

NEW WORLD ORDER



The hall showing the entrance to the room
in the Mansion of Bahjís where Bahá'u'lláh
received Prof. Edward Granville Browne.

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BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

O ! THOU Invisible Essence of the Universe
 Whence sprang adown the ages glorious orbs
 To illumine the abysmal darkness of mankind
 And manifest on earth the self of God—
 What hast Thou now bestowed to clear the
 mists

That still o'erhang the consciousness of soul
 And hide from it the vision of the Infinite ?
 Out of the East, as ever, comes the dawn
 Of a new day. Again the wondrous light
 Shines from the horizon of Thy boundlessness,
 Only this day in such effulgent power
 As ne'er before. There leaps into the sky
 A sun which to the eyes of groping men,

Reveals a vista to that perfect day,
 Not yet a distant day when all the earth
 Bathed in Its Beauty shall be purified
 And all Thy creatures realize their oneness
 With all their kind and Thee.

Bahá'u'lláh

God's Glory ! True Revealer of the Sign !
 For by Thy potent Word, from God the
 Infinite
 The seals have fallen from the hidden
 mysteries
 And man stands face to face with Truth and
 God.

H. H. ROMER.

THE STORY OF A WORLD FAITH (9).

(2) BAHÁ'U'LLÁH.

Bahá'u'háll reached the prison of 'Akká on August 31, 1868. Those who consigned Him to that grim citadel, reserved for the desperadoes of the Ottoman realms, hoped that this incarceration would spell His doom and extinguish His life. The air of 'Akká was proverbial for its vileness. They used to say that a bird flying over that city would fall dead. And its water carried disease and pestilence. Yet this was indeed a city that had gathered renown in the course of centuries. It was the ancient Ptolemais, the St. Jean d'Acre of the days of the Crusades which ran the gauntlet of Richard the lion-hearted, the city which refused to bow to the might of Napoleon.

Even more. David had spoken of it as "The Strong City." Hosea had called it, "The gate that looketh towards the East" to which "The glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East." Muhammad had regarded it as "A city in Syria to which God hath shown His special mercy." And again He had thus testified to its pre-eminent rank, "Blessed the man that hath visited 'Akká and blessed he that hath visited the visitor of 'Akká."

But the 'Akká which opened its gates to receive as a Prisoner the Deliverer of the world was a city sunk in the depths of misery. To it came the Lord of Hosts and in this way the promises and the prophecies of old were fulfilled.

"When Bahá'u'lláh came to His prison in the Holy Land, the wise men realized that the glad tidings which God gave through the tongue of the Prophets two or three thousand years before, were again manifested, and that God was faithful to His promise; for to some of the Prophets He had revealed and given the good news that 'The Lord of Hosts should be manifested in the Holy Land.' All these promises were fulfilled; and it is difficult to understand how Bahá'u'lláh could have been obliged to leave Persia, and to pitch His tent in this Holy Land, but for the persecution of His enemies, His banishment and exile." This is how 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Son of Bahá'u'lláh, and the Centre of His Covenant, described this momentous event.

Life in the citadel of 'Akká was indeed hard and hazardous. Furthermore, the prisoners

were viewed with utmost hostility and suspicion by the townsmen. On their arrival they were greeted at the landing-place by a group of idle onlookers who had gathered there in a mocking mood to see "The God of the Persians." The first night in the prison, they were, in the words of Bahá'u'lláh, "deprived of either food or drink... They even begged for water and were refused." Their rations consisted of three flat loaves of black and unpalatable bread for each person. Later slight concessions were made, but food remained pitifully inadequate and the water was polluted. Before long disease raged amongst them. All but two went down with illness. Three of them died, and the guards would not attend to their burial without payment. Bahá'u'lláh gave the carpet on which He slept to be sold so as to provide the money which the soldiers demanded. Even then, they took the money and buried the dead without a shroud and a coffin. In spite of their afflictions the prisoners were happy because they shared the trials of their Lord and dwelt near His Person. Bahá'u'lláh writes, "None knoweth what befell Us, except God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing."

In the early part of Bahá'u'lláh's incarceration, His followers in the outside world received little news of Him. Some travelled, even on foot, from far-off Persia to 'Akká and found the gates of the citadel shut in their faces. They could not gain admittance into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, and had perforce to content themselves with a momentary glimpse of His figure as He stood behind the bars and they on the farther side of the moats which surrounded the prison. Only a passing glimpse was the reward of months of toiling over the peaks of Persia and the deserts of 'Irâq and Syria, and yet that was enough to kindle a more vigorous flame in their hearts, enough to deepen their dedication to the Faith which they professed at peril to their lives.

For two years Bahá'u'lláh remained within the prison walls until a movement of the Ottoman armies brought release from that strict bondage. The citadel was needed to accommodate the troops. Thereupon Bahá'u'lláh and the rest of the exiles were led out, but not to freedom. They were still held as

prisoners inside the town. Four months before this event a further tragedy, dire and poignant, had cast its shadows upon them. That was the loss of a twenty-two year old son of Bahá'u'lláh. Mírzá Mihdí, entitled the Purest Branch; had shared his Father's exile from childhood. One day while walking on the roof he fell through a skylight and received fatal injuries.

Release from the barrack prison, opened a new chapter of tribulations. For one thing, the people of 'Akká were extremely ill-disposed towards the exiles whom they regarded as criminal outlaws, enemies of order and religion and decency. An awful act committed not long after by a few amongst them, added to the furies of the populace. When the Ottoman authorities sent Bahá'u'lláh to 'Akká they included in the band of His followers accompanying Him, four of the accomplices of Azal, to spy upon them. These four never lost an opportunity to torment the exiles and spread falsehoods. Their plots and schemings brought fresh sorrows in their wake, further incited the townsmen against Bahá'u'lláh and placed His life in great jeopardy. On His part Bahá'u'lláh repeatedly exhorted His followers to forbearance, and counselled them to avoid any deed which would bear, no matter how remotely, the resemblance of retaliation. But the treachery and malevolence of the adversaries waxed high. Then, seven of the exiles chose to disregard the injunctions of Bahá'u'lláh, and slew three of the evil men. This flagrant act not only aroused the people, but, forcing the intervention of the officials, subjected the Person of Bahá'u'lláh to arrest and interrogation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was put in chains for one night. Bahá'u'lláh viewing this event wrote, "My captivity cannot harm Me. That which can harm Me is of the conduct of those who love Me, who claim to be related to Me, and yet perpetuate what causeth My heart and My pen to groan." And also, "My captivity can bring on Me no shame. Nay, by My life, it conferreth on Me glory. That which can make Me ashamed is the conduct of such of My followers who profess to love Me, yet in fact follow the Evil One."

Such was the measure of Bahá'u'lláh's sufferings in the prison-city of 'Akká.

Although the foe was bitter and relentless, although rank upon rank of violent prejudice, unfeigned hatred, blind fanaticism and fierce animosity were pitted against Him, although

the future seemed indescribably dark and threatening, Bahá'u'lláh withstood every tide of adversity with such fortitude, serenity, and majesty of mien and bearing that inevitably inspired awe and respect amongst the people and gradually stilled their passions. The officers of the government into whose custody He was placed, began to see in their Prisoner a Being far exalted above the level of men. Finally, a time came when they felt unable to enforce the harsh and drastic rules which they were commissioned to apply.

Bahá'ís came from far and wide, and with little difficulty attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. High officials of the Ottoman government sought interviews with the prisoner to pay Him their respects. The Muftí of 'Akká who was once a bigoted opponent gave Him his allegiance. The governor, a man of high standing, wished to render Him a service and was told by Him to repair instead the aqueduct outside the town which had become derelict, and thus insure the water supply of 'Akká. And the people said that the air of their town had taken a decided turn for the better since Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in their midst. Later another governor made it known that should Bahá'u'lláh wish to leave 'Akká for the countryside He would not be prevented.

However, nine years passed before Bahá'u'lláh walked out of the city-gates. One day He said, "I have not gazed on verdure for nine years. The country is the world of the soul, the city is the world of bodies." Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá knew that the time was approaching when His Father would move out of the confines of 'Akká. He found a garden in the plains and rented it—the garden of Na'mayn which is laid in the middle of a river, and is now known as the garden of Ridván, a name given to it by Bahá'u'lláh Himself. It was at the garden of Ridván, outside Baghdád, that Bahá'u'lláh had revealed His divine mission, long before, in April, 1863. A residence was prepared, but Bahá'u'lláh considering Himself still a Prisoner, would not agree to leave the city walls. At last the Muftí of 'Akká went to plead with Him—"God forbid! Who has the power to make you a prisoner. You have kept yourself in prison."

After two years in the garden of Ridván, Bahá'u'lláh transferred His residence to the Mansion of Bahjí, some two miles away. The Mansion is a lofty and a palatial home, not

far from the sea. From its upper part the blue waters of the Mediterranean, the minarets of 'Akká and in the distance the outline of Mount Carmel, can be seen across the plains. Many a time Bahá'u'lláh visited Haifa and pitched His tent on Mount Carmel. This He had foretold while yet a captive in the barracks of 'Akká—"Fear not, these doors shall be opened, My tent shall be pitched on Mount Carmel, and the utmost joy shall be realised."

Bahjí was a palace, but life at Bahjí was simple and far from ostentatious luxury. It was there that Professor Edward Granville Browne, the distinguished orientalist and Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, then at the outset of his brilliant academic career, visited Bahá'u'lláh in April, 1890. Later Edward Browne wrote an account of that visit and bequeathed to posterity a unique document—a pen-portrait of Bahá'u'lláh. To-day a visitor to Bahjí can read it before entering the room, once occupied by Bahá'u'lláh, the very room where that memorable interview took place, as it is suitably framed and placed on the wall. And here it is:—

"My conductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then, with a quick movement of the hand, he withdrew, and, as I passed, replaced the curtain; and I found myself in a large apartment, along the upper end of which ran a low divan, while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going, and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me), a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner, where the divan met the wall, sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head-dress of the kind called *táj* by dervishes (but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's

very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet-black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to the waist seemed to belie. No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain!

"A mild dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued: 'Praise be to God that thou hast attained! . . . Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile . . . We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer-up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. . . . That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? . . . Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come . . . Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? . . . Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind? These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.'

"Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words, which, besides many others, I heard from Bahá. Let those who read them consider well with themselves whether such doctrines merit death and bonds, and whether the world is more likely to gain or lose by their diffusion."

(To be continued).

H.M.B.

"Therefore to-day, victory neither has been nor will ever be opposition to anyone, nor strife with any person; but rather what is well-pleasing is that the cities of men's hearts, which are under the dominion of the hosts of selfishness and lust, should be subdued by the sword of the word of wisdom and of exhortation."

Bahá'u'lláh

THE PLACE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY

By DAVID AND MARION HOFMAN.

THE relationship between the individual and society is the basic problem of our time. The old social moulds are shattered; attempts to establish new ones have fostered in this century, the greatest wars, the greatest revolutions, the most wide-spread unrest known to history. The problem occupies the international stage as the major cause of mistrust between nations: while nations themselves are striving to solve it within their own borders. The ancient and populous East awakes with new vigour to seek a better answer than the immemorial one, and the potent millions of Islām seethe with new aspirations in a new age.

The central figure of this drama is man—a man. He is caught in a vast whirlpool of economic, political, social, spiritual, scientific theories, facts and broken traditions. He seeks vainly for any firm foothold, unable to establish a relationship between himself and the chaotic universe. He is lost unless there crystallizes, out of this twentieth century melting-pot, some organic order which will again harmonise and make purposeful the myriad energies of human life.

The catalyst which promotes this crystallization is the revelation, in human terms, of the Divine purpose for the age. Many will accept that Divine guidance—the direct intervention of Providence—is the sole hope for mankind. Bahá'ís believe that such guidance has been given by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, and they see in the world order associated with His Name, the true and merciful answer to the chaos of our day.

His teachings are effective through a renewal of faith and a reorientation of citizenship, involving a dissolution of those universal prejudices which restrict individual relationships to classes, races, colours, nations, members of religious systems or in the extreme, the egocentric individual.

The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, though still embryonic, has yet evolved sufficiently in certain aspects to be more than theoretical. Its spiritual foundations are known, and it has developed from the purely personal stage of individual service and love, to the formative stage of group organisation, establishment of authority and administrative procedure.

The individual in the Bahá'í World is in harmony with the needs of the age. He is truly a world citizen, and for him the historical conflicts are resolved in an ultimate loyalty to mankind. "The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens," wrote Bahá'u'lláh, and "Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country, let him rather glory in this that he loves his kind."

The Bahá'í world citizen has a compelling incentive to an active, vigorous, useful life. He is established on a conscious relationship to God. He knows the source of his life, its purpose, and the path he must follow to make it fruitful. He is required "to strive by day and by night to progress along the path of human endeavour"; he must show his confidence in the Divine purpose by pursuing "his profession and calling and relying upon God, as in His hands is the destiny of all his servants." His personal life can become a "mighty sign of God," through prayer, work and worship, displayed in social action. His love of God, the moving force of his life, must be expressed in social citizenship; retirement from the world and ascetism are not acceptable.

In the sphere of social action, the individual Bahá'í can be clearer about his rights and duties than was possible in the past. His economical, political, and social rights are established in Scripture, and are not dependent upon inference, conventional interpretation, or public opinion.

His economic rights are available in return for work; he is not required to provide for a mass of idle people... rich or poor; in return for world citizenship, loving his kind more than his country, that is, giving up national sovereignty, he is freed from the devastation and impoverishment of war. He is relieved of the oppressive battle between capital and labour by becoming a partner, an actual shareholder and sharer of profits in whatever work is undertaken.

He is freed from political pressure. His right to vote is automatic with citizenship and adult age (for both men and women). He votes unhampered by canvassing, or unrestricted as to candidates.

Socially he is not judged by his background, but solely by his own being and accomplishment. His right to education, to the pursuit of truth, to the expression of his opinions, is inviolate.

The duties of individuals in the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh are clear. The personal striving for development of character and spiritual attainment is accomplished by an active and interested participation in community life. Attendance at community meetings, group worship, consultation on community affairs are all means of fostering social unity and health.

The individual must be ready to serve on administrative bodies if appointed or elected in an honorary capacity. He must see that his children are educated; he must follow some

craft, trade, or occupation. In administrative matters he must submit to the will of the majority, and give willing co-operation when over-ruled.

In the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, the emphasis of individual duty lies in the direction of striving to become a conscious, active, healthy cell, in the organic body of mankind.

The right and duty of the individual is Justice. His right is a full share in the well-being of the whole; his duty a full contribution through active social life to that well-being. He must generate, receive, and pass on those energies and powers which circulate in a healthy organism, and by so doing he achieves his highest personal fulfilment.

JOINED BY GOD.

By GEORGE TOWNSHEND

The Day of God is come. Mankind is approaching maturity. Its spiritual powers and susceptibilities are ripening. It is able at last to understand the true nature of marriage and to make the home what God intended it to be. Holy Writ, therefore, in this Age gives us pronouncements, counsels, exhortations and commands which call the closest attention of every believer to the sacred institution of marriage and which with all the authority of revelation, assign to it a key-position in the material and spiritual order of human life.

What was taught by precept was confirmed in practice. The Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Exemplar of the Faith, were all married men and fathers of families; and the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, known to many western visitors, stands as a pattern of what the ideal home of the New Era ought to be.

"Know thou," wrote 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "that the command of marriage is eternal. It will never be changed or altered." True marriage is a spiritual relation between united lovers—a particular state of being to which special blessings are attached by God. "No mortal can conceive the union and harmony which God has designed for man and wife." If they are united both spiritually and physically, and if the foundation of their affection is laid in "the very centre of their spiritual being, at the very heart of their consciousness," then they will have eternal unity throughout all the divine worlds and improve the spiritual life of

each other. Such union "is a splendour of the light of the love of God."

The paying of honour to celibacy as to a condition specially pleasing to God is due to human misunderstanding. In His Tablet to Napoleon III, Bahá'u'lláh bade the monks to "Enter into wedlock that after you another may arise in your stead . . . But for man, who on my earth would remember Me, and how could my attributes and My names be revealed? Reflect and be not of them that have shut themselves out as by a veil from Him, and are of those that are fast asleep."

Bahá'u'lláh commends marriage, but He does not make entrance into it easy. The initiative lies with the lovers themselves; they are free to choose. But they are strictly enjoined to give to this choice conscientious and deliberate thought. They are to acquire knowledge of each other's character and to make sure beforehand that their outlook on life is in accord on both spiritual and physical matters. They are to be frank and open with each other and if their mutual consent is finally given it is to be complete and entire.

Thus they are expected to employ reason as well as emotion; common sense as well as instinct, in order that they may reach a sound and firm decision; and their union is to represent knowledge as well as love.

When their own consent is given they must obtain before marriage, if possible, the consent of all their four parents, if living; they must

in other words submit their proposed union to the objective judgment of those who know and love them best and who are next to themselves most closely concerned with their happiness. Once this consent is obtained the marriage may go forward.

Thus a Bahá'í marriage is not a personal matter between two united lovers but also a social matter between them and the community and a spiritual matter between them and their heavenly Father. When these relationships are justly combined together, and when as commanded in the Bahá'í revelation the lovers live as equals and can thus help one another to the full limit of their capacity, then is the union real and perfect.

It is not for this earth only. It is intended to be and must be by them regarded as an eternal binding, an everlasting communion and friendship. A true unity of hearts once attained on earth is not dissevered in any of the worlds of God. "I love thee," cried the poetess to her husband, "with the breath, smiles, tears of all my life and if God chooses I shall but love thee better after death." The fulfilment of this hope is one of the great truths about the eternal realms by Bahá'u'lláh.

The marriage ceremony contains the three elements, the personal, the social, the spiritual. But its unique impressiveness and beauty and power are due to the spiritual meaning which inspires it and the spiritual aspirations which it enshrines. The Bride and the Bridegroom stand before the Bride's man, the Witnesses, and the Bahá'í Reader of their choice; but they stand also in heart and soul before the Mercy-Seat of their Great Father on High. Through their joint declared submission to His will and desire they win the privilege of a sacred union truly made in heaven. From God they seek blessing, happiness and strength for the years to come and to Him they are directly responsible for the due performance of the precious, divine trust they have undertaken.

How often has 'Abdu'l-Bahá written and spoken of the importance of unity in a home basing it always on spirituality, telling of the radiance which it sheds afar and of the blessings which it draws down from above. With what power and what exaltation of joy does He in His "Marriage Tablet" exhort united lovers to this unity! Here, indeed, is a picture of true marriage—both mystical and practical—which shines with the "light of the splendour of the love of God."

He tells lovers how to meet the special tests and strains to which their union may be subjected. "The bond which unites hearts most perfectly is loyalty." He writes: "True lovers once united must show forth the utmost faithfulness one to another." But He adds at once that they are to dedicate themselves first of all to God and that their hearts are to be "spacious, as spacious as the universe of God." He bids them to beware above all of jealousy (which "vitiates the very essence of love") of any kind of hypocrisy, of nursing a grievance or making it known to others: rather they are to consult together on their problem in private and to show to one another the greatest frankness and understanding. They are to turn their hearts and their minds towards high, happy, heavenly things and discuss with one another their noblest thoughts and aspirations. Their home is to be "a haven of rest and peace," for others as well as themselves. "Be hospitable, and let the doors of your house be open to the faces of friends and strangers. Welcome every guest with radiant grace and let each feel it is his own home."

They are to be examples of perfect love so that whosoever enters will "cry out from the heart, 'here is the home of love,' and that people will say to one another: "it is as though from all eternity God has kneaded the very essence of their being for the love of one another."

Their children are a sacred trust from God to whose instruction and guidance they are to consecrate themselves.

'Abdu'l-Bahá bids them nourish continually their union with love and affection: for it is like a tree, a living, growing, expanding, deepening thing bearing fruits of love and unity that will be "for the healing of the nations." In one beautiful image after another He bids them fill their hearts with love, give themselves up to love, know nothing but love. They are to dwell in a paradise of love, "build your nest in the leafy branches of the tree of love. Soar into the clear atmosphere of love. Sail upon the shoreless sea of love. Walk in the eternal rose-garden of love. Bathe in the shining rays of the sun of love. Be firm and steadfast in the path of love . . ." In these and all the other love-laden phrases which He uses He does more than urge in many forms again and again a lesson hard enough for imperfect beings to learn and to apply. He reveals in these objective external images the real

existence of a universe of love which only a lover knows and which only a lover can enter. This sweeter, fuller life may be a sea on which to sail, a sky in which to soar, a rose-garden in which to walk, a sun in whose rays to bathe, a path, a tree, a flower, a melody, an ocean full of pearls ; but always it is a real world created for lovers, laid open for their use, a world of unshadowed beauty and infinite delight, wherein they may go forward together passing from discovery to discovery, from happiness to further happiness.

If this world be hidden from men it is hidden in the heart of Truth and the veil that blinds unloving eyes is the veil of inexperience and ignorance. It is, as He shows, of the essence of existence. If the lover sees his beloved transform for him the living earth around him, this is not an idle dream :

"Yours is not a conscious art ;
'Tis the wild magic of your heart.
You but speak a simple word,
Often said and often heard,
What before my wondering eyes
An unveiled Paradise
Bursts about me into flower.
Here each nimble-footed hour
Daft with all the fun that's in it
Dances like a mapcap minute.
All the earth in light unfolden
Seems a chamber green and golden
Dight for love's festivities ;
And a thousand harmonies
Softer, sweeter more endeared

Than my heart had ever heard,
Gush from every bank and rise
Fill the woods and touch the skies.
Wind and cloud and leaf and stream
Notes of purest music seem,
And all nature, like a choir
Tuned to the sun-god's lyre,
In new hymns of jubilee
Chants her ancient ecstasy."

Love is the true revealer and the passage of time takes nothing from such a vision. United lovers who through the years have fought side by side the rugged battle of life unyielding, who have shared anxiety and trial and sorrow, who have mingled their tears together—tears of grief as well as tears of joy, who have seen one another falter and stumble and go on again, who have helped and been helped, have forgiven and been forgiven, they know as none other can know how precious is fellowship in love, and with a fuller illumination and a deeper thankfulness than of old they say again the sacred verse that made them forever one : "We are content with the will of God ; we are satisfied with the desire of God."

'Abdu'l-Bahá was the Exemplar of the perfect life, and to His word God gave creative power. This Tablet of His is itself a Marriage Song so exalted, so joyous, so triumphant, aglow in every part with overflowing, outpouring, illimitable, heavenly love that it makes love seem the Reality, the Essence of all existence, and puts all unlovingness to shame.

LABELS.

"You are lost in a sea of names !" said 'Abdu'l-Bahá. How often one hears genuine seekers after-the-truth say : "I don't want to label myself." Surely it is that they have not yet found the right label. The "sea of names" is composed of surging sects, each claiming a monopoly of truth and grace, each exclusive of the rest. This whirlpool in the immensity of God's Ocean, spells disunity. The Name of Bahá'u'lláh exalts the essence of Unity, garnering the truth from all religions, and so uniting all in a new vehicle of expression for the activity of the Holy Spirit throughout the world. The label of the Bahá'í Faith is proudly worn. We face the world, not in exclusive superiority and antagonism, but with love and hands extended in welcome to every living soul.

M.E.H.

"THIS EARTH ONE COUNTRY"

A Review by MARION HOFMAN.

EMERIC SALA's book, "This Earth One Country," reached England on the eve of the convening of the General Assembly of the United Nations (January 10, 1946). Although written apparently before the San Francisco Conference, the book could not have been more timely. All the world now knows that the institutions embodied in the United Nations Charter are far from adequate to meet the threat of atomic war. But what does the future require?

One wishes, at this very juncture, that representatives of governments and, indeed, the people of all nations could become familiar with Mr. Sala's lucid and convincing theme: The only foundation of peace, and of that justice and economic welfare for which the hearts of men now yearn, is the establishment of a true supranational community, a federation of the members of the human race. And the achievement of that mighty federation waits on the application of the spiritual and social principles which constitute the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

As Mr. Sala points out in his preface, this "travailing world . . . from trial to trial, is irresistibly moving towards its appointed destiny: a supranational community." The year 1945, from start to close, was a terrifying but promising witness to this fact. In its compass were critical battles, the close of two phases of a vast world conflict, the extinction of figures symbolic of prejudice and hate, the drafting of a world charter, hardship on an inconceivable scale for millions of human beings, the introduction of atomic energy, the deterioration and instability of nation-states, and the beginning of tests from every standpoint—economic, political, and moral—of men's hopes and plans for the post-war world. The impact of experiences such as these, added to the already unanswerable total of proof brought by the trend of events during the twentieth century, should go far to shorten mankind's self-imposed suffering in the evolution of World Order. For this goal of World Order has been, for many years, the only possible outcome of our history. Yet, half-way through 1946, we find the nations self-involved and constrained, their leaders suspicious of one another, and humanity itself still, in large measure, unawakened or

mired in the immediate absorptions of the hour.

It is at this point that Bahá'ís the world around find themselves confronted with an urgent but staggering task: how to bring vividly and convincingly to the attention of masses of men the Divine Program which they alone recognize and support. And it is for this task that Emeric Sala has provided yet another invaluable tool.

"This Earth One Country" is a book for our day. It speaks in practical and understandable terms to all those who are concerned with society and the direction of world events. It demonstrates the need of World Order, and associates inseparably the principles of Bahá'u'lláh with its development. It orients Bahá'í thought and vision to contemporary problems, thus clarifying our own minds as Bahá'ís, while performing the yet greater service of challenging the rest of the world. It is a man's book, and as such fills a gap in our literature; but it is also a book for anyone who thinks about to-day, man or woman, expert or amateur, old or young.

In scheme the book moves towards a full exposition of the Bahá'í Faith, grounded upon three opening chapters which boldly analyse contemporary society,—the economics, political structure, and social environment of this "one world" which to-day is mankind's fulfilment and greatest danger. To this reader the chapter on "The Christian Individual in An Immoral Society" is a penetrating study of the moral basis of Western civilisation, and demonstrates why Western man, unaided by the new Revelation of truth for this age, has been unable to cope with the severe problems of the 19th and 20th centuries. The claims of the Bahá'í Faith are first introduced at the close of this chapter: "a religion which calls men to build a world society founded upon moral principles and actually outlines the institutions for such a society."

"In order to judge fairly such a claim as this," writes Mr. Sala, "we would need to find the answer to several questions. First, can religion have a widespread effect upon the institutions of society? Second, how do the social institutions and principles of the Bahá'í Faith meet modern needs? Third, does the first hundred years of the Bahá'í faith indicate

an ability to change the social outlook of individuals enough to effect a radical change in society? The remaining chapters in this book are an attempt to answer these questions."

To "Islám—A Case in Point" the author turns for answer to his first question, for "the history of Islám furnishes perhaps the most striking example of the influence of religion on civilization." The answers to the remaining questions are found in the Bahá'í Faith itself, in its pattern of world society already functioning in some 78 countries of the world, and in its history which contains for the student superlative proof of the authenticity and vigor of this Revelation.

Chapter V, "The Supranational Community," also commends itself, for whether or not the reader is Bahá'í, he is sure to gain a clear-cut and dynamic impression of the Bahá'í world community at work, and of its

future potentialities. "As long as a world conscience is not produced, world justice is impossible, and without world justice, world peace is unobtainable. Bahá'u'lláh's world community is imbued with a world conscience and is creating an instrument for the administration of world justice. In this lies its great significance for the modern world."

The simplicity and force of the author's style are notable. The book is not only full of information, freshly conceived; it is satisfyingly readable. Our thanks go to Mr. Sala, who has made available a real and effective instrument for all those who would understand the principles and practice which characterize the world community of Bahá'u'lláh.

"*This Earth One Country*," by Emeric Sala.

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and in Toronto by The Ryerson Press, in 1945.

Price \$2.50.

FINAL VICTORY

"The tribulations attending the progressive unfoldment of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have indeed been such as to exceed in gravity those from which the religions of the past have suffered. Unlike those religions, however, these tribulations have failed utterly to impair its unity, or to create, even temporarily, a breach in the ranks of its adherents. It has not only survived these ordeals, but has emerged purified and inviolate, endowed with greater capacity to face and surmount any crisis which its resistless march may engender in the future."

Shoghi Effendi.



A GUIDE TO BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

"THE PROMISE OF ALL AGES," by *George Townshend*.

IN this book the author traces the history of religion from the earliest times, as successive acts in a great epic drama planned by the Creator from the beginning of time, to culminate in the promised Era of Peace. Step by step, led by a succession of High Prophets, mankind progresses to fulfil this great destiny. The author records for us the lives of the three latter-day Teachers, showing them to fulfil the prophecies of ancient scriptures in a startling manner, and appeals to the world to recognise their divine mission, and carry out the tasks which they charge us to perform.

"GLEANINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH," translated by *Shoghi Effendi*.

HERE we have selections from the writings of the Divine Messenger for this age. They

contain many profound spiritual teachings and admonitions addressed to His followers and contemporaries. This is a work which should not be read through in the ordinary way, but studied at leisure in order to penetrate the full significance of its contents.

"SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS," by *Laura Clifford Barney*.

THE author of this book had the supreme privilege of spending several months at different times with the family of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and in this book she gives a translation of many discourses given by Him during those visits. There are interesting explanations of various Christian teachings, also of passages from the Old Testament. Two sections of the book deal with the powers and conditions of the Manifestations of God, and those of man, respectively. There is also instruction on miscellaneous subjects, such as the theory of reincarnation, the treatment of criminals, and strikes.

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.

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

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