

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

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

THE CENTURY OF LIGHT

"In every Dispensation the light of Divine Guidance has been focussed upon one central theme. . . In this wondrous Revelation, this glorious century, the foundation of the Faith of God and the distinguishing feature of His Law is the consciousness of the Oneness of Mankind." 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

"In cycles gone by, though harmony was established, yet, owing to the absence of means, the unity of all mankind could not have been achieved. Continents remained widely divided, nay even among the peoples of one and the same continent association and inter-change of thought were well nigh impossible. Consequently intercourse, understanding and unity amongst all the peoples and kindreds of the earth were unattainable. In this day, however, means of communication have multiplied, and the five continents of the earth have virtually merged into one. . . . In like manner all the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch as political ties unite all peoples and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved. Verily this is none other but one of the wonders of this wondrous age, this glorious century. Of this past ages have been deprived, for this century—the century of light—has been endowed with unique and unprecedented glory, power and illumination. Hence the miraculous unfolding of a fresh marvel every day. Eventually it will be seen how bright its candles will burn in the assemblage of man."

"Behold how its light is now dawning upon the world's darkened horizon. The first candle is unity

in the political realm, the early glimmerings of which can now be discerned. The second candle is unity of thought in world undertakings, the consummation of which will ere long be witnessed. The third candle is unity in freedom which will surely come to pass. The fourth candle is unity in religion which is the corner-stone of the foundation itself, and which, by the power of God, will be revealed in all its splendour. The fifth candle is the unity of nations—a unity which in this century will be firmly established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland. The sixth candle is unity of races, making of all that dwell on earth peoples and kindreds of one race. The seventh candle is unity of language, i.e., the choice of a universal tongue in which all peoples will be instructed and converse. Each and every one of these will inevitably come to pass, inasmuch as the power of the Kingdom of God will aid and assist in their realisation." 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

"Upon the consummation of this colossal, this unspeakably glorious enterprise—an enterprise that baffled the resources of Roman statesmanship and which Napoleon's desperate efforts failed to achieve—will depend the ultimate realisation of that millennium of which poets of all ages have sung and seers have long dreamed. Upon it will depend the fulfilment of the prophecies uttered by the Prophets of old when swords shall be beaten into plough-shares and the lion and the lamb lie down together. It alone can usher in the Kingdom of the Heavenly Father as anticipated by the Faith of Jesus Christ. It alone can lay the foundation for the New World Order visualised by Bahá'u'lláh—a World Order that shall reflect, however dimly upon this earthly plane, the ineffable splendours of the 'Abhá Kingdom. *Shoghi Effendi.*

The Promise of All Ages

George Townshend, M.A.

Lindsay Drummond, 5/-

We welcome most heartily the republication of this challenging book, under the author's own name. It had previously been published as the work of "Christophil." In dispensing with his *nom de plume* the author, who is Archdeacon of Clonfert and Canon of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, associates himself with the movement whose foundation and historical setting he describes.

"The Promise of All Ages" is an essay on "the religious teaching of Bahá'u'lláh on the subject of the unity of mankind and the establishment in this century of a universal and permanent peace." It is an uplifting and hopeful book, dealing with a high and noble theme, yet not neglecting its mundane application. It is a great drama, "a story of men of vision and of action, the pioneers of a new era; a story of the first systematic effort to reconstruct the social order on a world-basis and to lift mankind to the level of a new social responsibility."

"The central figure of this story is a Great Seer, who in prophetic tones forecast the character and magnitude of the Day of God then at its dawning, and by word and by example, in His Epistles to the Kings and in other writings, called on his own and other nations to reduce their armaments, to seek union and peace and to prepare for that long promised civilisation in which righteousness and justice should prevail throughout the earth."

"The challenge of this story, of the enthusiasm of its heroes, their restless energy, their radiant faith, will bring delight and uplift to every spiritual mind. For it is not the challenge of the cynic or the sceptic, but that of fellow believers in God who with joy sacrificed all they had and all they were in an effort to establish World-Peace on an imperishable foundation."

The book is timely, for the heroes of which it speaks did not sacrifice in vain; the confusion of the present day cannot nullify or retard the realisation of the great vision for which they strove . . . "a truth whose time has come cannot be suppressed by priests and tyrants," neither can it be smothered by the unwillingness of men to accept it.

The book is printed in large type, bound in green cloth with a very attractive jacket. At five shillings it is the best bargain we have seen for a long time. From all booksellers.

The Bahá'í Faith

(continued).

ADMINISTRATION

The Guardianship

In His Will and Testament, 'Abdu'l-Bahá made provision for a succession of Guardians who would be heads of the Bahá'í Faith. The Guardian is not in the same station as the Founders of the Faith, but his is the sole responsibility for interpretation of the scriptures. By this provision sectarianism is avoided, and it is one of the unique features of the Bahá'í Faith, that today, more than ninety years since its birth, there is no Bahá'í sect. The Guardian is also permanent head of the international House of Justice. In this he has no special legislative powers, but only one vote. There is no historical precedent by which to describe the institution of Guardianship; it is not similar to the papacy, is neither autocratic nor monarchical. The present Guardian is Shoghi Effendi, grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Houses of Justice

There is no priesthood in the Bahá'í Faith, and ritual, sacrament, and rigid forms of worship are forbidden. In every community where there are Bahá'ís to the number of nine or more, a Spiritual Assembly is elected. (At present "Spiritual Assembly" is used instead of "House of Justice.") This body has charge of all matters in that community, and must look after the educational, charitable, and social activities of the community, as well as stimulating its spiritual life. In countries where there are a number of local Spiritual Assemblies, a National Spiritual Assembly is elected to co-ordinate the activities of the local communities and to administer matters of national importance. The Universal House of Justice, when elected, will, as its name implies, function on a super-national scale and co-ordinate the activities of a world community.

Procedure

Bahá'í elections are unique. There are no candidates, no electioneering, no nominations and no party programmes or platform promises. In the local elections, every adult member writes down the names of nine people from the community, voting for those whom, after prayer and reflection, he or she considers best qualified by character, ability, and knowledge to administer affairs. The nine with the greatest number of votes form the membership of the Spiritual Assembly. The local communities elect a number

of delegates to a Convention, who in turn, elect the National Spiritual Assembly. The Universal House of Justice will be elected by the members of the various National Spiritual Assemblies.

Bahá'í administrative bodies act by consultation. There is no party in power and no opposition. There are no "rulers and ruled." The object of consultation is to seek the best solution of every matter, unhampered by previous commitments. Problems are considered in the light of the spiritual principle which is involved.

Every nineteen days the Bahá'í communities throughout the world celebrate the "Nineteen Day Feast." The believers come together, passages from the Scripture are read, there is discussion between the Spiritual Assembly and the community, including presentation of secretarial and financial reports, and the feast concludes with the sharing of refreshment.

The Dawn of a New Day

By Louis Rosenfield.

The confusion of these days is heightened by a babel of passwords, slogans, panaceas. There are patent medicines for humanity as comprehensive in their healing claims, as any that were sold at the old time fairs. "New World Order," Economic Reform, Federated States, World Commonwealth, are terms frequently used indiscriminately, without thought of their real significance. Is it possible that they only become quack remedies on the lips of thoughtless and shallow talkers, while in reality they arise from a deep and firmly planted root? What are the possibilities of a "New Day"?

We are living in the twilight of civilization under the gathering darkness of inhumanity, war, and hatred, and may yet witness the total black-out of liberty, justice and decency. If such a dark age should descend upon us, what becomes of our brave new world?

There is what may be called the "immutable law of the dawn," that is the inevitable succession of night and day. No-one ever doubts this. Even in the blackest night, the certainty of the new day never wavers. Now in the same way that the impenetrable darkness of night gives way gradually to the hues of the dawn, so does the world condition of humanity change. But it is only the man who is up and about before dawn who knows that the earth prepares itself in antici-

pation; and he too knows that the blackest hour is the last one of the night.

There are many signs which may be read by those who are awake, signs which clearly indicate that the idea of a new world is not some "vague and pious hope" but an approaching reality. Many are directly conscious of these signs, the greatest of which is the appearance of Bahá'u'lláh and the emergence, under His influence, of a world community representing a cross section of humanity. Many are aware indirectly of the coming dawn. They see in the growth and spread of certain principles and ideas the inevitable transformation of man from a purely national citizen, to an internationally conscious world citizen. The movement for an international language is one of these signs; the decline of institutional religion and intolerant creeds is another; the emancipation of women; the idea of collective security; the increase of education; the popularising of science; the continued evolution of the status of the worker from "slave" to partner which is apparent in the growth of profit-sharing; these are some of the clear signs which indicate an approaching change in organised society.

It is true that every one of these ideals finds a violent and diametrically opposed process in some one or other part of the world . . . the emancipation of women and collective security to name but two. But this in itself is another hopeful sign that the positive principles will win, for it is only when an institution or theory, such as state sovereignty or racial superiority finds itself seriously challenged by new conceptions that it takes to self-assertion by force.

On the practical and technical side everything required for a new and better world is available. We can grow all the food we need, clothe and shelter everyone, produce more than enough for all humanity's comfort. We can make life healthier, longer, fuller in every way. The stage is set but the actors do not appear.

All these things are clear and irrefutable evidence of the reality which lies at the root of our hope. But this darkest hour which is now beginning will undoubtedly test us all, and something more even than hope will be needed. That something more is Faith. It comes only through the Word of God, and requires us to make preparation for the coming dawn. "Bestir yourselves, O people, in anticipation of the days of Divine justice, for the promised hour is now come. Beware lest ye fail to apprehend its import and be accounted among the erring."

Tasmania

By Three Bahá'ís.

*"Come let us explore, and we will seek
A Golden Isle, set in Southern Seas."*

Tasmania! Island of Many Waters and Many Mountains! Heart-shaped, it is set as a radiant jewel in Southern Seas, 180 miles from the South Eastern shores of Australia. There is daily communication with the Mainland by steamer and by plane. A mere dot on the map of the world, (and in some maps not at all!) it is, in many respects, unique and world-known.

Its inhabitants, mostly descendants of early British Settlers, number about 200,000 and, in a little over one hundred years, have made manifest many of its secrets. There are not lacking abundant historical associations, but, sad to relate, there are no survivors of its native black race, though many traces of them may still be found.

Little advertisement has been given to its diversified scenic attractions and they are as yet unsung and unwritten in ballad and legend. Its loveliness ranges from the tranquillity of tableland, lakes and rich rolling meadow, to the "Beauty and strength of its deep mountain valleys . . . with glimpses of creeks and a vision of mosses," and to scenes of savage grandeur, jungle covered gorges and wild, precipitous, untrodden mountain ranges.

There are charming old-world villages with English names; a "Cataract Gorge" is set in the heart of a City. One finds also uncanny caves, Blow-holes, and Nature's own Tesselated Pavements.

Hobart, the capital, on the River Derwent, possesses a natural harbour, surely one of earth's loveliest. Behind it to the West looms majestic Mount Wellington. The largest Ocean liners can berth without the aid of tugs in 64 feet of water. Five British Royal visitors have sailed up this river and disembarked within 300 yards of the General Post Office.

From the Pinnacle of Mount Wellington the Panorama is breathtaking and sublime; horizons seem immense. Visibility is so splendid that the eye roves down and beyond, over the hills and far away to fiord, island, beach and headland . . . and "far away" on a clear day may mean 80 miles!

Living in the fastnesses of ancient mountains are organisms of the most primitive type as, for instance, the rare shrimp, *Anaspides Tasmaniae*, found in icy streams and lakes.

There are, roaming in evergreen forests, far from man's retreats, animals which are found only

in a fossilised state outside Tasmania. Tiger cats, the duck-billed Platypus, Kangaroo, Wallaby and the huge Wedge Tailed Eagle. In no other part of the world are found the marsupial Wolf and Tasmanian Devil and there are fourteen or fifteen kinds of birds peculiar to this little island. Botanists rejoice in its bewildering variety of form and colour; an interesting fact is that Tasmania has only one endemic deciduous tree—*Fagus Gunnii*.

A variety of minerals is crowded into a small compass, some more precious than gold. Osmiridium is mined and Mount Lyell has produced more than £20,000,000 of gold, copper and silver. Mount Bischoff was once celebrated as the richest tin mine in the world.

Tasmania is connected with the telephone and wireless network of the world. The sub-cable connecting the Island with the Mainland is the largest of its type and its transmission efficiency is the highest yet achieved by man. Power potentialities are almost unlimited, there being one and three quarter millions of horse-power capable of being commercially developed. A vast Hydro Electric scheme, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, has harnessed some of the waters of the State, having to date developed 143,000 horse-power. This is being used for various works and for the reticulation of most of the town and country areas.

Important industries include: Electrolytic extraction of Zinc, confectionery manufacture, wool and woollen manufacture, cement and carbide works, paper pulp, dairying, agriculture, apple, small fruits and hop growing, fruit preserving, jam making and sawmilling.

In the beauties of our Island Home we see the reflection of those inner, invisible glories so often spoken of by Bahá'u'lláh. May it, in the symbol of its shape, shine with the burnish of the spirit and soar in the Realms of the Infinite!

BAHÁ'Í SUMMER SCHOOL

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