly and degraded people with power Divine and the potency of the Holy Spirit, and unified the various peoples and nations of the world. He gathered them together, he caused them to agree and brought them together beneath the overshadowing efficacy of one Word. His mention was not confined to the Children of Israel only, for that was a limited people then. But his holiness Christ united the numerous nations who were then hostile and inimical, such as: The Roman people, the Greek people, the Egyptian people, the Chaldeans, the Syrians and the Assyrian people. He rescued them from their former state of continuous warfare. He made them a united people, and the utmost of love was created by his Word amongst them. At last these people advanced extraordinarily along the degrees of human perfection and edification, and thereby achieved the glory never-ending. The Jews had undergone a great dispersion. This single

and unique individual overcame all the world then, founding a sovereignty everlasting, a nation mighty indeed. The results of such an education proved him to be a great man of the world, the first educator of his time, the first teacher of his period. What proof could there be greater than these? What evidence could there be greater than that a single individual should have resuscitated so many peoples and nations, should have unified so many tribes and sects, should have removed so much warfare and sedition? Undoubtedly such a work is wrought through the Power of God, because the power of a human being fails in the accomplishment of such facts.

When his holiness Christ appeared, the Jews then living pronounced him to be the enemy of Moses. Pharisaical rabbis of the time declared him to be the very destroyer of the law of Moses, the very destroyer of the institutes of the Torah; he would bring a great misfortune to the people of Israel, for he was considered to be the breaker of the Sabbath and destroyer of the Temple of Solomon. Hence they turned away from him. We must investigate this. We must see whether this was reality or a libel. When we investigate the facts we find that his holiness Christ caused the name of Moses to be widespread, the fame of Moses to be spread broadcast and the book of Moses, the Bible, through him was published everywhere. In 1500 years the Jews had been unable to have more than one translation of the Old Testament or Torah, which translation was from the Hebrew into the Greek language. But his holiness Christ was instrumental—that is to say, his teachings were instrumental—in having the Old Testament, the Torah, translated into 600 tongues, and in these various languages they were spread in every part of the world. All the kings of Israel, with all the prophets of Israel, were unable to further the movement of Judaism and the name of Moses even

beyond the confines of Palestine. They were unable to have the Torah even spread in any other part, only Palestine; but his holiness Christ caused the name of Moses to be spread throughout the world. In Asia and in Africa and Europe, in most parts of the world, Judaism became an established religion amongst the people. Amongst these continents Asia, which was the center of Judaism, in all the cities of Asia the name of Moses was spread. His holiness Moses was pronounced to be a prophet of God. His book was pronounced to be the book of God. And now this personage is to be considered as a friend or an enemy of Moses!

Fairness is needed; one must judge it aright. Had he been an enemy, he would not have allowed the name of Moses to be so wide-spread. He would not virtually have promulgated the Torah. Would there have been any mention of Moses in America? Who was instrumental in even the name of Judaism having come to this part of the world? It was through the blessing of Christianity, undoubtedly. His holiness Moses had no better friend than his holiness Christ, and no greater sympathizer than his holiness Christ. Regard how they conceal reality and how the illiterate amongst the Israelites still continue in the delusion that Christ was an enemy of Moses. Just now all the Christians do believe in Moses. They declare that Moses was the interlocutor of God; he was a prophet of God, a man of God, that his book was the book of God and that the prophets of Israel were all valid and true, that the people of Israel were the people of God. They offer such unlimited praises, unlimited eulogy, such unlimited love. What harm comes from this? And what if the Jews should say that Christ was also the Word of God; that he was the Spirit of God? What harm could there be in this? Just a few words. These few words will be the cause of reconciling the Christians and the Jews.

The Christians do believe in Moses. They believe in the book of Moses. What harm have they received from that belief? Have they lost anything by it?

In answer to all these questions, the Rabbi answered, "No."

Then I said: What harm comes from an attitude of the Jews similar to that of the Christians, if they shall declare that Christ was the Word of God, that the Gospel is the Word of God? By such an attitude as this the enmity of many, many centuries will pass away. I declare that verily Moses was the prophet of God; that his book was the book of God. Does that harm my religious standpoint? Not at all. No harm comes to your religious standpoint if you declare that Christ was the Word of God. Furthermore, every nation in the world is proud of its great men and heroes. They, the heroes or great men, might have been atheists or agnostics. Today France glories in Napoleon Bonaparte, saying: "He was a French military genius," whereas he was a tyrant; "Voltaire was ours," whereas he was an atheist; "Rousseau was a great man of ours," whereas he was an irreligious man. They are proud of them, and they have feasts commemorating them; they have adorned special days or places for them. They have music in their honor. They have commemorations in their behalf. They are proud of them: "Rousseau was ours!" And now, do you consider such great men, these great men of France—I asked of this Rabbi—to be greater than the person of Nazareth, Jesus Christ? It is self-evident that in comparison with Jesus Christ they are as nothing. Consider the grandeur and majesty of Jesus, and that of such men as were mentioned. Consider him from the standpoint of fame and name, and consider the others from the same standpoint. Where is the station of Christ, and where is theirs? What relation is there? Incomparable! What harm

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. VI

Jalal 1, 71 (April 9, 1915)

No. 2

“Hasten ye toward love and prosperity!
Hasten ye toward peace and
reconciliation!”

Tablet from Abdul-Baha addressed, “To the beloved of God and the
maid-servants of the Merciful throughout the world”

(Revealed several years ago; reprinted from the STAR OF THE WEST, No. 1, Vol. IV)

HE IS GOD!

O ye spiritual friends of Abdul-Baha!

“Perfume Thou the East! Illumine
Thou the West! Bestow Thou light to
the North! Grant Thou life to the
South!”

This verse hath been revealed from the lips of the Center of the Covenant one year after the departure of Baha’o’llah. But the nakazeen (not understanding its spiritual purport) wondered and derided. Praise be to God! that now its signs have become manifest, its powers evident, and its proofs plain. Thanks be unto Him! that the East and the West are stirred into cheerfulness, and through the holy fragrances all directions are perfumed.

The Blessed Perfection, in a clear text, hath promised us in the Book: “Verily,

I behold you from the horizon of Abha and will make victorious whomsoever will arise in the service of my Cause with the hosts of the supreme concourse and the cohorts of the favored angels.” Praise be to God! that this victory and confirmation became visible and manifest and hath shone forth from the horizon of the world like unto the sun.

Therefore, O ye friends of God! Show ye forth an earnest endeavor and display ye a resolute effort, so that ye may become assisted in the adoration of the Ancient Beauty and the manifest light; to be the cause of spreading the light of the sun of Truth; to infuse into the dead, antiquated body of the world a new spirit; to cast in the fields of the hearts pure seeds; to arise in the service

of the Cause; to speak with eloquent tongues to become candles of guidance in the assemblage of the world; to become shining stars in the firmament of the existent beings; to become merciful birds in the rose garden of oneness; to sing the melodies of realities and significances; to spend every breath of your existence in the service of this conspicuous light; so that in the end ye may be freed from loss and failure and attain to the inexhaustible treasury of the kingdom. For the life of man is wholly subject to danger and impermanency. A person cannot put his assurance even in one moment's continuity. Notwithstanding this, the nations of the world, deceived by the mirage of superstition, imagine themselves secure in the heavenly way. Alas! Alas! Former communities in bygone ages entertained the same perishing thoughts; but by one of those periodical fluctuations they were all hidden under the ground, and afflicted with deprivation and loss, except those souls who had become pure evanescence and had arisen with a great self-abnegation in the path of God. Such souls shine forth as brilliant stars from the horizon of the Ancient Glory, and the results which emanated from their lives in succeeding ages and cycles are the proofs of this statement. Therefore, do not ye rest, neither day nor night; seek not ye for composure; talk ye of the mystery of servitude, and seek ye the path of thralldom; so that through the promised confirmation ye may receive assistance from the kingdom of oneness.

O ye friends! Dense and gloomy clouds have covered the horizon of the world, and the darkness of hatred, malignity, persecution, tyranny and the greatest cruelty is spreading. All the people are drunk with the wine of heedlessness; and bloodthirstiness and rapaciousness are considered the noblest excellencies of the world of men.

His Highness the Almighty hath chosen the friends from among the concourse of men and hath specialized them with the most eminent guidance and the high-

est gift; so that we may with our souls and hearts exert ourselves, sacrifice our lives, be engaged in the guidance of the people and the training of souls; so that the wild beasts may become the gazelles of the meadows of unity; the wolves the sheep of God the bloodthirsty ones the heavenly angels; the fire of malice be extinguished and the flame of safety in the blessed tabernacle bestow illumination; the odor of the nether realm of infidelity be dispelled and the fragrances of the rose garden of faithfulness be diffused in all parts; the weak draw light from the Universal Reason and evil souls seek to be purified with the holy and divine breath. There are needed manifestors for this gift; farmers for this field; gardeners for this rose garden; fishers for this sea; luminous stars for this heaven; spiritual physicians for these ill ones, and loving guides for these wanderers; so that they may bestow a share on those who are deprived, grant a portion to those who are shareless, give unmeasured treasure to the indigent ones, and show forth the power of proof to the seekers.

Glory be unto Thee, O my God! I supplicate unto Thee, O Thou my Helper! I invoke Thee, O Thou my Refuge! I utter to Thee my agonies, O Thou my Physician, and entreat Thee with all my heart, my soul and my spirit, saying: O my God! O my God! Verily, the gloomy night hath fallen upon all regions and the clouds of ignorance have extended in all directions; the people are immersed in the darkness of surmise and the tyrants are sunk in the depths of brutality and lawlessness. The red glare of the burning fire is flashing forth from the nether world, roaring, ominous voices are rising from the cruel, destructive and terrible armaments; every region is crying out with its dumb secret tongue: "Nothing that I possess hath benefited me and power and strength are taken away from me!" Verily, O my God, the lamps of guidance are extinguished; the fire of animosity is enkindled; wrath and antipathy are spread abroad and

provocation and maliciousness are disseminated upon the face of the earth. Yet I see only Thy wronged followers who are crying at the tops of their voices and summoning the people:

Hasten ye toward affinity!

Hasten ye toward faithfulness!

Hasten ye toward generosity!

Hasten ye toward guidance!

Hasten ye toward union!

Hasten ye to behold the Light of the World!

Hasten ye toward love and prosperity!

Hasten ye toward peace and reconciliation!

Hasten ye toward the law of disarmament!

Hasten ye toward harmony and success!

Hasten ye toward co-operation and mutual help in the path of guidance!

Verily, these wronged ones do sacrifice themselves with infinite joy and happiness for the sake of the people, with all their souls and spirits throughout all regions. Verily, Thou beholdest them weeping at the misfortunes of every one of Thy creatures and becoming grieved at the distress of Thy children; they are kind to all the people and pained at the sight of the calamities of the inhabitants of the world. O my Lord! make the wings of prosperity to grow upon their shoulders, so that they may ever soar toward the apex of their aspirations; strengthen their loins in the service of Thy people, and confirm them in the thralldom and adoration of the threshold of Thy Holiness.

Verily, Thou art the Merciful! Thou art the Clement, and there is no God but Thee, the Powerful, the Compassionate, and the Ancient!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Talk by Abdul-Baha

(Continued from page thirteen)

comes from your declaring that Jesus of Nazareth was a great man who issued from Israel, and we love him? A great man indeed did we give to the world. Such a mighty personage, whose Word has spread throughout the world, was an Israelite, who has conquered the East and the West. Such a person was born of this race. You should be proud of him! When you express your glory and honor in the recollection of Christ, rest assured that the Christians will shake your hands in fellowship. There will be no trouble therein; there will be no hesitancy; there will be no restraint. Consider, for this fanaticism what a lot of trouble and what persecutions have been heaped upon you in Russia. And you must not think that this is all ended! This humiliation will continue forever! The times may come when in Europe itself they will arise against the Jews. But if you should declare Christ

to be the Word of God, then you will rid yourself of all the trouble. What harm comes to your religion if you believe in Christ? Jesus was a Hebrew. My advice is this, that your future may be assured and secure, that you may become honorable, that the Christians may love you, and all this depends upon two words: "Christ, the Word of God!" Finished! Nothing more! Is it not a thoughtless state? Is it not ignorance? Is it not folly? Is it not stupidity? Get thee hence, O prejudice! Say, "Verily the Word of God was realized!" and all will be right.

At last, he said: "I guess that is so. I believe that it is perfectly so! But I ask one thing more of you. Cannot you tell the Christians to love us a little bit more?"

I said: Very well. I have done so, and I will continue to do so.

Prophecies of Baha'o'llah concerning Adrianople, Constantinople and Roumelia

Talk by Abdul-Baha at the home of Mrs. Parsons,
Washington, D. C., November 7, 1912

From stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen

ALTHOUGH this evening I feel quite fatigued, yet now that I am face to face with you I suddenly feel animated; therefore I shall speak to you.

Consider events in the Balkans today, where a great conflagration is furiously raging and so much blood is being shed. You can say the whole world of humanity is virtually lamenting and mourning because of the revival of this warfare. Governments are in the process of change and transformation. The sovereignty of the Orient at large is tottering; it is subject to the greatest uncertainty. I desire, therefore, to touch upon this subject.

Most especially do I wish to touch upon the phases of this war which Baha'o'llah prophesied forty years ago fully and completely. He addressed a letter to the sultan of Turkey during his exile and while he was under surveillance in the prison of Akka. He likewise addressed epistles to Napoleon III and to the shah of Persia. All these letters which he sent to the crowned heads of the earth were compiled in a book which was published thirty-five years ago in Bombay, India. It was published years ago. There are several editions of the book. The first edition was about thirty-five years ago, and another twenty-two years ago. I have with me a copy of the edition of twenty-two years ago. Professor E. G. Browne, of Cambridge University, wrote a book detailing therein his visit to Akka. He followed that first work by another wherein he quoted extracts from these tablets or letters, some of which have been translated into English and are to be found in the libraries. You can look them up in your library here. I thought some of the friends possessed copies of these. Some had copies, but they have

passed them on from hand to hand until no one knows where these copies are. Inasmuch as they are published in London you can all secure copies. When you get copies, carefully peruse these extracts, in order that you may see the remarkable statements of these tablets. In brief, in his words addressed to the sultan of Turkey he says: "Verily, because of your oppression against the subjects who dwell in your land, and because of your great tyranny in governing, ere long your government will undergo change, and soon you shall be dethroned and Roumelia will be taken out of Turkey or conquered. It will be occupied by others. And in Constantinople there shall come a reign of terror, to such a degree that women will be mourning and wailing, children will be crying, men lamenting, and the cries of these will reach unto heaven." I wish therefore to read certain parts of this book, citing the very words which Baha'o'llah uttered in that connection. They will be translated to you. The third edition was published in Bombay twenty-two years ago. The date is 1308 A. H., about twenty-two years according to your calendar. The western calendar is different from the east.

(Reading:) "O thou king (literally president), verily thou hast committed that whereat the prophet Mohammed mourns and laments in his delectable paradise! Verily the glory of this earth hath made thee haughty because thou hast turned thy face toward the countenance wherefrom light radiates towards all the denizens of the earth. Ere long thou shalt find thyself in the most great loss. Thou has united with the king of Persia, the shah, in exercising oppression toward me; even after I cry towards ye

from the dawning-point of Majesty and Might with a Command which has illumined the eyes of the near ones. Verily this is the day wherein fire declares in all the things." (This is an Arabic text; you must know there are many such similies in Arabic. "Fire" refers here to the fire in the "bush" seen by Moses.) "Verily it declares that the Beloved of the world hath appeared, and in the estimation of all things there is a declaration that the Interlocutor of the wise hath appeared, and they are ready to hearken to the Word of the generous and wise. Hast thou imagined that thou canst extinguish a light ignited by God? No verily, by His might and power! By that which thou hast committed, that is to say the persecutions, its volume has been increased and its ignition has augmented, and ere long it will spread and set aglow the denizens of the earth. Even so hath the matter been accomplished, and nothing upon the earth nor in heaven can withstand the onward march of this command."

(This is the prophecy:) "Ere long there shall come a change of affairs; a revolution in the land of mystery, Adrianople, and in its environment (Roumelia), and it will go out of the hand of the king. There shall be a great quaking and bewailing, and revolution and corruption will be witnessed everywhere. In all parts of Roumelia affairs will undergo transformation because of that which hath befallen the captives. (Referring to Baha'o'llah and his party.) Verily that government will change, and things will be straightened, and there will be lamentation even of the infants; lamentation to the extent that stones and clay will lament in Constantinople, and even trees and inanimate objects will bemoan and lament. Blood will be spilled in that land, and thou shalt find the people in a great turmoil and trouble. Did the Pharoahs withstand the power of the sovereignty of God while they existed upon the earth and when they were of the oppressors? Verily we caused the Interlocutor (Moses) to appear from the house of Pharoah even to express the

great power of God. And recall the time when Nimrod ignited the fire to burn the Friend of God (Abraham). Verily the oppressors have ever exercised a ferocity or oppression toward the wronged ones, endeavoring to exterminate the light of God and extinguish the flame of life. We have caused the command to be issued in the countries, and we have caused His mission to be proclaimed amongst the unitarians. Verily this youth hath come to unify the denizens of the earth; all of them. Ere long God, through His power, will conquer, and thou shalt find the earth a delectable paradise of Abha. Even so hath this matter been recorded upon a mighty tablet with the strong pen of God."

Many are the other prophecies in this book; especially to the shah of Persia, all of which prophecies have come to pass. They are lengthy and we have not time to quote them.

The purpose of this citation is that Baha'o'llah's great endeavor in the east was to unify these people, to cause them to agree, to reconcile them one with the other, thereby to manifest the oneness of the world of humanity, to prepare the way for international peace, and to have all enjoy composure and welfare. But they have not hearkened to the summons of Baha'o'llah. Nay rather, both the Persian and Turkish governments arose against his cause, and the result is that the governments of Persia and Turkey have both gone to pieces. Whereas had they heard his commands and received his admonitions, both of these countries would have been protected. They would have been in the utmost joy and happiness. They would have exercised fellowship together. They would have availed themselves of the wonderful power of love and unity. They would have been well pleased with each other. They would have dwelt in the delectable paradise. But alas! The commands and behests of the Blessed One have not been listened unto. Nay rather, day after day they have followed their own devices, until now this fire is raging most furiously.

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. VI

Jamal 1, 71 (April 28, 1915)

No. 3

"There is need for an Educator; there must needs be in the world a Universal Teacher"

Talk by Abdul-Baha at the home of Mrs. Parsons,
Washington, D. C., November 7, 1912

From stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen

IN THE world of nature we observe expressions of the struggle for existence. We find efforts of the survival of the fittest everywhere. And this is the very cause of error in the theories and opinions of man. Because we state *a priori* that nature is defective. When we glance at the world of nature we discover numerous defects which must be removed by means of education. For example, consider man: If we study human beings who have been reared according to the postulates of nature, if we observe them in their aboriginal condition, we will find them defective indeed.

Regard the people of central Africa. They have not received religious education nor have they received any form of civilization. They have grown, developed and advanced only according to their aboriginal state. We find them all to be bloodthirsty. We find them all to be possessed of immoral qualities, animalistic in type to such an extent that they even kill and devour each other. This makes it evident that the world of nature, if left alone, presents defects, because it is a plane upon which the struggle for existence expresses itself. If we leave a piece of ground in its natural state, wild weeds and thorns will grow therefrom, wild trees of the jungle will spring up. But if we train or cultivate that piece of ground, the result of cultivation will be that it will rid itself of the defects of nature, will become trans-

formed into a rose-garden of variegated hues, or an orchard of fruitful trees. This proves that the world of nature is defective. The schools which are founded, the systems of education which are established, are for what? They are for replacing the defects of nature with virtues and perfections. If the world of nature were not defective there would be no need of cultivation or education. There would be no need for training. But inasmuch as we find that children are in need of education and training, that they require cultivation—it proves conclusively that the world of nature must be developed. Many things show clearly that the world of nature is defective and imperfect. One of the basic evidences of this imperfection is the expression of the survival of the fittest among the brutes; their ignorance, sensual qualities, susceptibilities of the animal type and free vent of passions. There is need for an educator. There is need forever for the teacher. There must needs be in the world a universal teacher. Teachers are of two kinds: the private or special teacher, and the universal instructor. The universal instructors are the prophets of God, and the special teachers are the philosophers. The philosophers are only capable of educating a circumscribed circle of people. They can only train a limited number of human souls, whereas the holy divine manifestations of God are capable of conferring upon humanity

a general education. They arise to bestow upon humanity a moral education universal in scope. They are the cause of general development. For example, consider that his holiness Moses was a universal teacher, and how in the early days he educated the people of Israel; how he enabled them to rescue themselves from the lowest abyss of despair and ignorance and caused them to attain the highest level of knowledge and refinement. For they were captives and in bondage, but through him they were freed. He led them out of bondage into the Holy Land and caused them to advance. This formerly oppressed and

insula was in a state of utmost ignorance. Those tribes were constantly waging war and shedding the blood of one another, burning the houses and homes of each other, and lived in a state of utmost immorality. They were baser and lower than animals. His holiness Mohammed appeared as a prophet among such a people. He educated such a barbarous nation, rescued them from savagery and ignorance and put an end to the continuous strife and warfare which had existed amongst them. He caused them to agree and reconcile. He unified them and caused them to be as brothers. He enabled them to advance along the degrees

“VERILY, I declare that these teachings constitute the illumination of humanity; that this is the spirit of modernism; that this is the honor everlasting; that these are heavenly teachings, and the cause of life never-ending amongst men.”

—ABDUL-BAHA

downtrodden people, captives of the Pharaohs, were helped to establish a sovereignty Solomonic in proportion. This is an example of a universal teacher, a universal instructor. Again, consider his holiness Christ: how that marvelous example of unity, his holiness Christ, gave an education in ethical training to the Roman, Greek, Egyptian, Syrian and Assyrian nations and welded them together by a bond indissoluble. These various nations were formerly at enmity, hostile, and in a state of continuous strife. He cemented them together and caused them to agree, conferred a general tranquillity upon humanity and established the means of welfare to the human race. Hence he was a real educator. He was the instructor of reality.

When we consider or study the conditions prior to the rise of the prophet of Arabia, we find that the Arabian pen-

insula was in a state of utmost ignorance. Whereas they were formerly ignorant they became wise; whereas they were formerly barbarous, they became refined; whereas they were formerly debased, they became elevated; whereas they were humiliated, later they became renowned. This proves that he was an educator, that he was a teacher.

In the nineteenth century there was ignorance of the utmost degree in the Orient. There was continuous warfare and strife. The apathy and ignorance of the eastern nations or peoples had reached the lowest pitch. They were indeed gloomy and dark, utterly negligent of God and completely captives of the baser feelings and passions. The struggle for existence had been in full exercise amongst them.

At such a time as this his holiness Baha'o'llah appeared amongst them,

even like unto the sun. He flooded the east with light. He expounded new teachings to them. He laid a basis for new institutions which are the very spirit of modernism, the very light of the world, the cause of the development of the body politic and of eternal honor. The souls who hearkened to these teachings amongst the various Oriental nations immediately let go of that spirit of strife and sedition, and began to exercise the utmost of good-will and good-fellowship. From the extremity of animosity they were transformed into the acme of love and amity. They had been warring and quarreling, now they began to be loving and to live together in amity, until today in the Orient such people—the Bahais—live in the utmost state of love and good-fellowship. Among them you will find no expression of religious prejudice, no political prejudice, no patriotic prejudice; nay rather, they associate together with utmost fellowship and love, and

their joy is exceedingly great. The warfare which takes place in the east is not at all connected with them. They do not participate in it. Nay rather, their attitude towards all is one of good-will and good-fellowship. It is a standard of peace which is unfurled amongst them. It is the Light of Guidance which has flooded all their souls with its radiance. It is love upon love. It is light upon light. This is the education of his holiness Baha'o'llah. This is the training he has given them. He has led these souls to this standard. He has given them such teachings as to ensure eternal illumination amongst them. Anyone who becomes well versed in these teachings will say: "Verily, I declare that these teachings constitute the illumination of humanity, that this is the spirit of modernism; that this is the honor everlasting; that these are heavenly teachings, and the cause of life never-ending amongst men."

"It is proved that the existence of phenomena is effected through the Eternal Will"

Talk by Abdul-Baha at the home of Mrs. Parsons,
Washington, D. C., November 10, 1912

From stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen

THIS is the last evening we meet here; therefore it shall be our farewell visit. Just now upstairs a lady asked a question which I wish to answer. As it is a very important question and in need of a thorough explanation, and as you are waiting here it was decided that the answer should be given downstairs so that the questioner might be satisfied and at the same time we should enjoy our meeting and visit. The question was, "What is the Reality of Divinity, or what do we understand by God?"

This is an important question indeed. It is a very subtle subject. Therefore, listen to it very carefully. After you leave here ponder over it in order that you may understand the result of this

explanation. It is a very subtle question. When we glance at all phenomena, we discover that the real identity of any given phenomenon is unknown. Phenomena or created objects are known only by their attributes. Man discerns only manifestations or attributes of objects, whereas the reality or identity of them is unknown to him.

For example, this flower—what do we understand by this flower? We understand the qualities apparent and appertaining to this flower; but the very elemental reality or identity of the flower remains unknown to us. As regards its external appearance and attributes, these are knowable; but as regards the inner being, the very identity, it is unknown. Now so long as earthly

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

HE IS GOD!

O thou Star of the West!

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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phenomena are unknown as regards their identity, and are known only through their properties or qualities, how much more is this true concerning the reality of divinity, that holy reality which cannot be comprehended by any human grasp? That which comes within human grasp is finite, and we are infinite in relation thereto because we can grasp it. Assuredly the finite is lesser than the infinite; the infinite is ever greater. That reality of divinity to be contained within human grasp would be after all possessed of an intellectual existence only; a mere intellectual concept with no extraneous existence; an image or a likeness which had come within the grasp of human mind or intellect. The mind of man would be transcendental thereto. How could it be then that an image which has only intellectual existence is the reality of divinity which is infinite? Therefore the reality of divinity in its identity is beyond the range of human intellection, because the human mind, the human intellect, the human thought are limited, whereas the reality of divinity is unlimited. How can the limited grasp the unlimited and transcend it? Impossible! The unlimited always comprehends the limited. The limited can never comprehend, surround or take in the unlimited. Therefore every concept

of divinity which has come within the intellection of a human being is finite or limited, and is a pure product of imagination, whereas the reality of divinity is holy and sacred above and beyond all such concept.

But the question may be asked "How shall we know God?" We know Him by His attributes. We know Him by His signs. We know Him by his names. We know not what the reality of the sun is. But we know the sun by the ray, by the heat, by its efficacy, by its penetration. By the bounty and effulgence of the sun we recognize the sun, but as to what constitutes the reality of the solar energy, that is unknowable to us. But the attributes characterizing the sun are knowable. If we wish to come in touch with the reality of divinity, we do so by recognizing its phenomena, its attributes and traces which are widespread in the universe. All things in the world of phenomena are expressive of that one reality. Its lights are shining, its heat is manifest, its power is expressive and its education or training resplendent everywhere. What proof could there be greater than that of its functioning, or its attributes which are manifest? This plant or this flower; we ask, does it exist or not? Can this plant—this flower—comprehend the reality of man? Can it

put itself in touch with the human existence or reality? Evidently not. It is entirely out of tune with the human kingdom; it is not possessed of the capacity, although both man and the flower have been created. But the difference in the degrees between the vegetable and the human is ever a hindrance, an obstacle. Inasmuch as the degree of capacity appertaining to this plant is inferior to our human kingdom, consequently it is entirely impossible for the plant, which is inferior, to comprehend man who is superior, although both are accidental or created. We are created; likewise this plant is existent, this mineral exists, this wood exists; but can this flooring here comprehend those who are standing upon it? Impossible. Why? Because sight and hearing are properties or faculties belonging to a higher kingdom than the mineral. The difference between these two kingdoms, the vast difference between the mineral kingdom and the human kingdom is a hindrance to comprehension.

How then can the reality of man which is accidental, ever comprehend the Reality of God which is eternal? It is self-evidently an impossibility. Hence we can observe the traces and attributes of God which are resplendent in all phenomena and shining as the sun at mid-day, and know surely that these emanate from an infinite source. We know that they come from a source which is infinite indeed!

Furthermore: It is a philosophical principle that the existence of phenomena implies composition, and that mortality or non-existence is equivalent to decomposition. For example, certain elements have come together and as a result of that composition man is here. Certain elements have entered into the structure of this flower. Certain organic or cellular elements have been utilized in the composition of every animal organism. Therefore, we can state that existence necessitates composition and death is another expression for decomposition. When there is disintegration amongst these composing elements, that is death.

That is mortality. The elements, which have gone into the body of this flower and which have given existence to this form and shape, will finally disintegrate;—this beautiful organism will decompose—and this we call mortality, death. Consequently the conclusion is that life means composition and death spells decomposition. On this account the materialists are of the opinion that life is the mere conjoining of elemental substances into myriad forms and shapes. The materialist comes to the conclusion that life in other words means composition; that wherever we find single elements combined in aggregate form there we behold the phenomena of organic life; that every organic composition is organic life. Now if life means composition of elements then the materialist may come to the conclusion of the non-necessity of a composer, the non-necessity of a creator; for composition is all there is to it, and that is accomplished by adhesion or cohesion. In response to this we say that composition must needs be of three kinds. This is a very important and subtle question. Give it your fullest attention. Then you will appreciate the point. One form of composition is termed philosophically the accidental form, another the voluntary, or a third, the involuntary composition. As to the first or accidental composition; accidental composition, would signify that certain elements through inherent qualities and powers of attraction or affinity have been gathered together—have blended together and composed a certain form, being or organism. This can be proven to be false; for composition is an effect, and philosophically no effect is conceivable without causation. No effect can be conceived of without some primal cause. For example, this heat is an effect; but that energy which gives forth this phenomenon of heat is the cause. This light is an effect, but back of it is the energy which is the cause. Is it possible for this light to be separated from the energy whereof it is a property? That is impossible and inconceivable. It is self-evidently false. Accidental composition is,

therefore, a false theory and may be excluded.

As to the second form of composition—involuntary—this means that each element has within itself as an inherent property the power of composition. For example, the inherent quality of fire is burning or heat; heat is a property of fire. Humidity is the inherent nature or property of water. You cannot conceive of H_2O , which is the chemical form of water, without having humidity associated, for that is an inherent quality of water. The power of attraction has as its function attractive or magnetic qualities. We cannot separate attraction from that power. The power of repulsion has as its function repelling,—sending off. You cannot separate the effect from the cause. If these premises be true—and they are self-evident—then it would be impossible for a composite being, for certain elements which have gone into the make-up of a composite organism, to ever be decomposed, because the inherent nature of each element would be to hold fast together. As fire cannot be separated from heat, likewise the elemental being could not be subjected to decomposition, and this does not hold true, because we see decomposition everywhere. Hence this theory is untrue, inasmuch as we observe that after each composition there is a process of decomposition, which forever ends it. By this we learn that composition as regards phenomena is not accidental or not involuntary. Then what have we left as a form of composition? It is the voluntary form of composition, which means that composition is effected through a superior will—that there is will expressed in this motive or action. It is thus proved that the existence of phenomena is effected through the eternal will, the will of the living, eternal and self-subsistent, and this is a rational proof concerning composition, whereof there is no doubt or uncertainty. Furthermore, it is quite evident that our kind of life, our form of existence is limited, and that the reality of all accidental phenomena is

likewise limited. The very fact that the reality of phenomena is limited well indicates that there must needs be an unlimited reality, for were there no unlimited or infinite reality in life, the finite being of objects would be inconceivable. To make it plainer for you,—if there were no wealth in the world you would not have poverty. If there were no light in the world you could not conceive of darkness. Why? Because we know things philosophically by their antitheses. We know for example that poverty is the lack of wealth. Where there is no knowledge there is no ignorance. What is ignorance? It is the absence of knowledge. Therefore, our limited existence is a proof conclusive that there is a reality unlimited, and this is a shining proof and evident argument. I have been speaking today from morning until now. This evening I have analyzed this subject for you. Many are the proofs concerning this matter, but there is not time to go into the subject further, for there is still another meeting and engagement to be kept. Therefore, I beg your pardon and indulgence.

As I said before, this is our last evening, and I ask God that His confirmations may encompass you; that your hearts may become radiant; that your eyes become illumined through witnessing the signs of God; that your ears hearken to the anthems of heaven; that your faces be set aglow with the radiant light of the word of God. May you all be united; may you be agreed, may you serve the solidarity of mankind. May you be well-wishers of all humanity. May you be assistants of every poor one. May you be nurses for the sick. May you be sources of comfort to the broken in heart. May you be a refuge for the refugee. May you be a source of courage to the affrighted one. Thus through the favor and assistance of God may the standard of the happiness of humanity in the center of the world be held aloft, and may this flag be unfurled.

Adieu to each and all of you!

THE city of San Francisco was adorned with the lights of the beauty of Abha during the week of April 19-25. The brilliant points of manifestation were the First International Bahai Congress and the Convention of the Bahai Temple Unity. While the city with bands and parades was celebrating the ninth anniversary of the fire and earthquake, and the wonderful recovery that had been made, the Bahais were engaged in kindling a conflagration of love that, God willing, will encircle the whole world.

As Abdul-Baha was leaving America, after having been here nine months, he said to some of the assembled friends, "In two years the results of my visit will become apparent." The brilliant gatherings held in San Francisco were a clear and evident proof of the fulfillment of that prophetic utterance, for the firmness, unity and love of the faithful souls made possible these powerful illumined meetings. Verily this was a bounty from God.

Each day the light of love burned more brilliantly and the divine enthusiasm increased. Though outer communication was cut off with Abdul-Baha because of the war, the inner communication was evident and manifest, and reached its conscious height when in the convention all united in sending to Abdul-Baha a "spiritual wireless" message, since we could not send the cable that each convention in the past had sent.

This convention was one of mighty accomplishment, because it joined the most wonderful spiritual inspirations with practical plans for moving forward. The souls were enthralled with the love of the divine Beloved and this was expressed in the ambition to begin at once, with the utmost activity, the work in the world that God has entrusted to us.

The consciousness that the great war, which is affecting the whole world, was in progress, made all realize the fact that the world in anguish is calling for the healing remedy; and that none can give this save the souls whose cups have been filled with the water of reality (life) from the fountain-head of revelation.

—*Harlan F. Ober.*

With this inspiring word of introduction by Mr. Ober, who has written at length concerning the convention work, we begin in this issue of the STAR OF THE WEST, the addresses delivered at the culminating event of the Congress, the official reception tendered by the Directorate of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to the International Bahai Congress, in Festival Hall, on the Exposition grounds, Saturday, April 24, at 10 a. m.

—*The Editors.*

MEDALLION PRESENTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL BAHAI CONG
OF THE PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EX



Front of Medallion

"This humble bronze is symbolic of a broader measure, the token of that birthmark herald not merely the birth and growth of a nation, but that universal manhood which consummate It bears the Bahai message of unity, not that all men are equal rests upon the head of every man alike. In that birthmark there is nothing in

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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.

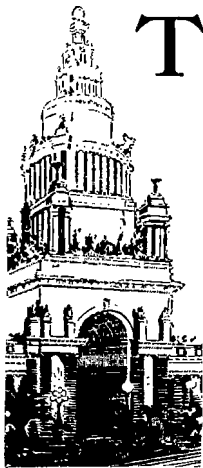
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Ceremonies at the Official Reception given to the International Bahai Congress by the Directorate of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in Festival Hall, Exposition Grounds Saturday, April 24, 1915, 10 a. m.

Representing the P. P. I. E. - - - *Director* JOHN A. BRITTON
Chairman of the International Bahai Congress
Reception Committee: - - - CHARLES MASON REMEY
Washington, D. C.



THE CHAIRMAN: Director Britton, members of this committee, friends of the International Bahai Congress: We have assembled here this morning in response to the welcome extended to us by the president and directors of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Mr. John A. Britton of the Exposition directorate is here to receive us. I now present Director Britton.

DIRECTOR BRITTON: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen: One of the particularly pleasant things which we directors have to do at the present time, and have been doing for some time past, is the recognition of true worth wherever we find it to exist.

It may be accepted as a truism that those who are building foundations for the betterment of the human race, which are dealing with the social and economic problems that confront the people of the world today, are doing quite as much for the perpetuation of the betterment of mankind as do those who build their monuments of steel, of granite and of marble.

We, of the Exposition family, have been hard at work for the past three or four years, rearing here on these beautiful grounds the monuments which stand for the handiwork of man as representing the arts, the sciences and the crafts. We have built these, not so much for their artistic and architectural beauty, as we have for the lasting effects they will produce upon the human race and, primarily, for the purpose of bringing before the peoples of the world, gathered from its four corners, the effect upon the masses in the educational benefits which will

arise from the buildings, from the exhibits within the buildings; and more particularly still, the benefits which will arise from the gathering together of people such as you, whose sole purpose and aim, as I read it, is the unification and solidarity of the people of the world, and to produce an effect far reaching, not for today, but for all time to come.

We, perhaps, here on the peaceful western shore of the United States, looking out into what you might call the vast eternity across the Pacific to the Orient, are mindful, and very mindful, of the horrible things that this day has brought upon us in the old world, where the civilizations builded for many centuries are being wiped away, where men are clutching at each others throats, and destroying the last vestiges of humanity and love of mankind, which should concern us all. And, to you who represent that great propaganda of peace—that peace which the Master of the world, whoever he may be, to all of us, has placed upon us as a necessary part of the true education, the true refinement and the true growth of the universe, to you, who have that solemn duty in hand, and who so seriously and full-mindedly and intelligently are seeking to impress it upon your fellow-men, we, of the Exposition family, extend welcome to you to *our* family, because we are striving in our feeble way, out here on this western rim, to be the proponents of all those things which go toward the uplifting of mankind, of the world, and its betterment.

We have lived and worked in vain, ladies and gentlemen, if the wonderful things that you will see before you today in this Exposition—our palaces, our wonderful illustrative sculptures, our wonderful exhibits—are to go for naught and as the mere passing of a dream of today. If our building of them shall not accomplish the helpfulness to mankind for which we have

hoped, then have we builded absolutely in vain.

But I have faith in the intelligence of the human race; I have that faith in the ultimate good to be achieved by work and effort, that what we have been doing and what you are striving to do, that the foundation laid, such as you have laid, will some day—it may be many years to come—produce that wonderful crop of men and women who will have but one ideal in life, and that is that the race which is to come after you shall be better than you are today because of your efforts to make it so.

And so, in that recognition which we desire to give to your universal efforts, I have the proud privilege and honor of presenting to you a symbol of that appreciation on behalf of the Panama-Pacific Exposition Company. And, let me say to you, in all honesty and candor of mind, that in the many times I have, in my official capacity, given, to those who have come here, recognition of our appreciation of their participation in our affairs, none has afforded me the extreme pleasure I am afforded today by the privilege of giving this to you, who represent so much to humanity.

THE CHAIRMAN: I feel, friends, that we have all been deeply touched and moved by the kind words of welcome extended to us by Director Britton, by the president and directorate of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, and I am going to ask the president of the Congress, Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn, to respond to these generous words of welcome.

DR. D'EVELYN: Director Britton and friends: Were I to yield to the instinctive promptings of the moment, I would dismiss this meeting, that we might go to our respective dwelling places cherishing the words that Director Britton has spoken. That which comes from the heart goes to the heart, and I know I am only feebly putting into expression the sincere thoughts of

every one present today when I say that the words spoken by Director Britton strike a sympathetic chord in the heart of each one of us.

Director Britton, your words shall re-echo over a greater arena than you can estimate. On behalf of the Bahais here assembled, and of those throughout the world, on behalf of that humanity which is looking upwards, we accept this token with deep appreciation and sincere gratitude.

I am sorry that I have not the ability to amplify the text that Director Britton has so aptly outlined for us; but the more frequently we visit this Exposition, just the more persistently and irresistibly will the thought be brought home that the dominant appeal which it makes is for a recognition of the intercommunion and the interdependence of the peoples of the world.

Today, these facts are crystallized with an urgency and a significance before which utterance itself seems dumb, and a tribute of silence is the only recognition which it appears desirable to offer. Thus interpreted, this simple ceremony carries with it a relationship to the oncoming future which the fretted limitations of the present seem reluctantly to concede.

Within a few days our western eyes will be permitted to gaze upon that honored relic, the Liberty Bell, whose sounding notes awoke the great dawn of the natal day of the nation.

Time has enshrined those memories with a wondrous heritage. No one nation, however, expresses the fullness of humanity.

This humble bronze is symbolic of a broader measure, the token of that birthmark which divinity has predestined to herald not merely the birth and growth of a nation, but that universal manhood which a unified humanity alone can consummate. Thus dedicated, this token shall start upon its mission. It will travel to the land of the cradle song, where shepherds

watched their flocks by night. Carmel will learn of it; Nazareth will hear of it; and, as the messenger who bears it speeds onward, the rippling waves of the tideless sea shall sound in his ears, and his feet shall be moistened with the dew of Lebanon. It will halt in the Great Prison, and there, in its triumph, the forty years of servitude will become as a dream in the night. It will voyage to India; there the mysterious Parsee, the haughty Brahmin, the wondering Hindu, will become one, as it tells its story. To China, to Japan, to Africa, to the Isles of the Sea, far away to distant Ishkabab, it will be even as a star to the caravan; and to the broken brotherhood of Europe, to the Slav and the Teuton, the Moslem and the Allies, it will tell of a better and a brighter day, of a kindlier and a nobler kinship. And, sir, when at last its mission is complete, it will come back to rest beneath that dome where a unified humanity shall make mention of God; the Mashrak-el-Azkar.*

The bell, in its mission, sounded the liberty of the nation. This, in its fullness, tells of the freedom of the world. This may seem a measure too broad, an estimate too great, but it could not be otherwise, for it bears the Bahai message of unity, not that all men are equal, but that the crown of humanity rests upon the head of every man alike. In that birthmark there is nothing inferior, there is nothing superior. This is the reality of man, and that reality is the throne of the divine manifestation, and to every soul it is permitted to look within himself and see therein that reality, powerful, mighty, and supreme.

The Bahai message claims and teaches that such is man's right of self-appraisement. Further, to concede that appraisement to his fellow-man is to admit in both the possession of that common reality which confirms the di-

*The Bahai Temple of Unity to be erected in Chicago.

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

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vinity of unity and the unity of divinity.

Seek not, accept not, any compromise for that attitude until there is established at once and forever that relationship which, by its realization, shall annul geographical boundaries, technical barriers, racial prejudices, tribal theology, and the many things which have been and are deterrents of unity and destructive of human solidarity.

This is the Bahai message in the concrete, and, in the oneness of unity, in the divinity of reality, this message shall make for the healing of the nations.

Director Britton, I know that you rejoice with us that we are permitted on this occasion, here in this city of the Golden Gate, to send forth this humble messenger, the token and the symbol of that unity which will be effective when the reality of man is recognized and accepted as the throne of the divine manifestation. This alone is the world's resource; its honor and its continuity depend upon it. Allah-o-Abha!

THE CHAIRMAN: Friends, Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford, whose pen and

voice have ever proved strong advocates of the Cause so dear to our hearts, will now address us.

MRS. FORD: Mr. Chairman, Director Britton and friends: I cannot tell you what happiness it gives me to stand here in this wonderful moment, before all my friends, and try to accentuate a little the suggestion that has already been given in the wonderful words that have been spoken, as to why we are here, why we should be gathered in this beautiful spot, which today is the most beautiful spot in America, and I am not at all sure but that it is not the most beautiful spot in the world.

Let me tell you that I came to this Exposition from long wanderings on the other side of the water, where I had stood under the arches of the great cathedrals, and had studied the masterpieces and sculpture of the world, and I had said to myself, "Is there anything left to be done in the realm of architecture?"

I remembered that Abdul-Baha had said long ago, when he told us about the divine civilization that is to be created, "There will be a new art, a new architecture, fused of all the beauty of the world of the past, but

new." When I came here to these grounds, what did I find? The *new* architecture, fused of all the great architecture of the past, but a new architecture in which there is nothing as it was in the ancient time, because here you see, as you wander back and forth, how the Byzantine and the Moorish and the Romanesque have clasped hands with the old classic Greek and Roman of the past, and neither one could recognize itself in the result that has transmuted all, and created, on these wonderful fields along the shore of the Pacific, forms of beauty which must suggest to every observer the glories of the buildings of the future that we are to create.

Let me say to you: Have you not thought of this? Is not the very creation of this wonderful fair out of the heart of the city that only nine years ago was razed to the ground,—is it not the most marvelous demonstration of the great and new spiritual force that is in the world today, converting and transmuting and transforming all the physical forms of the universe? I know of no greater miracle than that this city, which was destroyed, should in nine years create the most beautiful spectacle of the entire world.

Now let us go back for a moment and remember what our vaunted progress of this modern world means. All the evolution of the past sixty or seventy years, perhaps, finds its beginning in the cause we represent here. We pride ourselves on our great new ideas, on our comprehension of brotherhood, on our governmental reform, on our insistence upon the equality of men and women. And we believe that these are western ideas. We look back to the East and say: "What have you done, sleeping in your dreams of the past? Why will you not learn from us? Take our energy and transform yourselves." Yet, long ago, in 1844, when there was no movement of brotherhood in the world, when there was no suggestion

anywhere of the equality of men and women, before any one thought of the suffrage movement, a young Persian gentleman by the name of Ali Mohammed began to speak in the city of Shiraz—think of it!—in all the darkness of Mohammedan prejudice, to people who declared that there was only one true religion, that there had never been but one prophet of God, and that he was Mohammed. And what did Ali Mohammed say to these people? He said to them: "The world is one. We are at the dawn of a new day. In this day we are to recognize that there is but one religion; that all the religions of the world have sprung from the same source; that in this day we shall receive a divine revelation that will create a new civilization; that in this day we are to recognize that woman, who has been enslaved for centuries, is the equal of man; that the women must come out of their seclusion; that our oriental world, which has imprisoned women, has committed a crime; that the women of Shiraz and every other city of the world must walk the streets unveiled and be endowed with all the rights and privileges that the men enjoy." Think of it! Do you wonder that they persecuted him? Do you wonder that they could not understand him? When you follow his astonishing career and consider the Bab's preaching, when you remember his youth, you will say to yourself, "How could he dare do it?"

Ali Mohammed, the Bab, was but twenty-five years of age when he commenced his mission. In those days there was no wireless, no telegraphic system, there were no steam cars, and yet in the short six years of his ministry, his movement, his words, went from one end of Persia to the other, and before his execution the soil of Persia was drenched with the blood of people who had accepted his message of progress, and been martyred for the truth they professed.

While I am talking about progress and the equality of men and women I always want to remind people that the first martyr to the cause of equal rights died there in Persia years ago, because the greatest feminine disciple of the Bab was Kurat-ul-Ayn. This wonderful and lovely creature, one of the most distinguished women of Persia in her day, took off her veil, went about teaching publicly, and insisted upon the realization of the truth of the Bab's teaching in regard to the equality of women. After the Bab had been martyred, she still continued her urgent insistence upon the freeing of women, to such an extent that her words fired every heart, and the women of Persia began to rise and clamor for that liberty which they had been told was their right. Then some of the learned men of Persia went to Kurat-ul-Ayn and said: "We do not wish to martyr you because you are a follower of this absurd Bab; we do not wish to martyr you because you belong to this dangerous movement, for we love you; but we insist that you stop talking to the women about this question of equality. You are inciting all the women of Persia to revolt. If you will simply be silent on that part of your teaching, we will let you go."

Do you think she would be silent? Can't you imagine how she looked at those men who threatened her and said to them: "Do you suppose that for the sake of the little thing you call life, and that I know is not life, I would be silent upon this important question which is the foundation of the future civilization of the world, the true civilization?" So she went on just the same, speaking to both the men and the women who came to hear of the power and significance of this part of the Bab's teaching, that men and women are equal and must stand equal in the face of the world.

At last they came to take her secretly to execution, because they did not dare

to take her publicly, on account of the numbers who loved her, into a garden in the suburbs of the city where they would be unobserved, and there they murdered her.

Some of you know the wonderful story of her martyrdom. The keeper of the garden had found a man, a young Turkish fellow, who was very brutal, whom he believed would do anything for twenty dollars. He gave him a gold piece and said: "You will find a woman in a room upstairs; you are to take this silk handkerchief and strangle her, and it must be done quietly." This man ascended the stairs, and when he entered the room Kurat-ul-Ayn was kneeling in prayer, for she well knew that her hour had come. She turned to him and said: "You are too noble a fellow to stain your soul with so black a crime for this little bit of money." He looked at her and could not touch her. He ran back to the man who had sent him, and threw the coin in his face, crying: "Find some one else to do your dirty work; that woman is divine; I cannot touch her." Then they sent another man, more brutal, and, because the victim said nothing this time in protest but yielded herself to his hand, he choked her with the silk handkerchief. Her body was thrown into a deserted well on the place, and covered quickly with stones, so that no one might discover the crime which had been committed. But today, because of the memory of Kurat-ul-Ayn, not only of the beauty of her face, but the loveliness of her soul and character, pilgrims walk many miles to her grave. They believe that when they stand by its side they are healed of all their ills; but especially, if their eyes have been blinded or afflicted, they believe that as they stand near the dust of that wonderful, clear-seeing woman, all the trouble disappears from them and they themselves see clearly once more.

But I must not linger over the beautiful story of this gifted woman. I must remind you of what followed quickly, followed the teaching of Baha'o'llah, who was the successor of the Bab and the great center of truth for the world for so many years, and who died in prison in 1892. He said: "This is the day of real brotherhood, the day when the shackles must fall away from the world, the day when real brotherhood must be established."

Do you remember what followed immediately? Do you think it was an accident, that in 1861 the Czar freed the serfs? That from 1861 to 1865 America was in the throes of the great Civil War, as a result of which slavery was banished forever from the shores of America? Do you think it was an accident that in 1860 began that long and tremendous struggle, as a result of which Italy stood freed? The one word that went from one end of Italy to the other, in those years of her trouble, was *unity*, that the unity of Italy must be established. And today the unity of Italy is established. There is no tyranny in Italy. For the first time in the long years since the Roman Empire, Italy has raised her head, and she has been glorified in the liberty which has been granted her. And today remember that Persia—tyrannized and tormented Persia—has her constitution; even Turkey, who perhaps will be wiped from the map of Europe presently, has her constitution; China, the last word of the oldest old regime, has become a republic!

When you realize the spirit working under the surface and manifesting itself in all the wonders of these great results, do you believe that for one moment the political chicanery of Yuan Shi Kai can keep China from the enjoyment of her liberty? Never!

Where is the secret of all these wonders? Friends, there is always a cause for such magnificent results, and do we

not find it right here in the marvelous teachings and the spiritual counsels of the Bahai Movement, as we call it, which, after listening to the words of the Bab and Baha'o'llah, today is listening to the words of Abdul-Baha? Subjectively the heart of humanity has been quickened by these expressions.

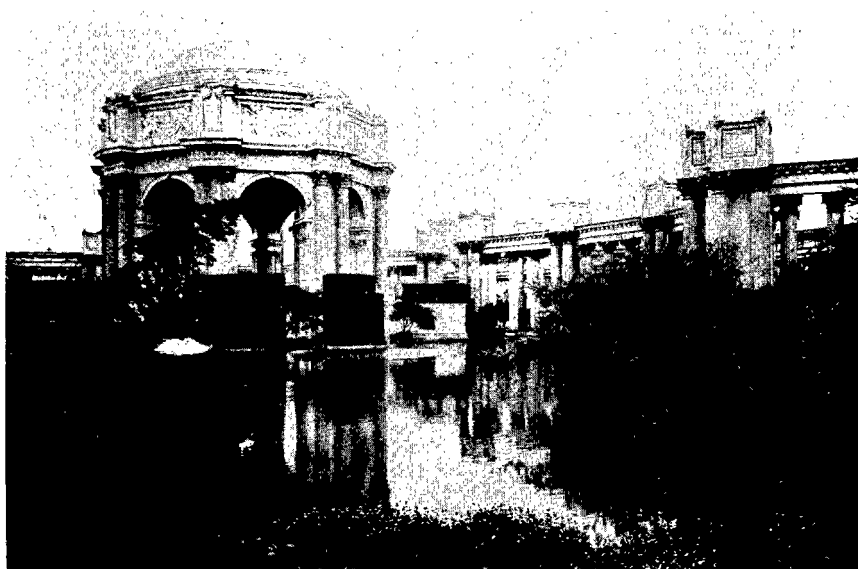
Do you remember one of the things said in America just recently by Abdul-Baha when he was here in San Francisco? He said: "Between 1860 and 1865 you did a wonderful thing; you knocked the shackles from chattel slavery; but today you must do a much more wonderful thing: you must destroy *industrial* slavery."

Does not that one word put us here in the center of this great Exposition, which is the very spirit of progress? I am reminded of Abdul-Baha's words every time I come on these grounds. You remember at the Scott Street entrance the great Fountain of Energy, symbolic of all the activities of the present day, and directly opposite, on the Marina, the Column of Progress, designed by Hermon MacNeil, the figure of the archer shooting across the Pacific to the shores of the Orient? What does Abdul-Baha say? "Today the Orient and the Occident must join hands, so that the Occident will give to the Orient its organizing spirit, its business spirit, its power of creating material civilization; and the Orient will give to the Occident in turn the spiritual power and riches that enable all these things to become facts." And so there is the archer shooting across the Pacific. What is it he symbolizes? Is it not the wonderful wireless that moves over the universe today, and that moves not only through the outer mechanism of the ether, but through the more marvelous inner mechanism of mind to mind, and heart to heart, that is uniting mankind today in spite of this war? Perhaps you remember one of Abdul-Baha's utterances in regard to the war. He said: "Such

great changes are to arise because of the divine civilization the world must found, that it seems almost impossible to break the old condition without a great war which will destroy the traditional usage. After that war will necessarily come the great reorganization and the Most Great Peace."

I wish you would walk, all of you, before you leave these lovely grounds, through that marvelous Court of the Colonnade before the Art Palace. You know Mr. Metcalf, the architect of the building, intended to erect a beautiful

end to the other, you see the marvelous cloisters of Italy; you enter once more the heavenly enclosure of Monreale in Sicily; you recall the Moorish and Christian civilization of the eleventh and twelfth centuries which built such noble cathedrals. Ah! you hear, also, the irresistible words of St. Francis laughed out to the listening world, saying, as Abdul-Baha says today: "Be happy! Above all things be happy, and only thus be wise." As you walk on, pausing under the dome for that whispering of the muse, which is such



"As you go past the dome to the other end of the colonnade, there begins to whisper in your hearts and ears all the great new voices of the coming dawn."

classic Greco-Roman structure, but when he began his work it seemed that some wonderful old Aztec ghost got hold of him, and in spite of himself he did not rear a Roman-Greek palace at all! He raised an edifice the like of which has never been seen before, and he put before it this delightful colonnade which has in it the spirit of all the cloisters of the past. You seem to find there the quiet converse of Plato's academy, Confucius' whispering, and the breath of Zoroaster's teaching. Then, as you walk through it, from one

a presage of what the world is to do and what our continent is to make in the future, and as you go past the dome to the other end of the colonnade, there begins to whisper in your hearts and ears all the great new voices of the coming dawn, that love of man to man, and woman to woman, which is an eternal love, which is outside of the flesh, that love which is so sensitive that it will not tolerate the existence of pain in the world that may be relieved, that love which creates beauty because it is so happy and so glad to

(Continued on page thirty-eight)

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. VI

Nur 1, 71 (June 5, 1915)

No. 5

The Feast of Rizwan

At the home of Mrs. Helen S. Goodall, Oakland, California

April 21, 1915, 2 p. m.

THE most charming event of the Bahai Congress at San Francisco, was the Feast of Rizwan, given in the beautiful Oakland residence of Mrs. Goodall. The feast was a noon luncheon which proved a veritable banquet. Mrs. Goodall's home is delightfully planned for such an entertainment. From a spacious entrance hall ascends a graceful branching stairway to the floor above, that is like an open court, from which one can look down upon the floor below.

The first floor is so connected by great sliding doors, that it seems one vast salon, and here the tables were laid for the banquet. These tables were beautifully decorated with flowers, in fact, flowers were everywhere in the house. It was evident that the guests had arrived in the land of flowers.

When all were seated Mrs. Goodall greeted them in a few touching words, in which she told how Abdul-Baha had walked through her rooms, and up and down the broad stairway repeating, with that wonderful smile of his, "This is *my* house, this is *my* house!" Her description brought to every mind the vivid recollection of Abdul-Baha's presence in America, and seemed to place him bodily among the guests, so naturally every one was happy. We were surrounded not only by the hospitality of Mrs. Goodall, but by the enveloping welcome of Abdul-Baha himself.

Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm then took charge of the assemblage, as toast master, and he was very happy in his usual half facetious and half serious vein, calling upon various people to express the feeling of the occasion, and the joy of comradeship which it aroused.

The first one to speak was Mr. Hall of Minneapolis, who said only a few words, because, as he explained, we were just at the beginning of the feast, but his words were a genial invitation to feast well and remember also the happiness of the occasion celebrated, and the delight of lunching together in the beautiful home which Abdul-Baha had made spiritually his own. Mr. Hall's great and characteristic talk was made later, when he took part in the evening devoted to explanation of the economic teachings of the Bahai movement; then his illuminating suggestions as to how we may transform material into divine civilization will not be forgotten by those who heard them.

Mr. Hall's opening address was in marked contrast to that of Dr. D'Evelyn which brought the entertainment to an end, for Dr. D'Evelyn spoke after the spirit of comradeship had warmed the assembled guests, and he gave a significant and eloquent description of the moment when Abdul-Baha reached San Francisco, and the long suspense of the committee who awaited his belated arrival. Not all

the members of the committee lingered, as one gathered from Dr. D'Evelyn's words, and it was a moment, he said, when military experience was of value, when the habit of quiescent waiting through long hours for the word of command bore fruit. Those who waited were rewarded, for in the weird moments between two and three in the morning, the white turban of Abdul-Baha at last issued from the

also made a few remarks, but the addresses of women were not a feature of this congress, and in fact one would hardly have surmised from scanning the program of the Congress how warmly the equality of women is advocated by Bahais everywhere. Perhaps the marked absence of women from the list of speakers will ensure their presence in the congresses of the future, for certainly the work of the women in



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long exit at the ferry, and his warm hand clasp, and the welcome of his eyes eliminated all the weary hours of hope delayed.

Between these two addresses many good things were said, Mr. Harris gave one of his characteristic forcible talks, Mr. Windust, who was particularly heralded by his friend "Roy", uttered some gentle philosophy, Mr. Hoar talked well as he always does, Mr. Hannen said many interesting things, Mrs. True was called for and made a brief but impressive talk. Mrs. Ford

the Bahai cause is of supreme importance.

The delightful feature of the feast was not the brilliance of individual speakers, nor Mr. Wilhelm's gay and tactful manner of filling the office of toastmaster, nor the charm of the environment provided by Mrs. Goodall's genuine hospitality, though all these were appreciated. It was perhaps suggested by the few words spoken by "Pa" Goodale. There was a warmth and tenderness in his simple words which found a response in every heart.

He, himself, was so moved at one time his lips trembled and he could only proceed with effort. The vibration of his words, therefore, was far deeper than anything expressed in the words themselves.

All who participated in this feast left it with a new consciousness, a sense of union, of warmth and gentleness toward all, a new feeling of the need of brotherhood in the world, and of what

must spring from a new and more tender feeling in the heart, which cannot endure the existence of suffering in the world, and insists upon the creation of that new justice which is not satisfied unless each country not only makes peace with its neighbor but sees to it that individually its citizens are assured of happiness and equal opportunity.

Perhaps one might call this spiritually a militant peace; it is not quiescent,



CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF RIZWAN

real brotherhood is. Is not this what Abdul-Baha means when he says he hopes the Bahais will kindle such a fire of peace in America that they will establish the peace of the world? Because real and lasting peace is not settled by mere diplomatic legislation, but

it is not pacific in one sense, because it insists upon positive action for the establishment of truth, and upon wide readjustments, but such a warm, smiling, militant peace spreads from one happy heart to another, and ensures the happiness of the world.

—*Mary Hanford Ford.*

On April 21st the Feast of Rizwan was celebrated at the home of Mrs. Helen S. Goodall in Oakland. The friends gathered in this beautiful spot, where Abdul-Baha had been,

where he had addressed to the lovers of truth, wonderful words. These words were read by Mrs. Ella G. Cooper and were the center around which the feast revolved. Mr. Roy C.

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

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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Nur 1, 71 (June 5, 1915)

No. 5

Wilhelm presided and through his spiritual perceptions and his keenness of humor assisted the flow of happiness and rejoicing. The spirit of Abdul-Baha permeated throughout, becoming stronger and stronger as the feast proceeded.

When at the end, Dr. Frederick W. D'Evelyn read a cablegram received from Persia telling of the martyrdom of a venerable Bahai teacher and of the danger to the friends there, asking us to intercede with our government for the protection of the Americans in Persia, the consciousness of nearness was so great as to be beyond description. We were submerged in the sea of oneness and all barriers were swept away. In the prayer for these needy

ones that followed we ascended to the holy threshold, and supplicated with a new understanding of the joys and the sufferings that come to those who have been the recipients of the divine bounty of oneness and brotherhood. So close were the ties that bound us in the spirit of Baha'o'llah that though we were in America, we were conscious of the spiritual atmosphere of the beloved friends in Persia. The traces of divine unity were apparent in every face.

At the close of the feast a photograph was taken on the terrace and this will always be a reminder of the spiritual hospitality that adorned that memorable gathering.

—Harlan F. Ober.

Ceremonies at the Official Reception Given to the International Bahai Congress

(Continued from page thirty-four)

give, that it cannot tolerate the existence of the misery of others, and must banish poverty and establish justice on this earth!

THE CHAIRMAN: We can safely intrust the closing words of this never-

to-be-forgotten occasion to our esteemed co-worker, Mr. William H. Randall, of Boston.

MR. RANDALL: Mr. Chairman, Director Britton, members of this committee, friends: I am glad I was not

asked to speak first, principally because I shall not have to speak very long, and particularly because the words of Director Britton brought a great lump in my throat. I am not even going to wait for the end to express your sentiments and mine in thanking Director Britton and this committee for the very deep feeling of gratitude we have, that they have taken us right into the heart of the ideal of this great Exposition; we enter that heart bringing to it the pulsations of the love of humanity, and we take to its mind the highest vision that God has given us.

We knew, before we had stepped a single foot in San Francisco, that we were to enter the very melting pot of the East and the West, where all emerge as brothers. "California welcomes the world"—the paean of brotherhood!

Our hearts were deeply touched by this wonderful reception, and as I walked through the grounds this morning it seemed to me that right out there Aladdin stood with his wonderful lamp, and just wished that the most marvelous city the world has ever seen should immediately descend into existence, expressing the very epitome of architectural and scientific beauty.

This city is a city of oneness, because every nation of the world has contributed to its growth. This city expresses the sacrifice and the love of California and San Francisco for humanity, because in the very midst of war and strife it has patiently worked to rear this wonderful City of Peace, that it may be the herald to the whole world of the peace in the hearts of this nation, and the example of the bestowals of peace. Yes, and even more than that, for this city has been reared and elevated in all its magical beauty of light upon the shores of the greatest ocean, which is named for peace.

The Golden Gate is the hope of humanity. The gift that every nation has

to give to every other nation is not its commercialism. It is the wealth of its spiritual culture. Prejudice—religious, social and racial—has seemed to block up the arteries of mankind; it has choked the flow of that love and wisdom which come from the great heart and the great mind of the great Power of all. The Bahai Revelation, in its effort, is seeking to break down all these barriers, every barrier of prejudice, every race hatred, every religious misunderstanding, that through this great organism of humanity may flow, from the heart and mind of all, the love and the bestowal that the Creator has in store for us, if we only lift up our eyes and our hearts to receive the gift.

Baha'o'llah, in the time of darkness, arising in Persia some fifty or sixty years ago, has returned to the world that gift of God whereby man shall become acquainted with the knowledge of God. The gift has always been in the possession of the world. Every prophet that has come has brought this gift, this vision, and it is the very continuity of prophetic vision, but the world has not received it. Mankind has gone on in its isolation, although God has never been isolated from man.

I am not going to make a speech this morning. I am just going to give an illustration.

The heart and the core of the Bahai Movement is unity. Every kingdom in the world grows and thrives and brings forth its hidden secrets because of the fact that it is under the law of unity. There are no eight-hour labor days in the sun. The sun has no night; it just keeps right on shining. And it shines because it loves to shine, and there is no consciousness of effort; and we never hear a sunbeam come to us with complaint, because every molecule of the sun is affinitized with every other molecule, and there is expressed there such a perfect and absolute unity that the expression of the whole is a radi-

ance that is a perfect conflagration, and it pours out this energy without effort, and brings creative power to every world that depends upon its center of unity. And that is just what God is doing to humanity, only we have not found it out.

If we could only understand *unity*, humanity would be a great flame of love, just like the sun, and there would be no sickness, no poverty, no effort; we should just be harnessed to the divine Energy, and our activities would be the expression of our joys. Nature knows unity. The stone knows it. Are we not better than the stones? And yet we have isolated ourselves from the very principle and from the very power that should bring about this expression of the unity that would give to us the joys of life.

God did not just make this earth and stick a few stars around it and then stop working. He has created worlds within worlds, and mysteries within mysteries, and the key to unlock these worlds and these mysteries, which shall give to us the knowledge of heaven and earth, is the key of unity. This is the Bahai Revelation. And from that central heart there spreads out in luminous light to the whole world the principles upon which this unity stands: the oneness of the world of humanity, the solidarity of the human race, the oneness of all the religions.

God in his singleness created a universe of oneness. If we can rise to that vision, if we can stop seeking the center of self and turn our eyes to that supreme center which is God, we shall find that we were all created by God to be a brotherhood, a race of solidarity, and not separate races, and separate colors, and separate nations. Is it greater that we love that nation which we call *our* nation, or that we

love humanity in which all nations merge and from which all nations stand forth?

Every prophet has brought us this message. But man has decided that he can do better going it alone. He has felt that his own interest was greater than that for which God created him. But when we wake up to this world-wide vision, and enter into this race-deep consciousness, we shall realize that the real bestowals are much greater than anything that we can learn or conceive of.

Abdul-Baha, the son of Baha'o'llah, came to California two or three years ago, and in one of the tablets, or letters, in which he spoke of San Francisco, he spoke of it as being a city of great freedom. This is the very first step toward the emancipation of self, the race and the world. Freedom! Free from all petty prejudices, free from all limitations, so that we can amalgamate and become a concrete whole.

Baha'o'llah has brought to us this knowledge of God, this knowledge of unity, and he has given to us the power to express this unity, so that today this Bahai spirit, in its universal movement, is reaching around the world. In every country, and in every city, we find the little groups actively working for the uplift of humanity. The secret of this power is the love of service. The moment we begin to serve we begin to enter into that divine power which is waiting to mold us all in that image in which God created us.

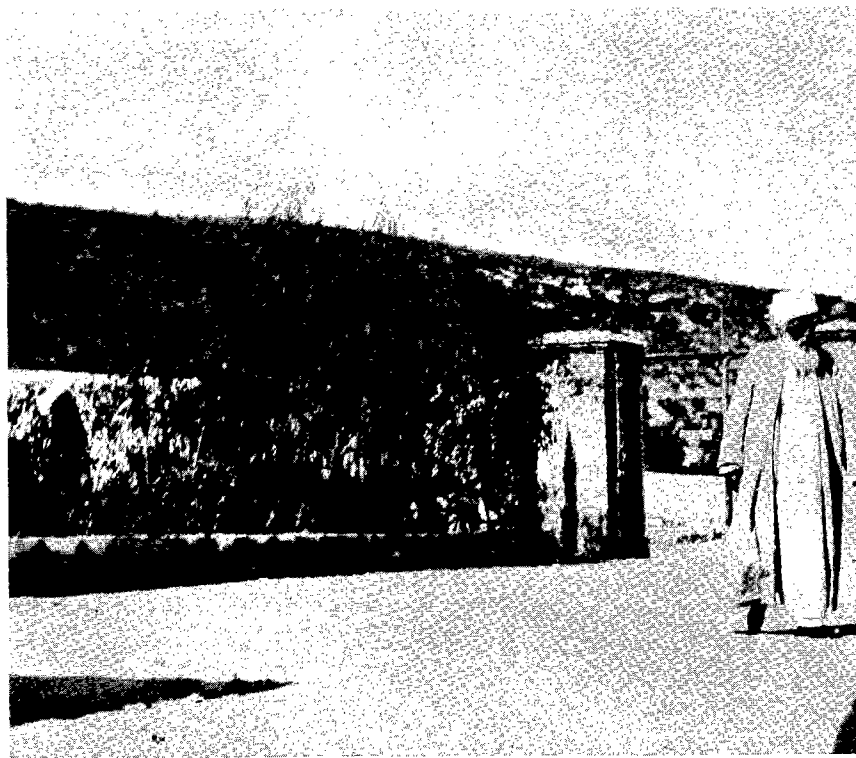
I am going to close with this remark, that the Bahai Movement is not a new religion, but it is the spirit of all religions, "a new statement and a new demonstration of the power of God which is working for the education and the uplift of humanity."

IN THIS DAY every one must be tested, as the time of the "chosen ones" to prove their worth is indeed very short. The day of attainment is drawing to a close for them. The "first fruits" must be ripened in spirit, mellowed in love, and consumed by their self-sacrifice and severance. None other are acceptable as first fruits, and all who fail to attain to the standard through the tests are relegated to the "many who are called."

—ABDUL-BAHA

[The above excerpt is from notes brought by Dr. E. C. Getsinger from Haifa. As the notes were not signed by Abdul-Baha, the responsibility for their correctness must rest with Dr. Getsinger until the door of communication with Abdul-Baha is again opened and the statements therein confirmed. Inasmuch as they appear of vital importance to all, we publish them in this issue.—*The Editors*]

[See page 45]



ABDUL-BAHA AT HOME—HAIFA, MT. CARMEL, SYRIA
Gateway and walk leading to door of his house; Mt. Carmel in background, with glimpses of Haifa

Photograph taken October 7, 1914, by Mr. George Latimer

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. VI

Rahmat 1, 71 (June 24, 1915)

No. 6

Latest news of Abdul-Baha

Cairo, Egypt, May 13, 1915.

Mr. Charles Mason Remey.

Dear Bahai Brother— You will be glad to hear the latest good news which we have had of Abdul-Baha. Two Persian Bahais—one a resident of Cairo and the other of Haifa—managed to get on a steamer at Haifa and were allowed to come to Egypt. They were searched, and could bring no letters nor papers, and that is why Mirza Sohrab could not send by them any mail for America. They tell me that Abdul-Baha is *very well and happy*; his health is very good, and he laughs much and is in excellent spirits. He is happier than at any time since the war began. They have enough to eat as supplies are brought in from the country villages—vegetables, fruits, grains, eggs, meat, etc. The holy family and Lua Getsinger have been staying in a village two hours inland from Acca, but now they are all returning to Haifa, as Abdul-Baha considers it safe for them all to remain in their own homes at Haifa. You will all rejoice with us over this favorable news of Abdul-Baha.

Faithfully yours in the name of El-Abha.

Elinore Hiscock.

"The worst enemies of the Cause are in the Cause"

Utterances of Abdul-Baha in answer to questions asked by Dr. Edward C. Getsinger during a few brief meetings at Haifa, Syria, January 26 to February 5, 1915, and recorded by Dr. Getsinger at the time.

NO OBSTACLE should be placed before any soul which might prevent it from finding the truth. Baha'o'llah revealed his directions, teachings, and laws, so that souls might know God, and not that any utterance might become an obstacle in their way.

Holding to the letter of the law is many times an indication of a desire for leadership. One who assumes to be the enforcer of the law shows an intellectual understanding of the Cause, but that spiritual guidance in them is not yet established.

The alphabet of things is for children, that they may in time use their reasoning powers. "Following the spirit" is a guidance by and through the heart, the prompter of the spirit. The Pharisees were extremely orthodox, holding strictly to the law. They were the cause of the condemnation and ultimate crucifixion of Jesus.

Several times tablets have been written to some friends regarding a small detail in the work of the Cause, which they might attend to, such as reporting

about Ezeliés, nakazeen, et al., and now we hear that such tablets are used as a proof of their authority over the friends in those régions. Although the books and writings of Abul Fazl are used in many countries as text books, never did he even give a sign that he was an authority on any subject, consequently the gifts of God ever increased upon him, since he bore all honors in humility, until he attained to the supreme nearness.

The ones in real authority are known by their humility and self-sacrifice and show no attitude of superiority over the friends.

Some time ago a tablet was written stating that none are appointed to any authority to do anything but to serve the Cause as true servants of the friends—and for this no tablet is necessary; such service when true and unselfish, requires no announcement, nor following, nor written document.

Let the servant be known by his deeds, by his life!

To be approved of God alone should be one's aim.

When God calls a soul to a high station, it is because that soul has capacity for that station as a gift of God, and because that soul has supplicated to be taken into His service. No envies, jealousies, calumnies, slanders, plots, nor schemes, will ever move God to remove a soul from its intended place, for by the grace of God, such actions on the part of the people are the test of the servant, testing his strength, forbearance, endurance and sincerity under adversity. At the same time those who show forth envies, jealousies, etc., toward a servant, are depriving themselves of their own stations, and not another of his, for they prove by their own acts that they are not only unworthy of being called to any station awaiting them, but also prove that they cannot withstand the very first test—that of rejoicing over the success of their neighbor, at which God rejoices. Only by such a sincere joy can the gift of God descend unto a pure heart.

Envy closes the door of Bounty, and jealousy prevents one from ever attaining to the Kingdom of Abha.

No! Before God! No one can deprive another of his rightful station, that can only be lost by one's unwillingness or failure to do the will of God, or by seeking to use the Cause of God for one's own gratification or ambition.

No one save a severed soul or a sincere heart finds response from God. By assisting in the success of another servant in the Cause does one in reality lay the foundation for one's own success and aspirations.

Ambitions are an abomination before the Lord.

How regrettable! Some even use the affairs of the Cause and its activities as a means of revenge on account of some personal spite, or fancied injury, interfering with the work of another, or seeking its failure. Such only destroy their own success, did they know the truth.

Abdul-Baha is the interpreter of the aims, intents, and purposes of the Words of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah) and is the interpreter of his own written words, and none can say that this or that is the intention conveyed therein, save Abdul-Baha. The spirit of unity exists in the Divine Words, and one who interprets them in such wise as to create a division and discord is indeed one who errs.

Were not the Revelation of Baha'o'llah one adaptable to the entire world and its diverse nations, it could not be a unique and universal Revelation, but its elasticity adapts itself to *all* conditions, and its spirit is one that moulds itself into every vehicle and need for the accomplishment of the divine plan of unity.

But when some follow merely the hard and fixed letter of the law, they deprive it (the Revelation) of its elastic quality—the spirit—and endeavor to convert it into a hard instrument of inflexible qualities.

In this day every one must be tested, as the time of the “chosen ones” to prove their worth is indeed very short. The day of attainment is drawing to a close for them. The “first fruits” must be ripened in spirit, mellowed in love, and consumed by their self-sacrifice and severance. None other are acceptable as first fruits, and all who fail to attain to the standard through the tests, are relegated to the “many who are called.”

The more one is severed from the world, from desires, from human affairs, and conditions, the more impervious does one become to the tests of God. Tests are a means by which a soul is measured as to its fitness, and proven out by its own acts. God knows its fitness beforehand, and also its unpreparedness, but man, with an ego, would not believe himself unfit unless proof were given him. Consequently his susceptibility to evil is proven to him when he falls into the tests, and the tests are continued until the soul realizes its own unfitness, then remorse and regret tend to root out the weakness.

The same test comes again in greater degree, until it is shown that a former weakness has become a strength, and the power to overcome evil has been established.

Blessed are they who are the means of making unity among the friends, and pity on those who *in the right or wrong* are the cause of discord. For instance: When one is in the right in a case in dispute, and his minority prevents him from establishing this rightful matter, instead of agitating the subject, if he will humbly submit to sacrifice his position for the sake of unity and peace, God will accept that sacrifice and ere long the rightful matter will be established without any further dispute, by the Divine assistance; whereas without such sacrifice and submissiveness great harm might ensue.

The friends must be prepared to efface themselves at all times. Seeking the approval of men is many times the cause of imperiling the approval of God.

The worst enemies of the Cause are in the Cause and mention the Name of God. We need not fear the enemies on the outside for such can be easily dealt with. But the enemies who call themselves friends and who persistently violate every fundamental law of love and unity, are difficult to be dealt with in this day, for the mercy of God is still great. But ere long this merciful door will be closed and such enemies will be attacked with a madness.

It has been a long time since letters have been received from the friends. Everything is first read by the censor, and all tablets likewise submitted to him, and as my mail alone would keep him very busy, we make no effort to trouble him. Tell Ahmad Yazdi not to send any more mail to me under any circumstances.

Indeed, I contemplate no journey, for who would look after the poor should I leave here to travel to America or elsewhere?

If you knew what great things would happen to the Cause after my departure, you would pray every day and night for my release and demise.

STAR OF THE WEST

PUBLISHED NINETEEN TIMES A YEAR

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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. VI

Rahmat 1, 71 (June 24, 1915)

No. 6

“The holy spirit in America is confirming the dear friends”

LETTER FROM MR. GEORGE LATIMER.

Portland, Oregon, July 9, 1915.

To the STAR OF THE WEST:*

A little over a year ago Abdul-Baha uttered the following words:

“O how I long to see the believers shouldering the responsibilities of the Cause! This is the time of the proclamation of the Kingdom of Abha! This is the hour of union and accord! This is the day of the spiritual harmony of the friends of God! All the resources of my physical strength are exhausted and the spirit of my life is the news of the unity of the people of Baha. I am

straining my ears toward the east and toward the west, toward the north and toward the south, perchance I might hear the songs of love and good-fellowship raised from the meetings of the believers. My days are numbered, and save this there is no joy left for me. . . . I am waiting, I am patiently waiting.”

In this present time of extreme crisis, when Abdul-Baha is cut off from the rest of the world, he again voices this longing of his heart. In a letter just received from Beirut, dated May 9, 1915, Mirza Aziz'o'llah Bahadus of the American University, who spent four days of his Easter vacation with Abdul-Baha in Acca, writes that just before his departure Abdul-Baha said to him: “On your return, write to the beloved friends everywhere and give them my heartiest love. Tell them that my health is very good. The climate here suits it, but if (providing) they (the violators) do not interrupt me. Tell the friends that

*Extract from letter written by Mr. Latimer: “Dear brother Windust: I have just received the enclosed message from Abdul-Baha through our Persian brother Aziz'o'llah and, in view of the condition existing in certain centers, am sending it on to you. These words ought to make the friends realize that now is the time to take on the mantle of unity and harmony which Abdul-Baha has given us and to cast off the old disintegrating robe of personal differences. . . .

“Yours in the Covenant,

“George Latimer.”

whenever I receive news that they are in harmony so that their hearts are overflowing with love for one another, that they are a comfort to one another, and that they have devoted their time to serving mankind without any exception, then my health improves more and more. So my health depends upon their conduct. I am really much pleased with them. I pray that they may become more and more confirmed by the heavenly hosts."

In another letter, dated May 25th, of this year, he writes that Dr. Habib'o'llah† passed through Beirut, with Abdul-Baha's permission, to go to Persia and convey the glad-tidings of his health. He

†Dr. Habib'o'llah was in Germany last summer, as was Mirza Aziz'o'llah Bahadus.

states: "*Abdul-Baha is exceedingly pleased with the beloved souls in America. They are often the object of his commendation. Abdul-Baha says: 'Though I am here, the holy spirit in America is confirming the dear friends, the children of the kingdom. They are blessed in every respect. My soul is with them.'*"

It is indeed apparent what is required of us and that now is the time to fulfill these expectations of Abdul-Baha. May these words of his bring to us a redoubled zeal and energy and enable us to establish the kingdom of love, unity and peace in the hearts of mankind today.

In the spirit of the Covenant,
George Latimer.

"The example of America must be a special example"

Address by Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States, before four thousand newly admitted citizens, at Philadelphia, May 10, 1915.

IT warms my heart that you should give me such a reception; but it is not of myself that I wish to think tonight, but of those who have just become citizens of the United States. This is the only country in the world which experiences this constant and repeated rebirth. This country is constantly drinking strength out of new sources by the voluntary association with it of great bodies of strong men and forward looking women.

And so by the gift of the free will of independent people it is constantly being renewed from generation to generation by the same process by which it was originally created. It is as if humanity had determined to see to it that this great nation, founded for the benefit of humanity, should not lack for the allegiance of the people of the world.

You have just taken an oath of allegiance to the United States. Of allegiance to whom? Of allegiance to no one, unless it be to God. Certainly not of allegiance to those who temporarily represent this great government.

You have taken an oath of allegiance to a great ideal, to a great body of principles, to a great hope of the human race. You have said, "We are going to America not only to earn a living, not only to seek the things which it was more difficult to obtain where we were born but to help forward the great enterprises of the human spirit"—to let men know that everywhere in the world there are men who will cross strange oceans and go where a speech is spoken which is alien to them, knowing that whatever the speech, there is but one longing and utterance of the human

heart, and that is for liberty and justice.

And while you bring all countries with you, you come with a purpose of leaving all other countries behind you—bringing what is best of their spirit, but not looking over your shoulders and seeking to perpetuate what you intended to leave in them.

I certainly would not be one even to suggest that a man cease to love the home of his birth and the nation of his origin—these things are sacred and ought not to be put out of our hearts—but it is one thing to love the place where you were born and it is another thing to dedicate yourself to the place to which you go.

You cannot dedicate yourself to America unless you become in every respect and with every purpose of your will thorough Americans. You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups. America does not consist of groups. A man who thinks of himself as belonging to a particular national group in America has not yet become an American; and the man who goes among you to trade upon your nationality is no worthy son to live under the stars and stripes.

My urgent advice to you would be not only always to think first of America, but always also to think first of humanity. You do not love humanity if you seek to divide humanity into jealous camps. Humanity can be welded together only by love, by sympathy, by justice, not by jealousy and hatred.

I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellow men. He has lost the touch and ideal of America, for America was created to unite mankind by those passions which lift and not by the passions which separate and debase.

We came to America, either ourselves or in persons of our ancestors, to better the ideals of men, to make them see finer things than they had seen be-

fore, to get rid of things that divide, and to make sure of the things that unite.

It was but an historical accident, no doubt, that this great country was called "The United States," and yet I am thankful that it has the word "United" in its title; and the man who seeks to divide, man from man, group from group, interest from interest in the United States, is striking at its heart.

It is an interesting circumstance to me in thinking of those of you who have just sworn allegiance to this great government that you were drawn across the ocean by some beckoning finger of hope, by some belief, by some vision of a new kind of justice, by some expectation of a better kind of life.

No doubt you have been disappointed in some of us. Some of us are disappointing. No doubt you have found that justice in the United States goes only with a pure heart and a right purpose as it does everywhere else in the world. No doubt what you found here did not seem touched for you, after all, with the complete beauty of the ideal which you had conceived beforehand.

But remember this, if you had grown at all poor in the ideal, you brought some of it with you. A man does not go out to seek the thing that is not in him. A man does not hope for the thing that he does not believe in and if some of us have forgotten what America believed in, you, at any rate, imported in your own hearts a renewal of the belief.

I was born in America. You dreamed dreams of what America was to be, and I hope you brought the dreams with you. No man that does not see visions will ever realize any high hope or undertake any high enterprise. Just because you brought dreams with you, America is more likely to realize the dreams such as you brought. You are enriching us if you came expecting us to be better than we are.

See, my friends, what that means; it means that Americans must have a consciousness different from the consciousness of every other nation in the world. I am not saying this with even the slightest thought of criticism of other nations.

You know how it is with a family. A family gets centered on itself if it is not careful and is less interested in the neighbors than it is in its own members. So a nation that is not constantly renewed out of new sources is apt to have the narrowness and prejudice of a family, whereas America must have this consciousness, that on all sides it touches elbows and touches hearts with all the nations of mankind.

The example of America must be a special example. The example of America must be the example not merely of peace because it will not fight, but of peace because peace is the healing and elevating influence of the world and strife is not. There is such a thing as a man being too proud to fight. There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right.

So if you come into this great nation as you have come, voluntarily seeking something that we have to give, all that we have to give is this: We cannot exempt you from work. No man is exempt from work anywhere in the world. I sometimes think he is fortunate if he

has to work only with his hands and not with his head.

It is easy to do what other people give you to do, but it is difficult to give other people things to do. We cannot exempt you from work; we cannot exempt you from the strife and the heart-breaking burden of the struggle of the day—that is common to mankind everywhere. We cannot exempt you from the loads that you must carry—we can only make them light by the spirit in which they are carried.

That is the spirit of hope, it is the spirit of liberty, it is the spirit of justice.

When I was asked, therefore, by the mayor and the committee that accompanied him to come up from Washington to meet this great company of newly admitted citizens I could not decline the invitation.

I ought not to be away from Washington, and yet I feel that it has renewed my spirit as an American. In Washington men tell you so many things every day that are not so, and I like to come and stand in the presence of a great body of my fellow citizens, whether they have been my fellow citizens a long time or a short time, and drink, as it were, out of the common fountain with them and go back feeling that you have so generously given me the sense of your support and of the living vitality in your hearts, of its great ideals which made America the hope of the world.

CORRECTIONS

In No. 19 issue, Vol. V. STAR OF THE WEST, on page 298, regarding the departure of Prof. Cheney, it is erroneously stated that he died in London. His death took place in Oxford.

In the address delivered by Mary Hanford Ford, which appeared on pages 33 and 34 of this Volume of the STAR OF THE WEST, the architect of the Palace of Fine Arts is a Mr. Maybeck, not the name mentioned; and the Column of Progress is on the Esplanade, not the Marnia.

—*The Editors.*



AGA SHEIKH ALY AKBAR GOOCHANI
Martyred April, 1915

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. VI

Kalamat 1, 71 (July 13, 1915)

No. 7

Bahai Martyrdoms in Persia

Extracts from letters from Dr. Susan I. Moody and Dr. Arastoo, Teheran, Persia.

AGA SHEIKH ALY AKBAR GOOCHANI, a noted Bahai teacher, was murdered in Meshed last April. The assassin shot him in the back and the body lay where it fell in the bazaars for some days. The animosity against the Bahais had reached the point where none dared to move it for fear of a general slaughter. A photograph of fifty Bahais was posted in the bazaars and they were boycotted in all the shops.

A few days ago news reached Teheran from Goochan that the wife of the martyr has died in childbed; the child also died. No midwife would attend her, nor would a Mussulman prepare the bodies for burial. It was forbidden to bring them to the graveyard, so the grandmother washed the bodies and had them buried in their own garden.

The original of the photograph sent herewith was given me by Sheikh Aly Akbar while he was sojourning in Teheran three years ago.

His martyrdom is foretold by the beloved Abdul-Baha in the tablet of which I am enclosing both Persian and English copies. Persistent effort is being made to bring the murderer to justice.

—Susan I. Moody.

... The wife of Aga Sheikh Ali Akbar, the martyr, had three or four children, and she herself was very learned. Consider how much the enemies have added to their oppression and tyranny toward the Bahais. All the Bahais are scattered from Khorassan and are distressed and wandering. . . . Also from Zovareh, which is a city near Esphahan, a great number of the Bahais have come to Teheran after all their property had been taken. . . .

We have no remedy save to be patient and pray on behalf of the oppressors. May God awaken them!

—Dr. Arastoo, through Mirza Lotfullah, London, England.

TABLET REVEALED FOR SHEIKH ALY AKBAR

Upon him be Baha'o'llah-el-Abha!

O thou firm one in the Covenant!

Thy letter addressed to his honor Mirza Hayder Aly was noted and from its contents regret was experienced because our intention was to prepare the means of tranquillity; now it has produced difficulties and you are greatly troubled; but as these troubles are in the

path of God it is in reality a favor and will have great results.

Since this is so, it is better that with the utmost cheerfulness and happiness you bid farewell to the friends (saying): I am going on a journey to teach that perchance I may be confirmed in servitude and perhaps the cup of martyrdom

may overflow. As in this region the giving up of life is not attainable, therefore it is necessary to hasten to other parts.

Then go to Ishkabad and a letter will be written to Hazrati Afnan to prepare the necessities of the journey to send you to Isfahan because in Isfahan the people are crying aloud for teachers and I hope

that you may attain to a great and distinguished service on this journey. From Isfahan you may hasten to Abadeh and Shiraz and from there to the shores of the Persian gulf and the journey may be ended at the blessed tomb.

Upon thee be Baha'o'llah-el-Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated by M. Vali'o'llah Khan Vargha, May 28, 1915, Teheran

Brief history of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in America

BY MRS. CORINNE TRUE.

"O Concourse of Creation! O People of God! 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 thy Lord, the Merciful the Clement, in spirit and fragrance. Verily, by His mention, by this commemoration, the breasts shall be dilated, the eyes illumined, the hearts gladdened; and thus shall you pray the orient of praises, in the Mashrak-el-Azkar."

—From the *Kiktab-el-Akdas*, by Baha'o'llah.

HAVING heard enthusiastic reports of the building of the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in Ishkabad, Russia, the members of the spiritual committee* of the Chicago Assembly were inspired to supplicate to the Center of the Covenant, Abdul-Baha, to grant permission for the second Mashrak-el-Azkar to be built in America.

On June 7, 1903, a tablet was revealed in Acca by Abdul-Baha saying, "Now the day has arrived in which the edifice of God, the divine sanctuary, the spiritual temple, shall be erected in America."

The following words from the pen of Abdul-Baha clearly indicate the erection of a material building: "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. . . . Praise be to God! The erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar has a great effect in all grades (or states). It was tested in the east and so evidently and plainly was

it proved good (that) even when in a village a house was called the Mashrak-el-Azkar, it possessed a different effect. How much more its building and organization." Furthermore, he says, "The Mashrak-el-Azkar is the *most important* matter and the greatest divine institute. Consider how the first institute of his holiness Moses, after his exodus from Egypt was the 'Tent of Martyrdom' which he raised and which was the travelling temple. It was a tent which they pitched in the desert wherever they abode, and worshipped in it. Likewise, after his holiness Christ—May the spirit of the world be a sacrifice to him—the first institute by the disciples was a temple. They planned a church in every country. Consider the Gospel (*i. e.*, read it), and the importance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar will become evident. I hope that all the beloved of God, collectively, on the continent of America, men and women, will strive night and day until the Mashrak-el-Azkar is erected in the utmost solidity and beauty."

And again: "Today, the establish-

*Better known as the "House of Spirituality."—*The Editors.*

ment of the Mashrak-el-Azkar is of paramount importance, but hereafter it shall not be so. This is the beginning of organization; it is like unto the first church founded in Christianity; it is an expression of the elevation of the Word of God."

While in London, on his first European trip, Abdul-Baha told Mr. Charles Mason Remey that "its building is the most important of all things. This is the spiritual foundation, for that reason it is the most important of all foundations; from that spiritual foundation will come forth all manner of advancement and progress in the world of humanity. Therefore, how great is its importance."

To Mrs. Helen S. Goodall and Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, Abdul-Baha said: "*To have it built* is most important. Some material things have spiritual effect, and the Mashrak-el-Azkar is a material thing that will have great effect upon the spirits of the people. Not only does the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar have an effect upon those who build it, but upon the *whole* world." "In the Mashrak-el-Azkar, services will be held every morning and the words of Baha'o'llah only are to be read."

While in Ramleh, Egypt, Abdul-Baha assured Mr. Percy Woodcock that "The most important thing in this day is the speedy erection of the edifice. Its mystery is great and cannot be unveiled as yet. In the future it will be made plain."

During the sojourn of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Haney in the prison home of Abdul-Baha, he said: "When the Mashrak-el-Azkar, with its accessories, is established in the world, aside from its religious or spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization. Aside from the religionists, who will feel its influence, materialists will not be exempt therefrom. Moreover, it contains divine wisdoms, spiritual effects upon the intellects and thoughts. Subsequent to its erection these will become evident."

This important point was made clear to a pilgrim visiting him, namely, that "The organization of worshipping places is not simply for drawing near to God, but it is to concentrate the word or spirit of God and cause the power of unity and oneness among the people."

Regarding the locating of this edifice of God, Abdul-Baha wrote to the friends of New York City: "Concerning the erection of the temple; now all the believers must become united, so that the temple may be built soon in one place. For should the believers undertake (the erection of the temple) in many places, it will not become completed anywhere; and, as in Chicago they have preceded every other place to plan the erection of the temple, undoubtedly to co-operate and help them is nobler and a necessity. Then when it is built in one place it will become erected in many other places. God willing in all the states of America, in the future, there will be erected temples, with infinite architectural beauty and art, with pleasing proportions and handsome and attractive appearances, especially in New York."

Also to Dr. Edward Getsinger, Abdul-Baha wrote: "Regarding the building of the temple in Chicago, both of you (Dr. and Mrs. Getsinger) display the utmost effort in encouraging and inspiring the believers and the maid-servants of God, so that they may assist in the matter with generosity, and thus soon this temple will be erected. This matter is of great importance." ("Utmost importance" in Abdul-Baha's own handwriting.)

When M. Eshte'al-Ebn Kalanter wrote regarding a Mashrak-el-Azkar on Monsalvat (Green Acre, Maine,) Abdul-Baha replied: "Concerning the building of a Mashrak-el-Azkar on Monsalvat: It is certain that before long this shall be built; and this is an ordained (or fixed) matter; but in Chicago it is two or three years since a number of people are making efforts. Now while the building of

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VI

Kalamat 1, 71 (July 13, 1915)

No. 7

Persian-American Educational Society

THE WORK of the Persian-American Educational Society continues as heretofore; and through the courtesy of M. Eshte'al-Ebn Kalanter, the private banking facilities of the Persian Legation have been made available for the transfer of funds to Teheran. In this way recent drafts have been safely transmitted, and another remittance is being made up to be forwarded as soon as the funds shall have been assembled.

Dr. Susan I. Moody writes from Teheran, telling of a plan to create a building fund by setting aside any margin which may accrue after deducting from the scholarship fund of \$18.00 per annum, the actual expenses of tuition, books, etc. To this will be added such special amounts as the American friends may contribute from time to time. Of course, as heretofore, those who send money for clothing for their proteges may be assured of its being applied in that direction. The following quotation from Dr. Moody's letter may be of general interest:

"You might make known the fact of building fund, and others may wish to subscribe various sums. This year nine of the American boy pupils received

sixth grade certificates from the university. In all forty-three boys passed.

"From the Girls' Tarbiet, twelve girls received the same certificate. We are very proud of them, as they have had so few years of preparation.

"We are also examining in my home, all the advanced girls who have completed the first and second courses in their study of the Revelation. We take them in small groups by request of the Spiritual Assembly. They are given simple gifts, as a remembrance—a penholder; a ticket bearing their name and stamped by the Mahfil Dars Aklagh; once we added a printed telegram from Abdul-Baha; another time one of Mr. Remey's illuminated cards; again, a photographic copy of a holy tablet. Miss Kappes loans out a beautiful gold medal sent by Miss Holmes, which is worn by each graduate in turn during one session of class. We serve sherbet and tea, the pupils chant prayers and poems from memory and the atmosphere is just what one desires, nearness to each other and to the Beloved.

"Dr. Clock and Miss Kappes are interested in establishing centers to teach married women to read and write, and

working in the advanced girl students as teachers."

The friends and patrons of the society will realize herein opportunities

for service in a most effective manner, and it is hoped that the work of the society may be continued uninterruptedly, and its influence increased.

Joseph H. Hannen, Exec. Sec'y.

Brief History of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in America

(Continued from page fifty-three)

this temple is not yet started or engaged in, if there be the founding of a second temple undertaken, neither of the two would be accomplished, and this failure would weaken the Cause."

Mr. Mountfort Mills received a tablet from Abdul-Baha saying: "The Mashrak-el-Azkar of Chicago is of the greatest importance. This is a Bahai temple, a supreme house of worship, a place of spiritual gathering and of the manifestation of divine mysteries. The friends of God must endeavor with all their hearts and souls that this structure may be raised and completed."

The Center of the Covenant has written: "One must first grasp those affairs which will make growth (in the Cause) and also *be in time and season*."

From the foregoing quotations it is manifest that the Mashrak-el-Azkar is founded on the "Rock of Ages," the eternal Word of God, as to its object, location and appropriate time for its erection.

A brief sketch of the work accomplished may prove interesting:

In the spring of 1907 while Messrs. Chase, Agnew and Scheffler were in the prison home of Abdul-Baha, he said to them: "Concerning the temple, the Mashrak-el-Azkar, it is a very important matter, the most important thing now in America is the building of the temple. You and your friends must endeavor in this matter. This building will be the cause of the confirmation of the believers. It has a great effect because it is the beginning of the foundation. After centuries it is not so important as it is now, but *now* it is very important. At first they build the temple and worship in it

and grow. In past times they could not build it so outwardly. This building will be the cause of unity and prosperity of the Cause. The unity comes; from every part the believers will assist. This is a heavenly society and also it will be the cause of strength. The believers will get blessings and bounties. It cannot be compared with the church of the old time. You have only to begin, everything will be all right."

When this message was brought back to America a new activity in the Mashrak-el-Azkar resulted throughout the country and contributions from various assemblies and individuals were received. A convention was called for November 26, 1907, to be held in Chicago. This was the first Mashrak-el-Azkar convention, regarding which Abdul-Baha wrote to Mr. Charles Sprague: "Thou hast written concerning the organization of a council for the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. This news brought much spirit and fragrance, for the nine delegates sent by the various assemblies gathered in that meeting and consulted concerning the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar."

Several possible tracts of land on both the south and north sides of the city had been investigated, as Abdul-Baha had said to a pilgrim that it must be near the lake. The morning of the day of November 26, 1907, the delegates visited the south side tract, noting carefully the surroundings, returning to the home of Mrs. Grace Foster for a sumptuous (Thanksgiving day) feast, prepared in the name of the Center of the Covenant by the Chicago maid-servants. It was at first feared that such a feast of good things had incapacitated the delegates to visit

the north shore tract in the afternoon but it made them stronger for the trip, both spiritually and physically. That evening a spirited meeting was held over the location and it was unanimously voted that the north shore tract was most desirable. Miss Gertrude Buikema took the minutes of this meeting. Upon closer investigation the north shore tract (now the site of the Mashrak-el-Azkar) was found to consist of fourteen lots. The spiritual meeting of the Chicago Assembly, after bringing the matter before the assembly for approval, took title to two of the lots in the name of the treasurer of the assembly, Mr. Carl Scheffler, and arose to obey the Center of the Covenant when he said, "You have only to begin, everything will be all right." The sum of \$2,000 was paid for those two lots on April 9, 1908.

On June 19, 1908, a tablet was revealed by Abdul-Baha and translated by his daughter Moneveh Khanum, in which he wrote, "Ask every spiritual meeting in the other cities that they will each select one and send him, and from these selected ones and with those who are selected from the Chicago meetings, establish a new meeting for the provision of the needs of the temple. If this be established with perfect fragrance and joy, it will produce great results. In this new meeting, especially for the establishment of the temple, women are also to be members."

In compliance with these instructions from Abdul-Baha, the House of Spirituality of the Chicago Assembly called the second* Mashrak-el-Azkar convention for March 22 and 23, 1909, the proceedings of which were accurately recorded by Miss Gertrude Buikema and Mr. Charles Ioas, duly elected to act as secretaries, and afterwards printed. Thus the tiny mustard seed of nine delegates grew in the two intervening years to four times nine. The Bahai Temple Unity resulted, as an organization, with full

power and authority to provide ways and means for the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. A constitution was presented and adopted and the first executive board of Bahai Temple Unity was elected and authorized by the convention to close and complete the purchase of the land, recommended by the first convention, 1907, of which two lots had been bought and paid for, with an option secured on the remaining twelve lots. Immediately after the close of the convention the newly appointed executive board went into session, selecting its officers in accordance with the constitution. The treasurer of the Chicago Assembly, Mr. Scheffler, in whose name the title to the two lots was held, turned over to the Bahai Temple Unity all official documents and all monies held by him for the Mashrak-el-Azkar, as follows:

Monies on hand.....	\$3,666.44
Land values.....	2,000.00
Total	\$5,666.44

When the two lots had been purchased, Mr. C. E. Brush, one of Chicago's architects, kindly made a plat of the tract and its surroundings, which was sent to Abdul-Baha. A beautiful tablet flowed from his pen, "To the friends and maid-servants," saying that on the anniversary of the declaration of his holiness the Supreme, the Bab, the map of the Mashrak-el-Azkar had been presented, that "great joy was obtained thereby and with the greatest care it was considered;" that "it is indeed a delightful spot worthy of this edifice and building." (Date of this Tablet, July 4, 1908).

The members of the Executive Board of Bahai Temple Unity appointed Messrs. Mills, Hall and Jacobsen, a committee to attend to the land negotiations, and an offer of \$32,500 for the remaining twelve lots was made and accepted with a contract providing for the payment of \$5,000 every six months, with interest, commencing July 1, 1909. A religious corporation was effected under the laws of Illinois in the name "Bahai Temple Unity," and the title to the land secured.

*More often referred to as the first convention because it was the first *general* gathering of Bahais in convention.—*The Editors*.

The third Mashrak-el-Azkar convention convened in Chicago, April 25 and 26, 1910. Report of the work done during the year was given by the secretary, Mr. Jacobsen, and the financial secretary's report showed contributions for the fiscal year:

From the Orient.....	\$7,092.85
From America and Europe....	7,638.66
Turned over by Mr. Scheffler..	5,666.44

Total	\$20,397.95
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(\$2,000 of this being land)

Contributions had come from India, Persia, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Russia, Egypt, Germany, France, England, Canada, Mexico, Hawaiian Islands, and a little island far out in the Indian Ocean, Mauretius. Besides from sixty different American cities. The words of the Center of the Covenant had literally been fulfilled: "You have only to begin—everything will be all right."

The fourth Mashrak-el-Azkar convention was held in Chicago, May 1 and 2, 1911. A command having come from Acca to hold the convention during the Rizwan days. During the fiscal year April 23, 1910, to April 29, 1911, the total contributions were:

The Orient and Europe.....	\$ 1,190.83
America	9,210.76

Total	\$10,401.59
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The fifth convention in Chicago, April 29 to May 1, 1912, will eternally wear the glorious crown of bestowal because of the presence of the Center of the Covenant and his dedication of the Mashrak-el-Azkar grounds May 1, 1912. During this fiscal year the lake shore tract of 293 feet frontage had been contracted for and payment made on it, the purchase price being \$17,000. The contributions for the year having been \$7,292.45.

The sixth convention was entertained by the friends of New York City, April 28 and 29, 1913. Regarding this wonderful convention Abdul-Baha wrote Mr. Wilhelm, saying:

"Praise be to God, that the New York believers became confirmed in the accomplishment of a great service and held in that city the consultation convention for the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. They displayed the utmost of effort until that convention was inaugurated with infinite perfection. They exercised the greatest of love and kindness towards all the delegates who had come from the different states. They united and entertained the delegates in their homes. With perfect affection they spread before them the banquet of hospitality. Every one became grateful and happy. This event will adorn an important and blessed page in the Bahai history."

At this convention the commemoration of the ninth day of every month as Mashrak-el-Azkar day was proposed and afterward confirmed by Abdul-Baha and has proved a very great impetus to the Mashrak-el-Azkar work. The friends of other countries join with us in observing the day; very beautiful are the letters from our four American sisters in Teheran telling of their holding this ninth day with us.

The first contribution for the fiscal year April 30, 1912, to April 19, 1913, was a gift from the Center of the Covenant at the closing session of the previous convention in Chicago. Also this year marked the completion of the payment on the site dedicated by Abdul-Baha and an indebtedness of \$9,000 on the Lake Shore tract remained only, its entire liquidation being urged before the expiration of 1913. The contributions for the year having been \$14,206.42.

Another year soon rolled around and Chicago was again blest with a Mashrak-el-Azkar convention, which was the seventh convention. It also marked the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Baha'o'llah.

At the close of the year 1913 the money came literally rolling in for the cancellation of all land debts and a cablegram was sent to Abdul-Baha announcing that the Bahai Temple Unity had completed

its land obligations. Thus the new year, 1914, dawned free of any clouds for the Mashrak-el-Azkar work so that the building fund might be started. The financial secretary reported contributions for the year \$13,503.79 and the Unity entirely out of debt with land holdings for which \$51,500 had been paid and which was worth almost double the price paid. Complete unity and harmony marked the sessions of this seventh convention.

And now the eighth Mashrak-el-Azkar convention and first Bahai congress has convened in San Francisco. Thus our conventions held in the United States of America have travelled from coast to coast.

Almost immediately after the second convention, when the Bahai Temple Unity resulted, the president of the first Executive Board, Mr. Mountford Mills, of New York City, visited the Center of the Covenant who was still a prisoner of the Turkish Government, though liberated in July of that same year, 1908. Mr. Mills wrote: "At the temple convention, he seemed most pleased and satisfied and assured us that the future would see many more, constantly increasing in numbers, attending and bringing together representatives from all parts of the world. He said that these gatherings would be to the spiritual body of the world what the inrush of the spirit is to the physical body of man, quickening it to its utmost parts and infusing a new light and power."

One of the most touching gifts to the building fund was a check for \$1,000 addressed to "the Bahai Temple of Peace" and saying in the letter, "In Europe, fathers and brothers have been torn from their wives and little children, and many left at home are in want of dire necessities. Our beloved ones are not facing mutilation, acute suffering and death. I send this as a thanksgiving offering, though it seems minute indeed to express what I feel."

During the fiscal year beginning April 27, 1914, the monthly contributions have been as follows:

April 27 to May 1.....	\$ 258.00
May.	388.60
June.	351.09
July.	483.31
August.	344.22
September.	1,533.88
October	557.99
November.	519.50
December.	614.66
January.	768.72
February.	247.10
March	278.76
April 1 to April 18.....	251.82

Total, to April 18, 1915.....\$6,597.65

Total receipts of subscriptions from August, 1907, to April, 1915:

First Convention	\$ 5,666.44
Second Convention	14,731.51
Third Convention	10,401.59
Fourth Convention	7,292.45
Fifth Convention	14,206.42
Sixth Convention	13,503.79
Seventh Convention	6,597.65

Grand Total \$72,399.85

Of the above amount \$11,158.75 was from countries other than United States, as follows:

England—St. Ives, Cornwall; Springfield, Broadway; Manchester; London; Sussex, Brighton; Warwicke; Clifton, Bristol. *Ireland*—Warrington, County Down. *France*—Paris; Dinan, Brittany. *Germany*—Berlin; Stuttgart; Esslingen; Zuffenhausen. *Italy*—Sienna; Ravenna, Erba. *European Turkey*—Constantinople. *Palestine*—Acca; Haifa. *Russia*—Baku; Ishkabad. *Persia*—Teheran; Esphahan; Gangelie; Shiraz; Yahromi; Resht; Kermanshah; Sanstan; Meshed; Tiflis; Yazd; Arabelli. *India*—Rangoon; Bombay; Mandalay. *Egypt*—Cairo; Port Said; Alexandria. *South Africa*—East Rand; Transvaal; Capetown. *New Zealand*—Davenport; Aukland. *Brazil*—Sao Paulo. *Canada*—Montreal; Brockville; St. John's, W. B. *Islands of the Sea*—Isle of Pines; Isle of Mauretius; Hawaiian Islands.

Respectfully submitted,

CORINNE TRUE,
Financial Secy., Bahai Temple Unity.

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. VI

Asma 1, 71 (August 1, 1915)

No. 8

"We are in the most radiant century, wherein human perceptions have developed and investigation of reality is conducted"

Address by Abdul-Baha at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Moxey, New York City, November 18, 1912.

Stenographic notes taken by Miss Esther Foster.

I OFFER thanks to God for this meeting with you here. From the external standpoint such meetings are inconceivable, for we are orientals, whereas you are occidentals, and between us there is no patriotic relation, no racial relation, no linguistic relation, no commercial relation, no political relation. There is no connection or any bond requiring such a gathering between us. However, the love of God has gathered us here, and this is the best of means. Every other means of fellowship is limited in efficiency, but fellowship based on the love of God is unlimited, is everlasting, is divine, is radiant. Therefore we must be thankful to God for uniting us in fellowship and creating such amity between us that persons from the east may meet revered persons of the west in the utmost love. Surely, for everything there is wisdom, especially for great things, and most especially for the most particular affairs of life, and this concerns the manifestation of God and the descent of the law of God, for, verily, this is the greatest affair, and for the greatest affair, surely, there is all comprehensive wisdom.

The divine, holy Manifestations of

God did not reveal themselves for the purpose of founding a nation or a denomination. They did not appear in order that some one, or ones, might acknowledge their prophethood. They did not appear in order to lay the foundation for a religious belief. Even Christ, his holiness Christ, did not become manifest that we should believe in him as the Christ; he did not appear in order that we might follow him; he did not appear in order that we might adore him; all these are limited in scope, whereas the reality of Christ was an unlimited essence. The unlimited reality cannot become bounded by any limitation. Nay, rather, his holiness Christ appeared in order to illumine the world of humanity in order to render the earthly world celestial in nature; to make all the human world a realm of angels; to unite the hearts; to enkindle the light of love in all the hearts; that souls might thus become independent, attaining the utmost love and fellowship, turning to God, being ushered into the kingdom, apportioned in the bestowals and bounty of God, and partaking of the manna from heaven. Thus they might become baptized through the holy

spirit, attaining a new spirit and realizing the life everlasting. All these beliefs and all prophetic laws were for these various purposes. Consequently, we offer thanks to God that no mundane relation obtains among us, but—Praise to God!—ideal and divine bonds connect us. We have gathered at this meeting eagerly anticipating the showing forth of the divine bestowals.

In bygone centuries, all the nations of the world imagined that the law of God was synonymous with blind imitation. For example, the Jews were captives of domestic, blind imitations. The Musselmén, or Mohammedans were also captives. The Christians were followers of old and ancient tradition and teachings. The basic foundation of the religions of God, which are ever conducive to good fellowship, amity and love of humanity, that foundation was forsaken and cast aside, each religion held tenaciously to certain imitations, and by dint of these blind imitations, one was inimicable to the other. On this account it was impossible for the religionists to gather in a meeting, nor was it possible for them to exercise fellowship, even ordinary conversation was considered contaminating, and every nation because of the heritage of blind imitations from ancestors and forefathers and their tenacious hold thereto was alienated from all the other religions. There was no investigation of reality at all. Every soul whose father chanced to be a Jew, turned out to be a Jew, and every soul whose father had been a Mohammedan turned out to be a Mohammedan, and every soul whose forebear was a Buddhist was likewise a Buddhist. In brief, religion was a heritage which was bequeathed from ancestor to progeny, therefore there was no investigation; consequently all were at variance.

Praise be to God, we are in this most radiant century, wherein human perceptions have developed and examination or investigation of reality is conducted. Each individual of the human race is

bent on the revelation of reality. Therefore it is behooving of this century that we set aside all that savors of blind imitation and impartially and independently investigate reality. Let us find out what constitutes the reality of the divine religions. For example, if a Christian sets aside all blind imitations handed down by his forebears and investigates the reality of the teachings of the Gospel, he will observe that the foundation of the teachings of his holiness Christ constituted mercy, love, good fellowship, humanitarianism, altruism, and the resplendence or radiance of the bestowals of God, the acquisition of the breaths of the holy spirit united to oneness, even as he declared: Verily, the sun of God shineth upon all humanity without exception, for it shineth upon the just and the unjust. What is the meaning of this declaration? we may ask. The meaning is this, that the mercy of God encircles all, not a single individual is deprived of the mercy of God; no soul is deprived of the resplendency of the bestowals of God. The whole human race is submerged in the sea of the mercy of the Lord and we are all the sheep of God. If there is any shortcoming, it must be eradicated; for example, the man who is ignorant must be educated in order that he may become wise; the man who is sick must be treated in order that he recover; the man who is immature must be trained in order that he may reach maturity; the man who is asleep must be awakened. All this must be accomplished in the utmost love and not through hatred or rancor. For instance, his holiness Christ has declared: Those having eyes yet they see not; having ears yet they hear not; having hearts, yet they understand not. Just as the prophet Isaiah foretold: But I shall heal them. Hence, it becomes evident that the bounties of Christ transformed the eye which was blind into a seeing one; the ear which was formerly deaf, he rendered attentive; the heart which was hard, he made tender; in

other words, the text means that although the people possessed external eyes, yet the insight, or the sight of the soul was blind although the corporeal ear heard, yet the hearing of the spirit was deaf; though they possessed hearts, they were without illumination; and the bounties of his holiness Christ saved those souls from these conditions. Thus it is evident that the manifestation of the Messiah was synonymous with universal mercy. His providence was universal and his teachings were for all. His lights were for everybody. Every "Christ" came for the earth of mankind. Therefore we must investigate the foundation of the divine religion and find it and reinstate it and spread it broadcast in the world, so that it may become the cause of illumination of the world; that the dead may become alive, and the blind seeing, and the inattentive attentive.

Each one of the divine religions is divisible into two departments. One department is spiritual in nature, such as faith in God, faith in Christ, faith in Moses, faith in Abraham, faith in Mohammed, the love of God, the oneness of the world of humanity. These shall be spread throughout the world. This strife and sedition shall disappear. This ignorance and inadvertence and these quarrels shall cease, and all the human race shall be bound together. The second department or division, which is non-essential, concerns the world of bodies, concerns transactions. It is non-essential or accidental. Seen in affairs it is subject to changes and transformations according to the exigency of the time and place. For example, the question of divorce, at the time of Moses it was permitted, but during the time of Christ it was not permitted, therefore Christ made it unlawful. For example, there are in the Torah ten commandments concerning retribution for murder. . . . And now the religions have forsaken the department which is essential, which has to do with the life of

the human world, the life which is lasting—and that is the love of God, faith in God, philanthropy, knowledge, perception, guidance—all these are held to be accidental and they squabble over the question as to whether divorce is lawful or unlawful. The Jews consider it lawful and the Catholic religion says it is unlawful, therefore, they quarrel. Now what is the basic foundation?

His holiness Christ said in the Gospel: Whosoever smites thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. Consider what is going on now in the Balkans. What relation is there between the teachings of Christ and what is happening there? What relation is that which man has absolutely forgotten? For the mooted question as regards their quarreling and disputing belongs to the department which is accidental and of no importance. We therefore must set aside all these blind imitations and investigate reality, and reality is one, it does not accept of multiplicity at all, and there is no doubt through that conception we shall be unified.

In the orient, darkness was brewing and all the religions were submerged in the ocean of blind imitation. There was no trace of the foundation of the divine religion. Therefore, because the blind imitations were various, the people were hostile and inimical; rancor and sedition were rampant, and battling and quarreling were continuous; blood overspread the eastern horizon. In place of religion being the cause of fellowship, it was the cause of hatred; in lieu of religion being the cause of unity, it proved to be the cause of discord, reaching that degree wherein there was warfare and strife, even as in the Balkans at the present time. The present existing religion in the Balkans imagines that the basis of divine religion means warfare. If the adherents of one religion endeavor to eradicate and erase the other religion, the adherents of both religions try to

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. VI

Asma 1, 71 (August 1, 1915)

No. 8

“The Will of the Creator is effected through the process of (voluntary) composition”

SCIENTIFIC PROOF OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Address by Abdul-Baha delivered Sunday, February 9, 1913, at 30 rue St.
Didier, Paris.

Translated from notes in Persian by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab.

TODAY some one asked a question regarding the existence of God. What are the proofs through which one can establish the existence of God?

People are divided into two sections, one which is satisfied with the knowledge of the attributes of divinity, and the other which strives to establish the existence of divinity, and be informed of the fundamental principles of divine philosophy.

Therefore today I will speak to you of the proofs which establish scientifically the existence of God.

I will not quote to you the scriptural proofs from the Old and the New Testament or the Koran, for you are more or less familiar with those ideas. Consequently I will deal with this subject

from an intellectual standpoint. As it is an abstruse subject I request you to give your utmost attention.

When we look upon all forms of phenomena we observe that they are the results of composition. For example, certain single atoms are brought together through the inherent law of elective affinity existing between these various particles, the result of which is the human being. A number of primordial atoms have gone into the make up of a plant, the result of which is the flower.

Again looking into the mineral kingdom we observe that this law of cohesion is working in the same manner in that kingdom, for we see that many atoms go into the composition of a piece of stone which through purification may reach to the state of a mirror.

In short, the existence of life depends upon the composition and decomposition of phenomena. When the particles of a given composition are disintegrated this may be called non-existence, but the original simple atoms will go back to their primary elements and are ever existent.

For instance, the body of man being the resultant factor of the composition of these atoms, when this body becomes the subject of decomposition we call that death, but those atoms of which the body of man was composed, being simple and primordial, are indestructible. Consequently it is proved that the existence of phenomena depends upon composition and their mortality upon decomposition.

This is a scientific principle; science approves of it, because it is not a matter of belief. There is a great difference between theories upheld by belief, and facts which are substantiated by science.

Beliefs are the susceptibilities of conscience, but scientific facts are the deductions of reason and inexorable logic.

Therefore it is logically proven that the existence of phenomena depends upon composition, and their destruction upon disintegration.

Now going back to our subject and the facts upheld by materialists. They state that inasmuch as it is proven and upheld by science that the life of phenomena depends upon composition and their destruction upon disintegration, then where comes in the need or necessity of a Creator—the self-subsistent Lord?

For we see with our own eyes that these infinite beings go through myriads of compositions and in every composition appearing under a certain form showing certain characteristic virtues, then we are independent of any divine maker.

This is the argument of the materialists. On the other hand those who are informed of divine philosophy answer in the following terms:

Composition is of three kinds.

1. Accidental composition.
2. Involuntary composition.
3. Voluntary composition.

There is no fourth kind of composition. Composition is restricted to these three categories.

If we say that composition is accidental, this is philosophically a false theory, because then we have to believe in an effect without a cause, and philosophically no effect is conceivable without a cause. We cannot think of an effect without some primal cause, and composition being an effect, there must naturally be a cause behind it.

As to the second composition, i. e., the involuntary composition. Involuntary composition means that each element has within it as an inherent function this power of composition. For example, certain elements have flowed towards each other, and as an inherent necessity of their being they are composed. That is, it is the imminent need of these elements to enter into composition.

For example, the inherent quality of fire is burning or heat. Heat is an original property of fire.

Humidity is the inherent nature of water. You cannot conceive of H_2O , which is the chemical form of water, without having humidity connected, for that is its inherent quality, inseparable and indivisible.

Now as long as it is the inherent necessity of these elements to be composed, there should not be any decomposition. While we observe that after each composite organism, there is a process of decomposition we learn that the composition of the organisms of life is neither accidental nor involuntary. Then what have we as a form of composition? It is the third, that is the voluntary composition. And that means that the infinite forms of organisms are composed through a superior will, the eternal will, the will of the living and self-subsistent Lord.

This is a rational proof, that the Will of the Creator is effected through the process of composition.

Ponder over this carefully. When you comprehend the significances of this subject you will then be able to convey it to others. The more you think over this

the greater will be your comprehension.

Thank God that He has given you such a power through which you can comprehend these divine mysteries. Reflect deeply, ponder carefully, think minutely, and then the doors of knowledge shall be opened unto you.

"We are in the most radiant century"

(Continued from page sixty-one)

suppress the other. They think the more a religionist kills, the nearer he draws to God, the more blood he sheds, the more does he gain the good pleasure of the Lord. That is why you see them fiercely attacking each other and taking the women captives. Think of the property they plunder and the innocent children they destroy. Observe the results of blind imitation. How gloomy imitations are! How destructive to humanity! If this be the foundation of divine religion, undoubtedly irreligion is better, because the infidels do not shed blood; they are inimical to each other. It is the religions of the present day that are inimical. Thus religion, which should have contributed to the illumination of the world has become productive of gross darkness.

Consider how blind imitations in the orient made darkness all-encircling. At such a time, his holiness Baha'o'llah dawned from the eastern horizon like unto the sun. He reformed the basis of the religions of God. He took away from their midst blind imitations and placed in their stead amity and good fellowship. There remained no strife, no sedition, no quarrels. The amity of the sects can be seen. Nay, rather all

live together in the utmost of love and good fellowship. Were you to enter one of their meetings, you would observe that they have become as one race, as one nativity, as one religion; that they associate one with the other in the utmost of love and good fellowship. Praise be to God, these blind imitations, this darkness, have ceased to exist and the reality of the oneness of humanity has been proven!

Now, I have come to America, and I consider the American people to be a civilized people, an intelligent nation, a nation investigating reality, hence, I hope through the efforts of this noble nation the solidarity of humanity will be advanced daily; the illumination of the human world will be widespread; the banner of universal peace be held aloft; the lamp of the oneness of the human world be ignited; and the hearts of the east and west become united. Then the reality of the divine religions shall become resplendent and refulgent, indicating the fact that all the divine religions were meant to be the cause of unity and love and all heavenly bestowals have ever been conferring light upon humanity.

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. VI

Kamal 1, 71 (August 20, 1915)

No. 9

"The Great Manifestation was fulfilled and consummated in the Blessed Beauty of Abha (Baha'o'llah)... thus was it ended and for a thousand years all shall receive illumination from His Lights"

Translated August 4, 1908

Tablet from Abdul-Baha to be read by the friends of God in the East and the West.

Upon them be Baha'o'llah-El-Abha!

He is God!

O YE people of the Kingdom of Abha!

There are two influences tending toward prosperity and progress which emanate from the forefront of advancement of the world of humanity. They remind the negligent, awaken them that sleep, give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, power of utterance to the mutes and life to the dead.

One is the influence of civilization—that development of the world of nature that concerns the material life of man. It promotes physical advancement and cultivates the social virtues. The laws and deductions of science, so indispensable to progress, are the product of the lofty thoughts of sound minds, the accumulated results of the efforts of ancient and modern scholars. The most effective power for the promotion and dissemination of this influence is just government.

The other is the divine influence, the holy and spiritual revelations, which insure eternal glory, everlasting happiness, the illumination of the world, the appearance of merciful phenomena

in the world of humanity, and perpetual life. The fundamental basis thereof is the teachings and the precepts of the prophets, the dictates and attraction of the conscience, which belong to the realm of morality. Like unto the lamp they illuminate and brighten the depths and recesses of human realities. The effective power of this is the Word of God.

But the advancement of civilization, material perfections and human virtues will bear no fruit or result unless joined to the spiritual perfections; merciful qualities and sound morals, and the happiness of the human world, which is the original goal, will not be attained. For although through the advancement of civilization and the adornment and refinement of the material world, happiness is realized, and the sight of hopes fulfilled in perfect beauty wins the heart, yet, concomitantly, great dangers, severe ordeals and awful catastrophes are involved.

Now, when ye behold the order and regularity of countries, cities and villages, the attractive adornment, the del-

icacy of the blessings, the suitability of implements, the ease of transportation and traveling, the extension of knowledge of the facts of the world of nature, the great inventions and gigantic undertakings and the fine and artistic discoveries, ye shall say that civilization is the cause of happiness and the development of the human world.

Yet again, when ye glance over the inventions of infernal instruments of destruction, the creation of the forces of ruin, the discovery of fiery means which cut at the root of life, it becomes plainly evident that civilization is twin with savagery and a concomitant thereof, unless material civilization be aided by divine guidance, merciful appearance, heavenly thoughts, and become joined to the spiritual states, the perfections of the kingdom (of God) and the divine bounties.

Now consider how the most civilized and populous countries of the world have become storehouses of infernal articles (guns, etc.), the dominions of the world a great barracks, the nations of the world armed hosts, and the kings thereof commanding generals of the battlefield. Thus hath the human world fallen into a great calamity!

Therefore this civilization and material development must be led by the Great Guidance; the mundane world must be made the place for the appearance of the bounties of the kingdom; material advancement must be made twin with merciful revelation. Thus may the human world appear as the representative of the (heavenly) assembly on the plane of existence, and the exposition of divine evidence may reveal itself in the greatest sweetness and loveliness. Thus may eternal happiness and glory find realization.

Praise be to God! For centuries and cycles the banner of civilization has been raised, the human world has day by day advanced and developed, the material world has flourished and outward perfections increased until now the world

of human existence has attained great capacity for the spiritual teachings and the divine summons.

To illustrate: When a suckling babe has passed through the material grades and has attained physical growth and development, the body reaches the grade of maturity and attains capacity for the manifestation of ideal perfections and intellectual virtues. Then the signs of the endowment of perception, intelligence and knowledge, and the spiritual forces appear.

Likewise in the general world, when mankind accomplished physical development, traveled through the grades of civilization and attained the human wonders, virtues and endowments in their most consummate form, it attained capacity for the appearance and extension of the spiritual divine perfections and obtained worthiness for hearing the divine summons.

Then the ensign of the Kingdom was raised, spiritual virtues and perfections became manifest, the sun of reality arose, the light of the "Most Great Peace" dawned, the solidarity of the human world was realized. We hope that the radiation of these lights may day by day become intensified and these ideal virtues magnified. Thus may the great achievement of the human world become evident and manifest, and the beloved of the love of God may become with the utmost sweetness and beauty the representatives of the (heavenly) assemblage.

O ye friends of God! Know ye verily that the happiness of the world of humanity is dependent upon the unity and solidarity of mankind, and that material and spiritual progress both rest upon universal friendliness and love among human individuals.

Consider other living beings; that is to say the animals that graze, or fly, and those that are ferocious. The individual of every ferocious kind is separated from its kin and the members of the same species, and lives in loneli-

ness. They exercise the utmost opposition and ferocity towards each other. When they chance to meet they immediately engage in contention and fighting, and use their claws and sharpen their teeth by ferocity, such as atrocious lions or bloodthirsty wolves. Thus do the ferocious animals that live solitary and fight for their living.

But as to the tame, domestic animals of good nature and pure temperaments, such as those that fly and those that graze, they associate with each other with the utmost love, and company by company they live together. They spend their time in the greatest happiness, joy and gladness. The thankful birds which are content with a few grains, practice the utmost joyousness towards one another and sing myriads of melodies upon the pleasant plains, mountains and valleys. Likewise the animals that graze, like the sheep, deer and rabbit, live in a state of greatest friendliness, and fellowship with happiness and unity in the pasturage of the green tablelands. But the dogs, wolves, tigers and the bloodthirsty hyenas and other ferocious animals shun each other and wander lonely after their prey. Even when the animals that graze and fly come to each other's nest or den, there is no opposition and estrangement manifested, nay rather they treat one another with the utmost friendliness and affection. On the contrary, when a ferocious animal approaches the den of one of its kind, the two engage in contention. Even if one passes through the neighborhood of the other, it is at once attacked and if possible destroyed.

Therefore it becomes evident that friendliness and love even in the animal kingdom are the result of good nature, pure temperament and gentle behavior; while discord and estrangement characterize the ferocious brutes of the plains.

The almighty God has not created in man the claws and teeth of the lion; nay the human existence is made and fashioned after the best form and for

the most consummate innate virtues. Therefore it behooves man in homage for this creation and gratitude for this bestowal that he should exercise friendship and love for his kind, nay more, he should treat all living beings with justice and equity.

Again consider that the comfort, joy, rest and happiness of mankind come from love and unity; that contentions and disputes are the greatest causes of distress, misery, tribulation and unhappiness. But a thousand times alas! that humanity is ignorant and negligent concerning these matters, and every day becomes metamorphosed into the character of a savage animal, one day a ferocious tiger, again a coiling and repulsive serpent.

The sublimity of man is derived from the qualities and virtues which characterize the angels of the supreme concourse. Therefore when good qualities and virtuous attributes appear in man, he is verily a heavenly personage, an angel of the kingdom, a divine reality, a merciful manifestation. And when he does contend and thirst for blood, he exceeds in ferocity the basest of brutes, for while the bloodthirsty wolf will devour one sheep in the night, in that time man will make away with a thousand victims.

For man has two aspects: one the sublimity of nature and intellectual qualities, and the other the base animality and imperfections of passion.

If you travel through the continents and countries of the world, you will see, on one side, the signs of ruin and destruction and, on the other, the signs and monuments of civilization and construction. As to the ruin and destruction, they are the signs of contention and discord, of war and battle. But order and construction are the results of the virtues of friendliness and concord.

If one travel in the central desert of Asia, he will observe how many cities as great and populous as Paris or London have been ruined. From the Cas-

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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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Kamal 1, 71 (August 20, 1915)

No. 9

pian Sea to the River Oxus naught is to be seen save forlorn and deserted prairies and deserts. The Russian railway (the Trans-Caspian R. R.) takes two days and two nights to traverse the ruined cities and destroyed villages of that desert. There was a time when that land was very populous and in the highest state of civilization and development; science and knowledge were widespread, the arts and professions established, commerce and agriculture were in the utmost state of perfection, and civil government and politics well organized. Now, all this great region is the habitation of desolation and shelters only the nomadic Turkoman tribes and the wandering beasts of prey. The cities of that land, as Gorgan, Tassa, Abiavard and Shahrastan, were once famous in the world for sciences, knowledge, professions, wonders, wealth, greatness, happiness and virtue. Now, no voice or murmur is to be heard in all that land save the roar of ferocious brutes, and naught to be seen save the wandering wolves.

This ruin and destruction was occasioned by the battles and murders of the wars between Iran (Persia) and Turkan, which had become different in

customs and religion. Their godless leaders made public property of the blood, the belongings and the privacy of each other. This is the exposition of one instance.

Then, when you travel through the world and observe it, you shall find all constructiveness and progressiveness to be signs of friendliness and love, and all destructiveness and ruin the results of hatred and enmity.

Notwithstanding this obvious fact the human world does not take warning nor wake up from its sleep of negligence. Men still engage in discord and contention; they organize armed forces and long to charge on the battlefield.

Again, consider organization and decomposition, existence and non-existence. Every being is composed of many different constituents, the existence of everything is the expression of organization. That is to say: when by divine genesis organization of certain elements occurs, a being is produced. All existent beings are after this fashion. But when a defect appears in that compound and decomposition sets in, the parts separate and that being disintegrates and becomes non-existent. Thus annihilation of

(Continued on page seventy)

O BELOVED of God! These days are the time for firmness and the period for steadfastness and constancy in the Cause of God. You must not look upon the personality of Abdul-Baha, for he will eventually bid ye farewell. Nay, ye must observe the Word of God. If the Word of God is in the ascendant, be ye happy, joyous and thankful, even if Abdul-Baha be under a sword or beneath fetters and chains; for importance is in the holy temple of the Cause of God, and not in the physical mould of Abdul-Baha.

The beloved of God must be confirmed with such a firmness that if every moment a hundred like Abdul-Baha become the target of arrows, no change should occur in their decesion or intention, no transformation in their zeal or attraction to God, and no abatement in their occupation in the service of the Cause of God.

Abdul-Baha is the servant of the Word of the Blessed Beauty and the manifestation of absolute servitude in the threshold of the Lord. He has no other station, grade, class or power. This is my utmost hope, and my abiding paradise.

—ABDUL-BAHA

“The Great Manifestation was fulfilled and consummated in the Blessed Beauty of Abha (Baha’o’llah)”

(Continued from page sixty-eight)

things is an expression of their decomposition and disintegration. The affinity and organization of the elements makes possible the existence.

To sum up: the attraction and affinity of things are the cause of fructification and production, and estrangement and disunion among things the cause of death and annihilation. By attraction and affinity all living beings such as plants, animals and men are realized. From disagreement and estrangement dissolution results and annihilation follows. Verily the life of the human world is that which is conducive to unity, attraction and concord of mankind.

When you pass a farm and observe a prosperous plantation with symmetry and beauty, full of plants and flowers with an organized community, ye see proof of the fact that the farm and garden are under the care and cultivation of a skillful farmer; but if ye see confusion and disorder, it is an evidence that the place is bereft of the care of the gardener and a wild and uncultivated plantation results.

Therefore it is evident that unity and concord are the result of the education of the real educator, while separation and dissension are evidence of savagery and the lack of the training of God.

If an opponent object, saying: The nations, peoples, tribes and sects of the world have different ethics, morals, conducts, tastes and temperaments and their thoughts and opinions vary, how then can real unity become realized or absolute accord among humanity be established?

We will say that difference (or disagreement) is of two kinds: One sort is the cause of annihilation and that is like the disagreement of warring nations and fighting tribes who destroy one another, ruin homes and cause comfort and peace

to depart, exhibiting ferocity and blood-thirstiness. The other difference (or disagreement) is an expression of variety, that is itself perfection, and the means of manifesting the graces of the All-Glorious.

Look at the flowers of the gardens. Although members of different families, having various colors, different forms and shapes, yet because they absorb the selfsame water and grow and thrive by the same breeze and are reared by the same heat and light of the one sun, this difference and variety produces greater beauty and grace and each appears more beautiful by contrast with the other.

When the complete proof, which is the effectiveness of the Word of God, obtains, this difference in nature’s ethics, habits and thoughts results in the diversification and adornment of the human world. Moreover this difference and variety is inherent and innate in the parts and members of man, which afford the means for revealing perfections, and since these members and parts (of the human organism) are under the control of the king of the spirit, the spirit interpenetrates the parts and governs even the veins and arteries. This difference and variety then is no barrier to oneness and love governed by the spirit. This diversity is indeed the greatest power of unity.

Should a garden have its trees with their branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit all of one kind, color, shape and arrangement it would have no beauty and sweetness whatever. But if it possess various hues, different leaves, blossoms and fruits, each will intensify the decorative effect and beauty of the other. The garden will become perfect and excel in beauty, delicacy, freshness, sweetness and magnificence.

Likewise, the difference and variety

of thoughts, opinions, morals and temperaments of the human world when under the guidance of the one power and the influence of the word of oneness, will shine forth with the utmost greatness, beauty, sublimity and perfection.

Today no power save the great power of the Word of God, which comprehends the realities of things, can gather together under the shade of the same tree, the minds and hearts of the world of humanity. It is the motive power of all things; it is the mover of souls and the controller and governor of the human world.

Praise be to God! Today the light of the Word of God shines upon all horizons. From every nation, tribe and denomination, souls are coming under the influence of the Word (of God) and have agreed and united with the utmost concord and harmony.

Many an assembly shall be organized whose members will be representatives of different nations, tribes and peoples. If one attend such a meeting, he will be surprised and will imagine that those present are of one birth and nation, one people with the same thoughts and opinions, when, as a matter of fact, one may be an American, another a European; one from Hindustan (India), another from Turkestan; one an Arab, another a Tajik; one Persian, another Greek. Notwithstanding this they consort together with joy and sing together in the utmost unity, harmony, love and solidarity in liberty and wisdom. This is through the effect of the Word of God.

If all the powers of the world should convene, they could not organize an assembly like unto these assemblies. Here with such remarkable love, attraction and zeal, different people unite in one assembly and raise their voices in unison in the center of the world. They cause the abolishment of war and murder, and the realization (and establishment) of universal peace, and the friendliness and unity of the world of humanity. Can any power withstand the

power of the Word of God? No, verily, the proof is clear and the evidence complete.

If a soul open the eye of equity, he will become amazed and surprised and will testify justly that all the nations and peoples of the world should be grateful and thankful to the teachings of Baha'o'llah. For these teachings make tame every ferocious animal, give speed to those that only move, transform human souls into angels of heaven and make the world of humanity the center of the manifestation of mercy. All are compelled thereby to obey and be loyal to the government.

Today no kingdom in all the world is confident and at ease, for security and confidence have disappeared from humanity. Kings and subjects are alike in danger.

The sect today which obeys the government with perfect religious honesty, and practices the utmost integrity towards the nations is this oppressed sect. The proof thereof is the following: All the tribes in Persia and Turkestan are thinking of their own petty interests; if they obey the government it is either with the hope of favor or through fear of punishment. But the Bahais are well wishers of and obedient to the powers (or governments) and are loving and kind to all the nations.

This obedience and adherence are enjoined as duties upon all by the Beauty of Abha (Baha'o'llah) in clear texts. Therefore in compliance with the commandment of God they practice the utmost honesty and good-will toward the governments. If any man commit a wrong against the government he must hold himself responsible before God and consider himself a sinner deserving of punishment. Notwithstanding this it is amazing how some of the ministers of (political) affairs account all other sects well disposed, but the Bahais ill disposed.

Praise be to God! (An expression of wonder when thus used.) In these lat-

ter days when a great general uprising and commotion took place in Teheran and other cities of Iran (Persia), it was clearly evidenced that not a single Bahai interfered in these affairs nor troubled the populace, and for this reason they were blamed and criticised by others, for they had obeyed the Blessed Beauty (Baha'o'llah) and interfered not at all in political matters nor disturbed any sect. They were occupied with their own affairs, trades and professions.

All the friends of God testify that Abdul-Baha is entirely true to, and exhibits good-will toward the governments and nations of the world, especially, the two sublime governments of the East (Persia and Turkey), for these two countries were respectively the native land and habitation of his holiness, Baha'o'llah. In all the epistles and writings he has commended and praised these two kingdoms, and has asked aid for them from the threshold of oneness. The Beauty of Abha—may my soul be a sacrifice for His beloved!—prayed in behalf of their majesties, the two sovereigns (the shah and the sultan). Praise be to God! Notwithstanding these decisive arguments, each day an event occurs and difficulties appear. But we and the beloved of God must not grow lax in the least in our honesty and good-will, nay rather in the utmost devotion and trustworthiness remain steadfast in our sincerity and engage in philanthropic prayers.

O beloved of God! These days are the time for firmness and the period for steadfastness and constancy in the Cause of God. You must not look upon the personality of Abdul-Baha, for he will eventually bid ye farewell. Nay, ye

must observe the Word of God. If the Word of God is in the ascendant, be happy, joyous and thankful, even if Abdul-Baha be under a sword or beneath fetters and chains; for importance is in the holy temple of the Cause of God, and not in the physical mould of Abdul-Baha.

The beloved of God must be confirmed with such a firmness that if every moment a hundred like Abdul-Baha become the target of arrows, no change should occur in their decision or intention, no transformation in their zeal or attraction to God, and no abatement in their occupation in the service of the Cause of God.

Abdul-Baha is the servant of the Word of the Blessed Beauty and the manifestation of absolute servitude in the threshold of the Lord. He has no other station, grade, class or power. This is my utmost hope, my abiding paradise, my Masjid-El-Aska* (Most Holy Sanctuary) and my Sadrat-El-Montaha† (Divine Guidance).

The great Manifestation was fulfilled and consummated in the Blessed Beauty of Abha (Baha'o'llah), and his holiness the Supreme (the great Bab) was the herald of the Blessed Beauty—may my spirit be a sacrifice to them! Thus was it ended and for a thousand years all shall receive illumination from his lights and obtain (favor) from the sea of his favors.

O ye beloved of God! This is my wish for ye and counsel to ye. Blessed is he who is aided by God to comply with what is written on this leaf.

Upon ye be Baha'o'llah-El-Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

*Masjid-El-Aksa, originally a Christian Church and afterwards turned into a Moham-medan Mosque by the Caliph Omar, attained great importance in the devotional estimation of the Mohammedans.

†Sadrat-El-Montaha (the furthestmost Tree) referred to a tree planted by the Arabs in ancient times at the end of a road, to serve as a guide. It usually refers to the Manifestations of God on earth.

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. VI

Eizzat 1, 71 (September 8, 1915)

No. 10

Recent letters from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab to Bahais in America*

Home of Abdul-Baha,
Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
July 1, 1915.

Mrs. Corinne True, Chicago.
My dear sister in the Faith!

The spirit suggests to me to write you a letter and convey to you the news of the good health of Abdul-Baha and those who moth-like fly around this divine candle. For the last ten months we have received not one letter from America nor under the present circumstances have I been able to mail to the Bahai world the spiritual words and advice as well as the description of the selfless deeds and divine actions of the Beloved. Thus from an external and superficial standpoint

we have been separated from each other, but from the ideal standpoint our relations were not interrupted in the least. There is no separation for those who are engaged in the services of the Cause. They may not hear from each other, but their hearts are united, their altruistic aims are for the moral illumination of their fellowmen and their highest desire is to serve in an effective manner the religion of Truth.

We are waiting patiently to hear the results of the First International Bahai Congress and the progress of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. We read its preliminary program in the STAR OF THE WEST. After that we have received no more information. Abdul-Baha gave a stirring

*LETTER FROM MR. HANNEN.

Dear brother Windust:

At the suggestion of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, from whom I have heard two or three times recently, I give you below extracts from his letters to me covering matters of general interest, and also information concerning his correspondence with others. It is suggested that you obtain from several or all to whom he has also written recently, extracts from his letters, the whole or a compilation to be published in the STAR OF THE WEST from time to time as current news from Haifa. It would appear that communication has again been established with that city; and of course it goes without saying that the friends will be most interested in all news concerning Abdul-Baha and his servants who are privileged to be near him in these days. If I can be of any further service in this matter, pray command me.

On July 8, 1915, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab writes: "According to Abdul-Baha's suggestion, I am writing a series of short letters to the different believers of the west, giving the news of his health. . . . I wonder whether all these

letters will be received by the different individuals. Will you and brother Windust see to it that the general portions of these letters dealing with the teachings and the health of Abdul-Baha are reproduced in one or two numbers of the STAR OF THE WEST? This is very important.

"Abdul-Baha is quite well, spending most of his time with the members of the holy family and enjoying a much-needed rest in these last years of his life. A few days ago a pilgrim arrived from Bagdad. It had taken him fifty days for the journey. He is an old resident of Bagdad, but a Persian by birth. Another incident worth relating is the arrival of our Persian students from the American College in Beirut. Their presence has given us a new zest of life. They chant and sing, and are full of activity.

"Very few things happen in these parts, and from a spiritual standpoint, except Abdul-Baha and his work and deeds and words, there is nothing worth recording. It is his love and grace that keeps us awake and alive."

Faithfully yours,
Joseph H. Hannen.

talk in this regard which no doubt you will read in its opportune time. You must know by this time that none of the letters mailed to Port Said during the past many months were received by us. Personally I feel sad because all the ways of correspondence are closed and the glad-tidings of the kingdom could not be sent out or received. Undoubtedly, there must needs be a wisdom in this which will appear later on. God's ways are inscrutable and unsearchable. All that we can say is: We do not understand. Let His will be done. No doubt all these turmoils and disturbances are the result of man's heedlessness and negligence, and those who are conversant with biblical prophecies and their fulfillment in these days, do not need any other proof.

Praise be to God! that Abdul-Baha is quite well. After many months of stay in Abou Senan the holy family and the friends are back in Haifa and the Beloved at the present time is passing quite peaceful days with them. There are no tablets to be written, no pilgrims to meet and talk to and no strenuous outward activities. Our days are like a calm, limpid stream, flowing smoothly and with no inundation. The surface, like the mirror, is silver-like and clear. Now and then he delivers an informal talk or discusses in a heart-to-heart manner on the beauty and advantage of love and amity. These thoughts are the dancing ripples of light which appear on the stream to delight our eyes and enrapture the ears. We are happy to be in his neighborhood during these crucial months of the history of mankind and watch daily his acts of charity and hear his words of loving kindness. He is always doing some good and is ever ready to go to the help of the needy and those who are in want. He often remembers his many trips to and through Chicago and reviews for the benefit of the friends the many meetings held in your house and other places. The memory of his tour in the United States, the devotion and sincerity of the friends,

the reception given to him by the churches and meetings, the inspiration and satisfaction of the services rendered at the threshold of the Almighty form a great consolation in these days of inactivity. He often prays for the spiritual success and prosperity of the believers and hopes they will embody in their lives the ideal principles of Truth.

I am thinking of the friends of Chicago. Their kindness to me will never be forgotten. Day and night I pray that they may arise with greater zeal and enthusiasm in the promotion of the Word of God.

Please give them my sincere greeting. I hope that a day may come when I may have the pleasure and privilege of meeting them again.

I am as ever, your faithful brother,
(Signed) *Ahmad.*

Home of Abdul-Baha,
Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria.
July 4, 1915.

Mr. Arthur E. Lunt, Boston.

My very dear brother:

This being your fourth day of July, no doubt America is holding a national holiday to praise God, the author of their blessings and the sustainer of their independence. Long may that land be bright with freedom's holy light! In prostrated attitude and agonizing despair the embattled legions of Europe and the countless hosts of Asia look toward America to behold the rays of hope. They are straining their ears to hear the voice of love and peace. The United States, as a racial and religious composite photographer, has demonstrated to the whole world by keeping peace and goodwill amongst its heterogeneous population that the idea of the brotherhood of man is not an utopia, but an actual reality. With the dynamic force of the "New Dispensation" she must become the leader of this hotly-waged crusade for international arbitration and the universal Court of Justice. This will be the crowning glory of America as the benefactor of the world of humanity.

It is a very long time, my dear brother, that I have not heard from you, nor from the friends of God. My heart is aching to hear the news and know the details of the services rendered by your good self and other equally devoted brothers and sisters.

In the STAR OF THE WEST, No. 16 or 17 (after these two numbers we have received no other), I read your name as a speaker at the First International Bahai Congress in San Francisco. I hope that in the future it will be my great pleasure to read a copy of your address. . . .

Praise be to God! that the health of Abdul-Baha is good. He much needed this rest, but he longs to hear the news of the friends and look into the shining faces of the pilgrims. . . .

All the friends here are well and send you their warmest greeting and salutation. All of us are praying for your success. Often Abdul-Baha speaks about his spiritual experiences and the glowing meetings in Boston and Green Acre. He hopes and prays that the former may become the rose-garden of Truth and the latter the elysium of heavenly beatitudes. These two spots were blessed with his holy presence and many of you heard his words and utterances. What greater privilege is conceivable than this! Now we must put forward extraordinary effort to serve the holy Cause and teach, not only by words but by self-sacrificing deeds and charitable thoughts.

Seldom a day passes that I do not think of you and of my ineffable experiences in Boston and Green Acre. Your love and kindness is ever remembered.

Please convey my sincere greeting to all the friends in these two places and assure them of the love and affection of the Beloved for each and all.

Hoping to see you and converse with you as in the olden time, I am as ever,

Your faithful brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad*.

Home of Abdul-Baha,
Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.
July 5, 1915.

Mrs. May Maxwell, Montreal, Canada.
My dear spiritual sister!

Is it not a long, long time that we have received any news from you? It seems to me an age. What has caused this sudden interruption of all correspondence, the unexpected closing of the wide gate of intellectual and spiritual association, and the hurried ending of the chapter of all sweet ideal relations? Is it not strange, nay rather a sad commentary on the spirit of our time that the East is deprived of the glad heart-uplifting news of the West, and the West has become bereft of the life-imparting breaths of the holy spirit wafting from the kingdom of Peace? It is true that the ideal tie with which the hearts of the friends are bound together will not be broken by these accidental circumstances; but it is nevertheless true that constant co-operation, relation and mutual helpfulness will increase its strength, durability and solidity. With this point of view we must ever think of the widening of the sphere of spiritual and social relations between the members of the human commonwealth.

It is now about ten months that we have had no news from the believers in America nor have I been in a position to write them about the news of the health and spiritual activities of the Beloved. Leaving aside the celestial blessings and benedictions that are vouchsafed to one by living near the abode of Abdul-Baha, the only other source of my pleasure and happiness was the arrival of soul-clearing news from the western friends. You do not know how much we all hunger and thirst for this bread and water. Often I feel extremely sad and unhappy over all these human misfortunes and miseries and how all the people are caught in a mad whirlpool of sufferings and trials; but then I realize my utter helplessness in the face of all these lofty mountains of hardships.

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Honorary Member: MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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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. VI

Eizzat 1, 71 (September 8, 1915)

No. 10

Whenever I am attacked with these thoughts I turn my face towards the Center of the Covenant and then I feel assured that the end will be light, peace, progress and love.

Praise be to God! that the health of the Beloved is quite good in these days. The present condition of the world has forced upon him a much needed rest. From his earliest childhood he has been so active and energetic that he would not take a rest under any consideration. Now after several months of stay in Abou Senan, a village near Acca, the holy family and the believers have returned to Haifa and he is spending his days quietly with the blessed members of his household. We have no pilgrims to whom he may deliver formal talks nor do we receive any letters requiring immediate attention. Peacefully and calmly these spiritual days succeed each other like the lovely days of an ideal tropical spring. In the garden of the hearts the birds of contentment sing and in the field of the spirits the roses of assurance bloom. Now and then he delights our ears with a charming spiritual discourse, setting before our eyes the shining gems of

truth and the brilliant pearls of wisdom. These jewels of heavenly brightness are diligently collected as they fall from his seraphic tongue: thus future humanity may adorn therewith the temples of their beings.

My dear sister! The Beloved thinks of you and of your husband and of "his" little darling Mary. Often he speaks about his never-to-be-forgotten sojourn in your city, the light-beaming faces of the friends, the spiritual meetings held in your house, the attraction and enkindlement of the hearts, your faithfulness and loyalty to the Cause of God and your contagious enthusiasm in the diffusion of the fragrance of God. Whenever he reviews these events, his face becomes illumined and were I a painter I would place on the canvas the rapturous smile of his countenance and the inimitable gesture of his hands!

Please convey to *all* the friends my sincere Bahai greeting and let them know that we are all thinking of them and pray for their spiritual and physical success and prosperity. . . .

I am as ever your sincere brother,

(Signed) Ahmad.

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.
July 18, 1915.

Messrs. Howard and Edward Struven,
Baltimore, Md.

Often have I spoken about your spiritual meetings to your Oriental brothers and their faces have glowed with joy and enthusiasm because they realized more than others the beatitude and blessing of peace and love based on the knowledge of God. Although I have not written you all this time yet have I especially remembered you in the presence of Abdul-Baha and when praying at the threshold of the Blessed Perfection,—so that all of you may attain to complete happiness and composure of mind both in this world and the world to come. No doubt you have also prayed for this unworthy servant, for we are so much in need of each other's prayers in these days of darkness and gross materialism. Of course Abdul-Baha does not only pray for us, he is praying for the whole world, that its inhabitants may become illumined with the rays of the Sun of Reality, their hearts become the caskets of the jewels of good-will and fellowship, their minds the chamber of the lofty ideals of brotherhood and their ultimate object the progress of humanity. He hopes that the practice of altruism and the inculcation of optimism may become the general rule and not the exception and the law of fellow-feeling and sympathy widely spread. He is looking to the friends for the creation of a better understanding between nations and the diffusion of the fragrance of the holy spirit. The world is sick and those who claim to be the wise physicians must treat this patient with farsighted wisdom and perception. Will their treatment cure or only aggravate the malady? It is the duty of the friends of God to show to the denizens of this globe, through their deeds and explanations what love means, what toleration signifies, what is the meaning of brotherhood, and what is the standard of true solidarity. These are the things

that are demanded of each one of us and we must perform them more or less according to our abilities and attainments. The Beloved longs to see the friends as the embodiment of charity and loving-kindness, as the personification of fraternity and neighborliness. He expects them to shine as the stars in this dark night of mutual hatred and enmity, and guide the wandering steps to the station of certainty and assurance. They must be the vivifiers of the dead, joy-bringers and the dispellers of gloom. Only in this manner can we bring happiness to his sorrow-laden heart.

Now that Abdul-Baha is living on the slope of Mount Carmel near the holy tomb of the Bab, his health is much improved, in fact he is well and enjoying the fresh, vitalizing breeze wafting from the far away hills in this Holy Land. We meet him two or three times a day and are uplifted by the grandeur and beauty of his moral and spiritual discourses. These are of course our golden days for we have him all to ourselves. No pilgrims throng the streets of Haifa and no reading of letters take up the time. Each day is a blissful recurrence of the one just past, all being strung into a white rosary of sweet memory.

Our dear mother Lua [Getsinger] lives with the holy family at the foot of the mountains and is very happy.

Please present my grateful greeting to all the dear friends. I hope I will be given the opportunity to see them again and talk with them on the things we prize most.

I am as ever, your faithful brother,
(Signed) *Ahmad*.

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
August 8, 1915.

Miss Ghodsea Ashraf.

My dear sister in the light of Abdul-Baha!

Soon it will be three years that I have left the United States—three years overflowing with spiritual memories and divine events. Each day was equal to a

thousand years and each hour most important in its ideal signification. They were such days the like of which will not be found in the annals of history. Their beauties cannot be compared with those of the most precious jewels or the majesty of principalities and kingdoms. Each day was a white limpid pearl strung on the golden thread of time, a fruitful tree planted in the garden of life, a blue heaven studded with the bright stars of humanitarian ideals, a garden adorned with the most fragrant flowers, a most perfect portrait painted by the hand of the master artist, a charming song the notes of which will enrapture the hearts of many thousands and a new dedication to the service of the Cause of God and the promotion of the Word of God.

The sweetness and affability of these days will never be forgotten, nor will they ever be erased from the tablet of consciousness. I wish all the friends were with me to enjoy the sublime pictures; engraving them on the retina of the eyes. It is one thing to take part in an event, and another thing to describe it. One cannot put on paper those sudden outbursts of joy, those indefinable moments of tremulous pleasure, those happy events of the past which appear in the life of every individual, leaving behind a deep and lasting impression. The greatest writers have acknowledged their limitations when they had to describe the details of the most wonderful epochs of their lives. They could not cast into the mould of cold words the warm and glowing sentiments of their hearts. They struggled, they strove, but at last they laid aside their pens and confessed their inability. Similarly I have tried to form a clear mental picture of all the marvelous events of the last three years, but they come crowding upon me with such variety and number that I retire from the field precipitously. It is impossible to duly appreciate one of these events, appearing in order and gradation one after another.

My dear Ghodsea! I hope you have made great progress in your education and have bedecked the chambers of your mind and the mansion of your heart with imperial thoughts and queenly sentiments. This will not only make Abdul-Baha happy but all those who are sympathizing with the movement tending toward the emancipation of the Persian women, suffering them to become the intellectual and spiritual peers of the women of the civilized world.

Praise be to God! that from the time of your arrival in America you have been confirmed at every step and have been advancing year after year. This is a great bounty on the part of God and there is no doubt that you are appreciating it. All of us expect from you the performance of great and signal services. I dare say that few of the Persian girls have had the wonderful opportunities prepared for you by the grace and mercy of Abdul-Baha, and I feel certain that you have availed yourself of each one of them in a noble and thankful manner. You know what our great poet Sadi says in the beginning of his book: "In every breath two blessings are contained and for every blessing a separate thanksgiving is due." If the mere process of expiration and inhalation involves so many blessings and thanksgivings, how much more then should we thank our Father who has showered upon us all His graces and favors.

If you desire to know something about our condition here: Praise be to God! we are all well, especially our Beloved's health is excellent. He is living now on the slope of Mount Carmel and we have the rare pleasure of seeing him two or three times a day.

There is a possibility of my return to Washington after this war. No doubt four years in America have worked wonders in you and I anticipate seeing these pleasing changes. In myself I do not see any radical change, except I have grown older and the hairs of my head are getting white. Youth is a fitting image which like a character in a moving pic-

ture shows itself for a few years which in comparison to eternity are far less than a few seconds and then flies away forever. . . .

I am as ever your sincere well-wisher,

(Signed) *Ahmad*.

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
August 9, 1915.

Dr. and Mrs. Bagdadi, Chicago.

My dear brother and sister in the Cause of God!

During the last month I wished so much to write you a letter and express to you my spiritual love and devotion and now I avail myself of the first opportunity offered to me. Because you are the natives of this blessed land, because your dear families live here, and you have been brought up in this sacred atmosphere, you are never forgotten both in the holy presence and at the divine threshold of the Blessed Perfection. Our love for and devotion to you ever prompt us to remember you and pray for you, and we anticipate to receive good news from you. On one hand Abbas Ikbāl is spending his vacation on Mount Carmel in company with the Persian students from the American college, on the other hand your mother and sister and your three brothers are permanent dwellers in Haifa. All these dear ones are well, happy and in good health and, with the friends of God, remember you and supplicate for your success and prosperity.

Abdul-Bahā's health is excellent. He is at the time of this writing living in the house of Aga Abbas Goli adjoining the tomb of the Bab.

It is now more than a month that he has come up. The weather at the foot of the mountain is quite warm during the summer, while here on its high slope it is cool and refreshing, the vitalizing breeze ever blowing from the sacred hills beyond. . . .

My dear brother! Now that the Beloved lives on Mount Carmel we see him every morning and evening. In the

morning he comes to Mosafer Khaneh* and while walking to and fro he uplifts our hearts through his spiritual talks and conversations. Like unto the white pearls we gather the words of wisdom falling from his divine lips, collecting them for the timely presentation to the eastern and western friends. In the afternoon for an hour or so he walks majestically in front of the Magham,† then directing his steps toward the holy of holies we follow him quietly and offer our prayer in behalf of all the friends.

It is now nearly one year that we have no letters from America. We do not know what our friends are doing and how are they getting along. Please give my sincere greeting to each and all and tell them I have not forgotten them. Every day I pray for them and hope they will be confirmed with the breaths of the holy spirit. The Persian students, especially Abbas Ikbāl and Mirza Badi send you their heartiest greeting.

Ever your faithful brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad*.

*Mosafer Khaneh—Pilgrims' House.

†Magham—the tomb of the Bab.

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.

August 15, 1915.

[Louis G. Gregory, Washington, D. C.]
. His [Abdul-Bahā's] desire is that all the believers characterize themselves with these [divine] attributes, adorn their temples with these garments, ornament their bodies with these decorations and illumine their homes with these glistening lamps. Then and not until then will they be considered as his sons and daughters. His real solicitude is for their spiritual welfare and happiness. Above everything else he wishes them to be joy-bringers to this sorrow-laden world. This is considered to be their greatest mission. They must cry at the top of their voices:

“Rejoice! Rejoice! O thou world of humanity! The tree of thy hope is near the time of fruition!

"Rejoice! Rejoice! The rivers of celestial ideals are flowing from the mountains of decree!

"Rejoice! Rejoice! The gales of love and peace have stirred deeply the sea of God's grace and pity!

"Rejoice! Rejoice! The music of reality has attracted the hearts of all the sincere ones!

"Rejoice! Rejoice! The trees of the gardens of truth are bedecked with the most luscious fruits.

"Rejoice! Rejoice! The Beloved of all nations will soon enter the assembly of the children of men with a radiant face!

"Rejoice! Rejoice! for the earth of capabilities is already begemmed [ornamented] with the sweet amaranths of love and the fragrant lilies of affection!"

In such wise the friends must work, for as the moral physicians of the world of humanity, their pharmacopœia must be filled with all kinds of medicines; thus they may be able to treat every kind of illness and disease. Firmness and steadfastness is the condition whereby they may attain to this unparalleled station. They must close their eyes to the world and the things contained therein. Their work is in the realm of the spirit; their efforts are along the line of morality and the inculcation of ethical principles. They look at all times towards heaven and are

enraptured with the beauty of the Beloved. They are not attached to anything. They pray at morn and eve for the misguided children of men and wish them naught but good and prosperity. The heaven of their minds is not darkened with the clouds of prejudices nor the chambers of their hearts bedimmed with the smoke of hostility. They are released from all such ties and are soaring in the atmosphere of sanctity.

I am writing you this letter from the lovely garden of Abdul-Baha. He is just walking amidst the beds of roses and talking with a number of friends on the corruptibility of nature and the sacredness of the Word of God. Like unto the sun, he shines upon the just and unjust. Every day we descend from the Pilgrim's House and spend several hours in the verdant garden and listen to the words of truth and wisdom. They are indeed life-giving and soul-uplifting. I wish you were present; but I am sure you can accomplish better and more efficient work where you are.

Abdul-Baha remembers you and sends you his greeting. He prays for all the friends at the Holy Threshold and the blessed tomb of the Bab.

Give my greeting to all the friends We are all well and happy. I anticipate the time when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you face to face.

I am ever your sincere brother

(Signed) *Ahmad*.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR FUNDS

On hand at opening of Convention in San Francisco.....	\$8,150.92
Amount received from April 17th to Sept. 1st, 1915.....	1,718.96
Total	\$9,869.88
Expenses	661.95
In bank August 31, 1915.....	\$9,207.93

BAHAI TEMPLE UNITY,

Corinne True, Financial Secretary.

A few of the Greatest Name stones, in ring and brooch sizes, received direct from Haifa some time ago, may be obtained so long as the supply lasts. Interested friends may address Joseph H. Hannen, P. O. Box 1319, Washington, D. C., for particulars and prices. This distribution is planned at the request of those who have been unable to procure the stones, none of which are now being sent over.

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. VI

Masheyat 1, 71 (September 27, 1915)

No. 11

Abdul-Baha's Message to the People of America

Talk given by Abdul-Baha at Grand Hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio,
November 5, 1912.

SINCE I am in Cincinnati, the home of President Taft, who has done noble service for the cause of peace, I will dictate a statement for the people of Cincinnati and America generally:

In the orient I heard that there are many peace-loving people in America. Therefore, I left my native land to associate here with those who are the standard-bearers of international peace. Having traveled from coast to coast, I find America a continent vast and progressive; the government just; the nation noble. I attended many gatherings where international peace was discussed, and am extremely happy to witness the results of these meetings, for one of the great teachings of Baha'o'llah relate to international peace. He founded and taught this principle fifty years ago, in the orient. He proclaimed universal peace among the nations; he summoned the people to establish universal peace among the various religions; he organized peace among many races, communities and sects. At that time he wrote epistles to all the rulers and kings of the world and summoned them to co-operate with him in spreading these principles, saying that humanity would not attain composure and rest save through universal peace. And he practiced the principle in Persia. And, therefore today there are people of various religions and races, in Persia and elsewhere, souls who followed the exhortations of Baha'o'llah, living together in the utmost love and fellowship, with no religious prejudice, no patriotic prejudice, no sectarian prejudice. They live in unity and agreement, Mohammedan, Roman Catholic, Jew, Buddhist, followers of Zoroaster, and all others.

Now, America has arisen to spread the teachings of peace, for the illumination of mankind and for bestowing happiness and prosperity on all the children of men. These are the principles of divine civilization. America is a noble nation, the standard bearer of peace throughout the world, shedding her light to all regions. Foreign nations are not untrammelled and free of intrigues like the United States, and are unable to bring about universal peace. But America, thank God, is at peace with all the world and is worthy of raising the flag of brotherhood and international peace. When the summons to international peace is raised by America, all the rest of the world will cry, "Yes, we accept!" The nations of every clime will join in adopting the teachings of Baha'o'llah, revealed over fifty years ago. In his epistles he asked the parliaments of the world to send their wisest and best men to an interna-

tional world parliament, that should decide all questions between the peoples and establish universal peace. This would be the last court of appeal, and the Parliament of Man, long dreamed of by the poets, would be realized. It would be much more far-reaching than The Hague tribunal.

I am grateful to President Taft for giving his influence to the movement for international peace and what he has done toward establishing peace treaties is good; but when we have the inter-parliamentary body, composed of delegates from all the nations of the world, devoted to maintaining universal peace and good-will, then we will have the Parliament of Man, of which the poets have dreamed.

Tablet from Abdul-Baha to Mr. Andrew Carnegie

To the noble personage, his excellency, Mr. Andrew Carnegie,
May God assist him!

HE IS GOD!

O thou illustrious soul! O thou the great pillar of the palace of universal peace!

It is some time since I intended to correspond with thee, but there was no intermediary between us. Now that his excellency, Mr. Topakyan, has made this possible through his kindly suggestion, I write thee this epistle; for truly I say thou art the lover of humanity and one of the founders of universal peace.

Today the most great service to the kingdom of God is the promotion of the principle of the unification of mankind and the establishment of universal peace. A number of souls who were doctrinaires and unpractical thinkers worked for the realization of this most exalted aim and good cause, but they were doomed to failure, save that lofty personage who has been and is still promoting the matter of international arbitration and general conciliation through deeds, words, self-sacrifice and the generous donation of wealth and property. Rest thou assured that through the confirmations of the holy spirit thou wilt become confirmed and assisted in the accomplishment of this most resplendent service, and in this mortal world thou shalt lay the foundation of an immortal, everlasting edifice, and in the end thou

wilt sit upon the throne of incorruptible glory in the kingdom of God.

All the leaders and statesmen of Europe are thinking on the plane of war and the annihilation of the mansion of humanity, but thou art thinking on the plane of peace and love and the strengthening and reinforcement of the basis of the superstructure of the human world. They are the heralds of death, thou art the harbinger of life. The foundations of their palaces are unstable and wavering and the turrets of their mansions are tottering and crumbling, but the basis of thy structure is firm and unmovable.

While I was journeying throughout America and Europe, I cried before all the meetings, conventions, and churches: "O ye noble friends! The world of humanity is facing in the future a most portentous danger and supreme calamity. The continent of Europe has become like unto a gunpowder magazine and arsenal, under which are hidden combustible materials of the most inflammatory nature. Its combustion will be dependent upon the sudden and unexpected enkindlement of one tiny spark which shall envelop the whole earth with a world-wide conflagration, causing the total collapse of European civilization

through the furious, wild, raging, fiery tongues of war. Therefore, O ye well-wishers of the world of humanity, endeavor by day and by night so that these inflammable materials may not come in touch with the burning fires of racial antipathy and hatred!"

Today the life of mankind and its attainment to everlasting glory depend on its display of effort and exertion in accord with the principles of his holiness Baha'o'llah; for his first and foremost teaching consists of the oneness of the world of humanity. He says: "We are all the sheep of God. His Highness, the Almighty, is the real Shepherd and kind to all the sheep. Why then should we be unkind toward each other?" Another of his most great institutes deals with the subject of universal peace, the establishment of which would be conducive to the well-being and progress and tranquillity of the commonwealth of man.

Other precepts of Baha'o'llah treat of the identity of the underlying foundations of the religions of God, the original oneness of the nations, the adoption and general practice of a universal auxiliary language and the inculcation of the ideal of cosmopolitanism and world-patriotism among the children of men; consequently in the future his teachings will act as a deterrent and preventive from the occurrence of the most great danger, i. e., universal war.

Today the most important object of

the kingdom of God is the promulgation of the cause of universal peace and the principle of the oneness of the world of humanity. Whosoever arises in the accomplishment of this pre-eminent service the confirmations of the holy spirit will descend upon him.

Now all that has been predicted has come to pass, and the lurid flames of this war have emblazoned the horizon of the east and the west, causing a reverberating social earthquake through the columns of the earth. After this war the workers for the cause of universal peace will increase day by day, and the pacific party will array its force, displaying great activity with better advantage, and in the end gaining a permanent triumph and eternal victory over all the other parties. The realization of this matter is incontestable and irrefragable.

Therefore, ere long a vast and unlimited field will be opened before your view for the display of your powers and energies. You must promote this glorious intention with the heavenly power and the confirmation of the holy spirit. I am praying in thy behalf that thou mayest erect a pavilion and unfurl a flag in the world of peace, love, and eternal life.

I beg you to accept the consideration of my highest and deepest respect.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

. Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, May 1, 1915. Home of Abdul-Baha, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria.

Tablet from Abdul-Baha

To the Bahai Assembly of Portland, Oregon.

Upon thee be Ba ha'o'llah-el-Abha!

HE IS GOD!

O ye denizens of the Kingdom!

Your letter was received and caused joy and gladness, for it was an evidence of firmness and steadfastness. Praise be to God, ye have an assembly in the utmost joy and fragrance; the candle

thereof being the blessings of his holiness Baha'o'llah, the spirit of that meeting is the confirmations of the supreme kingdom, and the sustenance of that gathering is celestial benediction. I hope that the life of that assembly shall be

(Continued on page eighty-seven)

STAR OF THE WEST

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Honorary Member: MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAE

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Vol. VI

Masheyat 1, 71 (September 27, 1915)

No. 11

Some Bahai Teachings on Peace and War

*Extract from a tablet by Abdul-Baha,
October 4, 1914.*

About fifty years ago, his holiness Baha'o'llah proclaimed certain teachings, and chanted the song of Universal Peace. In numerous tablets and epistles* he foretold in the most clear language the present cataclysm: stating that the world of humanity was facing the most portentous danger, and that the coming of universal war was unfortunately inevitable; for the combustible material stored in the infernal arsenals of Europe would some day explode through contact with a single spark. Amongst other things he foresaw that the Balkans would become a volcano, and the map of Europe would be changed. For these and similar reasons Baha'o'llah invited the kings and rulers

of the world to lay down their arms and proclaim an era of universal peace.

Words spoken at Acca to Professor E. G. Browne, 1890, by Baha'o'llah.

We desired 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 the diversity of religion shall cease, and differences of race be annulled. These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the "most great peace" shall come. Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race, than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. Strife, bloodshed, and discord, must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory that he loves his kind.

*These epistles are contained in the *Surat'-ul-Mutuk*, and have been described and analyzed in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. Baha'o'llah wrote to the Pope, to Queen Victoria, to the Shah of Persia, and Napoleon III, asking them for their co-operation in his efforts to make his ideas of fraternity and universal peace triumph. History does not tell us how all of them were received, but the prophecies therein have made them celebrated. Thus in 1868, he announced to Napoleon III, the approaching fall of his Empire, and to the Pope the loss of his temporal power.

From "Abdul-Baha in London"—Notes of a Conversation.

Abdul-Baha showed how Baha'o'llah had exactly described in one of his books what has since been attempted in the International Court of Arbitration, at The Hague. Baha'o'llah also said the Court must have other functions, some of which are not yet realized, and Abdul-Baha described them to us so that when they would be fulfilled in the near future, we might know they had been prophesied by Baha'o'llah. The functions of the International Court of Arbitration would be to settle disputes that arose from time to time between nations; to define the exact boundaries of the different countries; to decide what number of soldiers and guns should be maintained by each nation, according to its population, in order to preserve internal order. If any state rebelled against the decision of the Court and rejected it, the Court would empower the others to join their forces and to endorse their decision, if need be, by united effort.

Extract from Abdul-Baha's Writings.

Fifty years ago Baha'o'llah clearly stated this matter of universal peace in the *Book of Akdas*, and has commanded all the Bahais to serve faithfully with heart and soul in this great Cause, to give up their possessions and wealth for it, and sacrifice their lives in case of necessity.

Extract from "Bahaism" by Monsieur Hippolyte Dreyfus.

The Bahais have carried obedience to this principle so far—remembering that their Prophet had said: "It is better for you to be killed than to kill"—that the fanatical population of Persia excited by its mullas, has been able, at different times in the last few years, to make odious attacks against them, without their even wishing to take up arms in self-defense, although often they had a numerical advantage.

Extracts from "Talks Given by Abdul-Baha in Paris."

Land belongs not to one people, but to all people. The earth is not man's home, but his tomb. It is for their tombs these men are fighting.

However great the conqueror, however many countries he may reduce to slavery, he is unable to retain any part of these devastated lands except one tiny portion—his tomb! If more land is required for the improvement of the conditions of the people, for the spread of civilization, surely it would be possible to acquire peaceably the necessary extension of territory!

But war is made for the satisfaction of men's ambition; for the sake of worldly gains to the few, terrible misery is brought to numberless homes, breaking the hearts of hundreds of men and women.

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate every thought of his heart on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love. Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well-being, restfulness and content. Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship and happiness. When soldiers of the world draw their swords to kill, soldiers of God should clasp each others' hands! So may all the savagery of man disappear by the mercy of God working through the pure in heart and the sincere of soul.

Do not think the peace of the world an ideal impossible to attain. Nothing is impossible to the Divine benevolence.

If with all your heart you desire friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men.

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate every thought of his heart upon love and unity.

Only One Religion for Entire World

Requisite for Universal Peace Announced by Mirza Ali Kuli Khan.
Persian Charge d'affaires Speaks Before International
Peace Congress

MIRZA Ali Kuli Khan, charge d'affaires of the Persian legation at Washington, D. C., in an address before the International Peace Congress at San Francisco, said:

"Humanity, from the dawn of history, has progressed under the guidance of prophetic teachers from a state of infancy through the various stages of development leading to its maturity. In spite of all obstacles to the contrary, the course of humanity, in the long run, has never been impeded by retrogression.

"The prophets of God, whose gospels were the result of a well founded optimism, aimed at the unity of man because of their due knowledge of the principle of human unity, which in the mind of God had ever been an accomplished fact. Each world teacher accomplished that plan in conformity with the limited capacity manifested by his people.

"God applied His original plan for the unification of Israel through Moses, of the Gentiles through Jesus, of the Parsees through Zoroaster, of the Hindus through the Buddha, and of the other sections of humanity through other world teachers and prophets.

"Today, which to the wise and thoughtful is the day of the maturity of the human race, God will accomplish that noble plan. In the voice raised in all parts of the world in favor of peace, and in the efforts extended by the peace-loving element in the world's population, which constitutes the positive, affirmative principle of the human body politic, we find a potent manifest proof that the day of peace has dawned, and is steadily, though slowly, break-

ing through the dense clouds which temporarily impede its course to the meridian of its glory.

"Although the effecting of a world brotherhood is the determined plan of God, it is for the membership of the human family to co-operate in its realization.

"In our effort to unify the world we must take the lessons taught by the past great religions in achieving the moral and spiritual uplift of their respective peoples, for no unity of a people existing in a civilized state could be independent of moral and spiritual character. The building of such character has been the task of every true religion.

"As our aim today is the creation of a world civilization, based upon a world unity, we must enlarge our conception of religion to reach the dimensions of a world religion—the religion of humanity.

"Such religion should include the truth of all religions and exclude all patriotic, national and racial bias.

"The most successful political and industrial steps taken by any nation toward human betterment are those represented by the federal and industrial institutions organized in the United States, the greatest republic of all time; for these American institutions, in their domestic and international relationships, are impregnated with the spirit of justice, altruism and broad humanity, which is embodied in the religion of humanity, because they exhale the fragrance of the noble sayings of the Persian prophet [Baha'-o'llah] of these modern times: 'Ye are all the leaves of one tree and the drops of

one sea'; 'Great glory is not his who loves his country, but rather his who loves his kind.'

"America is therefore the field in which the seeds of the world religion are given opportunity to germinate, and which will extend to the peoples

of all climes the bounties of the religion of humanity. May we not, therefore, look upon America as the nation which is specially chosen by the Almighty to assist in man's progress upward and to bless humanity with the fruits of universal peace?"

Tablet from Abdul-Baha

(Continued from page eighty-three)

the breaths of the holy spirit, and in accordance with the heavenly teachings ye become regiments of universal peace, breaking asunder the armies of war and strife through the power and teachings of his holiness Baha'o'llah, and thus raise the standard of unity, of friendship and of love in the world of humanity.

The Americans are distinguished from the Europeans in this noble ideal, viz.: universal peace, and it is proper that they glory before all nations. His honor Mr. William Jennings Bryan, the Secretary of State of the United States of America, especially, has in reality stood by the promulgation of universal peace with the utmost effort; and because in this matter he is striving exactly in ac-

cordance with the teachings of his holiness Baha'o'llah, he is self-sacrificing. My hope is that he will become a candle of the Convention for Universal Peace and shine forth like unto the morning star from the horizon of the oneness of the world of humanity.

It may come to pass that some corrupted souls shall come to America working to bring about the wavering of your hearts; but ye must be firm like unto a mountain in faith and the Covenant, and be not shaken by the blowing of contrary winds.

Upon ye be Baha-el-Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Translated October 14, 1914, Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria.

Letter from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
September 4, 1915.

Albert H. Hall,
Minneapolis, Minn.

My dear brother in the Kingdom of God!

Days and months succeed each other and we do not have any news from those friends, neither have we been able to correspond with you. Because we could not write nor did we receive your letters our spiritual loss and deprivation has been great and measureless. How much more wonderful it would have been were the ties of

our relation not broken, the light of friendship not extinguished, the stars of our hope not set, the river of amity not dried, the breezes of devotion not hushed and the palaces of mutual helpfulness not destroyed! Instead of sowing the seeds of love, we have sown the seeds of hatred. Instead of cultivating the flowers of brotherhood, we have nurtured the thorns of strangeness. Instead of shining with the light of joy and happiness, we have surrounded ourselves with the darkness of grief and despair. Instead of teaching and practicing the laws of life, we are

disseminating and inculcating the sentences of death. We are not following in the path of Christ, nor are we imbued with his holy fragrances. It seems that all the teachings of Christ, his sufferings and crucifixion have yielded no result, for the so-called civilized Christian nations of Europe today are no better than their Visigoths, Vandals, Franks, Anglo Saxons ancestors and other barbarian, bloodthirsty tribes who roved over the then uninhabited parts of the west. We may still thank those early savages for having not perfected the art of manslaughter, they could not spread so much destruction and ravages. They were unable to kill so many of their brothers in a day or in a month. They had no rifles, no rapid-firing guns, no cannons, no bombs, no aeroplanes and no dirigibles. Their instruments consisted of crude spears, javelins, battle-axes and unwieldy engines of ancient war methods. With these they could not carry their cruel propensities into full operation, and were hampered by lack of means and the non-existence of the means of modern communication. Their spheres of activities were always limited and their ambitions bounded by natural and impassable barriers.

My dear brother! Praise be to God, that the health of Abdul-Baha is perfectly well and for the present he is living in Haifa. We are fortunate to see him and hear him speak three or four times a day. We preserve his talks and conversations as they are all the spiritual food for the people of the earth. They are the roses of the kingdom of Abha and the sweet notes of the bird of paradise. I hope that when the means of transportation are again established, I will be able to forward

to the friends those jewels of the mines of truth gathered in these days. The light of those gems will illumine many hearts and strengthen many souls. They will impart comfort and consolation, bringing to light many dark and ambiguous problems. Our days in Haifa are very quiet because there are no pilgrims nor any letters—thus we pray at the threshold of the Almighty to bring to an end these conflicts and let the sun of goodfellowship shine forth for the realization of better understanding amongst all the peoples. Often do I remember the spiritual days spent in Minneapolis and the meetings held in the Jewish synagogue, your home and other places. Abdul-Baha now and then speaks of you and narrates for the friends the interesting events of those few days. He remembers also the Bahais in St. Paul and the few delightful hours spent there. Those were days that we do not forget and the love and kindness of the friends showered upon us remain vivid and clear throughout all our lives. He hopes all the dear ones in those parts are well and engaged in the service of the Cause of God. Whenever he receives such news his heart is filled with gladness and joy. He knows that in the future the spiritual responsibility of propagating the principles of the oneness of the world of humanity will be theirs, and he loves to see them carrying in their firm hands the luminous torch of divine principles. To this lofty station, he calls forth their attention.

Please give my sincere greeting to all the loved ones.

Ever faithfully your brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad.*

FEBRUARY 22, 1947

In Memoriam

SEPTEMBER 30, 1912

THORNTON CHASE

"This revered personage was the first Bahai in America. He has served the cause faithfully and his services will ever be remembered throughout future ages and cycles."
—ABDUL-BAHA.

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. VI

Elm 1, 71 (October 16, 1915)

No. 12

"Tell Everyone Now is the Time to Teach and Spread the Cause!"

LETTERS FROM LUA GETSINGER

Mrs. Bagdadi, Chicago.

Port Said, Egypt,
Sept. 20, 1915.

Dear Zeenat Khanum:

I promised your brother, who came to see me on board our American Cruiser, *Des Moines*, August 30th, which took me and many hundreds of refugees from Haifa, that I would write you as soon as possible after reaching some destination from which it would be possible to get mail through to you. I arrived in Port Said, September 14th, so tired and exhausted that I could do nothing but talk to the friends who have been so long without news of Abdul-Baha! Praise be to God! when I left he was in good health though surrounded by difficulties and dangers which I am powerless to describe.

What he has not done for Syria! "The army of God," as Abdul-Baha named the locusts—which came in such clouds as to darken the sun—completed the difficulties by way of misery, starvation and death. Such suffering as was manifest on all sides can scarcely be believed. People were coming day and night begging and weeping at his gate. He became the sole comfort and hope of the people whether they are believers or unbelievers!

Your mother and family were well and your mother especially was so wishing and longing to hear from you. There is no reason why you cannot write direct to Haifa as long as America is neutral and you do not write about war matters. The Bahais in America could have been writing all this time *direct* to Haifa; but they have sent everything to Port Said which was cut off from Turkey a year ago. Abdul-Baha said, *now* the friends should not address him—as he did not wish to trouble them—and *perhaps their letters would not reach him*; but that anyone could write Mirza Ahmad Sohrab or other friends in Haifa, so long as America is not in the conflict. Thus please Zeenat, do write to your mother and family; but write in English or Arabic. No news had come from Fatima Khanum for a long time and I am sorry to say that nothing had been heard from any of Dr. Zia's people for some time. . . .

I am enclosing a photograph of a tablet to the American Bahais which was revealed August 27th, and which I got through the custom house with the assist-

ance of the American Consul at Haifa. Please ask Dr. Zia to translate it to Mrs. True and then give it to the STAR OF THE WEST. I do not just yet know when I shall reach America as I have some work to do in France first. I am writing an account of my last months with Abdul-Baha and family to Mr. Hannen which will probably be sent to all centers. . . .

I am sent forth again "to herald The Covenant" by *its holy Center*, and I shall do it with his divine assistance better and more powerfully than I have ever done. . . .

Please say to all the friends that I love them all, and I am ready to meet them in the spirit of the Center of God's holy Covenant which is naught save pure, spiritual divine love! I wish everybody success in the service of His Great Cause, and ask them to pray for me—the least and most unworthy of all His faithful servants. . . .

With most sincere Bahai greetings to you and your husband, I am as always,

Yours in the service and love of Abdul-Baha,

(Signed) *Lua*.

Port Said, Egypt,
Sept. 21, 1915.

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

My dear Bahai friend:

I arrived here a week ago from the island of Crete, having left Haifa on our American cruiser, *Des Moines*, which brought away from Haifa two hundred and ninety refugees and myself. I was ready to leave the middle of June on the U. S. S. *Tennessee*, but as some of the students in Beyrouth succeeded in getting away, Abdul-Baha decided that I should stay until later. When the news filtered through of the possibility of America declaring war, and our gunboat came to the very port of Haifa, he said: "Now is the time for you to go and give news to the friends in Egypt, Europe and America. It is a long time that they are without any word, and I desire to send you to them, after which you are to go and teach." Then he wrote a tablet to the friends in America, gave me my instructions, and I left. I shall send a photographic copy of the tablet on the next mail, with a short account of the last few days in Haifa, which were stirring and moving ones for everybody.

Abdul-Baha was well, though surrounded with the greatest dangers and difficulties when I left. He left Haifa for Nazareth at noon, August 29th, and I sailed the next morning, August 30th. . . . He has been encompassed by difficulties on all sides for months, and more especially since the locusts came and destroyed everything, which has caused hundreds to suffer and die from starvation. We were absolutely without news from any quarter for months, and greatly wondered why no one from America wrote, as it was the only neutral country from which news could come. And now that must cease also, as far as addressing Abdul-Baha is concerned; but I do hope you will try and write

Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, if only post cards. Letters via Constantinople must all pass the censorship, remember, so no word about war, politics or prophecies!

We passed through three bombardments, which were all localized, therefore no lives were lost. What the people are to do there this winter, only God knows. The cold rains will be an added misery to their already manifold woes. It was wonderful to witness the calm majesty of Abdul-Baha as he went about among the people, whose only hope and help he is! . . .

I shall come to America as soon as possible, though I have work to do elsewhere first. I enclose you a translation of the tablet above-mentioned, and will send photographic copy of the original next mail. I send the French translation, made in Haifa by Shougi Effendi, Abdul-Baha's grandson; also the English. Please let the friends see them. I have had such a fatiguing journey, and feel so very exhausted physically that I cannot write more at present; beside I only just have time to catch the mail, which closes at midnight. Please give my most sincere greetings to all in the service, and love of the Covenant of God, especially your dear wife, Mrs. Haney and Mrs. Parsons. Abdul-Baha said: "*Tell everyone now is the time to teach and spread the Cause!*" The friends in Cairo and here are all well, and send greetings to all in Washington.

O these days of trial and test! The whole world has been flung into the melting pot. Each individual soul must be put into the crucible and "tried as gold is tried and refined as silver is refined." The Center of the Covenant now sitteth as the Refiner, and it is he who judgeth the purity, capacity and station of every servant. He is the divine assayer who accepts and rejects. He alone knows the hearts, and in him only can one find justice and truth. He is the judge of the high court in the supreme concourse, who renders judgments in righteousness and stations the souls of his sincere worshippers! In this day all must be sure that he is the *Center* from which every *living* soul is sent forth, and to which every faithful and sincere one must turn!

More later. As ever, yours faithfully,

In the Center of the Covenant,

(Signed) *Lua*.

TABLET

Haifa, August 27, 1915.

To the beloved of God in America—On them be glory and bounty!

The maid-servant of God, Lua, was a long time occupied in India in spreading the fragrances of the love of God. She is now ready to return to the regions of America. Show her every consideration. She is firm in the Covenant of love. In reality she worked vigorously during her sojourn in India, and she is worthy of love.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Address letters to Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, care of Mirza Jalal Irani, Haifa, Syria.

STAR OF THE WEST

PUBLISHED NINETEEN TIMES A YEAR

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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. VI

Elm 1, 71 (October 16, 1915)

No. 12

“The confirmation of the Kingdom of Abha shall
descend uninterruptedly upon those souls
who are firm in the Covenant”

TABLET

To the beloved of God in America—On them be glory and bounty!

The maid-servant of God, Lua, was a long time occupied in India in spreading the fragrances of the love of God. She is now ready to return to the regions of America. Show her every consideration. She is firm in the Covenant of love. In reality she worked vigorously during her sojourn in India, and she is worthy of love.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Haifa, August 27, 1915.

ALLAH'O'ABHA!

On the opposite page we take pleasure in reproducing a photographic copy of the original tablet written by Abdul-Baha sent through Lua Getsinger to the Bahais in America, the English translation of which is given above. Perhaps, some who read the simple statements in this tablet may wonder why it was written at all, inasmuch as the bearer is well known to all the Bahais in America; yet to those who are informed of the spread of the Bahai Cause in the West, it is replete with meanings.

What we have in mind is this: It is the duty of Bahais, of course, to receive all, whether from the East or the West in the spirit of friendship, but as a protection to the Cause, Abdul-Baha has made it a rule that any one coming from the East, whether a Bahai or not, even if it be one of his own relatives, who does not bring a letter of permission written in his [Abdul-Baha's] own handwriting with his own signature—such an one must not be approached by the Bahais, who must even shun him.

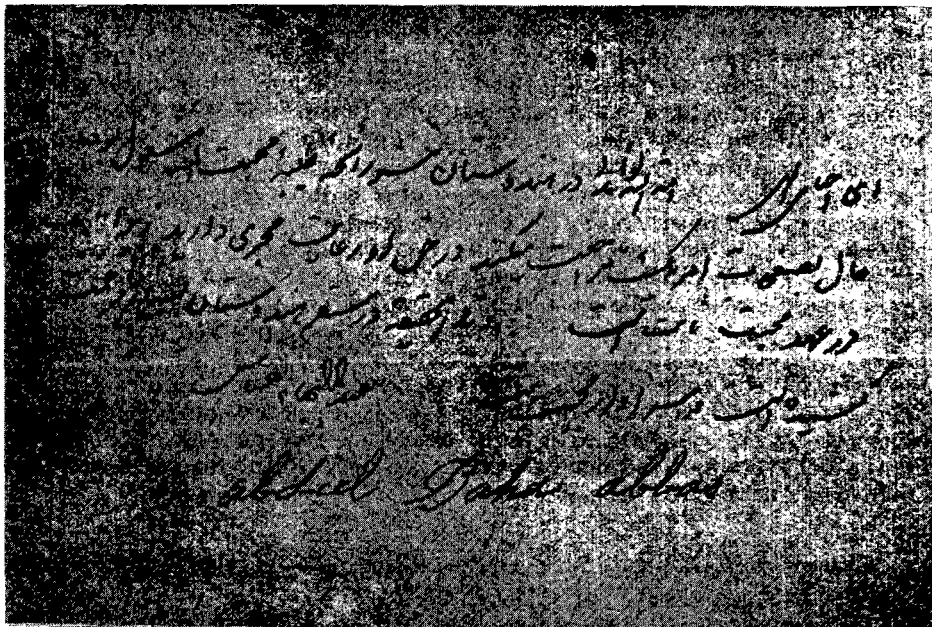
The following extracts from tablets and cablegrams sent by Abdul-Baha to Bahais in America, explain this important matter:—

Tablet revealed many years ago:

O ye beloved of God! Highway robbers are many and hypocrites are innumerable. The wolves clothe themselves with the shepherd's garment and thieves show themselves in the form of watchmen. Hereafter, if any Persian or Oriental come to those parts, even though he be from the very city of Akka, if ye find he does not possess a letter written by the hand and sealed by the seal of Abdul-Baha, you must decidedly avoid him. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Cable from London to Wilhelmitte, New York, received December 30, 1912:

Receive no Persian, even my family, without autographic permission. Communicate to all friends. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA.



Facsimile of original tablet to the American Bahais brought by Lua Getsinger

From a tablet to Charles Mason Remey, Washington, D. C., translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, London, England, December 29, 1912:

Awaken the friends, for ere long a test shall come. Perchance some persons, outwardly firm and inwardly wavering, shall come to those parts in order to weaken the faith of the friends in the Covenant of God. Let them be awake! Let them be mindful! As long as they see a trace of violation of the Covenant, they must hold aloof from the violator. Day and night let them strive so that the lights of the Kingdom of Abha may encircle the globe, and the darkness of error may be entirely dispelled. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Cablegram received February 3, 1913, from Paris to Wilhelmitte, New York:

We have reached Paris. Greetings to all. Any Persian, be he my own

son or daughter, if he comes to America without having a *new* permission written in my own handwriting or signature, do not meet him at all. Inform all cities. (*Signed*) ABBAS.

Cablegram from Paris, February 14, 1913, to Parsons-Remey, Washington:

I am servant of Baha! His holiness Baha'o'llah is unique and peerless. All must turn to Baha'o'llah. This is the religion of Abdul-Baha. Firmness in the Covenant means love and obedience to the command of Abdul-Baha. Announce this. (*Signed*) ABBAS.

Portion of a tablet to Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, March 25, 1913, Paris, France. The original of this tablet is in Abdul-Baha's own handwriting:

Convey my longing greeting to all the believers of God throughout all the cities of America and announce to them on my behalf that if any person from amongst the Persian believers who may be well known as to his character, whether man or woman—although he may be my own son or daughter—comes to America and has not a *new* permission for his going to America written with my own handwriting and signed with my own signature, you must not give him any attention at all. Whosoever speaks with him is a violator of the Covenant! This question is most important. Undoubtedly you must show the utmost caution. There are some wolves in sheep's clothes who may claim to be shepherds. Whosoever from amongst the Persian believers arrives in America although he may be related to me,—that is,—even if he be my son-in-law or she be my daughter, first ask of him the letter giving him a *new* permission to come again to America. If he shows you any such letter, be most careful and attentive that it is my writing and my signature, that they may not be counterfeits. Then you cable to me and inquire about him. When the answer is received by you that it is correct then you meet him, otherwise do not associate with him. Announce the contents of this letter to all the believers and the maid-servants of the Merciful throughout America. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Excerpt from tablet to Mrs. Harriet Cline, Los Angeles, Calif., translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Paris, March 29, 1913:

Today firmness in the Covenant is the means of the promotion of the Word of God and conducive to the effect of the word of man. Any explanation which does not accord with the Covenant will have no effect whatever. Therefore, whosoever heralds the Covenant of God, unquestionably he is confirmed. This has been tried a thousand times: Any soul who violates the Covenant and Testament in the least degree, immediately he is cut off; even in this material world he will become afflicted with remorse and regret. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

From a tablet to an American Bahai, translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Paris, March 4, 1913:

Whosoever claims that Abdul-Baha has given to him a tablet or sent a cablegram he must prove it (by showing it). Do not accept the saying of anyone on mere statement. He must bring forth the unmistakable and valid

evidence, signed by my own written signature and not the signature on a cablegram which cannot be substantiated. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Message from Abdul-Baha in his own handwriting, to the American Bahais, translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, September 18, 1913, Ramleh, Egypt:

Any Persian, whether Bahai, or belonging to the ancient religions of Persia—in short, any Persian—without carrying in his hand a letter either in my handwriting, or signed with my signature, the believers must not associate with him or speak to him, even if he is Shougi Effendi or Rouhi Effendi (the two grandsons of Abdul-Baha). The friends must demand of him before anything else, his credential letter, written in my handwriting, or signed with my signature. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Portion of a tablet to Mr. Charles Mason Remey, translated in Ramleh, Egypt, September 23, 1913:

I have repeatedly written that any Persian—although he be my relative or Afnan—if he has no credential in his hand, the believers must not at all approach him, or associate with him, because all the enemies of the Cause in Persia—Yahyais, Nakazeen and Sufists—are turning their attention to America and will come in order to weaken the Cause of God. You must protect the Cause of God, and write to every one, and awaken all, that they must not meet any Persian who has not in his hand a credential in my handwriting and signature. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

In response to a letter detailing the circumstances attending the arrival in San Francisco of two Persians from India (via Honolulu), without credentials, of their appearance at a Bahai meeting, of their being advised to leave and return to their hotel, and of their being entertained subsequently in the home of a believer, the following tablet was revealed by Abdul-Baha. Translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, Ramleh, Egypt, September 30, 1913:

O thou who are attracted to the Kingdom of Abha! Thy letter was received. Its details concerning those two persons (Persians) became known. You have acted most reasonably. Every Persian, or non-Persian, who comes from the East and has not in his hand a letter from me, although he may be one of my relatives, the believers must not receive him, neither should they let him enter into their meetings. For some wolves are coming from Persia to those parts in order to tear the sheep of God, and to scatter the seeds of corruption and to become the means of division—especially the followers of Mirza Yahya. To receive those souls would be like permitting a thief to enter a home, or like letting a wolf into a flock (of sheep). Unquestionably this is not permissible!

A man may receive his own enemy into his house and show him the utmost respect and consideration, but it is not allowable to receive a thief into his house, nor a traitor into his home, nor a wolf into the flock. This would be injustice. Although the heart of the wolf is displeased at this, yet the sheep of God must be protected.

Show ye the utmost kindness toward enemies, that is, *ignorant* enemies, but not toward traitorous and treacherous enemies. I hope that through the divine bounty and favor you may be guarded and protected.

Say to those two persons (Persians): "Because we have explicit instructions in regard to this matter we cannot disobey them. It would have been

better for you to have gone first to Akka, and, receiving permission and credentials, to have come to America from there. Then you would have experienced the utmost consideration. You must likewise obey this command. If you are sincere believers, act according to this clear injunction." (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Portion of a tablet to Miss Juliet Thompson, New York City, translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, October 29, 1913, Ramleh, Egypt:

Convey this message to each and all the believers in New York: *Any person* who comes to America from the East, whether Bahai or non-Bahai, although he may be one of my relatives, such as Mirza Jalal, Mirza Mohsen and Mirza Hadi (the three sons-in-law of Abdul-Baha), who has not in his hand a letter of permission in my handwriting and signature, the believers of God must not at all approach him, but shun him and know that he is a wolf—he has come to scatter the flock; a thief—he has come to rob the house.

From a tablet to the friends of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful, United States of America; translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, home of Abdul-Baha, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Syria, April 19, 1914. (These words are in the handwriting of Abdul-Baha):

If a Persian comes from the East to those parts—supposing the impossible: Although he may be my own son, or the only daughter of Abdul-Baha—without having in his hand an epistle with my own hand and my own signature, to meet and hold conversation with him is forbidden. For whosoever goes to America without permission has no other aim save sedition and the violation of the Covenant. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Tablet to Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, New York City, translated by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, August 2, 1913, Ramleh, Egypt:

The confirmation of the Kingdom of Abha shall descend uninterruptedly upon those souls who are firm in the Covenant. Thou hast well observed that every firm one is assisted and aided and every violator is degraded, humiliated and lost. It is very astonishing that people are not admonished. They have observed how Mirza Mohamed Ali on account of the violation of the Covenant descended to the lowest degree of humiliation, and yet they do not become mindful. They have seen how others through disobedience to the Testament have fallen into a well of degradation, and yet they are not awakened. This Covenant is the Covenant of his holiness, Baha'o'llah. Now its importance is not known befittingly; but in the future it shall attain to such a degree of importance that if a king violates to the extent of one atom he shall be cut off immediately.

Consider that during the life of Christ—May my life be a sacrifice to him!—his cause had no importance whatsoever; nay, rather the people scoffed and ridiculed him, and according to the text of the Gospel they called him Beezele-bub. Now you can see the importance which it had later. (*Signed*) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

In the light of the foregoing, further comment on our part is unnecessary. "Peace be upon those who follow guidance."

It is evident that those who are favored with a written word of approval from Abdul-Baha should receive every consideration. Lua Getsinger has been thus favored; "she is worthy of love."
—*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. VI

Kudrat 1, 71 (November 4, 1915)

No. 13

Addresses by Abdul-Baha delivered at Washington, D. C.

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT A BAHAI BANQUET, RAUSCHER'S HALL,
NOVEMBER 9, 1912.

Dr. Ameen U. Fareed, interpreter; stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen.

I FEEL a keen sense of joy in being present at this banquet this evening. For—praise be to God!—I see before me countenances which are radiant; ears which hear, which hearken to the melodies of the supreme concourse; hearts which are set aglow with the fire of the love of God; spirits which are exhilarated through the glad-tidings of God; souls sheltered beneath the overshadowing power of the Kingdom of Abha. I see before me here an assemblage of souls who are of the "chosen" and not of the "many called." And it is my hope that through the favors of Baha'o'llah he may keep all of you attracted to his Kingdom; that he may render you victorious in your service to the oneness and solidarity of men. May he assist all of those who are firm in establishing the unity and the oneness of the inhabitants of this earth. May all of you thereby become my partners and co-sharers in servitude.

Supplication

O Lord! Confirm and aid this assemblage. Confirm these souls through the breaths of Thy holy spirit. Enlighten the eyes by witnessing these radiant lights, and render the ears happy through Thy anthems and Thy summons. O God! Verily we have gathered

here in the utmost of love. We have turned to Thy Kingdom. We seek naught save Thee, and desire naught save Thy good pleasure! O God! Let this food be Thy manna from heaven, and suffer this assemblage to be a concourse of Thy supreme ones. May they be the cause of love to humanity and the source of illumination to the human race. May they be the instruments of guidance upon the earth. For verily Thou art Powerful, Thou art the Giver, Thou art the Forgiver and Thou art the Almighty!

After anointing and serving

In the world there have been organized many banquets, assemblages or meetings. There have been many banquets held; but those assemblages have gathered either for commercial purposes or have met in commemoration of political achievements. Meetings have been held for financing certain plans or for the promulgation of certain scientific accomplishments. They have been held to establish agricultural industries or for territorial agreements. Many are the assemblages which have been held in the world for consultation upon subjects of learning and education. These meetings have had for their object the advancement of civilization. But—

praise be to God!—this banquet and this assemblage are for no other purpose than love; for the purpose of showing forth the Kingdom; for manifestation of the traces of God; for reflecting the effulgences of the Kingdom of God; for connecting the hearts together; for service to the world of humanity; for the promulgation of humanitarianism and altruism; for promoting and advocating international peace; for the illumination of the world at large. Therefore such an assemblage as this is matchless, peerless, because every other assemblage is held for a limited object, for a personal reason, whereas this meeting is for God and God only; for the love of God. It is for the love of the hearts of men. It is for the oneness of the world of humanity. So it behooves us to offer thanks to God, for He has confirmed us in attaining hereto. He has suffered us to be servants of the world of humanity, to be advocates of universal peace amongst the religions; to herald universal peace amongst the races; to establish universal peace amongst the nations and all peoples.

It is my fervent, fond hope through the favor of God that this present meeting may be instrumental in ushering in the day when the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity shall be held aloft in America. May it be the first real foundation of Universal Peace. May it have for its object universal service to man. May it be divine philanthropy to humanity. May it never observe any distinctions or differentiations. May you consider all the religions as the servers of God, and may you regard all the races as avenues of God's Manifestations. May you know humankind to be the sheep of God, and may you know for a certainty that God is the real Shepherd of all. Consider how this kind and tender Shepherd most gently cares for all His flock; how He leads them to green pastures and beside the still waters; and how well He protects them! Verily this real Shepherd observes no distinctions

whatsoever. To all the sheep He is kind. Therefore we must emulate the example of God and strive in pathways of good and well-wishing for all humanity. May we endeavor with heart and soul to reconcile the religions of the earth, to reconcile the peoples of the earth, to reconcile and unify all the nations. May we uphold the flag of solidarity, and may we enkindle a light which shall illumine all regions with the radiance of oneness. May all our purposes be centralized in the earnest desire of attaining the good-pleasure of God, and may our supreme efforts be directed to the welding together of the human household. Let us not regard our own respective capacities; nay, rather let us regard forever the favors of God. The drop must not observe its own limited capacity. Nay rather, it must regard the sufficiency and capacity of the ocean which ever glorifieth the drop. The tender and simple seed, solitary though it may be, must not look at its own lack of power. Nay rather, its attention must ever be directed to the sun, in the rays of which it basks; and it must ever consider the downpour of the cloud of mercy. For the bounty of the cloud, the effulgence and heat of the sun and the breath of the vernal zephyrs can transform the tiny seed and develop it into a mighty tree. And may you remember that a single infinitesimal atom in the ray of the sun and through a shining beam of the solar energy becomes glorified and radiant.

Therefore let us ever trust in God and seek confirmation and assistance from Him. Let us have perfect and absolute confidence in the bounty of the Kingdom. Recall the events connected with souls of by-gone times, in the beginning of their days; and again regard them when, through the assistance and the aid of God, they proved to be the mighty ones of the earth. Remember the fact that Peter was a fisherman, but through the bounty of the Kingdom he became the great apostle. Mary, the Magdalen,

was a villager of lowly type, and that selfsame Mary, the Magdalen, was changed and became the means of conferring confirmation upon the disciples. Verily she served the Kingdom of God in such wise as to render herself well-known and oft-mentioned by the tongues of men. She is shining even to-day from the horizon of eternal majesty. Consider how colossal is the bounty of God. A woman such as Mary Magdalene God selected to be the channel of confirmation of the disciples, and a light of nearness in His Kingdom. Consequently

trust ye in the bounty and grace of God, and rest assured in the bestowals of God's eternal outpouring. I am hopeful that each one of you may become a shining light, even as these electric lights are now shining. Nay rather, may each one of you become a luminary like unto a sparkling star in the heaven of His good will. This is my supplication at the throne of God. This is my hope through the favors of Baha'o'llah. In behalf of all of you I offer this supplication, and with a contrite heart do I beg for you assistance and eternal bestowal.

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT 1252 EIGHTH STREET, N. W.,
NOVEMBER 10, 1912.

Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, interpreter; stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen.

THIS is a beautiful assembly. This is a very good assembly. I am very happy that the whites and the colored are together. This is the cause of my happiness, for you are all the servants of one God, and all are brothers, sisters, mothers and fathers. In the sight of God there is no white and there is no colored. In the sight of God all are as one. Any one whose heart is pure is dear to God, whether white or colored, red or yellow. Among the various animals there are colors. Among the doves that you see, some are white, some black, some yellow, red; but, notwithstanding this, they are in the utmost happiness and fellowship with each other. There is no distinction whatever, because they are all doves. Now you all are human. The doves understand that there is no distinction between their colors. Therefore they live together in the utmost fellowship. Man is intelligent and thoughtful; he has powers of mind. Why, then, should he be bound by distinction of color or race? There is no sheep which says to the other: "I am white!" or "You are black, and I

am brown." Nay rather, they graze together in the utmost love, live together in the utmost unity and happiness. How can man be limited by colors? What are colors, anyway? The important thing is that in reality all are human. All are one progeny of Adam. Inasmuch as they are all one family, why should they be separated?

I had a servant who was colored; his name was Isfandiar. If a perfect man could be found in the world, that man was Isfandiar. He was the essence of love; radiant with sanctity and perfection. He was luminous like unto this light. Whenever I think of Isfandiar I am moved to tears, although he passed away fifty years ago. He was the faithful servant of Baha'o'llah. He was entrusted with the secrets of Baha'o'llah. The shah of Persia especially wanted him because he knew the secrets of Baha'o'llah; therefore the shah wanted him very much and inquired continually as to his whereabouts. His holiness Baha'o'llah was in prison; but the shah of Persia had appointed several persons to find Isfandiar. Perhaps more than a

(Continued on page 102)

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

HE IS GOD!

O thou Star of the West!

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. VI

Kudrat 1, 71 (November 4, 1915)

No. 13

1850—Arthur P. Dodge—1915

A pioneer of the Bahai Cause in America has passed to the life beyond. The name of Arthur Pillsbury Dodge will ever be associated with its development in the western world, for he was an active worker and well known. In its memorial issue, the STAR OF THE WEST plans to mention his services in the Cause he loved. On behalf of the Bahais everywhere, we extend heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved.

—The Editors.

[NEWSPAPER CLIPPING]

ARTHUR P. DODGE DEAD, AFTER VARIED CAREER.

Lawyer, Inventor, Publisher, Author and
Student of Religion Succumbs
At Sixty-five.

Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, lawyer, inventor, publisher, and member of the bars of New York, New Hampshire, Illinois, and Massachusetts, died October 12th at his home in Freeport, L. I., in his sixty-sixth year. He was born in Enfield, N. H., and was a direct descendant of Simon Dodge, who came to this country from England in 1630. Mr. Dodge educated himself, and was admitted to the bar of Massachusetts in 1879, and for a time was attorney for

Mary Baker G. Eddy, at that time an apostle of Phineas Parker Quimby, the founder of Christian Science.

In 1886 Mr. Dodge founded *The New England Magazine*, and later founded *The Bay State Monthly* and *The Granite State Monthly*. Dr. Edward Everett Hale and William Dean Howells were both associated with Mr. Dodge in these enterprises.

In 1892, Mr. Dodge went to Chicago and was admitted to the bar of Illinois and became interested with the late George M. Pullman and devoted his time to the development of the Dodge System of Stored Heat Motive Power. Later he founded the Kinetic Power Company, the Dodge Motor Company, and the Kinetic Manufacturing Company.

Mr. Dodge bought the franchise of the Babylon Railroad at Babylon, L. I., and, with the aid of the late Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, planned to use it to demonstrate his system of stored heat motive power. Later he sold the franchise to the Pennsylvania Railroad. In 1900, in company with his wife, who was Miss Elizabeth Ann Day of Boston, and whom he married in 1870, he made a pilgrimage to the ancient prison city of Acre in Palestine, Syria, where Abdul-Baha Abbas was proclaiming the Bahai message to the world. Three years ago, Abbas visited this country and was entertained by Mr. Dodge, who made arrangements whereby he was allowed to preach the gospel of

Universal Peace and Unification of Religions in a number of important churches throughout the United States.

Mr. Dodge was a profound student of religion and was the author of a number of books on religion, the most recent of which were "The Truth of It" and "Whence? Why? Whither?"

He is survived by his wife and three sons, William C. Dodge, a lawyer of 14 Nassau Street; Wendell Phillips Dodge, editor of the *Strand Magazine*, and Richard P. Dodge, a scenic artist.

His funeral services will be held from his late residence at Freeport on Thursday and the interment will take place in the Dodge plot in Wakefield, Mass.

Messages from Abdul-Baha to Bahais in Germany

PORTION of letter from Mirza Azzi-zollah dated Haifa, July 30, 1915, addressed to Miss Alma S. Knobloch, Stuttgart, Germany.

"I translated all the enclosed letters immediately and offered them to our beloved Abdul-Baha. He became very happy thereby. He loves all of you, dear friends. He often speaks highly of the character of his German children. He says: 'They are pure, their nature is not stained by any disagreeable quality. They are readily confirmed by the hosts of the Kingdom. They are blessed in their activities in serving and helping the negligent and distressed. Their success in the service of the kingdom of God is sure.'

"Dear sister, he praises them so often that I do not know which time to write. I have only to congratulate all for their nobility of character which attracts so many blessings from him.

"Also I pray that he may keep them always under his guarding staff, safe from the thieves of worldly desires, pride and negligence. I am sure he does

this, and consequently they will always strive and shine brilliantly among other friends upon the horizon of the Cause."

Message from Abdul-Baha, to the Bahais of Germany, through Frau Consul Schwarz, translated by A. S. Bahadur, Mount Carmel, July 25, 1915:

"O dear friends!

"Praise be to God, we are all well and safe under the shelter of divine patronage and protection. We are in the utmost harmony; we pray night and day and beseech God's mercy for all the people of the world, that He may not look at the capacity of His creatures (at what the people deserve), but may He deal with them through His mere Blessing and Grace, so that the means of comfort and joy may be attained; so that the hearts may become lamps for (His) lights, and the souls (people) may attain God's pleasure. This is our utmost desire and longing. And you also pray that the ocean of bounties may rise in waves, and all the people may be-

come immersed in the ocean of God's forgiveness.

"God be praised! Strong love is produced between Germany and Islam. The Islamic world is in love with the Germanic world. The former loves exceedingly, the latter.

"What a good friendship is produced! We hope that this love and friendship

will give rise to great results, that it will influence others (nations) also.

"By the grace of God, we are well and happy. We hope that you are happy too. Your postal cards were received. As they bear the glad-tidings of your good health, they became the cause of our delight and joy. May peace be upon you!"

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT 1252 EIGHTH STREET, N. W.

(Continued from page ninety-nine)

hundred policemen were appointed to go in search of him. If they had succeeded in catching him, they would not have killed him at once. Nay rather, they would have cut his flesh into pieces to force him to tell them the secrets of Baha'o'llah. But Isfandiar with the utmost dignity used to walk in the streets and bazaars. One day he came to us. Mother, sister and I had a place near a corner, because they frequently injured us. We said: "We must go to a place where they do not know us." I was a child at that time. At midnight Isfandiar came in. Mother said: "O, Isfandiar, there are a hundred policemen seeking after you. If they catch you they will not kill you at once, but they will torture you with fire. They will cut off your fingers. They will cut your ears. They will put out your eyes, to force you to tell them the secrets of Baha'o'llah, you who are the servant of Baha'o'llah. Go away; do not stay here." He said, "I cannot go, because I am indebted in the street and in the stores. How can I go? They will say that the servant of Baha'o'llah has eaten and devoured the property of the people. Unless I pay all these debts, I cannot go. But, if they take me—never mind. If they kill me—never mind. If they punish me, there is no harm in that. But to go away is impossible. I must strive and pay all my debts. Then I will go." For one month Isfandiar went about in the streets and bazaars. He had things to sell and from his earnings he used to pay his debts. In fact, they were not his debts,

but the debts of the court, for they had confiscated our properties. Everything we had was taken away from us. The only thing that remained was our debts. He paid all our debts; not a single penny remained unpaid. Then he came to us and said "Good-bye!" and went away. Afterwards Baha'o'llah was released from prison. We went to Bagdad, and Isfandiar came there. He wanted to stay in the same home, and Baha'o'llah the Blessed Perfection said: "When you fled away there was a Persian minister who gave you shelter, at a time when no one else could give you protection. Because he did give you shelter and protect you, you must be faithful to him. If your master is satisfied, then come to us; but if he does not want you to go, do not be separated from him." His master said: "I do not want to be separated from Isfandiar. Where can I find another like him, with such sincerity, such faithfulness, such character, such power? Where can I find one? O, Isfandiar! I am not willing that you should go, yet if you wish to go, let it be according to your own will." But because the Blessed Perfection had said, "You must be faithful," Isfandiar stayed with his master until he died. He was a point of light! Although his color was black, yet his character was luminous, his mind was luminous, his face was luminous. Truly, he was a point of light.

Then it is evident that excellence does not depend upon color. Character is the true criterion of humanity. Anyone

who possesses a good character, who has faith in God and is firm, whose manners are good, whose speech is good,—that one is accepted at the threshold of God, no matter what color he may be! In short—praise be to God!—you are the servants of God. The love of Baha'o'llah is in your hearts. Your souls are rejoicing in the glad-tidings of Baha'o'llah. My hope is that the white and the colored will be united in the utmost love and fellowship, with complete unity, associating in real amity and brotherhood. Associate with each other, think of each other and be like unto a rose-garden. Anyone who goes into a rose-garden will see various roses, white roses, pink roses, yellow roses, red roses—all growing together and replete with the utmost adornment. Each one is the adornment of the other. Were all of one color, the garden would be monotonous to the eye. If they are all white or all yellow or all red, the garden would lack variety and attractiveness. But when the colors are varied, white, pink, yellow, red, there will be the utmost beauty. Therefore I am hoping that

you will be like unto a rose-garden. Although different in colors, yet—praise be to God!—you receive rays from the same sun. From one cloud the rain is poured upon you. You are under the training of one Gardener, and this Gardener is kind to all. Therefore you must manifest the utmost kindness towards each other, and you may rest assured that whenever you are united, the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha will reach you, the heavenly favors will descend upon you, the bounties of God will be given to you, the sun of reality will shine upon you, the cloud of mercy will pour its showers upon you, and the breeze of mercy will waft its fragrances upon you.

I hope you will continue in unity and fellowship. How beautiful to see colored and white together! I hope. God willing, the day will come when I shall see the red men, the Indians with you, also the Japanese and others. Then there will be white roses, yellow roses, red roses, and a very beautiful rose-garden will be organized!

ADDRESS DELIVERED AT 1901 EIGHTEENTH STREET, N. W.,
NOVEMBER 10, 1912.

Dr. Ameen U. Fareed, interpreter; stenographic notes by Mr. Joseph H. Hannen.

I AM well pleased with the friends of Washington, and entertain the utmost of joy for them. Likewise I am pleased with all the friends living in the environs of Washington, like Baltimore, etc., for I have observed that their hearts are attracted to the love of Baha'o'llah. Their sight is occupied with the kingdom of Baha. Their spirits are joyous through the glad-tidings of Abha. Verily they are servants of the Cause of God. All are endeavoring to serve, and the utmost of their desire is to enter into the kingdom of Abha and draw near to God. On that account I am very happy and I am well pleased with them. For all do I pray. May

the favors of the Blessed Beauty (Baha'o'llah) encompass them all, and may the lights of the sun of reality shine upon all. May you all be united and assured. As a united force may you as one, singly and alone serve God's Cause; and I give you the glad-tidings that the confirmation of God will reach you. Be assured of this. Ye will become illumined. Ye will become conquerors.

But after I leave, perhaps some people will arise in opposition to you, heap persecutions upon you, and in the papers there may be articles against the Cause. Rest ye in assurance of firmness. Be ye well poised. Be ye serene,

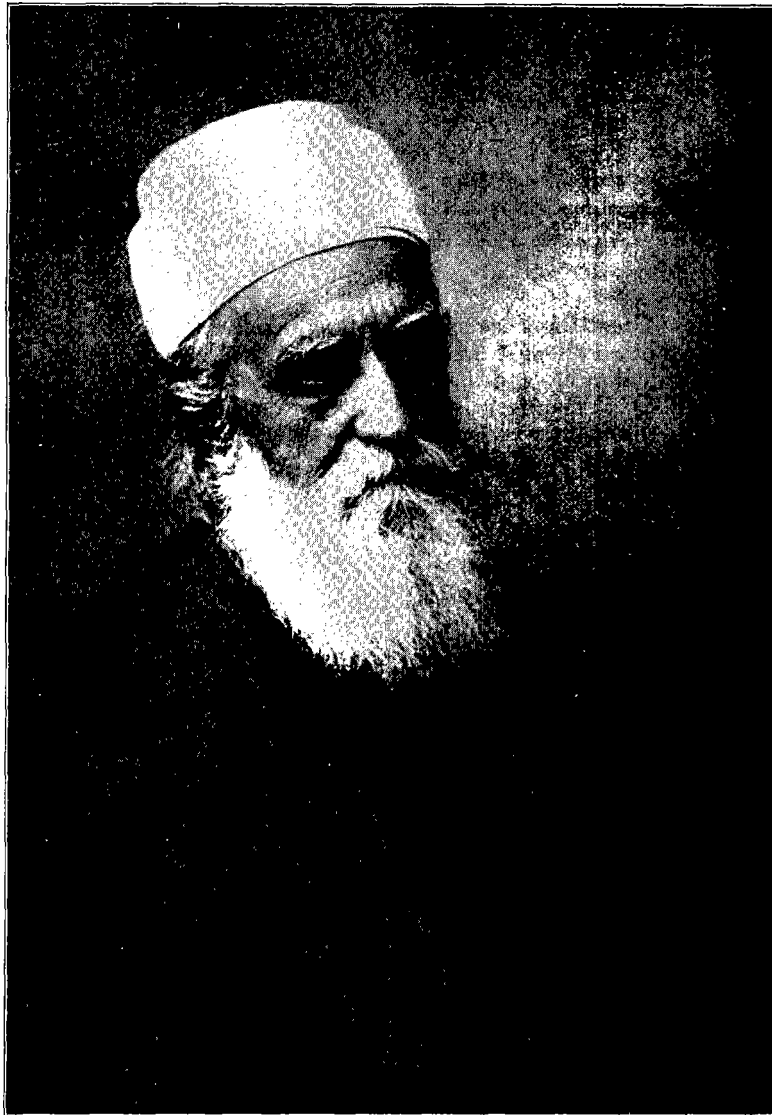
and remember that they are only as the twittering of sparrows, and they will pass away. If it be not so, the fame of the Cause will not be widespread and the summons of God will not be heard. Consider the times of the past. Regard, for instance, the days of his holiness Christ and the days subsequent thereto. How many were the books compiled against his holiness! How many were the calumnies attributed to him! How many were the utterances in the temples against his holiness! How many were the accusations against him, and what hatred and persecutions! How many scoffed at him in derision! How many were the titles they bestowed upon him! They even designated him Beelzebub—satan. They did not say “Jesus.” They used the term Beelzebub. Beelzebub was crucified, they said. Beelzebub was captured. Upon the head of Beelzebub was placed the crown of thorns. Beelzebub was taken and paraded through the streets, they said. This is the name of the Jews for Christ, and you will find it in the Gospels. It is recorded there. Likewise many were the forms of reviling and persecution. Witness in the Gospel, how they went as far as spitting in his face, cursing him, anathematizing him, and bowing backward towards him, saying: “Peace be on thee—thou king of the Jews!” “Peace be on thee, thou destroyer of the temple!” “Peace be on thee, thou king and pretending builder of the temple in three days!” How many were the philosophers of the times, Romans and Greeks, who wrote against his holiness Christ! Even the kings wrote against him. Many were the calumnies indeed. One of the Caesars who was a philosopher wrote a book. In that book, concerning the people of Christ, he says: “The most degraded of people are the Christians. The most immoral of the people of this time are the Christians. Jesus of Nazareth has led them astray.

O people! If you wish to know who Jesus is and what Christian means, go and ask his relatives. Go and ask the Jews who knew him. See what a bad person he was; how degraded he was.” There were many similar accounts. But remember that these did not affect the Cause of Christianity. Nay rather, Christianity advanced daily in power and potency.

Day by day the majesty of Christ grew in splendor and effulgence. Therefore my purpose is to warn you against accusations, against certain complaints, criticisms, revilings, and upbraidings in newspaper articles, or other publications. Be not disturbed by them. They are the very cause of confirming the Cause; the very source of upbuilding the movement. I hope that God may confirm it that ten or twenty ministers of the churches may arise and with bared heads cry at the top of their voices, saying to the people that the Bahais are misguided. I would like to see that day, and I want you to know that on that day something is going to happen. That is the day when the Cause is going to spread. Baha’o’llah has pronounced such as these the couriers of the Cause. They will proclaim from the pulpit that these Bahais are fools; that these Bahais are a bad lot; but be ye steadfast in the Cause of God. They will spread the Cause of Baha’o’llah.

My purpose is this.—that his honor Mirza Abul Fazl has written a treatise* answering the criticisms of a London preacher. It is published in Chicago; Mr. Windust has copies of it, and the copies are for distribution. Each one of you should have a copy of that book, and read, memorize and ponder over it. Then when anybody advances accusations and criticisms, you will be well armed.

*Refers to “The Brilliant Proof” by Mirza Abul Fazl. It was published by Abdul-Baha during his sojourn in America. Mr. Windust was the printer of the book. It can be had of the Bahai Publishing Society, P. O. Box 283, Chicago. Price, 15 cents.



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'LLAH.

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. VI

Kowl 1, 71 (November 23, 1915)

No. 14

[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*]

"These Great Days are swiftly passing and once gone can never be recalled; so while the rays of the Sun of Truth are still shining, and the "*CENTER of the COVENANT of GOD*" is manifest, let us go forth to work, for after a while the night will come and the way to the Vineyard will not then be so easy to find."

—ABDUL-BAHA

The Covenant of God*

By GEORGE O. LATIMER

IN all the Holy Scriptures the "Covenant and Testament" of God has been given to man through the prophets and in order to clearly and fully comprehend the Bahai Revelation it is necessary to understand the meaning and purpose of this Covenant and Testament as it has existed in past ages as well as its importance in this present day. As the term implies, a "covenant" means a compact or an agreement and a "testament" is a document by which one disposes of his property after his death. In legal phraseology the term, covenant, is used in the sense of a mutual promise and necessarily implies that there are two parties to the agreement: the *promisor* and the *promisee*. The promisor agrees to fulfill certain conditions upon the performing of certain acts by the promisee.

Now the "Covenant of God" is a promise, with the Creator as the party of the first part and the people of the world as the party of the second, that "at the 'end of the days,' God will es-

tablish His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven." In each successive cycle this Covenant or promise has been renewed with man by the Word of God speaking through His Manifestations, but each time it has been given in a different testamentary form. A testament requires two witnesses to make it valid, and the preceding and succeeding prophet in each dispensation have been these witnesses. For example, Moses promised the coming of Christ and Christ said that he fulfilled the prophecy of Moses, thus these two were the witnesses to God's Covenant, and in like manner, this has been the case in every age.

The subject is clearly explained in the following tablet from the pen of Abdul-Baha:

"His holiness Abraham—On him be peace—made a covenant concerning his holiness Moses and gave the glad-tidings of his coming. His holiness Moses made a covenant concerning the 'promised one,' i. e., his holiness Christ, and an-

*Note—Compiled in Stuttgart, Germany, during August, 1914. This manuscript was presented to Abdul-Baha personally by Mr. Latimer while in Akka in October of the same year. Abdul-Baha gave consent to its publication.—*The Editors*.

nounced the good news of his Manifestation to the world. His holiness Christ made a covenant concerning the Paraclete and gave the tidings of his coming. His holiness the prophet Mohammed made a covenant concerning his holiness the Bab, and the Bab was the one promised by Mohammed—for Mohammed gave the glad-tidings of his coming. The Bab made a covenant concerning Baha'o'llah and gave the glad-tidings of his coming, and Baha'o'llah was the one promised by his holiness the Bab. Baha'o'llah made a covenant concerning a promised one who will become manifest after one thousand, or thousands of years. He likewise, with his Supreme Pen, entered into a *great covenant and testament* with all the Bahais whereby they were all commanded to follow the Center of the Covenant after his (Baha'o'llah's) departure, and turn not away, even to a hairsbreadth, from obeying him."

In reality, there has been but one Covenant. Each prophet has renewed this Covenant in a different manner and to distinguish the promise of one from that of the other, it is spoken of as the covenant of Abraham, the covenant of Moses, etc., and in this "latter day" it has been referred to by Jeremiah (31:31) as the "new covenant."

Thus God has entered into this Covenant with all His Manifestations and each in turn has given it to the world, but always in a new form according to the understanding of the people. The story of Adam and the Garden of Eden is an account of this Covenant. Again the Ark of Noah represents this Covenant. The "everlasting covenant" with Abraham that "his seed would inherit the earth" explains the promise, Moses fulfilled this Covenant on Mount Sinai. Christ referred to this Covenant when he spoke of Peter as the "rock" upon which the church was to be built. Again the account of Fama-Gadeer (where Mohammed told the people to turn to his successor, Ali) relates to this Covenant. The *Book of Beyan*, in which the Bab commanded his followers to turn to

Baha'o'llah as the one "Whom God shall Manifest," is this same Covenant, and the *Kitab-el-Ahd* (Book of the Covenant), written by Baha'o'llah, is the establishment of this same Covenant.

This Covenant is the source of order in the world. In the words of Abdul-Baha: "The Covenant is an Orb which shines and gleams forth unto the universe. Verily, its lights will dispel darkness, its sea will cast out the froth of suspicion upon the shores of perdition. Verily, naught in the world can resist the power of the Kingdom. Should all mankind assemble, could they prevent the sun from giving its light, the winds from their blowing, the clouds from their showers, the mountains from their firmness or the stars from their beaming? No! by the Lord, the Clement. Everything (in the world) is subject to corruption, but the Covenant of thy Lord shall continue to pervade all regions."

Each one of the prophets testified to the renewal of this Covenant by the one who was to come after him and at the same time pointed to the final Covenant which would be a culmination of all the preceding ones and which would be the establishment of God's Kingdom in the hearts of mankind. In the *Old Testament* this Covenant has been symbolized by salt. Moses commanded that all offerings be seasoned with the "salt of the covenant of God." In Numbers 18:19, it is referred to as "a covenant of salt forever before the Lord." In Chronicles II, 13:5, it is stated that the Lord gave the kingdom of Israel over to David and his sons by "a covenant of salt." Again Christ says to his disciples (Matt. 5:13): "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" Salt has been used to characterize the spiritual power which gives life to humanity and if one is deprived of its savor by losing hold of the Covenant his spiritual sustenance is cut off.

Today, the symbol of the spiritual power of the Covenant is love. All through the biblical scriptures the wrath

STAR OF THE WEST

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

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. VI

Kowl 1, 71 (November 23, 1915)

No. 14

of God is called down upon those who violate the Covenant of God or loose hold thereof, but His protection is guaranteed to all who come under its divine power. In the present day, the Covenant has again been the means of illuminating mankind. Abdul-Baha says: "The Covenant has such a sway that it astonishes the minds. In every region the sign of the power of the Covenant is apparent and manifest. For instance, in Persia the fire of revolution blazed in such wise that all communities, government and nation became afflicted with the most severe trials; but the power of the Covenant protected the Bahai friends to such a degree that in this turbulent storm no dust fell upon them, except in one locality, which became the cause of the spreading of the Religion of God and the diffusion of the Word of God. Now all the parties in Persia are wondering how the people of Baha' were guarded and protected." (Extract from a Tablet.)

Thus in every age the people have been commanded to "remain firm in this Covenant," i. e., to perform their part of the agreement, for unless both parties carry out their side of the agreement, the

Covenant becomes invalid and cannot be established. The way in which the people are to fulfill their side of this compact is to turn to God with open hearts and to follow His commandments and abide in His love. When they do this the confirmations of heaven will reach them; all their desires and longings will be fulfilled by the establishment of this very same Covenant.

Today, this Covenant is fulfilled by the Manifestation of the three Bahai teachers: the Bab, Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha. The coming of the *three* to establish the Covenant in this day—one as the "Forerunner," one as the "Lord of Hosts," and one as the "Center of the Covenant"—was promised by God in the clearest of terms through the prophet Malachi (3:1): "Behold I will send my [1] messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; [2] and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; [3] even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." It is not meant however, that these three holy personages are to be considered as separate manifestors of the Word of God in this day, for the Word of God is

ever given in its oneness and singleness, i. e., it is made manifest through only one channel or individual at a time.

The reality of their Manifestation is likened unto that of a tree: the Bab, known as the "First Point" of this Revelation, is the first off-shoot from the seed of the Tree; Baha'o'llah is the "Pre-existent Root" of the same Tree, and Abdul-Baha is the "Greatest Branch" of that Tree. All parts of the Tree are nourished by the same osmosis (the Word of God), and each is dependent on the other for sustenance. In the botanical kingdom, the direct, upward growing branch of the tree is known as the main or greatest branch of the tree while all the other branches are considered as offshoots from this main branch. The seed of the tree is its manifestation, for it is the seed itself which appears in the form of branches, leaves and fruits. The fruit cannot be ripened and perfected save through the branch, and without the fruit the potentiality of the seed ceases to exist. The people of the world are the leaves of this tree and the leaves receive their nourishment through the branch. When the connection with the branch is severed they drop off from the tree and wither up. The purpose of the tree is to produce fruit and while the root may live for awhile without its branch, yet it is not able to complete its existence; therefore the root and the trunk are one and each is subservient to the other for the perfection of their manifestation. "The essential object is the Tree, the foundation is the Tree, and the Universal Reality is the Tree."

The perfection of this "Branch" has been foretold by God through Zechariah (3:7): "For, behold, I will bring forth my servant, the Branch"; and the promise was also given through Isaiah (11:1): "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse. [Baha'o'llah descended from Jesse, the son of Abraham—not Jesse, the father of David], and a Branch shall grow out of his root, and the spirit of

the Lord shall rest upon him." Again Isaiah said (4:2): "In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely."

The branch is the center of the tree's existence; likewise in this world of creation there is a center for everything and all the bounties of existence come from that center. For example, everything in this physical world is dependent for its existence upon the center of gravity which holds all the physical bodies together. If anything should detach itself for one instant from this center of attraction it will immediately fall off into space, and so far as part of the life of this planet is concerned it will cease to exist. In our solar system the sun is the center of illumination. All forms of genesis appear through its light and heat, without which there would be no growth and development; there would be no vegetable kingdom, no animal kingdom, and all life in the world would cease to exist. The earth, the moon and all the planets receive their illumination from this same sun, and if deprived of its rays they would be in eternal darkness. In the mineral kingdom the elements are held together by a center known as chemical affinity, and likewise there is a center for all life in the vegetable world. Again the human organism is a unit composed of various organs all dependent upon one center—the heart—for life and sustenance. As long as all the different parts are in perfect connection with the heart, they co-ordinate and perform their separate functions in harmony and accord, and life will be manifest in its fullest perfection; but if the supply of life-giving blood is cut off from one of the members of the body, immediately that organ begins to disintegrate and die. In turn its death will cause the contamination of the other members, and eventually the entire body will become diseased, and death will be the result. In our commercial life there is a focusing point that controls affairs. The heart of the city is the business

center which regulates the life of the entire city. In a like manner there are co-ordinate units of centralization for the social, civic and political welfare of the community. In fact, everything in the material world demands a centralizing of forces for the well-being and progress of humanity.

Now, the material world is a counterpart or reflection of the spiritual world and as there is a center of attraction for everything in the terrestrial globe—this being an universal law of nature—likewise, there must be a center of attachment in the spiritual world. In every age the absence of this center in the spiritual world has been the cause of the decline and departure of the spirit from religion. Differences and misunderstandings have crept in and falsehood has supplanted truth, creating new sects and thus destroying the very foundations of religion. Strife and contention makes division, and separation is the cause of death, for every creation is an organized unit, the members of which are held together by the center of attraction.

Because in former times there was no distinct center of the Covenant of God, after each renewal, decay set in and the Word of God became contaminated by man-made creeds and dogmas which in turn caused disagreement, opposition and bitter struggle throughout the centuries, down to the present time; and now this strife in the spiritual world, as well as in the physical world is at its height for the very reason that this Center *is unknown*.

In former ages no distinct personage had been appointed to be the Center which was to differentiate between truth and falsehood and thus eradicate all differences arising in the mind of man. Many have thought that Peter was made the expounder of the Book, when Christ said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church"; but this was only an indication and confirmation of Peter's faith, for the word "rock" was used as a symbol of faith, and the Christian church was established through

the faith of the people in Christ. Yet there were dissensions in the time of Christ because there was no Center, and men began to interpret and explain his teachings in the way that most benefited themselves. The separation between Roman and Greek church was due to a small question of interpretation—whether a word meant "by" or "through." Today the signs of man are far more evidence in the church, than the signs of Christ.

Therefore, in order to have accord and harmony in the spiritual world, and the establishment of God's Kingdom of love and peace on earth, and the uniting of all peoples under the tent of oneness, a Center is necessary, and *Abdul-Baha has been appointed that Center*. He is the Explainer of the Word and the Expounder of the Book of God revealed to the world in this day through Baha'o'llah. In the *Kitab-el-Ahd* (Book of the Covenant) the *Tablet of the Branch*, and in numerous writings, Baha'o'llah clearly appoints Abdul-Baha, the Greatest Branch, as the one to whom all should turn for spiritual guidance and knowledge after his departure. He writes in his Will and Testament: "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. The aim of this blessed verse hath been the Greatest Branch." Again he commanded: "After My departure turn to the Branch for what ye do not understand," and in a tablet to Abdul-Baha addressed "O Thou My Greatest Branch," he said, "Verily, We have ordained Thee the guardian of all the creatures, and a Protection to all those in the heavens and earths, and a Fortress to those who believe in God, the One, the Omniscient! I beg of God to protect them by Thee; to enrich them by Thee, to nourish them by Thee; and to reveal to Thee that which is the Dawning-point of riches to the people of Creation, and the Ocean of Generosity to

those in the world, and the Rising-point of favor to all nations. Verily, He is the Powerful, the All-knowing, the Wise! I beg of Him to water the earth and all that is in it by Thee, that there may spring up from it the Flowers of Wisdom and Revelation and the Hyacinths of science and knowledge." Also in another tablet: "Thou knowest, O my God, that, verily I have chosen Him, only because Thou hast chosen Him; I have elected Him, only because Thou hast elected Him. Therefore assist Him by the Hosts of Thy Heaven and earth. Help Thou, O My God, whosoever may help Him! choose, whosoever may choose Him! strengthen whosoever may advance toward Him! and reject whosoever may deny Him and desire Him not!"

These are a few of the many utterances of Baha'o'llah referring to the appointment of Abdul-Baha as the Center of His Covenant. This does not mean that Abdul-Baha is the "Promised One" of Baha'o'llah, for that One will not appear until after one thousand or thousand of years, but it means that Abdul-Baha has been made the Standard differentiating falsehood from truth, and his explanations of the meanings of the texts and verses are the truth.

Therefore, again in this day, all the people are exhorted to firmness in God's Covenant, and this is accomplished by turning to Abdul-Baha for enlightenment and guidance in all affairs. He says: "Firmness in the Covenant means *obedience*, so that no one may say, 'This is my opinion'; nay rather, he must obey that which proceeds from the Pen and Tongue of the Covenant. Any explanation which does not accord with the Covenant will have no effect whatsoever. Therefore, whosoever heralds the Covenant of God, unquestionably he is confirmed. Know this for a certainty that *today, the penetrative power in the arteries of the world of humanity, is the power of the Covenant. The body of the world will not be moved through any power except through the power of the Covenant.* There is no other power

like unto this. This Spirit of the Covenant, is the real Center of love and is reflecting its rays to all parts of the globe, which are resuscitating and regenerating man and illuminating the path to the Divine Kingdom."

Through all His Prophets, God has urged the people to firmness and obedience so that His *Everlasting* Covenant may be established: It is His universal law that all things which are not attached to their life-giving Center, disintegrate and die, and in order to preserve the oneness of all humanity, He has made known that spiritual Center which will unite all and establish His Kingdom in the hearts of men.

When the electric light bulb loses its connection with the power-house it becomes extinct and ceases to give forth light. The Center of the Covenant is the Divine Magno which is illuminating the world, dispelling the darkness of racial and religious hatred, and lighting up the way made dark by the superstitions and blind imitations of former ages. It is the Magnet which is attracting the hearts of men to God. This awakening is being accomplished by the *Servitude* of Abdul-Baha to mankind. His whole life has been one of sacrifice and service so that man might become mindful of God's wishes. After a life of imprisonment and trials and at an advanced age, he travelled throughout Europe and America, undergoing many hardships, in order to serve the people by rending asunder the veils of ignorance and disclosing the realities of all things, thus illuminating this dark world of materialism.

Assuredly, the words of Jesus (Matt. 23:11) to the multitude: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant," are being fulfilled today by Abdul-Baha, the "Servant of God." His greatest wish is: "To be a faithful servant and a sincere slave at the Threshold of Baha'o'llah. Whosoever enters perfect love for me and is firm in the Covenant must know and believe that I am the Servant of the Threshold

of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah). But the Center of the Covenant is the Point toward which all the people of the world must turn their faces. He is the Interpreter of the Books and all the Bahais are beneath his protection. Therefore, if any soul by himself, interprets the Books of God contrary to the clear text emanating from the pen of the Covenant, it is not acceptable and this will become the cause of differences amongst the believers of God" (From a recent Tablet of Abdul-Baha).

The fruit appears upon the branch and not upon the root of the tree, therefore the fruits of Baha'o'llah's teachings are being ripened and brought to fruition through Abdul-Baha. He is ushering in the *new harvest* of Universal Peace and the Oneness of the World of Humanity—which means the cessation of fruitless strife and ruinous warfare. Thus the antagonism of faiths and religions and the racial and patriotic differences will be eradicated and for all there will be one religion, one faith, one race, one people and one home, and the din and clamor caused by warfare and discordant revelry will be changed to the beautiful and harmonious melodies of the kingdom of paradise.

These blessings are coming to man through his firmness in the Covenant. Abdul-Baha has said: "Today firmness in the Covenant is the means of the

promotion of the Word of God and conducive to the effect of the word of man," for the fulfillment of this Covenant it is necessary for the believers of God to imitate the conduct and manner of Abdul-Baha, that is they must engage in teaching and spreading the Cause of God; their words must be like the flame of fire, burning away the veils of dogmas, passion and desire and they must be in the utmost state of humility and self-renunciation so that others may be mindful. In order to accomplish this fulfillment of the Covenant, one has only to follow out the following admonition of Abdul-Baha:

"Through the protection and help of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah), you must conduct and deport yourselves in such a manner that you may stand out among other souls distinguished by a brilliancy like unto the sun. If any one of you enters a city he must become the center of attraction because of the *sincerity, faithfulness, honesty, fidelity, truthfulness, and loving-kindness* of his disposition and nature toward *all* the inhabitants of the world. That the people of the city may cry out: 'This person is unquestionably a Bahai. For his manners, his behavior, his conduct, his morals, his nature and his disposition are of the attributes of the Bahais.' *Until you do attain to this station, you have not fulfilled the Covenant and Testament of God.*"

*Concluding paragraph of "The Daily Prayer"
revealed by Baha'o'llah*

[Then sitting down, say:] "I confess Thy Oneness and Singleness and that Thou art God: There is no God but Thee! Thou hast manifested Thy Command, *FULFILLED THY COVENANT*, and opened the gate of Thy Bounty to all who are in the Heavens and upon the earth. Prayer and peace, praise and glory be upon Thy beloved, who were not prevented by the deeds of the people from turning unto Thee, and who offered what they had for the hope of what Thou hast. Verily Thou art the Merciful, the Forgiving!"

“The Call of God”

O PEOPLE! The doors of the kingdom are opened—the Sun of Truth is shining upon the world—the fountains of life are flowing—the daysprings of mercy have appeared—the greatest and Most Glorious Light is now manifest to illuminate the hearts of men. Wake up and hear the voice of God calling from all parts of the Supreme World: *“Come unto Me, O ye children of men! Come unto Me, O ye who are thirsty, and drink from this sweet Water which is descending in torrents upon all parts of the globe!”*

Now is the time! Now is the accepted time!

—ABDUL-BAHA

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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Massa'ul 1, 71 (December 12, 1915)

No. 15

The Call of God*

By GEORGE O. LATIMER

THE Bahai Message has been given to the world on the same basis as that of all the past religions, that is, the acknowledgment of a *single* divinity which is all-powerful, all-comprehending, all-encompassing. This divinity is an unknown essence, an infinite being known as God. "God, singly and alone, abideth in His own place, which is holy above space and time, mention and utterance, sign, description and definition, height and depth. God alone should be realized as the one power which animates and dominates all things which are but manifestations of its energy." [Baha'o'llah]. All things owe their existence to God and are dependent upon Him for guidance and advancement. All existence testifies to a creator and every kingdom is in need of an educator.

For example, the barren soil when tilled produces abundant crops. By cultivation, fertilization and engrafting, trees which produced bitter fruits, yield sweet fruits. Without the training of the gardener the flowers become choked by weeds and cease to give forth their fragrance. By careful training the animal has become domesticated and is of great service to mankind, but if it is left untrained it remains a wild, often ferocious beast. Man also, if left without training, becomes bestial, in fact he becomes lower than the animal, for the greater number of animals protect their

own kind, while men, among the negroes of central Africa, kill and eat one another; whereas if man be educated he becomes a heavenly being. If it were not for education, no facilities or wonderful industries in the world, sciences and arts would be known, and civilization would not exist.

Now man, the greatest of all God's handiwork, is in constant need of education. He is born into the world helpless and remains in this condition for a long time. His faculties are brought into use only by training. He does not speak until taught to do so. Later on he is sent to school and receives instruction in the arts, sciences and needs of humanity. In fact, his whole life from birth to death is one period of learning. As man has material faculties which need development, so he has within him spiritual faculties, latent powers given him by God, which must be awakened.

Thus man is in need of three kinds of education: material, human and spiritual. Material education perfects his physical body and is common to animals as well as men. Human education deals with his civilization and progress. It has to do with the social, economic and civic problems of life. It includes arts, sciences, inventions and all the activities which are essential to man as distinguished from the animal. Divine education consists in acquiring the divine

*Note—Compiled in Stuttgart, Germany, during August, 1914. This manuscript was presented to Abdul-Baha personally by Mr. Latimer while in Akka in October of the same year. Abdul-Baha gave consent to its publication.—*The Editors.*

perfections, the awakening of the latent spiritual powers within man. This is the *real education* and confers upon man the supreme goal of the world of humanity: "Let us make man in our image and after our likeness."

Thus it is evident that man needs an educator who must be perfect in all respects in order to impart this education to him. This teacher must aid man in the carrying out of physical matters and the establishment of a proper social and civil organization. He must train the mind, so that it will be able to grasp the reality and purpose of creation, to improve arts, trades and inventions and to master the difficult problems of science; and he must quicken the spiritual susceptibilities, so that he may be freed from self and become illumined with the heavenly attributes of God.

It is clear that no human agency is able to fill this important mission, for since man is unable, in his short lifetime, to acquire perfection in any one of the branches of art, learning, literature or science, how much more impossible is it for him to bestow at the same time perfect material, human and divine education. Can there be a perfect civilization with an imperfect educator? Undoubtedly no one but God, the creator, is able to fulfill this great office. But as man is incapable of knowing God, because it is impossible for the finite mind to comprehend the infinite, this awakening must come through certain channels which are capable of man's comprehension.

These channels are certain men, chosen and prepared by God to express His word in speech and writing and to manifest it in their lives. These men are likened unto polished mirrors which reflect perfectly the rays of the sun, but which are not a part of that sun, and are known as *Manifestations* of God. "The root of all knowledge is the knowledge of God—Glory be to Him!—and this knowledge is impossible save through His Manifestation" [Baha'o'llah].

From time to time such a man appears, declares his mission to the world and establishes a civilization—termed dispensation—which lasts for centuries and which becomes the focal point around which the laws and lives of many generations revolve. This civilization which all the governments on the earth have been unable to found, one holy man establishes without any material aid or support. For example, Christ, singly and alone, established a cause and founded a union between many diverse communities, which all the kings of the earth had tried to establish and had failed. History cites many notable examples of this kind, among whom are Abraham, Moses, Mohammed and Christ.

History also shows us that although each one of these educators of the world of humanity was of lowly and humble birth, without schooling or instruction, yet they were endowed with erudition, and the wisest philosophers have not displayed one-thousandth part of the influence manifested by these holy men. This power was not due to their human attainments but to the divine word which spoke through them. The divine words of these educators of humanity have certain characteristics which prove them to be from a higher source than man. It is their direct appeal to the hearts and lives of men, rather than an appeal to the intellects. The words of a great writer appeal only to the mind of a man, while the word of God, speaking through His Manifestations, appeals directly to his heart or soul. The soul is the lamp, while mind is the light which comes from the lamp. Therefore, in order to have illumination the lamp must first be lit. This word of God has ever enkindled the lamp of humanity. It has made a resistless advance against all earthly powers, overcoming ignorance and darkness, dispersing former conceptions and superstitions, and creating new ideals and higher morals. Its permanency has outlasted kingdoms, dynasties and philosophies.

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

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(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

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Massa'ul 1, 71 (December 12, 1915)

No. 15

Whenever one appears in the world, equipped with these qualifications, and by his words and deeds such a result follows, can we not safely acclaim him to be a true messenger of God and worthy of our greatest love and respect? Shall we remain in the darkness of doubt and denial, as in former ages, or shall we become illumined by acceptance and enlightenment?

“Look ye at the time of Christ; had the people realized that the holy spirit of God was speaking to them through his divine mouth they would not have waited three centuries before accepting him, and now is it meet for you that you are sleeping on the bed of idleness and neglect, while the *Father* foretold by Christ has come amongst us and opened the greatest door of bounteous gifts and divine favors? Let us not be like those in past centuries who were deaf to his call and blind to his beauty; but let us try and open our eyes that we may see him, and open our ears that we may hear him, and cleanse our hearts that he may come and abide in our temples” [Abdul-Baha].

It is a law of nature that stagnation is the cause of retrogression and death. Man must always advance and for this purpose God has sent His Manifestations, from age to age, for the guidance

and assistance of mankind. From the time of Adam and Enoch to that of Moses and Christ and down to the present day, such divine leaders have appeared, guiding man through the various highways and byways and leading him through the different stages of development from childhood to the present manhood of the race. Man has never been without such instructions. Each one of these teachers gave the same message: “The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man,” but in the terminologies of the race and the exigencies of the time, and according to the capacity of the people to whom he came. Each of these messengers had a threefold mission. First, to fulfill the prophecies of the prophets who preceded him and heralded his coming. Second, to be the unique source of all divine knowledge and instruction during his dispensation. Third, to prepare the way for the coming of the great latter-day Messiah, who would establish God’s kingdom of “Peace on earth as it is in heaven.”

Christ did not establish this kingdom but heralded its coming. As a proof of this he said: “I came not to send peace, but a sword,” and the Christian dispensation has been one of warfare and strife.

The Christian nations have perfected the deadliest instruments for the cruel

and bloody destruction of mankind. One has only to look at the present condition existing in the world and ask himself if it is the divine will of God that nine nations of the world should be at war with one another thus destroying the greatest of all God's handiwork. The very foundations of our existence have been shaken by division and inharmony, strife and enmity, oppression and inequality. The conflict of thoughts and ideas is raging; one sees the persecution of the poor and hears the sighs of agony of the wretched. From all sides sound the discordant strains of the folly and heedlessness of those who have turned from God. The rights of men, nations and races have been lost in the whirlpool of greed, thoughtlessness and ambition; even the very right of existence is denied to some. This is indeed the time of calamity and separation of which Christ spoke (Mark 13:8). "For nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom! and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows."

In the spiritual world there is a similar conflict. Theology is arrayed against science, creeds and dogmas deafen the ears of man, and forms and ceremonies blind his sight. In the United States alone there are one hundred and thirty-two Christian sects, each one professing to have the only true way of attaining the kingdom, thus disobeying the express commandments of all the divine messengers. In like manner in the eastern world there are antagonizing sects among the Mohammedans, Buddhists and Hindoos, each claiming to be the pure religion of God.

But how can the glorious and heavenly kingdom of God be established amidst this mess without first laying the essential foundation of unity, peace and justice? Is it not time for a new guide to come and clear away the debris of ignorance and superstition and again make manifest the path of God?

Fortunately there is a ray of hope for the world is a-quiver with the longing and expectation of the appearance of the new Sun of Truth, the new peacemaker. The Jews are expecting the coming of the Messiah; the Christians are looking for the second coming of Christ, and in the eastern world a similar anticipation is prevalent. The Moslems expect the coming of their promised one, the Imam Mahdi, the Buddhists hope for the coming of the fifth Buddha, the Zoroastrians are longing for Shah Bahram, and the Hindoos await the appearance of the tenth incarnation of truth, called Kalki, while the people of modern and advanced thought are expecting the coming of the Great Master who will right all the conditions of this decadent world.

In order to bring about this change and to cure all the ailments of mankind this Great Master must fulfill certain conditions: "He must be the educator of the world of humanity; his teachings must be universal and confer illumination upon mankind; his knowledge must be innate and spontaneous, and not acquired; 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; he must be a joy-bringer and the herald of the kingdom of happiness; his knowledge must be infinite and his wisdom all-comprehensive; the penetration of his word and the potency of his influence must be so great as to humble even his worst enemies; sorrows and tribulations must not vex him. His courage and conviction must be God-like. Day by day he must become firmer and more zealous; 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."*

*From a talk given by Abdul-Baha to a large delegation of Theosophists in Hôtel Ritz, Budapest, April 11, 1913.

When one sees that all of these conditions are fulfilled in one human temple, then he may safely turn to him for guidance and illumination.

The Bahai Revelation brings the fulfillment of all these hopes and conditions to the world. It is a renewal of religion to man. It brings the spring-time of a new life and ideals. In the words of Abdul-Baha: "The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You can never organize the Bahai Cause. *The Bahai Movement is the spirit of this age.* It is the essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an *inclusive movement*: the teachings of all the religions and societies are found here; the Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, et al., find their highest aims in this Cause. Even the Socialists and philosophers find their theories fully developed in this Movement."

This Movement had its beginning May 23, 1844, with the appearance of a young Persian, called the Bab (the Persian or Arabic word for door or gate) who, although unschooled and untrained, arose among the great doctors of Islam who were ruling the people in spiritual ignorance at that time, and proclaimed himself to be the forerunner of "Him-whom-God-shall-manifest." He taught and prepared the people for this coming during a period of six years, at the end of which time he was martyred by the Mohammedan clergy, together with thousands of his followers. Nineteen years after this declaration, Mirza Hussein Ali of Noor, more widely known as Baha'o'llah (which means the Glory of God manifest) announced to the world by means of letters to the rulers and crowned heads of all nations, that he was the promised one of all religions and the one whom God would manifest. He declared that the time was at hand for the "most great peace," the cessation of strife and warfare and the unity and harmony of all the world. He renewed the word of every prophet as to

the oneness and fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and taught the abolition of differences existing between religions. He suffered the most severe persecutions at the hands of the Mohammedan clergy and after the confiscation of his property he was banished with a number of followers, first to Bagdad in Asiatic Turkey, then to Adrianople and finally, in 1868, he was sent to the prison city of Acca, which lies at the foot of Mount Carmel, the home of the prophets, in Syria. Here he remained until his death in 1892, but although in constant imprisonment and hardship he was able to spread his message to all parts of the world and leave his Cause firmly established. After his departure, Baha'o'llah commanded his followers to turn to Abbas Effendi, the Center of God's Covenant, for guidance. Abbas Effendi, the eldest son of Baha'o'llah—who prefers to be called Abdul-Baha (the Servant of God)—went into exile with his father at the early age of nine years, remaining with him until the latter's death, and sharing all his deprivations. In 1908 after fifty-six years of persecution, hardship and imprisonment, forty years of which were spent in the prison of Acca, Abdul-Baha was given his freedom by the new Turkish Republic. Since that time he has been unceasingly at work spreading the glorious message of Baha'o'llah. He has come from the east to the west, visiting many countries of Europe, including England, France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and traveling extensively throughout America, awakening the people from their lethargic sleep on the bed of negligence with this call:

"Do you know in what day you are living? Do you realize in what dispensation you are alive? Have you not read in the holy scriptures that at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a *day* which is the sun of all the past days?

"*This is the day* in which the Lord of Hosts has come down from heaven on the clouds of glory! This is the day in

which the inhabitants of all the world shall enter under the tent of the word of God. This is the day whose real sovereign is His Highness, The Almighty. This is the day when the east and the west shall embrace each other like unto two lovers. This is the day in which war and contention shall be forgotten. This is the day in which nations and governments will enter into an eternal bond of amity and conciliation. This century is the *fulfillment* of the Promised Century."

The east shall become illumined, the west perfumed and the children of men shall enter beneath the all-embracing canopy of the oneness of the world of humanity.

Indeed all the prophecies of the past have been fulfilled by this call, which has gone out to the world from the prison city of Acca. In speaking of this time, Hosea (2:15) said: "And I will give the valley of Acca for a door of hope." Solomon (Eccl. 4:14) said: "For out of prison he cometh to reign." Micah (7:12) spoke: "In that day, he shall come to thee from Assyria." Isaiah (35:2), that: "Carmel and Sharon they shall see the glory of the Lord"; and Christ (Matt. 24): "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even to the west, so shall the coming of the son of man be." Again there are many utterances of the prophet Mohammed regarding Acca. He said to one of his followers, Ebne Masoud: "The greatest of all sea-coasts in the sight of God is Ascalon, but Acca is greater than Ascalon; the greatness of Acca to Ascalon and all other sea-coasts can be compared with the greatness of Mohammed to all other prophets. Be mindful of what I say unto you concerning a city which lies between two mountains (Carmel and Lebanon) in Palestine in the midst of a plain which is called Acca." To Ons, another follower, Mohammed said: "I inform you about a city on the coast of the white sea (the Mediterranean) which is called Acca; anyone who remains there seven days, God will regard him as the

associate of Elijah and God will redeem him from the gnashing of teeth in the day of resurrection." Again, "Blessed is the one who has visited Acca and blessed is the one who has seen the visitor of Acca," and many other similar utterances.

These three divine men (the Bab, Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha) have not only fulfilled the spiritual prophecies of all the former religions, but they have manifested by their words and deeds all the true qualities and requisites necessary to the divine and perfect educator. The Bab, a young merchant, untrained and unschooled, was able, at the age of twenty-five, to confound the most erudite doctors of the religion of Islam. Alone, he was able to withstand all the great men of religion and state who arose to exterminate his life and teachings, and he produced a great change in the corrupt morals, thoughts and customs of Persia. At that time, when the persecution, pillage and massacre of the Bab's followers was at its height, Baha'o'llah arose to promulgate his teachings. Although a person of noble birth, he had never studied in any school nor associated with the learned men of religion, yet he manifested such knowledge and perfection that all the people of Persia marvelled at his wisdom while his enemies spoke of him as "the renowned Baha'o'llah." He was exiled four times and for fifty years he was exposed to the gravest dangers and persecutions, yet in that decadent and declined civilization of Persia, he advanced teachings and ideals that were unheard or unthought of even in our western civilization. He proclaimed: The oneness of the world of humanity; the investigation of truth so that no one should blindly follow the beliefs and superstitions of his forefathers; the oneness of God and the oneness of all religions; that the purpose of religion is the creation of unity, harmony and accord amongst men and if it fails in this, irreligion is better than religion; the agreement of religion and science, for that which is not in accord with

science is superstition; the equal rights of man and woman; the abolition of religious, sectarian, sectional, denominational and patriotic prejudices—"Glory is not his who loves his country, but glory is his who loves his kind"; the non-interference of religion and politics; universal peace amongst nations, races and religions; a universal language; the pursuit of education and the necessity for every one to engage in some occupation, art or trade, for this will be accounted an act of worship before God; the solution of the economic problem of the world and the organization and establishment of Houses of Justice for the administration of the law and the means of philanthropic and social betterment; in fact, all the needs and demands of our present civilization have been provided for in the writings of Baha'o'llah and the teachings of Abdul-Baha, who without any opportunity for education, has never failed to answer convincingly the questions of the most learned philosophers, religionists and scientific men of the orient and the occident, and who by his life of servitude and sacrifice to humanity, has become the means of the realization of these teachings.

Can a just judgment, after reflection and consideration, deny the reality of these educators? Their Cause invites investigation and their message is for all ears. Every person whether spiritual or materialist can find his questions and difficulties solved by these educators. Does it behoove us then to turn our eyes from these manifest signs and to shut our ears to the call of God? It is of the greatest importance, for our future as well as present welfare to investigate the purpose and teachings of these educators and to hearken to their divine call, which has been expressed by Abdul-Baha as follows:

"The foundation of Divine Religion is love, affinity and concord. Praise God that this cycle is the period of illumination! Minds have made great progress; intelligences have been unfolded; the

means of unity and agreement are brought about; communication between the races of men is rapidly established. Now is the time that all of us may embrace the law of peace and treat each other with honesty and straightforwardness. Let the religious prejudices be wiped away. Let the law of racial supremacy be discontinued. Let political expediencies be done away with. Let the love of country be superceded by the love of the world. Let us all deal with each other with infinite kindness. We are all the servants at the one Divine Threshold. We are all receiving the rays of truth from the same Sun of Reality. We must all believe in all of the prophets. We must all acknowledge the divine authority of all the heavenly books. We must wash our hearts free of all human prejudices. We must serve God. We must propagate the oneness of the realm of humanity. We must be the cause of the appearance of the perfections in the world of man. We must not be like the beasts of prey. We must not allow carnage and bloodshed. We must regard the blood of man as sacred. We must not shed the holy blood of man for the paltry earth. We must all agree upon one fundamental principle—that principle is the oneness of the kingdom of humanity.

"In this age, Baha'o'llah has breathed the Holy Spirit into the dead body of the world. Consequently every weak soul is strengthened by these fresh divine outbreathings. Every poor man will become rich, every darkened soul will become illumined, every ignorant one will become wise, because the confirmations of the Holy Spirit are descending like unto torrents. *A new era of divine consciousness is upon us.* The world of humanity is going through a process of transformation. *A new race is being developed.* The thoughts of human brotherhood are permeating all regions. New ideals are stirring the depths of hearts and a new spirit of universal consciousness is being profoundly felt by all men."

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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Sharaf 1, 71 (December 31, 1915)

No. 16

"The principle of religion is to acknowledge what is revealed by God, and to obey the laws established in His Book."

—BAHA'O'LLAH

The Word of God*

By GEORGE O. LATIMER

THE greatest cause of the inharmony in the world today is the lack of religion; or rather the failure of mankind to understand the meaning of and the reason for religion. If this were not the case, why are nine civilized nations of the world at war with one another; why are seven great religions bitterly attacking each other; why is there unceasing strife between capital and labor and why are the pillars of our social, political and economic structure being shaken from their very foundation? Our body politic has ever been based, as history proves, upon the teachings of the messengers of God, and surely these divinely inspired men have not given a false doctrine to the world. What then is the cause of this present state of affairs, and are we not to blame for the existence of such a condition? Let us look into the matter with an open and unbiased mind and ascertain the real purpose of religion.

To quote from Abdul-Baha: "The first bestowal of God in the world of humanity is religion, because religion consists in divine teachings to men, and most assuredly divine teachings are preferable to all other sources of instruction. Religion confers upon man the life everlasting. Religion is a service to the

world of morality. Religion guides humanity to the eternal happiness. Religion is the cause of the everlasting honor in the world of man. Religion has ever helped humanity towards progress." By religion, *the fundamentals* of religion are meant, not the blind imitations, dogmas and creeds that have been added through man's invention and which have ever been the cause of the destruction and retrogression of nations, nay even their degradation. Again history is our proof for these facts. These foundations of the religion of God are one and have been laid by the divine prophets through whom the word of God has spoken.

It is the purpose of this discourse to show that this word of God which has been the impetus to all advancement in civilization, is and ever has been fundamentally the same. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"; but man's refusal to accept and understand this "word" has been the cause of his failure to comprehend the reality and the oneness of all religion. Baha'o'llah has written: "The Sun of Truth is the word of God, upon which depends the training of the people of thought. It is the spirit of reality and the water of life. All things owe their existence to it. Its man-

*Note—Compiled in Stuttgart, Germany, during August, 1914. This manuscript was presented to Abdul-Baha personally by Mr. Latimer while in Akka in October of the same year. Abdul-Baha gave consent to its publication.—*The Editors*.

ifestation is ever according to the capacity and coloring of the mirror through which it may reflect. For example: Its light when cast on the mirror of the wise, gives expression to wisdom; when reflected from the minds of artists it produces manifestations of new and beautiful arts; when it shines through the minds of students it reveals knowledge and unfolds mysteries. All things of the world arise through man and are manifest in him, through whom they find life and development; and man is dependent for his (spiritual) existence upon the sun of the word of God. All the good names and lofty qualities are of the word. The word is the fire of God, which glowing in the hearts of people, burns away all things that are not of God. The minds of the lovers are ever aflame with this fire." And from the pen of Abdul-Baha: "The word of God is the storehouse of all good, all power, all wisdom. The illiterate fishers and savage Arabs were thereby enabled to solve such problems as were puzzles to eminent sages all through the ages. It awakens within us that brilliant intuition which makes us independent of all tuition and endows us with an all-embracing power of spiritual understanding. Many a soul, in the ark of philosophy, after fruitless struggles, was drowned in the sea of conflicting theories of cause and effect, while those on board the craft of simplicity reached the shore of the universal cause by the help of favorable winds blowing from the point of divine knowledge. When man is associated with that transcendent power emanating from the word of God, the tree of his existence becomes so well rooted in the soil of assurance that it laughs at the violent hurricanes of skepticism which attempt its eradication. For this association of the part with the whole endows him with the whole, and this union of the particular with the *universal* makes him all-in-all."

In order to understand the light of this sun of truth one must free his mind from the superstitions of the past, and investigate the reality of the "word" with a

fair unbiased mind. Reality is not multiple and by religion is meant the one law or word of God, ever from the same source, which has been the cause of the establishment of all divine institutions in the world. According to Abdul-Baha this "word" of God has a twofold function and may be separated into two divisions. One deals with clay and water while the other deals with the heart and soul. The one has to do with the world of morality—the ethical sublimity of human nature; the other is concerned with the transactions of society and has to do with the material well-being of man.

The first aids him in his advancement toward the kingdom of God. It is true idealism. It has ever been the means of quickening man from a material being into a spiritual one. It is the cause of the "new birth" of which his holiness Christ spoke. This division has always been one and the same in all religions. It is the fundamental basis of all and is not subject to change or alteration. It has been renewed in each prophetic dispensation or cycle; and, in short, can be summed up by the "golden rule" which Christ gave (Matt. 7:12) "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them, for this is the law and the prophets"—which Mohammed proclaimed: "Let none of you treat his brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated"—and which again appears in the teachings of Baha'o'llah: "O son of man! Wert thou to observe mercy, thou wouldst not regard thine own interest but the interest of mankind. Wert thou to observe justice, choose thou for others what thou choosest for thyself." This is the spiritual, the essential, the eternal side of religion.

The second assists man in his relationship toward society. It aims at the highest state of material civilization and progress. It has advanced man from the depths of ignorance to a high stage of enlightenment. This division, however, has been subject to change and transformation according to the exigencies of time

and the varying needs of mankind. Each succeeding prophet has abrogated the existing material law and substituted teachings applicable to the (then present) necessities of man. This, however, is the practical, the non-essential, the transitory side of religion.

Let us consider for a moment this second part of the Word of God with a keen sight, for it is the misunderstanding of the purpose of these teachings of God that has caused the establishment of many different faiths in the world. For example, in the time of Noah certain requirements demanded that sea-foods be allowed. In Abraham's dispensation camel's flesh was a food for man, but in Jacob's epoch it was unlawful. After Christ, four disciples, including Peter and Paul, permitted the eating of animal food forbidden by the Bible, "with the exception of those animals which had been strangled, or which were sacrificed to idols, and of blood." (Acts 15:20.) Later Paul permitted the eating of such animals.

During the time of Adam it was permissible for man to marry his sister, and Abel, Cain and Seth took unto wife their own sisters. In the Abrahamic cycle a certain expedient made it permissible for man to marry his aunt, as Sarah was the sister of Abraham's mother; but when Moses came and established the law of the Torah these material ordinances were abrogated and changed. Later Christ came and broke the Sabbath and forbade divorce. When Moses came to the world there were no houses of correction, no forms of punishment and because of the lawless condition of the people the law of God had to be strict and direct. Therefore Moses said that an eye was to be taken for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. He laid down ten commandments for dealing with the murderer. If a man robbed to the extent of one dollar, his hand was cut off. It is not permitted in our advanced civilization to carry out these commands. It is indeed impossible; even the law of capital punishment

has become a mooted question. But when Jesus came he abrogated the law of Moses and substituted the law of love: If the right cheek was smitten, then turn the left also. Now in this day Baha'o'llah has said: "If you be slain for God's good pleasure, verily it is better for you than that ye should slay."

Again the tribes that Mohammed came to were in the lowest stages of savagery and debasement. It was one of their customs to bury their own daughters alive. A man was permitted to take a thousand women as his property and nearly every husband had at least ten wives. It was a custom that when such a husband died his sons took possession of each other's mothers. If a son threw his mantle over his father's wife and said, "This woman is my lawful property," immediately she became his slave and chattel. In all fairness one may ask, was not Mohammed's law curbing this barbaric state of affairs and making it unlawful for man to have more than four wives an advance over the existing condition? And now in our present day, Abdul-Baha has abrogated this law of Mohammed by forbidding polygamy. In a word these seeming differences are merely alterations demanded by the growth and advancement of mankind. Time changes and when time changes, the laws must change. Therefore, it is impossible for us to compare the time of Moses to that of Christ because the condition of the world has greatly altered.

The existence of the world may be compared to the physical being or health of man, and the prophets of God to skillful physicians. It is impossible for the human body to remain in one state of health, and different diseases occur, which require different remedies. The Divine Wisdom requires that for every change of condition there will be a change of commands and when diseases change, there will be a change of treatment. For example, the patient may be in the throes of a raging fever and the doctor will administer a cooling remedy,

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TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA.

O thou Star of the West!

HE IS GOD!

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. VI

Sharaf 1, 71 (December 31, 1915)

No. 16

Letters from Mirza Ahmad Sohrab

Mt. Carmel, Haifa, Syria,
Sept. 18, 1915.

Kate C. Ives, Oldacre, Eliot, Maine.

My dear spiritual sister in the love of
God!

Yesterday a letter was received from Teheran giving the sad and painful story of the recent troubles against our friends in different cities; the pillaging of their properties to the extent of \$60,000; their dispersion through the mountains and deserts and the martyrdom of a number of spiritual teachers. This harrowing news saddened the heart of Abdul-Baha. For a long time his grief was so great and overwhelming that he did not open his mouth. After so many months of complete silence and lack of correspondence, this was, then, the news from the headquarters of the Cause, this was the manner in which the followers of light were treated by the people of darkness! He read the letter twice and pondered long over its contents. Continuing his walk, for an hour he spoke with unusual animation and earnestness and gave vent to his utmost feelings and thoughts. Like into a tumultuous waterfall the words fell from his lips with thunderous

tones. It would fill many pages should I attempt to give you a translation of his discourse, but I must acknowledge that it was a wonderful, spontaneous outburst of the spirit that could not be produced under the usual standard of social and religious emotions!

How true it is that this is the year of universal tests and ordeals for all mankind! None are excepted. Everyone is suffering, men and women, old and young, rich and poor. God is pouring the vial of His wrath upon all His children. Their negligence has reached to such a degree that they have forgotten not only the precepts of their Creator, but the Creator Himself. They have set aside His laws and statutes and are walking in the path of desire and self. They are not thinking of the consequences of their own deeds and are submerged in the sea of self-adoration. Without any valid reason they shed the blood of their own brothers, pillage their properties, set on fire their homes and scatter them to the four corners of the earth. How all-embracing are the teachings of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah): "Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch!"

If the people of the world could unstop their ears and listen to this spiritual all-inclusive principle, there were no need of these wars and their calamitous results. They would have then acknowledged that God is the Father of all mankind irrespective of race, religion and nationality, that He is the Universal Shepherd, that we are all His sheep, that He is so kind and benevolent as to feed us, protect us, nourish us and surround us with the white fluttering wings of His protection. They would have then confessed the brotherhood of man is not a utopian, unpractical dream; that the Fatherhood of God is not a visionary theory without basic foundation and that international conciliation and amity are not wild doctrines of dreamers. These ideas would have then become the moving policies of their administrations and activities.

In short, now that the whole world is drinking from this over-flowing cup of sorrow, our friends in Persia are holding in their hands similar goblets filled with the same nectar. Heroically they are giving up everything in the path of God, enduring incredible hardships for the sake of Truth. We beg of you to pray for them in your meetings and gatherings, so that God may send down upon them His confirmation and aid to withstand all the tests in this dark night. We also pray for them in this Holy Land. They are indeed the true soldiers of the Lord, the humble servants of the Most High and the burning torches of guidance. The effect of their patience and self-sacrifice will illumine the hearts of the seekers of Truth and their example will be followed by generations yet unborn.

Please give my faithful greetings to all the friends. I think of them and never forget them. I am as ever your sincere brother,

(Signed) *Ahmad*.

—
Washington, D. C., Oct. 28, 1915.

Dear Brother Windust:—From a letter just at hand, addressed to me by Mirza

Ahmad Sohrab under date September 16, 1915, I quote the following:

“As usual Abdul-Baha gives wonderful talks almost every day, and they are preserved for future distribution. There must be great wisdom in the ending of all the former relations between the east and the west, in fact Abdul-Baha has repeatedly asserted this point, exhorting us to be patient and long-suffering, and that brighter and happier days are in store for the people of the world. He says this is like the season of winter—frosty, snowy, windy and cold; this is the night of the world, dark, gloomy and forbidding. But even during the inky night we can look heavenward and behold the shining stars suspended in the limitless, unfathomable space. We can study the book of the firmament and decipher its brilliant hieroglyphic alphabet of this matchless creation. There in yon blue vault is the wonderful Venus, the luminous Orion and Pleiades, the great planets, the scintillating constellations, the Milky Way begemmed with millions of suns and stars! Is not this in itself a great consolation, a source of infinite comfort? The darker the night, the more brilliant the stars. In a way we must be thankful for the coming of the night, for it makes it possible for us to see and appreciate the starry hosts of heaven. In a similar manner these sad events will bring forth and create better environment for humanity, causing the stars of divine qualities to shine forth with greater brilliancy. Those who cannot look toward heaven and see the stars of hopeful promises twinkling with dazzling beauty, who complain on account of the enveloping darkness, are indeed blind, deaf and speechless. Only the seer, the thinker, the poet, are endowed with this invisible power of visualization. Abdul-Baha desires us to gain this heavenly vision, this spiritual hope, this radiant faith so that we may be able to serve our fellow-men.

“We are all very well; especially

Abdul-Baha is very healthy. He prays in behalf of all the Bahais and wishes them to work for goodwill and brotherhood amongst all the nations. He desires them to display extraordinary effort in the diffusion of the fragrance of the love of God and set aglow the fire of attraction and enkindlement in the hearts of all the children of men."

Faithfully yours,
Joseph H. Hannen.

Dear Brother Windust:—From a postal card, just at hand, sent to me by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and dated Haifa, Syria, Oct. 24, 1915, I quote the following for reproduction in the STAR OF THE WEST if you can utilize it. I am advised that a series of cards is being sent out, and extracts from these may be used as you receive them and find them available:

"Having finished and mailed the series of letters, I have been writing a series of postal cards, making their contents as general as possible, so that they may be copied and distributed and portions to appear in the STAR OF THE WEST.* So far I have written twenty-five, and will write thirty or thirty-five more, completing a circle of dear and steadfast believers. As I am doing this work at the suggestion of Abdul-Baha, I hope they

will stimulate the friends to greater activity during this season. We must all arise in the accomplishment of worthy and noble services, and be not satisfied with little things. It is true that we must attend to the small things as conscientiously as the great things, but in the accomplishment of the smaller services we must not lose sight of the great and universal problem of this Cause. Conscious of our weakness in the Presence of God, we must appear as the tower of strength in the eyes of men and at all times rely upon His confirmation and beg for His help. Banishing all ideas that breed disappointment and discouragement, we must breathe the spirit of hope into the dead bodies of mankind.

"This is the eighth day since Abdul-Baha came to Bahajee to pray for the warring nations at the Holy Tomb of the Blessed Beauty (Baha'o'llah). I have written every day one postal card to different friends, and they are mailed."

Faithfully yours,
Joseph H. Hannen.

*Note—Copies of many of the letters and postal cards referred to have been sent by the recipients to the STAR OF THE WEST. We regret that lack of space makes it impossible to print them.—*The Editors.*

The Word of God

(Continued from page 123)

in a few hours the state of the patient may be changed to one of chills. It is then that the skilled physician changes his remedy and applies a heating or vivifying tonic. The skill of the physician depends upon his ability to prescribe remedies that will cure the patient in every state of sickness. The ignorant patient may complain of the lack of skill on the part of the physician when he changes his treatment, saying to himself, "If the first drug was my cure, why did he change, and if it were not my cure

why did he recommend it in the beginning?"—but the wise patient is ever submissive and the change of treatment only adds to his conviction and faith in the doctor. Some constitutions are weak while others are strong, but all need constant care and attention. The change of remedies according to the state of the patient's condition is a proof of the skill of the doctor.

Today the condition of the world is very grave and serious. Humanity is sick, socially, economically, spiritually.

It is attacked by the germs of despotism and oppression; the microbes of injustice and inequality have entered the system, the bacteria of deceit and hypocrisy are multiplying; the savagery of bloody war and relentless strife have gripped and distorted the body; the scourge of license and calumny has left its deep pit-marks; the disintegrating forces of patriotic, social and religious prejudices are attacking man from all sides. The air has become contaminated with blind dogmas, creeds and superstitions and man's sustenance is befouled by pride, lust and selfishness. Man is gasping for relief from this disease of repulsion, discord, hatred and separation. The old teachings are insufficient for today, they cannot cure every disease and are not an ointment for every wound.

Now in this hour of extreme crisis the Divine Physician has again come in the person of Baha'o'llah and has given the allaying remedies of attraction, harmony, unity and love. He has prescribed antidotes, free from all toxins, which have the power to cure our spiritual as well as sociologic sickness. His medicine is the panacea for every disease in the world today. The divine healer, Christ, administered to the needs of his time but he did not give his full treatment for he said: "I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now." His treatment had to do with the individual, while the remedies of Baha'o'llah are for the community at large. He has diagnosed every sickness of the body of the world and prescribed remedies accordingly. His treatment is for the body politic and in administering it he says to the world of humanity: "The progress of man depends upon faithfulness, wisdom, chastity, intelligence and deeds. He is ever degraded by ignorance, lack of faith, untruth and selfishness. Verily, man is not called man until he be imbued with the attributes of the Merciful. He is not man because of wealth and adornment, learning and refinement. Blessed is he who is free from the names, seeking the shore of the sea of purity and

loving the melody of the dove of virtue." In a similar way all the demands of our present stage of civilization are provided for and everything that has been a hindrance and a setback to improvement has been cast aside.

These material changes, however, are the non-essentials and have been aptly termed the accidentals of religion. Abdul-Baha writes: "In this great cycle and wonderful dispensation, the majority of those non-essential commands which refer to the body are to be administered by the House of Justice, because this great cycle is of long duration, this great age is vast, continuous and eternal, and since changes and alterations are the characteristic and necessary demands of the world, therefore these material commands will be administered according to the exigencies of the time, but the *very foundation* of the law of God has never been nor will be altered. The same foundation, which is the basis of the law of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Christ, Mohammed and all the prophets, is again to be found in the teachings of the Bab, Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha.

To sum up what has already been said, we find that the second part of the law or word of God consists of teachings which are concerned with the material welfare of man. It is composed of instructions relating to prayer, fasting, forms of worship, marriage and divorce, legal processes, the abolition of slavery and the method of treatment for criminals, etc. This part of the divine law is modified and altered according to the condition of mankind in each prophetic cycle. While on the other hand the first part of the law of God is never abrogated because it is spiritual and not material truth. It comprises faith, knowledge, rectitude, justice, piety, righteousness, trustworthiness, love of God, inward peace, purity, severance, humility, meekness, patience, constancy and all the heavenly attributes. It causes man to care for the wretched, to uplift the down-trodden, to give to the needy and to defend the oppressed. It makes man treat

friend or foe alike and as a result one finds the wounded German and French soldiers lying side by side, each being nursed by the same kind hand. These divine qualities are the lofty attributes of God, they are unceasing and eternal. In every age this same spiritual law of God has been renewed. The necessity for the renewal is not that these teachings have entirely disappeared from the world, but that man has lost the spirit of them. And when the spirit has departed from the essential side of the word of God, then also the non-essential side becomes corrupt and in need of a change. The world is in this condition at the present time and again God has renewed his spiritual law and altered the material law through the divine instrumentation of the Bab, Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha. Shall we still keep on suffering or shall we turn to the divine

physician and partake of his spiritual treatment? The divine healer, Baha'o'llah has offered the following remedy: "Ye are all fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch. O ye discerning ones of the people: Verily the words which have descended from the heaven of the will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of oneness. Be the cause of the comfort and the advancement of humanity. This handful of dust, the world, is one home: let it be in unity. Forsake pride, it is a cause of discord; follow that which tends to harmony. Consort with all the people with love and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity and unity is the source of order in the world."

All other remedies have failed. Shall we not give this treatment a fair trial?

Letter from India to Mr. George Latimer

Ghatia Azam Khan (U. P., India)

November 5, 1915.

My Dear Brother Latimer:—It made me so very happy to receive a letter from you yesterday, enclosing a photograph of Abdul-Baha. I thank you most cordially for the blessed gift. I shall keep it as a real souvenir of the spirit working in America, and show it to all the friends I meet. This week I also had a letter from sister Lua (Getsinger) from Cairo, telling us of the stirring times she passed through at Haifa. She says she has also written accounts of what she saw there and sent them to America and to London. A copy of the London accounts would probably reach me, but unless the American article is published in the STAR OF THE WEST I may not be able to see it. It is most heart-rending to hear that the people there have no money and no food.

What you say of the work you are all privileged to do out there in America is

very cheering. Even the matters as they stand with the Cause are not without a ray of hope, for the days of greatest hardships have been the days of greatest progress of the Cause. The news of the safe arrival of Miss Root in America was another word of glad-tidings. We found her truly what you say of her. She was such a help and inspiration to the Cause and the workers in India, being the embodiment of self-sacrifice. Let us hope most sincerely that you and Mr. Remey are coming soon. India is looking with most eager eyes towards Palestine and waiting for the light to flood it today as of yore.

Please convey Abha greetings to Brother Remey, Dr. Getsinger, Sister Lua, Miss Root, Howard Struven, Zee-nat Khanum (Mrs. Bagdadi) and other friends when you write to them, or meet them.

Yours sincerely in the service of the Covenant,

Hashmatullah.

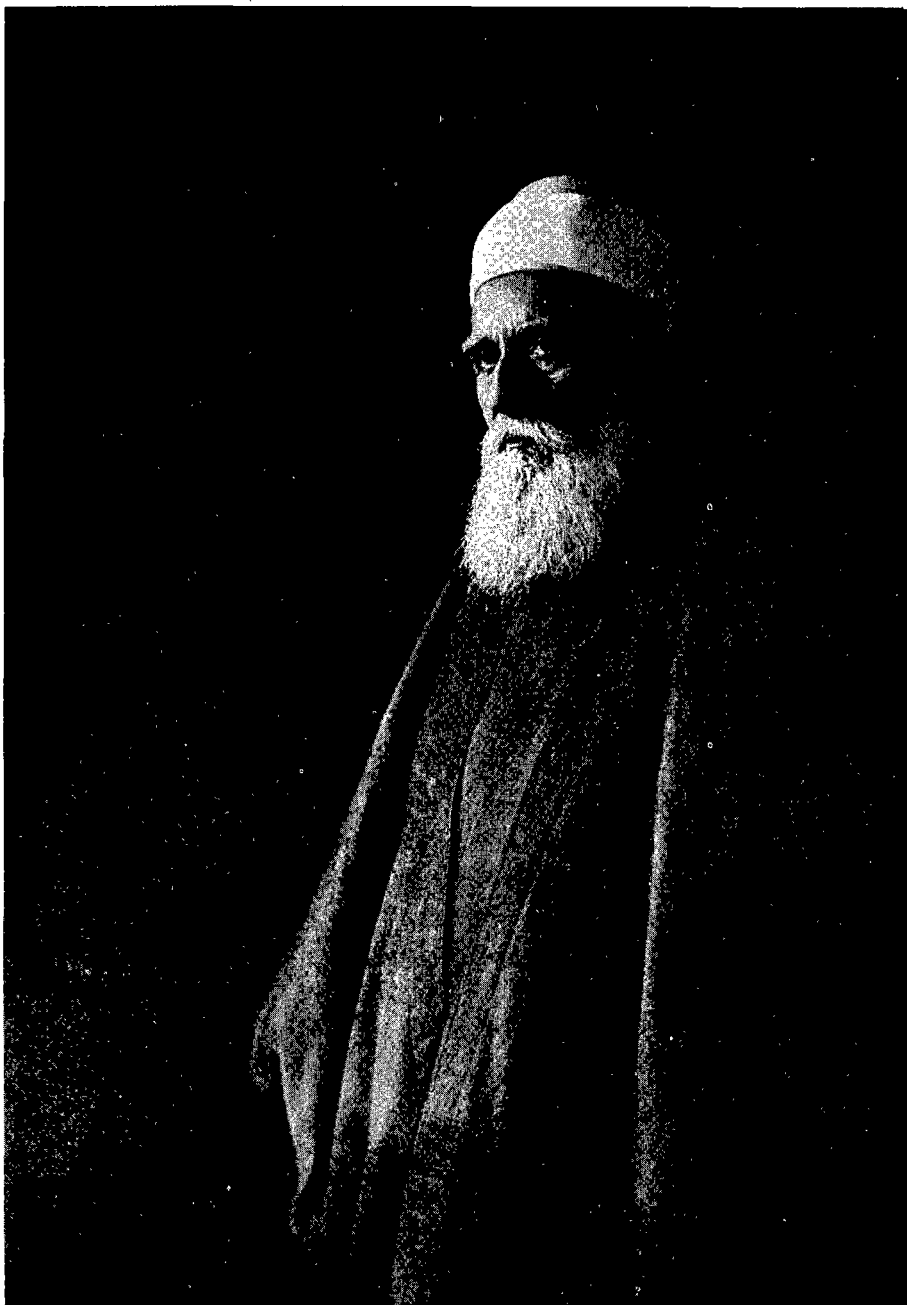
Words of Baha'o'llah from Kitab-el-Akdas

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 Source 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 galleries built 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!



ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS

“Now the day has arrived in which the edifice of God, the divine sanctuary, the spiritual Temple, shall be erected in America.”

Portrait by
Boissonnas & Taponier,
Paris

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. VI

Sultan 1, 71 (January 19, 1916)

No. 17

Foreword

THE Executive Board of Bahai Temple Unity has been impelled to issue this special Mashrak-el-Azkar edition of the STAR OF THE WEST by the urgent desire to place in the hands of every friend of the great Cause, every follower of Abdul-Baha, his words upon the purpose of the Universal House of Worship and its erection in America.

These words, arranged in chronological order over a period of ten years, include tablets, table-talks given in Akka and addresses delivered by Abdul-Baha during his American sojourn.

Upon these utterances there can be no comment. The call is there, the insistent call, to every Bahai in America to arise for the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar.

The inception in the west of the Mashrak-el-Azkar dates back to the early spring of 1903. The cornerstone of the Ishkabab Temple—the beginning of the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in the world—had just been laid. Photographs of that momentous event were sent by the friends of the east to the Chicago House of Spirituality.

And that body, inspired by the great vision of the Mashrak-el-Azkar upon American soil, supplicated to Abdul-Baha that the second Mashrak-el-Azkar in the world might be erected in America and in Chicago.

The tablet of May 30, 1903, was written in response to the appeal of the House of Spirituality. During the same year, three other tablets were revealed upon the same subject, all proclaiming in no uncertain phraseology the importance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in America.

Now a silence of four years seems to have surrounded the Mashrak-el-Azkar of the west. It was a tremendous undertaking. The Cause in America was young. The laborers were few. They were just coming into the realization of the spiritual dynamics of the Bahai Revelation. They knew that the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar was incumbent upon them by command not only of Abdul-Baha, but of Baha'o'llah in the *Kitab-el-Akdas*. As yet they did not know, perhaps, that, "Verily, God never reveals a letter or word from the Tongue of the inaccessible Godly Tree, without at the time of utterance, the spirit of its reality being created."*

So, apparently, for four years the Mashrak-el-Azkar idea in America languished. But it was never lost. In the silence it was gaining momentum; taking definite, ineffaceable form in the consciousness of the faithful.

And then, at the psychological moment, the silence was broken. In response to a supplication of inquiry, came the tablet of June 14, 1907, proclaiming again the importance of the construction of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Chicago.

*The Bab.

From that date, until the European war closed the door of direct communication between Abdul-Baha and the Bahais of America, every year came the call to the west to arise for the building of this great Bahai Institution, this manifest sign of the oneness of humanity and the vitality of religion.

Have we been slow to understand its imperativeness?

"Today, in America, no matter is greater for the elevation of the Word of God than the Mashrak-el-Azkar."

"The question of Mashrak-el-Azkar is very important and is superior to every matter."

"The Mashrak-el-Azkar is the most important matter and the greatest divine institute."

"When the Mashrak-el-Azkar, with its accessories, is established in the world, aside from its religious, or spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization."

"This organization of the Mashrak-el-Azkar will be a type for the coming centuries and will hold the station of the Mother."

Have we in America been slow to comprehend our great responsibility, our great privilege to serve the Cause of God, to influence civilization during all the ages to come?

If we have been slow to comprehend, surely, this compilation of the utterances of Abdul-Baha will awaken us, will inspire us, will stimulate us to greater effort in the accomplishment of this—the supremest work in the Cause today.

The world is sick. The European tragedy grows in horror. In America we hear rumors of war. To the Bahais of the world has been given the remedy for the world's ills.

Do we in America believe it with a realization so deep and powerful that, before another year has passed away, all obstacles shall be overcome and the walls of the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in America, the Mother Institution, shall rise triumphantly, in proclamation to all humanity that the "Most Great Peace" has come?

Unresting, let us strive for this prodigious achievement, that, when the door of communication with Abdul-Baha is again open, we may say to him—

"The Bahais of the west have arisen greatly to service. Come to America and lay the corner stone of the Mother Mashrak-el-Azkar of the world."

No message from America would stir more profoundly the great heart of Abdul-Baha.

While he is still with us, let us respond to his call. Let us objectify our supreme faith in his mission, in his station as the Center of God's Covenant.

We who have been called to the great service—let us arise!

(Signed) ALFRED E. LUNT, President,
 ELLA G. COOPER, Vice-President,
 ALBERT H. HALL, Treasurer,
 CORINNE TRUE, Financial Secretary,
 HARLAN FOSTER OBER, Secretary.
 WILLIAM H. RANDALL,
 EDWARD B. KINNEY,
 A. R. VAIL,
 JOSEPH H. HANNEN.

Utterances of Abdul-Baha upon the Mashrak-el-Azkar

I SEND you the glad tidings of the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar (the Bahai Temple) in Ishkabad, with all joy and great happiness. The friends of God assembled together with rejoicing and conveyed the stones themselves, upon their backs, while attracted by the love of God and for the glory of God. Soon that great Temple will be completed and the voice of prayer and praise shall ascend to the Sublime Kingdom.

I was rejoiced through your endeavors in this glorious Cause, made with joy and good interest. I pray God to aid you in exalting His Word, and in establishing the Temple of Worship, through His grace and ancient mercy. Verily, ye are the first to arise for this glorious Cause in that vast region. Soon will ye see the spread of this enterprise in the world, and its resounding voice shall go through the ears of the people in all parts.

Exert your energy in accomplishing what ye have undertaken, so that this glorious Temple may be built, that the beloved of God may assemble therein and that they may pray and offer glory to God for guiding them to His Kingdom.

[Translated May 30, 1903.]

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 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 tu-

mult 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.

[Translated June 7, 1903.]

The vision also signifies that a Mashrak-el-Azkar will soon be established in America. The cries of supplication and invocation will be raised to the Highest Kingdom therefrom and, verily, the people will enter into the Religion of God by troops, with great enthusiasm and attraction.

[Translated June 9, 1903.]

O friends of Abdul-Baha, and his co-sharers and partners in the servitude of the Lord of Hosts! Verily, the greatest affair and the most important matter today is to establish a Mashrak-el-Azkar and to found a Temple, from which the voices of praise may rise to the Kingdom of the Majestic Lord. Blessings be upon you for having thought to do so and intended to erect such an edifice, advancing all in devoting your wealth to this great purpose and to this splendid work. You will soon see the angels of confirmation succeeding you, and the hosts of reinforcement crowding before you.

When the Mashrak-el-Azkar is accomplished, when the lights are emanating therefrom, the righteous ones are presenting themselves therein, the prayers are performed with supplication towards the mysterious Kingdom (of Heaven), the voice of glorification is raised to the Lord, the Supreme, then the believers shall rejoice, the hearts shall be dilated and overflowed with the love of the All-Living and Self-Existent (God).

The people shall hasten to worship in that heavenly temple, the fragrances of God will be elevated, the divine teachings will be established in the hearts like the establishment of the spirit in mankind; the people will then stand firm in the Cause of your Lord, the Merciful.

[Translated July 2, 1903.]

The construction of Mashrak-el-Azkar in those regions is of the utmost importance; is conducive to the attainment of the good pleasure of the Almighty and the descent of the confirmation by the Exalted Lord.

[Translated June 14, 1907.]

To have it (the Mashrak-el-Azkar) built is most important. Some material things have spiritual effect, and the Mashrak-el-Azkar is a material thing that will have great effect upon the spirits of the people. Not only does the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar have an effect upon those who build it, but upon the whole world. In the time of Christ the believers used a room under a house, where they held their meetings. Moses built the Tabernacle. Solomon built the first real Temple. In the Mashrak-el-Azkar, services will be held every morning, and the Words of Baha'o'llah only are to be read. Mashrak-el-Azkar means "Dawning Point of Mention" (Where God is mentioned).

[Table talk given in Akka January, 1908.]

Thou hast written concerning the organization of a Council for the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. This news brought much spirit and fragrance, for the nine delegates sent by the various assemblies gathered in that meeting and consulted concerning the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar.

The Mashrak-el-Azkar is the most important matter and the greatest divine Institute. Consider how the first institute of His holiness Moses, after his exodus from Egypt, was the "Tent of Martyrdom," which he raised and which was the traveling Temple. It was a tent which they pitched in the desert wher-

ever they abode and worshiped in it. Likewise, after His holiness Christ—May the spirit of the world be a sacrifice to Him!—the first institute by the disciples was a Temple. They planned a Church in every country. Consider the Gospel (read it) and the importance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar will become evident.

In fine, I hope that all the beloved of God, collectively, in the continent of America, men and women, will strive night and day, until the Mashrak-el-Azkar be erected in the utmost solidity and beauty.

[Translated February 4, 1908.]

Concerning the erection of the Temple: Now all the believers must become united so that the Temple may be built soon in one place, for should (the believers) undertake (the erection of the Temple) in many places, it will not become completed anywhere. And, as in Chicago they have preceded every other place to plan the erection of the Temple, undoubtedly, to co-operate and help them is nobler and a necessity. Then, when it is built in one place, it will become erected in many other places. If, for the present, you prepare or establish a home in New York, though by renting it, to become a center for the gathering of the believers of God, it is very acceptable. God willing, in all the states of America in the future, there will be erected Temples with infinite architectural beauty, art, with pleasing proportions, and handsome and attractive appearance, especially in New York. But, for the present, be ye satisfied with a rented place.

[Translated May 9, 1908.]

But it is two or three years since a number of people are making efforts in Chicago, but this has not yet given result, and important persons are exerting themselves and applying for contributions to various quarters. Now, while the building of this Temple is not yet started or engaged in, if there be the founding of a second Temple undertaken, neither of the two would be ac-

complished and this failure would weaken the Cause of God.

[Translated 1908.]

In reality, the radiant, pure hearts are the Mashrak-el-Azkar and from them the voice of supplication and invocation continually reaches the Supreme Concourse. I ask God to make the heart of every one of you a temple of the divine Temples and to let the lamp of the Great Guidance be lighted therein. And, when the hearts find such an attainment, they will certainly exert the utmost endeavor and energy in the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Thus may the outward express the inward and the form (or letter) indicate the meaning (or reality).

[Translated May 21, 1908.]

His honor . . . presented the map of the land of the Mashrak-el-Azkar on the day of the declaration of His holiness the Supreme (the Bab). Great joy was obtained thereby and with the greatest care it was considered. It is indeed a delightful spot worthy of this edifice and building. However, it must be enlarged yet a little more, so that spacious ground around the Mashrak-el-Azkar may afford ample room for a rose garden.

Thank God! the people of God made such a sincere resolution and exerted such a great effort. It is hoped that all the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful, from all regions and directions, will assist the erection of this building, so that in a short time a wonderful edifice may arise in the name of God and prove the reason whereby the people may examine and investigate the Cause of God and seek the divine teachings.

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.

In the days of the Manifestation, any city, wherein a Temple was founded, afforded the means of promulgation (of the Cause) and the confirmation of the hearts and the confidence of souls, for in those dwellings the Name of God is

ever mentioned and always commemorated. And, for the tranquillity and repose of the hearts, there is no other means save the commemoration of almighty God.

Praise be to God! The erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar has a great effect in all grades (or states). It was tested in the east and so, evidently and plainly, was it proved. Even when in a village a house was called the Mashrak-el-Azkar, it possessed a different effect. How much more its building and organization!

Therefore, O ye friends and maid-servants of the Merciful! As long as ye can, endeavor with life and heart, so that the Mashrak-el-Azkar of Chicago may soon be built, organized and confirmed.

If all the friends in America, in all cities and hamlets, assist and by the means of a building commission help, this offering will prove most acceptable in the Kingdom of the Sun of the Horizons.

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 grace and favor.

Verily, Thou art the Generous, the Merciful, the Bountiful!

[Translated July 4, 1908.]

The believers of God in America, one and all, must unitedly make an effort, so that the Temple of God will be built in Chicago, then, afterwards, it will be built in other localities. . . .

Regarding the building of the Temple in Chicago, both of you display the utmost effort, that is, effort in encouraging and inspiring the believers and the maid-servants of God, so that they may assist in the matter with generosity and thus very soon this Temple will be erected. This matter is of great importance (utmost importance).

[In Abdul-Baha's own handwriting] In Ishkabad, the believers of God made the erection of the Temple conducive to affinity and unity, so that it really became the cause of oneness of the Word.

Ye also make the erection of the Temple in America conducive to the unity and oneness of the believers, of the maid-servants and servants of the Merciful, so that, in one thought, one aim, they engage themselves in the building of the Temple.

[Translated July, 1908.]

I am hopeful by divine bounty and grace that the beloved ones of God may be confirmed in the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar and all its accessories, for the Mashrak-el-Azkar has important accessories which are accounted of the basic foundations. These are—school for orphan children, hospital and dispensary for the poor, place for the incapable (i. e., home for the cripple), college for the higher scientific education. The meaning is this, that, in every place,

First a Mashrak-el-Azkar must be founded;

Then a School for the Education of orphan children and the poor;

Then the Hospital and Medical Dispensary must be founded;

Then the Home of the Cripple;

Then the College of Higher Scientific Education.

In every city a great Mashrak-el-Azkar must be founded after this order. Now we hope the Mashrak-el-Azkar may be founded in Chicago. After its foundation, the important accessories may gradually be founded.

[Translated November 25, 1908.]

Some of the souls are not aware of the importance of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. They think and say: The other nations have hundreds of thousands of temples, the Christians having as many as a million temples of the greatest structural importance. What result have they yielded, that now this one Mashrak-el-Azkar is said to cause the manifestation of signs and prove a source of light! One million churches have not yielded any fruit. What is the one Mashrak-el-Azkar going to do? . . .

Furthermore, today, the establishment of the Mashrak-el-Azkar is of paramount importance, but hereafter it shall not be so. This is the beginning of organization. It is like unto the first church founded in Christianity. It is an expression of the elevation of the Word of God. When the Mashrak-el-Azkar was erected in Ishkabad, its influence was felt in all the oriental countries. Who-soever heard of it commenced an investigation of the Cause. Now the Mashrak-el-Azkar of Ishkabad, like an evident banner waves in the world. And, if, in Chicago, the Mashrak-el-Azkar is established, even as in Ishkabad, then you will see what the recognition of the Cause will do. Particularly, the arrangement of the Mashrak-el-Azkar is such, that it will exert the greatest effect upon the civilized world, for it has many accessories. Among them are the following:

A school for orphans, a college for higher scientific education (or higher knowledge), a hospital, a home for cripples, a hospice.

When the Mashrak-el-Azkar, with its accessories, is established in the world, aside from its religious or spiritual influence, it will have a tremendous effect upon civilization. Besides the religionists who will feel its influence, materialists will not be exempt therefrom. Moreover it contains divine wisdoms, spiritual effects upon the intellects and thoughts. Subsequent to its erection these will become evident.

[Table talk given in Akka, February, 1909.]

Among the most important affairs is the founding of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, although weak minds may not grasp its importance: nay, perchance, they imagine this Mashrak-el-Azkar to be a temple like other temples.

They may say to themselves: "Every nation has a hundred thousand gigantic temples; what result have they yielded, that now this one Mashrak-el-Azkar (is said) to cause the manifestation of signs and prove a source of light?" But they are ignorant of the fact that the founding of this Mashrak-el-Azkar is to be in the inception of the organization of the Kingdom.

Therefore, it is important and is an expression of the upraising of the evident Standard, which is waving in the center of that continent, the results and effects of which will become manifest in the hearts and spirits. No soul will be aware of this mature wisdom save after trial.

When the Mashrak-el-Azkar was founded in Ishkabad, its clamor affected all the cities of the orient and caused souls to awaken (to the call). Most of the souls who investigated and heard the explanation were attracted to the Kingdom of God.

Moreover, the accessories of the Mashrak-el-Azkar are numerous. Among them are the school for orphans, the great college for the higher arts, hospital, home for the cripples, and hospice. The doors of these places are to be opened to all sects—no differentiations. When these accessories are completed, and, by God's help and aid, the departments fully systematized, it will be proved that the Mashrak-el-Azkar is to human society a great bounty and a great blessing.

In brief, through the unlimited bounty of God, I am hopeful that the beloved ones of God in America may be aided and confirmed in founding this mighty and solid foundation and gradually annex thereto its accessories.

Now ye have convened in that center (Chicago), from other cities of America.

With sincere intentions and lofty endeavors have ye proposed to undertake this mighty affair. Know ye for a certainty that ye will be confirmed by the aids of the Holy Spirit and that ye will render the Kingdom of God a distinguished service, whereby ye will become dear in both realms and will shine forth as morning stars from the horizon of the Love of God.

This organization of the Mashrak-el-Azkar will be a type for the coming centuries and will hold the station of the Mother, and thus, later, in other cities many Mashrak-el-Azkars will be its offspring.

O Lord! Make these holy souls dawning-points of lights and the manifestations of (Thy) signs. Make every one a leading corner stone 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 each 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!

[Extract from Tablet to Temple Unity Convention of March 22-23, 1909.]

Praise be to God! that the Convention of the delegates for the Mashrak-el-Azkar was held in perfect order and the members assembled in that spiritual meeting with radiant faces, heavenly hearts, merciful spirits and the glad tidings of the Kingdom, and consulted and deliberated respecting the founding of the Mashrak-el-Azkar.

Although hereafter thousands of Mashrak-el-Azkars will be founded, yet as this Mashrak-el-Azkar is the first divine Institute in America, therefore, it is very important and its results and fruits are endless. Soon will some of its results become known and evident.

In brief, the delegates who congregat-

ed in that lordly assemblage and engaged in the service of the divine Kingdom must give thanks night and day, for they were thus aided and confirmed and left a foot-print (trace), of which eternality is an inherent quality.

Although the importance of this divine Institute is not very evident now, yet in the future it will be clear and plain as the sun.

[Translated July 20, 1909.]

Thy detailed letter was received. Its contents indicated that thou didst travel in the cities of America and visited the friends of God until thou didst reach the general Convention held in Chicago for the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar. In thy letter thou hast written in praise and commendation of the illumination of that Convention. Truly, I say, the Convention of the Bahai delegates in Chicago was a heavenly gathering and confirmed by divine assistance. The splendor of the Kingdom of Abha shone forth and the soul-refreshing breeze wafted from the direction of providence. It was an effulgence from the rays of the Sun of Truth, that the friends of God gathered in that illumined assembly with the utmost love, unity and concord. The intentions of everyone were reinforced by divine confirmation, the aim of everyone was service in the Cause of God, servitude in the threshold of the Almighty and the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar.

The results of that Convention in the future will be far-reaching and most important, and evident signs shall become manifest. As it was the first general Bahai Convention in America, it displayed wonderful influence. The gathering of that illumined assembly, in such a short space of time, would have been impossible without the power of the divine Covenant and Testament. But the Covenant has such a great sway that it astonishes the minds. In every region the sign of the power of the Covenant is apparent and manifest.

For instance, in Persia, the fire of

revolution blazed in such wise that all communities, government and nation became afflicted with the most severe trials; but the power of the Covenant protected the Bahai friends to such a degree that in this turbulent storm no dust fell upon them, except in one locality, which became the cause of the spreading of the religion of God and the diffusion of the Word of God. Now all the parties in Persia are wondering how the people of Baha were guarded and protected.

Praise be to God! that, in Teheran and all the provinces of Persia, the call of God has been raised, the ensign of the Covenant has been unfurled, the cry of "Ya-Baha-el-Abha!" has been heard and the melody of the Kingdom of Abha has been promulgated among the people of intelligence.

[Translated August 14, 1909.]

O ye friends of the east and the west!

One of the greatest foundations of the religion of God, the significance of the Word of God and the duty of the believers of God is mutual assistance and co-operation. For the world of humanity, nay, rather, all the infinite beings exist by this law of mutual action and helpfulness. Should this law of joint interchange of forces be removed from the arena of life, the existence would be entirely destroyed.

When we ponder deeply upon the connection and interdependence of beings, we clearly realize that the life of every being draws benefit and sustenance from all the other innumerable existences. This mutual helpfulness is realized either directly or through mediation, and if, for the twinkling of an eye, this confirmation and assistance does not descend upon the living being, that one will become non-existent, for all the existing things are linked together and draw help from each other. Therefore, the greatest foundation of the world of existence is this co-operation and mutuality.

Liken the world of existence to the temple of man. All the limbs and organs of the human body assist each other;

therefore life continues. When, in this wonderful organism, there is a disconnection, life is changed into death and the parts of the body disintegrate. Likewise, among the parts of existence, there is a wonderful connection and interchange of forces, which is the cause of the life of the world and the continuation of these countless phenomena.

When one considers the living beings and the growing plants, he realizes that the animals and man sustain life by inhaling the emanations from the vegetable world, and this fiery element is called oxygen. The vegetable kingdom also draws life from the living creatures in the substance called carbon. In brief, the beings of sensation acquire life from the growing beings and, in turn, the growing things receive life from the sensitive creatures. Therefore, this interchange of forces and inter-communication is continual and uninterrupted.

From this illustration, one can see the base of life is this mutual aid and helpfulness; and the cause of destruction and non-existence would be the interruption of this mutual assistance.

The more the world aspires to civilization, the more this most important matter of co-operation and assistance becomes manifest. Therefore, in the world of humanity, one sees this matter of helpfulness attain to a high degree of efficiency; so much so, that the continuance of humanity entirely depends upon this interrelation. The believers of God must especially fortify the foundation of this reality among themselves, so that all may help each other under all circumstances, whether in the degree of truth and significances or in the stations of this world of matter and, especially, in founding public institutions which shall benefit all the people, and, still more, the founding of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, which is the greatest of the divine foundations.

Consequently, the friends of God, with the utmost magnanimity, sincerity of purpose and self-abnegation, must help

for the building of this supreme foundation. Now, in the regions of America, the believers of God have resolved to build the Mashrak-el-Azkar and, while choosing the land in a most beautiful spot, they are occupied in gathering contributions. Although they will build this Mashrak-el-Azkar with the utmost beauty and completeness, yet, for the sake of the communication between orient and occident, the increase of spiritual affection and love and the solidarity of the foundation of unity and concord, all the believers in the east must contribute according to their means, no matter how small the sum may be. God does not ask from any soul except according to his ability. This contribution must come from all cities and villages from all the believers of God. They should send all contributions to this Holy Land, so that they may be forwarded from here to America through a confidential channel.

In brief, O ye friends of God, rest assured that in place of this contribution, your commerce, your agriculture and industries shall be blessed many times. Whosoever comes with one good act, God will give him tenfold. There is no doubt that the living Lord shall assist and confirm the generous soul.

O my Lord! O my Lord! Illumine the faces of Thy sincere and beloved ones. Assist them with the angels of Thy manifest victory; make them firm in Thy great path; open before them the doors of blessings through Thine ancient favor, for they give in Thy way whatever they have, protecting Thy religion, assured in Thy mentioning, sacrificing their souls for Thy love, giving what they have for Thy beauty, so that they may gain Thy good pleasure. O my Lord, destine for them inexhaustible compensation, never failing bounty and divine outpouring.

Verily, Thou art the Confirmer, the Assister, the Generous, the Giver, and the Merciful.

[Translated August 24, 1909.]

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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. VI

Sultan 1, 71 (January 19, 1916)

No. 17

I hope that all of them may become assisted in the service of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, so that this divine Institution may be raised in that country, and the melody of Mashrak-el-Azkar may awaken the sleepy ones.

[Translated October 31, 1909.]

The Mashrak-el-Azkar of Chicago is of the greatest importance. This is a Bahai Temple, a supreme House of Worship, a place of spiritual gathering and of the manifestation of divine mysteries. The friends of God must endeavor, with all their hearts and souls, that this structure may be raised and completed.

[Translated 1909.]

O ye beloved of Abdul-Baha! The beloved of God and the maid-servants of the Merciful intend to found a Mashrak-el-Azkar in Chicago. They have sent to us numerous plans, that one may be accepted and the edifice be built accordingly. Now the funds must be accumulated, the land entirely paid for and the necessary preparations for building and then the accessory matters considered. Therefore, make ye an effort and show ye zeal that the price of the land be fully discharged and the means for the edifice procured.

The beloved in the east are striving with heart and soul to contribute to the

best of their ability, although the internal conditions of Persia have, during the last few years, been exceedingly disturbed. This revolution affected all conditions and walks of life. There has been no agriculture, no trade and no commerce; nay, rather in all the provinces there have been political disputes and quarrels between the two parties, namely, the nationalists and the constitutionalists. Thus they have been wholly occupied with their own affairs. Notwithstanding this, they have striven to contribute to the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Chicago according to their best ability and they will never be found wanting. If Persia should obtain order, the beloved then will make a worthy contribution.

[Translated March 18, 1910.]

Several plans and designs of the Mashrak-el-Azkar have been received from America. Now, the believers must display an endeavor so that the land may be bought in its entirety; then collect contributions for the building, and then they may think about the plans. So far, the means are lacking. I hope from the favor of the true One that sufficient and ample contributions may be gathered and afterward the best and most acceptable plans be decided upon.

[Translated April 12, 1910.]

In all the world of creation all the existent beings are in the utmost connection. Through this connection, mutual helpfulness and co-operation is realized. This mutual helpfulness and co-operation is the origin of the conservation of the forces of life. If, for one instant, this mutual helpfulness and co-operation were cut off from the sources and realities of things, all the existent beings and things would be thrown into confusion and chaos, and be reduced to nothingness and annihilation.

For instance, from the breath of the animals a watery element, called hydrogen, and carbon is exhaled, and this is the life principle of the vegetable kingdom. From the vegetable kingdom and the trees, a fiery element, called oxygen, is emitted and this becomes the cause of the maintenance of the life of the animal kingdom. In such a manner, mutual helpfulness and co-operation is realized continually between all the existent beings.

Likewise, the greatest interrelation and communication exists between the sons of men, without which, peace, life and existence are entirely impossible. For a soul independent of all the other souls and without receiving assistance from other sources cannot live for the twinkling of an eye; nay, rather, he will become non-existent and reduced to nothingness; especially among the believers of God, between whom material and spiritual communication is developed up to the highest point of perfection.

It is this real communication, the essential necessity and requirement of which is mutual helpfulness, co-operation and confirmation. Without the complete establishment of this divine principle in the hearts of the friends of God, nothing can be accomplished, for they are the hyacinths of one garden, the waves of one sea, the stars of one heaven and the rays of one sun. From every standpoint, the essential unity, the luminous unity, the religious unity and the ma-

terial unity are founded and organized between them.

In these times, the utmost hope and wish of the friends of the west is the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, and in those regions the materials for construction and building are expensive and costly. A large sum of money is needed for the building of a residence; then how much more is needed for the foundation of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, which must be erected with the utmost splendor, beauty and magnificence!

Therefore, the friends of God must arise in every part of the world to raise contributions, and with their hearts and souls strive to gather these funds to be sent to the occident, that it may become known and evident throughout the universe that the Bahais of the east and west are as members of one household and the children of the one Lord! The Turks and the Persians, the Parsee and the American, the Hindu and the African, all of them are one army and one cohort and, without any distinction, they arise for the assistance and aid of each other.

This praiseworthy movement is beloved and accepted in the threshold of the forgiving Lord. Truly, I say, in the erection of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Ishkabad, the friends of God have laid the foundation of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity and they worked nobly together until now, and it is nearly completed. Praise be to God! that, at this moment, from every country in the world, according to their various means, contributions are continually being sent toward the fund of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in America.

Convey the gratitude of Abdul-Baha to all the friends of God in this service.

In reality, this magnanimity of the believers is worthy of great praise and thankfulness, for, from Teheran, Khorosan, Shiraz, Jahram, Esphahan, even from the towns and villages of the Khorassan, Shiraz and Yazd, contributions were sent. This donation in the path of

the Orb of Regions is conducive to the happiness of the souls of the spiritual ones.

From the day of Adam until now, such an event has never even been witnessed by man, that, from the farthestmost country of Asia, contributions were forwarded to the farthestmost country of America. From Rangoon, India, donations are sent to Chicago, and from Jahram, a little village of Shiraz, and Kheirrol-Gora of Tarshiz, money is transmitted for the Mashrak-el-Azkar in America. This is through the bounty and providence of the Blessed Perfection, the assistance and confirmation of the Sun of Truth and the victory and triumph of the Luminary of Effulgence, who has united so marvelously the regions of the world together. Glory belongs to the Lord of Hosts. Sovereignty belongs to the compassionate God. Power and might belongs to the living, self-subsistent One, who has united the people of the world and assembled them together like unto the brilliant stars of the horizon of adoration.

O my God! O my God! Favor belongs to Thee! Generosity belongs to Thee! Praise belongs to Thee and glorification is Thine, for that which Thou hast bestowed upon these indigent ones, granted a refuge and asylum to these weak ones in the cave of Thy protection and preservation, assisted them in the service of Thy Cause and confirmed them in the worship of Thy exalted threshold.

O Lord! They have sacrificed their belongings and souls in Thy path, contributed for love of Thee and missed no chance or opportunity in spreading Thy signs, diffusing Thy Word, promulgating Thy Name among Thy servants and proclaiming Thy wonders among Thy creatures.

Verily, Thou are the Powerful, the Mighty, the Most High, the Omnipresent and, verily, Thou art the Clement and the Most Merciful!

[Translated April 19, 1910.]

Explain to the people the details of

the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Chicago and tell them how contributions are received from the east and the west. For example, at this moment, four contributions were received in one day from Rangoon, Bombay (India), Jahram of Shiraz and Kheirrol-Gora of Khorassan for the Mashrak-el-Azkar of America and were forwarded to their destination.

Truly, I say, the friends of God displayed wonderful generosity in regard to the contributions for the Mashrak-el-Azkar. They displayed magnanimity at any cost to such an extent that some of them sold portions of their clothing on the street. This is through the power of the Covenant of God, for, until this day, an event of this character has never transpired, that, from the east and Asia, contributions were forwarded to the west for the building of a Temple. Verily, this is a cause of astonishment for the people of perception.

[Translated April 19, 1910.]

O God, my aim, my hope! With hearts 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 worshipers beloved. Suffer its 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!

[Translated 1910.]

The Temple is the most great foundation of the world of humanity and it has many branches.

Although the Temple is the place of worship, with it is connected hospital pharmacy, pilgrim's house, school for the

orphans and university for the study of higher sciences.

Every Temple is connected with these five things. I hope that now in America they will build a Temple and gradually add to it the hospital, school, university, pharmacy and pilgrim's house, with the utmost efficiency and thoroughness. You must make the believers understand these details, so that they may realize how important the Temple is. The Temple is not only a place for worship: nay, it is perfect in every way.

[Translated 1910.]

Your detailed letter was perused, and from its contents it became evident that the debt of the land of Mashrak-el-Azkar is clear. This news made the hearts happy and caused infinite rejoicing.

Now, it is hoped that the believers of God may show magnanimity and raise a great sum for the building so that the foundation of the Mashrak-el-Azkar may be laid, and, perchance, God willing, the corner stone of the foundation may be laid by the hands of Abdul-Baha.

This confirmation will descend upon the people of America, if they will arise and endeavor with great courage to establish union and harmony, so that every trace of difference may be uprooted and they may all become as one heart and one soul.

Convey the wonderful Abha greeting to all the friends and the maid-servants of the Merciful.

[Translated March 4, 1911.]

You have written that a sum of money is raised to be contributed toward the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Ask ye of God that the American believers may become assisted in the building of this great Temple.

[Translated March 4, 1911.]

If the believers of God in New York and other cities of America establish, in a befitting manner, union and harmony with spirit, tongue, heart and body, suddenly they shall find Abdul-Baha in their midst. Unless this union is brought

about, the breath of the Holy Spirit shall not have any effect, for the physical body must find capacity, so that the life of the spirit may breathe through it. If the Beloved of the union of the friends and the harmony of the believers become manifest, the east and west of America shall be perfumed through the sweet fragrance of the Paradise of Abha, the Mashrak-el-Azkar shall be constructed, the outpouring of the Sun of Reality shall descend, the everlasting glory of the friends of God shall become apparent and the heavenly life be attained.

[Translated April 28, 1911.]

Today, in America, no matter is greater for the elevation of the Word of God than the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Surely, give it the utmost importance. I am always waiting that a good report regarding the Mashrak-el-Azkar should come.

In most of the cities of Persia, even in some villages, a Mashrak-el-Azkar has been founded.

Now the beloved in America must make effort to establish one Mashrak-el-Azkar.

[Translated June 1, 1911.]

The question of Mashrak-el-Azkar is very important and is superior to every matter; surely put forth utmost effort for it.

[Translated June 1, 1911.]

Know thou that the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar is the greatest foundation in those regions. God said in the Koran, "It is those who believed in God and the Last Day shall build the Temple of God."

It is incumbent upon thee and upon all to put forth the best effort in these days, in building this glorious Temple, raising the tumult of commemoration therein, during the wing of the night, at dawn and at eventide. It is incumbent upon you (men and women) to be united in this great Cause, so that ye may be confirmed by the divine bounty, and merciful spirit; become increased with energy and power; gain a recompense, and estimation.

[Translated September 23, 1911.]

Addresses of Abdul-Baha in America upon the Mashrak-el-Azkar

ADDRESS OF ABDUL-BAHA AT PUBLIC MEETING CONCLUDING THE BAHAI TEMPLE UNITY CONVENTION, DRILL HALL, MASONIC TEMPLE, CHICAGO, TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1912.

[STAR OF THE WEST, Vol. III, No. 4.]

AMONG the institutes of the Holy Books is that of the foundation of Holy Edifices. That is to say, an edifice is to be built in order that humanity may find therein a place of meeting, and this is to be conducive to unity and fellowship amongst them. The real Temple is the very Law of God, for to that all humanity must resort, and that is the center of unity for all mankind. That is the collective Center. That is the cause of accord and unity of the hearts. That is the cause of solidarity of the human race. That is the source of the life eternal. Temples are the symbols of that uniting force, in order that, when the people gather there, in a given edifice of God, in the house and Temple of God, they may recall the fact, that the law has been revealed for them and that that law is to unite them; that, just as this edifice was founded for the unification of mankind, the law preceding and creating this Temple was issued therefor. . . . In brief, the purpose of places of worship and edifices for adoration is simply that of unity, in order that various nations, divergent races, varying souls may gather there and among them amity, love and accord may be realized. The original purpose is this. That is why His holiness Baha'o'llah has commanded that a place be built for all the religionists of the world; that all religions and races and sects may gather together; that the oneness of the human world may be

proclaimed: that all the human race are the servants of God, and that all are submerged in the ocean of God's mercy. The world of existence may be likened to this place. It is the Mashrak-el-Azkar. Just as the external world is a place where various peoples of different hues and colors, of various faiths and denominations, meet; just as they are submerged in the same Sea of favors, likewise all may meet under the dome of the Mashrak-el-Azkar and adore the one God in the same spirit of truth, for the ages of darkness have passed away and the century of light has arrived. The imaginary prejudices are in the process of dispersion and the Light of unity is shining. The difference which exists among the nations and the peoples is soon to pass away, and the fundamentals of the divine religions, which are no other than the solidarity and the oneness of the human race, are to be established. For six thousand years the human race has been at war. It is enough! Now let them, for a time at least, consort in amity. They entertained enmity formerly. Let them for a period exercise love. For six thousand years have they negated each other, each nation considering the other as infidel. It is sufficient! We must all know that we are the servants of one God; that we are turning to one God; that we have one kind Father; that we have one divine Law; that we have one reality; that we have one desire. Thus may we live together in the utmost of amity and love. And, for this love, for this amity, the favors and bounties of God shall surround us; the world of humanity will be reformed; mankind will find a new life, eternal light shall shine; merciful and heavenly morals shall become manifested. The divine

policies shall rule, for the divine policy is the oneness of the human world. God is kind to all. He considers all as His servants. He does not exclude anybody, and the policy of God is the correct and just policy. No matter how complete human policy and foresight is, it is imperfect. If we do not emulate the policy of God, or if we refuse to follow His dictates, that will be a presumptive evidence of our saying, as it were, that we know better than God; that we are knowing and wise, whereas God is ignorant; that we are sagacious, and God is not. God forbid! We seek shelter in God's mercy therefor! No matter how far the human intelligence shall advance, it is still as a drop, whereas the divine omniscience is the very ocean. And now is it just for us to say that a drop is imbued or endowed with qualities where-with the ocean itself is minus or not endowed? To say that the policy of the atom or the drop is greater and superior to that of the ocean, there is no greater ignorance than this! At most it is this: That there are some people who are as children. They are ignorant, and with the utmost love we are to educate them in order that they may become wise. They are sick; they are ill. We must tenderly care for them and treat them until they become well. Their morals are unpraiseworthy. We must train them in order that they may become imbued with morals commendable. Otherwise we are all the servants of one God, and we are beneath the protection and providence of one God. These are the institutes of God and the foundations of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, or His Temple. The outer edifice is a symbol of the inner. May the people be admonished thereby! I pray in your behalf, that your hearts may be enlightened with the light of the love of God; that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may be set aglow with the fire of His glad tidings, until the divine foundations in the human world may become promulgated. And the first of these institutes is the one-

ness of the human world and love among all mankind, and the second is the Most Great Peace. Praise be to God, this American democracy presents capacity, its people showing forth their readiness to become the flag-bearer of the Most Great Peace. May they be the hosts of the oneness of humanity! May its people serve the threshold of God and spread that which is the good pleasure of God!

O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. The hearts are radiant through Thy love. The thoughts and the spirits are exhilarated through Thy glad tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees, even as it has aspired to the material degrees, and render this just government victorious! Confirm this revered nation to hoist the standard of the oneness of humanity; to promulgate the Most Great Peace; to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it dear, near to Thee, through Thy bounty and bestowal!

ADDRESS OF ABDUL-BAHA AT THE DEDICATION OF THE MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR GROUNDS, CHICAGO, HIGH NOON, MAY 1, 1912.

[STAR OF THE WEST, Vol. III, No. 4.]

Today you have endured considerable difficulty in coming out, withstanding the cold and wind; but the power which has gathered you here is truly a colossal power. It is the extraordinary power. It is a divine power which gathers you here. It is divine favor of Baha'o'llah, which gathered you together. Therefore, we praise God that this power does assemble people in this fashion.

Thousands of Mashrak-el-Azkars,—which means the Dawning-Point of Praise for all religionists,—will be built in the world. In the orient and in the occident of the world will they be built.

But this Mashrak-el-Azkar, being the first one in the occident, has great importance. In after years, there will be many Mashrak-el-Azkars; even in this City of Chicago many will be established. In Asia there will be many. In Europe there will be many. Even in Africa there will be many. Even in Australia and New Zealand; but this is of great importance. In Ishkabad, Caucasus, Russia, the Mashrak-el-Azkar has the same great importance, being the first one built there. In Persia there are many Mashrak-el-Azkars. Some are houses, which have been rented for that purpose. Others have given their homes entirely for that purpose, and in some places temporary and small places have been built therefor. In all the cities of Persia there are Mashrak-el-Azkars; but the great Mashrak-el-Azkar was founded in Ishkabad. Because it was the first Mashrak-el-Azkar, it possesses the superlative degree of importance. All the friends of Ishkabad agreed and put forth the greatest effort. His holiness the Afnan devoted all his wealth to it. Everything he had he gave for it. Hence, such an imposing edifice was built. A colossal effort was put forth. Notwithstanding their contributions to that Mashrak-el-Azkar, they have, as you know, contributed to the one here in this city. Now that one is almost complete, that is to say, with all its gardens. That Mashrak-el-Azkar is centrally located. It has nine avenues, nine gardens, nine fountains, so it is nine on nine, all nines. It is like a beautiful bouquet. Just imagine an edifice of that beauty in the center, very lofty, surrounded by gardens, variegated flowers, with nine avenues interlacing nine gardens, nine pools and nine fountains, and think how delightful it must be! That is the way it should be. It is matchless, most beautiful! Such is the design. And now they are at work building a hospital and a school for orphans and a home for cripples and a large dispensary and a hospice. They are now planning, thinking of these

things. When that, God willing, shall be completed, it will be a Paradise! There will be no greater geometry than this and I hope that in Chicago it shall be like this. It will be even so.

ADDRESS OF ABDUL-BAHA AT PROTESTANT
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION,
FIFTH AVE. AND 10TH ST., NEW YORK
CITY, SUNDAY, JUNE 2, 1912, 8 P. M.,
REV. DR. PERCY STICKNEY GRANT,
RECTOR.

[STAR OF THE WEST, Vol. III, No. 10.]

In the terminology of the Holy Books, the church has been called the "House of the Covenant," for the reason that the church is a place where people of differing thoughts and diverging tendencies,—where all races and nations may come together in a covenant of permanent fellowship. In the temple of the Lord, in the house of God, man must be submissive to God. He must enter into a covenant with his Lord, in order that he shall obey His commands and become unified with his fellow-man. He must not consider divergence of races nor difference of nationalities; he must not view variation in denomination and creed, nor should he take into account the differing degrees of thoughts; nay, rather, he should look upon all mankind and realize that all must become united and agreed. He must recognize all as one family, one race, one nativity; all the servants of one God, dwelling beneath the shelter of the mercy of one God.

The purpose is that the church is a collective center. Temples are symbols of the reality and divinity of God, the collective Center. Consider how, within a temple, every race and people are seen and represented—all in the presence of the Lord, covenanting together in a covenant of love and fellowship, all offering the same melody, prayer and supplications to God. Therefore, it is evident that the church is a collective center for mankind. For this reason, there have been churches and temples in all the di-

vine religions. But the real collective Centers are the Manifestations of God, of whom the church or temple is a symbol and expression. That is to say, the Manifestation of God is the real divine Temple and collective Center of which the outer church is but a symbol.

Recall the statement of His holiness Jesus Christ, recorded in the Gospel. Addressing Peter, He said, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my church." It is evident, therefore, that the Church of God is the Law of God and the actual edifice is but one symbol thereof. For the Law of God is a collective center which unites various people, nativities, tongues and opinions. All find shelter in its protection and become attracted by it. For example, His holiness Moses and the Mosaic Law were the unifying center for the scattered sheep of Israel. He united these wandering flocks, brought them under control of divine Laws, educated them, unified them, caused them to agree and uplifted them to a superlative degree of development. At a time when they were debased they became glorified; ignorant, they were made knowing; in the bonds of captivity, they were given freedom. In short, they were unified. Day by day they advanced, until they attained the highest degree of progress witnessed in that age. It is therefore proven that the Manifestation of God and the Law of God accomplish unity.

It is self-evident that humanity is at variance. Human tastes differ; thoughts, nativities, races and tongues are various. The need of a collective Center, by which these differences may be counterbalanced and the people of the world be unified, is obvious. Consider how nothing but a spiritual power can bring about this unification, for material conditions and mental aspects are so widely different, that agreement and unity are impossible through material means. But it is possible for all to become unified through one Spirit, just as all may receive light from one sun.

Therefore, assisted by the collective and divine Center, which is the Law of God and the reality of His Manifestation, we can overcome these conditions until they pass away entirely and the races advance.

Consider the time of His holiness Christ. How many different peoples, races and governments there were; how many varying sects and denominations! But, when His holiness appeared, the Messianic Reality proved to be the collective Center, which brought together and unified them beneath the same tabernacle of amity. Reflect a moment! Could His holiness Jesus Christ have united these divergent factors or brought about such results through political power? Was this unity and agreement possible through material forces? It is evident that it was not; nay, rather, these various peoples were brought together through divine power,—through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They were revived through the infusion of a fresh spirit. The spirituality of the Christ overcame their difficulties so that their disagreements utterly passed away. In this way, these varying peoples were unified, agreed, and became welded in a bond of love, which alone can unite hearts. Therefore, it is proved that the Manifestations of God—the great Mouth-pieces of God—are the collective Centers of God. The Prophets of God are these collective Centers, for they are the real shepherds. The real shepherd unites the scattered sheep, as they have done in the past. The collective Center has ever appeared from the orient. His holiness Abraham was a collective Center and he appeared in the east. His holiness Moses was a collective Center and he appeared in the east. His holiness Jesus Christ was a collective Center and He appeared in the east. His holiness Mohammed was a collective Center appearing among the nomadic tribes of the Arabian peninsula. Today, His holiness Baha'o'llah is the collective Center of unity for all humanity and He has come from the east.

He founded the oneness of humanity in Persia. He established amity among the various peoples of different religions, denominations, sects and cults by rescuing them from the fetters of past imitations and superstitions, and led them to the very foundation of the divine religions. And, from this foundation, shines forth the radiance of spirituality, which is unity, the love of God, the knowledge of God, praiseworthy morals and the virtues of the human world.

Baha'o'llah again renewed these principles, just as the coming of the spring refreshes the earth and confers new life upon all phenomenal beings. For the freshness of the former springtime had waned, its vivification had ceased, the life-giving breezes were no longer wafting their fragrance; winter and the season of darkness had come. His holiness Baha'o'llah came to renew the life of the world with this new and divine springtime, which has pitched its tent in the countries of the orient in the utmost power and glory. It has refreshed the world of the orient and there is no doubt that, if the world of the occident should abandon dogmas of the past, turn away from empty imitations and superstitions, investigate the reality of the divine religions, holding fast to the example of His holiness Jesus Christ, acting in accordance with the teachings of God and becoming unified with the orient, an eternal happiness would be thereby attained.

In the western world, material civilization has attained the highest point of development, but the divine civilization was founded in the orient. Now the orient must acquire material civilization from the occident and the occident must acquire spiritual civilization from the orient. This will establish a mutual bond. When the east and west shall come together, the world of humanity will present a glorious aspect and extraordinary progress will be achieved. This is clear and evident; there is no proof

needed. The status of material civilization in the occident cannot be denied, nor can any one deny the confirmation of the spiritual civilizations of the orient, for all the divine foundations of civilization have appeared in the east. This, too, is clear and evident. Therefore you must strive to assist the orient in order that it may acquire material progress. Likewise, the orient must promulgate the principles of spiritual civilization in the occident. By the commingling of these two civilizations, the world of humanity will attain the highest bond of prosperity and progress. Material civilization alone is not sufficient and will not prove productive. The physical happiness of material conditions was allotted to the animal. Consider how the animal has reached the utmost degree of physical felicity. For example, a bird perches upon the loftiest branch and builds there its nest in the utmost beauty and skill. All the grains and seeds of the meadows are its wealth and food; all the fresh water of mountain springs and rivers of the plain are for its enjoyment. Truly, this is the acme of material happiness, to which even a human creature cannot attain. This is the honor of the animal kingdom. But the honor of the human kingdom is the attainment of spiritual happiness in the human world, the acquisition of the knowledge and love of God. The honor allotted to man is the acquisition of the supreme virtues of the human world. This is his real happiness and felicity. But, if material happiness and spiritual felicity be conjoined, it will be "delight upon delight"—as the Arabs say. And now we pray that God will unite the east and the west in order that these two civilizations shall be exchanged and mutually enjoyed. I am sure it will come to pass for this is the radiant century. This is an age for the outpouring of divine mercy upon the exigency of this new century,—the unity of the east and the west. It will surely be accomplished.



SITE OF THE MASHRAK-EL-AZKAR IN AMERICA

Last words of Abdul-Baha concerning the M

As to the matter of the building of the Mashrak-el-Azkar, that is, the matter of beginning the building thereof—an important (or considerable) sum of money must decidedly be prepared in order that work may be begun: that is, at least two or three hundred thousand

dollars must be ready. And, most assuredly, if it be built in the days of the Covenant, it will be more joyful and more heart-rejoicing; but this is difficult.

Now be ye engaged in collecting contributions.

[Translated June 18, 1913.]

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Mashrak-el-Azkar Treasury

STATEMENT OF INCOMES AND EXPENDITURES,
FROM MARCH 29, 1909, TO DECEMBER 31, 1915.

INCOMES:

Contributions:

1909—March 29th, Chicago Assembly.....	\$ 3,665.44	
1909—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1910.....	14,732.51	
1910—Fiscal year ending May 2, 1911.....	10,453.59	
1911—Fiscal year ending April 30, 1912.....	7,325.27	
1912—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1913.....	14,123.28	
1913—Fiscal year ending April 27, 1914.....	13,514.14	
1914—Fiscal year ending April 23, 1915.....	6,986.93	
Overcharge in exchange.....	4.41	
Interest on deposit account, less exchange charges, April to Dec. 31, 1915	128.80	
1915—Fiscal year incomplete (to Dec. 31, 1915)	5,537.88	\$76,472.25

EXPENDITURES:

Purchase Price, Mashrak-el-Azkar Site, Main Tract:

1909—April 5, payment.....	\$5,000.00	
1909—Dec. 10, payment.....	5,000.00	
1910—July 1, payment.....	5,000.00	
1911—Jan. 1, payment.....	5,000.00	
1911—June 14, payment.....	2,500.00	
1912—June 24, payment.....	5,000.00	
1912—Sept. 21, payment.....	2,500.00	
1912—Oct. 1, final payment.....	2,500.00	\$32,500.00

Purchase Price Lake Shore Tract:

1911—Oct. 11, payment.....	\$ 200.00	
1911—Dec. 11, payment.....	2,800.00	
1912—Jan. 30, payment.....	1,000.00	
1912—Mar. 1, payment.....	1,000.00	
1913—Mar. 3, payment.....	3,000.00	
1913—Sept. 8, payment.....	3,000.00	
1914—Feb. 2, final payment.....	6,000.00	\$17,000.00

Buildings:

1909—Shelter houses.....	\$ 105.00	
1915—Cement sidewalks.....	395.00	\$ 500.00

EXPENDITURES—Continued:

Taxes and Assessments:

1909—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1910.....	\$ 974.79	
1910—Fiscal year ending May 2, 1911.....	695.80	
1911—Fiscal year ending April 30, 1912.....	976.73	
1912—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1913.....	331.00	
1913—Fiscal year ending April 27, 1914.....	1,768.73	
1914—Fiscal year ending April 23, 1915.....	4.46	
1915—Fiscal year incomplete (to Dec. 31, 1915)	880.78	\$ 5,632.29

Interest:

1909—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1910.....	\$1,425.00	
1910—Fiscal year ending May 2, 1911.....	1,200.00	
1911—Fiscal year ending April 30, 1912.....	675.00	
1912—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1913.....	861.62	
1913—Fiscal year ending April 27, 1914.....	600.00	\$ 4,761.62

Expenses:

1909—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1910.....	\$ 183.70	
1910—Fiscal year ending May 2, 1911.....	562.57	
1911—Fiscal year ending April 30, 1912.....	930.66	
1912—Fiscal year ending April 28, 1913.....	298.28	
1913—Fiscal year ending April 27, 1914.....	732.25	
1914—Fiscal year ending April 23, 1915.....	107.00	
1915—Fiscal year incomplete (to Dec. 31, 1915)	91.00	
1915—Special expenses, record and report, convention at San Francisco.....	150.00	\$ 3,055.46
Total expenditures.....		<u>\$63,449.37</u>

SUMMARY

1915—Dec. 31, balance in building fund.....	13,022.88
Grand total	<u>\$76,472.25</u>

NOTE—In addition to the land purchased for the Mashrak-el-Azkar site, shown in the above statement, there is also included in the main tract, and forming a part of it, two lots, purchased by the Chicago Bahai Assembly at a cost of \$2,000.00, and conveyed free of encumbrance to this Unity. The Unity also owns a lot at Muskegon, Michigan.

Respectfully submitted,

Albert H. Hall, Treasurer.

The Bahai Revelation

The Bahai (Glorious) Revelation proclaims the time of Universal Peace and provides the base for the Universal Religion—the hope of the ages. It points the way and supplies the means for the unity of mankind in the knowledge and love of Truth under the high banners of Justice and Mercy.

It is divine in origin, human in presentation, sane, practical and applicable to life in its every phase. In belief it inculcates naught but Truth; in action, naught but Good; in human relations, naught but loving Service.

For the information of those who know little or nothing of the Bahai Revelation, we quote the following account translated from the (French) Encyclopaedia of Larousse:

BAHAISM: *the religion of the disciples of BAHÁ'U'LLAH, an outcome of Babism.*—Mirza Husain Ali Nuri BAHÁ'U'LLAH was born at Teheran in 1817 A. D. From 1844 he was one of the first adherents of the Bab, and devoted himself to the pacific propagation of his doctrine in Persia. After the death of the Bab he was, with the principal Babis, exiled to Baghdad, and later to Constantinople and Adrianople, under the surveillance of the Ottoman Government. It was in the latter city that he openly declared his mission. He was "*He-whom-God-would-make-manifest*," whom the Bab had announced in his writings, the great Manifestation of God, promised for the *last days*; and in his letters to the principal Rulers of the States of Europe he invited them to join him in establishing religion and universal peace. From this time, the Babis who acknowledged him became Bahais. The Sultan then exiled him (1868 A. D.) to Acca in Palestine, where he composed the greater part of his doctrinal works, and where he died in 1892 A. D. (May 29). He had confided to his son, Abbas Effendi Abdul-Baha, the work of spreading the

religion and continuing the connection between the Bahais of all parts of the world. In point of fact, there are Bahais everywhere, not only in Mohammedan countries, but also in all the countries of Europe, as well as in the United States, Canada, Japan, India, *etc.* This is because BAHÁ'U'LLAH has known how to transform Babism into a universal religion, which is presented as the fulfillment and completion of all the ancient faiths. The Jews await the Messiah, the Christians the return of Christ, the Moslems the Mahdi, the Buddhists the fifth Buddha, the Zoroastrians Shah Bahram, the Hindus the reincarnation of Krishna, and the Atheists—better social organization! BAHÁ'U'LLAH represents all these, and thus destroys the rivalries and the enmities of the different religions; reconciles them in their primitive purity, and frees them from the corruption of dogmas and rites. For Bahaism has no clergy, no religious ceremonial, no public prayers; its only dogma is belief in God and in his Manifestations (Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, *et al.*, BAHÁ'U'LLAH). The principal works of BAHÁ'U'LLAH are the *Kitab-ul-Ighan*, the *Kitab-ul-Ahdas*, the *Kitab-ul-Ahd*, and numerous letters or tablets addressed to sovereigns or to private individuals. Ritual holds no place in the religion, which must be expressed in all the actions of life, and accomplished in neighborly love. Every one must have an occupation. The education of children is enjoined and regulated. No one has the power to receive confession of sins, or give absolution. The priests of the existing religions should renounce celibacy, and should preach by their example, mingling in the life of the people. Monogamy is universally recommended, *etc.* Questions not treated of are left to the civil law of each country, and to the decisions of the *Bait-ul-Adl*, or House of Justice, instituted by BAHÁ'U'LLAH. Respect toward the Head of the State is a part of respect toward God. A universal language, and the creation of tribunals of arbitration between nations, are to suppress wars. "You are leaves of the same tree, and drops of the same sea," BAHÁ'U'LLAH has said. Briefly, it is not so much a new religion, as Religion renewed and unified, which is directed today by Abdul-Baha.—*Nouveau Larousse Illustré* supplement, p. 60.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Extra copies of this Mashrak-el-Azkar edition of STAR OF THE WEST may be had by applying to Bahai Temple Unity, Harlan F. Ober, Secretary, 114 State Street, Boston, Mass.

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. VI

Mulk 1, 71 (February 7, 1916)

No. 18

The Mashrak-el-Azkar of Ishkabad

By CHARLES MASON REMEY

Washington, D. C.,
October 12, 1908.

To the House of Spirituality of Bahais,
Chicago, Ill.

Brothers in the service of Abha:—

As you have arisen for the construction of the first Mashrak-el-Azkar in America, and, as I have recently visited Ishkabad and seen there the great Mashrak-el-Azkar of the east, of which we in the west have heard so much, I take it upon myself to write to you a description of this edifice, hoping to share with you the great blessing of meeting with the friends in those parts and of beholding this Temple which is a testimony of their sacrifice and unity.

As you know, Ishkabad is in Russian Turkestan, just north of the Elbruz mountains, which separate the desert plain of western Turkestan, on the north, from Persia on the south. The city itself lies on the plain a short distance from the mountains, which here are quite rugged and rocky. The town is quite modern in aspect, being laid off with gardens and broad streets, which meet at right angles. Rows of trees along the sidewalks remind one of a

western city, while the buildings and the waterways, which flank the streets and are fed with water coming from the nearby mountains, are strikingly oriental.

I could hardly believe that this city had sprung up almost entirely during the past half-century. It was but a huddle of mud huts, when Baha'o'llah first directed some of his followers to settle there. Now this is replaced by a large and prosperous city of buildings of brick and stone.

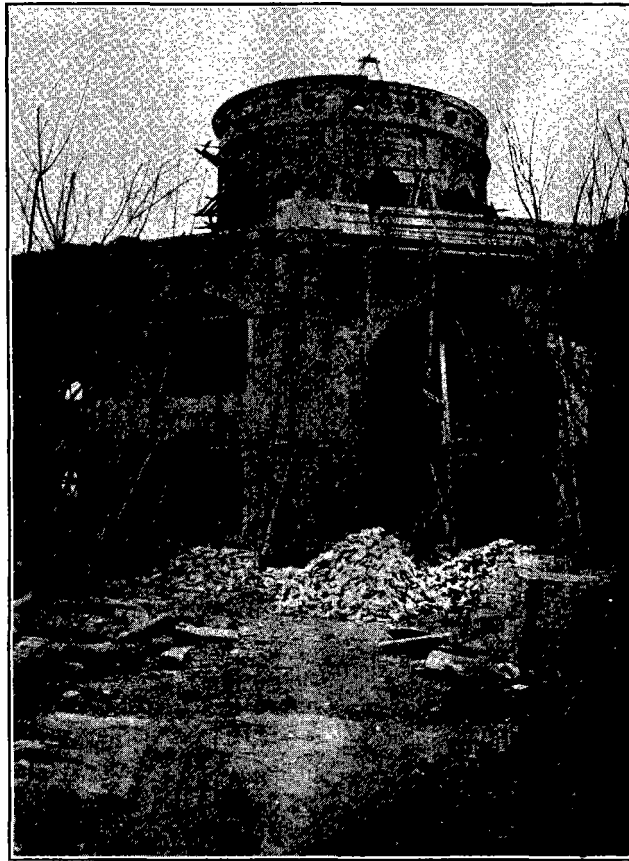
The Mashrak-el-Azkar stands in the center of the city, surrounded by a large garden, which is bounded by four streets. It rises high above the surrounding buildings and trees, its dome being visible for miles, as the traveller approaches the city over the plain. The building in plan is a regular polygon of nine sides. One large doorway and portico, flanked by turrets, facing the direction of the Holy City [Akka], forms the principal motive of the façade, while the dome dominates the whole composition.

The walls of the Temple are of brick covered with a firm and hard stucco,

which in that climate resists quite well the action of the elements, while the floors are concrete supported by iron or steel beams.

In plan the building is composed of three sections: the central rotunda, the aisle or ambulatory which surrounds it,

separate the triforium gallery (which is directly above the ambulatory) from the wall of the rotunda. The third story is decorated with nine flank arcades, between which is a shield upon which is inscribed, in Persian characters, "Ya-Baha-el-Abha." The fourth story con-



Temple at Ishkabad, Russia

and the loggia which surrounds the entire building.

The interior of the rotunda is five stories in height. The first or main floor story consists of nine arches, supported by piers, which separate the ambulatory from the rotunda proper. The second story consists of a similar treatment of arches and piers and balustrades, which

contains nine large windows, while the wall of the fifth story, which is not as high as the others, is pierced by eighteen bull's-eye windows.

Above, there is the dome which is hemispherical in shape. The rotunda from the floor to the top of the dome is elaborately decorated with fret work and other designs, all in relief. We were

told that the ultimate aim was that color and gilding should be added to this interior decoration.

The inner dome is of iron or steel and concrete, while the outer dome or roof is entirely of metal—the intention is that this shall be gilded.

The main portico of the temple is two stories in the clear, while the loggias, which surround the building, are on two floors, the lower being on the main floor level, while the upper one is on the level of the triforium gallery. This upper loggia is reached by two stair-cases, one to the right and one to the left of the main entrance, and the gallery is entered from the loggia.

On the main floor the principal entrance is through the large doorway, but there are also several inner doors, which connect the ambulatory with the loggia. An abundance of light is admitted through the windows in the upper part of the rotunda, as well as through the windows of the upper gallery and ambulatory, which open upon the loggias.

The Persian style of architecture has been used in treating the details and decorations of the buildings.

At present the stucco work is not quite completed. The interior of the rotunda is finished, but the decoration of the loggias and gallery and ambulatory is only done in part. However, the work is continuing and it will not be long before all will be complete.

From what I saw and heard in Ishkabad, I found that those believers who superintended the building of the Temple were competent business men and that, although they had undertaken a large enterprise, every possible economy was made, yet at the same time no expense seemed to be spared when necessary for the beauty and solidity of the building.

The layout of the garden is not yet complete. Nine avenues of approach lead to the Temple. The main avenue of the nine, leading to the entrance portico,

will be entered from the street by a monumental gateway. Last July they were completing the plans for this principal gateway of the grounds.

At the four corners of the garden are four buildings. One is a school. One is a house, where traveling Bahais are entertained. One is to be used as a hospital, and the other is for workmen, storage, etc. Much of the property in the immediate vicinity of this enclosure belongs to Bahais, so the Mashrak-el-Azkar is the center of the community materially, as well as spiritually.

That which impressed me more than all else, as I stood before this Mashrak-el-Azkar, was the fact that the Bahais of the east had all worked with one accord and had given freely toward its erection.

The Temple in America can be accomplished only as we give up self and unite in this service. The beloved in the east made their offerings and left them with all personal desires upon the altar of sacrifice. Now we in this country must do likewise. We need something more than money for the Temple. It must be built of the material of sacrifice and cemented together by the spirit of unity.

In the building of the Temple, every one must lay before God his material offering together with his ideas, desires and aspirations—give them to the Lord completely, and then, as we come together to construct the material building, we will find that we have ample means for the work in hand.

Each one of us has sufficient means, both material and spiritual, for the work which God has given us to perform. We need not trouble thinking that we may not have enough means, but we should seek to apply to the best advantage the means which God has given us.

Faithfully, your brother in the service of Abdul-Baha,

Charles Mason Remey.

STAR OF THE WEST

PUBLISHED NINETEEN TIMES A YEAR

By the BAHAI NEWS SERVICE, 515 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

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Honorary Member: MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

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To personal checks please add sufficient to cover the bank exchange.

Address all communications to BAHAI NEWS SERVICE, P. O. Box 283, Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

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. VI

Mulk 1, 71 (February 7, 1916)

No. 18

Aga-Seyed-Taki, the Great Afnan

By CHARLES MASON REMEY

January 1, 1916.

Mrs. Corinne True, Chicago.

My dear friend:

You have asked me for some information regarding the life of the venerable Afnan, or the great Afnan, as he was sometimes called in the orient, under whose service of direction, the Mashrak-el-Azkar was built in Ishkabad, Russia.

Afnan, you know, is the term which has been applied to the blood relatives of the "First Point"—the Bab. Aga-Seyed-Taki was the name of the Afnan of whom I write. In the orient, he is known also as Jenab-Afnan-Vakil-Dowleh, the title bestowed upon him for public services rendered to his country, Persia.

Aga-Seyed-Taki-Afnan was first cousin of the Bab. He was the son of Hadji-Mirza-Seyed-Mohammed, the brother of the Bab's mother. It was this same Hadji-Mirza-Seyed-Mohammed, to whom Baha'o'llah revealed, while in Baghdad,

the *Kitab-el-Ighan* or Book of Assurance. So far as I have been able to ascertain, Aga-Seyed-Taki-Afnan was six or seven years younger than the Bab, and they were intimately associated in Baghdad. The friends in Akka and Haifa have told interesting incidents of the youth of the Bab, as described by the Afnan, who recalled vividly the holy personality and spiritual charm of the "First Point."

After many years of service to the Cause in Persia, the Afnan was chosen by Abdul-Baha to undertake the work of the Mashrak-el-Azkar in Ishkabad, where he lived for some years, held in great esteem by all who knew him. Under his direction, the plans for the building were made and the edifice constructed.

I am sending you some pictures which will be of interest to the friends. One shows Aga-Seyed-Taki-Afnan the center of a multitude, including, as you will see by their uniforms, a number of Russian officials. He is in the act of placing the first stones of the foundation of the

Mashrak-el-Azkar of Ishkabad. Note the decorations he wears. These were received from the Russian government in recognition of service rendered in offices to which he had been appointed. Another picture shows the Mashrak-el-Azkar under construction. I send you

with him. Again, in the late spring of 1910, when Howard Struven and I were with Abdul-Baha, we had several memorable visits with the venerable Afnan, who was then visiting on Mount Carmel, in the German Colony, not far from the tomb of the Bab. I recall



The Great Afnan

also a likeness of the Afnan himself with two sons, one upon either side.

In the early summer of 1908, I made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Akka. At that time it was not advisable for a westerner to go to the home of Abdul-Baha, so I was entertained for two days in Akka in the home of the Afnan. This was my first acquaintance

him as a most patriarchal figure with his long white beard, green turban and the flowing robes of the orient. Though the physical man showed his many years, his smile was radiantly brilliant, giving a glimpse into the chambers of the soul of the inner—the real spiritual man, which knows no age, for it lives eternally.

Here was Aga-Seyed-Taki-Afnan spending the evening of a long life of service near to Abdul-Baha, on the hallowed slopes of the mountain of God—that spot frequented by the Holy Seers and Prophets of biblical days—that spot from which now, in these latter days, the spiritual religion of God is again being given to the world.

simple tomb of Aga-Seyed-Taki, the Afnan. Upon one side towered the mountain of God, with its sacred places, while upon the other side stretched the blue sweep of the “tideless sea,” stretching off to the north, where Akka, the New Jerusalem, with its white walls and domes seemed to float like a dove upon the water. We were struck by the sym-



Laying of Corner Stone, Bahai Temple, Ishkabad, Russia

The service of the great Afnan in this world was completed in the summer of 1911, when he passed into the realms beyond, at the advanced age of eighty-five years.

While George Latimer and I were on Mount Carmel a year ago last October (1914), we took a walk one day over the mountain, in the direction of the sea, toward the cave of the Prophet Elijah. Below us, on the flat between the foot of the mountain and the shore, was the Bahai cemetery. From where we stood, we could look down into the small enclosure, in the center of which is the

bology of the dove. In the past the “dove of peace” has always been represented as soaring above the earth, but here, even while the great war raged, we seemed to see the dove calmly resting upon the earth’s surface, affording the refuge, in this age, of spiritual peace, protection and shelter!

Could the mortal Aga-Seyed-Taki, the great Afnan, have a more fitting resting place than amid such holy surroundings?

Faithfully yours in the service of the Mashrak-el-Azkar,

Charles Mason Remey.

Letters from the Orient

Received by MISS MARTHA L. ROOT

Tanta, Egypt, Nov. 24, 1915.

Dear Bahai sister, Miss Root:—Yesterday morning I found upon my desk, after the first hour in the morning, a packet of letters, I knew, at a glance, to be from America. I welcomed them, because certainly they came from some friend, otherwise there is no connection between an occidental and an oriental like my poor self, unless it be a spiritual relation. I found printed on the envelopes the name of Miss Root. I felt a great pleasure, a pleasure beyond my expression. I remained the whole day joyous, happy and cheerful.

Yes, my dear sister, I was glad to know that you arrived home again safely, from your spiritual tour around the world, in these dangerous days. I felt that I was with you all the time I was reading your fragrant and spiritual letter. Indeed we still remember the few, but spiritual days, when you adorned our meeting and stirred our spirits. We hope and pray for the blessed days, in which we see an occidental friend among us, be he man or lady. It gives us more strength to see that the differences between us have been removed and that the east and west are being united in one universal brotherhood forever, through the Cause of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah). The first incident that struck me and worked out my final belief was the sight of some Europeans and Americans among Egyptians showing towards each other kindness and love that was not known among them before. I hope, my dear Bahai sister, and earnestly pray to see new friends from the east and west. Indeed this reminds me of the time, when our beloved Abdul-Baha was in Egypt, where there were many friends from all nationalities—the happiest hours of our lives. I cannot help weeping whenever I think of those glorious days. Oh! How

happy, how splendid were those days! I think you all appreciated them when Abdul-Baha was among you.

Yes, it is a good plan that we should correspond with the different centers of the Bahais in the world. It gives us a new impulse and pushes us forward on the road of the Kingdom. Though we have met and certainly love each other, yet, when I receive a letter from a friend in America whom I had not known before, and in the letter printed tablets, such as I had from our sister, Irene C. Holmes of New York, indeed it is a solid proof of our union in His Greatest Cause.

On the day I received your two letters and the letter of Miss Irene C. Holmes containing tablets and printed notes, and at the same time the STAR OF THE WEST and a card from Miss Hiscox in Cairo, I could not express my joy in receiving them at one time. This attracted the notice of one of our colleagues who happened not to have heard anything about the Bahai Movement; he got interested in the paper of the STAR OF THE WEST and read a great part of an address of Abdul-Baha. He was quite pleased with it. . . .

(Later) Today, November 26th, is the Fête Day of Abdul-Baha. We pray that God may take away this black cloud that darkens the horizons of the world and that people may open their sight and see the glory of Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha illumining all regions, that all should become one in faith and that the Most Great Peace should come.

Yesterday, I received a letter from Cairo, from Mohammed Taki Margosh, in which he stated that Mrs. Getsinger went to Alexandria to inquire from the American S. S., that arrived from Syria, about the health and conditions of Abdul-Baha and the friends there. She re-

turned from Alexandria with the good news of his well being and safety, as well as that of the friends.

My wife and family all remember you and send you their sincere love and greetings.

With Bahai love and greetings, your brother in His Abha Cause,

Mohammed Said Adham.

Bombay, India, Dec. 4, 1915.

Dearest spiritual sister:

I have received two letters from you each dearer than a world to me. Oh, you do not know how we all here remember you. It was indeed very kind of you to send us the Carnegie tablet. We have in India two newspapers the editors of which are very pro-Bahais and a magazine whose editor is a Bahai. One of the pro-Bahai editors is Mr. B. Temple of London, now editor of "The Daily Gazette" at Karachi. You must have read his lecture at the Royal Society of Arts, London, on the Movement, in 1910.

The other who is a Bahai, is the editor of a magazine in Madras. It is called "The New Reformer." His full name is D. Gopal Chetty.

Now I am sure that the Carnegie tablet shall come back to you from India like an echo.

It was indeed a pleasure to read of the many interesting things about the friends in America, and of Carl Hannen, who, I think, is the son of the dear Joseph Hannen. I shall copy your example in future and tell you of little or great events here.

Our brother M. R. Shirazi, who is at Karachi, has come down for a month to Bombay. He missed the opportunity of meeting you, simply because Karachi is a little out of the way. . . .

Hasmatullah has now nearly gathered an assembly in Karachi.

All the sisters here are sending you all their best wishes and prayers and desire that you will pray for their success.

Dear sister, if we are backward in service compared to you, it is because in our childhood we had not the benefit of a good education. Now we hope that our daughters may do better.

Yours very humbly,

Dowlat.

Cairo, Egypt, Dec. 5, 1915.

My dear Bahai sister:

Your good letters, of October 9th and 30th, were truly welcome and I have passed them around among the friends and read them to others. All were glad to hear from you and receive your words of love and remembrance. . . . All that you wrote was interesting, concerning your visits to the different assemblies.

This autumn I have especially been working for the education of girls. . . . My Bahai meetings continue with interest and devotion, and we feel the power of the Spirit with us. The chief thing is to keep close to God and to be constant in prayer, then He will be sure to use us in His service, and always there is something to do everywhere. It is blessed to be used by Him to uplift souls.

Mrs. Getsinger is at present stopping in Cairo, so we are joining our forces in our work here and it is good to have her here and the young Bahais are very glad to meet her and hear her speak. Mrs. Stannard left Cairo in the early summer and went to Port Said, where she has been living ever since. She seems to prefer it to Cairo or Alexandria.

The friends all speak of you often and all have such a sweet loving remembrance of you. They would be so happy to see you here again.

Yours ever, in El-Abha,
Elinore Hiscox.

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 late Arthur Pillsbury Dodge with Abdul-Baha and group of Persian Bahais, taken along Riverside Drive, New York, during Abdul-Baha's notable visit to America in 1912

In Memoriam

ARTHUR PILLSBURY DODGE

1849-1915

ON October 12th, 1915, shortly after seven o'clock in the morning, Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, servant of Abdul-Baha and of God, was called by the Most Glorious One to enter the Kingdom after a life of searching for the truth and of sincere and devoted service in the glorious Cause. And, al-

though suffering untold misery from a dread disease from which there was no cure or even temporary relief, he happily held fast to the one great solace of his life and that which filled his heart with unbounded joy despite his terrible earthly affliction. The very last thing that this good soul did on earth was to



The home of the late Arthur Pillsbury Dodge at Freeport, Long Island, N. Y., where he held Bahai meetings. In this picture with Mr. Dodge, taken when he first became ill, are Mrs. Dodge, R. Paul Dodge, and Mr. Osborne.

typewrite on a plain little piece of paper a simple notice of the next Sunday's Bahai meeting which he had hoped to live long enough to give in his modest little home in Freeport, Long Island, New York. This notice was written the night before he was called into the greater world that lies beyond, and he had addressed an envelope that was to carry the notice of the Bahai meeting, that was never held except in the spirit, to a local newspaper. The envelope read: "Editor Pearsall, Nassau County Review, Freeport, N. Y." And here follows the notice:

SUNDAY SERVICES

Talks on the Bahai Revelation by Arthur P. Dodge, at 64 Jay Avenue, Freeport, N. Y., Sunday afternoons at 3:30 o'clock.

Subject for October 17, 1915:

"The obvious reasons for contemplating Jesus Christ equal with God the Father, and by many even greater than God, while Christ Himself in all His Divine Utterances, declared He was only the Son, the Servant and the Door of the Will of God, whom He persistently held 'WAS ONLY GOD!' Assisted by Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Fleming and Mr. and Mrs. Frank D. Clark. All cordially welcome. Free; no charge or collection."

When my dear father passed out of this life into the greater one beyond, this notice, in the envelope addressed to the local newspaper, lay on top of a little note book in which he kept a record of his Bahai meetings held in Freeport; and the note book was beside the Holy Bible, Browne's "A Traveller's Narrative, or The Episode of the Bab," and several Utterances of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul-Baha, which were close by my father at all times.

The Sunday before he died, October 10th, 1915, when I saw him for the last time and heard him with difficulty, because of a tube in his throat, read one of the blessed tablets, my father conducted a well-attended meeting of the friends. The subject was, "The Covenants of God with His creatures, through His Seven great Prophets and Messengers, from Adam, the first recorded Prophet, down to the present time, as proven from the Bible and other sacred Books." At this meeting Andrew Fleming and Frank D. Clark assisted.

One of the oldest, best-known and beloved of Bahais, who was greatly beloved by Abdul-Baha, and who was affectionately spoken of throughout the world, and especially all through Persia and the orient as "Mr. Dodge," a short sketch of my father's work in the Cause may be of interest to the friends. Always, ever since he was a young man before his marriage to my mother in 1870, my father was given to seeking the divine truth. He successfully investigated and followed pretty nearly every cult and ism before he finally heard what he instantly recognized as the truth. During all this time he was a close and earnest student of religion and it was only natural that he should have known the Bible and other religious books as but few men, not excepting the most learned theologians, ever understand the sacred and historical works of religion. That he got more than the letter out of his early studies was evidenced from his ever desire for more and more and a

continual seeking after that which he had not attained.

My father first heard of the glorious Cause when we were living in Chicago right after the World's Fair. Just before the loss of my sister Anna in the winter of 1895 my father had been told something of the Cause by Dr. Sarah J. Burgess in Chicago, but not very much. He knew just enough about the great Bahai Revelation then to be interested in it, and to have renewed hope that at last he had found the truth! In fact, if he had not felt keenly about it he might never have outlived the terrible shock to him of Anna's death, for my mother said the only thing that seemed to keep him up at that time was what Dr. Burgess had told him of the Cause. Dr. Burgess had received the Message from a "Doctor" Ibrahim G. Kheiralla, whom my father and mother met upon their return to Chicago from Boston after the death of Anna. My father was

obliged to go to New York before he had investigated very far in the "Teachings," as they were termed—and it was more than a year before he returned to Chicago. Then he had only a few days and prevailed upon the teacher to give him the glad tidings all in one day. At that time, it was the method to give the Message of the Coming of the Kingdom in some twenty or more lessons, once or twice a week, before reaching the "pith"—that is, telling of the appearance of the Bab, Baha'o'llah and the Center of the Covenant, Abdul-Baha. This was in the early fall of 1897.

Leaving my brother William and me in Chicago to finish out the last year in our respective schools, he and my mother, with my brother Paul, moved to New York whither my father was to spend the balance of his life. William and I then took the "Teachings," in a large class that met once or twice a week, in West Monroe street.

That same winter, in January, 1898, my father sent for "Doctor" and Mrs. Kheiralla to come to New York, to No. 55 West 95th Street, where he and mother and Paul were boarding, to inaugurate the Cause in New York. So, as a matter of historic record, it is here set down that the great and wonderful, beautiful Bahai Revelation was first introduced into New York, and the first, original Bahai Assembly established there by my father in January, 1898. In the first class at the West Ninety-fifth street address was Mrs. Fiske, the wife of Col. Archie Fiske, who was invited to the class by Mrs. Talbot, who had taken the "Teachings" in Chicago. My father had asked Mrs. Talbot, who was interested in New Thought, to bring some of the New Thought people to the class.

Among the first believers in New York were the Kappes family—Lily and Charles, their mother, brothers and sisters; Arthur James, wife and daughters; Charles Jones and James D. Brittingham.



The Dodge plot in Lake Side cemetery, Wakefield, Mass., showing the grave of Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, and monument bearing the Greatest Name inscription.

(Continued on page 165)

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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Words of Abdul-Baha

CONCERNING thy question whether all the souls enjoy eternal life: Know thou those souls partake of the Eternal Life in whom the Spirit of Life is breathed from the Presence of God and all beside them are dead—without Life, as Christ hath explained in the texts of the Gospel. Any person whose insight is opened by God seeth the souls in their stations after the disintegration of the bodies. Verily they are living and are subsisting before their Lord and he seeth also the dead souls submerged in the gulfs of mortality.

Then know thou verily all the souls are created according to the nature of God and all are in the state of (unconscious) purity at the time of their births. But afterwards they differ from one another insofar as they acquire excellencies or defects. Nevertheless, the creatures have different degrees in existence insofar as the creation goes, for capacities are different; but all of them are good and pure (in their essence), then afterwards they are polluted and defiled. Although there are different states of creation, yet all of them are beneficial. Glance thou over the temple of man, its members and its parts. Among them there are the eye, ear, nose, mouth, hands and fingers. Notwithstanding the differences between these organs, all of them are useful in their proper spheres. But if one of them is out of order, there is need of a remedy and if the medicine does not heal, then the amputation of that member becomes necessary.

—ABDUL-BAHA.

CORRECTION

Dear brother Windust:—I have just been reading No. 18 STAR OF THE WEST. Now there is one word (page 156) which I feel ought to be corrected in the next issue if possible. It is the word “Baghdad,” which should have been “boyhood”—so as to read, “they were intimately associated in boyhood.” The Bab was never in Baghdad. This is the fault

of my writing I know and I should have sent a typed letter.

Also on the top of the second column, page 157, the word “visiting” should have been “residing,” and on top of page 154, second column, “wall” should have been “well.” But these latter two errors are not of great importance.

Charles Mason Remey.

In Memoriam—Arthur Pillsbury Dodge

(Continued from page 163)

A month or so later a class was started at the home of Dr. Egbert Guernsey, made up principally of New Thought people. In this class, among others, were Mrs. Mary MacNutt, Annie Boylan and Mrs. Alice Gibbons. Mrs. MacNutt had been from the "Doctor" at my father's rooms in Ninety-fifth street, and still later did W. Hooper Harris.

Following the Ninety-fifth street meetings, my father started other Bahai meetings in different studios in Carnegie

"Blessing be upon the spirit who departed from the body purified from the doubts and superstitions of the nations"

BUT concerning that which thou hast asked about the spirit and its everlastingness after its ascension, know that it will ascend at the time of its departure until it enters the presence of God in a form which, throughout all centuries, times, and throughout all circumstances and events of the world will remain unchanged. It will be everlasting as the perpetuity of the Kingdom of God, His Sovereignty, His Power and His Might, and from it will appear the traces of God, His Qualities, Providences and Favors—the Pen cannot move at the mentioning of this Station as it is in its Supremeness and Exaltation! The hand of the Divine Bounty will cause it to enter into a station that cannot be comprehended by expression, nor be explained by all the creatures of the existence.

Blessing be upon the spirit who departed from the body purified from the doubts and superstitions of the nations. Verily, it moves in the atmosphere of God's desire, and enters into the Supreme Paradise.

All the angels of the Supreme Paradise attend and surround it, and it will have fellowship with all the prophets of God and His saints, and speak with them and tell them what happened to it in the Cause of God, the Lord of the Universe. If anyone could realize what hath been assigned for it in the Kingdoms of God, the Lord of the Throne and the dust, he would immediately yearn with a great longing for the Unmovable, Exalted, Holy and Abha station!

—BAHA'O'LLAH.

studying the Vedanta philosophy, and a swami was staying at the MacNutt home at 731 St. Nicholas avenue, New York. Later Howard MacNutt, who rendered a most beautiful Bahai service at my father's funeral, received the Message

Hall, New York. At this time Abdul Karim and Mirza Serim Moses Raffi came from Cairo—the first Persians to come to America to teach the Cause. Anton Haddad, a Syrian, had come to America on business, and was in evi-



Arthur Pillsbury Dodge and Elizabeth A. Dodge at the time they first received the Bahai Message in Chicago, the early fall of 1897.

dence at the Ninety-fifth street meetings before this time. He was greatly beloved by my father, and was of great assistance with his Arabic translations of the Holy Utterances.

In August, 1900, my father and mother, and Mrs. William H. Hoar, set sail for Acca, and were met at the pier in Haifa by forty of the Persian believers. Often did my father comment upon the great spiritual light in their faces, making it easy to distinguish the believers from the other natives in the street or anywhere one passed or came upon them!

They remained in the Holy Household in Acca for nine days with Abdul-Baha, and my father spent nearly all of the time with him, receiving the blessed instructions straight from the fountain-head. He also studied much during his stay at Acca with Mirza Abul Fazl, the great Persian historian, and became thoroughly conversant with the history of the Bahai Revelation in Persia and elsewhere.

Sailing away from Haifa on the same ship that brought my father, mother and Mrs. Hoar, bound for America, were Mirza Assad'Ullah, Hadji Hassan Khorosani and Rhoui Effendi, who reached New York while father was in the East.

In Beyrout father, mother and Mrs. Hoar were beautifully entertained by Mohammad Mustapha Bagdadi, father of Dr. Zia Bagdadi, and in Acca by the Turkish Governor of the Province. Likewise by various good friends in Cairo, Port Said, Alexandria, and all along the way.

Returning from Acca my father gave the Message on board ship in the Mediterranean, and in London he gave the glad tidings to Canon Wilberforce of Westminster Abbey, among others. In London he had long talks about the Bahai Revelation with Prof. Edward G. Browne of Cambridge University—the great authority on Persian and other oriental languages and history; and with Prof. E. Denison Ross, also a Persian scholar and historian.



One of the latest pictures taken of Mr. Dodge, and a very good likeness.

While in London, the guest of Mrs. Thornburgh Cropper, Prof. Browne made a masterly translation of perhaps the most wonderful of all of the blessed tablets that Abdul-Baha had written in his own hand for my father and in his presence in Acca, explaining the three

great questions of Vicarious Atonement, the Trinity and the Immortality of the Soul, with which tablet every friend is familiar.

On his return to New York from Acca my father started meetings for the Cause in various places and took a large house at No. 261 West 139th street, which soon became known as the Bahai Home. Here meetings were held, and believers from all parts of the world were welcomed and received at all times. "Open house" always prevailed here, and it was the first place that the Persians and other friends coming to America and to New York would seek out.

My father also started a highly successful series of meetings in the big assembly hall of the Stephen Merritt Undertaking Establishment at Eighth avenue and Nineteenth street, New York, where four and five hundred persons would listen to talks on the Cause at every meeting.

Among the many things he did for the Cause was to send lamps over to Haifa for the blessed tomb of the Bab; and to Acca for the holy tomb of the Blessed Perfection (Baha'o'llah).

My father had the honor to receive the first tablet ever sent to America, which was written in Arabic by Abdul-Baha's own hand, and translated by Anton Haddad. He also received the first "Greatest Name" stone, sent from Acca. My father received many tablets and communications from Abdul-Baha, more perhaps than any other believer, and all over the orient the name, "Mr. Dodge" was known among the friends.

He was president of the First Bahai Assembly of New York, and served on the Board of Council for several years.

In forming the First Bahai Assembly

of Freeport, N. Y., on March 14th, 1915, my father wrote the following statement that was subscribed to and signed by the names which follow:

"We, whose signatures and addresses are written below, hereby associate ourselves as Founder-members of the First Bahai Assembly of Hempstead, in the County of Nassau and State of New York, and located at Freeport in said Township.

"It is our desire and intention to labor as humble, faithful and steadfast servants of and for the Incomparable Cause of God."

Signatures: Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, E. A. Dodge, Josephine Falley Clark, Frank Durbon Clark, Wendell Phillips Dodge, Beatrice M. Dodge, Richard William Dodge, Wendell Phillips Dodge, Jr., Richard Paul Dodge, Clara Louise Osborne, Mrs. Otis I. Hathon, Irene C. Holmes, William Copeland Dodge and Lavinia Evelyn Dodge.

Whereas he had been bitter against the church for its bigotry and superstition, the last two years of his life my father had so mellowed his feelings that he was not even antagonistic to an unbeliever, but rather pitied and tried to help everyone who had not been able to "see the light." The Bahai Revelation had made of him a sweet-tempered soul and had given him an unlimited reserve and compassion. He seemed not to mind his terrible suffering during the last year of his life, and expressed himself as only regretting that he could not live long enough to complete his work for the Blessed Cause, to serve God and man as he never had been able to do!

Wendell Phillips Dodge.

MADAME CHERON

To the STAR OF THE WEST, Greeting:

I recall in former years you have made it a custom to announce the departures of the friends in the last issue

for the Bahai year of the STAR OF THE WEST.

Now as the end of our present year is drawing near I am in receipt of the

announcement of the passing of one of our friends Madame Chéron on January 20th last, in Paris.

During Abdul-Baha's visits in Paris, souls became attracted to the Cause, and the principles of his teachings became known and produced an effect upon many. Then out from these people there arose a few who recognized the Covenant of God and realized that in Abdul-Baha was the living spiritual Center of this new life in the world. Madame Chéron was of these few. The spiritual atmosphere of her home was to the hungry and seeking soul as an oasis in the desert to the tired traveller seeking refreshment and rest.

During the weeks prior to the outbreak of the war, which George Latimer and I spent in Paris, we went often to the apartment of Madame Chéron, overlooking the Seine. At times when surrounded by discouragements we went there to talk about The Center of The Covenant and thus revive our spiritual forces; and at other times we went there to meet groups of friends and seekers whom our kind hostess had gathered to hear the wonderful story of The Cause of God. It will interest the friends in this country to know that the first of the ninth-day Mashrak-el-Azkar meetings held in Paris, was at Madame Chéron's home.

Only a few weeks before her death Madame Chéron wrote from the American Hospital in Paris, saying that she had but a few more weeks here with us. She had suffered much, but was happy and contented. My first thought was that she might be spared for more spiritual service here, but such was not God's will. We cannot say that her work is finished, for to those of us who knew her, her faith in and devotion to Abdul-Baha continues to inspire us—it will always stand out as a spiritual light of brilliancy amid the surroundings of darkness of material Paris.

Faithfully yours in El-Abha,
Charles Mason Remey.

MRS. THOMAS PETERSON 1838-1916

Mrs. Thomas Peterson, who died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Jensen,



Mrs. Thomas Peterson

Burlington, Wis., February 13, 1916, at the age of seventy-seven years, was one of the pioneers of the Bahai Cause in Wisconsin. She received the message in 1899. It was her desire that the Bahais conduct the funeral service.

Mr. Albert R. Windust of Chicago and Mr. Andrew Nelson of Racine responded to this request. The selections from the utterances of Baha'o'llah and Abdul-Baha which were read, made all realize that the promised age had indeed come, when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

HERBERT ANDERSON 1886-1915

On October 22, 1915, George Herbert Anderson passed into the life beyond. He



George Herbert Anderson

was well known among the Bahai young people of Chicago. Afflicted with a disease of the throat, he went first to Muskogee, Okla., then to Denver, Colo., where he died. Herbert, as everyone called him, was well known for his sincere convictions and earnest religious work. From Mr. Arthur S. Agnew, he heard the glad tidings of the coming of Baha'o'llah, and was the recipient of a beautiful tablet from Abdul-Baha.