

NEW WORLD ORDER

BAHÁ'Í
CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS



May 20-27
1944
LONDON

SIR RONALD STORRS, K.C.M.G., LL.D., L.C.C.,
OPENING THE BAHÁ'Í CENTENARY EXHIBITION
AT THE ALLIANCE HALL, PALMER STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1., ON SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1944

Special Centenary Number.

BAHÁ'Í CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

THE close of the first century since the Báb, Mirza Ali Muhammad, the herald of a new age, first proclaimed His mission on May 23, 1844, was celebrated in London during the week of May 20-May 27. The Báb came to prepare the world for the advent of Bahá'u'lláh, Glory of God (Mírzá Husayn 'Ali), who would lay the foundations of the new age: the age of the unification of the whole human race and of universal peace. The message of the Báb stirred mankind to its depths and a volcanic upheaval of the spiritual life of Persia took place, the repercussions of which were felt throughout the world. Bahá'u'lláh brought mankind a promise and a warning: a promise that in this epoch universal peace, hitherto unknown, shall be established; a warning that unless the rulers and leaders of man took heed of His admonitions and took counsel together and became united for the benefit of all mankind the most terrible world conflicts would

break out and would sweep away the old order of things before the new foundations could be laid. His counsels were neglected and the greatest and most terrible of world conflicts has broken out. The dawn of the new age heralded by the Báb was celebrated, not unfittingly, at the darkest hour. That of which Bahá'u'lláh warned a heedless people has come to pass. Meanwhile the world community of Bahá'ís are working for the splendour of the days to come, confident of the fulfilment of the promise.

This issue of *New World Order* is intended to serve as a record of some of the outstanding events of the centenary celebrations in London, and is therefore devoted mainly to the reproduction of extracts from some of the speeches made at the opening of the Bahá'í Centenary Exhibition on May 20 and the public meeting on May 23.

OPENING OF THE BAHÁ'Í CENTENARY EXHIBITION

BY SIR RONALD STORRS, K.C.M.G., LL.D., L.C.C.

THE following are extracts from the speech made by Sir Ronald Storrs, who opened the Bahá'í Centenary Exhibition at the Alliance Hall, Palmer Street, Westminster, London, S.W.1, on Saturday afternoon, May 20.

"It is a high honour for an Anglican Englishman to have been chosen to open the Centenary of a World Faith," said Sir Ronald, and claimed three qualifications: "I am an M.A. of the same university, Cambridge, and a scholar of the same college, Pembroke, as Edward Browne, who was not only the finest Persian scholar of the age but the best-loved foreigner in Iran and throughout the Bahá'í world; secondly, because I had the honour of Abbas Effendi's friendship from 1909 until his death; thirdly, I am the latest from that Front—of Haifa, Akká, Baghdád, Tíhran, Isphahan and Shíráz." Sir Ronald then went on to tell dramatically and poignantly the story of the Báb, the centenary of whose declaration was being celebrated. "Why is 1944 the centenary of this Faith? Because 100 years ago, all but two days, a young merchant of Shíráz, Sayyíd Ali Muhammad,

not yet 25 years old, declared to one follower that he was the bearer of a new message to mankind. He described himself as the Báb, meaning gate, or door, of this dispensation. His followers soon multiplied, but he spent most of his life in captivity, until in 1850 he was condemned, like Christ, Socrates and other religious innovators, to death. His execution was marked by a startling portent, which is thus recorded in a contemporary Persian "Traveller's Narrative":

"An iron nail was hammered into the middle of the staircase of the very cell wherein they were imprisoned, and two ropes were hung down. By one rope the Báb was suspended and by the other rope Aká Muhammad 'Alí, both being firmly bound in such wise that the head of that young man was on the Báb's breast. The surrounding house-tops billowed with teeming crowds. A regiment of soldiers ranged itself in three files. The first file fired; then the second file, and then the third file discharged volleys. From the fire of these volleys a mighty smoke was produced. When the smoke cleared away they saw that



Picture above shows part of the Baha'i Centenary Exhibition, which was designed to illustrate the aims purpose and underlying spiritual truths of the Baha'i Faith, to give a brief sketch of the lives of the Founders and to show the growth and development of the world communities during this first hundred years.

young man standing and the Báb seated by the side of his amanuensis, Aká Sayyid Husayn, in the very cell from the staircase of which they had suspended them. The bullets had merely cut the ropes. To neither one of them had the slightest injury resulted.

"Aká Ján Beg of Khamsa, colonel of the bodyguard, advanced; and they again bound the Báb together with that young man to the same nail. The Báb uttered certain words which those few who knew Persian understood, while the rest heard but the sound of his voice. The colonel of the regiment appeared in person. Suddenly he gave orders to fire. At this volley the bullets produced such an effect that the breasts of the victims were riddled, and their limbs, but not their faces, which were but little marred."

Speaking of his personal experiences and contact with Abdu'l-Bahá, Sir Ronald said:

My first connection with the Bahá'í Faith

dates from the beginning of this century, when it was my fortune and honour to become the Arabic pupil of Edward Browne.

"My first glimpse of Abbas Effendi was in the summer of 1909, when I drove round the Bay of Acre in an Arab cab, visited him in the barracks and marvelled at his serenity and cheerfulness after 42 years of exile and imprisonment. I kept touch with him through my confidential agent, Husain Bey Ruhi, son of a Tabriz martyr, and the "Persian Mystic" of my book "Orientations."

After the Young Turk Revolution, Abbas Effendi was released. He visited Egypt in 1913, when I had the honour of looking after him, and of presenting him to Lord Kitchener, who was deeply impressed by his personality—as who could fail to be? Then war cut him off from us and it might have gone hard with him in Haifa but for the indirect interposition of His Majesty's Government.

When, in his famous victory drive to the

North, Allenby captured Haifa, he detached me from Jerusalem to organise the British Administration there. On the evening of my arrival I visited my revered friend. "I found him sitting in spotless white. He placed at my disposal the training and talents of his community, and I appointed one or two to positions of trust, which they still continue to deserve." Later, he visited me in Jerusalem, and was held in great esteem and respect by the High Commissioner, Lord Samuel. In Egypt he presented me with a beautiful specimen of writing by the celebrated Bahá'í calligraphist, Míshqín Qalam, and with his own Persian pen box; in Palestine with an exquisite little Bokkara rug from the tomb of the Báb: all three, alas, destroyed by fire in Cyprus. When, on November 29, 1921, he was buried, 10,000 men, women and children, of many varying races and creeds, walked in the funeral procession up Mount Carmel, to lay his body in the exquisite cypress-avenued shrine.

Telegrams reached Haifa from all over the world. Mr. Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, desired the High Commissioner for Palestine to convey to the Bahá'í Community on behalf of His Majesty's Government their sympathy and condolence on the death of Sir 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas, K.B.E., and Field Marshal Lord Allenby telegraphed likewise from Egypt.

With Abbas Effendi the Apostolic and Heroic Age of the Bahá'í Faith is considered to be ended.

PUBLIC MEETING AT DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, ON MAY 23, 1944

ON Tuesday, May 23, 1844, being the actual day on which the Báb declared His mission, a public meeting was held at Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, S.W.1. Mrs. Basil Hall, daughter of Lady Blomfield, with whom Abdu'l-Bahá stayed when he visited London in 1912, was the chairman at this historic meeting, which she opened with these words:

"In the name of the Bahá'ís I bid you a very sincere welcome. We meet at a time when the revival of religion is needed. Nearly all the physical means for uniting mankind already existing: transport, radio, international organisation, the project of the universal auxiliary language and the fact that nations are interdependent is accepted, only

I have not lost contact with the Bahá'í world, and I hope I never shall. Recently I had the honour of receiving at the British Legation in Tíhran, a deputation of the Bahá'í Community, headed by Samimi, the respected Chief Munshi of the Legation, and Varga, President of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Persia. Later I was received by the Council at a tea, so sumptuous that the remembrance adds a sting to my British Ration Card. My diary of April 5, 1943, at Shíraz, tells me:

"After luncheon, off to visit the House of the Báb, leaving the car for the narrow winding streets, and shown over by Fazlullah Benana and the curator. A small but perfect courtyard, with a little blue tiled, eight feet square tank, six large red goldfish, a tiny orange tree and runner carpets round the sides, and a narrow deep well. Above, His bed and His sitting rooms (for which our hosts took off their shoes), and on the second floor the room in which in 1844 He declared His mission, to a solitary disciple."

What can I say more? Half a century ago the great Dr. Jowett, of Balliol, wrote: "This is the greatest light the world has seen since Christ, but it is too great and too close for the world to appreciate its full import." Already over many parts of the globe there are Bahá'ís actively, honourably, peaceably employed.

May this auspicious centenary prove propitious also for the early restoration of world peace."

one thing is lacking: the will of the nations to unite, and that can only come by the power of the holy spirit, and it is by a new outpouring of this mighty power that we give you glad tidings today. Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed that religion is one and not many and that the truth of religion is progressively revealed to mankind through the ages by the manifestations of God—the purpose being to combine men together in spirit and in social unity, and this can only come about by universal love and understanding of the search after truth through constructive discussion which will abolish all prejudice and superstition, because truth is one and no part of truth can counteract another, although there are as many aspects of truth as there are minds to perceive them.

"We believe that rivalry among religions is the negation of religion itself and wholly alien to the divine purpose and hostile to the design of God. These false rivalries have arisen mainly through ignorance, but partly through lust for power and claims to the monopoly of grace and through intolerance with regard to super-imposed doctrines. The inward truth of religion is one but the various forms of worship express the differing natures of men. Variety is in harmony with nature. In a beautiful garden you do not see only roses or lilies, you see many kinds of flowers and trees and that is what makes the garden beautiful. It is only the weeds of prejudice and superstition that must be rooted out. They cause contempt and hatred, and the only good and wholesome kind of rivalry there could be is a contest to remove these barriers and a race towards wider unities. There are many signs of this today and we rejoice in these signs. The Bahá'í faith is not merely one of many sects and many churches, it is the unifying force. Unity and not uniformity is our motto. Our faith is eminently reasonable and practical. There is nothing vague in the programme. To become a Bahá'í you don't only not have to renounce your former faith, you must not renounce it. Your own religion becomes more real and profound when you realise its majestic continuity with all other faiths. The search after truth is one of our main principles. No one is asked to believe anything blindly. By your presence here today you have proved yourselves seekers after the truth. It is difficult to grasp its magnitude at first, but we hope what you hear today will interest you profoundly. Now I am going to call on other speakers who will give you the tradition of this wonderful religion."

The other speakers at this meeting, which aimed at presenting an outline of the Bahá'í Faith and the views of one or two eminent personalities who have contacted it on what the Bahá'í teachings have to offer the world, were :

W. Tudor Pole, Shaw Desmond, Hannen Swaffer, Sir William Hornell, the Rev. Walter Winn, and Dr. Harold Moody.

The Bahá'í speakers were :

Hasan Balyuzi, David Hofman, Norman Smith, an American Bahá'í over here with the United States Army and who was in London during the Centenary celebrations, and Miss Vivian Isenthal, who read some messages sent to the meeting.

Hasan Balyuzi gave the following account of the life and mission of the Báb, which is reprinted in full since this day commemorated the declaration of the Báb :

"This week all over the world the Bahá'ís are celebrating the centenary of the Declaration of the Báb. Who was the Báb and what were His claims ? Very briefly, the Báb was a young merchant who declared to a seeker after truth, on the eve of May 23, 1844, that He was the promised one awaited by the world of Islam and that He had come to herald the advent of a still mightier revelation. He had only six years of ministry, of which four years were spent in prison, and in July, 1850, he was shot. That is the life of the Báb in very bare outline.

"Let us now see something more of Him in the different periods of His life. First of all, when He was a child, we have the testimony of His old tutor to the extraordinary powers that this child of seven possessed. This is not a matter of rumour or legend, there is the testimony of the man who was His tutor and who in later years followed and defended His cause. He was very bright, intelligent, kind and considerate, and one day this tutor despaired of having anything to impart to this very intelligent child and took Him to His uncle, who was His guardian, and told him that 'with all my learning I have nothing to impart to this child.'

"Next we see Him on the evening of May 23, 1844. A young man of 24, in search of the promised Deliverer, arrived at the gates of Shiráz, the famous city in South Persia, and was met by the Báb, who invited him to His house. This invitation was given with such grace and courtesy that he could not but accept it and there in His own house the Báb declared to this seeker that He was the one whom he was seeking. He produced proofs, and in the words of the speaker who said : 'I sat spellbound by His utterance, forgetful of time. I was blinded by the dazzling splendour of this revelation . . . excitement, joy, awe and wonder stirred the depths of my soul . . . the universe seemed but as a handful of dust in my grasp.'

"At last the Bab arose, and in a voice that thrilled His amazed guest, declared : 'This night, this very hour, will in the days to come be celebrated as one of the greatest and most significant of all festivals. Do thou render thanks to God for having graciously assisted thee to attain thine heart's desire, and for

having quaffed from the sealed wine of His utterance. Well is it with them that attain thereunto.'

"Seventeen others came of their own accord, met the Báb, accepted Him, and to them He gave the name of the Letters of the Living. They were the first ministers of His faith and He sent them out to teach and to spread the glad tidings. Here are a few extracts from the farewell address He gave them :

"My beloved friends, you are the bearers of the name of God in this day . . . You are witnesses of the Dawn of the promised Day of God . . . Purge your hearts of worldly desires and let angelic virtues be your adorning. The days when idle worship was deemed sufficient are ended. The time is come when naught but the purest motive, supported by deeds of stainless purity can ascend unto the throne of the Most High . . . Beseech the Lord, your God, that no earthly entanglements, no worldly affections . . . may tarnish the purity or embitter the sweetness of the grace that flows through you. I am preparing you for the advent of a mighty Day . . . Scatter throughout the length and breadth of this land, and with steadfast feet and sanctified hearts prepare the way for His coming.'

"They went out and practically all of them gave up their lives in the path of the new cause.

"Next we see Him under arrest, confined to the house of His uncle, and then we see Him in prison in the mountains of North-West Persian, under the charge of a very rough warden, noted for his brutality ; but such was His charm that this same warden opened the prison doors to all visitors. And so they took Him to the castle of Chihriq, and there again the warden of that castle, notorious for his rough methods, yielded to the charm of his prisoner.

"Finally, they decided to put an end to His life. Persecution was raging all over the land ; 10,000 suffered martyrdom. They brought Him to Tabriz, and with a faithful follower He was shot by 750 rifles, but when the smoke cleared, there was no sign of the Báb. He was sitting in a chamber close by, finishing a conversation that had been rudely interrupted earlier in the day. He was led out again. The first regiment refused to fire again. A second regiment was called, and this time the Báb was killed. Although the Báb was killed, although nearly all of His Letters of the

Living had suffered martyrdom and 10,000 had died for this cause, and although it seemed that its enemies had succeeded in extinguishing the Light of the Báb, nevertheless the cause lived. Now we will hear the rest of what happened."

Mr. David Hofman then gave an able presentation of the life and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. "The reason why the cause of the Báb flourished," he said, "was that it came from God and could not be extinguished." Speaking of the application of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh to the needs of this day, he said : "The very first thing which Bahá'u'lláh says to mankind today is this : law and order must first be established, then civilisation can follow. Bahá'u'lláh's plan for world reconstruction starts with the human being. A firm foundation can only come through faith, through religion. Wherever the power of religion has failed in the past, society has decayed. Therefore Bahá'u'lláh shows mankind how to restore himself to a knowledge of why he is here, and where he is going." Mr. Hofman concluded his talk with these words : "It is on the foundation of oneness that the Bahá'í faith raises a structure of unity ; a world parliament, to be elected by the nations of the world ; a supreme tribunal ; an international auxiliary language ; a world economic system, functioning for the benefit of the whole human race : these are the outward signs of world order, the delineation of that Kingdom of God promised to mankind from the beginning of its history : 'The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens !' It is on that spiritual truth that the Bahá'í faith offers to mankind today a plan for world reconstruction."

The Rev. Walter Winn spoke next and said that he was surprised to have been invited to take part in the meeting as he was a non-conformist, with more than a tendency to spiritualism and that he had grave doubts about himself and therefore about the universe at large, "but on the other hand," he said, "I claim to be a devoted follower of Jesus Christ and I am here because I believe that my Master would tell me to come, and to say to you that the principles contained in your great and wonderful literature are the principles of Christianity. As I read the account of that most remarkable founder of yours, I said, my mind for sixty years has been travelling in this direction. I have read your books and there isn't a bit of difference between

your conclusions and the actual teaching of Jesus Christ, and consequently we can all be one. There need be no division. There is nothing cranky about those books... There is nothing cranky in the brain of that great man who founded this wonderful movement. Get on with it. Don't rely upon big temples and big buildings. Circulate your ideas. They will saturate and some morning they will become dynamite, and the sooner the better.

"I was preaching in a Yorkshire town one morning and again in the evening. After the morning service I took a walk and I heard some people singing "All hail the power." I said that's me, so in I went. I sang with sincerity. I enjoyed the service, but after it there was a communion service, so I kept my seat. One of the deacons asked me to leave, because he had no evidence that I was one of the elect. I got up and walked out. And I will take good care not to walk back. It is that division that is the curse of the world today. You will not get rid of war, or the terrible inequalities of life until the divisions among religions are cured."

Mr. Winn recounted some amusing anecdotes and brought laughter into a meeting which by its very nature was solemn. Abdu'l Bahá loved laughter and happiness, and this certainly seemed to draw the audience and the speakers closer together.

Mr. Tudor Pole's moving and intimate memoirs of Abdu'l Bahá followed, and are given here as fully as possible. He said: "I don't propose to tell you the story of the life of Abdu'l-Bahá, son of the founder of the Bahá'í Faith, you can find his history set forth in the excellent books available at the Bahá'í Centres. But as very few present have had the great privilege of meeting and talking with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, you may be interested in one or two reminiscences with regard to this wonderful teacher who did not wish to accept the title of 'master' or 'prophet' but who simply desired to be known as a servant of the Father. I remember in the spring of 1919, when the Great War that was to end all wars was over, visiting 'Abdu'l-Bahá at his home near Haifa, on the slopes of Mount Carmel, when I tried to congratulate him, in the belief that a final Armageddon had been fought and won, he told me that the war just ended had sown the seeds for a far greater struggle than anything that had yet happened in human history and that I should live to witness this catastrophic event. 'Abdu'l-Bahá

added that so far as the material issues were concerned, aerial warfare would prove the decisive factor. You may imagine my consternation. I reminded 'Abdu'l-Bahá of what he had said in Paris in March, 1913, which I will read to you: 'Do you know in what Day you are living? Do you realize in what Dispensation you are alive? Have you not heard in the Holy Scriptures that at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a Day which is the Sun of all the past Days? This is the Day in which the Lord of Hosts has come down from heaven on the clouds of glory! This is the Day in which the inhabitants of all the world shall enter under the shelter of the Word of God.

"This is the Day whose real sovereign is His Highness the Almighty. This is the Day when the East and the West shall embrace each other like unto two lovers. This is the Day in which war and contention shall be forgotten. This is the Day in which nations and governments will enter into an eternal bond of amity and conciliation. 'This Century is the fulfilment of the Promised Century.'

"I asked how he could reconcile this statement with the reference to the coming of a still greater Armageddon than the Great War of 1914 to 1918. This was his reply: 'No word spoken by my father or by myself has been spoken in vain.' It is clear, therefore, that this great seer foresaw not only the tribulations through which we are now passing, but also the coming of the Most Great Peace before the present century ends. Out of the darkness of our grave afflictions will be born the light of the new Day. This Day is even now approaching.

"Let me tell you the story that is well known but is worth repeating in regard to 'Abdul-Bahá's presence at the time of the British attack upon Haifa in the summer of 1918. Some of us in Allenby's army were much alarmed by the information brought out of Haifa by our Intelligence agents, to the effect that the enemy intended to crucify 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his family before evacuating the city. It transpired that the Bahá'ís in Haifa gathered round their great leader and many of them encamped in the gardens round his house. One of those present told me later that during this period of extreme tension 'Abdu'l-Bahá used these words: 'All is well, the power of the spirit is with us. Not a single shell from the British guns will fall within the city, which will be taken undamaged within 48

hours and its people freed.' As a matter of fact, owing to the incorrect sighting of the guns, the British shells were falling harmlessly into the bay, and the prophecy just referred to was fulfilled.

"I remember an occasion when 'Abdu'l-Bahá took me to see the Akká prison house where he and his father and the family had been confined for nearly 40 years, and how he spoke about the Lord's Prayer in these words: 'Remember there is prophecy as well as petition in the great prayer which His Holiness the Christ gave to the world. The prophecies in the Lord's Prayer will be fulfilled, and perhaps more quickly than is realised; His kingdom shall come, His will shall be done on earth; daily bread shall be given to all; sins shall be forgiven and as each one turns to seek the kingdom that is within, so shall all good things be added to him.' 'Lay the foundation of your affection,' said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'in the very centre of your spiritual being, at the very heart of your consciousness, and let it not be shaken by adverse winds.'

"Do not expect to find peace without until you have attained that inward peace which is built on the rock of Faith, and so cannot be shaken by outer tribulations.'

"The Bahá'í teaching does not ask a man to desert the Faith of his forefathers but to live it, in unity and fellowship with all men irrespective of their colour, caste or creed, for we are all leaves of one tree.'

"Ere long,' says Bahá'u'lláh, 'God will sail His Ark upon thee.'

"Have we each begun to prepare a harbour within, in order to receive the Ark of the Covenant of Peace, so that the New Day may be manifested through us?"

Shaw Desmond expressed his pleasure at being on a platform that was "essentially international" and made a witty and eloquent speech, of which there is, unfortunately, no available record.

Hannen Swaffer also made a characteristic speech, in which he recalled receiving a visit from Mrs. Hanford Ford, in whom he met "a very gracious and charming lady who was obviously breathing the spirit of what I heard for the first time when I heard of the Bahá'í Faith. I have since read and found out a lot about your community and I know it to be one of those great movements which are destined to build the magnificent future out of the unhappy past.

"It is time," he said, "that there was brought into being a great world movement to merge differences in religion and to share the building up of the future."

Mr. Swaffer recounted picturesquely the story of the gods who, as a jest, broke up the diamond of truth and scattered it over the earth and then, watching the earth's inhabitants from their celestial heights, laughed to see how they eagerly ran to gather up the fragments, each one thinking that his fragment was the whole truth.

Sir William Hornell spoke very briefly and with a touching humility, warmth and sincerity. He recalled Martha Root's visit to him while he was in Hong Kong and said, "In the students' union of the University I arranged for a meeting, to which there came Chinese students and some members of the University staff. Martha Root gave her message. She is dead; the University is a looted shell, but the memory of that evening abides. I have many friends among the Bahá'ís and what has impressed me most is their kindness to one another and also to those outside their pale, and it is that spirit which I think is going to contribute a great deal to the success of the movement. I venture in all humility to warn the Bahá'ís not to be carried away by the slogans and clichés of the market place. I have read in one of your books that 'Abdu'l-Bahá concluded his message to the congress of races in London with these words:

"Let brotherhood be felt and seen among you and carry ye its quickening power throughout the world."

"To this I would say 'Amen'."

Dr. Harold Moody brought greetings from the League of Coloured Peoples and his own personal greetings. He spoke only a few words, but made a deep impression on the audience by the calm dignity of his personality and the beautiful quality of his voice. He said, "I feel you are engaged upon a great movement. You have triumphed over many difficulties and I am convinced you are determined to go on to still greater triumphs and I want to say God bless and prosper you. Out of this revelation something is going to come for the benefit of humanity. It rests upon every one of us to play our part effectively. You want not only to have a great faith but to practice that faith day by day in your lives... In the world that is dawning no one is too young and no one too old to heal the breaches which divide mankind."

Norman Smith spoke with moving simplicity of Bahá'u'lláh's claim to nothing but the hearts of mankind. "Addressing the Kings and rulers of the earth, Bahá'u'lláh told them He had not come to wrest their kingdoms from them. 'My mission is to capture and keep the hearts of men'." He spoke of the Bahá'is meeting in the Bahá'í Temple on the shores of Lake Michigan on this day, and concluded by saying: "It is the Bahá'í message to make everyone happy and enjoy the fruits of the spiritual conquest of the hearts and minds of all mankind, so that all men might live as brothers and the kingdom of God shall be established on earth."

Miss Isenthal closed the meeting with reading a message from Sir John Martin Harvey, who had originally accepted to be present at the meeting, sent very shortly before his death:

"You honour me with a request that I should add my small brick to the exalted edifice of the Bahá'í teaching. Its happy creed so passionately urged and so convincingly stated is an inspiration to all who work and

who, in the words of Kipling, have realised the significance of 'No one shall work for money and no one shall work for fame, but all for the joy of the working'."

"I would like to add my conviction to your teaching that 'absolute equality is a chimera' which, socially, is entirely impracticable. It has become a slogan to many workers, reliance upon which will only lead to a cruel disillusionment. The only 'equality' is that which any man may attain by being prominent in his work. It has been truly said that 'every man can do some one thing better than any other man.' So let our ambition be, no matter how humble our work may appear, to be of the aristocracy of work. And if to 'work is to pray' may not this noble ambition to be among the elect of the workers of the world, bring us by steps to the dream of your great Teacher of a Great Universal Peace, against which if any government among your take up arms to destroy that peace, 'the whole human race,' he tells, 'shall resolve with every power at its disposal to destroy.'"

THE STORY OF A WORLD FAITH

3. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

(Continued)

Not only the Bábís thronged from distant parts to Baghdád to learn and to obtain inward strength from Bahá'u'lláh, many a seeker outside the Bábí ranks came as well. The learned brought their problems to Bahá'u'lláh. During this Baghdád period, Bahá'u'lláh revealed three of the most well-known of His works,—The Hidden Words, The Seven Valleys and the Book of Certitude.

The Hidden Words present those eternal verities that stand at the core of every revealed religion. The power of their sweep, the exquisite tenderness of their imagery and description, the majesty,—over-whelming majesty—of their conception, captivate and enthral. Bahá'u'lláh writes of the theme, the ever-nearness of God, the abundant, ceaseless bestowal of His love and His grace, and the denial of that love by Man:—

"O Son of Man! veiled in My immemorial Being and in the ancient eternity of My

Essence I knew My love for thee, therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee My image and revealed to thee My Beauty."

"O Son of Man! If thou lovest Me, turn away from thyself; and if thou seekest My pleasure, regard not thine own; that thou mayest die in Me and I may eternally live in thee."

"O Son of Spirit! Noble have I created thee, yet thou hast abased thyself. Rise then unto that for which thou wast created."

"O Son of the Supreme! I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve? I made the light to shed on thee its splendour. Why dost thou veil thyself therefrom?"

The Seven Valleys was composed in answer to a learned Súfí mystic. It describes in a language of matchless beauty and tremendous power, the stages that the seeker must needs traverse in his spiritual quest.

The end of all search is to know God, and that knowledge is to be attained through His Manifestation. Bahá'u'lláh describes Seven Valleys of stages: The Valleys of Search, Love, Knowledge, Unity, Contentment, Wonderment, True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness.

The Valley of Search: "In this Valley, the wayfarer rides the steed of patience. Without patience the wayfarer in this journey will reach nowhere and attain no goal. Were he to strive for ages without beholding the beauty of the Friend, he should not become dejected... In this journey the seeker reaches a stage wherein he finds all beings madly in search of the Friend..."

The Valley of Love: "In this Valley, the wayfarer rides the steed of pain; for without pain this journey will never end. Every moment he would joyfully offer a hundred lives in the way of the Beloved and at every step He would throw a thousand heads in the path of the Friend... love admits of no life and seeks no existence. In death it seeks life and in abasement seeks glory..."

The Valley of Knowledge: "...In this Valley the wayfarer in his pure insight, finds no contradiction or difference in the creation of God... Many a knowledge he will find concealed in ignorance and hosts of wisdom manifest in knowledge..."

The Valley of Unity: "...He hears with the ears of God and sees the mysteries of divine creation with the eyes of God... He will gaze upon all things with the eye of oneness and will find the Divine Sun from the Heavenly Day-Spring shedding the same light and splendour upon all beings and will see the lights of singleness reflected and visible upon all creation."

The Valley of Contentment: "In this Valley he will feel the breezes of Divine Contentment wafting from the plane of the spirit; he will burn the veils of want; and with inward and outward eyes, he will witness within and without all things, the meaning of the verse: 'In that Day, God will make all independent out of His abundance.' His sorrow will be changed into joy, and his grief will be replaced by happiness; and his dejection and melancholy will yield to gladness and exultation..."

The Valley of Wonderment: "...Now he sees the temple of Wealth as want itself, and the essence of independence as sheer impotence. Now he is astonished by the beauty

of the All Glorious One, and now he wearies of his own existence... For in this Valley the wayfarer is thrown into utter confusion... He witnesses a wondrous world and a new creation at every instant, and adds wonderment to wonderment; and he is astonished at the works of the Lord of Oneness."

The Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness: "This state is that of dying from self and living in God, of being poor in self, and becoming rich in the Desired One... And when you have attained this lofty plane and reached this mighty state, you will find the Friend and forget all else..."

"The seven stages of this journey which have no visible end in the world of time, may be traversed by the detached wayfarer in seven steps, if not in seven breaths, nay in one breath—if, God willing, invisible assistance favour him..."

The Book of Certitude (The Kitáb-i-Iqán) was written in answer to questions sent by an Uncle of the Báb. In this book which the present Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith has described as "of unsurpassed pre-eminence amongst the writings of the Author of the Bahá'í Revelation," Bahá'u'lláh unravels the symbolism of the Scriptures of the past, establishes the fact of progressive Revelation, and adduces proofs to substantiate the claims forwarded by the Báb. No single quotation can adequately present a picture of the vast field covered by the contents of the Book of Certitude. Speaking of the powers and the signs of God manifest in the entire realm of creation, Bahá'u'lláh says: "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth is a direct evidence of the revelation within it of the attributes and names of God, inasmuch as within every atom are enshrined the signs that bear eloquent testimony to the revelation of that most great light. Methinks, but for the potency of that revelation, no being could ever exist. How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop! To a supreme degree is this true of man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and names of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed... Man, the noblest and most perfect of all created things, excelleth them all in the

intensity of this revelation, and is a fuller expression of its glory. And of all men, the most accomplished, the most distinguished, and the most excellent are the Manifestations of the Sun of Truth. Nay all else besides these Manifestations live by the operation of their will, and move and have their being through the outpourings of their grace... These tabernacles of holiness, these primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him who is the Invisible of the Invisibles. By the revelation of these gems of divine virtue all the names and attributes of God, such as knowledge and power, sovereignty and dominion, mercy and wisdom, glory, bounty and grace, are made manifest."

These Manifestations of God, the Founders of the world's religions are the Bearers of God's will and purpose to mankind. They are the Logos—the Word of God. In them nothing can be seen but the Reality and the Light of God.

This is only one aspect of the great theme unfolded by the Book of Certitude.

Thus Bahá'u'lláh wrote and spoke during those years at Baghdád. The Community of the Báb was once again dynamic and alive. And the foes once again conspired to effect its extinction. The hostile clergy gathered together and sent an emissary to Bahá'u'lláh. He offered to supply them with any proof they desired, but on one condition,—they should pledge themselves to accept his authority, if He succeeded in providing them with the proof agreed upon by them. Their purpose, however, was not to know the truth, and fearing lest Bahá'u'lláh should really bring forth the proof demanded by them, they refused to give any pledge. The man who acted as an intermediary between them and Bahá'u'lláh, himself a cleric, was disgusted by their behaviour, and as long as he lived he told the people the truth of what actually transpired.

Next, the adversaries supported by the Persian Consul in Baghdád, addressed themselves to the Government of the Sháh, and asked for definite action against Bahá'u'lláh. The tyrannical ruler in Tíhrán who once hoped that his repressive measures had put an end to the mighty work of the Báb, now witnessing the disappointment of his cherished hopes, resolved to strike yet another blow at the advocates of the new Faith. He instructed

his ministers to enter into negotiations with the authorities of the Othoman Empire. He wanted Bahá'u'lláh to be escorted to the frontier and handed over to his government. Failing that, Bahá'u'lláh should be removed from Iráq and the vicinity of the Persian border to some remote region. The Othoman Government agreed to the latter course and summoned Bahá'u'lláh to Istanbul.

That was in April, 1863. No one knew what awaited Bahá'u'lláh at the end of that long journey to the Seat of the Othoman Empire. There was great sorrow amongst the Bábís. And on April 21, Bahá'u'lláh moved out of Baghdád to the garden of Ridván outside the city gates. A friendly Pashá had put that garden at Bahá'u'lláh's disposal for the short period prior to His departure. The twelve days that Bahá'u'lláh spent in the garden of Ridván constitute the most momentous festival in the Bahá'í Calendar, because it was on the very first day of this period that Bahá'u'lláh told His sorrowing friends the tidings which their souls craved to hear,—that He was the One promised by the Báb, the Promised One of all ages,—the Lord of Hosts.

"This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendours of the Light that shineth from the face of thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. Verily We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have then called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days."

Grief was dispelled. Instead there was great joy.

(To be continued).

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It is intended that the *New World Order* magazine shall provide a forum for the discussion of the problems of our age and of the various aspects of life in this century, in relation to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Articles and correspondence are warmly invited.

BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

A limited edition of

THE HIDDEN WORDS

of Bahá'u'lláh, bound in paper boards, is now available at 1s. 6d.

It is hoped that a limited edition of a selection of Bahá'í Prayers will shortly be ready. The price will probably be 2s. 6d.

For Your Reading List:

MR. ERNEST T. WILLIAMS, O.B.E., M.I.E.E., in a pamphlet entitled *The United Nations and a New World Organization*, published by The Victory Fellowship, 1 Overlinks Drive, Parkstone, Dorset (price 9d.), puts forward a plan for a world organisation, clearly illustrated with diagrams. This book should interest all those concerned with replanning the world on a truly international basis. His plan covers many fields of activity, and we have every sympathy with his final recommendation: "As future world peace and progress can be ensured only by international goodwill, action should be taken to educate the world to become internationally minded. Provision should therefore be made in the World Organisation for a live and permanent publicity and propaganda department whose continual effort should be directed towards strengthening a deep sense of duty and service and a growing realisation of the brotherhood of man."

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

THE Báb, The Forerunner, declaration 1844, martyrdom, 1850.

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

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

SOME 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.