



NEW WORLD ORDER

46, BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

Vol. II, No. IV.

1d.

June, 1940.

"The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens."—Bahá'u'lláh.

THIS DAY

"The time fore-ordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled. Out of Zion hath gone forth the Law, and Jerusalem, and the hills and land thereof, are filled with the glory of His Revelation." *Bahá'u'lláh.*

"The world's equilibrium hath been upset by the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System—the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed." *Bahá'u'lláh.*

"The world is in travail and its agitation waxeth day by day. Its face is turned towards waywardness and unbelief. Such shall be its plight that to disclose it now would not be meet and seemly. Its perversity will long continue. And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then and only then will the Divine Standard be unfurled and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody." *Bahá'u'lláh.*

"Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the Voice, of the Promised One. The Call of God hath been raised, and the light of His countenance hath been lifted up upon men." *Bahá'u'lláh.*

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not seen since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." *Jesus.*

"Although outwardly cataclysms are hard to understand and to endure, yet there lies a great wisdom behind them which appears later. All the visible material events are inter-related with invisible spiritual forces. The infinite phenomena of creation are as interdependent as the links of a chain.

When certain links become rusty, they are broken by unseen forces, to be replaced by newer and better ones. There are certain colossal events which transpire in the world of humanity which are required by the nature of the times. For example, the requirements of winter are cold, snow, hail and rain—but the birds and animals who live for six months, enjoying a short span of life, not realising the wisdom of the winter, chide and make lament and are discontent, saying, "Why this awful frost? Why this hail and storm? Why not the balmy weather? Why not the eternal springtime? Why this injustice on the part of the creator? Why this suffering? What have we done to be meted out with this catastrophe?"

However, those souls who have lived many years and have acquired much experience and have weathered many severe winters realize that in order to enjoy the coming spring they must pass through the cold of winter. *'Abdu'l-Bahá.*

The Bahá'í Faith

The Báb, The Forerunner, declaration 1844, martyrdom 1860.

Bahá'u'lláh, The Founder, declaration 1863, ascended 1892.

"Abdu'l-Bahá, The True Exemplar and Interpreter, 1844-1921.

The Basic Principles

The Oneness of Mankind.

The Oneness of Religion.

The Independent Investigation of Truth.

The Relinquishing of Prejudices.

Education for Everyone.

Equal Status for Men and Women.

The Harmony of Religion and Science.

Solution of Industrial and Economic Problems.

A Universal Language. (Auxiliary.)

Universal Peace; international executive authority.

A World Commonwealth.

Since the war began, we have seen the heartening spectacle of men, from their own free will, burying partisan and sectarian differences, and uniting, in the face of a common danger, with their erstwhile opponents. Men of politics, of clashing interests—more than that, two great sovereign independent nations, have pooled their resources to achieve a common task.

Is there no lesson here for men of religion? Is not this an example which might well have been set by the world's religious leaders? The peril confronting the human spirit is graver than any which threatens our material life, serious as that undoubtedly is. The unleashed streams of hatred, bitterness, prejudice, desire for vengeance, will overwhelm the human soul unless a valiant and determined stand is made against them. Now, if ever, is the time to relinquish our petty differences of form, creed, sacrament, ritual and theology.

In four neighbouring houses there live Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muhammadan, and Church of England families. The children know each other and have played together, and the parents have come to value their neighbours. They would all like to unite in prayer to the One God in whom they all believe. But the Jewish day is Saturday, the Muhammadan Friday, the Roman Catholic may not enter the Protestant Church, and the Protestant knows nothing of the other's beliefs.

The soul of man is surrounded by darkness; we face a common peril. Is it too much for the religious leaders to bury their petty differences which, in

the name of religion divide the people? For these differences are petty. No matter by what long tradition, or by what human sanctions they are upheld, if they obstruct the unity of mankind they cannot be anything but petty. "For universality is of God, and all limitations earthly" said 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The situation is a direct challenge to all who believe in God. The religious leaders have the supreme obligation of following the example already set by politicians, soldiers, statesmen, and by working men and women. They need not fear any lack of support; the desire for unity in spiritual thought is overwhelming.

We have seen the power of compulsory unity, dedicated to principles which are false. What will be the power of voluntary unity, dedicated to principles which are true? We have seen great projects successfully accomplished through the co-operation of groups of mankind, whether those groups were family, regional, or national. How very great the tasks which can be accomplished by the combined force of all the human race! Through such a force international law and order may be established; economic security may be assured; justice and equity may be established; the new world order may become a reality.

But the source of this unity is spiritual; we cannot achieve it as long as we are divided in our religious life. Therefore let us forego the forms and ceremonies and ingenious doctrines, and realise that all the Scriptures speak of the same God. Christian, Jew, Muhammadan, Buddhist and Hindu have equal responsibility in this matter. Let the leaders of religious thought look to it or they will find themselves left high and dry because they were unable to satisfy the spiritual need of the people of to-day.

The Foundation of Order

'Abdu'l-Bahá

"We must speak of things that are possible of performance in this world. There are many theories and high ideas on this subject, but they are not practicable; consequently we must speak of things that are feasible.

For example, if someone oppresses, injures, and wrongs another, and the wronged man retaliates, this is vengeance, and is censurable. . . .

But the community has the right of defence and of self-protection; moreover, the community has no hatred nor animosity for the murderer; it imprisons or punishes him merely for the protection and security of others. It is not for the pur-

pose of taking vengeance upon the murderer, but for the purpose of inflicting a punishment by which the community will be protected. . . .

As forgiveness is one of the attributes of the Merciful One, so also justice is one of the attributes of the Lord. The tent of existence is upheld upon the pillar of justice and not upon forgiveness. The continuance of mankind depends upon justice and not upon forgiveness. So if, at present, the law of pardon were practised in all countries, in a short time the world would be disordered, and the foundations of human life would crumble. . . .

To recapitulate: the constitution of the communities depends upon justice, not upon forgiveness. Then what Christ meant by forgiveness and pardon is not that when nations attack you, burn your homes, plunder your goods, assault your wives, children, and relatives, and violate your honour, you should be submissive in the presence of these tyrannical foes, and allow them to perform all their cruelties and oppressions. No, the words of Christ refer to the conduct of two individuals towards each other; if one person assaults another, the injured one should forgive him. But the communities must protect the rights of man."

The Age of Transition

So great is the darkness, and so overwhelming the suffering, so terrible the daily happenings, that many begin to question the possibility of any worthwhile life in the future. Will not civilization be set back a thousand years? How can any good come out of this?

In the first place, we are all apt to be engulfed in the present moment by the very intensity of everything that is happening. We are apt to forget that there has been a long history before to-day, and there will be a long history after it.

Secondly, we deplore the destruction of our so-called civilization. Is there really so much in modern life, capable of being destroyed by war, which we shall regret to lose? The things of the spirit and of the mind, the courage, the sense of justice, the kindness of ordinary people are qualities which war can sharpen, and the knowledge and scientific attainments of the age cannot be destroyed as they could in past ages, by burning a few books. What then is there to lose? Buildings, works of art? The whole structure of modern industrial life with its slums and social divisions, its struggle for existence, its corruption and carelessness of human life, its inefficiency in providing for the material welfare of the race, its cynicism

and spiritual apathy . . . this is the greatest thing which will be destroyed, and this is what we shall not want to recover.

So let us not add woe to woe. Many things will go which we shall be glad to lose. But there remain the suffering of homeless, destitute people, the loss of young and vigorous lives; the unsettling of family life and the breaking up of nations. These are real wounds on the heart of humanity.

It is only by understanding the significance of the day in which we live that we can see beyond the daily happenings. This time is a critical and portentous moment in the history of mankind; it is related to the past and to the future. It is no less a period than the coming of age of the human race.

The growth of a single human being proceeds from stage to stage, from infancy to childhood, to adolescence, to youth, to manhood. The transition periods between these stages are characterised by upset and turmoil in the individual. The infant does not want to leave its mother's breast, the child clings to her apron strings, the boy and youth want the privileges of more mature life without having to accept the responsibilities. The most upsetting of these periods of transition is that from youth to manhood. At the door of maturity new powers begin to develop, physical, mental and spiritual, and the youth is in a very unsettled state.

This same process is true of the human race. It develops from stage to stage, eventually reaching the gate of maturity. Its infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth, are characterised by varying degrees of social organisation, such as family (infancy), tribal (childish), free city states and provinces (adolescent), sovereign independent nations (youthful). Mankind now stands on the threshold of maturity, when the normal course of his life requires the giving up of the youthful stage and the accepting of the mature stage. This mature stage is none other than world order, a world commonwealth. But mankind opposes this change, opposes it with all his might. He clings to the things of his youth, his sovereign nationality, his religious exclusiveness, his race and colour prejudice. And so this age of transition, in which we now live, and which in the *ordinary* course of events would be one of unrest, becomes the most chaotic and destructive period of history, because mankind has chosen to oppose the course of progress, instead of to assist it.

The principles of Bahá'u'lláh, given more than seventy years ago, are the essence of maturity. They are centred on the theme of human unity, the oneness of mankind. This theme, this spiritual truth, is the core of the truly mature outlook, the

foundation which determines the shape of everything built upon it. If we really believe that mankind is one, we will not permit any group of men, be it nation or otherwise, to have the right of maintaining armaments and waging war. But we have consistently refused to surrender these powers, not one nation has been willing, and so we have come to the present condition.

Bahá'u'lláh wrote to the kings and rulers of the world enjoining them to establish an international authority with the exclusive power of restraining military action by any nation. In His letter to Queen Victoria this injunction is epitomized in one sentence: "Should any one among you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him, for this is naught but manifest justice."

Thus, in addition to the essential spiritual foundation, Bahá'u'lláh gives a practical plan as well. He says in effect: there is but one God, there is but one human race. The time has now come for it to live in unity and give up the quarrels and ignorant prejudices of its youth. He shows how to do this, and gives certain laws and plans by which the whole of mankind can be protected from war and destruction.

And so when we begin to despair because of the darkness of to-day, let us remember that this is only a small point in history, only a small point even in our own lives. For however much we oppose the forces of life, we cannot prevent them from pressing onwards towards fulfilment. World Order, the brotherhood of mankind, peace on earth, is the plan and the promise of God. It will come about in this century, and the greatest and longest period of mankind's life will begin . . . the period of maturity.

Visible and Invisible Worlds

'Abdu'l-Bahá

I walked in the Trocadero Gardens near the Eiffel Tower this morning. The grass was so green, the weather so delicious, I began thinking and became amazed at all the material wonders—amazed at how men deprive and limit themselves. I thought of how the spirit radiates in all the realms of nature according to the receptive degree. In the mineral world the spirit shows itself, but limited to that mineral condition. It is proved through science that the mineral has the power of attraction, the vegetable the power of growth; life is according to capacity.

Man's spirit comprehends the realities of kingdoms which have no knowledge of him, even as the

child in the womb has no knowledge of exterior existence; nevertheless, the mother comprehends the child's existence. The superior kingdom understands the inferior, but that the inferior comprehends it not is no proof of the non-existence of the superior kingdom. In the human world, if we do not understand the divine world, is that a proof that the world of God does not exist? When we view the universe we see it as endless space, for we cannot restrict the universe to the lower kingdoms and to man who is here for a few days only, then vanishes.

This physical universe is infinite, and if material existence is endless, how much more so are the worlds of God! When we think of the visible worlds as infinite, how can we think that the worlds of God are limited? There is no beginning and no end to the material or spiritual worlds. Man passes through different phases and when in a lower consciousness he cannot comprehend the consciousness above. When we were in the state of the unborn child we had no knowledge of the world of man. If the vegetable kingdom could speak it would cry out, "Where is the world of man?" We cry out, "Where is the kingdom of the spirit?"

My hope for you is that as you travel through the universe of existence you will ever become acquainted with new and wonderful significances; that your knowledge will ever be increased—knowledge without limitation; then you will understand the realities existing in all kingdoms. Capacity is in accordance with striving and sincerity.

I pray that your inner sight may become clear, that you may be able to perceive things the heedless do not see, that you may understand the infinite worlds of God. A man who has no knowledge of the heavenly universe has missed a portion of his heritage and is like unto a stone which knows nothing of humanity. May God open your inner sight, so that you may know His secrets, attain to the highest degree of existence, become manifestors of a spiritual humanity and have your share of the heavenly wisdom that Baha'u'llah bestows. These divine effulgences have enveloped the Orient and Occident, but the eyes know not how to perceive, the intelligences are weak and so men are deprived and are in manifest loss. I commend you to turn towards the kingdom of Glory, so that the divine mysteries may be revealed.

| | |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| BAHÁ'Í | July 26th—August 10th. |
| SUMMER | Apply to Secretary, Miss Wellby, |
| SCHOOL | 20 Primrose Gardens, |
| | Belsize Park, N.W.3 |