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Tablet of General Instruction

Translated by Command of Abdul Bahá on August 4th, 1908, at Mt. Carmel, by Dr. Ameen U. Fareed.

"To be read by the friends of God in the East and the West.
Upon them be Bahá'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 of God, the holy and spiritual revelations. They 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 attractions of the conscience, which belong to the realm of morality. Like unto the lamy they light 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, hapiness 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 delicacy 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, 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 barracks of great war, 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 of the appear-

ance 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 Assembly in 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 has reached the grade of maturity and attained 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 has made physical development, traveled through the grades of civilization and attained the human wonders, virtues and endowments in their most consummate form, it has 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 day become intensified and these ideal radiation of these lights may day by 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 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 loneliness. 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 solitarily 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 others 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 one 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 Caspian 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 ye travel through the world and observe it, ye 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 things is an expression of their decomposition and disintegration. The affinity and organization of the elements makes possible the existence of death.

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 ye 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 bloodthirstiness. 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 self same 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 natures, 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 plurality 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 is an American, another 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 latter 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 the two sublime 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 ye 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 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 Aksa* (Most Holy Sanctuary) and my Sadrat El Montaha† (Divine Guidance).

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

†Sadrat El Montha (the furthermost 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.

The great Manifestation was fulfilled and consummated in the Blessed Beauty of Abha, 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 in this leaf.

Upon ye be Baha'o'llah El Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL BAHA ABBAS."

The Mashrak-el-Azcar

Authorized statement by the Chicago House of Spirituality concerning the purchase of the land for the Mashrak-el-azcar.

As there seems to be a general desire to know the history and the details of the purchase of the ground for the Mashrak-el-azcar, your servants, the House of Spirituality, wish to impart this information to the friends through the BULLETIN.

When it became known that Abdul Baha wished a Temple built in Chicago, some of the friends consulted an attorney to obtain his advice regarding the steps necessary to be taken to hold property legally. He made a search through the Bahai books and writings and reported that he found the material affairs and administrative duties were to be handled by a body of men to be elected by the Assembly. Being informed that such a body existed in the House of Spirituality, he gave it as his opinion that a meeting of the Assembly should be called and the House of Spirituality and the members of it chosen by the Assembly and invested with power to hold property as trustees, this proceeding being according to the law in Illinois.

A meeting after this order was called and the House of Spirituality and the members thereof were made trustees for the Assembly in the matter of the purchase of the land.

While this was being done the friends were busy seeking to locate a suitable piece of ground. Some land was found on the South side, near the lake, and some on the North side, and a friendly rivalry sprang up, the members of the House holding themselves as neutral as possible in the discussions of the merits of the various locations.

Meanwhile some money began to come into the treasury and it was found we had $2,000 on hand. Then some of the friends began to urge the House of Spirituality to purchase some land—to make a start somewhere—and for several weeks a number of the maid-servants visited the meetings (which are held weekly) and insisted on action, arguing against delay. The House of Spirituality held off, hoping the friends would come into unity on some location. Let it be known that all these meetings and negotiations were conducted with the sweetest spirituality and utmost good will.

About this time it was found that one piece of land, much desired by some of the friends, was divided into lots and that two of these lots belonged to a party who was anxious to sell and that he would sell the two lots for $2,000, which was considered a low price, as the lots are large—as large as eight lots in some parts of the city.

This was presented to the Assembly and the friends were asked if they wished to have the trustees purchase this ground and wished to give them authority so to do. Then, in the joy of realization that we were about to

purchase ground on which might be erected the Mashrak-el-azcar, all differing opinions and ideas seemed to melt into one and unity came, and the trustees were authorized to purchase these two lots.

The House of Spirituality, after consultation, felt it wise to recommend to the friends the purchase of this land for various reasons, one of these reasons, perhaps the least of all, being that in case it should develop that this was not the chosen land and some other location be found later which should be more acceptable, this land could be readily converted into cash, and that its purchase was a safe investment.

The House of Spirituality wished to be cautious and protect the interests of all in the transaction, and to this end it took title to the property temporarily in the name of the Treasurer, the transfer being amply safeguarded so that in case of future transfer, if other property be found more suitable, there might be no cloud upon the title we could give.

The matter will be left as it now is until the Convention is called and a larger organization formed; and then whatever this organization shall decide will be carried out. All the deliberations of the House of Spirituality have been with a hope that some such organization of all the Assemblies in America might be formed to carry this great undertaking to a glorious consummation.

We hope that the deliberations and actions of the House of Spirituality will find favor in the hearts of all the friends, and that the time will soon arrive for the meeting of the Convention and that out of it a most perfect organization may result.

HOUSE OF SPIRITUALITY.

The Spiritual Table

"Thou preparest a table for me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."—23d Psalm.

The Word of God

"The Word of GOD is the storehouse of all good, all power and 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 unison of the particular with the Universal makes him all in all."

ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.

The Greatness of the Day He is God!

O ye friends of God! Do ye know in what Cycle ye are created and in what Age ye Exist? This is the Age of the Blessed Perfection and this is the Time of the Greatest Name. This is the Century of the Manifestation; the Age of

the Sun of the Horizons and the beautiful Springtime of His Holiness, the Eternal One. The earth is in motion and growth; the mountains, hills, plains and prairies are green and pleasant; the Bounty is overflowing; the Mercy universal. The rain is descending from the cloud of Mercy; the brilliant Sun is shining. The full moon is ornamenting the horizon of Ether; the great Ocean Tide is flooding every little stream. The Gifts are successive; the Favors are consecutive. The refreshing Breeze is blowing, wafting the fragrant perfume of the blossoms. Boundless Treasure is in the Hand of the King of Kings; lift the hem of thy garment in order to receive it. If we are not cheerful and joyous at this season, for what other season shall we wait and what other time shall we expect? It is the time for growing, the season for joyous gatherings. Take the Cup of the Testament in thy hand; leap and dance with ecstasy in the Triumphal Procession of the Covenant. Lay your confidence in the Everlasting Bounty; turn to the Presence of the Glorious God; ask assistance from the Kingdom of Abha; seek confirmation from the Supreme World.

Turn thy vision toward the Horizon of Eternal Wealth; pray for help from the Source of Mercy. Soon shall ye see the Friends attaining their longed-for destination and pitching their tents, while we are but in the first day of our journey. Baha be upon you!

(Signed) ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.

The Message

"For as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."—Matt. 24:27.

We are living in a great Age, a great Day, the "*Day of God*," in which prophecies are being fulfilled, "Knowledge increased" (Dan. 12), the "seals" loosened, the books opened, and the Message of God spread throughout all regions. This Message is to be given to all nations and religions, so that they may all know God in Truth, "Know Him as He should be known," in order that the Earth may be changed, i. e., the heart turn to its Creator for guidance and protection.

In this Day of trials and temptations, the door to the Kingdom is open, even as Noah opened the door of the Ark of knowledge for the protection of the people in his day; but only a few desired to accept the Great gift which Noah offered them, and thus the world was drowned in the waters of superstitions and imaginations.

Then came Abraham, who offered the people protection in the form of sacrifice, for we needed to learn that sacrifice is one of the greatest means for attaining what we most earnestly desire. But still the people were negligent and desired it not.

Then came Moses to a down-trodden and ignorant nation, and gave them the serpent knowledge that overcame or swallowed up all other forms of knowledge, revealing to them laws for their protection, as well as teaching them to have faith in the messengers of God. A few accepted this divine gift; but later on their guides and leaders corrupted the message of Moses to such a degree that the people were veiled from the beauty of Jesus Christ when He appeared.

Jesus offered the Jews the love and protection of the Holy Spirit, or word of God, but only a few ignorant fishermen believed in Him. Thus they demonstrated that they did not really believe, or understand, the teachings of

Moses or the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, for did not Jesus tell them that if they had believed in Moses and the prophets, they would also have believed in Him, for Moses told them of Him?

Six hundred and twenty-two years after Jesus came Mohammed with a message, teaching the wild and roving tribes of Arabia the oneness and unity of God, and telling the Jews and Christians not to make differences in religion, for He was Moses and Jesus, thus offering them love and unity for their protection. But they refused it, while some of those wild and roving tribes of Arabia believed in Him. Mohammed also revealed many prophecies concerning the coming of the Glory of the Lord, which was to take place at the end of His dispensation, when the veils of darkness would be removed, the light of knowledge illumine the world, mysteries be revealed, and peace, love and unity exist through the power of the Word and Revelation of the Baha, or Glory of God.

The Bahai Revelation, we claim, therefore, is the fulfilling of all the prophecies relating to the time of the end, the "Latter Days," or the "End of the Ages," when God would manifest Himself with such power of the Word that Truth, Love, Peace and Unity would obtain among all nations, tribes and religions. Baha Ollah has declared that the "Most Great peace shall come, that wars shall be no more, and that the Kingdom of God shall be established on Earth as in Heaven. Christ commanded His disciples to pray to Our Heavenly Father to bring about this Heavenly condition, and He told them in the Parable of the Vineyard that the Lord of the Vineyard Himself would have to come to establish that Kingdom, as the other servants were unequal to the task.

Moses and the Prophets of the Old Testament so declared; Christ and His disciples have sung songs of praise for that time; and Mohammed has prophesied that the 12th Iman, the Supreme Lord, would herald these glad tidings.

The Bab was that Herald. In 1844 He arose in Shiraz, Persia, and went to Mecca, where thousands were gathered to pray and worship their Lord. Here He stood up alone and declared that the time had come when the God of the Jews, of the Christians, of the Mohammedans and of all other religions, in fact, the God of the whole universe, had instructed Him to herald the glad tidings that "He whom God would Manifest" was about to appear, to gladden the hearts of all who worshiped God in Spirit and in Truth.

What a wonderful statement! What a great act has been performed! Who can comprehend its greatness? Who among us can realize that we are living in that Day when God would reveal Himself to mankind? Its greatness is a stumbling block to many which prevents them from believing. They say that such a thing could not happen in this our Day. But, dear friends, for all that, it is true. Those who have spiritual eyes can see plain evidence of its truth in the great changes that are taking place in the world. We find it even in the newspapers. Writers of editorials are making wonderful statements. But do they know from whence this power of thought comes? Do they see the spiritual signs back of the material being manifested from all quarters? We think not. But the wise will understand, because they have turned to the Door of Knowledge, *i. e.*, the Manifestation of God.

In all the Holy Books, those who have come in the name of God have prophesied that at the time of the end God would restore peace and love, and guide people in the right path. Baha Ollah is the Proclaimer and Fulfiller of all the promises given by the Prophets of the past. They all, speaking of the Word, declared that the earth would be

changed, i. e., the earth of the hearts of the people.

All the Prophets of the past were as one reality, for all were dominated by one spirit; all spoke one Word. We know that Baha also spoke that same Word, only more powerfully, even as the Father is greater and more powerful than the Son. Did not Christ say that He had many things to say, but as the people could not bear it or understand it at that time, he referred them to the time of the Father, saying: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all Truth." That mighty "Spirit of Truth" was manifested in Baha Ollah, telling us what Love is, what Peace is, what Unity is, and how we shall live and accomplish so as to bring about the Kingdom of God on Earth.

This is the message we are giving to all while thirsting for the Water of Life, or hungering for the Bread of Life. This Water and Bread is that Spiritual knowledge that Christ gave. To-day we are getting it more abundantly from the Supreme Pen of Baha Ollah, the Glory of God and from the Pen and spoken word of Abdul Baha, the Servant of the Glory.

The earnest seeker shall surely find. As it is written, "Knock and it shall be opened unto you." The blind shall see, the deaf shall hear and understand, and the sick shall be healed.

Every time a Prophet appears on earth, new laws are made and new commands are given. It is a time of renewal. Souls are awakened out of their sleep. It is a day of resurrection, wherein people are made to see and understand the difference between spiritual and material things.

This day in which we are living, we claim is the Great Day because a greater revelation is given to the world. It is a day of judgment and resurrection. More light is being shed upon a darkened world than ever before in its history. Knowledge is being increased, mysteries revealed, and the knowledge of God made manifest. Man will change from wrong to right, from false to true, from ignorance to knowledge of God. He will sever himself from himself, and become Godly, *i. e.*, show forth the attributes and qualities of God. A greater understanding of the Spiritual condition will cause him to endeavor all the more to attain it. Having eyes, he will see with the eyes of God; having ears, he will hear with the ears of God; having a tongue, he will use it only to commemorate God. We quote from the 45th Arabic Hidden Word: "Thy hearing is My hearing, hear thou with it; thy sight is My sight, see thou with it. Thus mayest thou attest within thyself My Holiness, that I may attest within myself a place of exaltation for Thee."

The appearance of every prophet is called the Dawn of a New Day, a New Dispensation, in which is given forth the Message of God, His laws and His commands. Just before He (the prophet) departs, He makes a covenant with and for His people. It is necessary that someone should be appointed to carry out His plans to instruct the people in the teachings He has given. Just as Moses appointed Joshua as His successor, as Christ appointed Peter and as Mohammed appointed Ali, so at this time the greatest manifestation, Baha Ollah, has appointed his eldest son, Abbas Effendi, the greatest (Branch) spoken of in the Old Testament, as the center of his covenant. He it is whom we call Abdul Baha, and He it is to whom all are commanded to turn their faces and hearts for guidance, for teaching, for love, for peace, and for unity. Abdul Baha is the living example of the Peace, Love and Unity that this revelation gives forth.

Abdul Baha is the explainer of all the sacred Books of the past as well as of the writings of Baha Ollah. His Tablets and instructions are being sent to all parts of the world and most of the believers are blessed with one or more

of these Messages of Love and Advice. Therefore it behooves us to do what we can to serve Him, for this service teaches us to be humble, to have patience, and to know that every good act is great in this Great Day of God.

The Bahai Basis

By Mrs. I. D. Brittingham

The sole and only dogma of the Bahais is that of a Divine Revelation of the Word of God through His Manifestations or Prophets. The following compilation by Mrs. Brittingham is in no sense a "creed," but is intended to present in concise form the basic principles of the Faith, as she understands them.—Editor.

1. Belief in GOD, the Infinite Essence; the One; the Single; Creator of all things.

2. Belief in His Perfect Spirit, the Manifestation of Himself, pervading all things.

3. Belief in all of His highest Manifestations of Himself as have appeared in all of His prophets.

4. Belief in His latest and greatest prophet, Baha'o'llah.

5. Obedience to the Commands of Baha'o'llah and firmness in His Covenant.

6. The substance of His Commands is as follows:

(a) To turn to His dearest Son, Abdul-Baha, for all interpretation of the Holy Revelation of Baha'o'llah, and to follow the example of Abdul-Baha.

(b) To antagonize and denounce no religion or belief.

(c) To recognize good in all religions.

(d) To love all nations.

(e) To give the Truth and the Teachings of GOD without money and without price.

(f) To serve one another, and to know that all mankind are brothers. "Let not a man glory in this that he loves his country. Let him rather glory in this, that he loves the whole world."

(g) To assist in "taking the battle out of the earth," through the establishing of the Kingdom of GOD upon the earth.

(h) To destroy the reign of force in the world and bring to pass the unity of humanity and the brotherhood of the world through the active principle, or reign, of love, which brings the Great Peace.

(i) To establish work as worship and to help mankind *to help itself.*

(j) To establish a universal language throughout the world.

(k) To be sane and practical, as true Religion is the essence of sanity and practicability, and to live above the world of dust.

(l) To make to-day better than yesterday.

(m) To know, lift, serve, all human kind, through our universal love, *promulgated by deeds.*

7. The Bahai Revelation is summed up in one word. That word is—LOVE. "Love is the light of the Kingdom."

"He who hath not this love—(the Love of GOD)—hath no portion with El-Baha."

Ancient Persian Scripture

"I announce to you the Word which the Increaser has told me and which is the best to hear. Those that will pay attention to me and follow me, will secure for themselves health and immortality. Such men will be able to see Ahura-Mazda through Good Mind."

ZOROASTER.

Instructions for Holding Meetings

A selection of portions of Tablets from the pen of Abdul Baha concerning the question, "How to establish and conduct Bahai meetings."—Compiled by Ahmed Isphahani.

(1)

"Thou hast written concerning the meetings and gathering places of the believers of God. Such assemblies and gatherings will greatly aid the promotion of the Word, and all the audience, whether friends or not, will become affected. But when the friends have the intention of entering into these meetings they must disengage the heart from all other reflections, ask the Inexhaustible Divine Confirmation, and with the utmost devotion and humility set their feet in the gathering place. Let them not introduce any topic in the meeting except the mentioning of the True One, neither must they confuse that merciful assembly with complex outside questions. They must either teach or open their tongue in propounding arguments, either commune or supplicate and pray to God, either read Tablets or give out advices and exhortations.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(2)

"The believers of God must assemble and associate with each other in the utmost love, joy and fragrance. They must conduct themselves (in the meetings) with the greatest dignity and consideration, chant divine verses, peruse instructive articles, read Tablets of Abdul-Baha, encourage and inspire each other with love for the whole human race, invoke God with perfect joy and fragrance, read the verses of glorification and praises of the Self-Subsistent Lord and deliver eloquent speeches.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(3)

"You have written concerning the spiritual meetings. The foundation of the spiritual meetings must be the teaching and delivering the Cause of God. In these meetings the believers and maidservants of the Merciful must proclaim the proofs and arguments and explain the signs of the appearance of the Beauty of Abha (may my life be a sacrifice to the beloved ones). Meanwhile, they may read some Tablets and Communes, and at the end of the meetings, if they desire to sing with the utmost supplication and meekness, it is acceptable. But the fundamental principle of the establishment of spiritual meetings is for the sake of teaching and delivering the Truth, so that those souls who are present may become informed of the Divine Evidences and Proofs.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(4)

"But regarding teaching the Truth: One must teach with wisdom, amiability, good-naturedness and kindness. And should anyone circumscribe conditions (for teaching the Truth) it will become rare.

But concerning the established (organized) assemblies, altogether outside conversation must not be introduced therein. Nay, rather conversation must be confined to the reading of verses, the perusing of Words and affairs which pertain to the Cause of God, such as explaining proofs and evidences, delivering clear and irrefutable arguments and announcing the Signs of the Beloved of the Creatures.

Those souls who are in that assembly before their entrance therein must be adorned with utmost purity, turn their faces toward the Kingdom of Abha and enter with infinite humility and meekness, and when someone reads Tablets they must be silent and attentive. Should anyone desire to speak, he must do it with the utmost courtesy and with

perfect eloquence and fluency by the consent and permission of the people of the assembly.

Upon thee be greeting and praise.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(5)

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

"A hundred thousand glad tidings be upon ye that the Sun of the Reality of the Beauty of Abha hath shone forth from the Horizon of the Contingent Being and hath illumined the regions with the lights of the Most Great Guidance. The realities of the Old Testament and the Gospel are already fulfilled and the Mysteries of the Heavenly Books become manifest. This is the century of the Merciful One and the Period of Joy and Gladness. O ye heedless ones, become mindful! O ye sleepy ones, be awakened! O ye blind ones, become seeing! O ye deaf ones, become hearing! O ye dumb ones, become speakers! O ye dead ones, become living! O ye deprived ones, take a portion! This is the Effulgence of the Merciful and the moving of the depthless sea. This is the Outpouring of the wonderful and new springtime and the falling of the showers of the Beauty of the Most Great Lord! This is thy mission.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(6)

"Thou hast inquired regarding the Teachings and instructions of Baha Ollah! Thou must instruct the people of the world in the Love of God, that they may erase the foundation of warfare and strife, be attracted by the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of Abha, lay the basis of love and amity, raise the melody of affinity, and the oneness of the Kingdom of humanity; transmute tyranny and persecution into love and faithfulness, efface the traces of bloodshed, and carnage; construct the edifice of reconciliation, dispel the darkness of estrangement, diffuse the light of unity; change the poison of animosity into the honey of sympathetic affection; destroy the religious, national and social prejudices from the individuals of humanity; live and act, with and toward each other as though they were from one race, one country, one religion, and one kind.

(Signed)

"ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS."

(Translated by M. Ahmed Isphahani, November, 1908, Washington, D. C.)

The Young Folks

In our last issue we said we hoped to give a full account of the services observed by Mrs. Isabella D. Brittingham upon the occasion of the baptizing, or naming in the Abha Faith, of the four little children of Mrs. Charles A. Butler, of Huntington, Indiana. The services were conducted at the home of Colonel and Mrs. Archie C. Fisk in the Bronx. We print below a full account:

I.

Extract of Tablet from Abdul Baha:

"When you wish to name a babe, prepare a meeting therefor, chant verses and communes, supplicate the Threshold of Oneness, and beg the attainment of guidance for the babe; and wish confirmed firmness and constancy. Then give the name and enjoy beverage and sweetmeat. This is spiritual baptism."

II.

Let the parents state that in accord with the Word of Abdul Baha the friends have been invited to be present and welcome the little ones into the new

life, so that they may be known as Bahais and may know themselves as Bahais.

III.

Ask the friends to utter the Greatest Name in silence, supplicating the presence of the Holy Spirit and the blessing of God upon the children.

IV.

Read the following Commune, which is an extract from a Tablet to some American parents:

"O God! rear these children in the bosom of Thy Love, and give them milk from the breast of Providence. O Lord, cultivate these fresh plants in the rose-garden of Thy Love, and nurture them by showers from the clouds of Providence. Make them children of the Kingdom, and lead them to the Divine World. Thou art the powerful and kind; Thou art the generous, the bestower, whose blessings precede all else."

V.

The following supplication to Abdul Baha was signed by the parents and then by all present, a duplicate one being also signed for the parents to keep:

"As God has blessed us with the care of these little children, we will need His guidance and your prayers; your kindness; your charity; your patience to guide us in rearing these children of the new creation and to carry out the strict command of God to train and educate the children. In this new age, all are one family. These children are yours as well as ours to educate. May God's blessing and guidance be upon us all."

VI.

Supplication.

"O Unequalled Lord! For these helpless children be a Protector! For these weak and sinful ones be kind and forgiving! O Creator! although we are but useless grass, yet we are of your Garden; though we are but young trees bare of leaves and blossoms, yet we are of Thy Orchard; therefore nourish this grass with the rain of Thy bounty; refresh and vivify these young, languishing trees with the breeze of Thy spiritual springtime. Awaken us, enlighten us, give us eternal life and accept us into Thy Kingdom."

VII.

The children were then anointed with rose water, first the eldest and then the others, with the formula, "In the name of God I anoint you."

A social time followed.

Chicago

Chicago, Dec. 7, 1908.

To The Bahai Bulletin:

The Bahai friends will be glad to know of the good work that is being done by our brother Mirza Sinore Muzaffar Raffie, who for several years past has been a student at the University of Chicago. About a year ago last month Mirza Raffie and a student from India founded the Chicago International Club, which is the ninth chapter of the Inter-University Association of the Cosmopolitan Clubs of the United States. It was formed for the purpose of learning the best that there is in different nations, in all branches of life, ethics and religion, and it is now one of the most popular clubs in the University of Chicago.

The first quarterly open meeting of the club was held at the University of Chicago on Saturday evening, November 28th, Mirza Raffie, the president of the club, presiding. Addresses were made by Prof. Harry Pratt Judson, president of the University; Prof. George B. Fos-

ter, Prof. C. Edward Merriam, Mr. Thornton Chase and Countess Aurelia Bethlen. The addresses were interspersed with music, instrumental and vocal, and refreshments were served after the meeting. It was a delightful and enthusiastic occasion. About two hundred and fifty persons were present, most of them students at the university, among whom were representatives from Persia, Japan, Russia, India, China, South America, Turkey, the Philippines, etc. Probably fifteen or more nationalities were represented in this club. Five Bahais were on the programme. In addition to the three mentioned above, namely, Mirza Raffie, Mr. Chase and Madam Bethlen, vocal solos were beautifully rendered by Mr. Albert R. Windust and Miss Bessie Diggett. Mr. Windust sang "Ring Out, Wild Bells" ("Ring Out the Old, Ring in the New"). It was indeed a happy occasion. Although not a religious meeting, yet, as one expressed it, "The spirit manifested there was the true spirit of brotherhood and Bahai love. It was a glorious gathering." Mr. Chase was elected an honorary member. Madam Bethlen made a short, bright, impromptu speech and captivated the audience. The address given by Mr. Chase was fine. That the addresses of Mr. Chase and Madam Bethlen were highly appreciated was shown by the evident interest and applause of the audience.

The next day, at our regular Sunday morning meeting, which is held in Corinthian Hall, 17th floor, Masonic Temple, about twelve or more persons who had attended the meeting the evening before came to learn more about the teachings, and we trust the good seed thus sown will spring up and bear fruit.

Madam Bethlen, who came here from New York a few weeks ago, has been warmly welcomed by the friends and is an earnest worker.

For several weeks the Chicago friends were happy in the presence of Mr. Harlin F. Ober and Mr. Alfred E. Lunt, of Boston. They have now returned east and expressions of regret are often heard that they could not have stayed longer in Chicago.

Mrs. Marie L. Hopper and her dear little daughter Lorraine, formerly of Paris and now of Dixon, Ill., spent a few days with us, and the memory of their visit is indeed a pleasant one. Mr. Hopper and Mr. Breakwell, who visited Acca together some years ago, have both passed into the realm beyond.

Mr. Percy F. Woodcock, of Brockville, Canada, spent a week here and brought the greetings of the New York Assembly from whence he had come. Mr. Woodcock radiated the spirit of love and delivered some instructive addresses on the inner significance of the Temple. The appreciation of the friends was manifested by the enthusiasm displayed and at the large attendance at the meetings.

We were pleased to have Mr. Thomas MacMechan, of the New York Board of Counsel, with us on Sunday morning, December 6th. Mr. MacMechan brought the greetings and love of the New York friends.

We were also happy to have with us on Sunday morning, December 6th, Miss Cora Bush, of Detroit, Mich., who had spent a year in the mountains of Colorado and was passing through Chicago on her return home.

To look into the faces of the Bahai friends, which are bright with the light of the Kingdom, to see how earnestly they are striving "to live the life," to note the steady growth of that great love and unity for which Abdul-Baha has so earnestly longed and prayed, is to impress one with the truth of His words that "this is a heavenly society."

The Bulletin is heartily welcomed by the Chicago friends. May God bless its mission and speed it on its way.

Bahai greetings to the friends everywhere.

Sincerely yours,

G. B.

New York

On Sunday, November 29th, Prof. Raymond S. Perrin began a course of lectures on "The Philosophical Basis of Religion" at Club "A" of the People's Institute on 15th Street. In his opening lecture he referred most kindly to the Bahai Cause and spoke in terms of warmest admiration for Abdul Baha and the principles of the Religion. He exhorted the Bahais, however, to learn to distinguish between personalities and principles, and said that from his association with them it seemed to him that they were rather engaged in the worship of the personality of their great leader than in spreading the principles of his Cause.

In a Tablet to Miss Juliet Thompson, translated by Dr. Fareed in Acca on September 4th, 1908, Abdul Baha refers to Professor Perrin in the following words:

"The personage you mention is in reality enraptured with the Truth, and seeks the discovery of the Mysteries of God. His intention is blessed and his efforts directed towards the development of the world of humanity."

Professor Perrin especially invited the Bahais to attend his lectures, and frankly asked for criticisms and questions. If his philosophical theories are incorrect, he is willing to be convinced of the error of his way. Discussion always follows the Professor's addresses, in which all present are invited to take part, and in these discussions the Bahais have so far been represented by Messrs. MacNutt, Barakatullah and Harris. The result has been that quite a number of those attending have evinced great interest in the Bahai Revelation, and it is confidently hoped that one of the results of the Professor's friendly criticism of the Bahai teachings in America will be to attract quite a number of intelligent, active, energetic and thinking people to the Cause.

We must expect criticism, and even violent denunciation of our Cause, and when it comes from one with so kindly a spirit as that shown by Professor Perrin, it is indeed an easy thing; in fact, a delightful thing, to obey the command that we should love those who abuse us.

We understand that Professor Perrin's lectures will continue through the winter. He is really conducting a class in philosophy.

Brooklyn

Brooklyn, Nov. 26th.

To the Bulletin:

The Brooklyn Board of Counsel requests that announcement be made in the Bahai Bulletin of the change in time and place of meetings heretofore held at 935 Eastern Parkway to the following address:

Lockwood Academy, 138 South Oxford Street, near Fulton Street, at 8 o'clock every Sunday evening.

All believers and inquirers cordially welcomed. The Academy may be reached from New York by Subway to Atlantic Avenue Station, and walk north two blocks.

Very truly yours in the Cause,

C. L. HALL, Secretary.

The Bulletin is informed that the first meeting was held at Lockwood Academy on November 29th. The attendance was excellent, many inquirers being present. Mr. Howard MacNutt delivered the address, and, for the benefit of the inquirers, made his talk practically a first lesson in the Teachings. The interest was marked, and our Brooklyn brothers are very much encouraged. May the good work continue.

Announcement of Meetings

NEW YORK.

Regular meetings every Sunday at 11 o'clock, A. M., at Geneological Hall, No. 226 West 58th Street.

Regular meetings every Friday evening at 8 o'clock, at the studio of Miss Juliet Thompson, No. 119 East 19th Street.

Regular meetings every Sunday afternoon at 3:30 o'clock, at the residence of Mr. Arthur P. Dodge, 261 West 139th Street.

Regular meetings every Sunday evening, at 8 o'clock, at the home of Mrs. E. E. Gibbons, No. 83 Madison Avenue.

BROOKLYN.

Regular meetings every Sunday evening at 8 o'clock at Lockwood Academy, 138 South Oxford Street (near Fulton Street).

JERSEY CITY.

Regular meetings at 8 o'clock P. M., at No. 550 Newark Avenue. The friends in New York are especially requested to encourage these meetings by their presence.

BUFFALO, N. Y.

Regular meetings Sunday and Thursday of each week, 8:30 P. M., at 494 Elmwood Avenue.