



NEW WORLD ORDER

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

Vol. II, No. V.

Id.

July, 1940.

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

THE CALL OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

"The call of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices. If long-cherished ideals and time-honoured institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulæ have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories, are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine."

"Let there be no mistake. The principle of the Oneness of Mankind—the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve—is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope. Its appeal is not to be merely identified with a re-awakening of the spirit of brotherhood and good-will among men, nor does it aim solely at the fostering of harmonious co-operation among individual peoples and nations. Its implications are deeper, its claims greater than any which the Prophets of old were allowed to advance. Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family. It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal, but stands inseparably associated with an institution adequate to embody its truth, demonstrate its validity, and perpetuate

its influence. It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced. It constitutes a challenge, at once bold and universal, to outworn shibboleths of national creeds—creeds that have had their day and which must, in the ordinary course of events as shaped and controlled by Providence, give way to a new gospel, fundamentally different from, and infinitely superior to, what the world has already conceived. It calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilised world—a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units."

"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 millenium 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 ploughshares 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.'"

"Uttered at a time when its possibility had not yet been seriously envisaged in any part of the

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.

world, it has, by virtue of that celestial potency which the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh has breathed into it, come at last to be regarded, by an increasing number of thoughtful men, not only as an approaching possibility, but as the necessary outcome of the forces now operating in the world."

—Shoghi Effendi, *Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith*.

It has become usual to describe the war as "queer." You hear it everywhere; "It's a queer war," or, as one man put it, "It's the funniest war I've ever known." This word queer describes the situation exactly from the point of view of the average man. It means something more than strange or unusual, it includes unknown factors, and, like all unknown things, arouses uneasiness and even fear. And it applies to more than the war; the whole of life, the world, the situation of all mankind, is undoubtedly queer. Who can diagnose the sickness? Who can say what are the forces at work? Who can see the outcome?

Some sixty years ago, Bahá'u'lláh, foreseeing this day, wrote: *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.* He saw, even at that time, the beginnings of a virulent disease which would, unless checked, ravage the human race. That disease is disunity. It has not been checked, but has waxed day by day.

To realise how true was this diagnosis, we have

only to think of the events of the past year. First, because independent nations could not overcome their disunity, no effective stand could be made against aggression, and one nation after the other has been swallowed up. Secondly, nations have been divided within themselves and have crumbled in the day of testing. On a wider scale we can see four continents at war because in the past twenty years mankind has not been able to overcome its long-standing disunity, and engage in a common cause.

Bahá'u'lláh viewed the world as "one country and mankind its citizens." He saw these citizens split up into numberless groups and 'isms, some big, some small, but all at rivalry with each other. The large 'isms are Muhammadanism, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, each numbering hundreds of millions. Within these 'isms are hundreds of sub-divisions, and interwoven with their dividing lines are other lines of nations, colour, class, race, politics. The whole picture must be very like the tangle of roots under the soil of a forest. No wonder Bahá'u'lláh was moved to write: *How long will humanity persist in its waywardness? How long will injustice continue? How long is chaos and confusion to reign amongst men? How long will discord agitate the face of society? The winds of despair are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective.*

Having diagnosed the sickness, Bahá'u'lláh does not leave the patient to die. On the contrary, His whole life and mission have no other purpose than to revive and cure the patient, to set him on the path towards a new life, and to show him how to get the very best out of it.

Disunity is the sickness; Unity is the remedy. *Be united, O concourse of the sovereigns of the world, for thereby will the tempest of discord be stilled amongst you and your people find rest. That which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful and inspired Physician.*

This theme, unity, must be the thread running through all our thought, the goal towards which our effort is bent, the star on which our gaze is fixed. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said, *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.

But let no one think that unity means uniformity. We do not want everyone to think in the same way, act in the same way, dress in the same way, like robots. Unity in diversity is the watchword. But it must be unity, and not diversity alone. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained:—

Consider the flowers of a garden. Though differing in kind, colour, form and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm and addeth unto their beauty. How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruit, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, form and shape enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof. In like manner, when divers shades of thought, temperament and character are brought together under the power and influence of one central agency, the beauty and glory of human perfection will be revealed and made manifest. Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God, which ruleth and transcendeth the realities of all things, is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas and convictions of the children of men.

The power of the Word of God is in the world; we have to make of ourselves willing channels for its purpose.

A Prayer of Alfred the Great

O Thou who art the Father of that Son which has awakened us, and urgeth us out of the sleep of our sins, and exhorteth us to become Thine;

To Thee Lord, I pray, who art the supreme Truth;

For all the truth that is, is truth from Thee.

Thee I implore, O Lord, who art the highest wisdom;

Through Thee are wise all those that are wise.

Thou art the true Life, and through Thee are living all those that are alive.

Thou art the supreme felicity, and through Thee all have become happy that are happy.

Thou art the highest good, and from Thee all beauty springs.

Thou art the intellectual light, and from Thee man derives his understanding.

To Thee, O God, I call and speak. Hear, O hear me Lord!

For Thou art my God and my Lord; my Father and my Creator;

My Ruler and my hope; my wealth and my honour;

My house, my country, my salvation, and my life. Hear, hear me Lord!

Few of Thy servants comprehend Thee.

But Thee alone I love, indeed, above all other things.

Thee I seek; Thee I will follow; Thee I am ready to serve.

Under Thy power I desire to abide, for Thou alone art the Sovereign of all.

I pray Thee to command me as Thou wilt.

Interpretation of the Scriptures

'Abdu'l-Bahá

(From an address delivered in Dublin, New Hampshire, U.S.A.)

The people of Christianity have clung to literal interpretation of the statement in the Gospel that Christ came from heaven. The Jews likewise at the time of his manifestation held to outward and visible expectation of the fulfilment of the prophecies. They said: "Messiah shall appear from heaven; this man came from Nazareth; we know his house; we know his parents and people; it is only hearsay that he descended from heaven; this cannot be proved."

The text of the Gospel states that he came from heaven although physically born of the mother. The meaning is that the divine reality of Christ was from heaven but the body was born of Mary.

Therefore he came according to the prophecies of the holy book and likewise according to natural law; his reality from heaven; his body earthly. As he came before, so must he come this time in the same way. But some arise with objections, saying, "We must have literal proof of this through the senses."

The reality of Christ was always in heaven and will always be. This is the intention of the text of the Gospel. For while His Holiness Jesus Christ walked upon the earth, he said "The Son of Man is in heaven." Therefore holding to literal interpretation and visible fulfilment of the text of the holy books is simply imitation of ancestral forms

and beliefs; for when we perceive the reality of Christ these texts and statements become clear and perfectly reconcilable with each other. Unless we perceive the reality, we cannot understand the meanings of the holy books, for these meanings are symbolical and spiritual, such as, for instance, the raising of Lazarus, which has spiritual interpretation. We must first establish the fact that the power of God is infinite, unlimited, and that it is within that power to accomplish anything.

Secondly, we must understand the interpretation of Christ's words concerning "the dead." A certain disciple came to His Holiness and asked permission to go and bury his father. His Holiness answered "Let the dead bury their dead." Therefore Christ designated as "dead" some who were still living; that is, let the living "dead," the spiritually "dead," bury your father. They were dead because they were not believers in Christ. Although physically alive they were dead spiritually. This is the meaning of Christ's words "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of spirit is spirit." He meant that those who were simply born of the human body were dead spiritually, while those quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit were living and eternally alive. These are the interpretations of Christ himself. Reflect upon them and the meanings of the holy books will become clear as the sun at midday.

The holy books have their special terminologies which must be known and understood. Physicians have their own peculiar terms; architects, philosophers have their characteristic expressions; poets have their phrases, and scientists their nomenclature. In the scripture we read that Zion is dancing. It is evident that this has other than literal interpretation. The meaning is that the people of Zion shall rejoice. The Jews said Christ was not messiah but antichrist, because one of the signs of the messiah's coming was the dancing of Mount Zion, which had not yet come to pass. In reality, when His Holiness appeared, not only Mount Zion but all Palestine danced and rejoiced. Again in scriptures it is said "The trees shall clap their hands." This is symbolical. There are terms and expressions of usage in every language which cannot be taken literally. For instance, in oriental countries it is customary to say "when my friend entered the house the doors and walls began to sing and dance." In Persia they say "Get at the head," meaning engage in the matter according to its own terms and usages. All these have other and inner meanings.

In the Mosque

by

Elizabeth Haddon.

I have cleansed my tired body in the stream
And have taken off my old torn slippers;
I have climbed the Mosque steps as in a dream . . .
Pushed open the door . . .
And have lowly bent to pray to Allah
On the well-worn floor.

I pour out my soul in the sacred place
And fearfully unburden all my sins;
I plead forgiveness of Allah . . . my face
Penitent with tears.
May Allah behold me and absolve me
From my ill-spent years.

Through the stained window comes the glad sun-
light,
Gilding the mystic writings on the wall;
So, in the silent Mosque, half-dim, half-bright,
To Allah I pray.
May Allah, pitying my repentance,
Deign to show the way.

Through the wide doorway comes the clear sunrise
With fresh'ning air of gloom-dispelling morn;
Muezzin's form appear against the skies,
And the faithful see
And turn their steps towards the Mosque to pray,
At his shrill decree.

* * *

I cannot tell what healing gift is there,
What power supernal in that temple reigns;
I only know the world seems now more fair;
For my heavy sin
That closed to me the gates of Paradise
Has been left within.

The Editor is very glad to print this poem, which is, in his opinion, but one more proof that no matter what names we use—God, Jehovah, Allah—or what forms we adopt—Synagogue, Church or Mosque—we are "all leaves of one tree and drops of one ocean."

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles announces with regret that it has been necessary to cancel the Bahá'í Summer School, in view of the restrictions on holidays and the Government's wish to limit travelling.