

**THROUGH WARRING COUNTRIES
TO THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD**

An Account of Some of the Experiences of
Two American Bahais in France, England,
Germany, and Other Countries, on
Their Way to Visit Abdul Baha
in the Holy Land, in
the Year 1914.

By
Charles Mason Remey

ABDU'L BAHA IS THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR
INTERPRETING THE TEACHINGS OP BAHA'O'LLAH.

The Circulation of this Manuscript
has been approved by the Bahai Publication Committee.

[photo: ABDUL BAHA.]

[page 4]

“And it shall come to pass in the last
days that the Mountain of the Lord’s House
shall be established in the top of the
mountains and shall be exalted above the
hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.”

Isaiah II : 2.

“For, as the lightning cometh out of
the East, and shineth unto the West, so
shall the coming of the Son of Man be.”

St. Matthew XXIV : 27.

“Tarry no longer for He has come. Be-
hold His Temple, the glory dwelling therein.
It is the ancient glory with a new manifestation.”

Bahá'o'llah.

INDEX

| | Page |
|---|------|
| I. Foreword | 6 |
| II. Introductory Outline of the History of The Bahai Movement | 9 |
| III. Narrative of Travel | 19 |
| IV. The Bahai Cause and Peace | 95 |
| V. The Voice of Universal Peace | 106 |

I.

FOREWORD.

FOREWORD.

Inasmuch as the thoughts of most people in these days are centered upon the terrific struggle of nations now in progress in Europe, and the solution of the causes of this cataclysm, the time seems opportune for me to write an account of some of the experiences which befell my companion, George Latimer, and myself in the war countries during the Spring, Summer, and Fall of 1914, of our journey to Syria, and our visit there with Abdul Baha, who is the head of the Bahai movement, who offers to humanity the solution, a spiritual remedy, for this great human ill of war which is now devastating the world.

Abdul Baha's talks, herein quoted, given in Persian, were for the most part translated verbally, as he spoke, by Mirza Ahmed Sohrab, and taken down in English by my companion, Mr. Latimer.

The large photograph of Abdul Baha here reproduced was taken by Herr Consul Schwarz in his home in Stuttgart, and some of the other photographs used in illustrating this folio were taken by Mr. Latimer while we were in Syria.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the services of these friends in connection with this compilation.

C. M. R.

[photo: ABDUL BAHA IN A MEETING OF BAHAIS IN LONDON]

[photo: GROUP OF BAHAIS IN THE STUDIO OF MR. EDWIN SCOTT IN PARIS]

[page 9]

II

INTRODUCTORY OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE BAHAI MOVEMENT AND ITS RELATIONS TO THE RELIGIONS OF THE PAST.

[page 10]

HISTORY OF THE BAHAI MOVEMENT.

From the point of view of almost every line of thought the present time can be seen to be one of change and transition. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the religious world.

The present religious evolution of the world is not at all confined to the personal observation of the few, for during the past ten years such changes have taken place as to quite convince all fair-minded persons that now, for the first time in the history of the human race, the soul of the world is awakening spiritually, and is now demanding a religious teaching that is pure and free from the human thoughts which in every religious teaching has sooner or later obscured the simple and direct truths, encrusting them in a labyrinth of speculations, doctrines, and theologies.

This awakening is clearly seen in the universal modern religious awakening in the Christian world, whereas, as one travels into the Orient, one sees a parallel religious change and spiritual awakening and unrest quite manifest among the Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, and peoples of other religions, all of which shows that in this day the religious world throughout all countries is awake and searching for some new light, for which it feels the need.

In looking backwards over the history of man, it is clearly seen that whenever peoples have needed changes of moral ideals and institutions, religious or secular, that need has been supplied.

The most enlightened of the people have realized the inefficiency of the present systems to give to the people the moral and spiritual inspiration and force which they need to re-mold or to re-form the institutions, moral and social, of the day, and realizing this need the people have set about to find a practical philosophy which, when applied, would give the desired result.

In such times of suffering and social unrest the great world reformers have arisen, the great spiritual leaders of men, those holy souls who have revealed spiritual truth to the people. Through these great

divine souls the masses of the people have been freed from the superstitions and worn-out religious forms and imaginations of the past, the negative power of which has held humanity back from positive progress.

[page 11]

The great world teachers have broken into the mental and moral limitations of the people of their age, thus freeing them from the limitations of their own psychology. Thus the people have arisen above their surrounding conditions to become the foundations of new and higher orders of civilizations in the world.

Such a leader, reformer, and revealer of truth was Abraham the Prophet, who went out from the land of Ur leading a small band of people who were oppressed, but who, under his spiritual guidance, became a great people.

Centuries passed, and in time the children of Abraham lost their spiritual ideals and power, and finally found themselves in a state of, bondage and slavery. Then, at the moment of greatest necessity, another divine leader appeared in the person of the Prophet Moses, through whom the higher law of the Creator was again revealed, and through following him, and the line of inspired prophets who came after him, this once oppressed people, now freed from their limitations, founded a great civilization, the glories of which are depicted in both sacred and profane history.

Again the people lost the inspiration of the burning truth, and the time came when their religion was but the shell of its former spiritual power, having many outward forms, but none of that spirit which had characterized its early days, the epoch of its spiritual power and development.

Then it was that The Messiah appeared, and The Christ was revealed through the Holy Person of Jesus, who took upon Himself all of the trials and burdens of the world in order to teach the people that they might know spiritual truth and be freed from the superstitions of the ancient regime of priestly hierarchy which held them in thralldom, and that the peace of the spirit might be theirs.

The spiritual ideals and divine inspiration of Christianity were spread throughout the western world, and the great civilization of Christendom was the fruit of the divine mission of The Christ.

Also, in various ages in other parts of the world, there arose great prophets and divine philosophers manifesting to the people the glory and the reality of divine truth. Mohammed, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius; each arose in a time of need and gave the people the inspiration which they needed to lift them above the natural condition of the times, to free themselves

[page 12]

from ignorance, oppression, immorality, and suffering, through finding a new force and a new spiritual conception of truth, or religion. Through knowing the truth they were made free.

Now, in these present days, the people of the world are suffering because of ignorance and bondage, ignorance of the spiritual law of Christ, and the bondage of materialism and national and racial class and religious hatred, all of which, taken together, produce the human destructive agents of strife and war.

Ponder over it! In Europe today millions of Christians are lined up in battle against their Christian brethren of other nations, and slaying thousands. Hatred and greed have taken the place in men's lives which the true spirit of Christianity should occupy. True religion is needed. In view of this need people are awakening to the fact that below the surface of this trouble there is a spiritual lack, a great religious need in the world in general. Such conditions could not exist if the Christian peoples understood and lived the spiritual realities of Christianity.

In this day of need, as in parallel epochs of old, the people are realizing a condition of spiritual famine in the world, and thousands of hungering souls are seeking the light of God, which alone can remedy the trouble. Now, as in similar times of past need, a great spiritual teacher has again arisen — arisen in the East — bringing a message of spirit and of peace to the world, and, like the messages of the past, His coming is spiritually and psychologically very timely, and is meeting the needs of the people of the day.

The mission of Baha’o’llah is the infusing of spirituality and the spirit of brotherhood into humanity. His teaching comes as a renewal of the original spirit of the religions of the past. It confirms one in one’s own religion, whether one be Christian, Jew, Moslem, or of any of the other religions, and at the same time it teaches man of the oneness of all truth. Thus the enlightened soul knows all true religion as one truth, and he sees all men as brothers under the bounty of one Father, the Creator.

It was in the month of May, in the year 1844, that the fore-runner of Baha’o’llah appeared in the Orient, in the city of Shiraz, in Persia. He was known as The Bab, which means “The Doer” or “The Gate.”

The Bab arose with great devotion and a superhuman spiritual power, through which he was enabled to penetrate the hearts and

[page 13]

souls of the people with His glad tidings of the near approach of the great world-teacher whose mission would be that of establishing in the world universal religious tolerance, brotherhood, and peace. The Bab sacrificed His all in exhorting the people to prepare themselves and to be awaiting the advent of this great Promised One whose coming had been heralded in the prophesies of the religions of the past. The Bab prepared the people to be ready to follow the Promised One when He should appear.

Many people arose against The Bab and His followers to exterminate the new teaching. Led by their fanatical priests, the Moslems killed many thousands of the followers, and The Bab Himself suffered a martyr’s death, all to the advancement of the Cause, which prospered under this most violent opposition.

In the ninth year after the declaration of The Bab, Baha’o’llah, the Promised One, arose. He manifested the spiritual wisdom and power foretold by The Bab, and He fulfilled the spiritual signs by which The Bab had taught the people to know and recognize Him.

Baha’o’llah was met by the same spirit of persecution which had been manifested by the people against The First Point of the Revelation, The Bab. The superstitious and fanatical Moslem clergy, seeing their hold over the people giving way as the number of the followers of Baha’o’llah increased, arose with renewed efforts to assail the Cause. All manner of troubles and trials were heaped upon Baha’o’llah and his followers. He was exiled from Persia to Bagdad, in Arabia, then to Constantinople and to Adrianople, in Roumelia, and, lastly, to the fortress of Akka, in the Holy Land. Here He suffered and labored for over twenty years, until the Spring of 1892, when he passed quietly from this world, after His divine mission of forty years of imprisonment, exile, persecution, and hardship.

Baha’o’llah suffered all things in order that His Cause might be established in the world; in order that the foundation of universal religious brotherhood, the oneness of humanity, justice, and peace might be laid in the hearts of men. Upon His departure from this world He left a living testimonial of His spiritual mission in the Bahai Movement, and he provided for the guidance of the Cause after His departure by commending all of his followers to the direction and guidance of His son Abdul Baha.

Abdul Baha, who shared the exile and imprisonment of Baha’o’llah, is now interpreting and explaining the teachings of The

[page 14]

Movement, and in his life of service to the people about him is demonstrating the principles of Baha'o'llah. He is bringing these spiritual ideals into the hearts and lives of the many people who come in contact with him and receive His teachings.

For forty years Abdul Baha was a State prisoner and an exile in the Fortress of Akka, from 1868, when he was taken there with Baha'o'llah, until 1908, when the old Turkish government gave way to the reestablishment of the Ottoman Constitution of 1876, which had been crushed by the despotism of the regime of the Sultans. When this political change took place in Turkey, all of the religious and political prisoners throughout the Ottoman domains were liberated, and thus Abdul Baha was no longer held in confinement.

After his freedom Abdul Baha spent some months teaching in Egypt, made one trip to Europe, and still another tour to America, and again through Europe. In many cities He was received most warmly by religious, philosophic, and philanthropic leaders, and everywhere He went the people were cheered by his spirit of love, affection, and peace.

In the western world Abdul Baha gave the message of Baha'o'llah from the pulpits of Christian churches of many denominations, in the synagogues of the Jews, and in the meetings of Atheists and Free Thinkers, as well as before philosophical societies, universities, and other educational and social institutions, and in all places the people gladly welcomed and accepted the universal principles of The Bahai Movement, and all recognized that the world of today is ready and needs the application of these broad, humanitarian ideals in every walk of life, both religious and social.

Here and there in various parts of the world are groups of people of different races, nationalities, and religions, meeting together to study the teachings and principles of The Bahai teaching, and many people are working and serving in various ways in this Cause.

The Bahai Movement has neither clergy nor organized priesthood apart from the laity. All people are teachers, each in his own fields or sphere of life. Some are able and have the means to go about and lecture and teach publicly, while others remain at home, and in their daily lives in the world find on every hand ample opportunity for giving forth to others the spiritual knowledge which is theirs. Thus in all activities they are working harmoniously with all people for the accomplishment of universal brotherhood, harmony, and peace.

[page 15]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH SOME BAHAIS IN STUTTGART]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH SOME OTHER BAHAIS IN STUTTGART]

[page 16]

Through the illumination and the soul -uniting spirit of The Bahai Cause the people who are thus touched by it are freed from avarice, enmity, and prejudice. Thus negative forces find no place in their natures, while upon the other hand they are filled with the positive force of harmony, unity, and brotherhood toward the people of all nations, races, and religions.

The Cause of Baha'o'llah is striking a fatal blow at this great chimera of war. Though the Cause is but in its infancy, its sympathizers are many and are spread throughout the people of all races, nations, and religions. Its spirit is undermining the spirit of war in the hearts of the people through putting an end to greed, prejudice, and hate, which are the real cause of war.

This change in the hearts of the people is being accomplished through teaching and living harmony and justice, through inculcating into people's minds and hearts the constructive principles of peace and

harmony, and through their living in conformity with the teachings of The Bahai Movement, which are none other than the sum total of all the moral and spiritual teachings of all religions.

The Bahai Cause confirms and fulfills, and does not destroy the religions of the past. It makes each soul strong in the true spirit of his own religion, and as one understands and lives the true spirit of one's own religion one finds oneself at peace with God and with all the world. Thus are the people realizing the oneness of all true religion and the necessity for recognizing this truth. Through this knowledge comes a unity and a solidarity between peoples of different religions, which is basic and which humanity needs to realize.

This is a condition of spirit and soul, which, working in the world, is destined to overcome all inharmonious obstacles.

The Cause is growing, and it is but a matter of time before people in general will realize that these are the principles upon which our new civilization must be built, for its principles are constructive for the harmony of all peoples and for the oneness of all humanity.

The Bahai Teaching stands for the oneness of mankind. It exhorts people to study into these religious and social questions which are now facing the world, and with fairness of mind grasp all constructive teachings and ideals which make for real peace and prosperity, and not to follow blindly in the paths of the thinkers of the past, for in the present day there are new problems which can never be solved as long as people continue blindly in the way of the people of the past.

[page 17]

The foundation of all true religion is one foundation, which is the Divine Word. Upon this foundation The Bahai Movement is uniting Christians, Jews, and Moslems with the peoples of the far eastern religions, uniting them in the strongest bonds of the spirit of unity and oneness. This is not a mere tolerance of peoples of different religions, but a most vital spirit of life and of love, which in the Bahai Religion unites these many heterogeneous religious elements into one living brotherhood, which is growing and expanding in many parts of the world. It is ahead of, yet in line with the spirit of the new age now dawning; therefore, its growth and future are assured.

Irreligion or fanaticism has been the greatest cause of war. The most bloody wars of history have been so-called religious wars, brought about by a misconception of true religion. Thus by creating amity between the religions, races, and nations a blow is being struck at one of the chief causes of war.

Different religious teachings, each with its own system of education and institutions tend toward separation and division of the human race rather than uniting it, whereas the original spirit and intent of each great Divine teacher was to illumine the people and to unite them and do away with all differences.

Religion should be the means of harmony among men. If it fails in this unity, it is not fulfilling its mission, therefore would not be vital spiritual force, but merely an outward form. In this day people need a spiritually vital religion. The day is past for empty forms and imitations.

According to the teaching as demonstrated by Abdul Baha, there is no conflict between spiritual and material truth, between true religious teaching upon one hand, and science and reason upon the other. These go hand in hand and must be in harmony one with the other for the real advancement of mankind.

This Cause stands for the equal advantage, rights, privileges, and responsibilities of the sexes, and its teachings urge people to abandon all prejudices and fanaticism in order that the highest humanitarian ideals for the progress of the world may become realized.

Educational advantages for all, and a solution of the economic problem between capital and labor, as well as other questions which deal with the general betterment of the masses of the people are dwelt upon and explained at length in the inter-

[page 18]

pretations and explanations of Abdul Baha. These problems must be solved before peace and harmony in all of its aspects can be realized.

It is significant of the all-encompassing spirit of the founders of the Bahai Cause that long before the attention of the world in general was called to consider universalism in its many aspects Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha were teaching humanitarianism to be greater than patriotism, universal peace and arbitration, the voice of the people in matters which concern their welfare, equal suffrage, a universal language, universal education, and all of these universal principles which must come for the best good of humanity and its peace.

The Bahai Cause stands primarily for the spiritual union and harmony of all peoples of all religions. With this basis of divine love and brotherhood as the foundation of. the new order of united humanity, religious, racial, and national hatred will disappear and all the peoples of the world will become one great world people.

Religion has ever been the foundation of civilization, no civilization ever having developed and evolved apart from the inspiration and high morals and ideals of religion in its truest and purest sense. Thus logically with all reason, with all faith, and with spiritual assurance the world may look forward to the great universal civilization which will evolve through the inspiration, morals, ideals, and institutions founded upon the principles of the One Great Universal Religion, established by the great universal world teacher, whose coming has been announced by Christ and the prophets for the fulfillment of the religious truths of the past and for the establishment of this new age of Truth on Earth.

[page 19]

III

NARRATIVE

[page 20]

NARRATIVE

It was in Washington, D.C., in the midsummer of 1912, that I first met George Latimer, who was then on his return across the continent to his home in Portland, Oregon, from a visit of some days with Abdul Baha, who was then in America spending several weeks in Dublin, New Hampshire. My new friend had for several years been surrounded in his home by the atmosphere of the Bahai thought, but, like many others, personal contact with the center of The Bahai Cause had awakened him to the spiritual needs of these times. Moved by all he had experienced while with Abdul Baha and with the energy and life of a young man just out of college, he wished to do some service for the Cause for which so many have given their lives, not counting it a sacrifice, but their greatest joy and blessing so to do. I recall how we, in company with another young Bahai, sat up late one night talking of the great work to be done, I recounting to them some experiences in the Orient while travelling among the Bahais. Then in our

conversation George and I began to dream and hope that we might some day go forth together and travel from country to country trying to serve in spreading the Cause.

That evening of aspiration was the beginning of new things for us. We wrote to Abdul Baha of our desire to work together, and in due time we had his approval and were made happy by the prospect of serving together.

It was some months later that a call came to us from Abdul Baha to visit the Bahai centers throughout America and to go to Hawaii.

We met in Honolulu and began to realize our one hope of service together. After a stay of two months in the Hawaiian Islands we returned to the States, visiting the Bahai centers on the Pacific Coast before parting, my friend returning to his home in the west, while I travelled on through, visiting the assemblies toward the Atlantic coast.

Our journey was a spiritual blessing and a great confirmation to our faith. Upon every side we saw the growth in the hearts of the people of the principles of the Bahai Cause. The year previous the people had come into very close touch with Abdul Baha. He had visited most of the large assemblies in the States and from the smaller centers off from his route of travel people had come to meet him and to receive from him. Everywhere he sowed the seeds of love and amity in the hearts of the people by explaining and proclaiming the universal basic truths of re-

[page 21]

[photo: GROUP TAKEN AT THE HOME OF HERR AND FRAU CONSUL SCHWARTZ]

[photo: FOUR YOUNG BAHAIS OF ESSLINGEN]

[page 22]

ligion, thus making clear to every hearer the letter and the spirit of the Bahai Cause. These truths had taken such root in the hearts of the people that in all the assemblies we felt the spirit of love and unity and the firmness of the faith of the people in The Divine Covenant of Religion. Whereas, before Abdul Baha's journey of teaching, the people in general had been attracted to The Bahai Cause and its principles of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, after his journey in America the people through contact with him became confirmed in the Cause, realizing it to be indeed the Cause of God and the most important of all matters, and the source of spiritual inspiration. Thus many arose to serve and aid in various ways in taking this message of glad tidings to others, of whom there are many seeking that assurance and inspiration which a live and active faith and good works alone can give.

In the Cause of Baha'o'llah, as applied and interpreted by Abdul Baha, the people find the source of spiritual light, which light when thrown upon the teachings of the religions makes the ancient truths, freed from the superstitions of the past, the living truths of this day.

Wherever Abdul Baha went he carried with him good cheer, hope, and assurance. He found the people sad, he made them happy; wavering, he made them firm; divided, he united them in the love of the Lord.

Many souls in spiritual difficulties went to Abdul Baha and had their faith renewed to such an extent that they are now devoting their lives to the furtherance of unity and brotherhood through helpful service to humanity.

Such is the spirit of the real Bahai s, those who have been quickened by the light of the new spiritual era now in its dawn, the light of which is destined to change this earth from a battle field into a garden of

peace, and its people from their present destructive ferocious characteristics to those of constructive prosperity and harmony.

The true Bahais are showing forth such a spirit of tolerance and love for the peoples of all religious cults and sects that, despite all conditions, the people are attracted to this light, for in the spirit which emanates from Abdul Baha and from those who in reality follow in his path of service to humanity, all people find the realization of the highest spiritual ideals of their own religion, whichever it may be.

Subsequent to our first travels together, Abdul Baha wrote to Mr. Latimer 'mother in October, 1913: "If it be possible

[page 23]

that these two be together it will become the cause of greater confirmation."

In February, 1914, another word came from Abdul Baha addressed to me: "If it is possible, make a journey to Europe during the season of the Spring. In the various countries of Europe cry in the name of The Covenant of God, especially in Germany and France."

Again Mr. Latimer joined me, coming to Washington, D.C., from his home on the western coast, and a few days later, on March 27, we sailed from New York for Cherbourg en route for Paris.

PARIS

It was in the winter of 1898 that the first party of American Bahai pilgrims passed through Paris on their way to Abdul Baha, who was then in exile in Akka. They remained in Paris for a short while and through them several people living in Paris for the first time heard of the Bahai Cause. Among these was Miss May Bolles, now Mrs. Wm. S. Maxwell, who enthusiastically responded to the call of The Bahai Message, and joined the party of pilgrims going to the Holy Land, where she met Abdul Baha and shortly afterwards returned to Paris as the first resident Bahai worker in that city.

With great firmness and devotion to the Cause, and at all times turned toward Abdul Baha for his help and guidance, this lady spoke of The Movement with many people, and from among these there soon came forth a group of about twenty souls touched by the Bahai spirit, and firm in the Covenant of Baha'o'llah, whose united idea was to serve and carry to others this message of light. In brief, such was the beginning of the Bahai Movement in Paris. Most of the early believers eventually left France, some going to America and other countries, where they engaged in the work. The centers in Honolulu and in Montreal, Canada, were direct off shoots from the Paris assembly, while other assemblies in various parts were reinforced by workers from France.

In all places the welfare and the spiritual prosperity of the Cause is proportionate with the degree of the firmness and the confirmation of the friends in abiding by the truth, in following in their lives and conduct the teachings, and striving earnestly to follow Abdul Baha by carrying in word and in spirit this message to the people. This principle was clearly demonstrated in Paris. In those early pioneer days of the Cause in

[page 24]

France the work was not easy for the friends. Hardly any of the Bahai writings had been translated into any western language, while nothing at all had been put into print. Nevertheless, the people knew that the "Promised One" had appeared in the person of Baha'o'llah, and that Abdul Baha was the testament of Baha'o'llah living in the world today, so with the aid of a few manuscript copies of some of Baha'o'llah's words, and by looking always towards Abdul Baha, depending upon the instructions and

advices received from him, the Cause found firm root in the characters and lives of certain souls who arose to follow in the path and to serve.

Many of the Bahais will recall the beautiful eulogy written by Abdul Baha upon the occasion of the passing from this world of Thomas Breakwell, who was one of the first Bahais who heard of the message in Paris.

This young man responded with burning zeal to the spirit of the teaching. He hastened to the Holy Land to meet Abdul Baha, and then returned to France to serve. His life was an inspiration to all, and his passing from this world into eternal service in the realms beyond caused his friends to realize his illumination of soul.

I was at that time living in Paris and recall vividly the influence of Breakwell upon all who knew him. It was the influence of one severed from this world and wholly turned toward God. His spirit lived after him and continued to be a never-ending inspiration.

The following eulogy from a tablet, letter, written by Abdul Baha, is an eternal monument testifying to the purity and fervor of Breakwell's faith. It runs as follows:

“Do not lament over the departure of my dearly beloved Breakwell, for verily he has ascended to the luminous rose-garden in the Abha kingdom, near the Mercy of his Lord, the Almighty, and is crying out with the loudest voice: O, that my people knew how my Lord hath forgiven me and made me one of those who have attained.

O, Breakwell, my Beloved! Where is thy beautiful countenance, and where is thy eloquent tongue? Where is thy radiant brow, and where is thy brilliant face?

O, Breakwell, my Beloved! Where is thy enkindlement with the Fire of the Love of God, and where is thy attention to the Fragrances of God? Where is thy utterance for the glorification of God, and where is thy rising in the service of God?

[page 25]

O, my dear, O, Breakwell! Where are thy bright eyes, and where are thy smiling lips? Where are thy gentle cheeks, and where is thy graceful stature?

O, my dear, O, Breakwell! Verily thou hast abandoned this transitory world and soared upward to the Kingdom, hast attained to the Grace of the Invisible Realm, and sacrificed thyself to the Threshold of the Lord of Might!

O, my adored one, O, Breakwell! Verily thou hast left behind this physical lamp, this human glass, these earthly elements, and this worldly enjoyment.

O, my adored one, O, Breakwell! Then thou hast ignited a light in the Glass of the Supreme Concourse, hast entered in the Paradise of Abha, art protected under the shade of the Blessed Tree, and hast attained to the Meeting of the True One in the Abode of Paradise!

O, my dearly beloved, O, Breakwell! Thou hast been a Divine bird, and forsaking thy earthly nest, thou hast soared toward the Holy rose gardens of the Divine Kingdom and obtained a luminous station there!

O, my dearly beloved, O, Breakwell! Verily thou art like unto the birds, chanting the verses of thy Lord, the Forgiving, for thou wert a thankful servant, therefore thou hast entered in the Realm beyond with joy and happiness!

O, my beloved, O, Breakwell! Verily thy Lord has chosen thee for His Love, guided thee to the Court of His Holiness, caused thee to enter into the Rizwan of His Association, and granted thee to behold His Beauty!

O, my beloved, O, Breakwell! Verily thou hast attained to the Eternal Life, never-ending bounty, beatific bliss, and immeasurable Providence!

O, my beloved, O, Breakwell! Thou hast become a star in the most exalted horizon, a lamp among the angels of heaven, a living spirit in the Supreme World, and art established upon the throne of immortality!

O, my adored one, O, my Breakwell! I supplicate God to increase thy nearness and communication, to make thee enjoy thy prosperity and union with Him, to add to thy light and beauty, and to bestow upon thee glory and majesty.

[page 26]

O, my adored one, O, my Breakwell! I mention thy name continually, I never forget thee, I pray for thee day and night, and I see thee clearly and manifestly, O, my adored one, O, Breakwell!"

On each of Abdul Baha's two trips through Europe he made visits of several months in Paris, where daily meetings were held for the many people who crowded to receive his teaching. He gave addresses before various religious bodies, one, the most notable of which was from the pulpit of Pastor Charles Wagner, author of "The Simple Life," who is well known in the western world through his writings, as being a leader broad in Christian thought, nor were Abdul Baha's activities confined to the Protestant world. His message was for all, and about him were clustered many Moslems, Jews, and people of the New Thought, all attracted and hoping to realize the ideals which he taught, for this Cause is universal and for all people, and its spiritual message must be given to all, and all gathered into the one fold of brotherhood before union can come upon earth.

It was a beautiful morning early in April when my friend and I landed at Cherbourg and boarded the special steamer train for Paris. Warm rains and the Spring sun had brought out the leaves and blossoms in profusion. The country through which we sped was a bower of beauty, for a new season had opened up and the awakening was everywhere visible and manifest.

In our hearts spiritually we were as joyous as the passing scene without, for we felt surging within us a love for humanity which had come to us through our faith, and this we longed to share with others, that they also might have a portion of the Bahai joy of being permitted to serve in the founding of the new epoch of peace and brotherhood among men.

When the heart is light, time passes quickly. In an incredibly short space of time after leaving Cherbourg we saw the late Gothic tower of Bayeux Cathedral above the trees and the roof tops of the town, and then, as if by leaps, we were within sight of the earlier and more simple spires of the abbys at Caen, then after sighting the Cathedrals of Lisieux and Evreux our train pulled into the grim and dusty train shed of the Gare St. Lazare. We were in Paris.

We were not long in meeting our Bahai friends, who received us most cordially into their midst, and thus our work began.

Paris, as I had known it as a student some ten years before, had changed very much. During this interim the separation of

[page 27]

Church and State had taken place, and a wave of materialism had followed, which was a phase difficult to meet and to overcome in the individual, for unless a soul is sufficiently awake to acknowledge his spiritual needs it is almost impossible for one to awaken him. Later on we understood that Abdul Baha himself had found this same condition.

Thus we spent many busy days and the struggle was intense, the struggle between the materialism about us and the message within, which we longed to give to the people.

Paris is the very heart and center of intellectual, artistic, and material civilization of the world. In these matters she leads the world, but her people were not then seeking those purely spiritual ideals for which the Bahai Religion stands.

The French are idealists by nature, and they have within them great spiritual capacity and possibility, for when once enthused with an idea they sacrifice everything for it, that it may be realized in all its perfection. This is seen most clearly in the French art, both present and past. Surely when the French people awaken to the religious needs of the world and make the spiritual connection with the source of spiritual illumination they will become foremost in the new constructive order of peace and unity of nations. The benefit for France which one can see coming out of this war will be the blow to materialism which suffering always brings, for deep grief and trouble cause people to turn to the higher ideals and purposes.

It is currently reported abroad that during these months of war and perplexity there has been a turning of the French people toward religion and spiritual ideals. The entire world needs this reverse of vision from the outer to the inner, from the unreal to the real.

After almost three months in Paris we felt the call to push on to our next field of work, which was in London.

LONDON

For some years there has been a center of Bahai Teaching in London. Abdul Baha's two visits there had a very telling effect upon the growth of the Cause, not only among those who are working and serving directly in the propaganda, but in the broad thinking British world so keen to all of those questions which deal with racial and religious matters, playing so important a role in the administration of affairs where the Occident and the Orient meet, as they do in many of Great Britain's colonies and possessions.

[page 28]

[photo: CLUMP OF CYPRESS TREES NEAR THE TOMB OF BAB WITHIN THE SHADE OF WHICH THE BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH USED TO SIT

[photo: HADJI NIAZ KERMANI TAKEN NEAR THE GREAT PYRAMID

[page 29]

In the Summer of 1911, just prior to the first visit of Abdul Baha to London, there was held there the First Universal Races Congress. Delegates and representatives of nations, races, and religions assembled in London from all parts of the world in order to discuss these many interracial problems which, through the breaking down of the former natural geographic and political barriers by travel, commerce, and rapid intercommunication, are in this age, for the first time in history, presenting themselves for solution.

Although this Races Congress did not make a great stir in the world, it nevertheless marked a stage in the beginning of a new era in the consideration of world unity by the thinking people, for it was the first time that such a body of people had come together in recognition of the need of a better understanding and co-operative spirit of interdependence between the races of mankind.

To this Congress came many Bahais from various lands: From India, Persia, and Egypt on the East, to Europe and America on the West.

The people were seeking that brotherhood sympathy and understanding which exists so strongly between the Bahais of different nations, races, and religions; so our friends present found many and ample opportunities for voicing The Bahai Message and attracting the people towards the principles of the Cause.

Through this service The Bahai Movement was brought to the notice of many thinking people of universal and world-wide sympathies, so that when Abdul Baha arrived in London a few weeks later quite a group of attracted and interested souls eagerly awaited his coming.

It was in the City Temple in London that Abdul Baha made his first large public address at the invitation of the pastor, the Rev. R. J. Campbell. Before an audience of over two thousand souls he explained the principles of the great universal religion of God and called the attention of the people to the coming of world peace through the new spirit of this enlightened age, which is that of spiritual or religious unity, through which brotherhood and peace will result.

The Archdeacon of Westminster, the Rev. Dr. Wilberforce, also presented Abdul Baha, at a Sunday service, to his congregation in his church where, before a large and responsive audience, Abdul Baha dwelt upon the necessity for the Divine Manifestations or Prophets of God as the teachers of men, explaining

[page 30]

how man cannot attain to the knowledge of the Infinite God save through His Manifestations, (His Prophets and Messiahs), and demonstrating that the Knowledge of God and His Light have been reflected to the people through these Holy Manifestations, which have ever been the source of the spiritual upliftment of men. At the close of the service the archdeacon and the congregation knelt while Abdul Baha invoked a spiritual blessing upon all.

In a message to the editor of THE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH of London Abdul Baha dwelt again upon the oneness of the Divine Manifestations and prophets as follows:

“God sends prophets for the education of the people and for the spiritual progress of mankind. They serve the whole world by the bounty of God. The sure proof that they are the Manifestations of God is in the education and progress of the people. The Jews were in the lowest condition of ignorance, and captives under Pharaoh, when Moses appeared and raised them to a high state of civilization. Thus was the reign of Solomon brought about and science and art were made known to mankind. Even Greek philosophers became students of Solomon’s teaching. Thus was Moses proved to be a prophet.

After the lapse of time the Israelites deteriorated, and became subject to the Romans and the Greeks. Then the brilliant Star of Jesus rose from the horizon upon the Israelites, brightening the world, until all sects and creeds and nations were taught the beauty of unity. There cannot be any better proof than this that Jesus was the Word of God.

So it was with the Arabian nations who, being uncivilized, were oppressed by the Persian and Greek governments. When the Light of Mohammed shone forth all Arabia was brightened. These oppressed and degraded people became enlightened and cultured; so much so, indeed, that other nations imbibed Arabian civilization from Arabia. This was the proof of Mohammed’s divine mission.

All the teaching of the prophets is one; one faith; one Divine Light shining throughout the world. Now, under the banner of the oneness of humanity, all people of all creeds should turn away from prejudice and become friends and believers in all the prophets. As Christians believe in Moses, so the Jews should believe in Jesus. As the Mohammedans believe in Christ and in Moses, so likewise the Jews and the Christians should believe in Mohammed. Then all disputes would disappear, all then would be united. Baha’o’llah came for this purpose. He

[page 31]

has made the three religions one. He has uplifted the standard of the oneness of faith and the honor of humanity in the center of the world. Today we must gather round it, and try with heart and soul to bring about the union of mankind.”

Abdul Baha’s field of work in London was widespread and reached people of all phases of life from the leaders of progressive thought and the people of culture to the very poor and those of the humbler walks of life. Everywhere he was received he gave to the people of the spirit and the joy of Baha’o’llah’s Cause, leaving behind him traces of the uplifting power of the spirit and the living assurance that a new era had dawned on earth and that through international, interracial and inter - religious harmony better human conditions will follow and become manifest.

My companion in work and I passed a most eventful four weeks in London. There were meetings practically every day in the week in various parts of the city, and it was most encouraging and hopeful to mingle with the people and to see and to feel their devotion to the cause of humanity. We were quite touched by the kindness and the hospitality of the friends.

I will describe one meeting, never to be forgotten. It was a so-called feast, an institution which has been enjoined by each of the three great Bahai teachers of this day, a coming together of people in order to partake of both material and spiritual food in the form of refreshments and food, together with reading, speaking, and conversation about the Divine Cause and its realities.

This particular feast to which I refer was held in the King’s Weigh House, where the regular weekly Bahai meetings had for some time been held. It was quite typical of the work of our friends in London.

Over one hundred persons assembled, people of different nationalities, races, and religions, and representing many varied movements and interests. There were Moslems and Hindus from the East, and Jews and Orthodox Christians, Theosophists, New Thought people, and others of the new modern movements from the West, each attracted to the Bahai light and enthusiastic over its broad principles.

Besides public meetings, many gatherings were held in private homes. The homes of Mrs. Thornburgh Cropper, Miss Rosen-

[page 32]

berg, Miss Gamble, Mrs. George, Miss Herrick, and others associated with the work and known among our friends far and wide, were opened for the work of the Cause, and we were much strengthened through contact with the service of these friends.

While we were in London, some people in the guise of Bahais came there in order to mingle with the friends for the furtherance of some personal aims and ambitions of their own, which were quite foreign to the object and spirit of the Cause; nevertheless, they came as friends, disguising their intentions under the name of spirituality. Abdul Baha, who is ever the watchful shepherd of those working within the fold of God, knew of the intention of these people, and warned his friends in London that they might not be imposed upon nor have any harm come into their midst.

The affair was like a storm of wind and rain shaking a tree, but when passed the tree was fresher and greener than before. So it was with Abdul Baha's true friends in London. After this matter had become tranquillized the firmness and faith of the friends in the Cause was greatly emphasized, and there was an added fervor and fragrance manifest in their gatherings.

The spiritual imprint of the last meetings held in London will always be with me, for each time that I recall those gatherings my heart responds to the spirit manifested there.

While in England, my friend and I made a quick trip to Manchester and Liverpool in order to visit the centers there.

During Abdul Baha's second visit in England, he spent a day or two in Liverpool meeting and teaching people interested in the Cause, thus giving an impetus to the work which is now very manifest in the activity of the friends there. In a suburb of the city we attended a very memorable meeting in the home of a lady who had enlarged her household that she might assume the responsibility of some twenty homeless children whom she and her family, with some outside assistance, were caring for and developing and educating in the spirit of the Bahai Cause.

At this meeting there were gathered a goodly number of attracted souls who recognized that the Divine Light in the teachings of Baha'o'llah was the same as that in Christianity, and these responded with much heart to the message given.

[page 33]

Abdul Baha has often said that the people must teach the Cause of God by their good actions and deeds. This principle we saw exemplified in the philanthropic work of this Bahai family in Liverpool. The several hours which we spent with the children for whom they were caring was to us a demonstration of their spirit and service to humanity. These little ones they had taken from the slums, where degradation was the lowest, and through bringing them into the kind and loving atmosphere of an ordered home the children were unfolding and blossoming as young plants in a well cultivated garden. The spontaneity and naturalness of the little ones, and the gentle yet direct and fearless way in which they approached us and climbed up for the anticipated caress bespoke the love and affection which they received, an element in the growth and development of a child, quite as necessary for its moral and spiritual development as wholesome food for its physical welfare. Any one who has visited an orphan asylum where a large number of children are cared for by attendants will always recall the little pathetic faces, timid and hungering for that personal touch of affection which a large institution cannot provide, but which a home can give. This element of personal care and affection, which cannot exist where numbers are crowded together, we found in all of its fullness in the lives of the children for whom our friends were caring, and this spoke louder than words for the truly Christian spirit of their labors and service to humanity.

Having had some little experience myself in teaching, I appreciated the joy which these little ones put into their exercises. Their freedom from constraint, yet natural restraint, and their alertness and life spoke for the positive system under which they were being trained. It was clear to see that their efforts were always appreciated. How powerful a force is appreciation when rightly applied! Children respond to it quicker than to anything else, while its anticipation spurs them on to doing their best. And we grown-ups are as children in this respect, though, perhaps, we may not be frank enough to acknowledge it, for many through conventional thinking might consider love of appreciation to be a weakness. Nevertheless, we all at heart crave it, and when our virtues are appreciated by others the result is always good.

Abdul Baha's teaching is positive. He seldom says "Don't." His advice is practically always "Do."

By dwelling upon a person's virtues that side of the individual unfolds and develops, and his faults diminish.

A pilgrim once asked our teacher how to combat evil. His reply was to the effect that if we filled our souls with the

[page 34]

light and the love of God the evil in us, which is but the absence of good, would disappear as darkness does in the presence of light. This principle of teaching can be applied to material education as well as to religious and ethical training. It is a great psychological truth or law which is just beginning to be understood. Yet, as we look back over the methods of the great teachers of the past, those who have moved the world, it is clear to see that they understood and knew the value of seeing and recognizing virtue and not being blinded to the possibilities of the people by their untrained condition and ignorance.

In the Bahai precepts the necessity for the education and careful training of children is repeatedly mentioned, and people are exhorted to give especial attention to this matter. It is not only the duty of parents to educate and train their own children, but it is the privilege and duty of all who have the means to care for the fatherless and the orphans. To undertake this work is a necessity, not only for those individuals of the coming generation, but also for the general welfare of the community and the world at large.

One most necessary element is the eradication of poverty and crime. Abdul Baha teaches that through education and training this will be accomplished. If a garden is not cultivated, it will soon run to weeds, and so it is with a community. If the children are not trained and developed in both material and moral and spiritual matters, ruin awaits them as individuals, and collectively they form a class which is destructive to the general weal of the State and humanity.

Baha'o'llah has written that whosoever cares for and educates the child of another it is as if that person had fathered and cared for a child of God.

The whole spirit of the Bahai teaching is that of eradicating the causes of trouble in the world, and thus producing millennial conditions of oneness and virtue. Prevention rather than punishment will diminish the ever-increasing crime in the world. Humanity must be protected from the vicious, but were this ever-increasing, degenerate class trained and educated from the environment and tendencies which have kept them down in the scale of morality the criminal class would practically cease to exist, as we know it, and one great Bahai ideal would have become realized in the world.

Some months later, when we visited Abdul Baha, he one day spoke upon the education of children as follows:

[page 35]

“The children must receive divine and material education at the same time, and be protected from temptations and vices. How wonderful would it be if the teachers were faithful, attracted, assured, educated, and refined Bahais, well grounded in the science of pedagogy and familiar with child psychology; thus they could train the children with the Fragrances of God. In the scheme of human life the teacher and his system of teaching plays the most important role, carrying with it the heaviest responsibilities and most subtle influence. A teacher is like unto a gardener. Just as a gardener sows the seeds and watches carefully over their sprouting, looks after their growth and progression, so also a teacher must watch over the education of the children and inculcate in their young lives the highest ideals of truth and justice.”

In Manchester we had a truly spiritual visit with Bahai friends, the joy of which remained long with us. Seven years prior to this visit it had been my privilege to spend a day in that city, where at that time the Bahai work was in its infancy, it being carried on almost altogether through the devoted services of Miss S. A. Ridgeway, who had heard the Message in America, and later returned to her native country to serve and to teach.

Miss Ridgeway was a sincere student of the Divine Word, and her faith and enthusiasm were firmly founded. She served untiringly, endeavoring to explain to the people that the reality of religion is One Reality, that this reality in each religion is identical, that the Bahai religion is the same in essence as the religions of the past, and that it comes to fulfill, not to destroy, the teachings of the past. Thus those whom she taught became firm in the spirit of the Bahai Cause, and they understood the Testament of Baha'o'llah, for they looked toward Abdul Baha and were guided by him.

Only a few months prior to our visit Miss Ridgeway's work in Manchester being ended she was called to the Threshold of the Supreme Kingdom. Late one afternoon, in company with several friends, we visited her grave, situated in a quiet corner of a cemetery in the outskirts of the city. There we read the prayer for those departed this life, as well as the prayers for those in this mortal life, and we felt the truth of the teaching which assures us that the separation of the grave is but physical, for in spirit those who are alive in the Lord are ever united in His Kingdom, be they in this world or in the realms of the spirit beyond.

[page 36]

[photo: TOMB OF THE BAB ON MOUNT CARMEL]

[photo: NORTH FRONT OF THE TOMB OF THE BAB]

[page 37]

As we stood about the simple tombstone which marked the resting place of a noble soul, my thoughts dwelt upon the great and living monument which this maidservant of God had left behind her, a work which will grow and develop and ever be a bright light in the world.

In this little group of Manchester people, all of whom were of the so-called humbler walks of life, being working people, (their teacher, Miss Ridgeway, had been a weaver of silk in one of the large manufactories of Manchester) we found that affection, ardor, and enkindlement of spirit which always characterizes those meetings in which souls are firm in the Divine Covenant and Testament.

During our two days and two nights in Manchester, we were entertained in the little home of one of these good brothers, and to the hospitality and spirit of his family our souls responded to a degree which has left a spiritual impression never to be forgotten.

HOLLAND

It was shortly after the middle of July when Mr. Latimer and I left England for Holland. Prior to our going we had been in correspondence with several persons there who were much attracted to the Movement, all of which we mentioned in letters to Abdul Baha, who in reply instructed us to visit the Netherlands.

Our first stop was at The Hague, where we presented several letters of introduction to people who were attracted to the spirit of the work, and who were willing to lend a helping hand to forward the propaganda of Bahai ideals. One gentleman, in particular, was very much interested in the religious

unity aspect of the teaching. He had for some years been the official resident in one of the Dutch East Indies Colonies, where he had studied the question of racial and religious prejudice, and the accompanying hatred and destructiveness resulting from the condition. He was deeply interested in that phase of the Bahai work which is uniting in thought, in feeling, and in service to humanity the Orient and the Occident, for here is the solution of the problem of bridging the great chasm which separates the oriental and the occidental peoples, thus making the whole world the one home of the one great human family.

This purely practical aspect of the Bahai Ideal very deeply interested this diplomat, who had for some time been observing the progress of our work. This great racial problem, which is

[page 38]

at root a spiritual one, bears its fruits in very material ways in the physical world. The Bahai spirit, the Oneness of all, is not merely a beautiful theory, it accomplishes the spiritual results that the world now needs.

All of the Bahais are deeply interested in the Tribunal of World Peace established at The Hague. While in that city, my co-worker and I went out to The Peace Palace, where the sessions of the organization are held. Situated in the midst of a park of natural charm this edifice is as beautiful as could have been created by man. Architecturally it is the product of a competition of the world's greatest architects, while its ideals for the elimination of war through international arbitration are supported by some of the most progressive spirits in various countries, for the real progressives are those whose hopes are fixed upon the ideal of oneness and the interdependence of nations and peoples.

This international institution for arbitration, as conceived by the world's great thinkers, is one of the fruits of this new spiritual era upon which the world is now entering. It is coming as the result of an unfoldment and a greater activity in the higher life of humanity. At this moment it is undoubtedly the most needed of all institutions.

Although the present phase of the Bahai work now being done in the world is purely a religious one, nevertheless, this purely religious work is having a great influence in the lives and characters of people the world over, and is preparing them to bring forth as the fruits of their lives all of these universal institutions which the world now most needs, chiefest among which is universal peace.

At present the Bahais of the world are preparing to build a temple which shall stand for the spiritual peace and oneness of all nations, races, and religions. It is to be called the Mashrak-El-Azkar, Persian words which mean "The Dawning Place of the Mentionings of God."

In our city of Chicago a beautiful building site of about nine acres, bordering on Lake Michigan, has been purchased, and it is hoped that soon the actual building of the edifice will be begun.

The Mashrak-El-Azkar when completed will consist of a series or group of buildings. In the center will be the Mashrak-El-Azkar or temple proper, a building surmounted by a dome, which will be a place for worship in the most spiritual sense, a tem-

[page 39]

ple open to all peoples of all creeds, races, and classes, not a place for ceremonies or ritualism, but a sanctuary for reading, meditation, and prayer, into which people may retreat in order to come within their own souls near to God.

Around about the Mashrak-El-Azkar will be built various institutions for practical service to humanity: Schools, colleges, hospitals, asylums, and hospices, all of which form necessary adjuncts of the Temple of God, for the Bahai ideal is that faith and good works combined is the real worship of God,

and this principle of worship and service supplementing one another is thus accentuated in their temple of worship.

Some years ago a Mashrak-El-Azkar was built by the Bahais of the Orient. It is situated in the city of Eshkhabad, in Russian Turkistan, and was erected there by the Bahais in the oriental countries.

This Mashrak-El-Azkar, now to be built in the city of Chicago, is the first to be erected in the western world. It, however, does not represent the efforts of the West alone, for toward it the Orient has contributed as much as the Occident. In fact, offerings in varying amounts are constantly flowing toward this work from all parts of the world, and from people of all nations, races, and religions, whose hearts are united in this Cause. Thus, when built, the Mashrak-El-Azkar will stand as a great living monument, a standard and an ensign in the world, of the Divine Oneness of all religions, and the union of all people through the teaching of Baha'o'llah, and their united efforts in practical service to humanity.

After The Hague we spent a few days in Amsterdam and in Blaricum in North Holland. In these places we met with quite a few people who had been associated with the Theosophical Movement. They were very much alive to the spiritual needs of this day, and realized that the time was at hand for a religious reform in the world, a coming together of all religions in the spirit of unity.

One of these Dutch friends assured me that he knew the time was ripe for the coming of a world teacher who would accomplish the unity and interdependence spiritually and materially of all the world, and that he for one was looking for this great Master. He was deeply interested in reading the words of Abdul Baha upon this subject delivered before a gathering of Theoso-

[page 40]

phists in Budapest, in reply to questions as to how the people might know and recognize this great world master or teacher when He should appear. Here is the synopsis of Abdul Baha's reply:

EXCERPTS FROM AN ADDRESS BY ABDUL BAHÁ.

Budapest, 1913.

Nine proofs upon which the coming of the great Master is based:

1. That great master will be the educator of the world of humanity.
2. His teachings must be universal and confer illumination upon mankind.
3. His knowledge must be innate and spontaneous, and not acquired.
4. He must answer the questions of all the sages, solve all the difficult problems of humanity, and be able to withstand all the persecutions and sufferings heaped upon him.
5. He must be a joy-bringer, and the herald of the kingdom of happiness.
6. His knowledge must be infinite and his wisdom all comprehensive.
7. The penetration of his word and the potency of his influence must be so great as to humble even his worst enemies.
8. Sorrows and tribulations must not vex him. His courage and conviction must be God-like. Day unto day he must become firmer and more zealous.
9. He must be the establisher of universal civilization, the unifier of religions, the standard-bearer of universal peace, and the embodiment of all the highest and noblest virtues of the world of humanity.

“Whenever you find these conditions realized in a human temple, turn to him for guidance and illumination.”

Our friend was delighted when the above was read to him, and he immediately said: “I can see that Baha’o’llah was indeed the

[page 41]

world teacher, for He accomplished all these things, and now I long to meet Abdul Baha, that I may know more of the teaching.”

The attitude of this friend was typical of that of the people in general whom we met in the Netherlands. There is a large and a prepared field of work among those people, ready and awaiting the Bahai teacher who can go there for a sojourn of sufficient length of time to gather together a group and form a center of teaching. These truth-seekers are thinking people who, when confirmed, will go forth as workers in the Cause. We would gladly have remained there to have undertaken this service to the best of our ability, but the work in Germany was calling, so after a visit of a few days we continued on our way, leaving this fertile vineyard to others better fitted than we, who will arise to accomplish this service.

The first Bahai teacher to visit the Netherlands was Mr. Daniel Jenkyn, of St. Ives, Cornwall, England, a young man of rare and exceeding faith and purity of purpose, whose friends in many countries are mourning his recent departure from among us here in this material world. Though this young man remained only for a short vacation in the Low Countries, he met a few people, and these were deeply attracted and awakened by him. In speaking of his friendship with a certain man in Blaricum, our host there remarked that it was a mystery to him how this man and Jenkyn managed to converse and communicate, for neither understood but a few words of the language of the other.

My experience, however, in travelling among the Bahais in various countries has always been that a very limited vocabulary is quite sufficient between persons who are united by the Bahai fraternal tie.

In writing to America of Daniel Jenkyn the Secretary of the Bahai Assembly in London said: “He was a most spiritually-minded young man, a very sincere and ardent Bahai, and a most hard worker in the blessed Cause. Not long since he visited Holland for the purpose of meeting some of those attracted to the Movement and confirming their faith. He joined the Christian Commonwealth Fellowship, and found that this association brought him into contact with numbers of earnest seekers for the truth and reality of the Bahai Teachings. He undertook a vast correspondence in connection with the faith, and by this means did a great amount of teaching.”

I well remember the one time that I met Daniel Jenkyn. It was in Lady Blomfield’s drawing-room during Abdul Baha’s first visit in London. Some twenty-five or more persons were gathered

[page 42]

to meet Abdul Baha, including several men and women of worldly distinction, while in an inconspicuous place by the door sat Daniel Jenkyn, drinking in all Abdul Baha said. He was a clerk in a shipping house in a small town down on the Cornish coast, and being unable to obtain a holiday in order to attain his heart’s desire and spend several days near Abdul Baha, he had left home by a Saturday night train, travelling all night in an uncomfortable third-class compartment to have a few hours in London with Abdul Baha on Sunday, then returning home by night in order to resume work on Monday morning.

Through our correspondence which followed this meeting I soon learned that though our young friend had been of the humblest to seek Abdul Baha's presence, nevertheless, he had been among those most blessed and illumined, for he saw with the spiritual eye the stations of Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha. His life was firmly founded upon the Divine Covenant, and through this spiritual power he accomplished a great work, some of the fruits of which we found in The Netherlands.

GERMANY

Before leaving France a letter from Abdul Baha prepared us for blessings which were in store for us in Germany. His brief forecast was as follows: "The believers in Germany are very enkindled. You will be happy there."

The terrible calamity of war fell shortly after our arrival in Germany. Nevertheless, this assurance of happiness from Abdul Baha we realized in the fullest measure, although it came to us under far different conditions than we could ever have imagined.

In Germany we were blessed in meeting many friends whose whole lives and souls were wrapped up in and devoted to the cause of brotherhood. Never in Germany had there been manifest among the Bahai friends any spirit save that of firmness in the Covenant of Baha'o'llah, so there we found an enkindlement, an enthusiasm, and a joy in those meetings which is the very life of the spirit of religion, for this firmness and virility of spirit attracts and quickens souls and is the very life of the Kingdom.

In Berlin we remained a short while, but on account of its being the Summer vacation time the people whom we had most hoped

[page 43]

to meet were not in the city; therefore, after a few days we went on to Leipzig, where some Bahai friends awaited our coming.

Both of us were so intent upon our own Bahai affairs that we scarcely heard the first clamor which preceded the war. Even as late as Friday morning, July 31, when we left Berlin for Leipzig, we had thought of war as but a passing possibility, not a probability. Although for a long time anticipated, when it did finally come it came suddenly.

In Leipzig we were met by Miss Alma Knobloch, formerly of Washington, D.C., who for seven years had been laboring faithfully in Germany for the spread of the Cause. We were very glad to find ourselves again with Bahai friends. A few days spent in Berlin without this association had made us very restless and anxious to get into the field of active work; therefore, when we reached Leipzig, where meetings had been arranged for us, we were very contented and happy.

After a meeting with some friends the night of the day of our arrival in Leipzig, as we passed through the streets returning to our hotel, we realized for the first time that war was imminent. Bulletins at the corners announced the latest diplomatic news from Berlin, which produced the greatest excitement throughout the city.

Though our work was one of constructive peace, and we carried within the assurance of the meeting we had just left, nevertheless, the excited and turbulent condition of the populace was to us most distressing. All through the night we could hear the cries of the venders of bulletins. The people were responding to that psychological wave of thought or panic which precedes war and which has ever produced the momentum accompanying the opening up of actual hostilities.

During the three ensuing days which we spent in Leipzig, we met people who were deeply interested in our work. Several meetings were held, one of which was generally advertised in the papers, and the response was indeed good. Nevertheless, the intense war excitement made it quite impossible to do much general public work, for the call to arms had taken practically all of the men identified with and

interested in the Bahai work, while upon the women of the country had been thrust the heavy burdens of family and home.

I shall never forget one of our sister Bahai's as we all sat in meeting. Her husband had just joined his regiment, leaving her and the young child quite alone. She was struggling bravely

[page 44]

[photo: BAHAI STUDENTS ON MOUNT CARMEL]

[photo: MIRZA BADDI, GEORGE LATIMER, AND MIRZA AHMED]

[page 45]

with her responsibilities and grief, and her patience and resignation, together with her faith and assurance in the Holy Cause, was a lesson to us.

In Leipzig we had hoped to meet friends from some of the neighboring towns and cities, but because of the military operations train service was interrupted and there was no way for them to travel to us, nor for us to reach them. Since we were therefore so handicapped, and because Stuttgart was our objective point in Germany, we decided to push on as soon as possible.

Shortly before noon on Monday, August 2, we ascertained that an express train was going through that afternoon to Stuttgart, and that this would be the last passenger train for some days, as all regular traffic was being suspended during the mobilization of the army. We therefore made haste to take this last train.

At the station were thousands of people and all was confusion and excitement. Regiments of men armed for the fray were leaving, and families and friends were bidding the soldiers good-bye. We saw many touching scenes, mothers bidding good-bye to their sons, and fathers to their families. There seemed but little hope for many to ever be united again in this world. Every one was swayed by great emotion, and the many sobs of heart anguish were drowned by martial music and the songs of the soldiers, as they filed through the great hall of the station, singing as they went in order to keep up their spirits.

As our train pulled out from the city, we could see off in the distance towering above the houses and tree-tops the great war monument built by the Germans to commemorate Napoleon's defeat at the battle of Leipzig. In this Cyclopean pile the architect has depicted war in all its horrors and devastation. The character is so well interpreted and executed that when one enters into the gloomy rotunda of this monument, and his eyes becoming accustomed to the obscurity he finds himself as a pigmy at the feet of the four great colossal stone war images therein, a feeling of terror descends upon him and his first instinct is to rush to get out into the light. Such had been our experience a few days before, when we had visited this edifice.

From the surrounding terraces the eye sees nothing but beauty and prosperity everywhere manifest. Erected to perpetuate the spirit of a conflict of a century ago, this vast war shrine amid its surroundings was strikingly symbolic of the present

[page 46]

condition of the people. Like a great grotesque chimera it loomed above and dominated the happy homes, towns, and beautiful country as far as the eye could reach.

As our train sped southward, we were impressed with the fruitfulness and productiveness of the land. The season was a good one in the vegetable world. The orchards were so fruit-laden that most of the trees had been propped up to keep the limbs from breaking, while the harvest was everywhere abundant.

Military operations were in evidence upon all sides, and at the stations and crossings there were crowds of women and children and old men intent upon the passing trains, while in the half-mown, over-ripe fields of grain we saw here and there wagons and other wheeled farm implements, from which the horses had been requisitioned for the army. There were no able-bodied men at work, but in many places the women were out in the fields gathering in the harvests, drawing the heavily laden wagons.

During the frenzy of excitement which accompanied the beginning of the war. it was reported that many spies were abroad, and in Leipzig the story went around that a certain enemy had attempted to pollute the city water supply with cholera germs, but had been arrested in the act. All of these ideas had so taken hold of the people that there was suspicion of all foreigners.

All went well with us until our train was nearing the city of Naumberg, when an officer passed through the corridor, evidently looking for some one. We seemed to be his object, for he stopped and demanded our detention at the next stop. We were quite unceremoniously bundled out upon the platform, and our passports taken to some official who could read English, but just before the departure of the train our papers were returned, and we were allowed to continue our journey. Subsequently, we learned from Miss Knobloch, who bade adieu to us at the station in Leipzig, that she had been questioned by a police officer as to our nationality and destination, so without doubt the officer who took us into custody had been notified by wire to investigate us.

The train was crowded, people standing in the corridors. Everyone was very serious but pleasant and agreeable. Several hands were kindly thrust through the windows to help us aboard with our luggage, for the train was about to leave when we were released by the police, and we had no time to lose.

[page 47]

At Nuremberg our train was seized for military purposes. All passenger trains here had been stopped, and the passengers, like ourselves, hurried out upon the platforms. Among the civilians pandemonium reigned, but not so among the parting troops of soldiers, where all was quiet and orderly.

I have often recalled two panic-stricken Americans, man and wife, whom we passed at this point of confusion. They were laden with luggage, and not speaking the language, had boarded the wrong train. They told us they were trying to get out of the country by way of Switzerland. We would gladly have helped them, but before we could reflect we were separated from them.

After a tedious wait we continued our way. Travelling was by cross and side lines, by freight and omnibus trains, and by making frequent changes of trains, for the best cars and the through lines were commandeered by the army. Judging from the stars above we must have made a very roundabout and zig-zag route, for most of the night we seemed to be pointed directly away from the direction we wanted to go.

Hungry, dusty, and tired, we arrived in Stuttgart. Crowds thronged the station. It had been impossible to get telegrams through to our friends, so they did not know of our arrival. Upon leaving the station we were again put under arrest, but upon being satisfied by our passports that we were not of an unfriendly people the police allowed us to pass without further trouble; thus we found ourselves at the end of our travels for some time, for we remained in Stuttgart for more than six weeks.

It was over nine years ago that the Bahai Teaching was first given in Stuttgart through the efforts of Dr. Edwin Fisher, an American Bahai. Souls became attracted, and later Miss Alma Knobloch of Washington, D. C., went to Stuttgart, and for some years remained there, devoting her time to the giving of the glad tidings of the Cause. Many noble souls have arisen, and now there is a strong and an active Bahai center in that city, while in the surrounding towns and villages regular spiritual meetings are held.

While Abdul Baha was on his second tour in Europe, he made quite a visit in Stuttgart. Large gatherings were held and the friends were spiritually confirmed, for in him they realized the Center of the Covenant, through whose life of service to humanity the Divine Bounties of the Kingdom are in this day flowing to mankind.

[page 48]

Among these German Bahais there has never been the slightest sign of weakness in the Cause of Bahá'ó'llah. All have looked directly to Abdul Baha, and their faith and teaching has therefore been pure and luminous, and their meetings full of joy and fragrance of spirit.

In reading some of Abdul Baha's tablets to the Stuttgart friends one's heart is rejoiced by the clearness of his verses, in which he summons all to the Covenant of God, the directness of His text indicating the purity of heart and the clearness of the spiritual vision of those to whom he wrote.

In a letter to the friends in Esslingen, near Stuttgart, in the early summer of 1913, Abdul Baha wrote of two Persian Bahais whom he was sending there to work in the Cause, as follows:

“I send to those parts his honor Mirza Ali Akbar, and his honor Mirza Lotfullah, in order to associate with the friends and convey to them the yearning of the heart of Abdul Baha, and the explanation of the degrees of the powers of the Covenant, and the importance of the Center of the Testament. These two persons are very blessed, assuredly the believers shall obtain joy and happiness through their meeting.

Know ye this: That today the greatest of all affairs is obedience to the Center of God's Covenant. The power of the Covenant shall stir the regions, and the spirit of the Covenant shall resuscitate.”

In a subsequent tablet to the Stuttgart friends Abdul Baha wrote:

“The spirit of this age is the Covenant and Testament of God. It is like the pulsating artery in the body of the world. Speak in your meetings and assemblies about the Testament and the Covenant, and invite every one to the firmness and the steadfastness of the Covenant. Consider that the words of Mirza Ali Akbar were so effective because he is firm in the Covenant.”

A few days before our arrival in Stuttgart the friends there had the blessing of welcoming two brother Bahais from the Orient, Dr. Habibollah Khodabash of Hamadan, Persia, and Mirza Azizollah Bahadur of Shiraz, Persia.

These two young men had been for several years students in the American University in Beirut, Syria, the former having

[page 49]

graduated in medicine but a few weeks previous to his coming to Europe, while the latter had one more year before graduation. Abdul Baha had sent these friends to Europe on a mission of teaching. Their plan had been to spend eight days in Stuttgart and then to go to London to engage there in the activities of the Cause. They had no sooner reached Stuttgart than the war broke out, so they were unable to go to England as planned.

In the afternoon of the day that we reached Stuttgart we went in company with some German friends to the hotel where our two oriental brothers were staying. On account of the excited condition of the populace these two Persians had been obliged to remain within doors unless escorted by friends. Both were decidedly foreign looking compared with the Teuton type of man, and had they been suspected as enemies or spies, not speaking German, they would have had difficulty, for in the first flush of the spirit of war the people might have handled them quite roughly. It was at the advice of some of the Stuttgart friends that our Persian brothers observed this caution of remaining indoors.

Our meeting was a joyful one, as is always the case in Bahai circles, when people of different races, nations, and religions find themselves united. Mirza Azizollah had come into the Cause from Islam, while Dr. Habibollah was from Judaism.

During their stay in Germany, the faith of these two brothers was a demonstration to the people of the uniting spirit of Baha'o'llah, for through His teaching one, a Jew, and the other, a Moslem, were united with Christians and were accepting Christ, and in all of the meetings testifying to the divinity of Jesus, in whom they now believed because of their present light.

In Stuttgart we found Bahai matters very much alive, despite the upset condition of the country. Regular meetings were held almost every day in the city and environs, and at these meetings we were continually seeing new faces and meeting people who were coming for the first time to hear of the Cause.

These people were religiously inclined and receptive. In very simple and direct words was the Great Message given in all the meetings and all were invited to come and serve under the Covenant of God. There was always a heart-felt response. Never did we meet antagonism or skepticism. The people listened

[page 50]

sympathetically and with earnestness and reverence, and we knew that the words spoken were reaching the souls, and that the time would come when this spiritual seed, the Word of God, sown in these hearts and watered with kindness and love, would attain growth and bring forth good results, and all of this good spiritual work was being done amid the greatest excitement and unrest, for out in the streets the one thought was the war. Crowds everywhere, first the soldiers marching on their way to the front, singing martial airs of war as they went, and prisoners of war escorted through the streets. At all hours the passing of ambulances announced the arrival of trainloads of wounded and dying soldiers from the battlefields; then from time to time we would see a company of soldiers slowly following a draped caisson, bearing one of their comrades to his grave.

Often in the meetings the friends were obliged to close the windows of the room in which we met because of the noise of martial music and confusion without, but this was but a material trouble. The real virtue lay in the hearts of the firm friends. In the midst of war they were in joy, because they were firm in the Cause of God. They were reinforced and in great assurance and confirmation of soul.

I will attempt to describe a few of the many gatherings, that the reader may picture for himself the kind spirit of the friends, and the many blessings which were ours through meeting with such souls. Even in times of general welfare and peace such kindness as they manifested would have been an inspiration. As a light is more appreciated in the night than in the day, so their calmness of soul, and love and affection, were all the more prized because of the surrounding darkness of war and rancor.

We attended several memorable gatherings at the home of Herr Consul Schwarz. This gentleman and his wife and children are all firm and united in the Cause, and are devoting their lives to its spread. In meetings in their home there existed always a most beautiful spirit of kindness and hospitality.

Herr Schwarz was among the first called from civil life for army service. He had a major's commission, and during our stay in Stuttgart was stationed at Ludwigsberg, a military recruiting post only a few miles from the city, so we had the pleasure of meeting him at the several meetings he was able to attend, having had a spare hour to rest from military duty.

[page 51]

In looking back over the gatherings at the Schwarz home, one of these stands out particularly in my memory. The day was beautiful. It was Sunday. For some days the heavy fighting had been continuous, but there had not been much news from the front. So much in life is based upon comparative standards that even in war there are days of rest and quiet, and this day of which I write was one of these.

As we stood upon a balcony at our friends home, situated high up on a hillside, we could look down upon the old part of the city and off upon the hills on the opposite side of the valley. It was all very beautiful. Both man's work and that of Nature had been happily combined in the scene before us. As far as the eye could reach were cultivated gardens and beautiful trees interspersed with fine buildings, from the cathedral and "Schloss" in the old part of the town in the valley, to the modern residences on terraces on the hills, up the sides and over the tops of which the city had gradually climbed in recent years.

Joining the friends indoors, we met with a score or more of people who had gathered to hear the Message. One of the Bahais, an elderly lady with quite white hair, arrested my attention and I was told that she was a widow, a relative of the wife of the Consul, and that her only son, an officer in the army, had gone to the front. The meeting progressed, several of the friends read tablets and spoke of the teachings, when there was a slight interruption, while the elderly lady just mentioned was called from the room. Before leaving the house a look of distress upon the face of our hostess prompted me to inquire if any news had been received, and she told me that word had come that the widow's son had been killed and buried on the field of battle. It was under such burdens and sorrows that our friends were serving in Germany and trying to lay the foundation of The Kingdom, their faith giving them the necessary strength and fortitude to support afflictions because they were strong in the Lord.

Some days after our journey from Leipzig, the general mobilization of the army having been accomplished, passenger trains began running again, and Miss Knobloch was able to come to Stuttgart. Through this friend we met many people to whom she had spoken about the Cause, and we attended a number of gatherings in the home of Fraulein Doring, one of the first women in Germany to engage in the Bahai work.

At one of these reunions we met a young Stuttgarter, who had been living in Chemnitz, near Leipzig, one of the many whom, on

[page 52]

[photo: SOUTH FRONT OF THE MQZAFER KHANEH]

[photo: NORTH FRONT OF THE MOZAFER KHANEH]

[page 53]

account of the war, we had not been able to meet while in the North. This young man had been called to Stuttgart in order to be ready to join the army when the call came. One could scarcely imagine anyone with more love in his nature and less fight in his heart than this boy of nineteen years. He was in all the meetings and with us much. We often went to his widowed mother's home. She kept a small restaurant, and she always hospitably received us and fed us with various kinds of sweets. She was a mother, and the kindly atmosphere of the place drew us there.

With the first selection of men for the field our young friend was rejected on account of not being robust enough; he was but a stripling. He was supremely happy and joyful at the prospect of a longer association with the Bahais, for he was quite new in the Cause; but after several weeks, when the call went forth to all the younger and older men within the military age limits, he was called.

One day we went to bid good-bye to the boy. He had been ordered to Strassbourgh to join an army corps. The mother was in tears, but submissive. The boy's lip quivered, but he was brave. Upon his person he carried some Bahai treasures, a photograph of Abdul Baha, a copy of the Greatest Name, and some prayers, while his heart was turned toward the Covenant of the Lord. He sent, a message to Abdul Baha of love and greeting, to which Abdul Baha replied: "I hope, through the Grace of God, although he is in the midst of fire he will be protected. Of course when one is amid fire the blaze will affect one."

At the outbreak of hostilities there were some three hundred or more Americans in Stuttgart. Because of the halt of all civilian travel these people were forced to remain where they were. The American Consulate was fairly besieged. For some days I went there almost daily, hoping to get a cable or letter through to family and friends in the States, assuring them of our welfare, but no such communications were possible. Finally, the American Consul was able to arrange for a train to convey the Americans from Stuttgart through to Rotterdam, where they hoped to find steamer accommodations to New York. Early one morning we went down to the station to see our compatriots off. By buying tickets to the next station down the line — we had no intention of going there — we were able to force our way through the crowd and get through the gates, where our fellow countrymen were boarding their train. Selecting one pleasant looking stout gentleman from the crowd, I asked him if he would kindly take

[page 54]

charge of a package of letters and, once out of Germany, mail them. This he did, for in due time they arrived at their respective destinations, assuring family and friends of our safety and happiness.

The long train pulled out of the train-shed amid many hurrahs and waving of American flags, and we found ourselves with our Consul to be about the only American men remaining. He seemed a bit annoyed that we had not grasped the opportunity to leave, for he had been much harassed, and was as

anxious as were the Americans themselves to get them off his hands. However, that was the last he saw of us, for we had our circle of friends and work which occupied us. In fact, the thought of leaving Germany then never occurred to us, for though the war made things difficult from the material standpoint, yet from the spiritual aspect all was in order, and the way was made for the work we hoped to accomplish.

Our two Persian brothers were much in our company. They were quartered in an apartment in the home of Bahai friends, Herr and Frau Eckstein, and daily we were off together on some mission. Herr and Frau Eckstein had two sons, both in the army, so when our two Persians found they would have to remain for a time in Germany the Ecksteins insisted that they come into their home and live there. Here was another demonstration of the spirit of religious unity. A Moslem and a Jew through this teaching believing in Christ and united with a Christian family, who were in turn united with them, showering kindness upon them as if they had been of their own race. They were all of the same spiritual kind, and this illumination of soul and acknowledged oneness was the foundation of their friendly relation.

I might describe many informal meetings held at the Eckstein home. We usually met our oriental friends on a balcony over looking the garden adjoining the house, which, though in the heart of the city, with its encircling screen of high trees, gave an impression of country. However, I will content myself with dwelling upon but one experience in their home.

It was one stormy night, torrents of rain and thunder and lightning playing without, while within we two Americans and two Persians were cosily seated at the Eckstein board trying to enjoy a delicious meal. Herr and Frau Eckstein were as cheerful as possible, and doing and saying all they could to put us at our ease and to make us enjoy ourselves, yet beneath their manner one felt that their hearts were heavy and burdened, for news had come that day of storms and bad weather along the front and

[page 55]

of heavy German losses where their sons were fighting. Despite their spirit of faith and assurance in things Divine they were suffering humanly.

At one time the telephone rang, and at another time the door bell, and at these moments the tension of anxiety was manifested in expression and glance, to be momentarily lifted when no bad news was announced. Though we four visitors had no troubles of our own, we were sick at heart because of the trouble of our friends, though like them we were talking and thinking as cheerful and as helpful thoughts as possible. Having finished the meal, or more properly speaking left off, for we were not in a mood to eat, Herr Eckstein said: "Would you not like to see Otto's room." So we followed him to the vacant apartment of his younger son, who was just twenty when called to the army a few weeks before. There were all of the boy's things just as he had left them. An alpenstock, a coil of rope, a glacier axe, and light camping outfit. He had been planning a vacation in Switzerland when the call to arms had come, while on a table beside the bed lay a Bible. We stood around without saying a word; there was nothing to say. We felt too deeply; then, by common consent, we joined in a few moments of silent prayer for the illumination, guidance, and protection of the boy on the battlefield.

On leaving the house a few minutes later we found that the storm had cleared and we all went to a public Bahai meeting held in a hall in the Burghermuse, down in the heart of the city.

The stress and strain to which I have just referred, under which our friends were laboring, was characteristic of practically every Bahai household we entered. Nevertheless, their spirits were sustained by their faith, and though there was but little hope of their ever seeing their loved ones again they were happy in their Bahai service of laying the foundation in the world of better conditions to the extent that future generations may be in peace, and that the world of humanity may enjoy the fruits of unity and concord and be spared the horrors of war.

Trouble, suffering, and affliction do produce a sympathy and an understanding between people. It is a terrible thing that it has to be thus bought so dearly, when all that is necessary is the change of heart which can be attained when the soul once realizes and recognizes the spiritual reality of religion.

One Sunday afternoon a party of us were going to attend a meeting of friends, people interested in the work, in the neigh-

[page 56]

boring town of Felsbach. In leaving the station our train was sidetracked for a few minutes to allow the passage of an ambulance train from the front. The wounded, both German and French in friendly relations, were in the same box cars lying together on the straw which covered the floors. All were suffering, and among our own party I saw the eyes of several wet with tears. Subsequently, a sister Bahai who was doing relief work at one of the railroad stations, told us of an incident which had come under her notice. Both French and German wounded were being received, and a cup of coffee was handed to a German, who insisted that the suffering Frenchman at his side should be served first, since he had been longer without food. Many similar demonstrations of amity between the soldiers did we hear of, and this made us feel sure that the time is coming when the suffering will have become so intense that as a last resort the masses of the belligerent peoples will be swept by the ideals of the religion, not of man, but of God, and that in a very short order a new age will appear.

Under all conditions the active Bahai finds work to do, even under the most unpromising prospects. During the mobilization of troops in the various cities, the citizens were called upon to house the men. There was scarcely a home, however small, where there were not one or two soldiers lodged. Here was an other opportunity for the Bahais to reach men whom under normal conditions they would not have been able to meet. In all our meetings we had soldiers. These men, quartered in the city for a few days, or for two or three weeks, would frequent the evening meetings as much as possible, then when they had gone out into the field, each with his small supply of Bahai literature, that they might share with comrades the Bahai ideals and message, other soldiers would take their places in the various homes, and in turn be brought in contact with the teaching. Among these was a young man from a near-by village, a florist by trade, who for the few days he was with us showed his interest in the Cause by attending all meetings, and by supplying the people in the gatherings with flowers from his garden. One day he was called away with his regiment, but in eight days was brought back with a bullet in his thigh. As soon as he was able to see friends, we went out to the military hospital where he lay. Though suffering, he was happy, for even there among the wounded upon either side of him he had been able to make the way for the visiting Bahais to serve them, and tell them more about the unity of the world.

The following incident, which happened to one of the Bahai soldiers, was mentioned by him in a postal to his home in Stutt-

[page 57]

gart. In a skirmish along the Western front he had occasion to capture two Frenchmen, whom he had to take some distance within the German lines before turning them over to the proper authorities. The prisoners were terrified, for they expected to be killed, but our friend, though in the pursuance of his military duty, showed them such kindness that when the time came for them to separate one clung to his

hand, while the other embraced him. Thus even amid the din of battle came the opportunity for this man to show forth the Bahai spirit of brotherhood.

Undoubtedly some of my readers are asking themselves: "How comes it that the Bahais, who teach peace and believe that it is better to be killed than to kill, are thus engaged in war?" Jesus answered a similar question when He said: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." In the warring countries in Europe, with the exception of England, all able-bodied men between certain age limits are obliged to take up arms whether they wish to do so or not. Nothing could be more distasteful to a Bahai than to kill a brother man. Nevertheless, for the present, in the war lands of Europe he is obliged to "render unto Caesar," and this he is doing, strong in the knowledge and assurance that the time will soon come when nations will cease to make war, and God's law of peace will be on earth as it is in heaven.

The town of Esslingen on the Neckar, about nine miles from Stuttgart, is one of the most ancient cities in Wurttemberg. Surrounded by mediaeval towers and fortifications, the old part of the town with its "schloss," "rathaus," and churches of the Gothic period, its narrow winding streets and half-timbered dwellings, the upper stories projecting out over the street, takes one back several centuries. Such is Esslingen of the past, but amid these ancient surroundings a new life is entering into the souls of the people, for here the ideals of Baha'o'llah are taking root, and devoted people are arising to serve the Cause.

Though we went each week to Esslingen, I will only attempt, to describe one of those meetings, which in enthusiasm and spirit were all about equal in character.

Leaving Stuttgart in company with several of the younger Bahai men who had not yet been called to the army, we took a train over to the Neckar. Crossing the valley on foot, we

[page 58]

climbed the Wittenberg, a mountain upon the summit of which is a classic chapel, the Mausoleum of the kings of Wurttemberg. From the park surrounding the chapel we had a very extended view of the surrounding country with its many towns and villages, with here and there a tower or fortification of ancient date, a testimony of past wars, while at our feet in the valley below peacefully flowed the silvery Neckar, surrounded by green fields.

Striking off into the mountains by a well-travelled trail, we found ourselves going through a most picturesque rural district. Passing through several villages and by a number of farmhouses, we were kindly greeted by the people with the salutation peculiar to the Wurttembergers: "Greuse Gott." Old men, women, and children we saw on all sides, all busily engaged in work, but there were no able-bodied men to be seen anywhere.

Our route finally brought us out again on a height above the valley near Esslingen, whither we were bound. Entering the city, we went to the house of a friend, where we had tea, and later, in company with several who had joined the party, we all walked up past the beautiful Frauen Kirche, the largest and most beautiful church of the town, and by the Jewish cemetery without the city walls, (in mediaeval days they were thus excluded) to the house where the evening meeting had been prepared.

Long tables tastefully decorated with flowers and refreshments had been arranged in the shape of a large U, about which we seated ourselves to the number of over fifty. After all had been served and partaken of material food the spiritual meeting began. It consisted of readings from the Word of God, and short talks from various persons present.

Our Jewish brother, Dr. Habibollah, told us some very interesting things about the Jews in Persia. How, for many centuries, they had lived closely within the confines of their own views, opposing Christ, until now, through the power of the Bahai light, they are being taught the truth, and a large number of them have broadened out from their former attitude of hatred towards Christians, and these same people now are believing that Jesus was the Promised One whom their forefathers ought to have accepted, and in whom now they themselves believe.

None the less interesting was the story told by our Moslem brother, Mirza Azizollah. He spoke of the extreme hatred and animosity which for over thirteen centuries had existed between Moslems and Christians, of the bloody religious wars and destruction which was the fruit of this violent hatred, and then he told of the hold which the Cause had in the Moslem countries,

[page 59]

and how it had changed the hearts of the people to the extent that these very same persons who, a few years ago, believed that to kill a Christian was an act which would have met with Divine favor, now quickened by the spirit of true brotherhood are waiting with open, loving hearts to welcome their Christian brothers and sisters from the West, and to show them all hospitality. This testimony touched the hearts of all present, and for the moment I found myself transported back in thought to the countries of which he spoke, countries in which I had travelled and where I had been the recipient of kindness and love at the hands of many friends.

After the words of these friends were put into German for the benefit of those present who did not speak English several German friends spoke, dwelling upon the joy of the coming together in love and unity of the peoples of the different religions, of which we had a demonstration in our midst, and of the importance to the progress of the world of that unity.

It was late in the night when the meeting dispersed, several of the young men accompanying us down to the next village, and then by foot across the valley, where we took a train back to Stuttgart. It was a beautiful moonlight night. As we crossed the bridge over the river and continued the road beyond, the spirit of the meeting was so strongly with us that it was as if we had glimpses into the future when Europe would be as one country, and these warring elements would be fused into one great world people. The peace in our hearts and the love we bore one another and all humanity made the problem seem to be a very simple one to us.

All human difficulties are solved and set right through love. This Abdul Baha is demonstrating in his work of establishing in people's hearts the light of Baha'o'llah, yet as we walked along, arm-in-arm, we were constantly reminded of the warring multitudes, who as yet had not been reached by the spirit of the Cause. Far off above the hills over the valley, in the direction of Stuttgart, we could see the frequent flashes of searchlights patrolling the heavens, ever alert for the approach of the airships, lest bombs be dropped on the city.

Toward the end of our stay in Stuttgart Herr and Frau Herrigel, who are well known through their service to the Cause, spread a beautiful supper feast in their home. There were about thirty-five at the meal, Protestants and Catholics, including a priest of the Catholic church. All were gathered in the spirit of amity, and the discussion was centered upon the unity of mankind.

[page 60]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA ENTERING THE GARDEN OF HIS HOUSE IN HAIFA]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA'S HOUSE IN HAIFA]

In the neighboring town of Zuffenhausen, at the home of Herr and Frau Schweizer, who are active in the work, as well as in other neighboring towns, in the homes of other Bahai workers, many meetings were held, all of which were conducive to the spirit of the work of unity, and productive of much good feeling.

It was only a few days before we left Germany that Mr. Latimer and I knew definitely that we were going to visit Abdul Baha. Nevertheless, from the beginning of our travels together we had talked and hoped to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

From Stuttgart two telegrams were sent to Abdul Baha asking for advice as to the next move of our two Persian friends and ourselves, since they had been unable to go to England, but had been obliged to remain in Stuttgart. The first dispatch never reached its destination, but the second did reach Abdul Baha, and shortly we had a wire from Abdul Baha telling us to come on to Haifa by the most feasible route.

It was with a heart wrench that we parted from our many dear friends and started on our journey to the Orient.

A small crowd gathered in the station to see us off, and laden with letters and messages to the Bahais in various countries, as well as with gifts of fruits and other edibles, we boarded our train for the Swiss frontier. The train stopped for a moment at Esslingen and we had a hurried good-bye moment with a party of friends assembled there. The last word was from a young man to a brother Bahai in England, with whom he corresponded in Esperanto. It was a greeting of love and sorrow at the war which had broken their correspondence, though it had not separated them in spirit.

The spirit of brotherly love penetrates hearts and is always appreciated by all people under all conditions; nevertheless, when one finds war and bloodshed upon all sides, and hatred generally manifested about him under these conditions, he appreciates friendship far more than he possibly could amid more pacific surroundings. Such was our experience while in Germany. The war spirit was rife everywhere. The people were aroused and angry. All foreigners were looked upon with disfavor, but in the midst of all this rancor and unrest we found amid our Bahai friends harmony and peace of soul, and such loving hearts that we were made thankful and happy to have been with them even in such distressing war times.

Our route took us by way of Ulm to Fredrichshaven on the Lake of Konstanz, where our luggage and persons were subjected

to a strict examination for any possible documents containing military information before we were allowed to board the small steamer which conveyed us across the lake to the Swiss town of Romanshorn, where we found ourselves in a neutral country.

Taking a connecting train on to Zurich, where the night was spent, we made an early start the following morning for Milan, going down into Italy over the St. Gothard. In Milan we booked for sailings upon the next Italian steamer from Venice for Egypt. After a couple of days in Milan we went on to Venice, from whence our ship sailed four days later. Though at that time, late in September, Italy had not entered into the war, yet the war spirit was running quite high. The newspapers were publishing articles calculated to inflame public opinion, with the result that the people were excited and stimulated to conquest under the idea of adjusting past international wrongs and of adding to the present national glory and power of Italy. All of this was, of course, but the preliminary step towards the war in which Italy is now plunged.

As we travelled through Northern Italy, we felt that, if only this destructive thought in the minds of the people were transmuted into constructive peace thought, war could not happen. Everywhere there was manifested need for the elevation of the ideal of spiritual peace and harmony between the nations, and that this lofty ideal should be lived by the people.

A journey of five days brought us down through the Adriatic and Mediterranean seas to Alexandria in Egypt, our only intermediate port being Brindisi. Even on the high seas we were reminded of war. One morning at daybreak we were overhauled by a French cruiser, from which an officer was sent aboard our ship to examine our papers. The following night we passed a Franco-British squadron guarding the entrance of the Adriatic. Six men-of-war in line, dressed in their dark drab paint, without lights, looming up one by one on the horizon out of the dark night, silently awaiting the enemy, gave an unpleasant feeling of dread, not that we ourselves were in danger, but for the consequences all around should an engagement of belligerents take place.

Egypt was also in a state of war. Our party was subjected to a most rigorous examination of person and effects, while several of us had letters and printed matter of a strictly religious and peaceful nature confiscated.

[page 63]

In the late afternoon of the day we landed we took a train for Cairo. The journey, made in from three to four hours, was a beautiful ride through the rich grain fields of the Nile delta, over which the setting sun shed that rich mellow golden light so characteristic of the sunsets of Egypt and the desert. Here and there the fellahin (native peasantry) were working in the fields, donkeys and camels being their beasts of burden, while around about their poor mud huts one could see preparations in progress for the evening meal.

Shortly after dark our train pulled into the station in Cairo. Words fail one when one tries to describe the bustle and confusion that invariably attends the arrival of the traveller in the Orient. At first it is disconcerting and the uninitiated voyager is apt to agree to almost any demands of porters and dragomans rather than prolong the struggle, but with a little experience one's sensibilities become somewhat hardened and one learns to hold out against the multitudes for preservation of purse and person.

Before leaving Alexandria we had sent a dispatch to an oriental friend in Cairo, advising him of our coming, but doubtful as to whether he would be at home we were hardly expecting any one to meet us. Altogether we had a goodly number of pieces of luggage, and while we were parleying with several porters, who were all talking to us at the same time and at the top of their voices, I saw looming above the crowd about us the tall and stately figure of a friend, well known among the western Bahai's who have travelled to the East Hadji Niaz Kermani. He was not long in coming to our assistance, and in a few moments had quietly arranged for the transfer of our effects.

With Hadji Niaz was Mohammed Taki Esphahani, who, like Hadji Niaz, from his name we recognized as being of Moslem origin. The home of Mohammed Taki Esphahani in Cairo is one of the Bahai centers of hospitality, where travellers from all lands find a most hearty welcome.

After escorting us to an English hotel opposite the public gardens Taki Mohammed informed us that he was expecting us to dine with him that night, so to his home we all went. The building was similar in character to many of those of modern parts of Cairo. Mounting to the second floor, we were shown into a large salon, from which opened out a balcony upon which we went. We found ourselves overlooking a

garden which stretched off westward toward the Nile. Tall date palm trees, silhouetted against the moonlit sky, waved gracefully in the evening breezes.

[page 64]

Those who have journeyed on the Nile in warm seasons ever recall the refreshing breezes and the sparkling brilliancy of the nights in contrast to the glaring sunlight and parching heat of the day. There it is only after sunset that the people really enjoy themselves, that they circulate about enjoying themselves, for this is their social hour.

As we sat on the balcony of our friend, several of the Bahais of Cairo joined us. One, an Egyptian physician who had taken his medical degree in France; another, a young man, a student in the American University in Beirut; another young man from Persia, travelling that he might study and understand the civilizations of foreign countries; and still others came, until we had quite a party.

It must have been about ten o'clock when the meal was served, consisting of foods both oriental and occidental, the principal eastern dish being pilau, composed of boiled rice, light and fluffy, with browned pine nuts, raisins, and small cubes of boiled chicken, added to which were several kinds of sauces which one could take to one's individual taste.

During the meal, our conversation was upon the subject of the Cause which had brought us all together so closely, breaking bread and eating at the same board.

A well known author has written: "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Such indeed, and far worse too, is the condition of separateness between these two great halves of humanity. They mingle one with the other, as does oil with water, thus forming a heterogeneous humanity rather than a homogeneous unit. Although Europeans have lived in the East for generations, yet they are as strangers in a strange land so far as their real affiliation with the oriental peoples is concerned. Really worse than this mere lack of understanding and co-operation is the misunderstanding and natural enmity which exists. The vast majority of westerners dislike orientals, while the vast majority of easterners dislike with equal cordiality the occidentals. The reason for this inharmonious condition is at root prejudice, principally religious and racial.

There is a darkness in humanity the world over, but there is light too. When one looks for darkness one finds darkness, and when one looks for light, one finds light also. Goodness and virtue are equally divided among all peoples. Like the Occident, the Orient is teeming with virtue. All that is necessary is that the virtue be discovered and brought into the light.

[page 65]

The oriental peoples are strong in hospitality, kindness, friendship, and in idealism, and fervent in matters of the spirit. The western people need these elements which the orientals have, and the oriental peoples need the material and intellectual elements of western civilization. It is for the advancement of the whole world that there should be a harmonious union of these two halves of the human race.

It is very unusual in the Orient for people of different religions to eat together. From most ancient times the breaking of bread and the eating of salt have been the signs of the deepest trust and friendship between orientals; and there we were, our first night in an oriental land, received by our eastern brethren and shown by form and in the spirit, the deepest friendship. In the light of that meeting the problem of unity and harmony between peoples did not seem to be a difficult one. With the necessary brotherly spirit all other blessings follow.

This was not the only meeting of the kind in store for us. Each of the several nights our party spent in Cairo we assembled regularly in the hospitable home of Mohammed Taki Esphahani for a late dinner, and during those times we learned much about the Cause and its growth in the Orient. The name of the

great Bahai teacher Mirza Abul Fazl was often on our lips. He had departed this life of service on earth a few months previous to our visit, and it was in the home of Taki Mohammed that he was tenderly cared for and nursed during his last illness, and from whence the friends carried his remains to the tomb.

Mirza Abul Fazl, of the ancient town of Gulpaygan, in Persia, was one of the most learned men of the oriental world. He was holding a professorship in one of the universities in Teheran when he learned of the Bahai Cause and came to an understanding of its principles, and he arose to promulgate its truths. He was opposed, robbed of his property, and persecuted by the Moslems for his stand. Five months, twenty-two months, six months, respectively, was he imprisoned at various times because of his belief, but notwithstanding these troubles he continued his work, writing many books and treatises on the Movement, and travelling and residing in many lands, both East and West, that he might teach the Cause and establish its principles in the hearts of the people.

Mirza Abul Fazl was much beloved by the American Bahais, for he was one of the first of the oriental Bahai teachers to come to the West. He came to the States in the early days of the Movement there, some thirteen or fourteen years ago, and through his untiring efforts and devotion he instilled into the people the true principles of the religion of God.

[page 66]

In an interview with an American Bahai Abdul Baha recently said: "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 the Supreme Nearness. Those in real authority are known by their humility and self-sacrifice, and show no attitude of superiority over the friends."

One day, a friend, an Egyptian doctor of medicine, at our request took us to visit the tomb of Mirza Abul Fazl. His remains are laid in the family mausoleum of one of the Persian friends, Hadji Mirza Hassan Khorassani, in a cemetery on a hill to the east of the city, which looked, from a little distance, to be a part of the city itself, since it was laid off in streets with tombs on either side, a miniature city of the dead.

Arriving near our destination, we alighted from the carriages, and going in and out of several narrow streets we entered a small building, though large for its purpose, which covered the resting place of our late friend and spiritual teacher. A simple chamber, in one corner of which stood the large marble sarcophagus of one of the members of the Khorassani family, while in the center of the floor was a simple, as yet unmarked slab which covered the spot beneath which rested the mortal body of Mirza Abul Fazl. Around this we stood in silence for some time. I have rarely felt so profound a silence. The whole place seemed to pulsate and to vibrate and we each felt it. We left the place, thinking and speaking of the work and services to the Cause which had made the name of Mirza Abul Fazl so precious to the Bahais in all parts of the world.

During our few days in Cairo, we were constantly meeting and in company with our many friends. Hadji Niaz was most friendly and faithful in his attendance. He personally conducted us to the pyramids and to many out-of-the-way and interesting places in the native parts of old Cairo. His tall, erect figure, gray beard, high white turban, and flowing robes created a dignity which was truly patriarchal, while his cordial smile and ease of manner gave him an elasticity characteristic of a youth, which the gray hair and the lines in his face contradicted. He was constantly serving the friends and never seemed to tire with the output of physical energy, for apparently he was quite as fresh at the end of a strenuous day as he was at the beginning.

All of the Bahais who have visited Cairo will recall the meetings held in the home of the Persian Hadji Mirza Hassan, the

[page 67]

merchant of Khorassan. Toward dusk of our second day in the city we were conducted to his house. A driveway from the street flanked by trees and shrubs led to the main doorway of the residence. Like many oriental homes of the larger type the vestibule gave into a large high hall or central room from which, opened various other rooms. Doors at the far end of this main room, with its high panelled ceiling, opened out upon a deep loggia with a tessellated marble flooring. Going out into the loggia a beautiful vista was revealed to us, framed in between the marble columns which separated this open-air room from the garden. Before us in the midst of the garden was a large number of our friends, whom we were now seeing for the first time. Descending a few stone steps to the level of the garden walk, we soon found ourselves being most heartily welcomed by our brothers with fervent hand-shakes and embraces. We were all gathered on a large circular marble terrace surrounding a fountain. Darkness had fallen, and to give light lamps, alternating with vases of flowers, had been placed at regular intervals around the edge of the lowest and largest basin of the fountain. We all took seats on the terrace in a circle facing the fountain. A prayer of thanksgiving was chanted, and then selections were read from some of the writings of Baha' o' llah. Then, in turn, we were asked to tell those present of the work and friends in the countries visited, all of which was translated for the benefit of those who did not understand English, while one bright young man who had mastered English made an address of welcome, well worded and rich in the spirit of fraternity.

At one side we heard the simmering of a samovar and saw the glow of light which it cast upon the low branches of a neighboring tree, and presently little cut glass cups of most delicious Persian tea were served to each one present. It was a most beautiful experience from the aesthetic and material point of view, as well as from the spiritual. Though in the heart of Cairo, it seemed almost like the country, the high walls and the trees of the garden resulting in a silent seclusion; but most beautiful and harmonious of all were the souls in that circle. Men of all ages, and from many countries, to which their various garbs testified, from that of the conventional European dress to flowing oriental robes of many colors. Near us sat several men who attracted us much. They were students from the great Moslem University of El Asshar in Cairo, for even in that stronghold of Islam the work of spiritual world resuscitation is going on, though unseen except by a few. These Bahais, with their long dark cloaks and white turbans were, so far as clothing was concerned, like the thousands of their Moslem fellow students, but the light in their faces was different, because the reality of religion had reached their hearts, and they were of the new age of

[page 68]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH SOME YOUNG MEN ON MOUNT CARMEL]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA AND A GROUP OF BAHAIS AT THE TOMB OF THE BAB]

[page 69]

spiritual knowledge, though they wore the theological garb of the past. They were striving to live the life and thereby bring light and quickening of soul to their people.

The meeting being over our host, Hadji Mirza Hassan, took us through several rooms in his house, where he had many interesting Bahai writings in manuscript beautifully illuminated. The artist scribes of the Orient do rich and beautiful work of this kind. We also saw photographs of some of the Bahai martyrs, and other subjects of like interest which he had collected from various sources, all of which were of great interest to us two Americans, for in the West we have but few such treasures.

Although Egypt was in a state of war, and we had experienced some difficulties in entering the country, yet once in the land we saw and heard very little that savored of war. Being advised of a scarcity of steamers leaving from Port Said for the ports of Syria, we engaged passage by the first ship sailing, and after a stay of four days in Cairo we left for Port Said.

Almost everyone whom we had met while in Cairo was at the train to see us off. All four of us, two Persians and two Americans, had a compartment to ourselves, and before the train pulled out the place was a bower of flowers, for each of the many friends brought flowers, fruit, or sweets as parting souvenirs, while one arrived followed by a boy bearing a tray of iced sherbets, all of which, considering the excessive heat, added much to our comfort.

The people in the station and on board the train eyed us with no little interest on account of the mixture of people of divers races and religions who were congregated about us, for even in Egypt, where Europeans have lived for some generations, there is no real affinity and brotherhood between oriental and occidental, whereas, we through the Bahai Cause were here surrounded by kind and loving brothers of foreign races in a time of war and general unrest.

Because of the threatened unrest of the country, a most strict watch was being kept upon all Europeans who might stir up the natives against the British government of occupation. I was prepared to have the military authorities ask for our passports, but we had no inconvenience, though two of the officers kept a watch upon our movements.

A run of three hours brought us to Port Said, where we found another group of friends to welcome us and to make our stay

[page 70]

there of three days pass very quickly. Much of our time here was spent in the company of our good brother Bahai, the Persian Vice Consul, Mirza Ahmad Yazdi, whose kind services to the travelling Bahais has made him friends in all parts of the world.

On account of the opposition of the Moslems but little, if any, direct Bahai teaching is being done in Egypt; nevertheless, the light of the Cause will out, it cannot be hidden.

During one of the sojourns of Abdul Baha in Port Said, some native Arabs were attracted to him and became so enkindled with the spirit of the Cause that they soon became to be known as Bahais. Two of these in particular became the target of a Moslem attack. A party of infuriated fanatical Mohammedans surrounded their place of business, demolished their windows, and dragged these two men out and down the street, pelting them with melon rinds and other filth from the gutter. Though shaken and bruised, they fortunately sustained no serious injuries, while their faith and fortitude, upon the other hand, was greatly increased.

One night we attended a meeting where we met these two friends. One of the two chanted a prayer from the pen of Bahá'ó'llah, chanted in the original Arabic. We, of course, did not understand the words, but the man put so much feeling and fervor into his chant that we were not long in catching the spirit of the prayer, for those assembled were all moved and swayed.

People have often asked me if I did not find it a drawback in travelling in the East to be unable to speak the oriental languages and to be dependent upon interpreters. Where the tie of union is very

strong, a very few words can express much; in fact, at times words seem almost superfluous. With the average oriental his religion is the all-absorbing thing in his life, and the tie of faith is stronger than any human tie of blood. If you meet him on the ground of spiritual realities he is your brother in the most spiritual sense of the word, ready to make any sacrifice for you and to do you any service. The heart of the most conventional Westerner soon responds to this spirit of devotion and sincerity, and he is then at ease, and a rapture of soul is established, and more or less intuitively he understands the people about him and he feels with them. Under these conditions, though the words may be spoken through an interpreter, yet the spirit of the conversation is unbroken and direct.

These were the early days of October. At that time Turkey had not yet gone into the war. However, her relations with

[page 71]

Egypt were becoming strained. Syria being under Turkey, our American Consular agent in Port Said was disposed to try to dissuade us from going to Haifa, telling us that the possibility of a "Holy War" had been reported, and in that case there might be massacres of Christians in those parts. Feeling the impossibility of making this gentleman understand the nature of our mission, and the reasons why we felt perfectly safe in going into Turkish domains, we did not attempt to argue the point, and he finally arranged our papers and we embarked on a neutral ship flying the Italian flag for the port of Haifa.

Sailing from Port Said in the evening we dropped anchor the following morning outside of the reef of Joppa, the port where travellers for Jerusalem disembark. There was not the flotilla of small boats which almost invariably swarmed here from the shore and surrounded the ship, greeting the passing vessels and bringing various kinds of edibles and curios to tempt the traveller, and crowded with rapacious boatmen who try to inveigle one into going ashore to see the few sights of which the town boasts. Presently we saw coming out from the shore and through the narrow passage in the reef a boat flying a yellow flag. Our own quarantine flag was flying, so we knew we were in for a disinfection, for before sailing we had heard that on account of reported cases of plague in Egypt a Turkish quarantine was imminent.

We cabin passengers were not put to any inconvenience, but the passengers in the steerage had both their effects and their persons disinfected, as well as having imposed upon each a bill of costs for the same, all of which from the upper deck I viewed sympathetically, having on past travels twice gone through with this disagreeable formality.

Joppa rises picturesquely from the water's edge on a prominence overlooking the sea. Like many of the cities of the Levant it is really more attractive from a distance than when one finds oneself within its narrow streets and crowded bazaars, although the newer quarters of the city are well laid off with broad streets and avenues of trees. Prominent from the sea are several church towers and mosque minarets. The chief place of biblical interest is the house of "Simon the Tanner." We could see its roof from the ship's deck.

Off to the north of Joppa stretches the rocky arid sandy plain of Sharon, until it is stopped by the Carmel range of mountains, which come down from the interior, ending abruptly at the coast.

[page 72]

Early in the afternoon we weighed anchor and took a northerly course, skirting along the coast, passing within sight of the remains of the ancient towns of Caesaria and Athlit before we came to the Carmel range and promontory, which we rounded at about sunset. Instead of harboring in the Bay of

Haifa in the northern lea of the mountain, our steamer crossed the bay and dropped anchor off the fortress town of Akka about nine miles to the north of Haifa.

Akka is the mecca of the Bahais. In her prison Baha' o'llah and many of His followers were confined under the most dreadful conditions, and within her walls Abdul Baha was an exile and a State prisoner for forty years. Baha' o'llah in His writings alludes to Akka as "The Most Great Prison." It is a well-known fact that under the ancient regime in Turkey some of the Sultan's most dreadful political opponents were sent prisoners to Akka and left there, forgotten by the outside world, to languish of disease and to rot in her dungeons, where the sun's light never reached, and which reeked with disease and filth. Thus many, inch by inch, died deaths more horrible than those of their less unhappy brethren who were more summarily dispatched by knife or by the poisoned cup, and found a watery resting place in a weighted sack at the bottom of the Bosphorus.

Abdul Baha never chafed under his long confinement there, as will be seen by the following words addressed to the friends during his captivity:

"When one is released from the prison of the self, that is indeed a release, a freedom. It is very easy to be released from this material outer prison, but hard and difficult to be released from that other prison.

From this prison you may be released by only one word from the Sultan, to be released from that other prison is very difficult, even through all the words which have been pronounced by the Prophets of God. From this prison you may be released by making a break in the wall, from that other prison it is very hard to find a way of escape. Sometimes you become so weak that you are unable to do anything by which to make a way out.

This prison weakens the body, but that other prison causes the death of the spirit."

In present times, as in times past, the greatest light has shone out from the most dense darkness. It is quite in line with the history of the religious movements of all ages that this great spiritual cause of modern times should have been op-

[page 73]

posed by the leaders of the people whom it strove to elevate and free from superstition. Thus Baha' o'llah in order to alleviate the world's troubles took upon himself all of those troubles which he sought to dispel.

The darkest side of Turkish despotism has been alluded to by writers, and the tombs of many of its royal victims are visible in the Turkish mosques, but its real history will never be written, for its deeds were never recorded on paper or parchment. They were branded into the souls of those who, through torture and unnatural death, left no earthly record of their sufferings.

There we rode at anchor before the walls of Akka. Only a hundred yards or more away arose on a rock surrounded by the sea, the ruins of a once stronghold tower, built by the Crusaders, while off not far from the landside fortifications of the city now crumbling with age we could dimly discern the outline of the low hill thrown up by Napoleon, upon which he placed his cannon when he attempted to take Akka and met with defeat. Here and there lights glimmered through openings in the walls, and off to the left the bright light of the lighthouse on the ramparts shone clearly. Above, the sky was clear. Every star seemed visible, and in a short time the moon rose in all her glory above the mountains beyond the plain of Akka, bringing into relief the great white dome and minarets of the mosque in Akka and the richness of the foliage of the trees along the shore, while behind us in the light stretched a long band of surf along the shore off towards the Mount of Carmel on the opposite side of the bay. It was a scene the beauty of which will always remain with me.

We had happily made interesting acquaintances on board, so in addition to our party of two Americans and two Persians there were others with us to enjoy the scene.

One of these was a young man, a recently appointed instructor in one of the mission colleges in Syria. He was just graduated from the University of Illinois, and before leaving America had met some Bahais in his college town, and through them become filled with the desire to visit Abdul Baha. Understanding that we were Americans bound for Haifa, he asked us if we had ever heard of Abdul Baha, whereupon we explained to him our connection with the Cause.

Our two Persian comrades discovered a friend of theirs on board, a young Swiss instructor in French in the American University in Beirut who, in company with a party of students the season previous, had spent some days on Mount Carmel with Abdul Baha.

[page 74]

We passed a memorable evening with these fellow-travellers, who were anxious to talk of the Cause. We were longing and counting the hours when we would be able to land in Haifa and meet our beloved teacher and friend. Abdul Baha.

At sunrise the following morning we were on deck as our ship dropped anchor off Haifa. We had no difficulty in entering the country. Curiously enough our luggage was not opened, nor were passports asked for. The town and country were in a distressing state of war panic. The banks and foreign post offices were closed, and everywhere the first stages of war were visible. The army was gathering in the interior, and men and munitions were daily being sent inland to the scene of mobilization, while the government had commandeered all horses and vehicles, and had seized vast quantities of foodstuffs and needed merchandise from the local merchants and other private individuals. Business was at a standstill and the panic general.

It was not known how Turkey was going to side in the war, but of the fact that she was going to fight every one felt sure, and the army was preparing for action.

Because of the evidently approaching hostilities there had been an exodus of many families from the coast cities, and these had sought refuge in the interior. On landing we were informed that Abdul Baha had just returned to Haifa from the little village of Abou-Sinan, situated at some little distance up in the mountains back of Akka, where he had been attending to the welfare of the members of his family and those of a number of other Bahais, some fifty or sixty people in all; men, women, and children, for whose accommodation and comfort there Abdul Baha had personally arranged. One of the friends explained to us how several houses had been rented in this town in the hills, then of the transport of furniture, cooking utensils, and other luggage by camel pack trains, and of the carriages and wagons which finally conveyed the people thither.

From Haifa we could see beyond the plain of Akka the white houses of Abou Sinan off in the hills, and though we did not go there ourselves, our eyes often sought the spot where so many of our people were.

Haifa, at the foot of Mount Carmel, is a town which owes its present prosperity largely to the religious life and interests centered there. The German Temple Colony and other Protestant missions from the West, as well as several Catholic monasteries

[page 75]

and convents, and the recently constructed Jewish University, all testify to the fact that Carmel is the land of spiritual promise in the future with these various peoples, as well as of historical religious interests of the past, while the centering here, upon this Mountain of God, of the Bahai Cause is in reality the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies regarding the new era of soul enlightenment which in the latter days were to illuminate the whole world from this Holy Land of promise.

Upon landing we drove to the hotel of the German Colony, where we settled ourselves for a stay of some days amid simple but clean and wholesome surroundings. That same afternoon we went to the home of Abdul Baha on the outskirts of the city, and there had our first meeting with our much-beloved teacher.

He received us simply and cordially and with the kindness and affection of a most, loving father. We were moved by his tenderness as he inquired into some of the details of our travels, and asked regarding the welfare of his friends in various countries.

Everyone is at ease in his presence, for his atmosphere is one of sympathetic understanding and love. In fact, there are few persons, if any, who do not respond to the spirit of Abdul Baha, for there is in every soul that closed door which opens only in the presence of true love and friendship; in fact, which cannot remain closed in the face of him whose life and personality have been sacrificed in the Path of God, and who has the spiritual message of Divine Love for the world.

During our stay of two weeks, October 5 to 19, in Haifa, Abdul Baha spent much of his time lodged in a small house upon the side of the mountain near the building built over the tomb of the Bab, the spot where are deposited the remains of the forerunner of Baha'o'llah, transferred thither by the friends from Tabriz, the place of His martyrdom in Persia.

The building occupies a commanding position upon a terrace high up on the mountain side. From the garden about it one has an extended view out over the sea and across the bay, upon the opposite side of which is Akka. Like a bird she appears to float upon the water, her white walls and towers rising directly out of the sea, while behind her arise the mountains of the Phoenician coast range stretching off to the north, where they join the greater Lebanon Mountains.

With the deep blue of the sea and the brilliant coloring of the oriental landscape this is one of the famous and most beau-

[page 76]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA SEATED WRITING WITHIN THE GATEWAY OF HIS HOME IN HAIFA]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WALKING IN HIS GARDEN IN HAIFA]

[page 77]

tiful views of the world, particularly when seen at night under the mellow light of the moon as it rises over the mountains off towards the east beyond the plain of Akka, high up in a valley of which is Nazareth, where Jesus lived.

It was on one of our pilgrimages up the mountain, where we went to the little house near the tomb to call on Abdul Baha that he addressed us as follows:

“You are welcome. You are well? You are pleased and happy? How do you find the landscape and view from here? The scene is very beautiful. It is permeated with spirituality. This is a unique scene in all Syria. It is recorded in the Old Testament that the Lord is the Excellency of Carmel, and Carmel means the Vineyard of God. Practically all the prophets of Israel have visited this mountain. Even His

Holiness, Jesus Christ, has been here several times, and now the remains of The Bab are resting on its slope. His Holiness, the Blessed Beauty (Baha'o'llah) has pitched His tent on various spots on this mountain. The tent of Baha'o'llah has been raised on this Holy ground.”

After a silence of several minutes, during which Abdu] Baha gazed out of the window, a silence filled with deep spirituality, in which he seemed to be receiving the vibrations from all parts of the world, he continued: “For this reason these places are called the Holy Land and eulogies and praises have been sung by all the seers and prophets of the past concerning these sacred grounds.”

My companion remarked upon the beauty of the scene, and Abdul Baha replied:

“Of course it is beautiful. Carmel is a derivative of two words, Carm and El. Carm means garden, and El means God. Therefore it is the Garden of God.

The Fragrances of the Holy Spirit waft from this spot. If the nostrils are open, they will inhale these breaths. This blessed spot is fragrant. Praise ye God that ye have reached this place. The result will become evident in the future.”

At the time of which I write we two Americans were the only Western Bahai pilgrims on Carmel, the Mountain of God, as it is called, but in addition to our party there was a party of some fifteen or twenty students from the American University in

[page 78]

Beirut, who were spending their Summer vacation on the mountain with Abdul Baha.

I have lived much of my life more or less associated with student bodies, but never before had I been so privileged as to know intimately so spiritually “minded a group of young men as these. They were fond of all manner of humor and merriment, and some very jolly times we had together, but through all, and above all stood out the ideal common to them all, that of preparing themselves to go forth in the Cause as servants of God to teach and to serve His people in order that more spiritual conditions might exist in the world.

In addressing us all one day and alluding to our travels, Abdul Baha said:

“These friends have brought good news from Germany. When I was there also the believers were pure and radiant, and they were quite sincere. Their spirit was inspiring. When one looks into their faces one becomes very happy. Even the children were in the utmost enthusiasm and happiness. This shone forth from their faces. I went to Stuttgart a second time, returning from Vienna and Budapest. Their souls were pure and sincere, having no ambitions or desires.

All places in the world will ultimately become good. Through the Divine Inspirations of the Kingdom of Abha, which are being spread, every place will become good. These rays that shine forth from the Sun of Truth upon the horizons of the world will reach all places. What we have to do is to carry out exactly the teachings of the Blessed Beauty, Baha'o'llah. I declare by Him, beside whom there is no other God, that if we follow the teaching's of the Blessed Perfection, Baha'o'llah, in a very short time the Cause of God will encompass the world, provided we follow these teachings, exhortations, and divine admonitions which are revealed, so that our actions may be in accordance with them. We must not only read, but every one of us must bring our actions and conduct in accord with these teachings. These teachings are revealed for this purpose. Success and prosperity are an impossibility without them.

Praise be to God that we have all had the experience of this course. There is no one among us who has not had this experience. All of us have had this experience. Apart from the Sun of Beauty there is no success and prosperity.

The Blessed Beauty, Baha'o'llah, in all circumstances has given us the way to behave, explained the mode of our conduct and behavior. Let us meditate over the calamities and hardships

[page 79]

of the Blessed Beauty, Baha'o'llah. as well as over His severance and fortitude, for He was two years in the Kurdish Mountains, living solitary and alone in a cave, supplicating all night long. The Kurds came around at night and heard His voice, but they knew not who this Person was. Later they discovered who He was. When He came back to Bagdad He had on a very old jacket, sleeveless, and made of coarse fleece. In this manner He entered our house.”

Then addressing the believers he, Abdul Baha, continued:

“Consider what the Hand of Divine Power has accomplished. Where were we and where were these Western brothers of yours? Outwardly there is no physical nor material relation between us, but the Divine Confirmations and the Heavenly Powers have established this ideal communion between our hearts. Were it not for this Divine Bestowal our gathering in this sacred spot would have been impossible. The Celestial Grace binds the hearts of men and cements together their souls forever and ever.”

One afternoon a party of people from Haifa called on Abdul Baha, and after they left he summoned us all out on the garden terrace for tea and fruit. When we were all seated he said:

“These people who called on us today were in a state of fright. They are expecting daily the bombardment of Haifa by the foreign warships. No sooner did they see a little moving speck in the horizon of the sea than they looked through their glasses, anxiously scanning to behold whether these are the expected cruisers. Their hearts are in a state of anxiety. They are terror-stricken. They have no peace of mind. This is one of the signs of the absence of faith. It is stated in the Koran: They imagine every cry raised is an enemy unto them. For example, when a thief enters a house the least noise causes his flight. He trembles and quakes, but the hearts of the people of faith are assured. If they are surrounded by a thousand enemies, they stand firm on their ground. The greatest Divine Bounty is a confident heart. When the heart is confident, all the trials of the world will be as child's-play. Should they throw one into prison, should they cast him into a black well, should they heap upon him all manner of affliction, still his heart is content, peaceful, and assured.”

At another time, speaking of the war, he said:

“This Cause has hoisted the banner of the unity of the world of humanity. One of the instruments which will bring

[page 80]

about universal peace is this very war, so that all the people might be disgusted with this confusion of the war, and that all the world of humanity might be inclined toward peace. A German lady living in Haifa, whose son has gone to the war, was asked: ‘What news do you have of your son?’ She replied: ‘No news, but I have one son for whom I would not take the whole of France, but now he is on the battlefield, and if he is killed all France would not compensate me.’ She is greatly distressed. Surely all the hearts will be disgusted with this war.”

Near the tomb of The Bab on the Mountain is the “Mozafer Khaneh,” or traveller’s house. This building, as a tablet over the door testifies, was built by a Russian, a friend of the Cause, in order to provide shelter and lodging for the pilgrims who from all parts of the world visit this sacred spot. At the Mozafer Khaneh lived several Bahais, who are there to entertain and serve those who pass. There daily we met and talked with Hadji Mirza Hyder Ali, the aged Bahai teacher, who on account of his faith was cast into prison under the old regime in Egypt, and was sent in exile to Khartoum, where he remained for twelve years until the English, under Gordon, took the city, and thus he became free. Hadji Mirza Hyder Ali was then able to go to Akka and there continue his active work in the Movement.

Daily we would stop at the Pilgrim’s House for a visit with these friends, and Hadji would usually entertain us with anecdotes of the Cause in the early days when there was so much persecution that the followers were constantly in the greatest danger, so that most of the teaching had to be done privately and secretly.

In the late afternoon Abdul Baha usually summoned all of us for tea, which was served in the oriental style from a samovar in small glass cups and saucers with sugar only. Upon these occasions he invariably gave us a short talk, the substance of several of which I am incorporating in this narrative. Then later on we would all follow him into the interior of the tomb, and stand respectfully while he chanted a prayer. Then after a few moments of silence we would withdraw, one by one, to the terrace without, there to enjoy the view in the fading sunlight.

The Bahai’s in various parts had intrusted to us many questions to be asked of Abdul Baha, which were mostly of a personal nature, but among these was one of general interest, which my

[page 81]

American comrade one day presented. It was regarding the interpretation of verse fourteen from the “Hidden Words” from the Arabic by Baha’o’llah:

“O, Son of Spirit! I have created thee rich; why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee; why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee; why searchest thou for another than Me? From the clay of Love have I kneaded thee; why seekest thou another? Turn thy sight unto thyself, that thou mayst find Me standing within thee, Powerful, Mighty, and Supreme.”

Abdul Baha’s reply was:

“There are two kinds of standing within. The first is like the standing, or containing of water within an earthen bowl. This is false assumption, because it is a body contained within a body. This is not a correct theory, because the reality of Divinity is not a body, such as water.

But there is a second theory which is correct, and that is the appearance (standing within) of the Sun in a clear mirror. Therefore, the meaning of this verse is this: Purify thy heart that it may become like unto a transparent mirror. Then thou shalt find Me standing within thee, Powerful, Mighty, and Supreme. If you interpret this verse according to the above explanation, it will be correct, because the Sun has not left its transcendent station in order to find an entrance into the mirror, but it is ever stationed in its center of grandeur and perpetuity. While, on the other hand, the mirror having been polished, reflects the rays of the Sun.”

During our visit on Carmel a calamity befell the household of Abdul Baha in the sudden death of the faithful and trusted servant Bashir, whose memory is cherished by the many visiting friends from all parts.

On the following Sunday afternoon Abdul Baha called the friends together for a memorial service. A prayer was chanted, and Abdul Baha spoke as follows:

“This calamitous death of Bashir was a sudden, unexpected misfortune. Therein lies a good wisdom. It will appear later on. From the early years of his youth he was brought into the services of our household. When he was a very young boy, he had a most happy disposition, which followed him up to the last hour of his life. Every one loved him, both friends and strangers. Once he fell from the high roof of our house in Akka, but no

[page 82]

harm came to him. No sooner had he struck the ground than he got up and walked away. It is most strange how at times fate overtakes a man. Truly I say he was a dutiful young man and his passing away from this life was surrounded with happy and auspicious signs.

The length or shortness of life is not considered important, whether a man lives a few years or a hundred years. The purpose of his life is to achieve some definite results. If the tree of his life does not yield those luscious fruits, the purpose of his existence has not been accomplished, even if he has lived many years, but if he has lived only a few years and the tree of his life has attained to fruition he has obtained spiritual success. Consequently, the duration of life is a conditional matter, subject to the will of God. For example, this stone has existed two thousand, twenty thousand years, but it has not advanced beyond the mineral kingdom. It has not yet achieved its final result. Again, a merchant goes to his office every day in the year. He plans commercial enterprises, undertakes vast schemes, organizes large companies, but at the end of the year he has not gained any profit. On the other hand another merchant, through one stroke of good fortune gains large profits in one day. The former merchant, although he worked hard all through the year did not achieve any success, while the latter, although he worked only one day, yet the outcome of his activity was prosperous.

Now, praise be to God, that Bashir obtained the most great result from his blessed life. When I visited him the other night, I found him in a semiconscious condition. He opened his eyes, looked into my face and said: ‘Allah’o’Abha!’ and I answered him back ‘Allah’o’Abha!’ In brief, God doeth whatsoever He willeth, and commandeth whatsoever He desireth. No one can inquire into the wisdom of His actions.

What a happy youth he was. How good-natured he was. What a sweet temper he had. What a simple disposition he displayed. What a lovable character he possessed. What a firm faith he manifested. His manners conveyed courtesy and politeness to everyone. He was kind to all. He served all the friends irrespective of their station in life. He was never cross. Often I punished him, but my punishments never made him sad or unhappy. Once I did beat him, but he did not become disconsolate, because my aim was to educate and train him. Most wonderful! The more I punished him, the greater became his love. On the other hand, there are some people, that if I should welcome them with a tardy ‘Marhaba’ they

would become offended, but Bashir was just the opposite from this. Whenever I chastised him, he became happy. Firm-

[page 83]

ness and steadfastness became manifest under these conditions. For the right kind of correction leads to improvement of human character.”

On the following day we two Americans took a walk up to the Carmelite Monastery of “Mar Elias” on the promontory of Mount Carmel. There below the high altar of the chapel is the rock cave where the prophet Elias lived. It is a spot venerated alike by Christian, Jew, and Moslem.

On the way thither we could look down into the little Bahai cemetery at the foot of the mountain, where repose the mortal remains of a number of the faithful servants of the Cause.

In view, just across the bay, was the fortress where Baha’o’llah, Abdul Baha, and so many of the followers were confined, while some houses, partially hidden by trees on the plain at a little distance from the city, was named Behji, where Baha’o’llah spent much time during the latter years of His Mission, where He died, and where His tomb now is.

On account of conditions we were not able to visit either Akka or Behji, but we did not feel any privation, for we were with Abdul Baha. who is the living exponent of the spirit of Baha’o’llah.

In one of his afternoon talks Abdul Baha spoke of the Committee of Investigation sent from Constantinople by the old despotic government under Sultan Abdul Hamid to make away with him and to destroy the Cause. His words seemed prompted by the entrance of his son-in-law, Mirza Hadi Effendi, who was just from Akka and Abou Sinan. Looking at him he asked:

“How are the friends? Are they well?”

“I strive always to be the means of the tranquillity and composure of the friends. Man must ever try to be the cause of the happiness and security of his fellow-beings. At the time of the arrival of the Investigation Committee all the means of communication were closed. Spies were stationed all around, calumnies and falsehoods were hurled broadcast, and the enemies, both in Akka and in other places, were united against us, drawing up a number of false reports and sending them to the authorities in Constantinople to instigate them and arouse their suspicion so that they might make more close our confinement. It is evident from these remarks how difficult it was to attend to anything. One of their accusations was that I was trying to lay the foun-

[page 84]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH SOME OF HIS ORIENTAL FRIENDS AT HIS HOME IN HAIFA]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WALKING ON THE TERRACE BEFORE THE TOMB OF THE BAB THE PROMONTORY OF MOUNT CARMEL IS IN THE DISTANCE]

[page 85]

dition of a new sovereignty. Another was that I had built a fortress on the slope of Mount Carmel which would have a commanding situation of the vicinity. Again, another thing was that I had made a new flag to lead my increasing army into the active field, that I had shown this flag to the inhabitants of Akka, and through Mirza Zekrollah I had sent this flag through the surrounding cities, and through Sheik Mahmoud I had forwarded it to the Arabian tribes and Bedouins in the interior, demanding their allegiance and obedience. With the assistance of the Nakazeen(1) all these reports were concocted and sent to the Sublime Porte, Mirza Mohammed Ali(2) took a large piece of white cloth and had written on it the words 'Ya Baha El Abha,' telling them that this was the flag that I had made, and delivered it into the hands of the enemies that it might be forwarded to Constantinople. The president of this Committee, who was promised the Governorship of Beirut, at the time declared that the first thing that he would do would be to cut me into two pieces and hang me on the gate of Akka as a warning to others.

In short, my aim was this, that during these stirring days. I sent away seventy of the believers to Egypt, Russia, and various parts.

Among those persons whom I sent away was this Mirza Assad'o'llah(3) and his wife. At that time I provided sufficient and adequate travelling expenses for everyone. I borrowed the money from an American who lived in Paris. In short, I offered myself for a target for every calamity and affliction. Then a steamer arrived in the Bay of Akka to take me away secretly. The person through whom this was arranged is now living here. When this matter was arranged, I called in Seyed Ali Akbar, Aga Seyed Yahya, Mirza Assad'o'llah, Aga Riza, Mirza Mahmoud, and Mirza Hayder Ali,(4) and told them that everything was prepared for my departure, that a steamer was in the port to take me away, that I should be let down from the wall of the fortress by a rope, ride rapidly in a carriage, climb into a boat, and board the ship. Now you consult about this matter and see whether I should go or not. This group deliberated and finally decided that I should go. They came to me and said: 'This is very good. This is an excellent plan. Please go away and leave this present condition. We have unanimously decided upon this matter.'

-
1. Those who deny and oppose the Cause.
 2. One of the deniers who opposes the Cause.
 3. A Persian.
 4. Names of some Bahais.

[page 86]

Then I told them I would not go. Baha'o'llah. did not leave. The Bab did not leave, and I shall not leave. It is not good for the Cause of God. The well-being of the Cause of God demands my presence here. Then other events followed each other, and the members of the Investigation Committee left these parts. Before they reached Constantinople the Cannon of God boomed forth and the voice of freedom was raised, and the Committee of Union and Progress established a constitutional regime in Turkey.

The four members of the Committee all came to dire endings. One of them was shot with three bullets, the second was exiled, the third met a cruel end, and the fourth ran away to Egypt and went to the friends, asking for financial assistance, which he received. Before that his servant robbed him of all his possessions and he did not have enough money to go from Cairo to Alexandria. When the friends of Egypt wrote to me about his plight, I answered them back to give him ten pounds, but they could not find him for he had disappeared. The upshot of these remarks is this, that man must ever think of the protection of others and not of himself."

Shortly before the end of our visit the night came for the party of students to leave for the opening of their university work in Beirut.

Coming to them in the late afternoon, Abdul Baha said:

“I have heard that you are leaving today. Then I said to myself, I shall go to them to express my farewell. Praise be to God that you have spent a delightful Summer on the slope of Mount Carmel. The weather was bracing. The scenery was superb. The garden was beautiful. The flowers were fragrant. The country was verdant. You enjoyed the possession of such large airy rooms, whose windows opened out on the blue sea. You were living in the neighborhood of the Holy Tomb of the Bab. From every standpoint God’s blessings were complete. I hope that you have enjoyed exceedingly your sojourn in this sacred spot.

Now you are leaving for the college. Praise be to God that the Bahai students in Beirut are well known for the beauty of their character, the purity of their deeds, and the loftiness of their morality. From whomsoever one inquires about the Bahai students they will receive unstinted praise. This is through the Favors and Bounties of the Blessed Beauty who has assisted you to attain such a high station. For you have lived in such a manner, which has become conducive to the glorification of the Cause of God. Baha’o’llah is pleased with you. All of the people are pleased with you. I am pleased with you, and the

[page 87]

friends of God are pleased with you. This is the special Divine Bounty which is realized at rare intervals. If one asks any person concerning the Bahai students, he will answer, in reality they are intelligent, sober, industrious, diligent, displaying good manners and behavior, and concentrating all their attention on the acquirement of knowledge. They do not at all spend their time in frivolous amusements and distracting recreations. Even the enemies testify to your spotless character. I hope that through the Favor and Bounty of the Blessed Beauty, His Holiness, The Bab, and the ineffable blessings which hallow this Holy Shrine, the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha may encircle you, and that you may be characterized with the shining qualities and brilliant attributes of the Bahai life. Day by day may your morality become more refined. May, day by day, your faith and assurance be increased. May, day by day, your attraction toward the Kingdom be intensified. May, day by day, your grasp and attainment in sciences and arts become more universal. Perchance, God willing, you may become perfect and accomplished from every standpoint and be the means of the enlightenment of Persia. The horizon of the general morality is very dark; peradventure, through your instrumentality, the people may be brought back into the realm of light, and that each one of you may become like a shining candle in the lamp of Persia. It has been said that often one soul is equal to a thousand persons. God willing, each one of you may become like unto a hundred thousand souls. This is not impossible of realization, for the Bounties and Favors of God are unlimited. Do not be astonished at this, neither be ye ever discouraged. When His Grace descends, the ant is changed into a mighty king, the plant grows into a huge tree, the grain of sand into a lofty mountain, the atom becomes a sun. When we consider the Favor and Bounty of God we realize that all these things are made possible. You must not regard your own limited capabilities, but turn your eyes toward the unlimited Fountain of Divine Grace. He makes the shepherd, Abouzer Gaffary; the date -seller, Amanar Bassel; the captive, Salman; (these persons were of poor origin like the disciples of Christ, but became famous in the Islamic world because they believed in Mohammed during His life) the fisherman, Peter. In brief, there are many such instances in the religious history of the world which are accounted the miracles of each dispensation. These things do not happen at the other periods of human, history. They are the special privileges of the early days of the Manifestation. For this reason Baha’o’llah says in the Kitab el Akdas: ‘I shall cause the highest to become the lowest, and the lowest to become the highest.’ It is also revealed in the Koran: ‘We desire to surround with a special privilege

those who are weak and lowly upon the earth. We shall make them a nation and the inheritors of great things.’

[page 88]

Praise be to God that from the tender years of your life you have entered the Shade of the Divine Tree and are intoxicated with the choice wine from the Divine Goblet. I trust and hope that each one of you will rise higher and higher until you attain to the apex of human and divine perfections.”

Speaking about the Persian Bahai students in Beirut and the confidence of the president of the college in them, Abdul Baha said:

“He trusts them. Confidence is the cornerstone of all of life’s activities.”

Then Abdul Baha left the young men, but a few hours later, when they were ready to leave for the harbor where their steamer was lying at anchor, he came to them again for a final parting word.

Night had fallen as he came out of the little house near the tomb and down to where the group was gathered, saying:

“May you ever be under the protection and preservation of God. May you ever be confirmed and assisted. I will always remember you and beg for each one of you heavenly Grace and Divine Beatitude. Rest ye assured, for ye are ever under the canopy of Celestial Virtues. God willing, the fame of your sterling characters, your spiritual qualities, and selfless deeds may be spread more widely than formerly. Give my greetings and salutation to the president and those professors whom I have met. Tell them I shall pray for them and am very pleased with their attitude and courtesy toward you.”

I will always recall Abdul Baha as he left them with this parting benediction. He walked up the hill and disappeared behind a clump of trees and shrubs in front of the house, his garments swaying in the wind, a solitary figure, silhouetted against the light of the rising moon. It was indeed a never-to-be-forgotten picture of him who summons all men to love, harmony, and peace!

It was with much feeling we bade adieu to our young friends at the foot of the mountain, particularly to our Persian travelling companion, Mirza Azizollah Bahadur, who through kindness and devotion had proven himself a real friend, and whom we had grown to love devotedly. Having finished his studies, our other Persian fellow pilgrim, Dr. Habibollah, was remaining on indefi-

[page 89]

nately in Haifa, awaiting the advice of Abdul Baha regarding his next mission.

In Haifa and Akka, where the center of the Bahai Cause is, there is but little for the ardent Bahai to do in service for the Cause. There Abdul Baha himself is carrying the burden of affairs, and to him from time to time the various friends go for inspiration and for enlightenment, then going forth to their various fields in distant lands charged with a new power, and more zealous than ever to serve in the Cause.

Curiously enough, one often does not care to remain on in definitely in the presence of Abdul Baha, for when the soul is filled and overflowing with that spirit which he so freely radiates, one's desire seems to be to go forth and to share this gift with others.

Such was our experience when Abdul Baha called us to him and told us that he wished us to go forth again into the field. Our hearts were overflowing with the love of the Kingdom, and human and weak creatures that we were, our greatest joy lay in the thought of taking this joy forth and sharing it with others.

Calling us two Americans to him, Abdul Baha said:

“You have undertaken much trouble in coming here. You must be very rejoiced because you have come to this sacred spot and worshipped at the Holy Tomb of the Bab. For many days you have associated with me, and I have enjoyed your visit, and I hope that good results will issue therefrom. Today, whosoever is a herald of the Covenant is the light of the regions. In the Supreme Concourse the heavenly cohorts of the Kingdom of Abha are arrayed, expecting to see who will enter the arena of service to the Covenant. Thus they may rush forward to reinforce, to strengthen, and to confer upon him triumph. In brief, be ye overflowing with joy, be ye overflowing with happiness, for ye are the objects of the Favor of the Blessed Beauty. Be ye full of clamor and exclamation like unto a cup which is overflowing to the brim.

The Heavenly music is heart ravishing. That melody penetrated the heart of man. That clarion bestows on man spirituality and joy. That music awakens man out of the sleep of negligence, but the majority of mankind are not endowed with ears to listen to that joy-giving melody because their ears are accustomed to discord. They are not attuned to the celestial strains and divine days.

[page 90]

Perchance God will enable you to suffer the people to hear the Divine Song and the Heavenly Music. The church-bell music is the result of metallic elements, but the notes which emanate from the throat of a living temple of holiness stir the hearts and the souls.

Truly I say, I am well satisfied with both of you, for you have consecrated your lives to the Cause of God; you have no other aim save calling the people to the Kingdom of God; your hearts are empty; they are not preoccupied nor engaged with other immaterial affairs. Praise be to God that your minds are sanctified and holy. I am sure you will be confirmed and assisted in all things. There are many heralds in this world. Here is a herald who summons the people to the love and defense of their country, calling at the top of his voice: ‘O, my country; O, my beloved country!’ There is a herald who blows the bugle of New Nationalism. Here is another herald who calls the people to politics, in order that he may wield great power of State. There is another person who is a herald of literature and science. Here you find a soul who is the herald of commercial interests and its expansion; and there is still another herald who sounds the trumpet of war and militarism, but praise be to God, that you are the heralds of the Kingdom of God. All these contending voices which are raised in the world today will ere long be silenced and hushed, but the call of the Kingdom of God will gain volume and impetus day by day. The popularity of these worldly heralds may last for a year or two. but the fame of the souls who are the heralds of the Kingdom is eternal, for They are sounding the trumpet of celestial, universal peace. Their voices will ring throughout future centuries and will be immortal and age-abiding. Thank ye God that ye are the heralds of the Kingdom of Abha, the heralds of the Covenant of the Almighty. All other voices will be repressed, but this harmonic song of the kingdom of peace and truth is eternal and everlasting.

Now I desire to send you back to the United States. I supplicate and beseech at the Threshold of the Kingdom of Abha that you may go forth with a heavenly power, with radiant hearts, with celestial souls, and with breaths imbued with the Fragrances of the Holy Spirit! May you be confirmed, and assisted,

and. may you raise such a melody, and sing such a song as to stir and move the hearts of the American people. I anticipate to receive glad news from you.”

Looking at us he said smiling:

“You are two good friends. In conduct, in manners, in temperament, and in sociability you are one.

[page 91]

It will be well for you to make another tour of the United States and Hawaii to teach and to proclaim the Cause of God in the outlying assemblies.

On this trip I hope that both of you will return to America with a new power, filled with the glad tidings of the Kingdom. Be ye full of joy to such an extent that in whichever meeting you enter those present may be permeated with a spirit of heavenly blessedness.

When you return to America say to all the believers in my behalf that whenever a person comes to that country, no matter to what nationality he may belong, and tries to collect money in my name know that it has no connection with me. I am free from it. Whosoever asks for money for me, does so of his own volition. There are some people who desire to collect money under all kinds of pretexts. I desire to impress upon your minds that I have nothing to do with such affairs. I never ask anyone to send me money. Whosoever loves money does not love God, and who soever loves God does not love money. On the other hand, if some of the believers voluntarily desire to help and assist one another, or some philanthropic institution, whose objects are for the public welfare and progress, it is very good and praiseworthy. I do not desire that anyone may ask money in my name for any affair. The souls must be detached from the world. Those souls who are attached to this world and its wealth are deprived of spiritual advancement. The believers must live such an independent life that if one comes and begs them to accept money they should refuse him. As long as the souls are not severed, how do they expect to journey along the ideal path?

On the eve of my departure from New York I told a number of believers that His Holiness, Christ, has stated that when you leave a city, shake its dust from off your feet. So far, very few people have lived according to this behest, but it is my will to live accordingly. Before coming to America the believers of God, through Mirza Ahmad, offered for my travelling expenses \$16,000, but I did not accept one cent. Man must live in the utmost sanctity and purity, and he must ever think to assist others and not to beg assistance.

In short, I am sending you away. I supplicate and entreat confirmation for you. I beg strength and power for you. I hope that the confirmations of the Kingdom of Abha may encircle you, and that you may become the means of the guidance of the people. With reinforced hearts, strong resolution, and heavenly assistance may you loose your tongues, deliver eloquent speeches, and promote the Word of God.

[page 92]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA AND A GROUP OF BELIEVERS AT THE TOMB OF THE BAB]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH A GROUP OF BELIEVERS AT HIS HOUSE IN HAIFA]

[page 93]

May you ever be confirmed and assisted; may you ever be illumined; may you ever be the means of the guidance of the people; may you ever breathe the breath of life in the hearts; may you be the signs of mercy to all mankind; may you be the shining lamps of severance and detachment in this dark world.”

Such were Abdul Baha’s words of parting blessing and encouragement to us as we turned our faces westward toward America, hoping and trusting that by this Bounty of God we would be spiritually reinforced to do the work before us.

Brief visits with the Bahai friends in Port Said and in Ramleh near Alexandria closed our experiences in the Orient. A few days waiting between steamers in Naples, with a trip to Rome, and we were sailing for America, where we landed a little after the middle of November and continued our travels westward, visiting the various Bahai centers near the Atlantic Coast and across the States and on the Pacific coast, and then we took ship for the Hawaiian Islands, where we arrived in the early Spring. After a few weeks with the friends in Hawaii, together with a party, we returned to California, that we might attend the International Bahai Congress, held in San Francisco under the auspices of the Panama Pacific Exposition, where Bahai representatives assembled from many cities. After this convention we parted, Mr. Latimer returning to his home in Oregon, while I returned to Honolulu, where I now am.

We are both hoping and anticipating that Abdul Baha may again give us another opportunity to travel, and together attempt to serve the Bahai Cause.

The great lesson which we learned from Abdul Baha during this visit was the power of the penetrative spirit of the Bahai Cause. I went to him feeling strong in the letter of the teaching, but found myself weak in its spirit, and he made me realize as never before that the letter devoid of the spirit killeth that which we would bring about.

Love and harmony can only be established through love and harmony. It is only through being in spiritual harmony oneself, and truly loving humanity that one can possibly work in the Bahai Cause and bring harmony and peace to the hungering souls of the world.

[page 94]

The deep realization of this came to me while I was with Abdul Baha, not from any one definite word which he said to us, but simply through the awakening which comes to those souls who make a point of spiritual contact with him, for to be in his spiritual presence is in itself that which arouses one and makes one awake and alive to the realities of the Bahai Cause.

Those who have met Abdul Baha and recognize his spiritual station realize that in him there is a power for fraternal love before which enmity and prejudice cannot stand, and in proportion as people recognize this power and its source and live the life in accordance with it the Peace of God which we all so desire will come and dwell with us here upon earth.

FINIS.

IV

THE BAHAI CAUSE
AND
PEACE

THE BAHAI CAUSE AND PEACE

These are days of trouble and bloodshed. The great world powers are engaged in a war, the horrors of which surpass those of all past ages. Above the din of battle is heard the wailing of the multitudes of those made homeless, childless, husbandless, and fatherless through material greed and hatred, while even in those countries not directly engaged in the conflict the masses of the people are suffering because of the depression material and moral, both produced directly and indirectly by the war.

These conditions all taken together are causing people to think, and for the first time in history humanity as a whole has had forced upon it for consideration the universal question of war or peace.

The problem in the minds of thinking people is this: Is humanity to continue indefinitely this struggle between nations, with its seasons of war separated by longer or shorter periods of so-called peace, during which the nations are recuperating and renewing their engines of destruction in order to enter again into open conflict, destroying that which has taken years of labor to construct, or has the time not come for a change from this archaic system of destruction to one of justice, co-operation, and construction between the nations, a system conducive to peace?

Upon this question the world is now divided. On the one hand are the extreme militarists, who hold that the peace and prosperity of the nations can only be maintained, by developing and maintaining the military strength of the individual nation, that the world progresses through military valor, and that peace is devitalizing to a nation, and without war a people became effeminate and decadent.

Then, upon the other hand, are pacifists who hold the view quite opposed to that of the militarists; namely, that peace and co-operation and not military conflict and destruction are the conditions under which the highest virtues of man are born and develop.

World conditions in this twentieth century are not what they were in past epochs. In the present time through travel, communication, and commerce the interdependence of peoples and nations has become a recognized factor heretofore comparatively non-existent, which now has to be met by the world.

In primitive times in sparsely populated countries, where families were separated by distances, individual feuds, quarrels, and warfare were the rule; but as the lands filled up, cities grew, and people lived in closer contact one with another, conditions changed so that co-operation between individuals became necessary and conducive to the best good of all. When the majority of the people in a land wanted law and order they established it, and with an adequate police force order was forced upon the

disorderly members of society, and in this way life was made safe for the mass of the people. Thus conditions changed so that co-operation between individuals became conducive to the best good of all.

In other words, conditions had changed, and it no longer being possible for one man to enrich himself at the expense of his neighbor through pillage and theft they then began to co-operate, and in this new state of interdependence each found his horizon of life enlarged and his scope for development increased.

From the material standpoint a parallel may here be drawn between the development of peace between families and between nations. In past epochs nations and peoples were separated by geographic boundaries, not easily surmountable. In those days it was possible for the people of one country to invade the territory of another nation and enrich themselves by carrying off booty and plunder, (in those times often in the form of bullion and slaves) and thus from the material standpoint prosper through war; but now in this day those ancient conditions no longer exist. Now nations are so dependent upon one another for finances, foodstuffs, and supplies of all kinds, as well as for the output of their own products, that their welfare and prosperity now no longer depend upon war but upon peace, no longer upon conquest, but upon co-operation with neighboring nations.

In this present time nations lose far more through war than they possibly can gain. Were any one of the European nations now at war to gain an overwhelming victory over its adversaries, it would be impossible for it to exact sufficient tribute to recompense it for the material outlay, the loss of life, and the many terrible after-effects of war which it would suffer. Thus war has become a losing proposition, one doomed to loss even before entered upon.

This interdependence of nations and peoples is an entirely new phase of world progress, which now for the first time needs to be reckoned with in dealing with military matters.

Through the development of national military power and preparedness for war, so fervently advocated by many as a national

[page 98]

protection and a means for peace, instead of making for peace has quite the opposite effect, for such makes for war. A standing army and a large and increasing navy is not only a great economic drain upon a people, but that system in itself keeps alive the spirit of war; it tends to make a people proud and overbearing, and thus furthers the spirit of fear and hatred between peoples, races, and nations, thus psychologically laying the foundation for strife through the mental and moral destructive influences.

The system of militarism keeps the spirit of war alive, keeps the people in training for war, and places in their hands and ready for use at all times the engines and instruments of war, thus making war possible at short notice and little provocation.

It is a recognized fact that with a large and a growing armament and a standing army in training for war the time comes when the people want to fight, and when a people want to fight, like individuals under the power of the same fight thought, sooner or later they will fight.

Thus the means of war can be said to have become a cause of war, in that these means exert both a conscious and an unconscious influence for war, increasing hatred between the nations and races, all of which must be considered as fundamental elements in the general psychology of war, which psychology is the real underlying cause of wars of aggression.

While vicious marauders must be restrained by force, and the weaker and innocent must be protected by force, nevertheless, the power which will bring about a real and a lasting peace must be a spiritual power which will strike at and overcome the root or the primal cause of war.

Such a power is the Bahai spirit, and it is acting in this most important matter.

In order to abolish the causes of war, a blow must be struck at all hatred and enmity between classes, races, nations, and religions, and at the greed and avarice inherent in savage men. These disturbing

causes are at root in the soul of man. As the actions of peoples as well as of individuals are but the reflection of their thoughts and ideals, action, national as well as individual, can be traced back to the general and personal thought of the people. The power of imagination is a far greater element in life than material considerations, for the actions of people are ruled by the power of their sentiments, thoughts, affections, and prejudices, and material desires.

[page 99]

The cause of this present war is greed, national prejudice, pride, hatred, and fear, all of which causes have their root in the soul of man and arise through a lack of spiritual assurance, poise, and development.

Peace can only be permanently established by freeing the world from this obsession of war-thought, by freeing the people from greed, fear, desire of aggression, and from racial, national, and religious prejudices, all of which make up the cause of war.

Because of this present war already the vast majority of the thinking public are alive to this need of the day, and they realize that this question of universal peace is by far the most important issue at present before the world.

The real inner peace cannot be objectively forced upon a people or peoples. It cannot come from without, it must be born from within, spiritually and psychologically in a people before it begins to be manifest in their civic and national life, and now the question is: how is this inner change to be accomplished? How are prejudice, hate, and materialism to be overcome.

The Bahais meet this question with a positive teaching in word and deed of the Divine love principle of true religion.

The Bahai Movement is the universal religious cause of this new age. It stands for the Oneness in spirit and in deed of all peoples of all religions, races, and nations. It therefore deals directly or indirectly with all human problems.

One of the Bahai principles is that of universal peace. This subject of peace is uppermost in the mind of the world at the present time and the happiness, the well-being, and the progress of mankind depends upon the solution of the problem.

In the problem of international peace as well as in all other problems the Bahai Teaching holds aloft a high spiritual ideal which must be realized in deeds and actions. "These are the days of faith and deeds, not the days of words and lip service." "The effect of deeds is in truth more powerful than that of words." "Deeds reveal the station of the man." Such are the maxims of the Bahai Teaching. Therefore, in advancing the ideal of peace upon earth it is not merely advanced as an ethereal dream not to be realized, but along with this ideal are certain international reforms and institutions for which the Bahais stand, and through the founding of which they realize

[page 100]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH A GROUP OF BAHAIS AT THE TOMB OF THE BAB]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA WITH A GROUP OF BAHAIS AT HIS HOME IN HAIFA]

[page 101]

that war and strife will cease and a constructive system of co-operation will take the place of the present and past strife and hatred between nations.

The Bahai Cause teaches that brotherly love is the means through which the true civilization of humanity will be realized. Prejudice and hatred, be it between peoples of different classes, nations, races, or religions, is a destructive factor in the world and is the cause of the retrogression of the race. Therefore, the followers of the Bahai Movement, in order to firmly lay a foundation for human solidarity, are doing their utmost to destroy these various forms of animosity and prejudice by striving to implant in people's hearts the principles of the love of humanity.

Pure religious truth is in perfect harmony with the reason and the science of the age, before which light the superstitions and imaginations which have come down from the past are dispelled and dissipated. All men are exhorted to investigate, each for himself, the realities of religion, accepting nothing through tradition and hearsay.

Thus by a careful study of the reality underlying all religions, and through the light of this present day teaching, the fundamental oneness of all religions will be understood. This is the foundation of the universal religious ideal, from which is growing the new order of a universal spirit of faith, which is the mainspring of the great universal civilization of mankind which is to be.

Along with these high spiritual ideals must come their expression in daily life and material matters. Children of both sexes must be educated and trained, women must be given equal rights with men, and means must be devised so that neither individuals nor classes of individuals shall be deprived of their just portion of the fruits and material blessings of the earth.

These reforms can only come about, and this millennial state of humanity can only be attained through establishing in the heart of humanity the true spirit of the religion of God. This is true civilization, for true civilization only follows and is produced by true religion.

True religion, morality, and the accompanying high ideals have always gone hand in hand with human uplift and progress, and conversely in times when irreligion and immorality have prevailed with the inevitable lowering of all ideals, nations have retrograded, and civilization has fallen and decayed, and the people have been in manifest loss.

[page 102]

Even in reading this brief sketch of some of the Bahai principles it will be seen that each is a necessary element and a part of the real peace and prosperity of the world, so that the doctrine of universal peace very properly belongs in the Bahai philosophy and is one of its most important principles.

Baha'o'llah wrote: "Let not a man glory that he loves his country, but rather let him glory that he loves his kind," and in speaking of this Cause he is reported to have once said: "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." In the writings of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha are numerous treatises regarding peace and unity, all of which taken together form the teaching and the attitude of the movement toward this subject, nor is the teaching indirect and vague in the methods it advances for the establishment of harmony between nations. The nations should come together and establish an international Court of Arbitration, supporting and enforcing its international decisions. Besides police forces in each country sufficient to maintain national order, an international police force should be instituted in order to enforce the just decrees of the international Court of Arbitration, so that if one nation should threaten the peace and tranquillity of the world it could be forced into line with the others without the horrors of a prolonged war. Such measures, together with the strict neutrality of those nations not implicated in the international dispute, and their refusal to send either munitions of war or lend financial aid to belligerent nations, would very shortly do away with the possibility of war from a material standpoint, as the constructive teaching of peace

principles and true religion, though but slowly, now is, nevertheless, surely eradicating the war thought from the minds of men.

About forty years ago a book was written by one who was ever under the training and protection of Baha'o'llah, one who even then was prominent in the Bahai Cause as a teacher and a philosopher. This work was published under the title of *The Mysterious Forces of Civilization*, and is an anonymous exposition of Bahai thought and ideals relative to both national and international affairs. Although at that time the attention of the world had not been called to arbitration and universal peace, nevertheless, even more than twenty years prior to that date Baha'o'llah was laying the foundation for world conciliation.

[page 103]

The following excerpt from the book in question mentions arbitration backed up by a limited military force as an institution through which war may be eliminated:

“Yea, the true civilization will raise its banner in the center of the world, when some noble kings of high ambitions, the bright Suns of the World of humanitarian enthusiasm shall, for the good and happiness of all the human race, step forth with firm resolution and keen strength of mind, and hold a conference on the question of universal peace; when, keeping fast hold of the means of enforcing their views they shall establish a union of the States of the world, and conclude a definite treaty and strict alliance between them upon conditions not to be evaded. When the whole human race should have been consulted through their representatives and invited to corroborate this treaty, which verily would be a treaty of universal peace and would be accounted sacred by all the peoples of the earth, it would be the duty of the united powers of the world to see that this great treaty should be strengthened and should endure.

In such a universal treaty the limits of the borders and boundaries of every State should be fixed, and the customs and laws of every government. All the agreements and the affairs of State, and the arrangements between the various governments, should be propounded and settled in due form. The size of the armaments for each government should likewise be definitely agreed upon; because, if in the case of any State there were to be an increase in the preparation for war, it would be a cause of alarm to the other States. At any rate, the basis of this powerful alliance should be so fixed that, if one of the States afterwards broke any of the articles of it, the rest of the nations of the world would rise up and destroy it. Yea, the whole human race would band its forces together to exterminate it.

If so great a remedy should be applied to the sick body of the world, it would certainly be the means of continually and permanently healing its illness by the inculcation of universal moderation. Reflect that, under such conditions of life, no government or kingdom would need to prepare and accumulate war materials, or would need to pay heed to the invention of new weapons of offense for the vexation and hurt of mankind. On the contrary, they would require a few soldiers, as a means of assuring the safety of the State, and punishing the wicked and rebellious, and preventing the growth of civil sedition. Not more than these few would be needed. In the first place, therefore, the servants of God, that is to say, all the inhabitants of a State, would be freed from bearing the burden of the tremendous expense of an army. In the second place, the many persons who now devote their lives to the invention of instruments of war

[page 104]

would no longer waste their time upon such work, which but encourages ferocity and blood-thirstiness, and is repugnant to the universal ideal of humanity. On the contrary, they would then employ their natural gifts in the cause of the general well-being, and would contribute towards the peace and

salvation of mankind. All the rulers of the world would then be settled on peaceful thrones amid, the glory of a perfect civilization, and all the nations and peoples would rest in the cradle of peace and comfort.

Some persons who are ignorant of the world of true humanity and its high ambitions for the general good reckon such a glorious condition of life to be very difficult; nay, rather impossible to compass, but it is not so. Far from it, for, by the grace of God, and by the testimony of the Beloved, those near to the threshold of the Creator, and by the incomparably high ambitions of the souls that are perfect, and the thoughts and opinions of the wisest men of the age, there never has been and is not now anything improbable and impossible in existence. What are required are the most resolved determination and the most ardent enthusiasm. How many things, which in ancient times were regarded as impossibilities, of such a kind that the intellect could hardly conceive them, we now perceive to have become quite simple and easy. Why then should this great and important matter of universal peace, which is verily the sun amongst the lights of civilization, the cause of honor, freedom, and salvation for all, be considered as something improbable of realization?

It is evident that the honor and greatness of man have not arisen through blood-thirstiness, the destruction of cities and kingdoms, the ruining and murdering of armies and peoples. On the contrary, the cause of high-mindedness and prosperity is based upon the cherishing of justice and the sympathy with one's fellow-citizens, from the highest to the lowest, upon building up the kingdom, the cities and villages, the suburbs and the country, and upon the freedom and quiet of the servants of God in laying down the foundations of the principles of progress, and in the extension of the common weal, the increase of wealth, and general prosperity. Reflect how many world-subduing kings have sat on thrones as conquerors. For example, Halakoo Khan, Ameer Taimoor Koorkan, who subjugated the great continent of Asia, Alexander the Macedonian, and Napoleon the First, who stretched the hand of tyranny over three of the five continents of the world. What advantages have resulted from these vast conquests? Was any kingdom established, or any gain of happiness? Was any dynasty permanently settled thereby, or did it mean merely the ending of the reign of one particular dynasty? The only result produced by the world-conquering operations of Halakoo and Djan-

[page 105]

giz, provoking war on all sides, was that the continent of Asia became like a heap of ashes beneath the blaze of his terrible conflagrations.

Ameer Taimoor won no benefit by his subduing of the earth. He only dispersed the people in his path and destroyed the foundations of humanity.

The only outcome of the great conquest of Alexander the Macedonian was the fall of his sun from his throne as a ruler, and the passing of his dominions into the hands of Cassander, Seleucus, Ptolemy, and Lysimachus.

Napoleon the First found no benefit in his victories over the kings of Europe, but he ruined well-constituted kingdoms and well-cultivated countries. He destroyed hundreds of thousands of men, terrorized and intimidated the whole continent of Europe, and ended his life in a wretched captivity. Such were the results left behind them by these kings and their huge conquests. Now, consider carefully, in contrast, the graces and the praiseworthy virtues, the high-mindedness and great dignity of the just and righteous sovereign Anusheerwan the Just. At the time when that chief pillar of justice ascended the throne the Persian government was shaken to its foundation by years of misrule and oppression, but, by his God-given wisdom, he established the reign of equity, abolished the methods of cruelty and injustice, and gathered together the dispersed people of Persia under the protecting shadow of the wings of his sovereignty.

In a short time, under the life-giving influence of his care and devotion, the decaying kingdom of Persia was quickened into fresh vitality and became one of the happiest of nationalities. He restored and

fortified the weakened powers of the government. His fame for justice spread over all the seven regions of the earth, and the greater part of the peoples of the world were raised, from the depths of extreme poverty and degradation to the zenith of honor and prosperity.

Although he belonged to the nation of Magi(5) and Center of the Creation, Mohammed, the Sun of Truth of the heaven of prophecy uttered these blessed words concerning him: 'I was born in the time of the Just King.' He rejoiced at having been born in the days of his government. Now, is that glorious monarch thus esteemed for his loving peace and justice, or for the shedding of blood in the overrunning of the world?

Reflect how preeminently he is distinguished in the world, the center of wonders, since the fame of his greatness is undying on earth, and so he enjoys the glory of Eternal life."

5. Zoroastrians considered as idolaters by the ancient Moslems.

[page 106]

V
THE VOICE
OF
UNIVERSAL PEACE

[page 107]

THE VOICE OF UNIVERSAL PEACE

A letter written by Abdul Baha to a friend in London, England, dated Akka, October 11, 1914.

"After the declaration of the constitutional regime in Turkey in 1908, by the members of the Committee of the Union and Progress, this prisoner of forty years travelled and journeyed for three years, from 1910 to 1913, throughout the countries of Europe and the vast continent of America. Notwithstanding the advancement in age, with its natural consequences, with a resonant voice I gave detailed addresses before large conventions and historical churches. I enumerated all these principles contained in the Tablets and Teachings of Baha'o'llah concerning war and peace.

About fifty years ago His Holiness Baha'o'llah proclaimed certain Teachings and raised the Songs of Universal Peace. In numerous Tablets and sundry Epistles He foretold, in the most explicit language, the present cataclysmal events, stating that the world of humanity was facing the most portentous danger, and asserting categorically that 'the realization of war was unfortunately inevitable and unavoidable, for these; combustible materials which are stored in the infernal arsenals of Europe will explode by the contact with one spark.' Among other things, 'the Balkans will become a volcano and the

map of Europe will be changed.' For these and similar reasons He, Baha'o'llah, invited the world of humanity to universal peace. He wrote a number of epistles to the kings(6) and rulers, and in those epistles He explained the destructive evils of war, and dwelt on the solid benefits and nobler influences of universal peace. War saps the foundation of humanity, and killing is an unpardonable crime against God, for man is an edifice built by the hand of the Almighty. Peace is life incarnate; war is death personified. Peace is the Divine spirit; war is Satanic suggestion. Peace is the light of the world; war is stygian darkness and chimerian gloom. All the great prophets, ancient philosophers, and heavenly books have been the harbingers of peace and monitors against war and discord. This is the Divine foundation; this is the Celestial outpouring; this is the basis of all the religions of God.

In short, before all the meetings in the West I cried out: O, ye thinkers of the world; O, ye philosophers of the Occident;

6. Many extracts from these letters are now preserved in a volume called 'L Eptre au Fils du Loup' translated from Persian into French by H. Dreyfus.

[page 108]

[photo: ABDUL BAHA ON THE BALCONY OF THE HOUSE ON MOUNT CARMEL]

[photo: THE HOUSE WHERE ABDUL BAHA OFTEN STAYS ON THE SLOPE OF MOUNT CARMEL]

[page 109]

O, ye scholars and sages of the earth. A threatening black cloud is behind, which ere long shall envelop the horizon of humanity. An impetuous tempest is ahead, which shall shatter to splinters the ship of the lives of mankind, and a turbulent, furious torrent shall soon drown the countries and nations of Europe. Awaken ye! Awaken ye! Become ye mindful! Thus in the spirit of co-operation we may all arise with the utmost magnanimity, and through the favor and Providence of God hold aloft the flag of the oneness of humanity, promote the essentials of universal peace, and deliver the inhabitants of the world from this 'Most Great Danger.'

While travelling in Europe and America, I met altruistic and sanctified souls, who were my confidants and associates concerning the question of universal peace, and who agreed with me and joined their voices with mine regarding the principles of the world of humanity; but alas, they were very few! The leaders of public opinion and the great statesmen believed that the massing of huge armies and the annual increase of military forces insured peace and friendship among nations. At that time I explained that this theory was based on a false conception, for it is an inevitable certainty that these serried ranks and disciplined armies will be rushed one day into the heat of the battlefield, and these inflammable materials will unquestionably be exploded, and the explosion will be through one tiny spark. Then a world conflagration will be witnessed, the lurid flames of which shall redden all the horizons. Because the sphere of their thoughts was contracted and their intellectual eyes blind they could not acknowledge the above explanation.

From the beginning of the Balkan Confederation a number of important personages inquired of me whether this Balkan war was the expected universal war, but it was answered: 'It will terminate in universal war.'

In brief, the point to make clear is this: His Holiness, Baha'o'llah, nearly fifty years ago warned the nations against the occurrence of this 'Most Great Danger.' Although the evils of war were evident and manifest to the sages and scholars, they are now made clear and plain to all the people. No sane person can at this time deny the fact that war is the most dreadful calamity in the world of humanity, that war destroys the Divine foundation, that war is the cause of eternal death, that war is conducive to the destruction of populous, progressive cities, that war is the world-consuming fire, and that war is the most ruinous catastrophe and the most deplorable adversity.

The cries and lamentations are raised from every part to the Supreme Apex. The meanings and shriekings have thrown a mighty

[page 110]

reverberation through the column of the world. The civilized countries are being overthrown. Eyes are shedding tears, hearing the weeping of the fatherless children. The hearts are burning and being consumed, by piercing sobbings and uncontrollable wailing of helpless, wandering women. The spirits of hopeless mothers are torn by rayless grief and endless sorrows, and the nerve-racking sighs and the just complaints of the fathers ascend to the throne of the Almighty.

Ah me! The world of creation is totally deprived of its normal rests. The clash of arms and the sound of murderous guns and cannon are being heard like the roaring of thunder across the heavenly track, and the explosive materials have changed the battlefields into yawning graveyards, burying for eternity the dead corpses of thousands upon thousands of youths, the flowers of many countries, who have been evolving factors in the civilization of the future.

The results of this crime committed against humanity is still worse than whatever I may say, and can never be adequately described by pen or by tongue.

O, ye governments of the world! Be ye pitiful toward mankind! O, ye nations of the earth, behold ye the battlefields of slaughter and carnage! O, ye sages of humanity, investigate sympathetically the conditions of the oppressed! O, ye philosophers of the West, study profoundly the causes that led to this gigantic, unparalleled struggle! O, ye wise leaders of the globe, reflect deeply so that ye may find an antidote for the suppression of this chronic, devastating disease. O, ye individuals of humanity, find ye means for the stoppage of this wholesale murder and bloodshed. Now is the appointed time! Now is the opportune time! Arise ye, show ye an effort, put ye forward an extraordinary force, and unfurl ye the flag of universal peace and dam the irresistible force of this raging torrent which is wreaking havoc and ruin everywhere.

Although this captive has been in the prison of despotism for forty years, yet he has never been so sad and stricken with regret as in these days. My spirit is aflame and, burning. My heart is broken, mournful, heavy, and despondent. My eyes are weeping and my soul is on fire. Oh! I am so bowed down and sorrowful.

O, people, weep and cry, lament and bemoan your fate. Then hasten ye, hasten ye, perchance ye may become able to extinguish with the water of the newborn ideals of spiritual Democracy and celestial Freedom this many-flamed, world-consuming fire, and

[page 111]

through your heaven-inspired resolution you may usher in the golden era of international solidarity and world confederation.

O, Kind God! Hearken to the cry of these helpless nations. O, Pure Lord! Show Thy pity to these orphaned children. O, incomparable Almighty! Stop this destructive torrent. O, Creator of the world and

the inhabitants thereof! Cause the extinction of this burning fire. O, Listener to our cries, come to the rescue of the orphans. O, Ideal Comforter, console the mothers whose hearts are torn and whose souls are filled with the blood of irremediable loss. O, Clement and Merciful! Grant the blessing of Thy Grace to the weeping eyes and burning hearts of the fathers. Restore calmness to this surging tempest and change this world-encircling war into peace and conciliation.

Verily Thou art the Omnipotent and the Powerful, and verily Thou art the Seeing and the Hearing.”

(Signed) ABDUL BAHA ABBAS