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The Promulgation
of Universal Peace

1. Probit

2. War and peace, 1899 — 1913

30

**THE PROMULGATION OF
UNIVERSAL PEACE**

The Promulgation of Universal Peace

MacNutt, Howard

Discourses by
ABDUL BAHA ABBAS

During His Visit to
the United States
in 1912

+

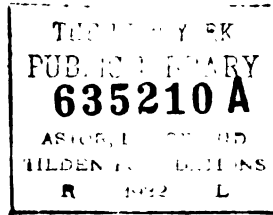
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INTRODUCTION

English and Persian

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Introduction.

TWO years before the crash of world war shook the continents and upheaved oceans Abdul Baha Abbas visited the United States of America proclaiming the Glad-Tidings of Universal Peace and the oneness of the world of humanity. In his message he reviewed social, religious and political conditions of the nations, foretold clearly the impending clash and conflict of militarism, summoning mankind to the standard of divine guidance upraised in this cycle of the cycles by the manifestation and teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH. His visit extending from April to December 1912 covered an itinerary across the continent and return, involving an extraordinary and incredible expenditure of energy on the part of one who at the threshold of three score years and ten had spent practically his whole lifetime in exile and imprisonment for the cause of God.

This treasury of his words is a compilation of informal talks and extempore discourses delivered in Persian and Arabic, interpreted by proficient linguists who accompanied him, and taken stenographically in both Oriental and Occidental tongue.

Upon the day of his arrival in New York he said "It is my purpose to set forth in America the fundamental principles of the revelation and teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH. It will then become the duty of the Bahais of this country to give these principles unfoldment and application in the minds, hearts and lives of the people." Abdul Baha's words therefore will be found characterized by a broad clear simplicity and practical basis, marked by an absence of metaphysical flights, philosophical speculation and mere rhetorical eloquence; always reflecting the pure beauty of the Word of God, that primal, essential, eternal foundation upon which rest religion, science and all human advancement.

Everywhere in his journeying throughout the United States Abdul Baha was received and welcomed in a spirit of love and reverence. Temples and churches of all denominations, synagogues, peace societies, religious and educational institutions, colleges, women's clubs, metaphysical groups and new-thought centers opened their doors, pulpits and platforms willingly and without reservation to his message. He attended peace conferences at Lake Mohonk, visited the open forum at Green Acre on the Piscataqua, addressed large gatherings at Columbia and Leland Stanford Uni-

versities, spoke before scientific associations, socialistic bodies, ethical cults, welfare and charitable organizations, attended receptions and banquets in the mansions of the rich, visited the poor and lowly in their humble homes, carried the light of hope and uplift to darkened souls in Bowery Mission;—in brief, proclaimed his message and teachings universally to every degree and capacity of humankind, with such pure and sincere motive that all heard him gladly and without prejudice or antagonism. Furthermore, his beneficent activity in the cause of God and loving service to mankind was without money and without price, for Abdul Baha in no instance accepted remuneration;—a most unusual precedent and a wholesome variation from the money-getting methods of other visitors from the Orient. On the contrary, it was his custom to make liberal donations to needy churches and religious bodies, often assisting by generous gift and contribution, societies and associations devoted to universal principles and ideals. Standing in the doorway of Bowery Mission one night he distributed two hundred dollars in silver to a long line of poor, disconsolate men, speaking words of uplift and encouragement as they passed before him. Under all circumstances Abdul Baha refused to accept money for himself or the cause he represented. When the Bahais of this country received word of his intended visit, the sum of eighteen thousand dollars was subscribed toward the expense of his journey. He was notified of this action and a part of the money forwarded to him by cable. He cabled in answer that the funds contributed by his friends could not be accepted, returned the money and instructed them to give their offering to the poor.

Briefly;—the visit of Abdul Baha to the United States was unique and characteristic of his high, holy mission, reflecting an unmistakable altruism of purpose and purity of motive. Philosophers, scientists, agnostics, materialists, professors, diplomats and officials were found in his audiences intently listening, sincerely questioning his presentation of the exalted principles and perfect ideals of the Bahai revelation in their application to the education, uplift and unification of mankind. Everywhere in editorial comment and publication of news concerning him the daily press was reverent and respectful in its tone and statement instinctively recognizing his high purpose and the manifest virtue of his teachings to the world.

An understanding of the mission and significance of this radiant herald of the New Day would not be complete without vision of the cumulative chain of religious history which extends backward from the time of Abdul Baha's appearance here to a

period practically cotemporary with the birth of American Independence in 1776. This is of especial importance too in the light of the fact that when BAHÁ'ULLAH sent epistles to the kings and rulers of the earth in 1868 he addressed one to the republic of the United States in which he said "O concourse of statesmen! assist the broken-hearted with the hands of justice and crush the mighty oppressors with the scourges of the commands of your Lord, the powerful, the wise." A very brief summary will be sufficient to show this spiritual sequence and historical progression of which Abdul Baha is the apex and consummation.

The earliest dawning rays of the effulgent Sun of Truth, the Word of God which shone forth from the heaven of the divine will upon the horizon of the human world in this luminous cycle were reflected in the pure mirrors of sanctity Sheikh Ahmad of Ahsai and Haji Seyd Kazim of Resht. As stars of morning precede the coming of the mighty luminary of day, these brilliant souls arose successively in Persia toward the close of the eighteenth century, piercing the sombre shadows of night and proclaiming the splendor of the approaching manifestation. This mission completed, the lamps of their physical existence were extinguished in 1826 and 1844 respectively.

On May 23, 1844 His Holiness Mirza Ali Mohammed the Bab suddenly enkindled the world by declaring in Shiraz, Persia that the Day of God was at hand. For six years as herald and forerunner this winsome messenger of the kingdom sounded his heavenly call, until in 1850 the flaming tongue and pen of his eloquence were stilled in the throes of a glorious martyrdom.

Then the heaven of religion overspread with the brilliant radiance of His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLAH, Glory of God, the manifest Word and Sun of Reality which poured its bounty upon the world of mankind forty years, extending to the time of its occultation in 1892. Throughout these years this glorious being was subjected to continuous exile, imprisonment and oppression by earthly rulers until after infinite hardships and suffering he ascended from these abject conditions and surroundings of religious and political tyranny to his abode in the supreme world.

But the equation of divine purpose was not yet complete. The coming of BAHÁ'ULLAH had fulfilled the prophetic promises of the sacred books of the Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Hindoos, Buddhists and others. Like mighty rivers restricted to their own watersheds these separate systems of religious belief and worship, incapable of mingling in their courses, had found their destined union and confluence in the infinite ocean of

BAHA 'ULLAH's utterance. Furthermore, the supreme and ultimate product of divine revelation, the apotheosis of prophecy and the universal outcome in which all the heavenly religions would consummate was that quintessence of the cycles, that "Mystery of God," a perfected "Servant" in whom the divine and human wills had found complete blending. This sanctified personage was to appear in the great Day of God, that Day of universal splendor when "the glory of the Lord should be revealed and all flesh should see it together."

In the latter half of the nineteenth century the nations and peoples of the world had become so closely associated and wrought together in their physical existence, so interwoven and interdependent in the necessities and requirements of life that the problems and politics of one government now affected and influenced the conditions of them all. The world had become one vast human family wherein interests were intimately related, responsibilities mutual and problems universal. Therefore the Word of God revealed by BAHA 'ULLAH was universal in its provision and remedy for the conditions of mankind; conditions which although they were direct outcomes of human will and making, had been eternally foreseen by the omniscient eye and spoken by the tongues of prophets as recorded in all the holy books. Great numbers of brilliant souls throughout the east had accepted and followed this manifest standard of unity and reconciliation. In religious heredity, training and belief they had been diverse, hostile and irreconcilable but under the benign, penetrating influence of the Holy Spirit of the Word made flesh in BAHA 'ULLAH they attained the blessed station of oneness and love in the heaven of the kingdom.

To strengthen, safeguard and increase this unity and love BAHA 'ULLAH appointed a successor to whom all should turn for guidance and illumination after his own departure; naming in the Book of the Covenant written by his own blessed hand, his eldest son, the Greatest Branch, Abdul Baha, Center of the Covenant in whom Bahais throughout the world recognize the authority of perfect servitude at the threshold of the manifest Word. This is the essence of his title, entity and being, Abdul Baha, Servant of Baha.

The great wisdom of this appointment is shown in many ways. It is particularly evident when we realize that from his earliest childhood Abdul Baha had been inseparably associated with BAHA 'ULLAH. Born in Teheran May 23, 1844 the day and date of the Bab's declaration, his very birth foretold the significance of his life and being in the divine processes and consummations of this

luminous cycle. At the age of eight years he was one of the little band of exiles who crossed the Persian border into Irak-Arabi, sharing vicissitudes and suffering with heroic strength and subjected with the rest to continuous imprisonments in various cities until they reached the prison-fortress of Akka in Syria, August 31, 1868. Throughout this long and faithful vigil of devotion to BAHÁ' ULLAH and loyalty to the cause of God, the record of Abdul Baha's life is pure and spotless, wonderful in its exaltation and effulgent with the beauty of holiness. When the tyrannous regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid ended, the gates of Akka were thrown open and Abdul Baha came forth free upon the fortieth anniversary of his entrance into that neglected and unspeakable place. This was August 31, 1908. In 1911, two years after his release from a living martyrdom of fifty-six years and at the age of sixty-seven he visited Europe, returning to Egypt from whence in 1912 he sailed for America as stated.

Thus far the evidences of divine forces and influences surrounding the life of Abdul Baha should be sufficient to impress and convince any thoughtful soul that we are viewing an unusual and majestic personality, a world-commanding figure who has appeared for the uplift, unification and peace of mankind. Dark indeed are the world-horizons unless we behold the shining beauty of this Sun of Reality. The human world plunging deeper and deeper with ever-increasing momentum into seas of materialism is crying out in its crucial need and stress for help and remedy,—for a new creative spirit of life and regeneration,—a power and healing direct from God. And just at this time Abdul Baha messenger of Universal Peace and the oneness of the world of humanity is sounding his call of salvation to the nations of the earth in heavenly words fortified by an impelling dynamic spiritual power and surcharged with the pure breaths of the Holy Spirit.

The divine Covenant outworking its purpose and plan in the history and destiny of mankind has been revealed progressively according to the necessities of the age and the degree of human capacity. In each dispensation of its bounties it has infused a new and spiritual impulse into minds and hearts through channels of religious belief. These irrigating currents have been the source of life to the human world and its only civilizing impetus. The standard of human requirement in every cycle has been obedience to the divine Word and purpose, firmness and steadfastness in the ancient Covenant of God. History shows how invariably and inevitably the people of the Covenant, as in the time of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed became the mightiest civilizing forces and forma-

tive influences in human progression, and how through obedience and fidelity to the messenger of the Covenant the exigencies confronting them in their day were overcome, their difficulties surmounted, their questions answered and uncertainties dispelled, so that ever-widening vistas of nobler attainments and loftier ranges of vision were opened to them in the horizons of human destiny. In reality this evolution and progression constitute the bounties of the Covenant itself, divine bestowals of higher capacity for development, discovery and advancement. That is to say, in each dispensation, through the gifts and bestowals of the Covenant the people of the Covenant have been quickened by a power which enabled them to overcome the menace of difficulties surrounding them, dominate their environments, make conditions minister to their advancement and growth, purify their lives and laws, strengthen their institutions and uplift themselves to the beatitude of peace, prosperity and unity; whereas those who denied the Covenant and were deprived of its bounties have succumbed to forces and surrounding conditions and have passed into oblivion, incapable of existence and continuance. This is the inner, penetrating power of the pure religion of God, the divine leavening spirit of the Covenant which has manifested itself in every age through an appointed or collective center whom all were commanded to acknowledge in allegiance and steadfastness lest they become deprived of the outpouring and overflowing bestowals of God.

Inasmuch as this wonderful century, this Day of God is universal in its conditions and requirements, characterized by an interrelationship and interdependence never before witnessed among the nations of the world, and inasmuch as the Book of the Covenant has been revealed in this day by the tongue and pen of His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH to all races, religions and peoples without preference or favor, naming in holy words and text the one to whom all must turn in obedience and loyalty, it therefore follows that the source of effulgent power and heavenly bestowals, the collective center and point of unity from which the bounties of the Covenant are now outflowing to the world of mankind is Abdul Baha, Servant of Baha, Center of the Covenant of God. He is the channel of purifying, unifying religious belief, the new impulse and dynamic, the creative spirit of regeneration, the power and healing direct from God, the irrigating current of life to the world of man, the answerer of questions, the explainer of the Book, the bestower of spiritual capacities, the uplifting impetus of civilization, the servant of all mankind, the point of agreement and reconciliation for all the divine religions, the standard-bearer of Univer-

sal Peace and messenger of the Glad-Tidings of the oneness of the world of humanity.

Abdul Baha's station of servitude in the divine cause is therefore world-wide and universal,—beyond the limitation of race, denomination, creed or nationality;—a station supreme in its loftiness, perfect in its humility;—Servant of the servants of God. Significant indeed is his visit to the shores of the western world; pregnant indeed are his words to the highly organized material civilizations of the Occident; potent indeed his message of peace and unity of mankind, cementing the east and the west in spiritual solidarity, blending the world that is old and the world that is new under the beneficent laws of the heavenly kingdom.

In obedience to the direct command of Abdul Baha, this Introduction has been written by a humble follower of his light and a devoted lover of his beauty. May the Glory of God illumine this heart and guide this pen to do his will in this most great responsibility.

HOWARD MACNUTT.

EXTRACTS FROM TABLETS

To his honor Mr. Howard MacNutt, Brooklyn, New York, U. S. A.
O thou old friend!

Thy intention to print and publish the discourses of Abdul Baha which thou hast compiled is indeed very advisable. This service shall cause thee to acquire an effulgent face in the Abha kingdom and shall make thee the object of praise and gratitude of the friends in the east as well as the west. But this is to be undertaken with the utmost carefulness so that the exact text may be reproduced and that all errors and deviations committed by previous interpreters shall be excluded.

ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.

(Haifa, Palestine, April 13, 1919.)

To his honor Mr. Albert R. Windust, Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A.
O thou servant of His Holiness BAHÁ'U'LLAH!

Name the book which Mr. MacNutt is compiling "The Promulgation of Universal Peace." As to its Introduction, it should be written by Mr. MacNutt himself when in heart he is turning toward the Abha kingdom, so that he may leave a permanent trace behind him. Send a copy of it to the Holy Land.

ABDUL BAHA ABBAS.

(Bahjeh, Akka, Palestine, July 20, 1919.)

[The English original of this Introduction was sent to Abdul Baha for approval. By his direction it was translated into Persian and returned with instructions that both English and Persian should appear in the publication.]

مبارکس متحرک سازد تا از عهد این مأموریت
 غطی کما ینغی بر ایم
 هوارد مکات

ترجمه
 العبد الحقیر ابن
 حرف الزامیر فی مدینه
 جفا جوار المقام
 التاملی
 ۱۹۲۰

بمالک نموده ماده فواید کلی از عقب و پیام
 مبارکش در مسئله صلح و اتحاد نوع بشر و اثرش در آت
 بقدرتش شرق و غرب بر وابطی روحانی امتزاج
 یافته و خاور و باختر را بتعاون و تعاضد امتزاج
 بخشیده عالم قدیم و جدید را بطل شریعت ربانیه
 درآورده و ملکوت اسمانی را با اقتداری عظیم تاسیس
 فرموده

اطاعة الامر و فرمان عبدالبها این مقدمه را
 یکی از خاضعان و مقنن از نور او و جانشان
 و محبت طلعت او نگاشته است امید از محمد الهی است
 که این قلب را نورانی فرماید و فلس را مبرج را در

در ارفع اعلام مدینت حقیقی خادم نوع انسانی است
 و مرکز اتحاد و اتفاق عالم انسانی موحد ادیان
 ربانیت و علمدار صلح عمومی رسولات و منادی
 بدشارات وحدت جهان انسانی

در اینصورت مقام عبودیت عبد البهاء را ملاحظه
 افغان را بطل بندگی کشاند چه که جهانگیر و عیسی
 داشت و از حدودات ملی و نژادی و مذاهب
 و اوطان مقدس و مبراست مقامیت اعلی‌المقام
 و در عبودیت در منتهای کمال و خادم خادم مان الهی است
 سفر مبارکش بسواحل عرب نهایت اهمیت را داشت
 و مضامین و بیاناتش را نتایج عظیمه از پی و خطابه‌ها

وجميع ملل واقوام عالم را من غير استثناء و امتياز
 بصريح عبارت و نص قاطع امر بنوحه و اطاعت
 و وفا مي فرمايد در اينصورت واضحست كه منبع
 قدرت كامله و الطاف و مواهب اسماني و مركز
 جامعة اتحاد من على الارض طلعت صد اليهاست
 كه همواره فيوضات عهد و ميثاقش بر اهل افاق
 مانند غيث ها طل نازل است اوست بنده بها
 و مركز ميثاق اوست مبين دين الله و متحد كنند
 مذاهب و مصدر قدرت و ثابيد و روح تجدد
 كننده ملل و شفا بخنده از جانب پرورده كار منبع
 فيض است و حيات بشر مجيب سائلانست و مبين
 كتاب رب العالمين بخنده استغلاء روحاني است

اینست قوه معنوی دین الله و نفوذ روح ربانی
 عهد الله که در مرعده و زمانی از مرکز مینافی
 که طرأ مأمور با طاعت و توجه با و و بت و
 استقامت بوده اند بر عالمیان هویدا کرده که مباد
 نفوس در نیبه ضلال گمراه شده از مواهب عظیمه
 و بخشای رب البریه محروم مانند

نظر بآنکه این قرن بدیع که بوم الله است در جمیع
 و اطوارش عام وجهانگیر است مدارش بر الفت
 کامله و روابط کلی عمومیت بقسمی که الی یومنا
 هذا در بین ملل عالم نظیرش مشاهده نگشته و نظر
 بآنکه خواب عهد در چنین بوم مبارکی نازل کرده
 و از لسان و قلم حضرت بهاء الله جاری و مرقوم شده

و علت نجاح و ترقی یعنی در هر عصر و ظهوری
 متمسکین و متبشّین بعهد و ثابّین بر پیمان ^{نصوص}
 و مواهی مخصوص گردیدند و چنان ماهر از آمدند
 که هر مشکلی را اسان یافتند و در جمیع شؤون ^{منظفر}
 و منصور بودند هر امری را مؤید مقاصد خویش ^{نیز}
 در مراتب ترقی و نجاح و عزّت و فلاح بذروه ^{علیا}
 رسیدند و در تنزیه و تقدیس و نواای صادقه ^{موفق}
 شدند و بسلوک در مناخج بضائل عالم انسانی
 و صلح و سلام و اتحاد و یگانگی مشار بالبنان گردیدند
 و بالعکس ناقضین و منکرین عهد و محرمین از ^{هیب}
 میثاق چنان اسیر و ذلیل افکار و اوهای گردیدند
 که بزایه نیان افتاده نیایا منبتا شدند

غالب و فائق شدند و مصادره تہذیب و تمدن
 کرده در ترقیات عالم انسانی آیات رحمانی شدند
 و چگونه با طاعت و انقیاد و وفا بملک و عهد
 و پیمان مؤید در جمیع شؤون و احوال و مظفر و
 مصور و دافع هر مشکلی گردیدند بشهادتشان
 زایل شد و آرزویشان مستجاب گردید ابواب عزت
 ابدی و شرف و بلوغ باعلی‌المقام بر درجہ‌شان
 مفتوح و در عالم انسانی بمنتهی درجہ افتخار
 و کمالان فائز گردیدند فی الحقیقہ این طہضت و ارتقا
 مغناطیس و اہب الہیت و از برای قابلیت علو
 بمراتب عالیہ بخشایش ربانیت سبب حصول التمام است

محکم تر و شدیدتر گردید عهد و میثاق در حق
 ظهوری عنایات و مواهب الهی را در قلوب و اروا
 نفوس بواسطه ایمان و یقین بار وابطی روحانی
 مبذول فرموده و مانند انهر سابقه و منابع
 حیات است برای عالم انسانی و قوه ایست نافذ
 برای تمدن حقیقی و در هر قرن برای اهل انما
 و ثبوت و استقامت نشاند و امر الله و اطاعت کلام الله
 قسطاس اعظم اقوام و کل محتاج بان بوده و خواهد

بود

نفس تاریخ مینمایاند که زمان ابراهیم و موسی
 و عیسی و محمد حکونه منتسکین بعهد و میثاق

وابن الدواء لهذا الداء وابن المنجى لنجاة الوری ^{ابن}
 الروح لأحياء الموتى لهذا عالم انسا بلسان حال
 علاج وشفائی مستقیماً از حق سائل وامل است
 در ابن اوان حضرت عبدالبها منادی صلح عمومی
 ومركز وحدت عالم انسانی ما علی التدا ملل عالم
 بسیل نجات وهدایت بخواند وبکلماتی ایها
 مؤید مجنود ملکوتی ومنبعث از نفثات ^{القدس} روح
 اصل جهان را دعوت مینماید

عهد و میثاق الهی همواره نافذ و مروج شئوننا
 مقدرة محنومه در توارخ عالم انسانی بوده و
 متدرجاً بحسب انتضای زمان واستعداد نوع انسا

حرکت فنود

و چون جبات عبدالبها همواره محاط بنابدات
 ربانیه و حاکی از سوحات مقدّمه الطیه بوده
 لذا از برای هر عاقلی اعظم برهان و حجت است اینکه
 ماها بشخصی بی مثل رسانند و برزکواری ناظر می
 و بطلعی مسخر العالم منوجه که ظهورش برای
 عاویث و انحاء و صلح من فی البلاد است چه که
 فی الحقیقه ازان جهان را ظلت احاطه نموده و
 از برای احدی مفردی جز توجه بجمال شمس حقیقت
 و عالم انسانی چون روز بروز بجمع مجاری طریقت
 سقوط و صیوط نماید فریاد برآورد که این المخلص

تنزیه و تقدیس مزین است علو منزلش اعلیٰ الفا
 و بحال و کمال مبارکی درخنده و تابان و چون
 عرش ظلم و استبداد سلطان عبدالحمید و ازگون
 کردید ابواب سخن عکا مفتوح شد و عبداللها
 بکمال آزادی از چنان زندانی که بوصفہ رنبايد
 و چهل سال پیش داخل شدہ بود بیرون آمد و این
 خروج در ۱۳ ماه اگست ۱۹۰۸ واقع گردید و در ۱۹۱۱
 دو سال بعد از آزادی از حالتی کہ بدست پنجاه الی
 شصت سنہ همواره در مقام شہادت برودہ و سبب
 بسخت و محنت رسیدہ بود با و روپ شریفہا
 شد و بمصر مراجعت نمود و از آنجا بامریکا ۱۹۱۲

تولدشان در طهران ۲۳ ماه محرم ۱۸۶۴ هجری و موافق باور
 بعثت حضرت باب بوده نفس ولادت در چنین بوی
 حاکی از رموز و اسرار حیات و وجود ایمان
 در مناخج ربانیه و بروز نتائج عالیّه در این قرن
 نورانیت و فتیله سن مبارکش هشت ساله بود
 از ایران در زمره دیگران منفی بعراق عرب گردید
 و بکمال بسالت و طبع خاطر تحمل رزایا و مستفان
 نموده قبول مسجونیت را در بلاد منعده فرمود
 ناآنکه بقلعه عکا در ۱۲ ماه آگست ۱۸۶۸ هجری ^{گردید} وارد
 در این مدت مدید در عبودیت و وفا بجهت بها ^{الله}
 و خدمت بامر الله صفحات کتاب عبدالبها باحرف

وهدایت و نورانیت از او طلبند یعنی در کتاب
 عهد که با ثر قلم مبارک خویش مرقوم فرموده اند
 ابن ارشد و عصا عظم عبداللها مرکز عهد
 و جمیع بهائیان در اقالیم عالم ایشان را مصد
 عبودیت کامله در عتبة کله بین شناسند
 اینست اصل ائمه و کینوت و حقیقت ایشان
 عبداللها

حکمت این تعیین را جهانی چند ملحوظ است
 بسی واضح است که عبداللها از بد و طفولیت همواره
 در معیت و محال و معاشر با حضرت بهاء الله بوده

مبین وحدت و اشنی در آمدن قبول واذعان نمودند
 ولی در بدعتهای مذهبی بدین عفاوند و از اختلاف
 و تباین جهت عداوت و بغضا پیمان آمد و لکن
 امروز بقدرت و نفوذ و رأفت روح القدس
 کلمه الله که در حضرت بها و الله تهنیم یافت رفیع
 این گونه عوارض گردید و فوج فوج با علی القام
 وحدت و یگانگی و محبت فائز و در ملکوت ابدی
 داخل شوند

حال محض استحکام و محافظت امر الله و از دیار
 و محبت بین عباد الله حضرت بها و الله و صیحه
 معین فرمود که طرأ اباید پس از صعودش منوجه بار
 کردند

بنفسمی که ملاحظه منافع کل میکرد و مسئولیات
 برطرفین وارد اید و مسائل کلی شامل عموم گردید
 لهذا کلمه الله که از جانب بها الله نازل شد بمنبت
 عمومیت را داراست و جهاتگیر است و علاج
 شافی را در روی کافی برای عوارض و امراض نوع
 انسانیست اگر چه این عوارض ناشی از انکار
 واردات خود سرانده خلق بظهور رسیده و لکن
 دیده و در بین من لا یغرب عن علمه من شیء از اول
 لا اول مشاهده این عوارض میبوده لذا بلسا
 انبیا در کتب مقدسه مرقوم و ثبت گردیده
 جم غفیری از اشخاص نورانی در شرق بطل علم

و عبد کامل که در او اراده الله و اراده بشر امتزاج
 یافت این شخص مقدس کسی است که در یوم الله عظیم
 ظهورش تحقق یابد آن روز روز جلوه مجد کلی
 الهی است که در آن یوم "روز ظهور مجدد رب است
 و اهل جبراه و را بچشم سر مشاهده نمایند"

در نصف اخیر قرن نوزدهم بقسمی ملل و اضراب
 عالم مربوط و محتور بایکدیگر کشیدند و چنان بنوع
 و تعاضد صوری عنصری قیام کردند و روابط
 زندگانی را بین خود محکم نمودند که الیوم رتق و فتق
 جمیع امورشان در تحت نفوذ و حکم یک حکومت
 و جهان سراسر میدان یک خاندان عظیم شده

نبوات کتب مقدسه کلیمیه و مسیحیان و اهل فرقان
 و زردشتیان و هند و بوداییان و سائر ادیان
 بوده و این مذاهب مختلفه و عقائد متباینه
 مانند انهر عظیمه در منابع خود را که و از سیر
 و جریان باز مانده بود لهذا بطهور بیان و نبیان
 حضرت بهاء الله انهر را که جریان یادت و حجر
 اعظم انصال پیوست و لکن بعلاوه این بکشمه
 عظمی و ثمر منتهی از ظهور ربانی و اعظم اکمال نبوت
 یزدانی و ظهور مواهب کلی اسمانی که جمیع ادیان
 الهی را در وه علیاست همانا خلاصه وجود و حیر
 اعصار و قرون و برز سر الله المکنونت بنده

سپس بپایان دین الله با شعله ساطعه طلعت
 بهاء الله مجد الهی و کله بین سحانی و افنا
 حقیقی منور گردید و مدت چهل و نه نبوذا
 و مواهبش را بر اصل امکان مبذول فرمود و در سنه^{۱۸۹۲}
 از انظار غایب گشت و در خلال این مدت همواره
 این سیکل مجید کریم را سر کونی و نفی و سخن و ظلم
 شدید ملوک ارض بوده تا آنکه پس از فحش محض و
 بلا با و رزایا از حنیض جور و ستمگران مذموم
 و سیاسی بذروه علیا صعود فرمود
 و لکن چون کفه میزان اراده الله هنوز طایف و کمال
 نگزیده بود چه که معنی بهاء الله منتم و مکمل و عود

و بشارت با شراق شمس ظهور اطمی دادند و چون
رسالت خویش را املاغ داشتند یکی در سنه^{۱۸۴۳}
و دیگری در سنه^{۱۸۴۴} سراج عنصری در وجود سنان
خراموش شده صعود نمودند

و در ۲۳ ماه محرم^{۱۸۴۴} حضرت میرزا علی محمد ملفف
به باب بغنة در عالم شعله فی برافروخت و در
شیراز (ایران) اظهار نموده بشارت بظهور يوم^{الله}
میداد تا مدت شش سال این رسول ذوالجمال
مدای ملکوت ذوالجلال را بجنان آسمان رسانید
تا آنکه در سنه^{۱۸۴۵} لسان بیان سعله انگیزش و فلم
بنیان بلیغش بواسطه شهادت غیبتش صامت
و ساکن گردید

مختصری در این مقام ذکر میشود تا بر نتائج روحانی
 راهبیت تاریخی آن که امروز عبدالبها بکانه ^{مصد}
 و مرجع کل است واقف شویم و اطلاع یابیم
 در آغاز طلوع و اشراق شمس حقیقت و بزوغ
 کلمه الله از سماء مشیت ربانی بر افاق عالم انسانی
 در این قرن نورانی اشعه ربانی بر مرآی صابیه
 مقدسه شیخ احمد احسانی و حاجی سید کاظم رشتی
 تملی نمود و مانند درختم بازغ بحر کاهی بشرو
 دینادی بطلوع و ظهور یوم نورانی ربانی گردیدند
 این دو هیکل درخشنده و احداً بعد از دیگری در این
 قائم با مرآت گشتند. و این قضیه در اواخر قرن ^{هجری}
 واقع گردید و که در ایل ظلمانی منسلک گردید و بجا

اگر نخواهیم جفائى و معانى و پیام این امر را
 و بشارت این منادی اسمانی بدقت پی بریم
 باید بتواریخ مساسله دینیّه که قبل از ورود
 عبداللّه با این اقلیم در کتب مدوّنه موجود است
 یعنی مفارن عصری که استقلالیت امریکا اعلان
 شد مراحت نمود و آن در سنه ۱۷۷۶ بود و همچنین
 این مطلب نیز اهمیت عظیم را داراست که حضرت ^{الله} بها
 بجه عنوان الواح ملوک و سلاطین ارض را در سنه ۱۸۶۸
 نازل و ارسال فرمود یکی از ان الواح به رئیس جمہور
 ممالک متحدہ بوده و در آن خطاب منفرد
 یا معشر الامرّاء اجبروا الکثیر با بادی العدل و
 کسر الصّحیح الظّالم بساط اوامر و تنک الامر الحکیم

و متخرجین از دارالفنونها و هیئت امر و اهل مناصب
 علیا حاضر و بکمال اذعان مستمع و در نهایت
 خلوص تخری حقیقت نموده از مبادی و اوامر و
 حقائق امریه و تأثیراتش در عالم تربیت و معارف
 و علویّت و اتحاد و یکپارچگی نوع بشر سوالات
 مهمّه نمودند و در تمام جرائد و مطابع و نشریات
 و روزنامه های یومیه صفحات اخبار را بکمال
 تمجید و ثنا و عزّت و احترام زینت داده منتشر
 میساختند چه که بقوه فراست ملتفت شده
 مشاهده نمودند و ظهور فضائل و جلوه
 تعالیم ایشان را بعالم وجود می نمودند

اماده نمودند و چون عبدالبها از این قصد ^{جواب} بخش
احاطا اطلاع یافت و قسمی از آن مبلغ تلغرافیا
بمحضور ارسال شده بود فوراً تلغرافیا در جواب
فرمودند که این وجه مزبور مقبول نخواهد گشت
و آن وجه رسول را اعاده نموده امر بتوزیع آن
در بین فقرا فرمودند.

مختصر آنکه مسافرت عبدالبها بممالک متحدہ امریکا
لم یسبق لها مثیل بوده و حاکی از علو شأن و تقدیر
و تزییه و ناشئی از حسن بخت و سمو همت و خیر خواهی
عموم بوده در محضر مبارکش از فلاسفہ و اهل علوم
و فنون و جمہور زناده و طبعیون و پروفیسرها

واحانات بشمار جمعتهای امور خیریه عمومیّه
 عنایت نمود شبی از شبها در محلی موسوم به دوری^{نیش}
 نزدیک درایتاده هیکل بابرک مقدار دویست
 دالر فقره جمعیتی که بترتیب صف زده بریند و
 در فضهای فقر و پریشانی بودند اتفاق نمودند و
 کمال عنایت و شفقت و مهربانی بیک یک آنها
 فرمودند و فردا فردا روح و ریحان بخشدند

در هیچ موقعی حضرت عبداللها ابدًا دیناری برای
 خود و یا خدمتش بامر الله قبول ننمود و فنیکه بها^{نشان}
 این اقلیم از عزیمت ایشان بخطه امرای واقف شدند
 فوراً مبلغ صد هزار دالر مهیا ساخته برای مصروف

مختصر آنکه پیام و تعالیم الهی را عموماً بصر صبیقه‌ای
از نفوس بقدر استعداد ابلاغ فرمود و چنان
در حالتی روحانی و خلوص و خضوع خطاب نمود
که کل بکمال فرح و انبساط پذیرفته ادنی تعصب
و اعتراضی احدی بر او ننمود و این گونه فیوضاً
و مواهب را بعنوان لا اسئلكم علیه من اجر مانند
لئالی نثار میفرمود و بدون اجر و خرد اتفاق میبود
زیرا عبدالبها در هیچ موقعی قبول نقدی از احدی
نفرمود و این مطلب نقطه مقابل و بعکس حرکت
سائر نفوس است که از شرق بغرب آیند و بلکه
بالعکس اتفاق و تبرعات بکائنات فقر و عجز فرمود

نمودند و بدون ادنی تعرض و اعتراضی برای
 پیام و بیانات مبارکش سمع فطرت بکشوند و
 بکنفرانس صلح در لیک موها ناک حاضر گردید و در
 گرین عکا در آن هنگامه عظمی و در کلومبیاد در
 الفونیهای متعدده نطقهای مفصل القا نمود
 و در مقابل جمعیتهای علمی و جمهور مساوات^{طلب}
 و معالین اخلاق و دار المساکین و المنفقین نطق
 و بیانات فرمود در ضیافتها و مهمانیها و
 در قصور عالیه اعیان و بیوت حیره مطبوعه فخر
 و عجزه و مساکین هر دو وارد کردید نور امید و حیات
 جدید و نشئه بدیع بجان و روان مظلومه منجمه^{بخشد}

و میراست روح معانی کلمه امانه را مجتهد نموده چو
 مطلب و اساس بنین ابدی را که ترقی و علویت عالم
 دیانت و دانش بر آن استقرار یابد و اضحای بیان
 میفرماید،

در آیات مسافر دشمن در بلاد امرای بکمال
 احترام اهالی هر اقلیم خوش آمد و استقبال نمودند
 و رؤسای معابد و کتائب و صوامع احزاب مختلفه
 و مجامع صلح و مراکز دینیه و اهل معارف و دار
 الفنونها و مجالس نساء و جمعتهای ماوراء الصبیحه
 و دوائر انکار حدیده طراً ابواب محافل را گشود
 بکمال روح و ریحان، تمنای ارتقای ایمان را بر منابر

از مخزن علم و دانش نثار کرده‌اید و فوراً ضبط شده
 بواسطه مترجمین ماهر ترجمه گردیده است
 یوم ورود بمدينه نینویون فرمودند
 قصد من اینست که در مریکا اساس اوامر این ظهور
 و تعالیم حضرت بهاء الله را بر عالیشان اشکار
 و نمایان سازم و بهائیان باید بر انشمار و ترجیح
 این مبادی همت بجارند و در افکار و قلوب
 نفوس رسوخ و تمکّن دهند بیانات عبدالبها
 در مستهای حلاوت و مساده کی بیان حقیقت را
 میرساند، چه که از تلیفیات فلسفه فی تعبیرات
 ما دراء الصبیحه فی اصطلاحات شعر بکلی ازاد

بطل لواء هدايت ربانيه که در اين قرن مجيد بوا^{سطه}
 ظهور و تعاليم حضرت بهاء الله بر قلل افاق موج
 زند اصل جهان را دعوت فرمود ^{مات سير}
 و سفر از آغاز ماه اپريل الى صاه ديسمب^ر استداد
 يافت همواره در حرکت و تبشير و اندر دافا^{ئيم}
 سار بود و چنان اثار قدرت و خدمتي فوق^{العما}
 ظاهر فرمود که محير عقول گردد چه که سن مبارک
 هفتاد بود و تمام حيات را در هجرت و زيان
 در سبيل امر حضرت يزدان را بکاف نموده بود
 اين مجموعه ايت^ر ابيانات و مکالمه و
 نطقهاي که بالبداهه بلسان فارسي و عرب

ترویج صالح عمومی

مقدمه

دو سال قبل از آنکه حروب ان عظیمه مهملکه انام
 عالم را بر لرزت الارض و لرزطها افکند و سخرت البها
 وقوع یابد حضرت عبداللها بلاد متحدہ امریکا را
 بقدم خویش مزین ساخته ندا بشارت صالح
 عمومی و وحدت عالم انسانی فرمود و باین ندا
 روحی جدید در ارکان و روابط هیئت اجتماع
 و مذہبیه و سیاسیه ملل افاق مبدول شد
 و بصیغ عبارت ازفتن و آشوب و خونریزی
 محنومہ دول عالم خیر و انداز فرمود و نفوس را

**DISCOURSES BY
ABDUL BAHÁ**

The Promulgation of Universal Peace.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in New York and Brooklyn.

April 11, 1912, at 780 West End Avenue, New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney.

Notes by Hooper Harris

HOW are you? Welcome! Welcome!

After arriving today, although weary with travel, I had the utmost longing and yearning to see you and could not resist this meeting. Now that I have met you, all my weariness has vanished, for your meeting is the cause of spiritual happiness.

I was in Egypt and was not feeling well; but I wished to come to you in America. My friends said "This is a long journey; the sea is wide; you should remain here." But the more they advised and insisted, the greater became my longing to take this trip and now I have come to America to meet the friends of God. This long voyage will prove how great is my love for you. There were many troubles and vicissitudes but in the thought of meeting you, all these things vanished and were forgotten.

I am greatly pleased with the city of New York. Its harbor entrance, its piers, buildings and broad avenues are magnificent and beautiful. Truly it is a wonderful city. As New York has made such progress in material civilization, I hope that it may also advance spiritually in the kingdom and covenant of God so that the friends here may become the cause of the illumination of America; that this city may become the city of love and that the fragrances of God may be spread from this place to all parts of the world. I have come for this. I pray that you may be manifestations of the love of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH; that each one of you may become like a clear lamp of crystal from which the rays of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may shine forth to all nations and peoples. This is my highest aspiration.

It was a long, long trip. The more we traveled the greater seemed the expanse of the sea. The weather was brilliant and fine throughout; there was no storm and no end to the sea.

I am very happy to meet you all here today. Praise be to God! that your faces are shining with the love of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH. To behold them is the cause of great spiritual happiness. We have arranged to meet you every day at the homes of the friends.

2 THE PROMULGATION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE

In the East, people were asking me "Why do you undertake this long voyage; your body cannot endure such hardships of travel?" When it is necessary, my body can endure everything. It has withstood forty years of imprisonment and can still undergo the utmost trials.

I will see you again. Now I will greet each one of you personally. It is my hope that you will all be happy and that we may meet again and again.

II

*April 12th, 1912, at 935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y.
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt.*

Notes by Howard MacNutt

THIS is a most happy visit. I have crossed the sea from the land of the Orient for the joy of meeting the friends of God. Although weary after my long journey, the light of the spirit shining in your faces brings me rest and reward. In this meeting, the divine susceptibilities are radiant. This is a spiritual house; the home of the spirit. There is no discord here; all is love and unity. When souls are gathered together in this way the divine bestowals descend. The purpose of the creation of man is the attainment of the supreme virtues of humanity through descent of the heavenly bestowals. The purpose of man's creation is therefore unity and harmony, not discord and separateness. If the atoms which compose the kingdom of the minerals were without affinity for each other the earth would never have been formed, the universe could not have been created. Because they have affinity for each other the power of life is able to manifest itself and the organisms of the phenomenal world become possible. When this attraction or atomic affinity is destroyed, the power of life ceases to manifest; death and non-existence result.

It is so likewise in the spiritual world. That world is the kingdom of complete attraction and affinity. It is the kingdom of the one divine spirit, the kingdom of God. Therefore the affinity and love manifest in this meeting, the divine susceptibilities witnessed here are not of this world but of the world of the kingdom. When the souls become separated and selfish the divine bounties do not descend and the lights of the Supreme Concourse are no longer reflected even though the bodies meet together. A mirror with its back turned to the sun has no power to reflect the sun's effulgence. Praise be to God! the purpose of this assembly is love and unity.

The divine prophets came to establish the unity of the kingdom

in human hearts. All of them proclaimed the glad-tidings of the divine bestowals to the world of mankind. All brought the same message of divine love to the world. His Holiness Jesus Christ gave his life upon the cross for the unity of mankind. Those who believed in him likewise sacrificed life, honor, possessions, family, everything, that this human world might be released from the hell of discord, enmity and strife. His foundation was the oneness of humanity. Only a few were attracted to him. They were not the kings and rulers of his time. They were not rich and important people. Some of them were catchers of fishes. Most of them were ignorant men not trained in the knowledge of this world. One of the greatest of them, Peter, could not remember the days of the week. All of them were men of the least consequence in the eyes of the world. But their hearts were pure and attracted by the fires of the divine spirit manifested in Christ. With this small army Christ conquered the world of the east and the west. Kings and nations rose against him. Philosophers and the greatest men of learning assailed and blasphemed his cause. All were defeated and overcome; their tongues silenced; their lamps extinguished; their hatred quenched; no trace of them now remains. They have become as non-existent while his kingdom is triumphant and eternal.

The brilliant star of his cause has ascended to the zenith while night has enveloped and eclipsed his enemies. His name beloved and adored by a few disciples now commands the reverence of kings and nations of the world. His power is eternal; his sovereignty will continue forever while those who opposed him are sleeping in the dust, their very names unknown, forgotten. The little army of disciples has become a mighty cohort of millions. The Heavenly Host, the Supreme Concourse are his legions, the Word of God is his sword, the power of God is his victory.

His Holiness Jesus Christ knew this would come to pass and was content to suffer. His abasement was his glorification; his crown of thorns a heavenly diadem. When they pressed it upon his blessed head and spat in his beautiful face they laid the foundation of his everlasting kingdom. He still reigns while they and their names have become lost and unknown. He is eternal and glorious; they are non-existent. They sought to destroy him but they destroyed themselves and increased the intensity of his flame by the winds of their opposition.

Through his death and teachings we have entered into his kingdom. His essential teaching was the unity of mankind and attainment of supreme human virtues through love. He came to establish the kingdom of peace and everlasting life. Can you find in his words

any justification for discord and enmity? The purpose of his life and glory of his death was to set mankind free from the sin of strife, war and bloodshed. The great nations of the world boast that their laws and civilization are based upon the religion of Christ. Why then do they make war upon each other? The kingdom of Christ cannot be upheld by destroying and disobeying it. The banners of his armies cannot lead the forces of satan. Consider the sad picture of Italy carrying war into Tripoli. If you should announce that Italy was a barbarous nation and not Christian, this would be vehemently denied. But would Christ sanction what they are doing in Tripoli? Is this destruction of human life obedience to his laws and teachings? Where does he command it? Where does he consent to it? He was killed by his enemies; he did not kill. He even loved and prayed for those who hung him upon the cross. Therefore these wars and cruelties, this bloodshed and sorrow are anti-Christ not Christ. These are the forces of death and satan, not the hosts of the Supreme Concourse of heaven.

No less bitter is the conflict between sects and denominations. Christ was a divine center of unity and love. Whenever discord prevails instead of unity, wherever hatred and antagonism take the place of love and spiritual fellowship, anti-Christ reigns instead of Christ. Who is right in these controversies and hatreds between the sects? Did Christ command them to love or to hate each other? He loved even his enemies and prayed in the hour of his crucifixion for those who killed him. Therefore to be a Christian is not merely to hear the name of Christ and say "I belong to a Christian government." To be a real Christian is to be a servant in his cause and kingdom, to go forth under his banner of peace and love toward all mankind, to be self-sacrificing and obedient, to become quickened by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, to be mirrors reflecting the radiance of the divinity of Christ, to be fruitful trees in the garden of his planting, to refresh the world by the water of life of his teachings; in all things to be like him and filled with the spirit of his love.

Praise be to God! the light of unity and love is shining in these faces. These spiritual susceptibilities are the real fruits of heaven. His Holiness the Bab, His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH over sixty years ago proclaimed the glad-tidings of Universal Peace. The Bab was martyred in the cause of God. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH suffered forty years as a prisoner and exile in order that the kingdom of love might be established in the east and west. He has made it possible for us to meet here in love and unity. Because he suffered imprisonment we are free to proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity for which he stood so long and faithfully. He was chained

in dungeons, he was without food, his companions were thieves and criminals, he was subjected to every kind of abuse and infliction, but throughout it all he never ceased to proclaim the reality of the Word of God and the oneness of humanity. We have been brought together here by the power of his Word;—you from America, I from Persia,—all in love and unity of spirit. Was this possible in former centuries? If it is possible now after fifty years of sacrifice and teaching, what shall we expect in the wonderful centuries coming?

Therefore let your faces be more radiant with hope and heavenly determination to serve the cause of God, to spread the pure fragrances of the divine rose-garden of unity, to awaken spiritual susceptibilities in the hearts of mankind, to kindle anew the spirit of humanity with divine fires and to reflect the glory of heaven to this gloomy world of materialism. When you possess these divine susceptibilities you will be able to awaken and develop them in others. We cannot give of our wealth to the poor unless we possess it. How can the poor give to the poor? How can the soul that is deprived of the heavenly bounties develop capacity to receive those bounties in other souls?

Array yourselves in the perfection of divine virtues. I hope you may be quickened and vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Then shall ye indeed become the angels of heaven whom Christ promised would appear in this Day to gather the harvest of divine planting. This is my hope. This is my prayer for you.

III

April 12, 1912, at 39 West 67th Street, New York.

Studio of Miss Phillips.

Notes by John G. Grundy

I GIVE you greeting in love and unity. The affairs of this world are to be accounted as nothing compared to the joy and heavenly happiness of meeting the friends of God. It is to experience this great joy and blessing that I have come here although weary from my long voyage upon the sea. Tonight I am in greatest happiness, looking upon this concourse of God. Your meeting here is surely an evidence that you are upholding the cause of God; that you are aiding and assisting in establishing the kingdom of God. Therefore the culmination of my happiness is to look upon your faces and realize that you have been brought together by the power of the Blessed Perfection **BAHA 'ULLAH**. In this meeting you are uphold-

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ing his standard and assisting his cause. Therefore I behold in you the making of a goodly tree upon which divine fruits will appear, to give sustenance to the world of humanity.

With hearts set aglow by the fire of the love of God and spirits refreshed by the food of the heavenly spirit you must go forth as the disciples nineteen hundred years ago, quickening the hearts of men by the call of glad-tidings, the light of God in your faces, severed from everything save God. Therefore order your lives in accordance with the first principle of the divine teaching, which is love. Service to humanity is service to God. Let the love and light of the kingdom radiate through you until all who look upon you shall be illumined by its reflection. Be as stars brilliant and sparkling in the loftiness of their heavenly station. Do you appreciate the Day in which you live?

This is the century of the Blessed Perfection!

This is the cycle of the light of his beauty!

This is the consummate day of all the prophets!

These are the days of seed-sowing. These are the days of tree-planting. The bountiful bestowals of God are successive. He who sows a seed in this day will behold his reward in the fruits and harvest of the heavenly kingdom. This timely seed when planted in the hearts of the beloved of God will be watered by showers of divine mercy and warmed by the sunshine of divine love. Its fruitage and flower shall be the solidarity of mankind, perfection of justice and praiseworthy attributes of heaven manifest in humanity. All who sow such a seed and plant such a tree according to the teachings of BAHÁ' ULLÁH shall surely witness this divine outcome in the degrees of its perfection and will attain unto the good-pleasure of his highness the merciful One.

Today the nations of the world are self-engaged; occupied with mortal and transitory accomplishments; consumed by the fires of passion and self. Self is dominant; enmity and animosity prevail. Nations and peoples are thinking only of their worldly interests and outcomes. The clash of war and din of strife are heard among them. But the friends of the Blessed Perfection have no thoughts save the thoughts of heaven and the love of God. Therefore you must without delay employ your powers in spreading the effulgent glow of the love of God and so order your lives that you may be known and seen as examples of its radiance. You must deal with all in loving-kindness in order that this precious seed entrusted to your planting may continue to grow and bring forth its perfect fruit. The love and mercy of God will accomplish this through you if you have love in your own heart.

The doors of the kingdom are opened. The lights of the Sun of Truth are shining. The clouds of the divine mercy are raining down their priceless jewels. The zephyrs of a new and divine springtime are wafting their fragrant breaths from the world invisible. Know ye then the value of these days.

Awake ye to the realization of this heavenly opportunity. Strive with all the power of your souls, your deeds, actions and words to assist the spread of these glad-tidings and descent of this merciful bounty. You are the reality and expression of your deeds and actions. If you abide by the precepts and teachings of the Blessed Perfection the heavenly world and ancient kingdom will be yours; happiness eternal, love and life everlasting. The divine bounties are flowing. Each one of you has been given the opportunity of becoming a tree yielding abundant fruits. This is the springtime of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. The verdure and foliage of spiritual growth are appearing in great abundance in the gardens of human hearts. Know ye the value of these passing days and vanishing nights. Strive to attain a station of absolute love one toward another. By the absence of love, enmity increases. By the exercise of love, love strengthens and enmities dwindle away.

Consider me—in years of my advanced age, burdened with physical infirmities—crossing the wide ocean to look upon your faces. It is my hope that through the life of the spirit you may all become as one soul, as one tree adorning the rose-garden of the kingdom. It is my hope that the endless treasures of the bestowals of God may be yours here and hereafter. It is my prayer that the Supreme Concurrence may be illumined by your brilliant lights shining forever in the heavens of eternal glory.

IV

April 13, 1912, at 141 East 21st Street, New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Morten.

Notes by Esther Foster

PRAISE be to God! this is a radiant gathering. The faces are brilliant with the light of God. The hearts are attracted to the kingdom of Baha. I beg of God that day by day your faces may become brighter; day by day you may draw nearer to God; day by day you may take a greater portion from the outpourings of the Holy Spirit so that you may become encircled by the bounties of heaven.

The world spiritual is like unto the world phenomenal. They are

the exact counterpart of each other. Whatever objects appear in this world of existence are the outer pictures of the world of heaven. When we look upon the phenomenal world we perceive that it is divided into four seasons; one is the season of spring, another the season of summer, another autumn and then these three seasons are followed by winter. When the season of spring appears in the arena of existence the whole world is rejuvenated and finds new life. The soul-refreshing breeze is wafted from every direction; the soul-quickenning bounty is everywhere; the cloud of mercy showers down its rain and the sun shines upon everything. Day by day we perceive that the signs of vegetation are all about us. Wonderful flowers, hyacinths and roses perfume the nostrils. The trees are full of leaves and blossoms, and the blossoms are followed by fruit. The spring and summer are followed by autumn and winter. The flowers wither and are no more; the leaves turn gray and life has gone. Then comes another springtime; the former springtime is renewed; again a new life stirs within everything.

The appearances of the manifestations of God are the divine springtime. When His Holiness Christ appeared in this world it was like the vernal bounty; the outpouring descended; the effulgences of the Merciful encircled all things; the human world found new life. Even the physical world partook of it. The divine perfections were upraised; souls were trained in the school of heaven so that all grades of human existence received life and light. Then by degrees these fragrances of heaven were discontinued; the season of winter came upon the world; the beauties of spring vanished; the excellences and perfections passed away; the lights and quickening were no longer evident; the phenomenal world and its materialities conquered everything; the spiritualities of life were lost; the world of existence became like unto a lifeless body; there was no trace of the spring left.

His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH has come into this world. He has renewed that springtime. The same fragrances are wafting; the same heat of the Sun is giving life; the same cloud is pouring its rain and with our own eyes we see that the world of existence is advancing and progressing. The human world has found new life.

I hope that each and all of you may become like unto verdant and green trees so that through the breezes of the divine spring, the outpouring of heaven, the heat of the Sun of Truth, you may become eternally refreshed; that you may bear blossoms and become fruitful; that you may not be as fruitless trees. Fruitless trees do not bring forth fruits or flowers. I hope that all of you may become friends of the paradise of Abha, appearing with the utmost

freshness and spiritual beauty. I pray in your behalf and beg of God confirmation and assistance.

V

*April 14, 1912, at Fifth Avenue and 10th Street, New York.
Church of the Ascension.*

Notes by Ahmed Sohrab and Howard MacNutt

IN his scriptural lesson this morning the revered Doctor read a verse from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face."

The light of truth has heretofore been seen dimly through variegated glasses, but now the splendors of divinity shall be visible through the translucent mirrors of pure hearts and spirits. The light of truth is the divine teaching, heavenly instruction, merciful principles and spiritual civilization. Since my arrival in this country I find that material civilization has progressed greatly; that commerce has attained the utmost degree of expansion; arts, agriculture and all details of material civilization have reached the highest stage of perfection; but spiritual civilization has been left behind. Material civilization is like unto the lamp, while spiritual civilization is the light in that lamp. If the material and spiritual civilization become united, then we will have the light and the lamp together and the outcome will be perfect. For material civilization is like unto a beautiful body and spiritual civilization is like unto the spirit of life. If that wondrous spirit of life enters this beautiful body, the body will become a channel for the distribution and development of the perfections of humanity.

His Holiness Jesus Christ came to teach the people of the world this heavenly civilization and not material civilization. He breathed the breath of the Holy Spirit into the body of the world and established an illumined civilization. Among the principles of divine civilization he came to proclaim is the "Most Great Peace" of mankind. Among his principles of spiritual civilization is the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. Among the principles of heavenly civilization he brought is the virtue of the human world. Among the principles of celestial civilization he announced is the improvement and betterment of human morals.

Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. To establish these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed. It is self-evident that unity of the human world and the "Most Great Peace" cannot be accomplished through material means. They cannot be established through polit-

ical power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this unity and agreement. Therefore it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity which is the essence of the teachings of all the manifestations of God is impossible except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers are too weak and are incapable of accomplishing this.

For man, two wings are necessary. One wing is the physical power and material civilization; the other is the spiritual power and divine civilization. With one wing only, flight is impossible. Two wings are essential. Therefore no matter how much material civilization advances it cannot attain to perfection except through uplift of the spiritual civilization.

All the prophets have come to promote divine bestowals, to found the spiritual civilization and teach the principles of morality. Therefore we must strive with all our powers so that spiritual influences may gain the victory. For material forces have attacked mankind. The world of humanity is submerged in a sea of materialism. The rays of the Sun of Reality are seen but dimly and darkly through opaque glasses. The penetrative power of the divine bounty is not fully manifest.

In Persia, among the various religions and sects there were intense differences. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH appeared in that country and founded the spiritual civilization. He established affiliation among the various peoples, promoted the oneness of the human world and unfurled the banner of the "Most Great Peace." He wrote special epistles covering these facts to all the kings and rulers of nations. Sixty years ago he conveyed his message to the leaders of the political world and to high dignitaries of the spiritual world. Therefore spiritual civilization is progressing in the Orient and oneness of humanity and peace among the nations is being accomplished step by step. Now I find a strong movement for Universal Peace emanating from America. It is my hope that this standard of the oneness of the world of humanity may be upraised with the utmost solidity, so that the Orient and Occident may become perfectly reconciled, attain complete inter-communication, the hearts of the east and west become united and attracted, real union become unveiled, the light of guidance shine, divine effulgences be seen day by day so that the world of humanity may find complete tranquillity, the eternal happiness of man

become evident and the hearts of the people of the world be as mirrors in which the rays of the Sun of Reality may be reflected. Consequently it is my request that you should strive so that the light of reality may shine and the everlasting felicity of the world of man become apparent.

I will pray for you so you may attain this everlasting happiness. When I arrived in this city I was made very happy for I perceived that the people here have capacity for divine bestowals and have worthiness for the civilization of heaven. I pray that you may attain to all merciful bounties.

Prayer.

O Almighty! O God! O Thou compassionate One! This servant of thine has hastened to the regions of the west from the uttermost parts of the east that perchance these nostrils may be perfumed by the fragrances of thy bestowals; that the breeze of the rose-garden of guidance may blow over these cities; that the people may attain to the capacity of receiving thy favors; that the hearts may be rejoiced through thy glad-tidings; that the eyes may behold the light of reality; that the ears may hearken to the call of the kingdom. O Almighty! Illumine the hearts. O kind God! Make the souls the envy of the rose-garden and the meadow. O incomparable beloved! Waft the fragrance of thy bounty. Radiate the lights of compassion so that the hearts may be cleansed and purified and that they may take a share and portion from thy confirmations. Verily this congregation is seeking thy path, searching for thy mystery, beholding thy face and desiring to be characterized with thine attributes.

O Almighty! Confer thou infinite bounties. Bestow thy inexhaustible treasury so that these impotent ones may become powerful.

Verily thou are the kind! Thou art the generous! Thou are the omniscient, the omnipotent!

VI

*April 14, 1912, at Carnegie Lyceum, West 57th Street, New York.
Union Meeting of Advanced Thought Centers.*

Notes by Mountfort Mills and Howard MacNutt

I HAVE come from distant lands to visit the meetings and assemblies of this country. In every meeting I find people gathered loving each other; therefore I am greatly pleased. The bond of union is evidenced in this assembly today where the power of

God has brought together in faith, agreement and concord those who are engaged in furthering the development of the human world. It is my hope that all mankind may become similarly united in the bond and agreement of love. Unity is the expression of the loving power of God and reflects the reality of divinity. It is resplendent in this day through the bestowals of light upon humanity.

Throughout the universe the divine power is effulgent in endless images and pictures. The world of creation, the world of humanity may be likened to the earth itself and the divine power to the sun. This Sun has shone upon all mankind. In the endless variety of its reflections the divine will is manifested. Consider how all are recipients of the bounty of the same Sun. At most the difference between them is that of degree, for the effulgence is one effulgence, the one light emanating from the Sun. This will express the oneness of the world of humanity. The body-politic or the social unity of the human world may be likened to an ocean and each member, each individual a wave upon that same ocean.

The light of the sun becomes apparent in each object according to the capacity of that object. The difference is simply one of degree and receptivity. The stone would be a recipient only to a limited extent; another created thing might be as a mirror wherein the sun is fully reflected; but the same light shines upon both.

The most important thing is to polish the mirrors of hearts in order that they may become illumined and receptive of the divine light. One heart may possess the capacity of the polished mirror: another be covered and obscured by the dust and dross of this world. Although the same Sun is shining upon both, in the mirror which is polished, pure and sanctified you may behold the Sun in all its fullness, glory and power revealing its majesty and effulgence, but in the mirror which is rusted and obscured there is no capacity for reflection although so far as the Sun itself is concerned it is shining thereon and is neither lessened nor deprived. Therefore our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

This means the oneness of the world of humanity. That is to say, when this human body-politic reaches a state of absolute unity, the effulgence of the eternal Sun will make its fullest light and heat manifest. Therefore we must not make distinctions between individual members of the human family. We must not consider any soul as barren or deprived. Our duty lies in educating souls so that the Sun of the bestowals of God shall become resplendent

in them, and this is possible through the power of the oneness of humanity. The more love is expressed among mankind and the stronger the power of unity, the greater will be this reflection and revelation, for the greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart no other divine bounty can be revealed in it.

All the prophets have striven to make love manifest in the hearts of men. His Holiness Jesus Christ sought to create this love in the hearts. He suffered all difficulties and ordeals that perchance the human heart might become the fountain-source of love. Therefore we must strive with all our heart and soul that this love may take possession of us so that all humanity whether it be in the east or in the west may be connected through the bond of this divine affection; for we are all the waves of one sea; we have come into being through the same bestowal and are recipients from the same center. The lights of earth are all acceptable, but the center of effulgence is the sun and we must direct our gaze to the sun. God is the supreme center. The more we turn toward this center of light, the greater will be our capacity.

In the Orient there were great differences among races and peoples. They hated each other and there was no association among them. Various and divergent sects were hostile, irreconcilable. The different races were in constant war and conflict. About sixty years ago BAHÁ'ULLAH appeared upon the eastern horizon. He caused love and unity to become manifest among these antagonistic peoples. He united them with the bond of love; their former hatred and animosity passed away; love and unity reigned instead. It was a dark world; it became radiant. A new spring-time appeared through him, for the Sun of Truth had risen again. In the fields and meadows of human hearts variegated flowers of inner significance were blooming and the good fruits of the kingdom of God became manifest.

I have come here with this mission; that through your endeavors, through your heavenly morals, through your devoted efforts a perfect bond of unity and love may be established between the east and the west, so that the bestowals of God may descend upon all and that all may be seen to be the parts of the same tree,—the great tree of the human family. For mankind may be likened to the branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit of that tree.

The favors of God are unending, limitless. Infinite bounties have encompassed the world. We must emulate the bounties of God, and just as each one of them—the bounty of life for instance—surrounds and encompasses all, so likewise must we be connected

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and blended together until each part shall become the expression of the whole.

Consider; we plant a seed. A complete and perfect tree appears from it, and from each seed of this tree another tree can be produced. Therefore the part is expressive of the whole, for this seed was a part of the tree, but therein potentially was the whole tree. So each one of us may become expressive or representative of all the bounties of life to mankind. This is the unity of the world of humanity. This is the bestowal of God. This is the felicity of the human world and this is the manifestation of the divine favor.

VII

*April 15, 1912, at 327 West End Avenue, New York.
Home of Mountfort Mills.*

Compiled from Stenographic Notes by Howard MacNutt

A FEW days ago I arrived in New York, coming direct from Alexandria. On a former trip I traveled to Europe, visiting Paris and London. Paris is most beautiful in outward appearance. The evidences of material civilization there are very great but the spiritual civilization is far behind. I found the people of that city submerged and drowning in a sea of materialism. Their conversations and discussions were limited to natural and physical phenomena, without mention of God. I was greatly astonished. Most of the scholars, professors and learned men proved to be materialists. I said to them "I am surprised and astonished that men of such perceptive caliber and evident knowledge should still be captives of nature, not recognizing the self-evident Reality."

The phenomenal world is entirely subject to the rule and control of natural law. These myriad suns, satellites and heavenly bodies throughout endless space are all captives of nature. They cannot transgress in a single point or particular the fixed laws which govern the physical universe. The sun in its immensity, the ocean in its vastness are incapable of violating these universal laws. All phenomenal beings,—the plants in their kingdom, even the animals with their intelligence are nature's subjects and captives. All live within the bounds of natural law, and nature is the ruler of all except man. Man is not the captive of nature, for although according to natural law he is a being of the earth, yet he guides ships over the ocean, flies through the air in aeroplanes, descends in submarines;—therefore he has overcome natural law and made

it subservient to his wishes. For instance, he imprisons in an incandescent lamp the illimitable natural energy called electricity—a material force which can cleave mountains—and bids it give him light. He takes the human voice and confines it in the phonograph for his benefit and amusement. According to his natural power, man should be able to communicate a limited distance but by overcoming the restrictions of nature he can annihilate space and send telephone messages thousands of miles. All the sciences, arts and discoveries were mysteries of nature, and according to natural law these mysteries should remain latent, hidden, but man has proceeded to break this law, free himself from this rule and bring them forth into the realm of the visible. Therefore he is the ruler and commander of nature. Man has intelligence; nature has not. Man has volition; nature is minus. Man has memory; nature is without it. Man has the reasoning faculty; nature is deprived. Man has the perceptive faculty; nature cannot perceive. It is therefore proved and evident that man is nobler than nature.

If we accept the supposition that man is but a part of nature, we are confronted by an illogical statement, for this is equivalent to claiming that a part may be endowed with qualities which are absent in the whole. For man who is a part of nature has perception, intelligence, memory, conscious reflection and susceptibility, while nature itself is quite bereft of them. How is it possible for the part to be possessed of qualities or faculties which are absent in the whole? The truth is that God has given to man certain powers which are super-natural. How then can man be considered a captive of nature? Is he not dominating and controlling nature to his own uses more and more? Is he not the very divinity of nature? Shall we say nature is blind, nature is not perceptive, nature is without volition and not alive, and then relegate man to nature and its limitations? How can we answer this question? How will the materialists and scholastic atheists prove and support such a supposition? As a matter of fact they themselves make natural laws subservient to their own wish and purpose. The proof is complete that in man there is a power beyond the limitations of nature, and that power is the bestowal of God.

In New York I find the people more endowed with spiritual susceptibilities. They are not mere captives of nature's control; they are rising out of the bonds and burden of captivity. For this reason I am very happy and hopeful that, God willing, in this populous country, in this vast continent of the west, the virtues of the world of humanity shall become resplendent, that the oneness of human world-power, the love of God, may enkindle the hearts,

and that international peace may hoist its standards, influencing all other regions and countries from here. This is my hope.

VIII

*April 16, 1912, at Hotel Ansonia, Broadway and 73rd Street,
New York.*

Bahai Friends of New Jersey.

Notes by Ahmed Sohrab

SOULS from the east and west have been brought together here through the power of the Holy Spirit. Such a gathering as this would be impossible through material means. A meeting of this kind has never been established in New York, for here tonight we find people from remote regions of the earth, associated with the people of America in the utmost love and spiritual unity. This is only possible through the power of God. His Holiness the Christ appeared in this world nineteen hundred years ago to establish ties of unity and bonds of love between the various nations and different communities. He cemented together the sciences of Rome and the splendors of the civilization of Greece. He also accomplished affiliation between the Assyrian kingdom and the power of Egypt. The blending of these nations in unity, love and agreement had been impossible, but His Holiness the Christ through divine power established this condition among the children of men.

A much greater difficulty confronts us today when we endeavor to establish unity between the Orient and the Occident. His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLÁH through the power of heaven has brought the east and the west together. Ere long we shall know that they have been cemented by the power of God. The oneness of the kingdom of humanity will supplant the banner of conquest and all communities of the earth will gather under its protection. No nation with separate and restricted boundaries, such as Persia for instance, will exist. The United States of America will be known only as a name. Germany, France, England, Turkey, Arabia—all these various nations will be welded together in unity. When the people of the future are asked "To which nationality do you belong?" the answer will be "To the nationality of humanity. I am living under the shadow of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH. I am the servant of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH. I belong to the army of the 'Most Great Peace'." The people of the future will not say "I belong to the nation of England, France or Persia," for all of them will be citizens

of a universal nationality; the one family, the one country, the one world of humanity; and then these wars, hatreds and strifes will pass away.

His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH appeared in a country which was the center of prejudice. In that country were many different communities, religions, sects and denominations. All the animosities of past centuries existed among them. They were ready to kill each other. They considered the killing of others who did not agree with them in religious belief, an act of worship. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH established such unity and agreement between these various communities that the greatest love and amity are now witnessed among them.

Today the Bahais of the east are longing with deep desire to see you face to face. Their highest hope and fondest wish is that the day may come when they will be gathered together in an assembly with you. Consider well the power that accomplished this wonderful transformation.

The body of the human world is sick. Its remedy and healing will be the oneness of the kingdom of humanity. Its life is the "Most Great Peace." Its illumination and quickening is love. Its happiness is the attainment of spiritual perfections. It is my wish and hope that in the bounties and favors of the Blessed Perfection we may find a new life, acquire a new power and attain to a wonderful and supreme source of energy so that the "Most Great Peace" of divine intention shall be established upon the foundations of the unity of the world of men with God. May the love of God be spread from this city, from this meeting to all the surrounding countries. Nay, may America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment and all the world receive this heavenly blessing. For America has developed powers and capabilities greater and more wonderful than other nations. While it is true that its people have attained a marvelous material civilization, I hope that spiritual forces may animate this great body and a corresponding spiritual civilization be established. May the inhabitants of this country become like angels of heaven with faces turned continually toward God. May all of them become the servants of the omnipotent One. May they rise from the perfections of materialism to such a height that heavenly illumination may stream from this center to all the people of the world.

The divine Jerusalem has come down from heaven. The bride of Zion has appeared. The voice of the kingdom of God has been raised. May you attain supreme capacity and magnetic attraction in this realm of might and power,—manifesting new energy and

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wonderful accomplishment, for God is your assister and helper. The breath of the Holy Spirit is your comforter and the angels of heaven surround you. I desire this power for you. Rest assured that these bounties now overshadow you.

IX

*April 17, 1912, at Hotel Ansonia, Broadway and 73rd Street,
New York.*

Notes by Howard MacNutt

DURING my visit to London and Paris last year I had many talks with the materialistic philosophers of Europe. The basis of all their conclusions is that the acquisition of knowledge of phenomena is according to a fixed, invariable law,—a law mathematically exact in its operation through the senses. For instance, the eye sees a chair; therefore there is no doubt of the chair's existence. The eye looks up into the heavens and beholds the sun; I see flowers upon this table; I smell their fragrance; I hear sounds outside, etc., etc. This, they say, is a fixed mathematical law of perception and deduction, the operation of which admits of no doubt whatever; for inasmuch as the universe is subject to our sensing, the proof is self-evident that our knowledge of it must be gained through the avenues of the senses. That is to say, the materialists announce that the criterion and standard of human knowledge is sense perception. Among the Greeks and Romans the criterion of knowledge was reason; that whatever is provable and acceptable by reason must necessarily be admitted as true. A third standard or criterion is the opinion held by theologians that traditions or prophetic statement and interpretations constitute the basis of human knowing. There is still another, a fourth criterion upheld by religionists and metaphysicians who say that the source and channel of all human penetration into the unknown is through inspiration. Briefly then, these four criterions according to the declarations of men are: First—Sense Perception; Second—Reason; Third—Traditions; Fourth—Inspiration.

In Europe I told the philosophers and scientists of materialism that the criterion of the senses is not reliable. For instance, consider a mirror and the images reflected in it. These images have no actual corporeal existence. Yet if you had never seen a mirror you would firmly insist and believe that they were real. The eye sees a mirage upon the desert as a lake of water but there is no reality in it. As we stand upon the deck of a steamer the shore

appears to be moving, yet we know the land is stationary and we are moving. The earth was believed to be fixed and the sun revolving about it but although this appears to be so, the reverse is now known to be true. A whirling torch makes a circle of fire appear before the eye, yet we realize there is but one point of light. We behold a shadow moving upon the ground but it has no material existence, no substance. In deserts the atmospheric effects are particularly productive of illusions which deceive the eye. Once I saw a mirage in which a whole caravan appeared traveling upward into the sky. In the far north other deceptive phenomena appear and baffle human vision. Sometimes three or four suns called by scientists "mock suns" will be shining at the same time whereas we know the great solar orb is one and that it remains fixed and single. In brief, the senses are continually deceived and we are unable to separate that which is reality from that which is not.

As to the second criterion—reason—this likewise is unreliable and not to be depended upon. This human world is an ocean of varying opinions. If reason is the perfect standard and criterion of knowledge, why are opinions at variance and why do philosophers disagree so completely with each other? This is a clear proof that human reason is not to be relied upon as an infallible criterion. For instance, great discoveries and announcements of former centuries are continually upset and discarded by the wise men of today. Mathematicians, astronomers, chemical scientists continually disprove and reject the conclusions of the ancients; nothing is fixed, nothing final; everything continually changing because human reason is progressing along new roads of investigation and arriving at new conclusions every day. In the future much that is announced and accepted as true now will be rejected and disproved. And so it will continue *ad infinitum*.

When we consider the third criterion—traditions—upheld by theologians as the avenue and standard of knowledge, we find this source equally unreliable and unworthy of dependence. For religious traditions are the report and record of understanding and interpretation of the Book. By what means has this understanding, this interpretation been reached? By the analysis of human reason. When we read the Book of God the faculty of comprehension by which we form conclusions is reason. Reason is mind. If we are not endowed with perfect reason, how can we comprehend the meanings of the Word of God? Therefore human reason, as already pointed out, is by its very nature finite and faulty in conclusions. It cannot surround the Reality Itself, the Infinite Word. Inasmuch as the source of traditions and interpretations is human

reason, and human reason is faulty, how can we depend upon its findings for real knowledge?

The fourth criterion I have named is inspiration through which it is claimed the reality of knowledge is attainable. What is inspiration? It is the influx of the human heart. But what are satanic promptings which afflict mankind? They are the influx of the heart also. How shall we differentiate between them? The question arises, How shall we know whether we are following inspiration from God or satanic promptings of the human soul? Briefly, the point is that in the human material world of phenomena these four are the only existing criterions or avenues of knowledge, and all of them are faulty and unreliable. What then remains? How shall we attain the reality of knowledge? By the breaths and promptings of the Holy Spirit which is light and knowledge Itself. Through it the human mind is quickened and fortified into true conclusions and perfect knowledge. This is conclusive argument showing that all available human criterions are erroneous and defective, but the divine standard of knowledge is infallible. Therefore man is not justified in saying "I know because I perceive through my senses"; or "I know because it is proved through my faculty of reason"; or "I know because it is according to tradition and interpretation of the holy book"; or "I know because I am inspired." All human standard of judgment is faulty, finite.

X

April 17, 1912, at 780 West End Avenue, New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney.

Notes by John G. Grundy

IN the holy books it is recorded that when the Sun of Truth dawns it will appear in the east and its light will be reflected in the west. Already its dawning has taken place in the east and its signs are appearing in the west. Its illumination shall spread rapidly and widely in the Occident. The Sun of Truth has risen in Persia and its effulgence is now manifest here in America. This is the greatest proof of its appearance in the horizon of the world, as recorded in the heavenly books. Praise be to God! that which is prophesied in the holy books has been fulfilled.

On Sunday last at Carnegie Hall the revered soul who introduced Abdul Baha gave voice to the statement that according to tradition demons would appear from the land of the sun-rising,

but now we find angels appearing instead. At the time this statement was made a reply was not possible but today we will speak of it. The great spiritual lights have always appeared in the east. The Blessed Perfection BAHÁ'ULLAH appeared in the east. His Holiness Jesus Christ dawned upon the horizon of the east. Moses, Aaron, Joseph and all the Israelitish prophets such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and others appeared from the Orient. The lights of Mohammed and the Bab shone from the east. The eastern horizon has been flooded with the effulgence of these great lights and only from the east have they risen to shine upon the west. Now, Praise be to God! you are living in the dawn of a cycle when the Sun of Truth is again shining forth from the east illumining all regions.

The world has become a new world. The darkness of night which has enveloped humanity is passing. A new day has dawned. Divine susceptibilities and heavenly capacities are developing in human souls under the training of the Sun of Truth. The capacities of souls are different. Their conditions are various. For example, certain minerals come from the stony regions of the earth. All are minerals; all are produced by the same sun, but one remains a stone while another develops the capacity of a glittering gem or jewel. From one plot of land tulips and hyacinths grow; from another, thorns and thistles. Each plot receives the bounty of the sunshine but the capacity to receive it is not the same. Therefore it is requisite that we must develop capacity and divine susceptibility in order that the merciful bounty of the Sun of Truth intended for this age and time in which we are living may reflect from us as light from pure crystals.

The bounties of the Blessed Perfection are infinite. We must endeavor to increase our capacity daily, to strengthen and enlarge our capabilities for receiving them; become as perfect mirrors. The more polished and clean the mirror, the more effulgent is its reflection of the lights of the Sun of Truth. Be like a well cultivated garden wherein the roses and variegated flowers of heaven are growing in fragrance and beauty. It is my hope that your hearts may become as ready ground, carefully tilled and prepared, upon which the divine showers of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may descend and the zephyrs of this divine springtime may blow with quickening breath. Then will the garden of your hearts bring forth its flowers of delightful fragrance to refresh the nostril of the heavenly gardener. Let your hearts reflect the glories of the Sun of Truth in their many colors to gladden the eye of the divine cultivator who has nourished them. Day by day become more closely attracted in order that the love of God

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may illumine all those with whom you come in contact. Be as one spirit, one soul, leaves of one tree, flowers of one garden, waves of one ocean.

As difference in degree of capacity exists among human souls, as difference in capability is found, therefore individualities will differ one from another. But in reality this is a reason for unity and not for discord and enmity. If the flowers of a garden were all of one color the effect would be monotonous to the eye; but if the colors are variegated it is most pleasing and wonderful. The difference in adornment of color and capacity of reflection among the flowers gives the garden its beauty and charm. Therefore although we are of different individualities, different in ideas and of various fragrances, let us strive like flowers of the same divine garden to live together in harmony. Even though each soul has its own individual perfume and color, all are reflecting the same light, all contributing fragrance to the same breeze which blows through the garden, all continuing to grow in complete harmony and accord. Become as waves of one sea, trees of one forest, growing in the utmost love, agreement and unity.

If you attain to such a capacity of love and unity the Blessed Perfection will shower infinite graces of the spiritual kingdom upon you, guide, protect and preserve you under the shadow of his Word, increase your happiness in this world and uphold you through all difficulties. Therefore it is my hope that day by day you will become more and more effulgent in the horizon of heaven, advance nearer and nearer toward the kingdom of EL-ABHA, attain greater and greater bounties of the Blessed Perfection. I am joyful for I perceive the evidences of great love among you. I go to Chicago and when I return I hope that love will have become infinite. Then will it be an eternal joy to me and the friends in the Orient.

XI

April 18, 1912, at 273 West 90th Street, New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall L. Emery.

Notes by Miss Dixon

TONIGHT I wish to tell you something of the history of the Bahai Revelation.

The Blessed Perfection BAHÁ'ULLAH belonged to the royal family of Persia. From earliest childhood he was distinguished among his relatives and friends. They said "This child has

extraordinary power." In wisdom, intelligence and as a source of new knowledge he was advanced beyond his age and superior to his surroundings. All who knew him were astonished at his precocity. It was usual for them to say "Such a child will not live" for it is commonly believed that precocious children do not reach maturity. During the period of youth the Blessed Perfection did not enter school. He was not willing to be taught. This fact is well established among the Persians of Teheran. Nevertheless he was capable of solving the difficult problems of all who came to him. In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological discussion he was found, he became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions presented.

Until his father passed away BAHÁ 'ULLAH did not seek position or political station notwithstanding his connection with the government. This occasioned surprise and comment. It was frequently said "How is it that a young man of such keen intelligence and subtle perception does not seek lucrative appointments? As a matter of fact every position is open to him." This is a historical statement fully attested by the people of Persia.

He was most generous, giving abundantly to the poor. None who came to him were turned away. The doors of his house were open to all. He always had many guests. This unbounded generosity was conducive to greater astonishment from the fact that he sought neither position nor prominence. In commenting upon this his friends said he would become impoverished, for his expenses were many and his wealth becoming more and more limited. "Why is he not thinking of his own affairs?" they inquired of each other; but some who were wise declared "This personage is connected with another world; he has something sublime within him that is not evident now; the day is coming when it will be manifested." In truth the Blessed Perfection was a refuge for every weak one, a shelter for every fearing one, kind to every indigent one, lenient and loving to all creatures.

He became well known in regard to these qualities before His Holiness the Bab appeared. Then BAHÁ 'ULLAH declared the Bab's mission to be true and promulgated his teachings. The Bab announced that the greater manifestation would take place after him and called the promised one "Him whom God would manifest," saying that nine years later the reality of his own mission would become apparent. In his writings he stated that in the ninth year this expected one would be known; in the ninth year they would attain to all glory and felicity; in the ninth year they would advance rapidly. Between BAHÁ 'ULLAH and the Bab

there was communication privately. The Bab wrote a letter containing three hundred and sixty derivatives of the root "Baha." The Bab was martyred in Tabriz, and BAHÁ 'ULLÁH exiled into Irak-Arabi in 1852, announced himself in Baghdad. For the Persian Government had decided that as long as he remained in Persia the peace of the country would be disturbed; therefore he was exiled in the expectation that Persia would become quiet. His banishment however produced the opposite effect. New tumult arose and the mention of his greatness and influence spread everywhere throughout the country. The proclamation of his manifestation and mission was made in Baghdad. He called his friends together there and spoke to them of God. Afterward he left the city and went alone into the mountains of Kurdistan where he made his abode in caves and grottoes. A part of this time he lived in the city of Sulimaniyye. Two years passed during which neither his friends nor family knew just where he was.

Although solitary, secluded and unknown in his retirement, the report spread throughout Kurdistan that this was a most remarkable and learned personage gifted with a wonderful power of attraction. In a short time Kurdistan was magnetized with his love. During this period BAHÁ 'ULLÁH lived in poverty. His garments were those of the poor and needy. His food was that of the indigent and lowly. An atmosphere of majesty haloed him as the sun at midday. Everywhere he was greatly revered and beloved.

After two years he returned to Baghdad. Friends he had known in Sulimaniyye came to visit him. They found him in his accustomed environment of ease and affluence and were astonished at the appointments of one who had lived in seclusion under such frugal conditions in Kurdistan.

The Persian government believed the banishment of the Blessed Perfection from Persia would be the extermination of his cause in that country. These rulers now realized that it spread more rapidly. His prestige increased, his teachings became more widely circulated. The chiefs of Persia then used their influence to have BAHÁ 'ULLÁH exiled from Baghdad. He was summoned to Constantinople by the Turkish authorities. While in Constantinople he ignored every restriction, especially the hostility of ministers of state and clergy. The official representatives of Persia again brought their influence to bear upon the Turkish authorities and succeeded in having BAHÁ 'ULLÁH banished from Constantinople to Adrianople, the object being to keep him as far away as possible from Persia and render his communication with that country more difficult. Nevertheless the cause still spread and strengthened.

Finally they consulted together and said "We have banished BAHĀ 'ULLĀH from place to place but each time he is exiled his cause is more widely extended, his proclamation increases in power and day by day his lamp is becoming brighter. This is due to the fact that we have exiled him to large cities and populous centers. Therefore we will send him to a penal colony as a prisoner so that all may know he is the associate of murderers, robbers and criminals; in a short time he and his followers will perish." The sultan of Turkey then banished him to the prison of Akka in Syria.

When BAHĀ 'ULLĀH arrived at Akka, through the power of God he was able to hoist his banner. His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun and the illumination of his cause expanded from the east to the west. Inside prison walls he wrote epistles to all the kings and rulers of nations summoning them to arbitration and Universal Peace. Some of the kings received his words with disdain and contempt. One of these was the sultan of the Ottoman kingdom. Napoleon III of France did not reply. A second epistle was addressed to him. It stated "I have written you an epistle before this, summoning you to the cause of God but you are of the heedless. You have proclaimed that you were the defender of the oppressed; now it hath become evident that you are not. Nor are you kind to your own suffering and oppressed people. Your actions are contrary to your own interests and your kingly pride must fall. Because of your arrogance God shortly will destroy your sovereignty. France will flee away from you and you will be overwhelmed by a great conquest. There will be lamentation and mourning, women bemoaning the loss of their sons." This arraignment of Napoleon III was published and spread.

Read it and consider: One prisoner, single and solitary, without assistant or defender, a foreigner and stranger imprisoned in the fortress of Akka writing such letters to the emperor of France and sultan of Turkey. Reflect upon this, how BAHĀ 'ULLĀH upraised the standard of his cause in prison. Refer to history. It is without parallel. No such thing has happened before that time nor since; a prisoner and an exile advancing his cause and spreading his teachings broadcast so that eventually he became powerful enough to conquer the very king who banished him.

His cause spread more and more. The Blessed Perfection was a prisoner twenty-five years. During all this time he was subjected to the indignities and revilement of the people. He was persecuted, mocked and put in chains. In Persia his properties were pillaged and his possessions confiscated. First, banishment

from Persia to Baghdad; then to Constantinople; then to Adrianople; finally from Roumelia to the prison fortress of Akka.

During his lifetime he was intensely active. His energy was unlimited. Scarcely one night was passed in restful sleep. He bore these ordeals, suffered these calamities and difficulties in order that a manifestation of selflessness and service might become apparent in the world of humanity; that the "Most Great Peace" should become a reality; that human souls might appear as the angels of heaven; that heavenly miracles would be wrought among men; that human faith should be strengthened and perfected; that the precious, priceless bestowal of God—the human mind—might be developed to its fullest capacity in the temple of the body; and man become the reflection and likeness of God, even as it hath been revealed in the bible "We shall create man in our own image."

Briefly; the Blessed Perfection bore all these ordeals and calamities in order that our hearts might become enkindled and radiant, our spirits be glorified, our faults become virtues, our ignorance transformed into knowledge; in order that we might attain the real fruits of humanity and acquire heavenly graces; although pilgrims upon earth we should travel the road of the heavenly kingdom; although needy and poor we might receive the treasures of life eternal. For this has he borne these difficulties and sorrows.

Trust all to God. The lights of God are resplendent. The blessed epistles are spreading. The blessed teachings are promulgated throughout the east and west. Soon you will see that the heavenly words have established the oneness of the world of humanity. The banner of the "Most Great Peace" has been unfurled and the "great community" is appearing.

XII

April 19, 1912, at Earl Hall, Columbia University, New York.

From Stenographic Notes

IF we look with a perceiving eye upon the world of creation, we find that all existing things may be classified as follows: First—Mineral—that is to say matter or substance appearing in various forms of composition. Second—Vegetable—possessing the virtues of the mineral plus the power of augmentation or growth, indicating a degree higher and more specialized than the mineral. Third—Animal—possessing the attributes of the mineral and vegetable

plus the power of sense perception. Fourth—Human—the highest specialized organism of visible creation, embodying the qualities of the mineral, vegetable and animal plus an ideal endowment absolutely minus and absent in the lower kingdoms—the power of intellectual investigation into the mysteries of outer phenomena. The outcome of this intellectual endowment is science which is especially characteristic of man. This scientific power investigates and apprehends created objects and the laws surrounding them. It is the discoverer of the hidden and mysterious secrets of the material universe and is peculiar to man alone. The most noble and praiseworthy accomplishment of man therefore is scientific knowledge and attainment.

Science may be likened to a mirror wherein the images of the mysteries of outer phenomena are reflected. It brings forth and exhibits to us in the arena of knowledge all the product of the past. It links together past and present. The philosophical conclusions of bygone centuries, the teachings of the prophets and wisdom of former sages are crystallized and reproduced in the scientific advancement of today. Science is the discoverer of the past. From its premises of past and present we deduce conclusions as to the future. Science is the governor of nature and its mysteries, the one agency by which man explores the institutions of material creation. All created things are captives of nature and subject to its laws. They cannot transgress the control of these laws in one detail or particular. The infinite starry worlds and heavenly bodies are nature's obedient subjects. The earth and its myriad organisms, all minerals, plants and animals are thralls of its dominion. But man through the exercise of his scientific, intellectual power can rise out of this condition, can modify, change and control nature according to his own wishes and uses. Science, so to speak, is the "breaker" of the laws of nature.

Consider, for example, that man according to natural law should dwell upon the surface of the earth. By overcoming this law and restriction however he sails in ships over the ocean, mounts to the zenith in aeroplanes and sinks to the depths of the sea in submarines. This is against the fiat of nature and a violation of her sovereignty and dominion. Nature's laws and methods, the hidden secrets and mysteries of the universe, human inventions and discoveries, all our scientific acquisitions should naturally remain concealed and unknown, but man through his intellectual acumen searches them out of the plane of the invisible, draws them into the plane of the visible, exposes and explains them. For instance, one of the mysteries of nature is electricity. According to nature

this force, this energy should remain latent and hidden, but man scientifically breaks through the very laws of nature, arrests it and even imprisons it for his use.

In brief, man through the possession of this ideal endowment of scientific investigation is the most noble product of creation, the governor of nature. He takes the sword from nature's hand and uses it upon nature's head. According to natural law, night is a period of darkness and obscurity, but man by utilizing the power of electricity, by wielding this electric sword overcomes the darkness and dispels the gloom. Man is superior to nature and makes nature do his bidding. Man is a sensitive being; nature is minus sensation. Man has memory and reason; nature lacks them. Man is nobler than nature. There are powers within him of which nature is devoid. It may be claimed that these powers are from nature itself and that man is a part of nature. In answer to this statement we will say that if nature is the whole and man is a part of that whole, how could it be possible for a part to possess qualities and virtues which are absent in the whole. Undoubtedly the part must be endowed with the same qualities and properties as the whole. For example, the hair is a part of the human anatomy. It cannot contain elements which are not found in other parts of the body, for in all cases the component elements of the body are the same. Therefore it is manifest and evident that man, although in body a part of nature, nevertheless in spirit possesses a power transcending nature; for if he were simply a part of nature and limited to material laws he could possess only the things which nature embodies. God has conferred upon and added to man a distinctive power, the faculty of intellectual investigation into the secrets of creation, the acquisition of higher knowledge, the greatest virtue of which is scientific enlightenment.

This endowment is the most praiseworthy power of man, for through its employment and exercise, the betterment of the human race is accomplished, the development of the virtues of mankind is made possible and the spirit and mysteries of God become manifest. Therefore I am greatly pleased with my visit to this university. Praise be to God! that this country abounds in such institutions of learning where the knowledge of sciences and arts may readily be acquired.

As material and physical sciences are taught here and are constantly unfolding in wider vistas of attainment, I am hopeful that spiritual development may also follow and keep pace with these outer advantages. As material knowledge is illuminating those within the walls of this great temple of learning, so also may

the light of the spirit, the inner and divine light of the real philosophy glorify this institution. The most important principle of divine philosophy is the oneness of the world of humanity, the unity of mankind, the bond conjoining east and west, the tie of love which blends human hearts.

Therefore it is our duty to put forth our greatest efforts and summon all our energies in order that the bonds of unity and accord may be established among mankind. For thousands of years we have had bloodshed and strife. It is enough; it is sufficient. Now is the time to associate together in love and harmony. For thousands of years we have tried the sword and warfare; let mankind for a time at least live in peace. Review history and consider how much savagery, how much bloodshed and battle the world has witnessed. It has been either religious warfare, political warfare or some other clash of human interests. The world of humanity has never enjoyed the blessing of Universal Peace. Year by year the implements of warfare have been increased and perfected. Consider the wars of past centuries; only ten, fifteen or twenty thousand at the most were killed but now it is possible to kill one hundred thousand in a single day. In ancient times warfare was carried on with the sword; today it is the smokeless gun. Formerly battleships were sailing vessels; today they are dreadnoughts. Consider the increase and improvement in the weapons of war. God has created us all human and all countries of the world are parts of the same globe. We are all his servants. He is kind and just to all. Why should we be unkind and unjust to each other? He provides for all. Why should we deprive one another? He protects and preserves all. Why should we kill our fellow-creatures? If this warfare and strife be for the sake of religion, it is evident that it violates the spirit and basis of all religion. All the divine manifestations have proclaimed the oneness of God and the unity of mankind. They have taught that men should love and mutually help each other in order that they might progress. Now if this conception of religion be true, its essential principle is the oneness of humanity. The fundamental truth of the manifestations is peace. This underlies all religion, all justice. The divine purpose is that men should live in unity, concord and agreement and should love one another. Consider the virtues of the human world and realize that the oneness of humanity is the primary foundation of them all. Read the gospel and the other holy books. You will find their fundamentals are one and the same. Therefore unity is the essential truth of religion and when so understood embraces all the virtues of the

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human world. Praise be to God! this knowledge has been spread, eyes have been opened and ears have become attentive. Therefore we must endeavor to promulgate and practice the religion of God which has been founded by all the prophets. And the religion of God is absolute love and unity.

XIII

April 19, 1912, at 227 Bowery, New York.

Bowery Mission.

From Stenographic Notes

TONIGHT I am very happy for I have come here to meet my friends. I consider you my relatives, my companions; and I am your comrade.

You must be thankful to God that you are poor, for His Holiness Jesus Christ has said "Blessed are the poor"; he never said Blessed are the rich. He said too that the kingdom is for the poor and that it is easier for a camel to enter a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom. Therefore you must be thankful to God that although in this world you are indigent, yet the treasures of God are within your reach; and although in the material realm you are poor, yet in the kingdom of God you are precious. His Holiness Jesus himself was poor. He did not belong to the rich. He passed his time in the desert traveling among the poor, and lived upon the herbs of the field. He had no place to lay his head; no home. He was exposed in the open to heat, cold and frost; to inclement weather of all kinds, yet he chose this rather than riches. If riches were considered a glory the prophet Moses would have chosen them; Jesus would have been a rich man. When Jesus Christ appeared it was the poor who first accepted him, not the rich. Therefore you are the disciples of Jesus Christ; you are his comrades for he outwardly was poor not rich. Even this earth's happiness does not depend upon wealth. You will find many of the wealthy exposed to dangers and troubled by difficulties, and in their last moments upon the bed of death there remains the regret that they must be separated from that to which their hearts are so attached. They come into this world naked and they must go from it naked. All they possess they must leave behind and pass away solitary, alone. Often at the time of death their souls are filled with remorse, and worst of all, their hope in the mercy of God is less than ours. Praise be to God! our hope is in the mercy of God and there is no doubt

that the divine compassion is bestowed upon the poor. His Holiness Jesus Christ said so; His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH said so. While BAHÁ' ULLÁH was in Baghdad, still in possession of great wealth, he left all he had and went alone from the city, living two years among the poor. They were his comrades. He ate with them, slept with them and gloried in being one of them. He chose for one of his names the title of "The Poor One," and often in his writings refers to himself as "Darweesh" which in Persian means "poor"; and of this title he was very proud. He admonished all that we must be the servants of the poor, helpers of the poor, remember the sorrows of the poor, associate with them for thereby we may inherit the kingdom of heaven. God has not said that there are mansions prepared for us if we pass our time associating with the rich but he has said there are many mansions prepared for the servants of the poor, for the poor are very dear to God. The mercies and bounties of God are with them. The rich are mostly negligent, inattentive, steeped in worldliness, depending upon their means whereas the poor are dependent upon God and their reliance is upon him, not upon themselves. Therefore the poor are nearer the threshold of God and his throne.

Jesus was a poor man. One night when he was out in the fields the rain began to fall. He had no place to go for shelter so he lifted his eyes toward heaven saying "O Father! for the birds of the air thou hast created nests, for the sheep a fold, for the animals dens, for the fishes places of refuge, but for me thou hast provided no shelter; there is no place where I may lay my head; my bed consists of the cold ground, my lamps at night are the stars and my food is the grass of the field, yet who upon earth is richer than I? For the greatest blessing thou hast not given to the rich and mighty but unto me for thou hast given me the poor. To me thou hast granted this blessing. They are mine. Therefore am I the richest man on earth."

So my comrades you are following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Your lives are similar to his life, your attitude is like unto him, you resemble him more than the rich. Therefore we will thank God that we have been so blest with real riches. And in conclusion I ask you to accept Abdul Baha as your servant.

At the end of this meeting, Abdul Baha stood at the Bowery entrance to the Mission hall shaking hands with four or five hundred men and placing within each palm a piece of silver.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in Washington.

*April 20, 1912, at Public Library Hall, Washington, D. C.
Orient-Occident-Unity Conference.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

TONIGHT I am most happy in presenting myself before an audience such as this. I am an oriental and have come into the west to meet the people of the Occident. Praise be to God! upon the faces of those assembled here I perceive the light of God. This I consider an evidence of the possibility of uniting the east and the west; of establishing a perfect bond between Persia and America, one of the objects of this conference. For the Persians there is no government better fitted to contribute to the development of their natural resources and the helping of their national needs in a reciprocal alliance than the United States of America; and for the Americans there could be no better industrial outlet and market than the virgin commercial soil of Persia. The mineral wealth of Persia is still latent and untouched. It is my hope that the great American democracy may be instrumental in developing these hidden resources and that a bond of perfect amity and unity may be established between the American republic and the government of Persia. May this bond whether material or spiritual be well cemented. May the material civilization of America find complete efficacy and establishment in Persia, and the spiritual civilization of Persia find acceptance and response in America.

Some of the creatures of existence can live solitary and alone. A tree for instance may live without assistance and cooperation of other trees. Some animals are isolated and lead a separate existence away from their kind. But this is impossible for man. In his life and being cooperation and association are essential. Through association and meeting we find happiness and development, individual and collective.

For instance, when there is intercourse and cooperation between two villages the advancement of each will be assured. Likewise if intercommunication is established between two cities both will benefit and progress. And if a reciprocal basis of agreement be reached between two countries their individual and mutual interests will find great development. Therefore in the unity of this

radiant assemblage I behold the link between Orient and Occident. Such unity is the means and instrument of cooperation between the various countries of the east and west. It is evident then that the outcomes from this basis of agreement and accord are numberless and unlimited. Surely there will be great harvests of results forthcoming for Persia and America. In Persia advanced material civilization will be established and the doors thrown open wide to American commerce.

Above and beyond all this, a great love and fountain of affection shall bind and blend these two remote peoples; for His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLÁH has proclaimed to the world the solidarity of nations and the oneness of humanity. Addressing all mankind he has said "Ye are all leaves of one tree and the drops of one sea." The world of humanity has been expressed by him as a unit,—as one family. It is therefore hoped that the American and Persian nations may be conjoined and united in reciprocal love. May they become one race endowed with the same susceptibilities. May these bonds of amity and accord be firmly established.

His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLÁH passed forty years of his life in prison and exile in order that he might upraise the banner of the oneness of the world of men. For this he bore all these ordeals and difficulties. He was under the dominion of Abdul Hamid. I too was in the prison of Abdul Hamid until the Committee of Union and Progress hoisted the standard of liberty and my fetters were removed. They exhibited great kindness and love toward me. I was made free and thereby enabled to come to this country. Were it not for the action of this Committee I should not be with you here tonight. Therefore you must all ask assistance and confirmation in behalf of this Committee through which the liberty of Turkey was proclaimed.

Briefly; I have traveled this long distance, crossed the Atlantic Ocean to this western continent in the desire and hope that the strongest bond of unity may be established between America and Persia. I know this to be your wish and purpose also and am sure of your cooperation. We shall therefore offer supplication in the divine threshold that a great love may take possession of the hearts of men and unite the nations of the world. We will pray that the ensign of international peace may be uplifted and that the oneness of the world of humanity may be realized and accomplished. All this is made possible and practicable through your efforts. May this American democracy be the first nation to establish the foun-

dation of international agreement. May it be the first nation to proclaim the universality of mankind. May it be the first to upraise the standard of the "Most Great Peace," and through this nation of democracy may these philanthropic intentions and institutions be spread broadcast throughout the world. Truly this is a great and revered nation. Here liberty has reached its highest degree. The intentions of its people are most praiseworthy. They are indeed worthy of being the first people to build the tabernacle of the great peace and proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity. I will supplicate God for assistance and confirmation in your behalf.

II

*April 21, 1912, at 1219 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C.
Studio Hall.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

I HAVE come here to visit you. With the greatest longing I have wished to see you. Realizing it was only with great difficulty that you could come to me and that very few could make the trip, I decided to come to you so that all might have the pleasure of meeting. Praise be to God! I am here and I am looking into your faces; faces radiant with inner beauty; hearts attracted to the kingdom of Abha; spirits exhilarated through the glad tidings of God. Therefore I have experienced the greatest possible happiness. And surely this happiness must be mutual, for the hearts are connected with each other and are filled with the same vibration. The flame and the light of love are reflected in all. Spiritual susceptibilities and heart-longings fill every heart. If we should offer a hundred thousand thanksgivings every moment to the threshold of God for this love which has blended the Orient and Occident we shall fail to express our gratitude sufficiently. If all the powers of earth should seek to bring about this love between east and west they would prove incapable. If they wished to establish this unity it would prove impossible. But His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH has accomplished both through the power of the Holy Spirit, and this bond of unity through love is indissoluble. It shall continue unto time everlasting; and day by day its power shall increase. Ere long it shall enchain the world and eventually the hearts of all the nations of the world will be brought together by its constraining clasp. The world of humanity shall become

the manifestation of the lights of divinity, and the bestowals of God shall surround all. From the standpoints of both material and spiritual civilization extraordinary progress and development will be witnessed. In this present cycle there will be an evolution in civilization unparalleled in the history of the world. The world of humanity has heretofore been in the stage of infancy; now it is approaching maturity. Just as the individual human organism having attained the period of maturity reaches its fullest degree of physical strength and ripened intellectual faculties, so that in one year of this ripened period there is witnessed an unprecedented measure of development, likewise the world of humanity in this cycle of its completeness and consummation will realize an immeasurable upward progress; and that power of accomplishment whereof each individual human reality is the depository of God,—that outworking universal spirit,—like the intellectual faculty, will reveal itself in infinite degrees of perfection.

Therefore thank ye God that ye have come into the plane of existence in this radiant century wherein the bestowals of God are appearing from all directions, when the doors of the kingdom have been opened unto you, the call of God is being raised and the virtues of the human world are in the process of unfoldment. The day has come when all darkness is to be dispelled and the Sun of Truth shall shine forth radiantly. This time of the world may be likened to the equinoctial in the annual cycle. For verily this is the spring season of God. In the holy books a promise is given that the spring-time of God shall make itself manifest, Jerusalem the holy city shall descend from heaven, Zion shall leap forth and dance and the Holy Land be submerged in the ocean of divine effulgence.

At the time of the vernal equinox in the material world a wonderful vibrant energy and new life-quickenings is observed everywhere in the vegetable kingdom; the animal and human kingdoms are resuscitated and move forward with a new impulse. The whole world is born anew, resurrected. Gentle zephyrs are set in motion, wafting and fragrant; flowers bloom, the trees are in blossom, the air temperate and delightful; how pleasant and beautiful become the mountains, fields and meadows. Likewise the spiritual bounty and springtime of God quicken the world of humanity with a new animus and vivification. All the virtues which have been deposited and potential in human hearts are being revealed from that Reality as flowers and blossoms from divine gardens. It is a day of joy, a time of happiness, a period of spiritual growth. I beg of God that this divine spiritual civilization may have the fullest impression and effect upon you. May you become as growing plants.

May the trees of your hearts bring forth new leaves and variegated blossoms. May ideal fruits appear from them in order that the world of humanity which has grown and developed in material civilization may be quickened in the bringing forth of spiritual ideals. Just as human intellects have revealed the secrets of matter and have brought forth from the realm of the invisible the mysteries of nature, may minds and spirits likewise come into the knowledge of the verities of God, and the realities of the kingdom be made manifest in human hearts. Then the world will be the paradise of Abha, the standard of the "Most Great Peace" will be borne aloft and the oneness of the world of humanity in all its beauty, glory and significance become apparent. And now in your presence I wish to pray in your behalf. Let your hearts be attentive and directed to the kingdom of Abha.

Prayer in Persian

It is my hope the supplication I have offered to the kingdom of Abha in your behalf may soon be answered and that its results and effects may become manifest in your hearts and lives.

III

*April 21, 1912, at Universalist Church, 13th and L Streets,
Washington, D. C.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

THE doctrines and creed of this church so capably expressed by its revered minister are truly commendable, sanctified and worthy of praise and glorification, for these precepts are opposed to the deep-rooted religious prejudices of the day. It is evident that prejudices arising from adherence to religious forms and imitation of ancestral beliefs have hindered the progress of humanity thousands of years. How many wars and battles have been fought, how much division, discord and hatred have been caused by this form of prejudice! But inasmuch as this century is a century of the revelation of reality, Praise be to God! the thoughts of men are being directed toward the welfare and unity of humanity. Daily the mirage of imitations is passing away and the ocean of truth is surging more tumultuously. All the existing nations had a divine foundation of truth or reality originally which was intended to be conducive to the unity and accord of mankind, but the light of that reality gradually became obscured. The darkness of superstitions and imitations came and took its place, binding the

world of humanity in the chains and fetters of ignorance. Enmity arose among men, increasing to such an extent that nation strove against nation in hatred and violence. War has been a religious and political human heritage.

Now it is enough! We must investigate reality. We must put away these superstitions. It is a self evident truth that all humanity is the creation of God. All are his servants and under his protection. All are recipients of his bestowals. God is kind to all his servants. At most it is this, that some are ignorant; they must be educated in order that they may become intelligent. Some are immature as children; they must be aided and assisted in order that they may become mature. Some are sick and ailing; they must be healed. But the suffering patient must not be tested by false treatment. The child must not be warped and hindered in its development. The ignorant must not be restricted by censure and criticism. We must look for the real, true remedy.

All the prophets of God, including Jesus Christ, appeared in the world for the education of humanity, to develop immature souls into maturity, to transform the ignorant of mankind into the knowing, thereby establishing love and unity through divine education and training. The prophets have not come to cause discord and enmity. For God has wished all good for his servants, and he who wishes the servants of God evil is against God; he has not obeyed the will and emulated the example of God; he has followed satanic leadings and foot-prints. The attributes of God are love and mercy; the attribute of satan is hate. Therefore he who is merciful and kind to his fellowmen is manifesting the divine attribute, and he who is hating and hostile toward a fellow-creature is satanic. God is absolute love even as His Holiness Jesus Christ has declared, and satan is utter hatred. Wherever love is witnessed, know there is a manifestation of God's mercy; whenever you meet hatred and enmity, know that these are the evidences and attributes of satan. The prophets have appeared in this world with the mission that human souls may become the expressions of the Merciful, that they may be educated and developed, attain to love and amity, and establish peace and agreement.

In the world of existence the animal is a captive of nature. Its actions are according to the exigencies and requirements of nature. It has no consideration or consciousness of good and evil. It simply follows its natural instinct and inclination. The prophets of God have come to show man the way of righteousness in order that he may not follow his own natural impulse, but govern his

actions by the light of their precept and example. According to their teachings he should do that which is found to be praiseworthy by the standard of reason and judgment of intellect, even though it be opposed to his natural human inclination; and he should not do that which is found to be unworthy by that same standard, even though it be in the direction of his natural impulse and desire. Therefore man must follow and manifest the attributes of the Merciful.

The imperfect members of society, the weak souls in humanity follow their natural trend. Their lives and actions are in accord with their natural propensities; they are captives of physical susceptibilities; they are not in touch or in tune with the spiritual bounties. Man has two aspects—the physical which is subject to nature, and the merciful or divine which is connected with God. If the physical or natural disposition in him should overcome the heavenly and merciful he is then the most degraded of animal beings; and if the divine and spiritual should triumph over the human and natural he is verily an angel. The prophets come into the world to guide and educate humanity so that the animal nature of man may disappear and the divinity of his powers become awakened. The divine aspect or spiritual nature consists of the breaths of the Holy Spirit. The second birth of which Jesus has spoken refers to the appearance of this heavenly nature in man. It is expressed in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and he who is baptized by the Holy Spirit is a veritable manifestation of divine mercy to mankind. Then he becomes just and kind to all humanity; he entertains prejudice and ill-will toward none; he shuns no nation or people.

The foundations of the divine religions are one. If we investigate these foundations we discover much ground for agreement, but if we consider the imitations of forms and ancestral beliefs we find points of disagreement and division, for these imitations differ while the sources and foundations are one and the same. That is to say, the fundamentals are conducive to unity, but imitations are the cause of disunion and dismemberment. Whosoever is lacking in love for humanity or manifests hatred and bigotry toward any part of it, violates the foundation and source of his own belief and is holding to forms and imitations. His Holiness Jesus Christ declares that the sun rises upon the evil and the good, and the rain descends upon the just and the unjust,—upon all humanity alike. His Holiness was a divine mercy which shone upon all mankind, the medium for the descent of the bounty of God; and the bounty of God is transcendent, unrestricted, universal.

The revered minister read from the words of the gospel "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." The century has dawned when the Spirit of truth can reveal these verities to mankind, proclaim that very Word, establish the real foundations of Christianity and deliver the nations and peoples from the bondage of forms and imitations. The cause of discord, prejudice and animosity will be removed, the basis of love and amity be established. Therefore all of you must strive with heart and soul in order that enmity may disappear entirely and that strife and hatred pass away absolutely from the midst of the human world. You must listen to the admonition of this Spirit of truth. You must follow the example and foot-prints of Jesus Christ. Read the gospels. His Holiness Jesus Christ was mercy itself; was love itself. He even prayed in behalf of his executioners,—for those who crucified him, saying "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." If they knew what they were doing they would not have done it. Consider how kind Jesus Christ was, that even upon the cross he prayed for his oppressors. We must follow his example. We must emulate the prophets of God. We must follow Jesus Christ. We must free ourselves from all these imitations which are the source of darkness in the world.

I shall ask you a question: Did God create us for love or for enmity? Did he create us for peace or discord? Surely he has created us for love; therefore we should live in accordance with his will. Do not listen to anything that is prejudiced, for self-interest prompts men to be prejudiced. They are thoughtful only of their own will and purposes. They live and move in darkness. Consider how many different nations and divergent religious beliefs existed when His Holiness Christ appeared. Enmity and strife prevailed among them,—Romans, Greeks, Assyrians, Egyptians,—all warring and hostile toward each other. His Holiness, through the breaths of the Holy Spirit, united them, established fellowship among them so that no trace of strife remained. Under his standard they became united and lived in peace through his teachings. Which is preferable and more commendable? To follow the example of Jesus Christ or to manifest the satanic instinct? Let us strive with all our powers to unite the east and west so that the nations of the world may be advanced and that all may live according to the one foundation of the religions of God. The essentials of the divine religion are one reality, indivisible and not

multiple. It is one. And when through investigation we find it to be single we have a basis for the oneness of the world of humanity. I will pray for you, asking confirmation and assistance in your behalf.

IV

*April 22, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, N. W. Washington, D. C.
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

SEE how good BAHÁ'ULLAH is to us; how great the power of his Word! From what distant parts of the world he has brought us together in this house and caused us to meet at this heavenly table; for love has prepared a feast and bidden Abdul Baha to let this entertainment be in his name. What a union of hearts and what a confirmation of BAHÁ'ULLAH between east and west has been established! How his bounty has embraced all! How his favors have been perfected for all!

When the Mohammedans conquered Persia, the chief of the Zoroastrian high-priests went to drink wine. According to the Mohammedan law wine is forbidden and he who drinks it must be punished by eighty-one strokes of the whip. Therefore the Moslems arrested the high-priest and whipped him. At that time the Arabs were considered very low and degraded by the Persians, scarcely to be accounted as human beings. As Mohammed was an Arab the Persians looked upon him with disdain; but when the high-priest saw the evidences of a power in Mohammed which controlled these despised people, he cried out "O thou Arabian Mohammed, what hast thou done? What hast thou done which has made thy people arrest the chief high-priest of the Zoroastrians for committing something unlawful in thy religion?" By this circumstance the prejudice which caused the Zoroastrian to shun the Mohammedan had been overcome; for he recognized in what had happened to him the great influence Mohammed exercised over these people.

Today in this meeting we have an evidence of how BAHÁ'ULLAH through the power of the love of God has exercised a wonderful spiritual influence throughout the world. From the remotest parts of Persia and the Orient he has caused men to come to this table to meet with the people of the west in the utmost love and affection, union and harmony. Behold how the power of BAHÁ'ULLAH has

brought the east and west together. And Abdul Baha is standing, serving you. There is neither rod nor blow, whip nor sword; but the power of the love of God has accomplished this.

In this world we judge a cause or movement by its progress and development. Some movements appear, manifest a brief period of activity, then discontinue. Others show forth a greater measure of growth and strength, but before attaining mature development, weaken, disintegrate and are lost in oblivion. Neither of these mentioned are progressive and permanent.

There is still another kind of movement or cause which from a very small, inconspicuous beginning goes forward with sure and steady progress, gradually broadening and widening until it has assumed universal dimensions. The Bahai movement is of this nature. For instance, when BAHÁ 'ULLÁH was exiled from Persia with Abdul Baha and the rest of his family, they traveled the long road from Teheran to Baghdad, passing through many towns and villages. During the whole of that journey and distance they did not meet a single believer in the cause for which they had been banished. At that time very little was known about it in any part of the world. Even in Baghdad there was but one believer who had been taught by BAHÁ 'ULLÁH himself in Persia. Later on two or three others appeared. You will see therefore that at the beginning, the cause of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH was almost unknown, but on account of being a divine movement it grew and developed with irresistible spiritual power until in this day wherever you travel east or west and in whatever country you journey you will meet Bahai assemblies and institutions. This is an evidence that the Bahais are spreading the blessings of unity and progressive development throughout the world under the direction of divine guidance and purpose, while other movements which are only temporary in their activities and accomplishments have no real, universal significance.

V

April 23, 1912, at Howard University, Washington, D. C.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

TODAY I am most happy, for I see here a gathering of the servants of God. I see the white and colored people together. In the estimation of God there is no distinction of color; all are one in the color and beauty of servitude to him. Color is not important; the heart is all-important. It matters not what the exterior may

be if the heart be pure and white within. God does not behold differences of hue and complexion; he looks at the hearts. He whose morals and virtues are praiseworthy is preferred in the presence of God; he who is devoted to the kingdom is most beloved. In the realm of genesis and creation the question of color is of least importance.

The mineral kingdom abounds with many-colored substances and compositions but we find no strife among them on that account. In the kingdom of the plant and vegetable, distinct and variegated hues exist but the fruit and flowers are not in conflict for that reason. Nay, rather, the very fact that there is difference and variety lends a charm to the garden. If all were of the same color the effect would be monotonous and depressing. When you enter a rose-garden the wealth of color and variety of floral forms spread before you a picture of wonder and beauty. The world of humanity is like a garden and the various races are the flowers which constitute its adornment and decoration. In the animal kingdom also we find variety of color. See how the doves differ in beauty yet they live together in perfect peace, and love each other. They do not make difference of color a cause of discord and strife. They view each other as the same species and kind. They know they are one in kind. Often a white dove soars aloft with a black one. Throughout the animal kingdom we do not find the creatures separated because of color. They recognize unity of species and oneness of kind. If we do not find color distinction drawn in a kingdom of lower intelligence and reason, how can it be justified among human beings, especially when we know that all have come from the same source and belong to the same household? In origin and intention of creation mankind is one. Distinctions of race and color have arisen afterward.

Therefore today I am exceedingly glad that both white and colored people have gathered here and I hope the time will come when they shall live together in the utmost peace, unity and friendship. I wish to say one thing of importance to both in order that the white race may be just and kind to the colored and that the colored race may in turn be grateful and appreciative toward the white. The great proclamation of liberty and emancipation from slavery was made upon this continent. A long bloody war was fought by white men for the sake of colored people. These white men forfeited their possessions and sacrificed their lives by thousands in order that colored men might be freed from bondage. The colored population of the United States of America are possibly not fully informed of the wide-reaching effect of this freedom and

emancipation upon their colored brethren in Asia and Africa where even more terrible conditions of slavery existed. Influenced and impelled by the example of the United States, the European powers proclaimed universal liberty to the colored race and slavery ceased to exist. This effort and accomplishment by the white nations should never be lost sight of. Both races should rejoice in gratitude, for the institution of liberty and equality here became the cause of liberating your fellow-beings elsewhere. The colored people of this country are especially fortunate, for, Praise be to God! conditions here are so much higher than in the east and comparatively few differences exist in the possibility of equal attainments with the white race. May both develop toward the highest degree of equality and altruism. May you be drawn together in friendship and may extraordinary development make brotherhood a reality and truth. I pray in your behalf that there shall be no name other than that of humanity among you. For instance we say "a flock of doves," without mention or distinction as to white or black; we apply the name "horse," "deer," "gazelle" to other creatures, referring to species and not to their variance in color. It is my hope that through love and fellowship we may advance to such a degree of mutual recognition and estimate, that the oneness of the human world may be realized in each and all present in this meeting.

Therefore strive earnestly and put forth your greatest endeavor toward the accomplishment of this fellowship and the cementing of this bond of brotherhood between you. Such an attainment is not possible without will and effort on the part of each; from one, expressions of gratitude and appreciation; from the other kindness and recognition of equality. Each one should endeavor to develop and assist the other toward mutual advancement. This is possible only by conjoining of effort and inclination. Love and unity will be fostered between you, thereby bringing about the oneness of mankind. For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and whites will be an assurance of the world's peace. Then racial prejudice, national prejudice, limited patriotism and religious bias will pass away and remain no longer. I am pleased to see you at this gathering, white and dark, and I praise God that I have had this opportunity of seeing you loving each other, for this is the means of the glory of humanity. This is the means of the good-pleasure of God and of eternal bliss in his kingdom. Therefore I pray in your behalf that you may attain to the fullest degree of love and that the day may come when all differences between you may disappear.

VI

April 23, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, Washington, D. C.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

TODAY I have been speaking from dawn until now, yet because of love, fellowship and desire to be with you, I have come here to speak again briefly. Within the last few days a terrible event has happened in the world; an event saddening to every heart and grieving every spirit. I refer to the "Titanic" disaster in which many of our fellow human beings were drowned, a number of beautiful souls passed beyond this earthly life. Although such an event is indeed regrettable, we must realize that everything which happens is due to some wisdom and that nothing happens without a reason. Therein is a mystery; but whatever the reason and mystery it was a very sad occurrence, one which brought tears to many eyes and distress to many souls. I was greatly affected by this disaster. Some of those who were lost, voyaged on the "Cedric" with us as far as Naples and afterwards sailed upon the other ship. When I think of them I am very sad indeed. But when I consider this calamity in another aspect, I am consoled by the realization that the worlds of God are infinite; that though they were deprived of this existence they have other opportunities in the life beyond, even as His Holiness Christ has said "In my father's house are many mansions." They were called away from the temporary and transferred to the eternal; they abandoned this material existence and entered the portals of the spiritual world. Foregoing the pleasures and comforts of the earthly, they now partake of a joy and happiness far more abiding and real; for they have hastened to the kingdom of God. The mercy of God is infinite and it is our duty to remember these departed souls in our prayers and supplications that they may draw nearer and nearer to the Source Itself.

These human conditions may be likened to the matrix of the mother from which a child is to be born into the spacious outer world. At first the infant finds it very difficult to reconcile itself to its new existence. It cries as if not wishing to be separated from its narrow abode and imagining that life is restricted to that limited space. It is reluctant to leave its home but nature forces it into this world. Having come into its new conditions it finds that it has passed from darkness into a sphere of radiance; from gloomy and restricted surroundings it has been transferred to an environ-

ment spacious and delightful. Its nourishment was the blood of the mother; now it finds delicious food to enjoy. Its new life is filled with brightness and beauty; it looks with wonder and delight upon the mountains, meadows and fields of green, the rivers and fountains, the wonderful stars; it breathes the life-quickenng atmosphere; and then it praises God for its release from the confinement of its former condition and attainment to the freedom of a new realm. This analogy expresses the relation of the temporal world to the life hereafter; the transition of the soul of man from darkness and uncertainty to the light and reality of the eternal kingdom. At first it is very difficult to welcome death, but after attaining its new condition the soul is grateful for it has been released from the bondage of the limited, to enjoy the liberties of the unlimited. It has been freed from a world of sorrow, grief and trials to live in a world of unending bliss and joy. The phenomenal and physical have been abandoned in order that it may attain the opportunities of the ideal and spiritual. Therefore the souls of those who have passed away from earth and completed their span of mortal pilgrimage in the "Titanic" disaster have hastened to a world superior to this. They have soared away from these conditions of darkness and dim vision into the realm of light. These are the only considerations which can comfort and console those whom they have left behind.

Furthermore, these events have deeper reasons. Their object and purpose is to teach man certain lessons. We are living in a day of reliance upon material conditions. Men imagine that the great size and strength of a ship, perfection of machinery or the skill of a navigator will insure safety, but these disasters sometimes take place that men may know that God is the real protector. If it be the will of God to protect man, a little ship may escape destruction whereas the greatest and most perfectly constructed vessel with the best and most skilful navigator may not survive a danger such as was present on the ocean. The purpose is that the people of the world may turn to God the one protector; that human souls may rely upon his preservation and know that he is the real safety. These events happen in order that man's faith may be increased and strengthened. Therefore although we feel sad and disheartened we must supplicate God to turn our hearts to the kingdom, and pray for these departed souls with faith in his infinite mercy, so that although they have been deprived of this earthly life they may enjoy a new existence in the supreme mansions of the heavenly Father.

Let no one imagine that these words imply that man should not

be thorough and careful in his undertakings. God has endowed man with intelligence so that he may safeguard and protect himself. Therefore he must provide and surround himself with all that scientific skill can produce. He must be deliberate, thoughtful and thorough in his purposes, build the best ship and provide the most experienced captain, yet withal let him rely upon God and consider God as the one keeper. If God protects, nothing can imperil man's safety; and if it be not his will to safeguard, no amount of preparation and precaution will avail.

VII

April 23, 1912, at Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, M Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Bethel Literary Society.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

AS I stand here tonight and look upon this assembly, I am reminded curiously of a beautiful bouquet of violets gathered together in varying colors, dark and light. This is an evidence and indication that the United States of America is a just and free government, for I see the colored and white races seated together in perfect harmony and agreement. Hearts are united. This just government makes such a meeting possible. You should thank God continually that you enjoy the security and protection of a government which furthers your development and rules with impartial equity and equality toward all, even as a father; for in the human world there is no greater blessing. This evening I will speak to you upon scientific subjects.

The virtues of humanity are many but science is the most noble of them all. The distinction which man enjoys above and beyond the station of the animal is due to this paramount virtue. It is a bestowal of God; it is not material, it is divine. Science is an effulgence of the Sun of Reality, the power of investigating and discovering the verities of the universe, the means by which man finds a pathway to God. All the powers and attributes of man are human and hereditary in origin, outcomes of nature's processes, except the intellect, which is super-natural. Through intellectual and intelligent inquiry science is the discoverer of all things. It unites present and past, reveals the history of bygone nations and events, and confers upon man today the essence of all human knowledge and attainment throughout the ages. By intellectual processes and logical deductions of reason, this super power in

man can penetrate the mysteries of the future and anticipate its happenings.

Science is the first emanation from God toward man. All created beings embody the potentiality of material perfection, but the power of intellectual investigation and scientific acquisition is a higher virtue specialized to man alone. Other beings and organisms are deprived of this potentiality and attainment. God has created or deposited this love of reality in man. The development and progress of a nation is according to the measure and degree of that nation's scientific attainments. Through this means, its greatness is continually increased and day by day the welfare and prosperity of its people are assured.

All blessings are divine in origin but none can be compared with this power of intellectual investigation and research which is an eternal gift producing fruits of unending delight. Man is ever partaking of these fruits. All other blessings are temporary; this is an everlasting possession. Even sovereignty has its limitations and overthrow; this is a kingship and dominion which none may usurp or destroy. Briefly; it is an eternal blessing and divine bestowal, the supreme gift of God to man. Therefore you should put forward your most earnest efforts toward the acquisition of science and arts. The greater your attainment, the higher your standard in the divine purpose. The man of science is perceiving and endowed with vision whereas he who is ignorant and neglectful of this development is blind. The investigating mind is attentive, alive; the mind callous and indifferent is deaf and dead. A scientific man is a true index and representative of humanity, for through processes of inductive reasoning and research he is informed of all that appertains to humanity, its status, conditions and happenings. He studies the human body-politic, understands social problems and weaves the web and texture of civilization. In fact, science may be likened to a mirror wherein the infinite forms and images of existing things are revealed and reflected. It is the very foundation of all individual and national development. Without this basis of investigation, development is impossible. Therefore seek with diligent endeavor the knowledge and attainment of all that lies within the power of this wonderful bestowal.

We have already stated that science or the attribute of scientific penetration is supernatural and that all other blessings of God are within the boundary of nature. What is the proof of this? All created things except man are captives of nature. The stars and suns swinging through infinite space, all earthly forms of life and existence whether mineral, vegetable or animal come under the

dominion and control of natural law. Man through scientific knowledge and power rules nature and utilizes her laws to do his bidding. According to natural limitations he is a creature of earth restricted to life upon its surface, but through scientific utilization of material laws he soars in the sky, sails upon the ocean and dives beneath it. The products of his invention and discovery so familiar to us in daily life were once mysteries of nature. For instance, man has brought electricity out of the plane of the invisible into the plane of the visible, harnessed and imprisoned that mysterious natural agent and made it the servant of his needs and wishes. Similar instances are many but we will not prolong. Man as it were takes the sword out of nature's hand and with it for his sceptre of authority dominates nature itself. Nature is without the crown of human faculties and attributes. Man possesses conscious intelligence and reflection; nature is minus. This is an established fundamental among philosophers. Man is endowed with volition and memory; nature has neither. Man can seek out the mysteries latent in nature whereas nature is not conscious of her own hidden phenomena. Man is progressive; nature is stationary, without the power of progression or retrogression. Man is endowed with ideal virtues, for example intellection, volition,—among them faith, confession and acknowledgment of God, while nature is devoid of all these. The ideal faculties of man, including the capacity of scientific acquisition are beyond nature's ken. These are powers whereby man is differentiated and distinguished from all other forms of life. This is the bestowal of divine idealism, the crown adorning human heads. Notwithstanding the gift of this supernatural power, it is most amazing that materialists still consider themselves within the bonds and captivity of nature. The truth is that God has endowed man with virtues, powers and ideal faculties of which nature is entirely bereft and by which man is elevated, distinguished and superior. We must thank God for these bestowals, for these powers he has given us, for this crown he has placed upon our heads.

How shall we utilize these gifts and expend these bounties? By directing our efforts toward the unification of the human race. We must use these powers in establishing the oneness of the world of humanity; appreciate these virtues by accomplishing the unity of the white and colored races; devote this divine intelligence to the perfecting of amity and accord among all branches of the human family, so that under the protection and providence of God, the east and west may hold each other's hands and become as lovers. Then will mankind be as one nation, one race and kind; as waves of one ocean. Although these waves may differ in form and shape,

they are waves of the same sea. Flowers may be variegated in colors but they are all flowers of one garden. Trees differ though they grow in the same orchard. All are nourished and quickened into life by the bounty of the same rain; all grow and develop by the heat and light of the one sun; all are refreshed and exhilarated by the same breeze; that they may bring forth varied fruits. This is according to the creative wisdom. If all trees bore the same kind of fruit it would cease to be delicious. In their never-ending variety man finds enjoyment instead of monotony.

And now as I look into your faces I am reminded of trees varying in color and form but all bearing luscious and delectable fruits, fragrant and delightful to the inner and outer senses. The radiance and spirituality of this meeting is through the favor of God. Our hearts are uplifted in thankfulness to him. Praise be to God! you are living upon the great continent of the west enjoying the perfect liberty, security and peace of this just government. There is no cause for sorrow or unhappiness anywhere; every means of happiness and enjoyment are about you, for in this human world there is no greater blessing than liberty. You do not know. I who for forty years have been a prisoner, do know. I do know the value and blessing of liberty. For you have been and are now living in freedom and you have no fear of anybody. Is there a greater blessing than this? Freedom! Liberty! Security! These are the great bestowals of God. Therefore praise ye God! I will now pray in your behalf.

VIII

April 24, 1912, at 1219 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D. C.

Studio Hall—Children's Reception.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

WHAT a wonderful meeting this is! What a wonderful meeting this is! These are the children of the kingdom. The song we have just listened to was very beautiful in melody and words. The art of music is divine and effective. It is the food of the soul and spirit. Through the power and charm of music the spirit of man is uplifted. It has wonderful sway and effect in the hearts of children, for their hearts are pure and melodies have great influence in them. The latent talents with which the hearts of these children are endowed will find expression through the medium of music. Therefore you must exert yourselves to make them proficient; teach them to sing with excellence and effect. It

is incumbent upon each child to know something of music, for without knowledge of this art, the melodies of instrument and voice cannot be rightly enjoyed. Likewise it is necessary that the schools teach it in order that the souls and hearts of the pupils may become vivified and exhilarated and their lives be brightened with enjoyment.

Today illumined and spiritual children are gathered in this meeting. They are the children of the kingdom. The kingdom of heaven is for such souls as these, for they are near to God. They have pure hearts. They have spiritual faces. The effect of the divine teachings is manifest in the perfect purity of their hearts. That is why His Highness Christ has addressed the world, saying "Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom"; that is, men must become pure in heart to know God. The teachings have had great effect. Spiritual souls! Tender souls! The hearts of all children are of the utmost purity. They are mirrors upon which no dust has fallen. But this purity is on account of weakness and innocence, not on account of any strength and testing, for as this is the early period of their childhood their hearts and minds are unsullied by the world. They cannot display any great intelligence. They have neither hypocrisy nor deceit. This is on account of the child's weakness whereas the man becomes pure through his strength. Through the power of intelligence he becomes simple; through the great power of reason and understanding and not through the power of weakness, he becomes sincere. When he attains to the state of perfection he will receive these qualities; his heart becomes purified, his spirit enlightened, his soul is sensitized and tender; all through his great strength. This is the difference between the perfect man and the child. Both have the underlying qualities of simplicity and sincerity;—the child through the power of weakness and the man through the power of strength.

I pray in behalf of these children and beg confirmation and assistance for them from the kingdom of Abha so that each one may be trained under the shadow of the protection of God, each may become like a lighted candle in the world of humanity, a tender and growing plant in the rose-garden of Abha; that these children may be so trained and educated that they shall give life to the world of humanity; that they may receive insight; that they may bestow hearing upon the people of the world; that they may sow the seeds of life eternal and be accepted in the threshold of God; that they may become characterized with such virtues, perfections and qualities that their mothers, fathers and relatives

will be thankful to God, well-pleased and hopeful. This is my wish and prayer.

I give you my advice and it is this: Train these children with divine exhortations. From their childhood instill in their hearts the love of God so they may manifest in their lives the fear of God and have confidence in the bestowals of God. Teach them to free themselves from human imperfections and to acquire the divine perfections latent in the heart of man. The life of man is useful if he attains the perfections of man. If he becomes the center of the imperfections of the world of humanity, death is better than life, and non-existence better than existence. Therefore make ye an effort in order that these children may be rightly trained and educated and that each one of them may attain perfection in the world of humanity. Know ye the value of these children for they are all my children.

IX

April 24, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

YOU are welcome this afternoon, most welcome. I am ever happy to see you. I ask God that meeting me may be productive of results; that it may not be like ordinary gatherings, for those who hold meetings where groups of people assemble, usually have some interest to further. Praise be to God! I have no personal interests. I have an interest in the kingdom and this is a sincere intention. I have perfect love for you, therefore I have traveled this long distance to meet and greet you. I hope that these gatherings may be productive of great results and there is no greater result than the love of God. There is no greater result than bonds of service in the divine kingdom and attainment to the good-pleasure of the Lord. Therefore I desire that your hearts may be directed to the kingdom of God, that your intentions may be pure and sincere, your purposes turned toward altruistic accomplishment unmindful of your own welfare; nay, rather, may all your intentions center in the welfare of humanity and may you seek to sacrifice yourselves in the pathway of devotion to mankind. Even as His Holiness Jesus Christ forfeited his life, may you likewise offer yourselves in the threshold of sacrifice for the betterment of the world; and just as His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH suffered severe ordeals and calamities nearly fifty years for you, may you be

willing to undergo difficulties and withstand catastrophies for humanity in general. May you bear these trials and tests most willingly and joyously, for every night is followed by a day and every day has a night. Every spring has an autumn and every autumn has its spring. The coming of a manifestation of God is the season of spiritual spring. For instance, the appearance of His Holiness Christ was a divine springtime. Therefore it caused a great commotion and vibrant movement in the world of humanity. The Sun of Reality dawned, the cloud of mercy poured down its rain, the breezes of providence moved, the world became a new world, mankind reflected an extraordinary radiance, souls were educated, minds were developed, intelligences became acute and the human world attained a new freshness of life, like unto the advent of spring. Then gradually that spring was followed by the autumn of death and decay. The teachings of His Holiness Christ were forgotten. The Christ bounties ceased. Divine moralities disappeared. Day ended in night. The people became negligent and oblivious. Minds weakened until conditions reached such a crisis that material science rose in the ascendent. Knowledge and sciences of the kingdom became obsolete, the mysteries of God deepened and the traces of the bounties of His Highness Christ were completely obliterated. The nations were enmeshed in superstition and blind imitation. Discord and disagreement arose, culminating in strife, war and bloodshed. Hearts were torn asunder in violence. Various denominations appeared, diverse sects and creeds arose and the whole world was plunged into darkness.

At such a time as this His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH dawned from the horizon of Persia. He reformed and renewed the fundamentals and realities of the Christ's teachings. He endured the greatest difficulties and underwent the severest ordeals.

Praise be to God! that the teachings of God are revoiced, the light of reality has dawned again, the effulgence is increasing daily and the radiance is shining more gloriously in the zenith. From the cloud of mercy a deluge is descending; the Sun of Reality is brilliant in its eternal station. Again we are hopeful that the same springtime may pitch its tent and that these boundless bestowals may appear once more among us. Through your efforts and sincerity this is made possible. If you arise in the cause of God with divine power, heavenly grace, sincerity of the kingdom, merciful heart and decisive intention, it is certain that the world of humanity will be entirely illumined, the moralities of mankind become merciful, the foundations of the "Most Great Peace" will be laid and the oneness of the kingdom of man become a reality. This is

the great bounty I desire for you, and I pray and supplicate the divine threshold imploring in your behalf.

O thou merciful God! O thou who art mighty and powerful! O thou most kind father! These servants have gathered together, turning to thee, supplicating thy threshold, desiring thy endless bounties from thy great assurance. They have no purpose save thy good-pleasure. They have no intention save service to the world of humanity. O God! make this assemblage radiant. Make the hearts merciful. Confer the bounties of the Holy Spirit. Endow them with a power from heaven. Bless them with heavenly minds. Increase their sincerity so that with all humility and contrition they may turn to thy kingdom and be occupied with service to the world of humanity. May each one become a radiant candle. May each one become a brilliant star. May each one become beautiful in color and redolent of fragrance in the kingdom of God. O kind Father! confer thy blessings. Consider not our shortcomings. Shelter us under thy protection. Remember not our sins. Heal us with thy mercy. We are weak; thou art mighty. We are poor; thou art rich. We are sick; thou art the physician. We are needy; thou art most generous. O God! endow us with thy providence. Thou art the powerful! Thou art the giver! Thou art the beneficent!

X

April 24, 1912, at 1937 13th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Home of Mrs. Andrew J. Dyer.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

A MEETING such as this seems like a beautiful cluster of precious jewels,—pearls, rubies, diamonds, sapphires. It is a source of joy and delight. Whatever is conducive to the unity of the world of mankind is most acceptable and praiseworthy; whatever is the cause of discord and disunion is saddening and deplorable. Consider the significance of unity and harmony.

This evening I will speak to you upon the subject of existence and non-existence, life and death. Existence is the expression and outcome of composition and combination. Non-existence is the expression and outcome of division and disintegration. If we study the forms of existence in the material universe, we find that all created things are the result of composition. Material elements have grouped together in infinite variety and endless forms. Each organism is a compound; each object is an expression of elemental affinity. We find the complex human organism simply an aggrega-

tion of cellular structure; the tree is a composite of plant cells; the animal a combination and grouping of cellular atoms or units, and so on. Existence or the expression of being is therefore composition, and non-existence is decomposition, division, disintegration. When elements have been brought together in a certain plan of combination the result is the human organism; when these elements separate and disperse, the outcome is death and non-existence. Life is therefore the product of composition, and death signifies decomposition.

Likewise in the world of minds and souls, fellowship, which is an expression of composition is conducive to life; whereas discord, which is an expression of decomposition is the equivalent of death. Without cohesion among the individual elements which compose the body-politic, disintegration and decay must inevitably follow and life be extinguished. Ferocious animals have no fellowship. The vultures and tigers are solitary whereas domestic animals live together in complete harmony. The sheep, black and white, associate without discord. Birds of various species and colors wing their flight and feed together without trace of enmity or disagreement. Therefore in the world of humanity it is wise and seemly that all the individual members should manifest unity and affinity. In the clustered jewels of the races, may the colored people be as sapphires and rubies, and the whites as diamonds and pearls. The composite beauty of humanity will be witnessed in their unity and blending. How glorious the spectacle of real unity among mankind! How conducive to peace, confidence and happiness if races and nations were united in fellowship and accord! The prophets of God were sent into the world upon this mission of unity and agreement; that these long separated sheep might flock together. When the sheep separate they are exposed to danger, but in a flock and under protection of the shepherd they are safe from the attack of all ferocious enemies.

When the racial elements of the American nation unite in actual fellowship and accord, the lights of the oneness of humanity will shine, the day of eternal glory and bliss will dawn, the spirit of God encompass and the divine favors descend. Under the leadership and training of God the real shepherd, all will be protected and preserved. He will lead them in green pastures of happiness and sustenance and they will attain to the real goal of existence. This is the blessing and benefit of unity; this is the outcome of love. This is the sign of the "Most Great Peace;" this is the star of the oneness of the human world. Consider how blessed this condition will be. I pray for you and ask the confirmation and assistance of God in your behalf.

XI

April 25, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.

Theosophical Society.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

THE greatest power in the realm and range of human existence is spirit,—the divine breath which animates and pervades all things. It is manifested throughout creation in different degrees or kingdoms. In the vegetable kingdom it is the spirit augmentative or power of growth, the animus of life and development in plants, trees and organisms of the floral world. In this degree of its manifestation, spirit is unconscious of the powers which qualify the kingdom of the animal. The distinctive virtue or plus of the animal is sense perception; it sees, hears, smells, tastes and feels but is incapable in turn, of conscious ideation or reflection which characterize and differentiate the human kingdom. The animal neither exercises nor apprehends this distinctive human power and gift. From the visible it cannot draw conclusions regarding the invisible whereas the human mind from visible and known premises attains knowledge of the unknown and invisible. For instance, Christopher Columbus from information based upon known and provable facts drew conclusions which led him unerringly across the vast ocean to the unknown continent of America. Such power of accomplishment is beyond the range of animal intelligence. Therefore this power is a distinctive attribute of the human spirit and kingdom. The animal spirit cannot penetrate and discover the mysteries of things. It is a captive of the senses. No amount of teaching, for instance, would enable it to grasp the fact that the sun is stationary and the earth moves around it. Likewise the human spirit has its limitations. It cannot comprehend the phenomena of the kingdom transcending the human station, for it is a captive of powers and life forces which have their operation upon its own plane of existence and it cannot go beyond that boundary.

There is however another spirit which may be termed the divine, to which Jesus Christ refers when he declares that man must be born of its quickening and baptized with its living fire. Souls deprived of that spirit are accounted as dead, though they are possessed of the human spirit. His Holiness Jesus Christ has pronounced them dead inasmuch as they have no portion of the divine spirit. He says "Let the dead bury their dead." In another instance he declares "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that

which is born of the spirit is spirit." By this he means that souls though alive in the human kingdom are nevertheless dead if devoid of this particular spirit of divine quickening. They have not partaken of the divine life of the higher kingdom; for the soul which partakes of the power of the divine spirit is verily living.

This quickening spirit has spontaneous emanation from the Sun of Truth, from the reality of divinity and is not a revelation or a manifestation. It is like the rays of the sun. The rays are emanations from the sun. This does not mean that the sun has become divisible; that a part of the sun has come out into space. This plant beside me has risen from the seed; therefore it is a manifestation and unfoldment of the seed. The seed, as you can see, has unfolded in manifestation and the result is this plant. Every leaf of the plant is a part of the seed. But the reality of divinity is indivisible and each individual of human kind cannot be a part of it as is often claimed. Nay, rather, the individual realities of mankind when spiritually born are emanations from the reality of divinity, just as the flame, heat and light of the sun are the effulgence of the sun and not a part of the sun itself. Therefore a spirit has emanated from the reality of divinity, and its effulgences have become visible in human entities or realities. This ray and this heat are permanent. There is no cessation in the effulgence. As long as the sun exists the heat and light will exist, and inasmuch as eternity is a property of divinity, this emanation is everlasting. There is no cessation in its outpouring. The more the world of humanity develops, the more the effulgences or emanations of divinity will become revealed, just as the stone when it becomes polished and pure as a mirror will reflect in fuller degree the glory and splendor of the sun.

The mission of the prophets, the revelation of the holy books, the manifestation of the heavenly teachers and the purpose of divine philosophy all center in the training of the human realities so that they may become clear and pure as mirrors and reflect the light and love of the Sun of Reality. Therefore I hope that whether you be in the east or the west you will strive with heart and soul in order that day by day the world of humanity may become glorified, more spiritual, more sanctified; and that the splendor of the Sun of Reality may be revealed fully in human hearts as in a mirror. This is worthy of the world of mankind. This is the true evolution and progress of humanity. This is the supreme bestowal. Otherwise, by simple development along material lines man is not perfected. At most, the physical aspect of man, his natural or material conditions may become stabilized and improved but he will

remain deprived of the spiritual or divine bestowal. He is then like a body without a spirit, a lamp without the light, an eye without the power of vision, an ear that hears no sound, a mind incapable of perceiving, an intellect minus the power of reason.

Man has two powers, and his development two aspects. One power is connected with the material world and by it he is capable of material advancement. The other power is spiritual and through its development his inner, potential nature is awakened. These powers are like two wings. Both must be developed, for flight is impossible with one wing. Praise be to God! material advancement has been evident in the world but there is need of spiritual advancement in like proportion. We must strive unceasingly and without rest to accomplish the development of the spiritual nature in man, and endeavor with tireless energy to advance humanity toward the nobility of its true and intended station. For the body of man is accidental; it is of no importance. The time of its disintegration will inevitably come. But the spirit of man is essential and therefore eternal. It is a divine bounty. It is the effulgence of the Sun of Reality and therefore of greater importance than the physical body.

I pray for you. You have come to visit me and I am most grateful. I shall ask confirmation and assistance for you from God the generous, the bestower, that you may be aided in serving the world of humanity.

XII

April 25, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.

Message to Esperantists.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

TODAY the greatest need of the world of humanity is discontinuance of the existing misunderstandings among nations. This can be accomplished through the unity of language. Unless the unity of languages is realized, the "Most Great Peace" and the oneness of the human world cannot be effectively organized and established; because the function of language is to portray the mysteries and secrets of human hearts. The heart is like a box and language is the key. We can open the box only by using the key, and observe the gems it contains. Therefore the question of an auxiliary international tongue has the utmost importance. Through this means, international education and training become

possible; the evidence and history of the past can be acquired. The spread of the known facts of the human world depends upon language. The explanation of divine teachings can only be through this medium. As long as diversity of tongues and lack of comprehension of other languages continue, these glorious aims cannot be realized. Therefore the very first service to the world of man is to establish this auxiliary international means of communication. It will become the cause of the tranquillity of the human commonwealth. Through it, sciences and arts will be spread among the nations and it will prove to be the means of the progress and development of all races. We must endeavor with all our powers to establish this international auxiliary language throughout the world. It is my hope that it may be perfected through the bounties of God and that intelligent men may be selected from the various countries of the world to organize an international congress whose chief aim will be the promotion of this universal medium of speech.

XIII

April 25, 1912, at 1700 18th Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Parsons.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

IN THE world of existence the greatest bestowals of God are his teachings. The other bounties of God are limited as regards their benefits and provision. Human existence itself is a divine bestowal but it is circumscribed with limitations. Sight and hearing are bounties of God; both are limited. And so it is with all the other bestowals; the circle of their operation is confined, restricted whereas the sphere of the divine teachings is boundless. Centuries and ages pass away but their efficacy continues like the spirit of life which animates the world of existence. Without the teachings of God the world of humanity is like the animal kingdom. What difference is there between the animal and man? The difference is this;—that the animal is not capable of apprehending the divine teachings whereas man is worthy of them and possesses the capacity to understand. In the animal kingdom there is no such bestowal; therefore limited progression. At most, evolution in that kingdom is a development of the organism. In the beginning it is small, undeveloped; it develops, becomes larger; but its sphere of intellectual growth is limited. Therefore the teachings of God are the bestowals specialized for man.

Although the divine teachings are truth and reality, yet with

the passage of time thick clouds envelop and obscure them. These clouds are imitations and superstitions; they are not the fundamentals. Then the Sun of Truth, the Word of God arises again, shines forth once more in the glory of its power and disperses the enveloping darkness.

For a long time the divine precepts of the effulgent Word were obscured by clouds of superstition and error until His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared upon the horizon of humanity, rent the shadows, scattered the clouds and revealed anew the foundations of the teachings of God.

The first teaching of BAHÁ 'ULLAH is the duty incumbent upon all to investigate reality. What does it mean to investigate reality? It means that man must forget all hearsay and examine truth himself; for he does not know whether statements he hears are in accordance with reality or not. Wherever he finds truth or reality he must hold to it, forsaking, discarding all else, for outside of reality there is naught but superstition and imagination. For example, during the days of Jesus Christ, the Jews were expecting the appearance of Messiah, praying and beseeching God day and night that His Holiness the promised one might appear. Why did they reject him when he did appear? They denied him absolutely; refused to believe in him. There was no abuse and persecution which they did not heap upon him. They reviled him with curses, placed a crown of thorns upon his head, led him through the streets in scorn and derision and finally crucified him. Why did they do this? Because they did not investigate the truth or reality of Christ and were not able to recognize him as the Messiah of God. Had they investigated sincerely for themselves they would surely have believed, respected him and bowed before him in reverence. They would have considered his manifestation the greatest bestowal upon mankind. They would have accepted him as the very saviour of man; but alas! they were veiled, they held to imitations of ancestral beliefs and hearsay and did not investigate the truth of Christ. They were submerged in the sea of superstitions and were therefore deprived of witnessing that glorious bounty; withheld from the fragrances or breaths of the Holy Spirit and suffered in themselves the greatest debasement and degradation.

Reality or truth is one, yet there are many religious beliefs, denominations, creeds and differing opinions in the world today. Why should these differences exist? Because they do not investigate and examine the fundamental unity which is one and unchangeable. If they seek the reality itself they will agree and be united; for reality is indivisible and not multiple. It is evident

therefore that there is nothing of greater importance to mankind than the investigation of truth.

The second teaching of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH is the oneness of the world of humanity. Every human creature is the servant of God. All have been created and reared by the power and favor of God; all have been blessed with the bounties of the same Sun of divine truth; all have quaffed from the fountain of the infinite mercy of God; and all in his estimation and love are equal as servants. He is beneficent and kind to all. Therefore no one should glorify himself over another; no one should manifest pride or superiority toward another; no one should look upon another with scorn and contempt; and no one should deprive or oppress a fellow-creature. All must be considered as submerged in the ocean of God's mercy. We must associate with all humanity in gentleness and kindliness. We must love all with love of the heart. Some are ignorant; they must be trained and educated. One is sick; he must be healed. Another is as a child; we must assist him to attain maturity. We must not detest him who is ailing, neither shun him, scorn nor curse him; but care for him with the utmost kindness and tenderness. An infant must not be treated with disdain simply because it is an infant. Our responsibility is to train, educate and develop it in order that it may advance toward maturity.

The third teaching or principle of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH is that religion and science are in complete agreement. Every religion which is not in accordance with established science is superstition. Religion must be reasonable. If it does not square with reason it is superstition and without foundation. It is like a mirage which deceives man by leading him to think it is a body of water. God has endowed man with reason that he may perceive what is true. If we insist that such and such a subject is not to be reasoned out and tested according to the established logical modes of the intellect, what is the use of the reason which God has given man? The eye is the organ of sense by which we view the world of outer phenomena; hearing is the faculty for distinguishing sounds; taste senses the properties of objects, such as bitter, sweet; smell detects and differentiates odors; touch reveals attributes of matter and perfects our communication with the outer world; yet after all, the circle and range of perception by the five senses is exceedingly limited. But the intellectual faculty of man is unlimited in its sphere of action. The eye views details perhaps a mile but the intellect can perceive the far east and west. The ear may hear tone modulations at one thousand feet but the mind of man can detect the harmonies of the heavenly spheres as they swing in their courses. Mind makes

geological discoveries in subterranean depths and determines the processes of creation in earth's lowest strata. The sciences and arts, all inventions, crafts, trades and their products have come forth from the intellect of man. It is evident that within the organism of human being the intellect occupies supreme station. Therefore if religious belief, principle or creed is not in accordance with the intellect and the power of reason, it is surely superstition.

At another time I shall speak further of the principles revealed in the teachings of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in Chicago.

*April 30, 1912, at Drill Hall, Masonic Temple, Chicago, Ill.
Public Meeting concluding Convention of Bahai Temple Unity.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

AMONG the institutes of the holy books is that of the foundation of places of worship. That is to say an edifice or temple is to be built in order that humanity might find a place of meeting and this is to be conducive to unity and fellowship among them. The real temple is the very Word of God; for to it all humanity must turn and it is the center of unity for all mankind. It is the collective center, the cause of accord and communion of hearts, the sign of the solidarity of the human race, the source of life eternal. Temples are the symbols of the divine uniting force, so that when the people gather there in the house of God they may recall the fact that the law has been revealed for them and that the law is to unite them. They will realize that just as this temple was founded for the unification of mankind, the law preceding and creating it came forth in the manifest Word. His Holiness Jesus Christ addressing Peter, said "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." This utterance of His Holiness was indicative of the faith of Peter, signifying—This faith of thine, O Peter! is the very cause and message of unity to the nations; it shall be the bond of union between the hearts of men, and the foundation of the oneness of the world of humanity. In brief, the original purpose of temples and houses of worship is simply that of unity; places of meeting where various peoples, different races and souls of every capacity may come together in order that love and agreement should be manifest between them. That is why His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH has commanded that a place of worship be built for all the religionists of the world; that all religions, races and sects may come together within its universal shelter; that the proclamation of the oneness of mankind shall go forth from its open courts of holiness; the announcement that humanity is the servant of God and that all are submerged in the ocean of his mercy. It is the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar. The world of existence may be likened to this temple and place of worship; for just as the external world is a place where the people of all races and colors, varying faiths, denominations and conditions come together,—just as they are sub-

merged in the same sea of divine favors, so likewise all may meet under the dome of the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar and adore the one God in the same spirit of truth; for the ages of darkness have passed away and the century of light has come. Ignorant prejudices are being dispelled and the light of unity is shining. The differences existing between nations and peoples will soon be annulled and the fundamentals of the divine religions which are no other than the oneness and solidarity of the human race are being established. For thousands of years the human race has been at war. It is enough. Now let mankind for a time at least, consort in amity and peace. Enmity and hatred have ruled. Let the world for a period, exercise love. For thousands of years the nations have denied each other, considering each other as infidel and inferior. It is sufficient. We must now realize that we are the servants of one God, that we turn to one beneficent father, live under one divine law, seek one reality and have one desire. Thus may we live in the utmost friendship and love, and in return the favors and bounties of God shall surround us, the world of humanity will be reformed, mankind enjoy a new life, eternal light will illumine and heavenly moralities become manifest.

Then divine policy shall govern the world; for the divine policy is the oneness of humanity. God is just and kind to all. He considers all as his servants. He excludes none and his judgments are correct and true. No matter how complete human policy and foresight may appear, it is imperfect. If we do not seek the counsel of God or if we refuse to follow his dictates it is presumptive evidence that we are knowing and wise whereas God is ignorant; that we are sagacious and God is not. God forbid! We seek shelter in his mercy for this suggestion! No matter how far the human intelligence may advance, it is still but a drop while divine omniscience is the ocean. Shall we say that a drop is imbued or endowed with qualities of which the ocean is devoid? Shall we believe that the policy and plan of this atom of a human soul are superior to the wisdom of the omniscient? There is no greater ignorance than this. Briefly; some are mere children; with the utmost love we must educate them to make them wise. Others are sick and ailing; we must tenderly treat them until they recover. Some have unworthy morals; we must train them toward the standard of true morality. Other than this we are all the servants of one God and under the providence and protection of one father.

These are the institutions of God and the foundations of his temple the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar. The outer edifice is a symbol of the inner. May the people be admonished thereby.

I pray in your behalf that your hearts may be enlightened with the light of the love of God; that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may become aglow with the fire and illumination of his glad-tidings, until these divine foundations may become established throughout the human world. The first of these institutions and foundations is the oneness of humanity and love among mankind. The second is the "Most Great Peace." Praise be to God! this American democracy manifests capacity, showing forth readiness to become the standard bearer of the "Most Great Peace." May its hosts be the hosts of the oneness of humanity. May they serve the threshold of God and spread the message of the good-pleasure of God.

O thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to thee. These hearts are radiant with thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the "Most Great Peace," to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of thy favors and is deserving of thy mercy. Make it precious and near to thee through thy bounty and bestowal.

II

April 30, 1912, at Hull House, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

WHEN we view the world of creation, we find that all living things may be classified under two aspects of existence: First, they possess bodies composed of material substance common to all whether vegetable, animal or human. This is their point of agreement or as it is philosophically termed, their point of contact. Secondly, they vary and differ from each other in degree and function; that is to say in their respective kingdoms. This is their point of distinction and differentiation. For instance, the vegetable and animal are alike in the fact that their bodies are composed of the same material elements; but widely different in their kingdoms and powers. Man is like the animal in physical structure but otherwise immeasurably separated and superior.

In the human kingdom itself there are points of contact, prop-

erties common to all mankind; likewise points of distinction which separate race from race, individual from individual. If the points of contact which are the common properties of humanity overcome the peculiar points of distinction, unity is assured. On the other hand if the points of differentiation overcome the points of agreement, disunion and weakness result. One of the important questions which affect the unity and solidarity of humankind is the fellowship and equality of the white and colored races. Between these two races certain points of agreement and points of distinction exist which warrant just and mutual consideration. The points of contact are many; for in the material or physical plane of being, both are constituted alike and exist under the same law of growth and bodily development. Furthermore both live and move in the plane of the senses and are endowed with human intelligence. There are many other mutual qualifications. In this country, the United States of America, patriotism is common to both races; all have equal rights to citizenship, speak one language, receive the blessings of the same civilization and follow the precepts of the same religion. In fact numerous points of partnership and agreement exist between the two races; whereas the one point of distinction is that of color. Shall this, the least of all distinctions be allowed to separate you as races and individuals? In physical bodies, in the law of growth, sense endowment, intelligence, patriotism, language, citizenship, civilization and religion you are one and the same. A single point of distinction exists; that of racial color. God is not pleased with, neither should any reasonable or intelligent man be willing to recognize inequality in the races because of this distinction.

But there is need of a superior power to overcome human prejudices; a power which nothing in the world of mankind can withstand and which will overshadow the effect of all other forces at work in human conditions. That irresistible power is the love of God. It is my hope and prayer that it may destroy the prejudice of this one point of distinction between you and unite you all permanently under its hallowed protection. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH has proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity. He has caused various nations and divergent creeds to unite. He has declared that difference of race and color is like the variegated beauty of flowers in a garden. If you enter a garden, you will see yellow, white, blue, red flowers in profusion and beauty; each radiant within itself and although different from the others, lending its own charm to them. Racial difference in the human king-

dom is similar. If all the flowers in a garden were of the same color, the effect would be monotonous and wearying to the eye.

Therefore BAHÁ' ULLÁH has said that the various races of human kind lend a composite harmony and beauty of color to the whole. Let all associate then in this great human garden even as flowers grow and blend together side by side without discord or disagreement among them.

III

April 30, 1912, at Handel Hall, Chicago, Ill.

Fourth Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

ACCORDING to the words of the old testament, God has said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." This indicates that man is of the image and likeness of God; that is to say, the perfections of God, the divine virtues are reflected or revealed in the human reality. Just as the light and effulgence of the sun when cast upon a polished mirror are reflected fully, gloriously, so likewise the qualities and attributes of divinity are radiated from the depths of a pure human heart. This is an evidence that man is the most noble of God's creatures.

Each kingdom of creation is endowed with its necessary complement of attributes and powers. The mineral possesses inherent virtues of its own kingdom in the scale of existence. The vegetable possesses the qualities of the mineral plus a virtue augmentative or power of growth. The animal is endowed with the virtues of both the mineral and vegetable plane plus the power of intellect. The human kingdom is replete with the perfections of all the kingdoms below it, with the addition of powers peculiar to man alone. Man is therefore superior to all the creatures below him, the loftiest and most glorious being of creation. Man is the microcosm, and the infinite universe the macrocosm. The mysteries of the greater world or macrocosm are expressed or revealed in the lesser world, the microcosm. The tree, so to speak, is the greater world, and the seed in its relation to the tree is the lesser world. But the whole of the great tree is potentially latent and hidden in the little seed. When this seed is planted and cultivated, the tree is revealed. Likewise the greater world, the macrocosm is latent and miniaturized in the lesser world or microcosm of man. This constitutes the universality or perfection of virtues potential in mankind. Therefore

it is said that man has been created in the image and likeness of God.

Let us now discover more specifically how he is the image and likeness of God and what is the standard or criterion by which he can be measured and estimated. This standard can be no other than the divine virtues which are revealed in him. Therefore every man imbued with divine qualities, who reflects heavenly moralities and perfections, who is the expression of ideal and praiseworthy attributes, is verily in the image and likeness of God. If a man possesses wealth can we call him an image and likeness of God? Or is human honor and notoriety the criterion of divine nearness? Can we apply the test of racial color and say that man of a certain hue—white, black, brown, yellow, red—is the true image of his creator? We must conclude that color is not the standard and estimate of judgment and that it is of no importance, for color is accidental in nature. The spirit and intelligence of man is the essential; and that is the manifestation of divine virtues, the merciful bestowals of God, the life eternal and baptism through the Holy Spirit. Therefore be it known that color or race is of no importance. He who is the image and likeness of God, who is the manifestation of the bestowals of God, is acceptable at the threshold of God whether his color be white, black or brown; it matters not. Man is not man simply because of bodily attributes. The standard of divine measure and judgment is his intelligence and spirit.

Therefore let this be the only criterion and estimate; for this is the image and likeness of God. A man's heart may be pure and white though his outer skin be black; or his heart be dark and sinful though his racial color is white. The character and purity of the heart is of all importance. The heart illumined by the light of God is nearest and dearest to God; and inasmuch as God has endowed man with such favor that he is called the image of God, this is truly a supreme perfection of attainment, a divine station which is not to be sacrificed by the mere accident of color.

IV

May 1, 1912, at Chicago, Ill.

Dedication of the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar Grounds

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

THE power which has gathered you here today notwithstanding the cold and windy weather is indeed mighty and wonderful. It is the power of God, the divine favor of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH which has

drawn you together. We praise God that through his constraining love human souls are assembled and associated in this way.

Thousands of Mashreq 'Ul-Azkars, dawning-points of praise and mentionings of God for all religionists will be built in the Orient and Occident, but this being the first one erected in the Occident has great importance. In the future there will be many here and elsewhere; in Asia, Europe, even in Africa, New Zealand and Australia; but this edifice in Chicago is of especial significance. It has the same importance as the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar in Ishkabad, Caucasus Russia, the first one built there. In Persia there are many; some are houses which have been utilized for the purpose, others are homes entirely devoted to the divine cause, and in some places temporary structures have been erected. In all the cities of Persia there are Mashreq 'Ul-Azkars but the great "dawning-point" was founded in Ishkabad. It possesses superlative importance because it was the first Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar built. All the Bahai friends agreed and contributed their utmost assistance and effort. His Holiness the Afnan devoted his wealth, gave all he had to it. From such a mighty and combined effort a beautiful edifice arose. Notwithstanding their contributions to that building, they have assisted the fund here in Chicago as well. The Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar in Ishkabad is almost completed. It is centrally located; nine avenues leading into it; nine gardens, nine fountains; all the arrangement and construction is according to the principle and proportion of the number nine. It is like a beautiful bouquet. Imagine a very lofty, imposing edifice surrounded completely by gardens of variegated flowers, with nine avenues leading through them, nine fountains and pools of water. Such is its matchless, beautiful design. Now they are building a hospital, a school for orphans, a home for cripples, a hospice and a large dispensary. God willing, when it is fully completed it will be a paradise.

I hope the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar in Chicago will be like this. Endeavor to have the grounds circular in shape. If possible, adjust and exchange the plots in order to make the dimensions and boundaries circular. The Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar could not be triangular in shape. It must be in the form of a circle.

V

May 2, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

IN this cause, consultation is of vital importance; but spiritual conference and not the mere voicing of personal views is intended. In France I was present at a session of the senate but

the experience was not impressive. Parliamentary procedure should have for its object the attainment of the light of truth upon questions presented and not furnish a battle ground for opposition and self-opinion. Antagonism and contradiction are unfortunate and always destructive to truth. In the parliamentary meeting mentioned, altercation and useless quibbling were frequent; the result mostly confusion and turmoil; even in one instance a physical encounter took place between two members. It was not consultation but comedy.

The purpose is to emphasize the statement that consultation must have for its object the investigation of truth. He who expresses an opinion should not voice it as correct and right but set it forth as a contribution to the consensus of opinion; for the light of reality becomes apparent when two opinions coincide. A spark is produced when flint and steel come together. Man should weigh his opinions with the utmost serenity, calmness and composure. Before expressing his own views he should carefully consider the views already advanced by others. If he finds that a previously expressed opinion is more true and worthy, he should accept it immediately and not wilfully hold to an opinion of his own. By this excellent method he endeavors to arrive at unity and truth. Opposition and division are deplorable. It is better then to have the opinion of a wise, sagacious man; otherwise contradiction and altercation in which varied and divergent views are presented will make it necessary for a judicial body to render decision upon the question. Even a majority opinion or consensus may be incorrect. A thousand people may hold to one view and be mistaken whereas one sagacious person may be right. Therefore true consultation is spiritual conference in the attitude and atmosphere of love. Members must love each other in the spirit of fellowship in order that good results may be forthcoming. Love and fellowship are the foundation.

The most memorable instance of spiritual consultation was the meeting of the disciples of Jesus Christ upon the mount after his ascension. They said "His Holiness Jesus Christ has been crucified and we have no longer association and intercourse with him in his physical body; therefore we must be loyal and faithful to him, we must be grateful and appreciate him, for he has raised us from the dead, he made us wise, he has given us eternal life. What shall we do to be faithful to him?" And so they held council. One of them said "We must detach ourselves from the chains and fetters of the world; otherwise we cannot be faithful." The others

replied "That is so." Another said "Either we must be married and faithful to our wives and children or serve our Lord free from these ties. We cannot be occupied with the care and provision for families and at the same time herald the kingdom in the wilderness. Therefore let those who are unmarried remain so, and those who have married provide means of sustenance and comfort for their families and then go forth to spread the message of glad-tidings." There were no dissenting voices; all agreed, saying "That is right." A third disciple said "To perform worthy deeds in the kingdom we must be further self-sacrificing. From now on we should forego ease and bodily comfort, accept every difficulty, forget self and teach the cause of God." This found acceptance and approval by all the others. Finally a fourth disciple said "There is still another aspect to our faith and unity. For Jesus' sake we shall be beaten, imprisoned and exiled. They may kill us. Let us receive this lesson now. Let us realize and resolve that though we are beaten, banished, cursed, spat upon and led forth to be killed we shall accept all this joyfully, loving those who hate and wound us." All the disciples replied "Surely we will,—it is agreed; this is right." Then they descended from the summit of the mountain and each went forth in a different direction upon his divine mission.

This was true consultation. This was spiritual consultation and not the mere voicing of personal views in parliamentary opposition and debate.

VI

*May 2, 1912, at Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Ill.
Federation of Women's Clubs.*

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

ONE of the functions of the sun is to quicken and reveal the hidden realities of the kingdoms of existence. Through the light and heat of the great central luminary, all that is potential in the earth is awakened and comes forth into the realm of the visible. The fruit hidden in the tree appears upon its branches in response to the power of the sun; man and all other organisms live, move and have their being under its developing rays; nature is resplendent with countless evolutionary forms through its pervading impulse; so that we can say a function of the sun is the revelation of the mysteries and creative purposes hidden within the phenomenal world.

The outer sun is a sign or symbol of the inner and ideal Sun of Truth, the Word of God. Inasmuch as this is the century of light, it is evident that the Sun of Reality, the Word has revealed itself to all humankind. One of the potentialities hidden in the realm of humanity was the capability or capacity of womanhood. Through the effulgent rays of divine illumination, the capacity of woman has become so awakened and manifest in this age that equality of man and woman is an established fact. In past ages woman was wronged and oppressed. This was especially the case in Asia and Africa. In certain parts of Asia women were not considered as members of human kind. They were looked upon as inferior unworthy creatures subordinate and subjective to man. A certain people known as the Nuseyrians held to the belief for a long period that woman was the incarnation of the evil spirit or satan, and that man alone was the manifestation of God the merciful. At last this century of light dawned, the realities shone forth and the mysteries long hidden from human vision were revealed. Among these revealed realities was the great principle of the equality of man and woman which is now finding recognition throughout the whole world,—America, Europe and the Orient.

History records the appearance in the world, of women who have been signs of guidance, power and accomplishment. Some were notable poets, some philosophers and scientists, others courageous upon the field of battle. Kurratu-l-Ayn a Bahai, was a poetess. She discomfited the learned men of Persia by her brilliancy and fervor. When she entered a meeting even the learned were silent. She was so well versed in philosophy and science that those in her presence always considered and consulted her first. Her courage was unparalleled; she faced her enemies fearlessly until she was killed. She withstood a despotic king, the Shah of Persia who had the power to decree the death of any of his subjects. There was not a day during which he did not command the execution of some. This woman singly and alone withstood such a despot until her last breath; then gave her life for her faith.

Consider the mysteries revealed during the last half century; all due to the effulgence of the Sun of Reality which has been so gloriously manifested in this age and cycle. In this day, man must investigate the reality impartially and without prejudice in order to reach the true knowledge and conclusion. What then constitutes the inequality between man and woman? Both are human. In powers and function each is the complement of the other. At most it is this,—that woman has been denied the opportunities which man

has so long enjoyed, especially the privilege of education. But even this is not always a shortcoming. Shall we consider it an imperfection and weakness in her nature that she is not proficient in the school of military tactics, that she cannot go forth to the field of battle and kill, that she is not able to handle a deadly weapon? Nay, rather, is it not a compliment when we say that in hardness of heart and cruelty she is inferior to man? The woman who is asked to arm herself and kill her fellow-creatures will say "I cannot." Is this to be considered a fault and lack of qualification as man's equal? Yet be it known that if woman had been taught and trained in the military science of slaughter she would have been the equivalent of man even in this accomplishment. But God forbid! May woman never attain this proficiency; may she never wield weapons of war; for the destruction of humanity is not a glorious achievement. The upbuilding of a home, the bringing of joy and comfort into human hearts are truly glories of mankind. Let not a man glory in this,—that he can kill his fellow-creatures; nay, rather, let him glory in this, that he can love them.

When we consider the kingdoms of existence below man we find no distinction or estimate of superiority and inferiority male and female. Among the myriad organisms of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, sex exists but there is no differentiation whatever as to relative importance and value in the equation of life. If we investigate impartially we may even find species in which the female is superior or preferable to the male. For instance, there are trees such as the fig, the male of which is fruitless while the female is fruitful. The male of the date palm is valueless while the female bears abundantly. Inasmuch as we find no ground for distinction or superiority according to the creative wisdom in the lower kingdoms, is it logical or becoming of man to make such distinction in regard to himself? The male of the animal kingdom does not glory in its being male and superior to the female. In fact equality exists and is recognized. Why should man, a higher and more intelligent creature deny and deprive himself of this equality the animals enjoy? His surest index and guide as to the creative intention concerning himself are the conditions and analogies of the kingdoms below him where equality of the sexes is fundamental.

The truth is that all mankind are the creatures and servants of one God, and in his estimate all are human. "Man" is a generic term applying to all humanity. The biblical statement "Let us make man in our image; after our likeness" does not mean that woman was not created. The "image" and "likeness" of God

applies to her as well. In Persian and Arabic there are two distinct words translated "man" into English; one meaning man and woman collectively, the other distinguishing man as male from woman the female. The first word and its pronoun are generic, collective; the other is restricted to the male. This is the same in Hebrew.

To accept and observe a distinction which God has not intended in creation, is ignorance and superstition. The fact which is to be considered however is that woman having formerly been deprived must now be allowed equal opportunities with man for education and training. There must be no difference in their education. Until the reality of equality between man and woman is fully established and attained, the highest social development of mankind is not possible. Even granted that woman is inferior to man in some degree of capacity or accomplishment, this or any other distinction would continue to be productive of discord and trouble. The only remedy is education, opportunity; for equality means equal qualification. In brief, the assumption of superiority by man will continue to be depressing to the ambition of woman, as if her attainment to equality was creationally impossible; woman's aspiration toward advancement will be checked by it and she will gradually become hopeless. On the contrary, we must declare that her capacity is equal, even greater than man's. This will inspire her with hope and ambition and her susceptibilities for advancement will continually increase. She must not be told and taught that she is weaker and inferior in capacity and qualification. If a pupil is told that his intelligence is less than his fellow-pupils, it is a very great drawback and handicap to his progress. He must be encouraged to advance, by the statement "You are most capable and if you endeavor you will attain the highest degree."

It is my hope that the banner of equality may be raised throughout the five continents where as yet it is not fully recognized and established. In this enlightened world of the west, woman has advanced an immeasurable degree beyond the women of the Orient. And let it be known once more that until woman and man recognize and realize equality, social and political progress here or anywhere will not be possible. For the world of humanity consists of two parts or members; one is woman, the other is man. Until these two members are equal in strength, the oneness of humanity cannot be established and the happiness and felicity of mankind will not be a reality. God willing, this is to be so.

VII

May 2, 1912, at Hotel La Salle, Chicago, Ill.

Bahai Women's Reception.

Notes by Joseph H. Hannen

WHEN we look upon the kingdoms of creation below man we find three forms or planes of existence which await education and development. For instance, the function of a gardener is to till the soil of the mineral kingdom and plant a tree which under his training and cultivation will attain perfection of growth. If it be wild and fruitless it may be made fruitful and prolific by grafting. If small and unsightly it will become lofty, beautiful and verdant under the gardener's training whereas a tree bereft of his cultivation, retrogresses daily, its fruit grows acrid and bitter as the trees of the jungle or it may become entirely barren and bereft of its fruitage. Likewise we observe that animals which have undergone training in their sphere of limitation will progress and advance unmistakably, become more beautiful in appearance and increase in intelligence. For instance, how intelligent and knowing the Arabian horse has become through training; even how polite this horse has become through education. As to the human world, it is more in need of guidance and education than the lower creatures. Reflect upon the vast difference between the inhabitants of Africa and those of America. Here the people have been civilized and uplifted; there they are in the utmost and abject state of savagery. What is the cause of their savagery and the reason of your civilization? It is evident that this difference is due to education and the lack of education. Consider then the effectiveness of education in the human kingdom. It makes the ignorant wise, the tyrant merciful, the blind seeing, the deaf attentive, even the imbecile intelligent. How vast this difference. How wide the chasm which separates the educated man from the man who lacks teaching and training. This is the effect when the teacher is merely an ordinary teacher.

But praise be to God! your teacher and instructor is BAHÁ' ULLÁH. He is the educator of the Orient and Occident. He is the teacher of the very world of divinity and spirituality, the Sun of Truth, the Word of God. The lights of his education are radiating even as the sun. See what it has accomplished; how it is developing all humanity, so that I, a Persian, have come to this meeting of revered souls upon the American continent and am standing here expounding to you in the greatest love. This is through the

training of BAHÁ 'ULLAH which can unite and has united these hearts. In this way it has enlightened the world. Even so it has breathed the spirit of God into men. Even so it has resuscitated the hearts of men.

Therefore Praise be to God! that you have been brought under the education of this one who is the very Sun of Reality and who is shining resplendently upon all humankind endowing all with a life that is everlasting.

Praise be to God a thousand times!

VIII

May 2, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Marzieh Moss

THIS morning the city is enveloped in fog and mist. How beautiful is a city brilliant with sunshine. Just as these mists and vapors conceal the phenomenal sun, so human imaginations obscure the Sun of Truth. Consider the radiant glory of the great solar center of our planetary system; how wonderful the sight; how its splendor illumines vision until clouds and mists veil it from the eye. In the same way the Sun of Truth becomes veiled and hidden by the superstitions and imaginations of human minds. When the sun rises, no matter from what dawning-point on the horizon it appears, northeast, east, southeast, the haze and mists disperse and we have clear vision of its glory mounting to the zenith. Similarly the nations have been directed to the dawning-points of the Sun of Reality, each to a particular rising-place from which the light of religion has become manifest; but after a time the dawning-point has become the object of worship instead of the Sun itself which is ever one Sun and stationary in the heavens of the divine will. Differences have arisen because of this, causing clouds and darkness to again overshadow the glorious luminary of Reality. When the mists and darkness of superstition and prejudice are dispersed, all will see the Sun aright and alike. Then will all nations become as one in its radiance.

Inasmuch as these clouds and human vapors of superstition hide the light of the spiritual Sun, we must put forth our utmost endeavor to dispel them. May we unite in this and be enlightened to accomplish it, for the Sun is one and its radiance and bounty universal. All the inhabitants of earth are recipients of the bounty of the one phenomenal sun and none are preferred

above others; so likewise all receive the heavenly bestowals of the Word of God; none are specialized as favorites; all are under its protection and universal effulgence. Human strife and religious disagreement complex and disfigure the simple purity and beauty of the divine cause until clouds obscure the light of reality and disunion results. Therefore make use of intelligence and reason so that you may dispel these dense clouds from the horizon of human hearts and all hold to the one reality of all the prophets. It is most certain that if human souls exercise their respective reason and intelligence upon the divine questions, the power of God will dispel every difficulty and the eternal realities will appear as one light, one truth, one love, one God and a peace that is universal.

IX

May 2, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Henrietta C. Wagner

WHEN we carefully investigate the kingdoms of existence and observe the phenomena of the universe about us, we discover the absolute order and perfection of creation. The dull minerals in their affinities, plants and vegetables with power of growth, animals in their instinct, man with conscious intellect, and the heavenly orbs moving obediently through limitless space are all found subject to universal law, most complete, most perfect. That is why a wise philosopher has said "There is no greater or more perfect system of creation than that which already exists." The materialists and atheists declare that this order and symmetry is due to nature and its forces; that composition and decomposition which constitute life and existence are exigencies of nature; that man himself is an exigency of nature; that nature rules and governs creation; and that all existing things are captives of nature. Let us consider these statements. Inasmuch as we find all phenomena subject to an exact order and under control of universal law. the question is whether this is due to nature or to divine and omnipotent rule. The materialists believe that it is an exigency of nature for the rain to fall and unless rain fell the earth would not become verdant. They reason that if clouds cause a downpour. if the sun sends forth heat and light and the earth be endowed with capacity, vegetation must inevitably follow; therefore plant-life is a property of these natural forces and is a sign of nature; just

as combustion is the natural property of fire, therefore fire burns and we cannot conceive of fire without its burning.

In reply to these statements, we say that from the premises advanced by materialists, the conclusions are drawn that nature is the ruler and governor of existence and that all virtues and perfections are natural exigencies and outcomes; furthermore it follows that man is but a part or member of that whereof nature is the whole.

Man possesses certain virtues of which nature is deprived. He exercises volition; nature is without will. For instance, an exigency of the sun is the giving of light. It is controlled; it cannot do otherwise than radiate light; but it is not volitional. An exigency of the phenomenon of electricity is that it is revealed in sparks and flashes under certain conditions, but it cannot voluntarily furnish illumination. An exigency or property of water is humidity; it cannot separate itself from this property by its own will. Likewise all the properties of nature are inherent and obedient, not volitional; therefore it is philosophically predicated that nature is minus volition and innate perception. In this statement and principle we agree with the materialists. But the question which presents food for reflection is this: How is it that man who is a part of the universal plan is possessed of certain qualities whereof nature is devoid? Is it conceivable that a drop should be imbued with qualities of which the ocean is completely deprived? The drop is a part, the ocean is the whole. Could there be a phenomenon of combustion or illumination which the great luminary the sun itself did not manifest? Is it possible for a stone to possess inherent properties of which the aggregate mineral kingdom is minus? For example, could the finger nail which is a part of human anatomy be endowed with cellular properties of which the brain is deprived?

Man is intelligent, instinctively and consciously intelligent; nature is not. Man is fortified with memory; nature does not possess it. Man is the discoverer of the mysteries of nature; nature is not conscious of those mysteries herself. It is evident therefore that man is dual in aspect; as an animal he is subject to nature, but in his spiritual or conscious being he transcends the world of material existence. His spiritual powers being nobler and higher, possess virtues of which nature intrinsically has no evidence; therefore they triumph over natural conditions. These ideal virtues or powers in man surpass or surround nature, comprehend natural laws and phenomena, penetrate the mysteries of the unknown and invisible and bring them forth into the realm

of the known and visible. All the existing arts and sciences were once hidden secrets of nature. By his command and control of nature man took them out of the plane of the invisible and revealed them in the plane of visibility whereas according to the exigencies of nature these secrets should have remained latent and concealed. According to the exigencies of nature, electricity should be a hidden, mysterious power but the penetrating intellect of man has discovered it, taken it out of the realm of mystery and made it an obedient human servant. In his physical body and its functions man is a captive of nature; for instance, he cannot continue his existence without sleep an exigency of nature; he must partake of food and drink which nature demands and requires. But in his spiritual being and intelligence man dominates and controls nature the ruler of his physical being. Notwithstanding this, contrary opinions and materialistic views are set forth which would relegate man completely to physical subservience to nature's laws. This is equivalent to saying that the comparative degree exceeds the superlative, that the imperfect includes the perfect, that the pupil surpasses the teacher; all of which is illogical and impossible. When it is clearly manifest and evident that the intelligence of man, his constructive faculty, his power of penetration and discovery transcend nature, how can we say he is nature's thrall and captive. This would indicate that man is deprived of the bounties of God, that he is retrograding toward the station of the animal, that his keen super-intelligence is without function and that he estimates himself as an animal without distinction between his own and the animal's kingdom.

I was once conversing with a famous philosopher of the materialistic school in Alexandria. He was strongly opinionated upon the point that man and the other kingdoms of existence are under the control of nature, and that after all, man is only a social animal, often very much of an animal. When he was discomfited in argument, he said impetuously "I see no difference between myself and the donkey and I am not willing to admit distinctions which I cannot perceive." Abdul Baha replied "No, I consider you quite different and distinct; I call you a man and the donkey but an animal. I perceive that you are highly intelligent whereas the donkey is not. I know that you are well versed in philosophy and I also know that the donkey is entirely deficient in it; therefore I am not willing to accept your statement."

Consider the lady beside me who is writing in this little book. It seems a very trifling, ordinary matter but upon intelligent re-

flection you will conclude that what has been written presupposes and proves the existence of a writer. These words have not written themselves and these letters have not come together of their own volition. It is evident there must be a writer.

And now consider this infinite universe. Is it possible that it could have been created without a creator? Or that the creator and cause of this infinite congeries of worlds should be minus intelligence? Is the idea that the creator has no comprehension of what is manifested in creation, tenable? Man the creature has volition and certain virtues. Is it possible that his creator is deprived of these? A child could not accept this belief and statement. It is perfectly evident that man did not create himself and that he cannot do so. How could man of his own weakness create such a mighty being? Therefore the creator of man must be more perfect and powerful than man. If the creative cause of man be simply on the same level with man, then man himself should be able to create whereas we know very well that we cannot create even our own likeness. Therefore the creator of man must be endowed with superlative intelligence and power in all points that creation involves and implies. We are weak; he is mighty; because were he not mighty he could not have created us. We are ignorant; he is wise; we are poor; he is rich; otherwise he would have been incapable of our creation.

Among the proofs of the existence of a divine power is this; that things are often known by their opposites. Were it not for darkness light could not be sensed. Were it not for death life could not be known. If ignorance did not exist knowledge would not be a reality. It is necessary that each should exist in order that the other should have reality. Night and day must be in order that each may be distinguished. Night itself is an indication and evidence of day which follows; and day itself indicates the coming night. Unless night was a reality there could not be day. Were it not for death there could be no life. Things are known by their opposites.

Therefore our weakness is an evidence that there is might; our ignorance proves the reality of knowledge; our need is an indication of supply and wealth. Were it not for wealth this need would not exist; were it not for knowledge ignorance would be unknown; were it not for power there would be no impotence. In other words demand and supply is the law and undoubtedly all virtues have a center and source. That source is God from whom all these bounties emanate.

X

May 3, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Marzieh Moss

I WAS in the Orient, and from the Orient to this part of the world is a long distance. Travel is difficult, especially difficult for me on account of my infirmities of body, increased by forty years in prison. My physical powers are weak; it is the power of will that sustains me. Realize from this how great has been my exertion and how strong my purpose in accomplishing this journey through the will of God. May it be the cause of great illumination in the Occident.

In this western world with its stimulating climate, its capacities for knowledge and lofty ideals, the message of peace should be easily spread. The people are not so influenced by imitations and prejudices, and through their comprehension of the real and unreal they should attain the truth. They should become leaders in the effort to establish the oneness of humankind. What is higher than this responsibility? In the kingdom of God no service is greater and in the estimation of the prophets including Jesus Christ there is no deed so estimable.

Yet even now warfare prevails. Envy and hatred have arisen between nations but because I find the American nation so capable of achievement and this government the fairest of western governments, its institutions superior to others, my wish and hope is that the banner of international reconciliation may first be raised on this continent and the standard of the "Most Great Peace" be unfurled here. May the American people and their government unite in their efforts in order that this light may dawn from this point and spread to all regions; for this is one of the greatest bestowals of God. In order that America may avail herself of this opportunity I beg that you strive and pray with heart and soul, devoting all your energies to this end that the banner of international peace may be upraised here and that this democracy may be the cause of the cessation of warfare in all other countries.

Observe what is taking place in Tripoli; men cutting each other into pieces; bombardment from the sea, attacks from the land and the hail of dynamite from the very heaven itself. The contending armies are thirsting for each other's blood. How they can do this is inconceivable. They have fathers, mothers, children; they are human. What of their wives and families? Think of their anguish and suffering. How unjust, how terrible! Human beings should prevent and forbid this. These kings, rulers and chieftans should

strive for the good of their subjects instead of their destruction. These shepherds should bring their sheep within the fold, comfort them and give them pasture instead of death and slaughter.

I supplicate the divine kingdom and ask that you may be instrumental in establishing the great peace in this country and that this government and nation may spread it to all the world.

XI

May 3, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Marsieh Moss

ACCORDING to the statement of philosophers the difference in degree of humankind from lowest to highest is due to education. The proofs they advance are these: The civilization of Europe and America is an evidence and outcome of education whereas the semi-civilized and barbarous peoples of Africa bear witness in their condition that they have been deprived of its advantages. Education makes the ignorant wise, the tyrant just, promotes happiness, strengthens the mind, develops the will and makes fruitless trees of humanity fruitful. Therefore in the human world some have attained lofty degrees while others grope in the abyss of despair. Nevertheless the highest attainment is possible for every member of the human race even to the station of the prophets. This is the statement and reasoning of the philosophers.

The prophets of God are the first educators. They bestow universal education upon man and cause him to rise from lowest levels of savagery to the highest pinnacles of spiritual development. The philosophers too are educators along lines of intellectual training. At most they have only been able to educate themselves and a limited number about them, to improve their own morals and, so to speak, civilize themselves; but they have been incapable of universal education. They have failed to cause an advancement for any given nation from savagery to civilization.

It is evident that although education improves the morals of mankind, confers the advantages of civilization and elevates man from lowest degrees to the station of sublimity, there is nevertheless a difference in the intrinsic or natal capacity of individuals. Ten children of the same age, with equal station of birth, taught in the same school, partaking of the same food, in all respects subject to the same environment, their interests equal and in common, will evidence separate and distinct degrees of capability and advancement; some exceedingly intelligent and progressive, some

of mediocre ability, others limited and incapable. One may become a learned professor while another under the same course of education proves dull and stupid. From all standpoints the opportunities have been equal but the results and outcomes vary from the highest to lowest degree of advancement. It is evident therefore that mankind differs in natal capacity and intrinsic intellectual endowment. Nevertheless although capacities are not the same, every member of the human race is capable of education.

His Holiness Jesus Christ was an educator of humanity. His teachings were altruistic; his bestowal universal. He taught mankind by the power of the Holy Spirit and not through human agency, for the human power is limited whereas the divine power is illimitable and infinite. The influence and accomplishment of Christ will attest this. Galen the Greek physician and philosopher who lived in the second century A.D., wrote a treatise upon the civilization of nations. He was not a Christian but he has borne testimony that religious beliefs exercise an extraordinary effect upon the problems of civilization. In substance he says "There are certain people among us, followers of Jesus the Nazarene who was killed in Jerusalem. These people are truly imbued with moral principles which are the envy of philosophers. They believe in God and fear him. They have hopes in his favors, therefore they shun all unworthy deeds and actions and incline to praiseworthy ethics and morals. Day and night they strive that their deeds may be commendable and that they may contribute to the welfare of humanity; therefore each one of them is virtually a philosopher, for these people have attained unto that which is the essence and purport of philosophy. These people have praiseworthy morals even though they may be illiterate."

The purpose of this is to show that the holy manifestations of God, the divine prophets are the first teachers of the human race. They are universal educators and the fundamental principles they have laid down are the causes and factors of the advancement of nations. Forms and imitations which creep in afterward are not conducive to that progress. On the contrary these are destroyers of human foundations established by the heavenly educators. These are clouds which obscure the Sun of Reality. If you reflect upon the essential teachings of Jesus you will realize that they are the light of the world. Nobody can question their truth. They are the very source of life and the cause of happiness to the human race. The forms and superstitions which appeared and obscured the light did not affect the reality of Christ. For example, His Holiness Jesus Christ said "Put up the sword into the sheath." The meaning is

that warfare is forbidden and abrogated; but consider the Christian wars which took place afterward. Christian hostility and inquisition spared not even the learned; he who proclaimed the revolution of the earth was imprisoned; he who announced the new astronomical system was persecuted as a heretic; scholars and scientists became objects of fanatical hatred and many were killed and tortured. How do these actions conform with the teachings of Jesus Christ and what relation do they bear to his own example? For Christ declared "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you that you may be sons of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." How can hatred, hostility and persecution be reconciled with Christ and his teachings?

Therefore there is need of turning back to the original foundation. The fundamental principles of the prophets are correct and true. The imitations and superstitions which have crept in are at wide variance with the original precepts and commands. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH has revoiced and re-established the quintessence of the teachings of all the prophets, setting aside the accessories and purifying religion from human interpretation. He has written a book entitled *Hidden Words*. The preface announces that it contains the essences of the words of the prophets of the past clothed in the garment of brevity for the teaching and spiritual guidance of the people of the world. Read it that you may understand the true foundations of religion and reflect upon the inspiration of the messengers of God. It is light upon light.

We must not look for truth in the deeds and actions of nations; we must investigate truth at its divine source and summon all mankind to unity in the reality itself.

XII

*May 4, 1912, at Northwestern University Hall, Chicago, Ill.
Theosophical Society.*

Notes by Marsieh Moss

I AM very happy in being present at this meeting. Praise be to God! I see before me the faces of those who are endowed with capacity to know and who desire to investigate truth. This is conducive to the greatest joy.

According to divine philosophy, there are two important and universal conditions in the world of material phenomena; one which concerns life, the other concerning death; one relative to

existence, the other non-existence; one manifest in composition, the other in decomposition. Some define existence as the expression of reality or being, and non-existence as non-being, imagining that death is annihilation. This is a mistaken idea, for total annihilation is an impossibility. At most, composition is ever subject to decomposition or disintegration; that is to say, existence implies the grouping of material elements in a form or body, and non-existence is simply the de-composing of these groupings. This is the law of creation in its endless forms and infinite variety of expression. Certain elements have formed the composite creature man. This composite association of the elements in the form of a human body is therefore subject to disintegration which we call death, but after disintegration the elements themselves persist unchanged. Therefore total annihilation is an impossibility, and existence can never become non-existence. This would be equivalent to saying that light can become darkness, which is manifestly untrue and impossible. As existence can never become non-existence, there is no death for man; nay, rather, man is everlasting and everliving. The rational proof of this is that the atoms of the material elements are transferable from one form of existence to another, from one degree and kingdom to another, lower or higher. For example, an atom of the soil or dust of earth may traverse the kingdoms from mineral to man by successive incorporations into the bodies of the organisms of those kingdoms. At one time it enters into the formation of the mineral or rock; it is then absorbed by the vegetable kingdom and becomes a constituent of the body and fibre of a tree; again it is appropriated by the animal, and at a still later period is found in the body of man. Throughout these degrees of its traversing the kingdoms from one form of phenomenal being to another, it retains its atomic existence and is never annihilated nor relegated to non-existence.

Non-existence therefore is an expression applied to change of form, but this transformation can never be rightly considered annihilation, for the elements of composition are ever present and existent as we have seen in the journey of the atom through successive kingdoms, unimpaired; hence there is no death; life is everlasting. So to speak, when the atom entered into the composition of the tree, it died to the mineral kingdom, and when consumed by the animal, it died to the vegetable kingdom, and so on until its transference or transmutation into the kingdom of man; but throughout its traversing it was subject to transformation and not annihilation. Death therefore is applicable to a change or transference from one degree or condition to another. In the mineral

realm there was a spirit of existence; in the world of plant life and organisms it reappeared as the vegetative spirit; thence it attained the animal spirit and finally aspired to the human spirit. These are degrees and changes but not obliteration; and this is a rational proof that man is everlasting, everliving. Therefore death is only a relative term implying change. For example, we will say that this light before me, having reappeared in another incandescent lamp, has died in the one and lives in the other. This is not death in reality. The perfections of the mineral are translated into the vegetable and from thence into the animal, the virtue always attaining a plus or superlative degree in the upward change. In each kingdom we find the same virtues manifesting themselves more fully, proving that the reality has been transferred from a lower to a higher form and kingdom of being. Therefore non-existence is only relative and absolute non-existence inconceivable. This rose in my hand will become disintegrated and its symmetry destroyed, but the elements of its composition remain changeless; nothing affects their elemental integrity. They cannot become non-existent; they are simply transferred from one state to another.

Through his ignorance, man fears death; but the death he shrinks from is imaginary and absolutely unreal; it is only human imagination.

The bestowal and grace of God have quickened the realm of existence with life and being. For existence there is neither change nor transformation; existence is ever existence; it can never be translated into non-existence. It is gradation; a degree below a higher degree is considered as non-existence. This dust beneath our feet, as compared with our being is non-existent. When the human body crumbles into dust we can say it has become non-existent; therefore its dust in relation to living forms of human being is as non-existent but in its own sphere it is existent, it has its mineral being. Therefore it is well proved that absolute non-existence is impossible; it is only relative.

The purpose is this;—that the everlasting bestowal of God vouchsafed to man is never subject to corruption. Inasmuch as he has endowed the phenomenal world with being, it is impossible for that world to become non-being, for it is the very genesis of God; it is in the realm of origination; it is a creational and not a subjective world, and the bounty descending upon it is continuous and permanent. Therefore man the highest creature of the phenomenal world is endowed with that continuous bounty bestowed by divine generosity without cessation. For instance, the rays of the

sun are continuous, the heat of the sun emanates from it without cessation; no discontinuance of it is conceivable. Even so the bestowal of God is descending upon the world of humanity, never ceasing, continuous, forever. If we say that the bestowal of existence ceases or falters it is equivalent to saying that the sun can exist with cessation of its effulgence. Is this possible? Therefore the effulgences of existence are ever-present and continuous.

The conception of annihilation is a factor in human degradation, a cause of human debasement and lowliness, a source of human fear and abjection. It has been conducive to the dispersion and weakening of human thought whereas the realization of existence and continuity has upraised man to sublimity of ideals, established the foundations of human progress and stimulated the development of heavenly virtues; therefore it behooves man to abandon thoughts of non-existence and death which are absolutely imaginary and see himself ever living, everlasting in the divine purpose of his creation. He must turn away from ideas which degrade the human soul, so that day by day and hour by hour he may advance upward and higher to spiritual perception of the continuity of the human reality. If he dwells upon the thought of non-existence he will become utterly incompetent; with weakened will-power his ambition for progress will be lessened and the acquisition of human virtues will cease.

Therefore you must thank God that he has bestowed upon you the blessing of life and existence in the human kingdom. Strive diligently to acquire virtues befitting your degree and station. Be as lights of the world which cannot be hid and which have no setting in horizons of darkness. Ascend to the zenith of an existence which is never beclouded by the fears and forebodings of non-existence. When man is not endowed with inner perception he is not informed of these important mysteries. The retina of outer vision though sensitive and delicate may nevertheless be a hindrance to the inner eye which alone can perceive. The bestowals of God which are manifest in all phenomenal life are sometimes hidden by intervening veils of mental and mortal vision which render man spiritually blind and incapable but when those scales are removed and the veils rent asunder, then the great signs of God will become visible and he will witness the eternal light filling the world. The bestowals of God are all and always manifest. The promises of heaven are ever present. The favors of God are all-surrounding but should the conscious eye of the soul of man remain veiled and darkened he will be led to deny these universal signs and remain deprived of these manifestations of divine bounty. Therefore we

must endeavor with heart and soul in order that the veil covering the eye of inner vision may be removed, that we may behold the manifestations of the signs of God, discern his mysterious graces, and realize that material blessings as compared with spiritual bounties are as nothing. The spiritual blessings of God are greatest. When we were in the mineral kingdom, although endowed with certain gifts and powers, they were not to be compared with the blessings of the human kingdom. In the matrix of the mother we were the recipients of endowments and blessings of God, yet these were as nothing compared to the powers and graces bestowed upon us after birth into this human world. Likewise if we are born from the matrix of this physical and phenomenal environment into the freedom and loftiness of the life and vision spiritual, we shall consider this mortal existence and its blessings as worthless by comparison.

In the spiritual world, the divine bestowals are infinite, for in that realm there is neither separation nor disintegration which characterize the world of material existence. Spiritual existence is absolute immortality, completeness and unchangeable being. Therefore we must thank God that he has created for us both material blessings and spiritual bestowals. He has given us material gifts and spiritual graces, outer sight to view the lights of the sun and inner vision by which we may perceive the glory of God. He has designed the outer ear to enjoy the melodies of sound and the inner hearing wherewith we may hear the voice of our creator. We must strive with energies of heart, soul and mind to develop and manifest the perfections and virtues latent within the realities of the phenomenal world, for the human reality may be compared to a seed. If we sow the seed, a mighty tree appears from it. The virtues of the seed are revealed in the tree; it puts forth branches, leaves, blossoms, and produces fruits. All these virtues were hidden and potential in the seed. Through the blessing and bounty of cultivation these virtues became apparent. Similarly the merciful God our creator has deposited within human realities certain virtues latent and potential. Through education and culture, these virtues deposited by the loving God will become apparent in the human reality even as the unfoldment of the tree from within the germinating seed. I will pray for you.

O thou kind Lord! These are thy servants who have gathered in this meeting, turned unto thy kingdom and are in need of thy bestowal and blessing. O thou God! Manifest and make evident the signs of thy oneness which have been deposited in all the realities of life. Reveal and unfold the virtues which thou hast made

latent and concealed in these human realities. O God! We are as plants and thy bounty is as the rain. Refresh and cause these plants to grow through thy bestowal. We are thy servants; free us from the fetters of material existence. We are ignorant; make us wise. We are dead; make us alive. We are material; endow us with spirit. We are deprived; make us the intimates of thy mysteries. We are needy; enrich and bless us from thy boundless treasury. O God! Resuscitate us, give us sight, give us hearing. Familiarize us with the mysteries of life, so that the secrets of thy kingdom may become revealed to us in this world of existence and we may confess thy oneness. Every bestowal emanates from thee; every benediction is thine. Thou art mighty! Thou art powerful! Thou art the giver and thou art the ever-bounteous!

XIII

*May 5, 1912, at Hotel Plaza, Chicago, Ill.
Children's Meeting.*

Notes by Marzieh Moss

YOU are the children of whom His Holiness Christ has said "Of such is the kingdom of God;" and according to the words of BAHÁ' ULLAH you are the very lamps or candles of the world of humanity for your hearts are exceedingly pure and your spirits most sensitive. You are near the source; you have not yet become contaminated. You are the lambs of the heavenly shepherd. You are as polished mirrors reflecting pure light. My hope is that your parents may educate you spiritually and give you thorough moral training. May you develop so that each one of you shall become imbued with all the virtues of the human world. May you advance in all degrees material and spiritual. May you become learned in sciences, acquire the arts and crafts, prove to be useful members of human society and assist the progress of human civilization. May you be a cause of the manifestation of divine bestowals; each one of you a shining star radiating the light of the oneness of humanity toward the horizons of the east and west. May you be devoted to the love and unity of mankind and through your efforts may the reality deposited in the human heart find its divine expression. I pray for you, asking the assistance and confirmation of God in your behalf.

You are all my children, my spiritual children. Spiritual children are dearer than physical children for it is possible for physical children to turn away from the spirit of God, but you are

spiritual children and therefore you are most beloved. I wish for you progress in every degree of development. May God assist you. May you be surrounded by the beneficent light of his countenance and may you attain maturity under his nurture and protection. You are all blessed.

To the Friends

I am going away but you must arise to serve the Word of God. Your hearts must be pure and your intentions sincere in order that you may become recipients of the divine bestowals. Consider that although the sun shines equally upon all things, yet in the clear mirror its reflection is most brilliant and not in the black stone. This great effulgence and heat have been produced by the crystal clearness of the glass. If there were no clearness and purity these effects would not be witnessed. Should rain fall upon salty, stony earth it will never have effect but when it falls upon good pure soil, green and verdant growth follows and fruits are produced.

This is the day when pure hearts have a portion of the everlasting bounties and sanctified souls are being illumined by the eternal manifestations. Praise be to God! you are believers in God, assured by the words of God and turning to the kingdom of God. You have heard the divine call. Your hearts are moved by the breezes of the paradise of Abha. You have good intentions, your purpose is the good-pleasure of God, you desire to serve in the kingdom of the merciful One. Therefore arise in the utmost power. Be in perfect unity. Never become angry with one another. Let your eyes be directed toward the kingdom of truth and not toward the world of creation. Love the creatures for the sake of God and not for themselves. You will never become angry or impatient if you love them for the sake of God. Humanity is not perfect. There are imperfections in every human being and you will always become unhappy if you look toward the people themselves. But if you look toward God you will love them and be kind to them, for the world of God is the world of perfection and complete mercy. Therefore do not look at the shortcomings of anybody; see with the sight of forgiveness. The imperfect eye beholds imperfections. The eye that covers faults looks toward the creator of souls. He created them, trains and provides for them, endows them with capacity and life, sight and hearing; therefore they are the signs of his grandeur. You must love and be kind to everybody, care for the poor, protect the weak, heal the sick, teach and educate the ignorant.

It is my hope that the unity and harmony of the friends in Chicago may be the cause of the unity of the friends throughout

America and that all people may become recipients of their love and kindness. May they be an example for mankind. Then the confirmations of the kingdom of Abha and the bestowals of the Sun of Reality will be all-encircling.

XIV

May 5, 1912, at Plymouth Congregational Church, 935 East 50th Street, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Marsieh Moss

I OFFER thanks to God for the privilege of being present in an assemblage which is commemorating him; whose members have no thought or intention save his good-pleasure and the unbiased investigation of reality. I praise God for this meeting of human souls free from the bondage of imitations and prejudice, willing to examine reasonably and accept that which is found to be true.

In our solar system, the center of illumination is the sun itself. Through the will of God this central luminary is the one source of the existence and development of all phenomenal things. When we observe the organisms of the material kingdoms we find that their growth and training are dependent upon the heat and light of the sun. Without this quickening impulse there would be no growth of tree or vegetation, neither would the existence of animal or human being be possible; in fact no forms of created life would be manifest upon the earth. But if we reflect deeply we will perceive that the great bestower and giver of life is God; the sun is the intermediary of his will and plan. Without the bounty of the sun therefore the world would be in darkness. All illumination of our planetary system proceeds or emanates from the solar center.

Likewise in the spiritual realm of intelligence and idealism there must be a center of illumination, and that center is the everlasting, ever-shining Sun, the Word of God. Its lights are the lights of reality which have shone upon humanity, illumining the realm of thought and morals, conferring the bounties of the divine world upon man. These lights are the cause of the education of souls and the source of the enlightenment of hearts, sending forth in effulgent radiance the message of the glad-tidings of the kingdom of God. In brief, the moral and ethical world and the world of spiritual regeneration are dependent for their progressive being upon that heavenly center of illumination. It gives forth the light of religion and bestows the life of the spirit, imbues humanity with

archetypal virtues and confers eternal splendors. This Sun of Reality, this center of effulgences is the prophet or manifestation of God. Just as the phenomenal sun shines upon the material world producing life and growth, likewise the spiritual or prophetic Sun confers illumination upon the human world of thought and intelligence, and unless it rose upon the horizon of human existence the kingdom of man would become dark and extinguished.

The Sun of Reality is one Sun but it has different dawning-places, just as the phenomenal sun is one although it appears at various points of the horizon. During the time of spring the luminary of the physical world rises far to the north of the equinoctial; in summer it dawns midway and in winter it appears in the most southerly point of its zodiacal journey. These day-springs or dawning-points differ widely but the sun is ever the same sun whether it be the phenomenal or spiritual luminary. Souls who focus their vision upon the Sun of Reality will be the recipients of light no matter from what point it rises, but those who are fettered by adoration of the dawning-point are deprived when it appears in a different station upon the spiritual horizon.

Furthermore, just as the solar cycle has its four seasons the cycle of the Sun of Reality has its distinct and successive periods. Each brings its vernal season or springtime. When the Sun of Reality returns to quicken the world of mankind a divine bounty descends from the heaven of generosity. The realm of thoughts and ideals is set in motion and blessed with new life. Minds are developed, hopes brighten, aspirations become spiritual, the virtues of the human world appear with freshened power of growth and the image and likeness of God become visible in man. It is the springtime of the inner world. After the spring, summer comes with its fullness and fruitage spiritual; autumn follows with its withering winds which chill the soul; the Sun seems to be going away until at last the mantle of winter overspreads and only faint traces of the effulgence of that divine Sun remain. Just as the surface of the material world becomes dark and dreary, the soil dormant, the trees naked and bare and no beauty or freshness remain to cheer the darkness and desolation, so the winter of the spiritual cycle witnesses the death and disappearance of divine growth and extinction of the light and love of God. But again the cycle begins and a new springtime appears. In it the former springtime has returned, the world is resuscitated, illumined and attains spirituality; religion is renewed and reorganized, hearts are turned to God, the summons of God is heard and life is again bestowed upon man. For a long time the religious world had been

weakened and materialism had advanced; the spiritual forces of life were waning, moralities were becoming degraded, composure and peace had vanished from souls and satanic qualities were dominating hearts; strife and hatred overshadowed humanity, bloodshed and violence prevailed. God was neglected; the Sun of Reality seemed to have gone completely; deprivation of the bounties of heaven was a fact; and so the season of winter fell upon mankind. But in the generosity of God a new springtime dawned, the lights of God shone forth, the effulgent Sun of Reality returned and became manifest, the realm of thoughts and kingdom of hearts became exhilarated, a new spirit of life breathed into the body of the world and continuous advancement became apparent.

I hope that the lights of the Sun of Reality will illumine the whole world so that no strife and warfare, no battles and bloodshed remain. May fanaticism and religious bigotry be unknown, all humanity enter the bond of brotherhood, souls consort in perfect agreement, the nations of earth at last hoist the banner of truth and the religions of the world enter the divine temple of oneness, for the foundations of the heavenly religions are one reality. Reality is not divisible; it does not admit multiplicity. All the holy manifestations of God have proclaimed and promulgated the same reality. They have summoned mankind to reality itself and reality is one. The clouds and mists of imitations have obscured the Sun of Truth. We must forsake these imitations, dispel these clouds and mists and free the Sun from the darkness of superstition. Then will the Sun of Truth shine most gloriously; then all the inhabitants of the world will be united, the religions will be one, sects and denominations will reconcile, all nationalities will flow together in the recognition of one fatherhood and all degrees of humankind gather in the shelter of the same tabernacle, under the same banner.

Until the heavenly civilization is founded, no result will be forthcoming from material civilization, even as you observe. See what catastrophes overwhelm mankind. Consider the wars which disturb the world. Consider the enmity and hatred. The existence of these wars and conditions indicate and prove that the heavenly civilization has not yet been established. If the civilization of the kingdom be spread to all the nations, this dust of disagreement will be dispelled, these clouds will pass away and the Sun of Reality in its greatest effulgence and glory will shine upon mankind.

O God! O thou who givest! This congregation is turning to thee, casting their glances toward thy kingdom and favor, longing

to behold the lights of thy face. O God! bless this nation. Confirm this government. Reveal thy glory unto this people and confer upon them life eternal. O God! illumine the faces, render the hearts radiant, exhilarate the breasts, crown the heads with the diadem of thy providence, cause them to soar in thy pure atmosphere so they may reach the highest pinnacles of thy splendor. Assist them in order that this world may ever find the light and effulgence of thy presence. O God! shelter this congregation and admonish this nation. Render them progressive in all degrees. May they become leaders in the world of humanity. May they be thy examples among humankind. May they be manifestations of thy grace. May they be filled with the inspiration of thy Word. Thou art the powerful! Thou art the mighty! Thou art the giver and thou art the omniscient!

XV

May 5, 1912, at All-Souls Church, Lincoln Center, Chicago, Ill.

Notes by Marziah Moss

THE divine religions were founded for the purpose of unifying humanity and establishing Universal Peace. Any movement which brings about peace and agreement in human society is truly a divine movement; any reform which causes people to come together under the shelter of the same tabernacle is surely animated by heavenly motives. At all times and in all ages of the world, religion has been a factor in cementing together the hearts of men and in uniting various and divergent creeds. It is the peace element in religion that blends mankind and makes for unity. Warfare has ever been the cause of separation, disunion and discord.

Consider how His Holiness Jesus Christ united the divergent peoples, sects and denominations of the early days. It is evident that the fundamentals of religion are intended to unify and bind together; their purpose is universal, everlasting peace. Prior to the time of His Holiness Jesus Christ, the Word of God had unified opposite types and conflicting elements of human society; and since his appearance the divine teachers of the primal principles of the law of God have all intended this universal outcome. In Persia His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH was able to unite people of varying thought, creed and denomination. The inhabitants of that country were Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, Zoroastrians and a great variety of subdivided forms and beliefs together with racial distinctions such as Semitic, Arabic, Persian, Turk, etc., but through the

power and efficacy of religion BAHÁ 'ULLAH united these differing peoples and caused them to consort together in perfect agreement. Such unity and accord became manifest among them that they were considered as one people and one kind.

The cause of this fellowship and unity lies in the fact that the divine law has two distinct aspects or functions;—one the essential or fundamental; the other the material or accidental. The first aspect of the revealed religion of God is that which concerns the ethical development and spiritual progress of mankind, the awakening of potential human susceptibilities and the descent of divine bestowals. These ordinances are changeless, essential, eternal. The second function of the divine religion deals with material conditions, the laws of human intercourse and social regulation. These are subject to change and transformation in accordance with the time, place and conditions. The essential ordinances of religion were the same during the time of Abraham, the day of Moses and the cycle of Jesus; but the accidental or material laws were abrogated and superseded according to the exigency and requirement of each succeeding age. For example, in the law of Moses there were ten distinct commandments in regard to murder which were revealed according to the requirement and capacity of the people; but in the day of Jesus these were abrogated and superseded in conformity with the changed and advanced human conditions.

The central purpose of the divine religions is the establishment of peace and unity among mankind. Their reality is one, therefore their accomplishment is one and universal whether it be through the essential or material ordinances of God. There is but one light of the material sun, one ocean, one rain, one atmosphere. Similarly, in the spiritual world there is one divine reality forming the center and altruistic basis for peace and reconciliation among various and conflicting nations and peoples. Consider how the Roman empire and Greek nation were at war in enmity and hatred after the Messianic day; how the hostilities of Egypt and Assyria though subdued in intensity still flamed in the warring element of these ancient and declining nations; but the teachings of His Holiness Jesus Christ proved to be the cement by which they were united; warfare ceased, strife and hatred passed away and these belligerent peoples associated in love and friendship. For strife and warfare are the very destroyers of human foundations whereas peace and amity are the builders and safeguards of human welfare. As an instance, two nations which have remained at peace for centuries declare war against each other. What destruction and loss befalls both in one year of strife and conflict; the undoing of centuries.

How urgent their necessity and demand for peace with its comfort and progress instead of war which blasts and destroys the foundation of all human attainment.

The body-politic may be likened to the human organism. As long as the various members and parts of that organism are coordinated and cooperating in harmony we have as a result the expression of life in its fullest degree. When these members lack coordination and harmony we have the reverse which in the human organism is disease, dissolution, death. Similarly, in the body-politic of humanity, dissension, discord and warfare are always destructive and inevitably fatal. All created beings are dependent upon peace and coordination, for every contingent and phenomenal being is a composition of distinct elements. As long as there is affinity and cohesion among these constituent elements strength and life are manifest but when dissension and repulsion arise among them, disintegration follows. This is proof that peace and amity which God has willed for his children are the saving factors of human society whereas war and strife which violate his ordinances are the cause of death and destruction. Therefore God has sent his prophets to announce the message of good-will, peace and life to the world of mankind.

Inasmuch as the essential reality of the religions is one and their seeming variance and plurality is adherence to forms and imitations which have arisen, it is evident that these causes of difference and divergence must be abandoned in order that the underlying reality may unite mankind in its enlightenment and upbuilding. All who hold fast to the one reality will be in agreement and unity. Then shall the religions summon people to the oneness of the world of humanity and to universal justice; then will they proclaim equality of rights and exhort men to virtue and to faith in the loving mercy of God. The underlying foundation of the religions is one; there is no intrinsic difference between them. Therefore if the essential and fundamental ordinances of the religions be observed, peace and unity will dawn and all the differences of sects and denominations will disappear.

And now let us consider the various peoples of the world. All the nations,—American, British, French, Germans, Turks, Persians, Arabs are children of the same Adam, members of the same human household. Why should dissension exist among them? The surface of the earth is one nativity and that nativity was provided for all. God has not set these boundaries and race limitations. Why should imaginary barriers which God has not originally destined, be made a cause of contention? God has created and provided for all. He

is the preserver of all, and all are submerged in the ocean of his mercy. Not a single soul is deprived. Inasmuch as we have such a loving God and creator why should we be at war with each other? Now that his light is shining universally why should we cast ourselves into darkness? As his table is spread for all his children why should we deprive each other of its sustenance? His effulgence is shining upon all why should we seek to live among the shadows? There is no doubt that the only cause is ignorance and that the result is perdition. Discord deprives humanity of the eternal favors of God; therefore we must forget all imaginary causes of difference and seek the very fundamentals of the divine religions in order that we may associate in perfect love and accord, consider humankind as one family, the surface of the earth as one nationality and all races as one humanity. Let us live under the protection of God, attaining eternal happiness in this world and life everlasting in the world to come.

O thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same original parents. Thou hast intended that all belong to the same household. In thy holy presence they are thy servants and all mankind are sheltered beneath thy tabernacle. All have gathered at thy table of bounty and are radiant through the light of thy providence. O God! Thou art kind to all, thou hast provided for all, thou dost shelter all, thou dost confer life upon all. Thou hast endowed all with talents and faculties; all are submerged in the ocean of thy mercy. O thou kind Lord! unite all, let the religions agree, make the nations one so that they may be as one kind and as children of the same fatherland. May they associate in unity and concord. O God! upraise the standard of the oneness of humankind. O God! establish the "Most Great Peace." Cement the hearts together, O God! O thou kind father, God! exhilarate the hearts through the fragrance of thy love; brighten the eyes through the light of thy guidance; cheer the hearing with the melodies of thy Word and shelter us in the cave of thy providence. Thou art the mighty and powerful! Thou art the forgiving and thou art the one who overlookest the shortcomings of humankind.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in Cleveland.

May 6, 1912, at Euclid Hall, Cleveland, Ohio.

From Stenographic Notes

THIS is a very joyous evening, an evidence in itself of the possibility of uniting the east and the west; an eastern man appearing before an assemblage of reverent western people. The east and west, the Orient and Occident shall be united. If we search history we shall not find the record of such an occasion where one has traveled from the far east to the far west to address a meeting of this universal character. This is a miracle of the twentieth century which proves that the seemingly impossible may become real and possible in the kingdom of man. Praise be to God! the dark ages have disappeared and the age of light has at last arrived. The Sun of Reality has dawned with supreme effulgence, the realities of things have become manifest and renewed, the mysteries of the unknown have been revealed and great inventions and discoveries mark this period as a most wonderful age.

Through the ingenuity and inventions of man it is possible to cross the wide oceans, fly through the air and travel in submarine depths. At any moment the Orient and Occident can communicate with each other. Trains speed across the continents. The human voice has been arrested and reproduced and now man can speak at long distances from any point. These are some of the signs of this glorious century. The great progress mentioned has taken place in the material world. Remarkable signs and evidences have become manifest. Hidden realities and mysteries have been disclosed. This is the time for man to strive and put forth his greatest efforts in spiritual directions. Material civilization has reached an advanced plane but now there is need of spiritual civilization. Material civilization alone will not satisfy; it cannot meet the conditions and requirements of the present age. Its benefits are limited to the world of matter. There is no limitation to the spirit of man, for spirit in itself is progressive and if the divine civilization be established the spirit of man will advance. Every developed susceptibility will increase the effectiveness of man. Discoveries of the real, will become more and more possible and the influence of divine guidance will be increasingly recognized. All this is conducive to the divine form of civilization. This is what is meant

in the bible by the descent of the New Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem is none other than the divine civilization, and it is now ready. It is to be and shall be organized and the oneness of humankind will be a visible fact. Humanity will then be brought together as one. The various religions will be united and different races be known as one kind. The Orient and Occident will be conjoined and the banner of international peace will be unfurled. The world shall at last find peace and the equalities and rights of men shall be established. The capacity of humankind will be tested and a degree shall be attained where equality is a reality.

All the peoples of the world will enjoy like interests and the poor shall possess a portion of the comforts of life. Just as the rich are surrounded by their luxuries in palaces the poor will have at least their comfortable and pleasant places of abode; and just as the wealthy enjoy a variety of food the needy shall have their necessities and no longer live in poverty. In short, a readjustment of the economic order will come about, the divine sonship will attract, the Sun of Reality will shine forth and all phenomenal being will attain a portion.

Consider; what is this material civilization of the day giving forth? Has it not produced the instruments of warfare and destruction? In olden times the weapon of war was the sword; today it is the smokeless gun. Warships a century ago were sailing vessels; now we have dreadnoughts. Instruments and means of human destruction have enormously multiplied in this era of material civilization. But if material civilization shall become organized in conjunction with divine civilization, if the man of moral integrity and intellectual acumen shall unite for human betterment and uplift with the man of spiritual capacity, the happiness and progress of the human race will be assured. All the nations of the world will then be closely related and companionable, the religions will merge into one, for the divine reality within them all is one reality. His Holiness Abraham proclaimed this reality, Jesus promulgated it; all the prophets who have appeared in the world have founded their teachings upon it. Therefore the people of the world have this one true unchangeable basis for peace and agreement, and war which has raged for thousands of years will pass away.

For centuries and cycles humanity has been engaged in war and conflict. At one time the pretext for war has been religion, at another time patriotism, racial prejudice, national politics, territorial conquest or commercial expansion; in brief, humanity has never been at peace during the period of known history. What

blood has been shed! How many fathers have mourned the loss of sons; how many sons have wept for fathers, and mothers for dear ones! Human beings have been the food and targets of the battle-field, and everywhere warfare and strife have been the theme and burden of history. Ferocity has characterized men even more than animals. The lion, tiger, bear and wolf are ferocious because of their needs. Unless they are fierce, cruel and unrelenting they will die of starvation. The lion cannot graze; its teeth are fitted only for food of flesh. This is also true of other wild animals. Ferocity is natural to them as their means of subsistence; but human ferocity proceeds from selfishness, greed and oppression. It springs from no natural necessity. Man needlessly kills a thousand fellow-creatures, becomes a hero and is glorified through centuries of posterity. A great city is destroyed in one day by a commanding general. How ignorant, how inconsistent is humankind! If a man slays another man, we brand him as a murderer and criminal and sentence him to capital punishment but if he kills one hundred thousand men he is a military genius, a great celebrity, a Napoleon idolized by his nation. If a man steals one dollar he is called a thief and put into prison; if he rapes and pillages an innocent country by military invasion he is crowned a hero. How ignorant is humankind! Ferocity does not belong to the kingdom of man. It is the province of man to confer life not death. It behooves him to be the cause of human welfare but inasmuch as he glories in the savagery of animalism it is an evidence that divine civilization has not been established in human society. Material civilization has advanced unmistakably but because it is not associated with divine civilization, evil and wickedness abound. In ancient times if two nations were at war twelve months, not over twenty thousand men would be killed; now the instruments of death have become so multiplied and perfected that one hundred thousand can be destroyed in a day. In three months during the Russian-Japanese war one million perished. This was undreamed of in former cycles. The cause is the absence of divine civilization.

This revered American nation presents evidences of greatness and worth. It is my hope that this just government will stand for peace so that warfare may be abolished throughout the world and the standards of national unity and reconciliation be upraised. This is the greatest attainment of the world of humanity. This American nation is equipped and empowered to accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the envy of the world and be blest in the east and the west for the triumph of its

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democracy. I pray that this may come to pass and I ask the blessing of God in behalf of you all.

II

May 6, 1912, at Sanatorium of Dr. C. M. Swingle, Cleveland, Ohio.

Notes by Sigel T. Brooks

THIS is a beautiful city; the climate is pleasant, the views are charming. All the cities of America seem to be large and beautiful and the people appear prosperous. The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement; its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching and it will lead all nations spiritually. The flag of freedom and banner of liberty have been unfurled here but the prosperity and advancement of a city, the happiness and greatness of a country depend upon its hearing and obeying the call of God. The light of reality must shine therein and divine civilization be founded; then the radiance of the kingdom will be diffused and heavenly influences surround. Material civilization is likened to the body whereas divine civilization is the spirit in that body. A body not manifesting the spirit is dead; a fruitless tree is worthless. Jesus declares that there is spiritual capacity in some people; for all are not submerged in the sea of materialism. They seek the divine spirit, they turn to God, they long for the kingdom. It is my hope that these revered people present may attain both material and spiritual progress. As they have advanced wonderfully in material degrees so may they likewise advance in spiritual development until the body shall become refined and beautiful through the wealth of spiritual potentiality and efficiency.

Praise be to God! the Sun of Reality has dawned and its effulgences are shining from all horizons. The signs of God are resplendent and the teachings of the heavenly messengers are being spread. May the hearts be directed to the kingdom of God and become illuminated by witnessing the lights of God in order that all created beings may obtain a portion of the divine bestowals. May the spirit of life be restored through the divine graces of the Almighty and may the east and west be bound together. May oneness and harmony become manifest in all regions. May the people of the world become as one family and obtain the everlasting bounty. May the doors of the kingdom be opened from all directions and the praise of the name Abha be heard throughout the earth.

Discourse of Abdul Baha delivered in Pittsburgh.

May 7, 1912, at Hotel Schenley, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Notes by Susanne Beatty

I HAVE come from the Orient to visit your country. Surely this continent is praiseworthy from all points of view and there are signs of prosperity everywhere. The people show refinement, and evidences of progressive civilization abound. I will give you a brief exposition of the fundamental principles of BAHÁ 'ULLAH's teachings in order that you may be informed of the nature and significance of the Bahai movement.

About sixty years ago the greatest enmity and strife existed among the various peoples and religious denominations of Persia. Throughout the world generally, war and dissension prevailed. At this time His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared in Persia and began devoting himself to the uplift and education of the people. He united divergent sects and creeds, removed religious, racial, patriotic and political prejudices and established a strong bond of unity and reconciliation among varying degrees and classes of mankind. The enmity then existing among the people was so bitter and intense that even ordinary association was out of the question. They would not meet and consult with each other at all. Through the power of the teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLAH the most wonderful results were witnessed. He removed the prejudices and hatred from human hearts and wrought such transformation in their attitudes toward each other that today in Persia there is perfect accord among hitherto bigoted religionists, varying sects and divergent classes. This was not an easy accomplishment, for BAHÁ 'ULLAH underwent severe trials, great difficulties and violent persecution. He was imprisoned, tortures were inflicted upon him and finally he was banished from his native land. He bore every ordeal and infliction cheerfully. In his successive exiles from country to country up to the time of his ascension from this world, he was enabled to promulgate his teachings even from prison. Wherever his oppressors sent him he hoisted the standard of the oneness of the world of humanity and promulgated the principles of the unity of mankind. Some of these principles are as follows: First; it is incumbent upon all mankind to investigate truth. If such investigation be made, all should agree and be united, for

truth or reality is not multiple; it is not divisible. The different religions have one truth underlying them; therefore their reality is one.

Each of the divine religions embodies two kinds of ordinances. The first are those which concern spiritual susceptibilities, the development of moral principles and the quickening of the conscience of man. These are essential or fundamental, one and the same in all religions, changeless and eternal, reality not subject to transformation. His Holiness Abraham heralded this reality, His Holiness Moses promulgated it and His Holiness Jesus Christ established it in the world of mankind. All the divine prophets and messengers were the instruments and channels of this same eternal, essential truth.

The second kind of ordinances in the divine religions are those which relate to the material affairs of humankind. These are the material or accidental laws which are subject to change in each day of manifestation, according to exigencies of the time, conditions and differing capacities of humanity. For instance, in the day of Moses ten commandments in regard to murder were revealed by him. These commandments were in accordance with the requirements of that day and time. Other laws embodying drastic punishments were enacted by Moses; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. The penalty for theft was amputation of the hand. These laws and penalties were applicable to the degree of the Israelitish people of that period who dwelt in the wilderness and desert under conditions where severity was necessary and justifiable. But in the time of Jesus Christ this kind of law was not expedient, therefore His Holiness abrogated and superseded the commands of Moses.

In brief; every one of the divine religions contains essential ordinances which are not subject to change, and material ordinances which are abrogated according to the exigencies of time. But the people of the world have forsaken the divine teachings and followed forms and imitations of the truth. Inasmuch as these human interpretations and superstitions differ, dissensions and bigotry have arisen and strife and warfare have prevailed. By investigating the truth or foundation of reality underlying their own and other beliefs, all would be united and agreed, for this reality is one; it is not multiple and not divisible.

The second principle or teaching of BAHÁ'ULLAH is the proclamation of the oneness of the world of humanity; that all are servants of God and belong to one family; that God has created all therefore his bestowals are universal; and that his providence, training, sustenance and loving-kindness surround all mankind.

This is the divine policy and it is impossible for man to lay the foundation of a better plan and policy than that which God has instituted. Therefore we must recognize and assist the purpose of the glorious Lord. Inasmuch as God is kind and loving to all why should we be unkind? As this human world is one household why should its members be occupied with animosity and contention? Therefore humanity must be looked upon with the eye of equal estimate and in the same attitude of love. The noblest of men is he who serves humankind, and he is nearest the threshold of God who is the least of his servants. The glory and majesty of man are dependent upon his servitude to his fellow-creatures and not upon the exercise of hostility and hatred.

The third principle or teaching of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH is the oneness of religion and science. Any religious belief which is not conformable with scientific proof and investigation is superstition, for true science is reason and reality, and religion is essentially reality and pure reason; therefore the two must correspond. Religious teaching which is at variance with science and reason is human invention and imagination unworthy of acceptance, for the antithesis and opposite of knowledge is superstition born of the ignorance of man. If we say religion is opposed to science we either lack knowledge of true science or true religion, for both are founded upon the premises and conclusions of reason and both must bear its test.

The fourth principle or teaching of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH is the readjustment and equalization of the economic standards of mankind. This deals with the question of human livelihood. It is evident that under present systems and conditions of government the poor are subject to the greatest need and distress while others more fortunate live in luxury and plenty far beyond their actual necessities. This inequality of portion and privilege is one of the deep and vital problems of human society. That there is need of an equalization and apportionment by which all may possess the comforts and privileges of life is evident. The remedy must be legislative readjustment of conditions. The rich too must be merciful to the poor, contributing from willing hearts to their needs without being forced or compelled to do so. The composure of the world will be assured by the establishment of this principle in the religious life of mankind.

The fifth principle or teaching of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH is the abandoning of religious, racial, patriotic and political prejudices which destroy the foundations of human society. All mankind are creatures and servants of the one God. The surface of the earth

is one home; humanity is one family and household. Distinctions and boundaries are artificial, human. Why should there be discord and strife among men? All must become united and coordinated in service to the world of humanity.

The sixth principle or teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH concerns the equality of man and woman. He has declared that in the estimation of God there is no distinction of sex. The one whose heart is most pure, whose deeds and service in the cause of God are greater and nobler is most acceptable before the divine threshold, whether male or female. In the vegetable and animal kingdoms sex exists in perfect equality and without distinction or invidious estimate. The animal although inferior to man in intelligence and reason recognizes sex equality. Why should man who is endowed with the sense of justice and sensibilities of conscience be willing that one of the members of the human family should be rated and considered as subordinate? Such differentiation is neither intelligent nor conscientious; therefore the principle of religion has been revealed by BAHA 'ULLAH that woman must be given the privilege of equal education with man and full right to his prerogatives. That is to say, there must be no difference in the education of male and female, in order that womankind may develop equal capacity and importance with man in the social and economic equation. Then the world will attain unity and harmony. In past ages humanity has been defective and inefficient because incomplete. War and its ravages have blighted the world. The education of woman will be a mighty step toward its abolition and ending for she will use her whole influence against war. Woman rears the child and educates the youth to maturity. She will refuse to give her sons for sacrifice upon the field of battle. In truth she will be the greatest factor in establishing Universal Peace and international arbitration. Assuredly woman will abolish warfare among mankind. Inasmuch as human society consists of two factors, the male and female, each the complement of the other, the happiness and stability of humanity cannot be assured unless both are perfected. Therefore the standard and status of man and woman must become equalized.

Among other teachings and principles BAHA 'ULLAH counsels the education of all members of society. No individual should be denied or deprived of intellectual training although each should receive according to capacity. None must be left in the grades of ignorance, for ignorance is a defect in the human world. All mankind must be given a knowledge of science and philosophy; that is, as much as may be deemed necessary. All cannot be scientists

and philosophers but each should be educated according to his needs and deserts.

BAHA 'ULLAH teaches that the world of humanity is in need of the breath of the Holy Spirit, for in spiritual quickening and enlightenment true oneness is attained with God and man. The "Most Great Peace" cannot be assured through racial force and effort; it cannot be established by patriotic devotion and sacrifice; for nations differ widely and local patriotism has limitations. Furthermore, it is evident that political power and diplomatic ability are not conducive to universal agreement, for the interests of governments are varied and selfish; nor will international harmony and reconciliation be an outcome of human opinions concentrated upon it, for opinions are faulty and intrinsically diverse. Universal Peace is an impossibility through human and material agencies; it must be through spiritual power. There is need of a universal impelling force which will establish the oneness of humanity and destroy the foundations of war and strife. No other than the divine power can do this; therefore it will be accomplished through the breath of the Holy Spirit.

No matter how far the material world advances it cannot establish the happiness of mankind. Only when material and spiritual civilization are linked and coordinated will happiness be assured. Then material civilization will not contribute its energies to the forces of evil in destroying the oneness of humanity, for in material civilization good and evil advance together and maintain the same pace. For example, consider the material progress of man in the last decade. Schools and colleges, hospitals, philanthropic institutions, scientific academies and temples of philosophy have been founded, but hand in hand with these evidences of development, the invention and production of means and weapons for human destruction have correspondingly increased. In early days the weapon of war was the sword; now it is the magazine rifle. Among the ancients men fought with javelins and daggers; now they employ shells and bombs. Dreadnoughts are built, torpedoes invented and every few days a new ammunition is forthcoming.

All this is the outcome of material civilization; therefore although material advancement furthers good purposes in life, at the same time it serves evil ends. The divine civilization is good because it cultivates morals. Consider what the prophets of God have contributed to human morality. His Holiness Jesus Christ summoned all to the "Most Great Peace" through the acquisition of pure morals. If the moral precepts and foundations

of divine civilization become united with the material advancement of man, there is no doubt that the happiness of the human world will be attained and from every direction the glad-tidings of peace upon earth will be announced. Then humankind will achieve extraordinary progress, the sphere of human intelligence will be immeasurably enlarged, wonderful inventions will appear and the spirit of God will reveal itself; all men will consort in joy and fragrance, and life eternal will be conferred upon the children of the kingdom. Then will the power of the divine make itself effective and the breath of the Holy Spirit penetrate the essence of all things. Therefore the material and the divine or merciful civilizations must progress together until the highest aspirations and desires of humanity shall become realized.

These are a few of the teachings and principles of BAHÁ 'ULLAH briefly presented so that you may be informed of their significance and purpose and find them a stimulus to your knowledge and action. I ask God to assist this prosperous and progressive nation and to bestow his blessings upon this just government and wonderful continent of the west.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in New York, Montclair and Jersey City.

May 11, 1912, at 227 Riverside Drive, New York.

Notes by John G. Grundy

IT IS only three weeks that we have been away from the New York friends, yet so great has been the longing to see you that it seems like three months. We have had no rest by day or night since we left you; either traveling, moving about or speaking; yet it was all so pleasantly done and we have been most happy. Praise be to God! everywhere and all the time it has been "harakat," "harakat," "harakat" ("motion," "motion," "motion").

The friends in America are very good. All the people we have met here are kind and pleasant. They are polite and not antagonistic although somewhat inquisitive. A small minority of them seem prejudiced, yet even these have their good points. The American people have a real love for advancement. They are not content to stand still. They are most energetic and progressive. When you see a tree growing and developing be hopeful of its outcome. It will blossom and bear fruit eventually. If you see dry wood or old trees, there is no hope whatever of fruitage.

The questions asked us have been opportune and to the point. Our answers have not been utilized for controversy and argument. We met savants and learned men and satisfied them with our explanations. Important people expressed their satisfaction and pleasure at our replies to their inquiries. In brief, it would be difficult to find in the aggregate of people we met, any one who was dissatisfied. Some scholastic minds aimed only at fruitless discussion. In Chicago we met two clergymen,—delivering an address at the church of one and having dinner with the other. Both manifested great love. Likewise among all the people we met, not a single soul arose in opposition or went away disappointed.

Yesterday in Washington we met a group of important people. One prominent in political circles came with a justice of the supreme court. There were many ladies of the diplomatic circle present. After we had spoken, the politician referred to raised the point that the foundation of all religions from time immemorial had been peace, love and accord,—principles conducive to fellowship and unification,—yet Jesus, he declared had been "the cause of discord and strife and not a factor in the realization of unity."

"Therefore," he said "I cannot accept your statements and explanations that religion has been the source of human betterment." After we explained further he said "What you have stated may cause me to change my views and agree with you." During this time the justice remained silent. Fearing he might have some feeling of dissatisfaction we asked if anything presented had been objectionable to his opinion. He replied "Not at all! Not at all! It's all right! It's all right!" This is the characteristic expression of the Occident,—"All right!" "All right!"

There were also present at this meeting several cabinet officers, United States senators, many from the foreign diplomatic service, army and navy officials and other dignitaries. The servant of God, our hostess, experienced much trouble in preparation and entertainment but was always active and energetic in service, inviting important and influential people to the gatherings. We spoke to all from their own standpoints with most satisfactory results; working day and night, so there was very little time for individual and private interviews.

In Washington too, we called a meeting of the colored and white people. The attendance was very large, the colored people predominating. At our second gathering this was reversed but at the third meeting we were unable to say which color predominated. These meetings were a great practical lesson upon the unity of colors and races in the Bahai teaching.

We said in part: The black man must ever be grateful to the white man for he has manifested great courage and self-sacrifice in behalf of the colored race. Four years he fought their cause, enduring severe hardships, sacrificing life, family, treasure, all for his black brother until the great war ended in the proclamation of freedom. By this effort and accomplishment the black race throughout the world was influenced and benefited. Had this not been accomplished the black man in Africa would still be bound by the chains of slavery. Therefore his race should everywhere be grateful, for no greater evidence of humanism and courageous devotion could be shown than the white man has displayed. If the colored people of the United States forget this sacrifice, zeal and manhood on the part of the whites no ingratitude could be greater or more censurable. If they could see the wretched conditions and surroundings of the black people of Africa today, the contrast would be apparent and the fact clearly evident that the colored race in America enjoys incomparable advantages. The comfort and civilization under which they live here are due to the white man's effort and sacrifice. Had this sacrifice not been made they

would still be in the bonds and chains of slavery, scarcely lifted out of an aboriginal condition. Therefore always show forth your gratitude to the white man. Eventually all differences will disappear and you will completely win his friendship.

God makes no distinction between the white and black. If the hearts are pure both are acceptable before him. God is no respecter of persons on account of color or race. All colors are acceptable to him, be they white, black or yellow. Inasmuch as all were created in the image of God we must bring ourselves to realize that all embody divine possibilities. If you go into a garden and find all the flowers alike in form, species and color, the effect is wearisome to the eye. The garden is more beautiful when the flowers are many colored and different; the variety lends charm and adornment. In a flock of doves some are white, some black, red, blue, yet they make no distinction among themselves. All are doves no matter what the color.

This variety in forms and colorings which is manifest in all the kingdoms is according to creative wisdom and has divine purpose. Nevertheless, whether the creatures be all alike or all different should not be the cause of strife and quarreling among them. Especially why should man find cause for discord in the color or race of his fellow-creature? No educated or illumined mind will allow that this differentiation and discord should exist or that there is any ground for it. Therefore the whites should be just and kind to the colored people who in turn should reflect an equal measure of appreciation and gratitude. Then will the world become as one great garden of flowering humanity, variegated and multi-colored, rivaling each other only in the virtues and graces which are spiritual.

II

May 12, 1912, at Unity Church, Montclair, N. J.

Notes by Esther Foster

I WISH to speak upon the subject of "Divine Unity," the "Oneness of God," before this revered assemblage.

It is a self-evident fact that phenomenal existence can never grasp nor comprehend the ancient and essential reality. Utter weakness cannot understand absolute strength. When we view the world of creation we discover differences in degree which make it impossible for the lower to comprehend the higher. For example, the mineral kingdom, no matter how much it may advance can

never comprehend the phenomena of the vegetable kingdom. Whatever development the vegetable may attain, it can have no message from nor come in touch with the kingdom of the animal. However perfect may be the growth of a tree it cannot realize the sensation of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch; these are beyond its limitation. Although it is the possessor of existence in the world of creation, a tree nevertheless has no knowledge of the superior degree of the animal kingdom. Likewise no matter how great the advancement of the animal it can have no idea of the human plane; no knowledge of intellect and spirit. Difference in degree is an obstacle to this comprehension. A lower degree cannot comprehend a higher although all are in the same world of creation, whether mineral, vegetable or animal. Degree is the barrier and limitation. In the human plane of existence we can say we have knowledge of a vegetable, its qualities and product, but the vegetable has no knowledge or comprehension whatever of us. No matter how near perfection this rose may advance in its own sphere it can never possess hearing and sight. Inasmuch as in the creational world which is phenomenal, difference of degree is an obstacle or hindrance to comprehension, how can the human being which is a created exigency comprehend the ancient divine reality which is essential? This is impossible because the reality of divinity is sanctified beyond the comprehension of the created being man.

Furthermore, that which man can grasp is finite to man, and man to it is as infinite. Is it possible then for the reality of divinity to be finite and the human creature infinite? On the contrary the reverse is true; the human is finite while the essence of divinity is infinite. Whatever comes within the sphere of human comprehension must be limited and finite. As the essence of divinity transcends the comprehension of man, therefore God brings forth certain manifestations of the divine reality upon whom he bestows heavenly effulgences in order that they may be intermediaries between humanity and himself. These holy manifestations or prophets of God are as mirrors which have acquired illumination from the Sun of Truth, but the Sun does not descend from its high zenith and does not effect entrance within the mirror. In truth this mirror has attained complete polish and purity until the utmost capacity of reflection has been developed in it, therefore the Sun of Reality with its fullest effulgence and splendor is revealed therein. These mirrors are earthly whereas the reality of divinity is in its highest apogee. Although its lights are shining and its heat is manifest in them, although these mirrors are telling their story of its effulgence, the Sun nevertheless remains in its own

lofty station; it does not descend, it does not effect entrance, because it is holy and sanctified.

The Sun of Divinity and of Reality has revealed itself in various mirrors. Though these mirrors are many, yet the Sun is one. The bestowals of God are one; the reality of the divine religion is one. Consider how the one and same light has reflected itself in the different mirrors or manifestations of it. There are certain souls who are lovers of the Sun; they perceive the effulgence of the Sun from every mirror. They are not fettered or attached to the mirrors; they are attached to the Sun itself and adore it no matter from what point it may shine. But those who adore the mirror and are attached to it, become deprived of witnessing the light of the Sun when it shines forth from another mirror. For instance, the Sun of Reality revealed itself from the Mosaic mirror. The people who were sincere accepted and believed in it. When the same Sun shone from the Messianic mirror, the Jews who were not lovers of the Sun and who were fettered by their adoration of the mirror of Moses did not perceive the lights and effulgences of the Sun of Reality resplendent in Jesus, therefore they were deprived of its bestowals. Yet the Sun of Reality, the Word of God shone from the Messianic mirror through the wonderful channel of Jesus Christ more fully and more wonderfully. Its effulgences were manifestly radiant but even to this day the Jews are holding to the Mosaic mirror. Therefore they are bereft of witnessing the lights of eternity in Jesus.

In brief; the sun is one sun, the light is one light which shines upon all phenomenal being. Every creature has a portion thereof, but the pure mirror can reveal the story of its bounty more fully and completely. Therefore we must adore the light of the Sun no matter through what mirror it may be revealed. We must not entertain prejudice, for prejudice is an obstacle to realization. Inasmuch as the effulgence is one effulgence, the human realities must all become recipients of the same light, recognizing in it the compelling force that unites them in its illumination.

As this is the radiant century, it is my hope that the Sun of Truth may illumine all humanity. May the eyes be opened and the ears become attentive; may souls become resuscitated and consort together in the utmost harmony as recipients of the same light. Perchance God will remove this strife and warfare of thousands of years. May this bloodshed pass away, this tyranny and oppression cease, this warfare be ended. May the light of love shine forth and illumine hearts and may human lives be cemented and connected until all of us may find agreement and tranquillity beneath the

same tabernacle, and with the standard of the "Most Great Peace" above us move steadily onward.

O kind Lord! Thou who art generous and merciful! We are the servants of thy threshold and we are under the protection of thy mercy. The Sun of thy providence is shining upon all and the clouds of thy mercy shower upon all. Thy gifts encompass all, thy providence sustains all, thy protection overshadows all and the glances of thy favor illumine all. O Lord! grant unto us thine infinite bestowals and let thy light of guidance shine. Illumine the eyes, make joyous the souls and confer a new spirit upon the hearts. Give them eternal life. Open the doors of thy knowledge; let the light of faith shine. Unite and bring mankind into one shelter beneath the banner of thy protection so that they may become as waves of one sea, as leaves and branches of one tree, and may assemble beneath the shadow of the same tent. May they drink from the same fountain. May they be refreshed by the same breezes. May they obtain illumination from the same source of light and life. Thou art the giver, the merciful!

III

*May 12, 1912, at Grace Methodist Episcopal Church,
West 104th St., New York.
Meeting of International Peace Forum.*

Notes by Esther Foster

WHEN we review history from the beginning down to the present day we find that strife and warfare have prevailed throughout the human world. Wars, religious, racial or political have arisen from human ignorance, misunderstanding and lack of education. We will first consider religious strife and conflict.

It is evident that the divine prophets have appeared in the world to establish love and agreement among mankind. They have been the shepherds and not the wolves. The shepherd comes forth to gather and lead his flock and not to disperse them by creating strife. Every divine shepherd has assembled a flock which had formerly been scattered. Among the shepherds was His Holiness Moses. At a time when the tribes of Israel were wandering and dispersed, he assembled, united and educated them to higher degrees of capacity and progress until they passed out of the wilderness of discipline into the holy land of possession. He transformed their degradation into glory, changed their poverty into wealth and replaced their vices by virtues until they rose to such a zenith that the splendor of the sovereignty of Solomon was

made possible and the fame of their civilization extended to the east and the west. It is evident therefore that His Holiness was a divine shepherd for he gathered the tribes of Israel together and united them in the power and strength of a great nationhood.

When the Messianic star of Jesus Christ dawned, he declared he had come to gather together the lost tribes or scattered sheep of Moses. He not only shepherded the flock of Israel, but brought together people of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, ancient Assyria and Phoenicia. These people were in a state of utmost hostility, thirsting for the blood of each other with the ferocity of animals; but His Holiness Jesus Christ brought them together, cemented and united them in his cause and established such a bond of love among them that enmity and warfare were abandoned. It is evident therefore that the divine teachings are intended to create a bond of unity in the human world and establish the foundations of love and fellowship among mankind. Divine religion is not a cause for discord and disagreement. If religion becomes the source of antagonism and strife, the absence of religion is to be preferred. Religion is meant to be the quickening life of the body-politic; if it be the cause of death to humanity, its non-existence would be a blessing and benefit to man. Therefore in this day the divine teachings must be sought, for they are the remedies for the present conditions of the world of humanity. The purpose of a remedy is to heal and cure. If it be productive of worse symptoms its absence or discontinuance is preferable.

At a time when the Arabian tribes and nomadic peoples were widely separated, living in the deserts under lawless conditions, strife and bloodshed continual among them, no tribe free from the menace of attack and destruction by another,—at such a critical time Mohammed appeared. He gathered these wild tribes of the desert together, reconciled, united and caused them to agree so that enmity and warfare ceased. The Arabian nation immediately advanced until its dominion extended westward to Spain and Andalusia.

From these facts and premises we may conclude that the establishing of the divine religions is for peace, not for war and the shedding of blood. Inasmuch as all are founded upon one reality which is love and unity, the wars and dissensions which have characterized the history of religion have been due to imitations and superstitions which arise afterward. Religion is reality and reality is one. The fundamentals of the religion of God are therefore one in reality. There is neither difference nor change in the fundamentals. Variance is caused by blind imitations, prejudices and

adherence to forms which appear later, and inasmuch as these differ, discord and strife result. If the religions of the world would forsake these causes of difficulty and seek the fundamentals, all would agree, and strife and dissension would pass away; for religion and reality are one and not multiple.

Other wars are caused by purely imaginary racial differences; for humanity is one kind, one race and progeny inhabiting the same globe. In the creative plan there is no racial distinction and separation such as Frenchman, Englishman, American, German, Italian or Spaniard; all belong to one household. These boundaries and distinctions are human and artificial, not natural and original. All mankind are the fruits of one tree, flowers of the same garden, waves of one sea. In the animal kingdom no such distinction and separation are observed. The sheep of the east and the sheep of the west would associate peacefully. The oriental flock would not look surprised as if saying "These are sheep of the Occident; they do not belong to our country." All would gather in harmony and enjoy the same pasture without evidence of local or racial distinction. The birds of different countries mingle in friendliness. We find these virtues in the animal kingdom. Shall man deprive himself of these virtues? Man is endowed with superior reasoning power and the faculty of perception; he is the manifestation of divine bestowals. Shall racial ideas prevail and obscure the creative purpose of unity in his kingdom? Shall he say "I am a German," "I am a Frenchman," or an "Englishman" and declare war because of this imaginary and human distinction? God forbid! This earth is one household and the nativity of all humanity; therefore the human race should ignore distinctions and boundaries which are artificial and conducive to disagreement and hostility. We have come from the east. Praise be to God! we find this continent prosperous, the climate salubrious and delightful, the inhabitants genial and courteous, the government equable and just. Shall we entertain any other thought and feeling than that of love for you? Shall we say "This is not our native land therefore everything is objectionable?" This would be gross ignorance to which man must not subject himself. Man is endowed with powers to investigate reality, and the reality is that humanity is one in kind and equal in the creative plan. Therefore false distinctions of race and nativity which are factors and causes of warfare must be abandoned.

Consider what is happening in Tripoli; how the poor are being killed and the blood of the helpless is being shed upon both sides; children made fatherless, fathers lamenting the death of their sons,

mothers bewailing the loss of dear ones. And what is the benefit after all? Nothing conceivable. Is it therefore justifiable? The domestic animals do not manifest hatred and cruelty toward each other; that is the attribute of the wild and ferocious beasts. In a flock of one thousand sheep you will witness no bloodshed. Numberless species of birds are peaceful in flocks. Wolves, lions, tigers are ferocious because it is their natural and necessary means for obtaining food. Man has no need of such ferocity; his food is provided in other ways. Therefore it is evident that warfare, cruelty and bloodshed in the kingdom of man are caused by human greed, hatred and selfishness. The kings and rulers of nations enjoy luxury and ease in their palaces and send the common people to the battlefield; offer them as the food and targets of cannon. Each day they invent new instruments for the more complete destruction of the foundations of the human race. They are callous and merciless toward their fellow-creatures. What shall atone for the sufferings and grief of mothers who have so tenderly cared for their sons? What sleepless nights they have spent and what days of devotion and love they have given to bring their children to maturity! Yet the savagery of these warring rulers causes great numbers of their victims to be torn and mutilated in a day. What ignorance and degradation, yea even greater than the ferocious beasts themselves! For a wolf will carry away and devour one sheep at a time whereas an ambitious tyrant may cause the death of one hundred thousand men in a battle and glory in his military prowess saying "I am commander-in-chief; I have won this mighty victory." Consider the ignorance and inconsistency of the human race. If a man kills another, no matter what the cause may be, he is pronounced a murderer, imprisoned or executed; but the brutal oppressor who has slain one hundred thousand is idolized as a hero, conqueror or military genius. A man steals a small sum of money; he is called a thief and sent to the penitentiary; but the military leader who invades and pillages a whole kingdom is acclaimed heroic and a mighty man of valor. How base and ignorant is man!

In Persia previous to the middle of the nineteenth century, among the various tribes and peoples, sects and denominations there existed the greatest animosity, strife and hatred. At that time too all the other nations of the east were in the same condition. Religionists were hostile and bigoted, sects were at enmity, races hated each other, tribes were constantly at war; everywhere antagonism and conflict prevailed. Men shunned and were suspicious of each other. The man who could kill a number of his fellow-creatures was glorified for his heroism and strength. Among

religionists it was esteemed a praiseworthy deed to take the life of one who held an opposite belief. At this time BAHÁ 'ULLÁH arose and declared his mission. He founded the oneness of the world of humanity, proclaimed that all are servants of the loving and merciful God who has created, nourished and provided for all, therefore why should men be unjust and unkind to each other, showing forth that which is contrary to God? As he loves us why should we entertain animosity and hate? If God did not love all he would not have created, trained and provided for all. Loving-kindness is the divine policy. Shall we consider human policy and attitude superior to the wisdom and policy of God? This would be inconceivable, impossible. Therefore we must emulate and follow the divine policy, dealing with each other in the utmost love and tenderness.

BAHÁ 'ULLÁH declared the "Most Great Peace" and international arbitration. He voiced these principles in numerous epistles which were circulated broadcast throughout the east. He wrote to all the kings and rulers encouraging, advising and admonishing them in regard to the establishment of peace; making it evident by conclusive proofs that the happiness and glory of humanity can only be assured through disarmament and arbitration. This was nearly fifty years ago. Because he promulgated the message of Universal Peace and international agreement, the kings of the Orient arose against him for they did not find their personal and national benefits advanced by his admonition and teaching. They persecuted him bitterly, inflicted upon him every torment, imprisoned, bastinadoed, banished him and eventually confined him in a fortress. Then they arose against his followers. For the establishment of international peace the blood of twenty thousand Bahais was spilt. Their homes were destroyed, their children made captives and their possessions pillaged yet none of these people waxed cold or wavered in devotion. Even to this day the Bahais are persecuted and quite recently a number were killed, for wherever they are found they put forth the greatest efforts to establish the peace of the world. They not only promulgate principles; they are people of action.

In Persia today through the teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLÁH you will find people of various religious beliefs and denominations living together in the utmost peace and agreement. The former enmities and hatred have passed away and they exercise the utmost love toward all mankind for they realize and know that all are the creatures and servants of one God. This is directly due to the divine teachings. At most it is simply this; that the ignorant must be educated, the ailing must be healed, those who are as children

in the scale of development must be helped to reach the age of maturity. We must not be unfriendly to any one because of ignorance, neither must we reject the immature or turn away from the sick but administer the remedy for each human need until all are united in the providence of God. Therefore it is evident that the essential foundations of the divine religions are unity and love. If religion be productive of discord among mankind it is a destroyer and not divine for religion implies unity and binding together and not separation. Mere knowledge of principles is not sufficient. We all know and admit that justice is good but there is need of volition and action to carry out and manifest it. For example, we might think it good to build a church but simply thinking of it as a good thing will not help its erection. The ways and means must be provided; we must will to build it and then proceed with the construction. All of us know that international peace is good, that it is conducive to human welfare and the glory of man but volition and action are necessary before it can be established. Action is the essential. Inasmuch as this century is a century of light, capacity for action is assured to mankind. Necessarily the divine principles will be spread among men until the time of action arrives. Surely this has been so and truly the time and conditions are ripe for action now. All men know that verily war is a destroyer of human foundations and in every country of the world this is admitted and apparent. I find the United States of America an exceedingly progressive nation, the government just, the people in a state of readiness and the principle of equality established to an extraordinary degree. Therefore it is my hope that inasmuch as the standard of international peace must be upraised it may be upraised upon this continent, for this nation is more deserving and has greater capacity for such an initial step than any other. If other nations should attempt to do this the motive will be misunderstood. For instance, if Great Britain should declare for international peace it will be said that it has been done to insure the safety of her colonies. If France should hoist the standard other nations will declare some hidden diplomatic policy underlies the action; Russia would be suspected of national designs if the first step were taken by that people, and so on with all the European and eastern governments. But the United States of America could not be accused of any such selfish interest. Your government has, strictly speaking, no colonies to protect. You are not endeavoring to extend your domain nor have you need of territorial expansion. Therefore if America takes the first step toward the establishing of world peace it is certain to be

ascribed to unselfishness and altruism. The world will say "There is no other motive than altruism and service to humanity in this action by the United States." Therefore it is my hope that you may stand forth as the first herald of peace and hoist this banner; for this banner will be hoisted. Raise it aloft, for you are the most qualified and deserving of nations. The other countries await this summons, expect this call to the standard of reconciliation, for the whole world is distressed because of the excessive burden and irreparable damage of war. Taxes are levied to meet its drain. Every year the burden increases and the people have come to their end. Just now Europe is a battlefield of ammunition ready for a spark; and one spark will set aflame the whole world. Before these complications and cataclysmic events happen, take the step to prevent it.

The foundations of all the divine religions are peace and agreement, but misunderstandings and ignorance have developed. If these are caused to disappear you will see that all the religious agencies will work for peace and promulgate the oneness of human kind. For the foundation of all is reality and reality is not multiple or divisible. His Holiness Moses founded it, His Holiness Jesus raised its tent, and its brilliant light has shone forth in all the religions. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH proclaimed this one reality and spread the message of the "Most Great Peace." Even in prison he rested not until he lighted this lamp in the east. Praise be to God! all who have accepted his teachings are lovers of peace, peacemakers ready to sacrifice their lives and expend their possessions for it. Now let this standard be upraised in the west and many will respond to the call. America has become renowned for her discoveries, inventions and artistic skill, famous for equity of government and stupendous undertakings; now may she also become noted and celebrated as the herald and messenger of Universal Peace. Let this be her mission and undertaking and may its blessed impetus spread to all countries. I pray for all of you that you may render this service to the world of humanity.

III

*May 13, 1912, at Hotel Astor, New York.
Reception by New York Peace Society.*

Notes by Esther Foster

ALTHOUGH I felt indisposed this afternoon yet because I attach great importance to this assembly and was longing to see your faces, I have come. The expression of kindly feelings

and the spirit of hospitality manifested by the former speakers are most grateful. I am thankful for the susceptibilities of your hearts for it is an evidence that your greatest desire is the establishment of international peace. You are lovers of the oneness of humanity, seekers after the good-pleasure of the Lord, investigators of the foundations of the divine religions.

Today there is no greater glory for man than that of service in the cause of the "Most Great Peace." Peace is light whereas war is darkness. Peace is life; war is death. Peace is guidance; war is error. Peace is the foundation of God; war is satanic institution. Peace is the illumination of the world of humanity; war is the destroyer of human foundations. When we consider outcomes in the world of existence we find that peace and fellowship are factors of upbuilding and betterment whereas war and strife are the causes of destruction and disintegration. All created things are expressions of the affinity and cohesion of elementary substances, and non-existence is the absence of their attraction and agreement. Various elements unite harmoniously in composition but when these elements become discordant, repelling each other, decomposition and non-existence result. Everything partakes of this nature and is subject to this principle, for the creative foundation in all its degrees and kingdoms is an expression or outcome of love. Consider the restlessness and agitation of the human world today because of war. Peace is health and construction; war is disease and dissolution. When the banner of truth is raised, peace becomes the cause of the welfare and advancement of the human world. In all cycles and ages war has been a factor of derangement and discomfort whereas peace and brotherhood have brought security and consideration of human interests. This distinction is especially pronounced in the present world conditions, for warfare in former centuries had not attained the degree of savagery and destructiveness which now characterizes it. If two nations were at war in olden times, ten or twenty thousand would be sacrificed but in this century the destruction of one hundred thousand lives in a day is quite possible. So perfected has the science of killing become and so efficient the means and instruments of its accomplishment that a whole nation can be obliterated in a short time. Therefore comparison with the methods and results of ancient warfare is out of the question.

According to an intrinsic law, all phenomena of being attain to a summit and degree of consummation, after which a new order and

condition is established. As the instruments and science of war have reached the degree of thoroughness and proficiency, it is hoped that the transformation of the human world is at hand and that in the coming centuries all the energies and inventions of man will be utilized in promoting the interests of peace and brotherhood. Therefore may this esteemed and worthy society for the establishment of international peace be confirmed in its sincere intentions and empowered by God. Then will it hasten the time when the banner of universal agreement will be raised and international welfare will be proclaimed and consummated so that the darkness which now encompasses the world shall pass away.

Sixty years ago His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH was in Persia. Seventy years ago His Holiness the Bab appeared there. These two blessed souls devoted their lives to the foundation of international peace and love among mankind. They strove with heart and soul to establish the teachings by which divergent people might be brought together and no strife, rancor or hatred prevail. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH addressing all humanity, said that Adam the parent of mankind may be likened to the tree of nativity upon which you are the leaves and blossoms. Inasmuch as your origin was one, you must now be united and agreed; you must consort with each other in joy and fragrance. He pronounced prejudice, whether religious, racial, patriotic, political, the destroyer of the body-politic. He said that man must recognize the oneness of humanity, for all in origin belong to the same household and all are servants of the same God. Therefore mankind must continue in the state of fellowship and love, emulating the institutions of God and turning away from satanic promptings, for the divine bestowals bring forth unity and agreement whereas satanic leadings induce hatred and war.

This remarkable personage was able by these principles to establish a bond of unity among the differing sects and divergent people of Persia. Those who followed his teachings no matter from what denomination or faction they came were conjoined by the ties of love, until now they cooperate and live together in peace and agreement. They are real brothers and sisters. No distinctions of class are observed among them and complete harmony prevails. Daily this bond of affinity is strengthening and their spiritual fellowship continually develops. In order to insure the progress of mankind and to establish these principles His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH suffered every ordeal and difficulty. His Holiness the Bab became a martyr, and over twenty thousand men and women

sacrificed their lives for their faith. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH was imprisoned and subjected to severe persecutions. Finally he was exiled from Persia to Mesopotamia; from Baghdad he was sent to Constantinople and Adrianople and from thence to the prison of Akka in Syria. Through all these ordeals he strove day and night to proclaim the oneness of humanity and promulgate the message of Universal Peace. From the prison of Akka he addressed the kings and rulers of the earth in lengthy letters summoning them to international agreement and explicitly stating that the standard of the "Most Great Peace" would surely be upraised in the world.

This has come to pass. The powers of earth cannot withstand the privileges and bestowals which God has ordained for this great and glorious century. It is a need and exigency of the time. Man can withstand anything except that which is divinely intended and indicated for the age and its requirements. Now, Praise be to God! in all countries of the world, lovers of peace are to be found and these principles are being spread among mankind, especially in this country. Praise be to God! this thought is prevailing and souls are continually arising as defenders of the oneness of humanity, endeavoring to assist and establish international peace. There is no doubt that this wonderful democracy will be able to realize it and the banner of international agreement will be unfurled here to spread onward and outward among all the nations of the world. I give thanks to God that I find you imbued with such susceptibilities and lofty aspirations and I hope that you will be the means of spreading this light to all men. Thus may the Sun of Reality shine upon the east and west. The enveloping clouds shall pass away and the heat of the divine rays will dispel the mist. The reality of man shall develop and come forth as the image of God his creator. The thoughts of man shall take such upward flight that former accomplishments shall appear as the play of children;—for the ideas and beliefs of the past and the prejudices regarding race and religion have ever been lowering and destructive to human evolution. I am most hopeful that in this century these lofty thoughts shall be conducive to human welfare. Let this century be the sun of previous centuries the effulgences of which shall last forever, so that in times to come they shall glorify the twentieth century, saying the twentieth century was the century of lights, the twentieth century was the century of life, the twentieth century was the century of international peace, the twentieth century was the century of divine bestowals and the twentieth century has left traces which shall last forever.

IV

*May 19, 1912, at Church of the Divine Paternity, Central Park
West, New York.*

Notes by Esther Foster

RELIGIONS are many but the reality of religion is one. The days are many but the sun is one. The fountains are many but the fountain-head is one. The branches are many but the tree is one.

The foundation of the divine religions is reality; were there no reality there would be no religions. His Holiness Abraham heralded the reality. His Holiness Moses promulgated the reality. His Holiness Christ established the reality. His Holiness Mohammed was the messenger of the reality. His Holiness the Bab was the door of the reality. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLAH was the splendor of the reality. The reality is one; it does not admit multiplicity or division. The reality is as the sun which shines forth from different dawning-points; it is as the light which has illumined many lanterns.

Therefore if the religions investigate reality and seek the essential truth of their own foundations they will agree and no difference will be found. But inasmuch as religions are submerged in dogmatic imitations, forsaking the original foundations, and as imitations differ widely, therefore the religions are divergent and antagonistic. These imitations may be likened to clouds which obscure the sunrise; but the reality is the sun. If the clouds disperse, the Sun of Reality shines upon all and no difference of vision will exist. The religions will then agree, for fundamentally they are the same. The subject is one but predicates are many.

The divine religions are like the progression of the seasons of the year. When the earth becomes dead and desolate and because of frost and cold no trace of vanished spring remains, the spring-time dawns again and clothes everything with a new garment of life. The meadows become fresh and green, the trees are adorned with verdure and fruits appear upon them. Then the winter comes again and all the traces of spring disappear. This is the continuous cycle of the seasons,—spring, winter, then the return of spring; but though the calendar changes and the years move forward, each springtime that comes is the return of the springtime that has gone; this spring is the renewal of the former spring. Springtime is springtime no matter when or how often it comes. The divine prophets are as the coming of spring, each renewing and quickening

the teachings of the prophet who came before him. Just as all seasons of spring are essentially one as to newness of life, vernal showers and beauty so the essence of the mission and accomplishment of all the prophets is one and the same. Now the people of religion have lost sight of the essential reality of the spiritual springtime. They have held tenaciously to ancestral forms and imitations, and because of this there is variance, strife and altercation among them. Therefore we must now abandon these imitations and seek the foundation of the divine teachings; and inasmuch as the foundation is the one reality, the divergent religionists must agree in it so that love and unity will be established among all people and denominations.

At a time when the Orient was rent by religious dissension BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared. He founded teachings which became the means of uniting the various and divergent peoples. He promulgated principles which removed the cause of their dissension, until today in Persia those who had been constantly at war are united. Christians, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Jews,—people of every belief and denomination who have followed the teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLAH have attained complete fellowship and spiritual agreement. Former differences and dissensions have passed away entirely. Some of the principles of BAHÁ 'ULLAH's teaching are as follows:

First; that the oneness of humanity shall be recognized and established. All men are the servants of God. He has created all; he is the provider and preserver; he is loving to all. Inasmuch as he is just and kind why should we be unjust toward each other? As God has quickened us with life why should we be the cause of death? As he has comforted us why should we be the cause of anxiety and suffering? Can humanity conceive a plan and policy better and superior to that of God? It is certain that no matter how capable man may be in origination of plan and organization of purpose his efforts will be inadequate as compared with the divine plan and purpose; for the policy of God is perfect. Therefore we must follow the will and plan of God; as he is kind to all, we must be likewise and it is certain that this will be most acceptable to God.

Second; that truth or reality must be investigated; for reality is one and by investigating it, all will find love and unity. Those who are ignorant must be educated, the ailing must be healed, the undeveloped must be brought to maturity. Shall we reject or oppose the ignorant, sick or immature because of their incapacity? Is it not better to be kind and gentle and to provide the means

of remedy? Therefore under no circumstances whatsoever should we assume any attitude except that of gentleness and humility.

Third; that religion is in harmony with science. The fundamental principles of the prophets are scientific but the forms and imitations which have appeared are opposed to science. If religion does not agree with science it is superstition and ignorance; for God has endowed man with reason in order that he may perceive reality. The foundations of religion are reasonable. God has created us with intelligence to perceive them. If they are opposed to science and reason how could they be believed and followed?

Fourth; that religion must be conducive to love and unity among mankind; for if it be the cause of enmity and strife the absence of religion is preferable. When His Holiness Moses appeared the tribes of Israel were in a state of disunion as captives of the Pharaohs. His Holiness Moses gathered them together and the divine law established fellowship among them. They became as one people, united, consolidated, after which they were rescued from bondage. They passed into the promised land, advanced in all degrees, developed sciences and arts, progressed in material affairs, increased in divine or spiritual civilization until their nation rose to its zenith in the sovereignty of Solomon. It is evident therefore that religion is the cause of unity, fellowship and progress among mankind. The function of a shepherd is to gather the sheep together and not to scatter them. Then His Holiness Christ appeared. He united varying and divergent creeds and warring people of his time. He brought together Greeks and Romans, reconciled Egyptians and Assyrians, Chaldeans and Phoenicians. Christ established unity and agreement among people of these hostile and warring nations. Therefore it is again evident that the purpose of religion is peace and concord. Likewise Mohammed appeared at a time when the peoples and tribes of Arabia were divergent and in a state of continual warfare. They killed each other, pillaged, and took captive wives and children. His Holiness Mohammed united these fierce tribes, established a foundation of fellowship among them so that they gave up warring against each other absolutely and established communities. The result was that the Arabian tribes freed themselves from the Persian yoke and Roman control, established an independent sovereignty which rose to a high degree of civilization, advanced in sciences and arts, extended the Saracen dominion as far west as Spain and Andalusia and became famous throughout the world. Therefore it is proved once more that the religion of God is intended to be the cause of advancement and solidarity and not of enmity and dissolution. If

it becomes the cause of hatred and strife its absence is preferable. Its purpose is unity and its foundations are one.

When His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared in Persia violent strife and hatred separated the peoples and tribes of that country. They would not come together for any purpose except war; they would not partake of the same food or drink of the same water; association and intercourse were impossible. His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH founded the oneness of humanity among these people and bound their hearts together with such ties of love that they were completely united. He reestablished the prophetic foundations; reformed and renewed the principles laid down by the messengers of God who had preceded him. And now it is hoped that through his life and teachings the east and west shall become so united that no trace of enmity, strife and discord shall remain.

V

*May 19, 1912, at Brotherhood Church, Bergen and Fairview Aves.,
Jersey City, N. J.*

Notes by Esther Foster

BECAUSE this is called the "Church of Brotherhood" I wish to speak upon the "Brotherhood of Mankind." There is perfect brotherhood underlying humanity, for all are servants of one God and belong to one family under the protection of divine providence. The bond of fraternity exists in humanity because all are intelligent beings created in the realm of evolutionary growth. There is brotherhood potential in humanity because all inhabit this earthly globe under the one canopy of heaven. There is brotherhood natal in mankind because all are elements of one human society subject to the necessity of agreement and cooperation. There is brotherhood intended in humanity because all are waves of one sea, leaves and fruit of one tree. This is physical fellowship which insures material happiness in the human world. The stronger it becomes, the more will mankind advance and the circle of materiality be enlarged.

The real brotherhood is spiritual, for physical brotherhood is subject to separation. The wars of the outer world of existence separate humankind but in the eternal world of spiritual brotherhood separation is unknown. Material or physical association is based upon earthly interests but divine fellowship owes its existence to the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual brotherhood may be

likened to the light while the souls of humankind are as lanterns. The incandescent lamps here are many, yet the light is one.

At a time in the Orient when even physical brotherhood was not in existence His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH appeared. At first he set forth the principles of physical brotherhood and afterward founded the brotherhood spiritual. He breathed such a spirit into the countries of the Orient that various peoples and warring tribes were blended in unity. Their bestowals and susceptibilities became one; their purposes one purpose; their desires one desire to such a degree that they sacrificed themselves for each other, forfeiting name, possessions and comfort. Their fellowship became indissoluble. This is eternal, spiritual fellowship, heavenly and divine brotherhood which defies dissolution. Material civilization advances through the physical association of mankind. The progress you observe in the outer world is founded mainly upon the fraternity of material interests. Were it not for this physical and mental association civilization would not have progressed. Now, Praise be to God! the indissoluble spiritual association is evident; therefore it is certain that divine civilization has been founded and the world will progress and advance spiritually. In this radiant century divine knowledges, merciful attributes and spiritual virtues will attain the highest degree of advancement. The traces have become manifest in Persia. Souls have advanced to such a degree as to forfeit life and possessions for each other. Their spiritual perceptions have developed, their intelligence has quickened, their souls are awakened. The utmost love has been manifested. Therefore it is my hope that spiritual fraternity shall unite the east and the west and bring about the complete abolition of warfare among mankind. May it bind together individuals and members of the human family, be the cause of advancing minds, illuminating hearts and allowing divine bestowals to encompass us from all directions. May spiritual susceptibilities set hearts aglow with the message of glad tidings. May spiritual brotherhood cause rebirth and regeneration, for its creative quickening emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is founded by the power of God. Surely that which is founded through the divine power of the Holy Spirit is permanent in its potency and lasting in its effect.

Material brotherhood does not prevent nor remove warfare; it does not dispel differences among mankind. But spiritual alliance destroys the very foundation of war, effaces differences entirely, promulgates the oneness of humanity, revivifies mankind, causes hearts to turn to the kingdom of God and baptizes souls with the Holy Spirit. Through this divine brotherhood, the material world

will become resplendent with the lights of divinity, the mirror of materiality will acquire its lights from heaven and justice will be established in the world so that no trace of darkness, hatred and enmity shall be visible. Humanity shall come within the bounds of security, the prophethood of all the messengers of God shall be established, Zion shall leap and dance, Jerusalem shall rejoice, the Mosaic flame shall ignite, the Messianic light shall shine, the world will become another world and humanity shall put on another power. This is the greatest divine bestowal; this is the effulgence of the kingdom of God; this is the day of illumination; this is the merciful century. We must appreciate these things and strive in order that the utmost desire of the prophets may now be realized and all the glad-tidings be fulfilled. Trust in the favor of God. Look not at your own capacities, for the divine bestowal can transform a drop into an ocean; it can make a tiny seed a lofty tree. Verily divine bestowals are like the sea and we are the fishes of that sea. The fishes must not look at themselves; they must behold the ocean which is vast and wonderful. Provision for the sustenance of all is in this ocean therefore the divine bounties encompass all and love eternal shines upon all.

The question has been asked "Will the spiritual progress of the world equal and keep pace with material progress in the future?" In a living organism the full measure of its development is not known or realized at the time of its inception or birth. Development and progression imply gradual stages or degrees. For example, spiritual advancement may be likened to the light of the early dawn. Although this dawn light is dim and pale a wise man who views the march of the sunrise at its very beginning can foretell the ascendancy of the sun in its full glory and effulgence. He knows for a certainty that it is the beginning of its manifestation and that later it will assume great power and potency. Again, for example, if he takes a seed and observes that it is sprouting, he will know assuredly that it will ultimately become a tree. Now is the beginning of the manifestation of the power spiritual and inevitably its potency of life forces will assume greater and greater proportions. Therefore this twentieth century is the dawn or beginning of spiritual illumination and it is evident that day by day it will advance. It will reach such a degree that spiritual effulgences will overcome the physical, so that divine susceptibilities will overpower material intelligence and the heavenly light dispel and banish earthly darkness. Divine healing shall purify all ills and the cloud of mercy will pour down its rain. The Sun of Reality will shine and all the earth shall put on its beautiful green

carpet. Among the results of the manifestation of spiritual forces will be that the human world will adapt itself to a new social form, the justice of God will become manifest throughout human affairs and human equality will be universally established. The poor will receive a great bestowal and the rich attain eternal happiness. For although at the present time the rich enjoy the greatest luxury and comfort, they are nevertheless deprived of eternal happiness; for eternal happiness is contingent upon giving and the poor are everywhere in the state of abject need. Through the manifestation of God's great equity the poor of the world will be rewarded and assisted fully and there will be a readjustment in the economic conditions of mankind so that in the future there will not be the abnormally rich nor the abject poor. The rich will enjoy the privilege of this new economic condition as well as the poor, for owing to certain provision and restriction they will not be able to accumulate so much as to be burdened by its management, while the poor will be relieved from the stress of want and misery. The rich will enjoy his palace and the poor will have his comfortable cottage.

The essence of the matter is that divine justice will become manifest in human conditions and affairs and all mankind will find comfort and enjoyment in life. It is not meant that all will be equal, for inequality in degree and capacity is a property of nature. Necessarily there will be rich people and also those who will be in want of their livelihood, but in the aggregate community there will be equalization and readjustment of values and interests. In the future there will be no very rich nor extremely poor. There will be an equilibrium of interests, and a condition will be established which will make both rich and poor comfortable and content. This will be an eternal and blessed outcome of the glorious twentieth century which will be realized universally. The significance of it is that the glad-tidings of great joy revealed in the promises of the holy books will be fulfilled. Await ye this consummation.

VI

*May 20, 1912, at Metropolitan Temple, Seventh Avenue and
Fourteenth St., New York.
Woman's Suffrage Meeting.*

Notes by Esther Foster

TODAY, questions of the utmost importance are facing humanity; questions peculiar to this radiant century. In former centuries there was not even mention of them. Inasmuch as

this is the century of illumination, the century of humanity, the century of divine bestowals, these questions are being presented for the expression of public opinion and in all the countries of the world, discussion is taking place looking to their solution.

One of these questions concerns the rights of woman and her equality with man. In past ages it was held that woman and man were not equal; that is to say, woman was considered inferior to man even from the standpoint of her anatomy and creation. She was considered especially inferior in intelligence and the idea prevailed universally that it was not allowable for her to step into the arena of important affairs. In some countries man went so far as to believe and teach that woman belonged to a sphere lower than human. But in this century which is the century of light and the revelation of mysteries God is proving to the satisfaction of humanity that all this is ignorance and error; nay, rather, it is well established that mankind and womankind as factors of composite humanity are co-equal and that no difference in estimate is allowable; for all are human. The conditions in past centuries were due to woman's lack of opportunity. She was denied the right and privilege of education and left in her undeveloped state. Naturally, she could not and did not advance. In reality God has created all mankind and in the estimation of God there is no distinction as to male and female. The one whose heart is pure is acceptable in his sight, be that one man or woman. God does not inquire "Art thou woman or art thou man?" He judges human actions. If these are acceptable in the threshold of the Glorious One, man and woman will be equally recognized and rewarded.

Furthermore, the education of woman is more necessary and important than that of man, for woman is the trainer of the child from its infancy. If she be defective and imperfect herself the child will necessarily be deficient; therefore imperfection of woman implies a condition of imperfection in all mankind, for it is the mother who rears, nurtures and guides the growth of the child. This is not the function of the father. If the educator be incompetent the educated will be correspondingly lacking. This is evident and incontrovertible. Could the student be brilliant and accomplished if the teacher is illiterate and ignorant? The mothers are the first educators of mankind; if they be imperfect, alas for the condition and future of the race.

Again, it is well established in history that where woman has not participated in human affairs the outcomes have never attained a state of completion and perfection. On the other hand, every influential undertaking of the human world wherein woman has

been a participant has attained importance. This is historically true and beyond disproof even in religion. His Holiness Jesus Christ had twelve disciples and among his followers a woman known as Mary Magdalene. Judas Iscariot had become a traitor and hypocrite, and after the crucifixion the remaining eleven disciples were wavering and undecided. It is certain from the evidence of the gospels that the one who comforted them and re-established their faith was Mary Magdalene.

The world of humanity consists of two factors, male and female. Each is the complement of the other. Therefore if one is defective the other will necessarily be incomplete and perfection cannot be attained. There is a right-hand and a left-hand in the human body, functionally equal in service and administration. If either proves defective, the defect will naturally extend to the other by involving the completeness of the whole; for accomplishment is not normal unless both are perfect. If we say one hand is deficient we prove the inability and incapacity of the other; for single-handed there is no full accomplishment. Just as physical accomplishment is complete with two hands, so man and woman, the two factors of the social body must be perfect. It is not natural that either should remain undeveloped; and until both are perfected the happiness of the human world will not be realized.

The most momentous question of this day is international peace and arbitration; and Universal Peace is impossible without universal suffrage. Children are educated by the women. The mother bears the troubles and anxieties of rearing the child; undergoes the ordeal of its birth and training. Therefore it is most difficult for mothers to send those upon whom they have lavished such love and care, to the battlefield. Consider, a son reared and trained twenty years by a devoted mother. What sleepless nights and restless, anxious days she has spent! Having brought him through dangers and difficulties to the age of maturity, how agonizing then to sacrifice him upon the battlefield! Therefore the mothers will not sanction war nor be satisfied with it. So it will come to pass that when women participate fully and equally in the affairs of the world, enter confidently and capably the great arena of laws and politics, war will cease; for woman will be the obstacle and hindrance to it. This is true and without doubt.

It has been objected by some that woman is not equally capable with man and that she is deficient by creation. This is pure imagination. The difference in capability between man and woman is due entirely to opportunity and education. Heretofore woman has been denied the right and privilege of equal development. If

equal opportunity be granted her there is no doubt she would be the peer of man. History will evidence this. In past ages noted women have arisen in the affairs of nations and surpassed men in their accomplishments. Among them was Zenobia queen of the east whose capitol was Palmyra. Even today the site of that city bears witness to her greatness, ability and sovereignty, for there the traveler will find ruins of palaces and fortifications of the utmost strength and solidity built by this remarkable woman in the third century after Christ. She was the wife of the governor-general of Athens. After her husband's death she assumed control of the government in his stead and ruled her province most efficiently. Afterward she conquered Syria, subdued Egypt and founded a most wonderful kingdom with political sagacity and thoroughness. The Roman empire sent a great army against her. When this army replete with martial splendor reached Syria, Zenobia herself appeared upon the field leading her forces. On the day of battle she arrayed herself in regal garments, placed a crown upon her head and rode forth sword in hand to meet the invading legions. By her courage and military strategy the Roman army was routed and so completely dispersed that they were not able to reorganize in retreat. The government of Rome held consultation, saying "No matter what commander we send we cannot overcome her; therefore the Emperor Aurelian himself must go to lead the legions of Rome against Zenobia." Aurelian marched into Syria with two hundred thousand soldiers. The army of Zenobia was greatly inferior in size. The Romans besieged her in Palmyra two years without success. Finally Aurelian was able to cut off the city's supply of provisions so that she and her people were compelled by starvation to surrender. She was not defeated in battle. Aurelian carried her captive to Rome. On the day of his entry into the city he arranged a triumphal procession,—first elephants, then lions, tigers, birds, monkeys,—and after the monkeys Zenobia. A crown was upon her head, a chain of gold about her neck. With queenly dignity and unconscious of humiliation, looking to the right and left, she said "Verily I glory in being a woman and in having withstood the Roman empire." (At that time the dominion of Rome covered half the known earth). "And this chain about my neck is not a sign of humiliation but of glorification. This is a symbol of my power not of my defeat."

Among other historical women was Catherine I, wife of Peter the Great. Russia and Turkey were at war. Mohammed Pasha commander of the Turkish forces had defeated Peter and was about to take St. Petersburg. The Russians were in a most critical po-

sition. Catherine the wife of Peter said "I will arrange this matter." She had an interview with Mohammed Pasha, negotiated a treaty of peace and induced him to turn back. She saved her husband and her nation. This was a great accomplishment. Afterward she was crowned empress of Russia and ruled with wisdom until her death.

The discovery of America by Columbus was during the reign of Isabella of Spain to whose intelligence and assistance this wonderful accomplishment was largely due. In brief, many remarkable women have appeared in the history of the world but further mention of them is not necessary.

Today among the Bahais of Persia there are many women who are the very pride and envy of the men. They are imbued with all the virtues and excellences of humanity. They are eloquent, they are poets and scholars and embody the quintessence of humility. In political ability and acumen they have been able to cope and compete with representative men. They have consecrated their lives and forfeited their possessions in martyrdom for the sake of humanity, and the traces of their glory will last forever. The pages of the history of Persia are illumined by the lives and records of these women.

The purpose, in brief, is this—that if woman be fully educated and granted her rights, she will attain the capacity for wonderful accomplishments and prove herself the equal of man. She is the coadjutor of man; his complement and helpmeet. Both are human, both are endowed with potentialities of intelligence and embody the virtues of humanity. In all human powers and functions they are partners and co-equals. At present in spheres of human activity woman does not manifest her natal prerogatives owing to lack of education and opportunity. Without doubt education will establish her equality with men. Consider the animal kingdom where no distinction is observed between male and female. They are equal in powers and privileges. Among birds of the air no distinction is evidenced. Their powers are equal, they dwell together in complete unity and mutual recognition of rights. Shall we not enjoy the same equality? Its absence is not befitting to mankind.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in Cambridge and Boston.

May 23, 1912, at 367 Harvard Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Breed.

From Stenographic Notes

SCIENTIFIC knowledge is the highest attainment upon the human plane; for science is the discoverer of realities. It is of two kinds, material and spiritual. Material science is the investigation of natural phenomena; divine science is the discovery and realization of spiritual verities. The world of humanity must acquire both. A bird has two wings; it cannot fly with one. Material and spiritual science are the two wings of human uplift and attainment. Both are necessary, one the natural, the other supernatural; one material, the other divine. By the divine we mean the discovery of the mysteries of God, the comprehension of spiritual realities, the wisdom of God, inner significances of the heavenly religions and foundation of the law.

This is May 23 the anniversary of the message and declaration of His Holiness the Bab. It is a blessed day and the dawn of manifestation, for the appearance of the Bab was the early light of the true morn whereas the manifestation of the Blessed Beauty BAHÁ 'ULLAH was the shining forth of the sun. Therefore it is a blessed day, the inception of the heavenly bounty, the beginning of the divine effulgence. On this day in 1844 His Holiness the Bab was sent forth heralding and proclaiming the kingdom of God, announcing the glad-tidings of the coming of His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH and withstanding the opposition of the whole Persian nation. Some of the Persians followed him. For this they suffered the most grievous difficulties and severe ordeals. They withstood the tests with wonderful power and sublime heroism. Thousands were cast into prison, punished, persecuted and martyred. Their homes were pillaged and destroyed, their possessions confiscated. They sacrificed their lives most willingly and remained unshaken in their faith to the very end. Those wonderful souls are the lamps of God, the stars of sanctity shining gloriously from the eternal horizon of the will of God.

His Holiness the Bab was subjected to bitter persecution in Shiraz where he first proclaimed his mission and message. A period of famine afflicted that region and the Bab journeyed to Isfahan. There the learned men rose against him in great hostility. He was

arrested and sent to Tabriz. From thence he was transferred to Maku and finally imprisoned in the strong castle of Chihrik. Afterward he was martyred in Tabriz.

This is merely an outline of the history of His Holiness the Bab. He withstood all persecutions and bore every suffering and ordeal with unflinching strength. The more his enemies endeavored to extinguish that flame the brighter it became. Day by day his cause spread and strengthened. During the time when he was among the people he was constantly heralding the coming of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. In all his books and tablets he mentioned BAHÁ 'ULLAH and announced the glad-tidings of his manifestation, prophesying that he would reveal himself in the ninth year. He said that in the ninth year "you will attain to all happiness;" in the ninth year "you will be blessed with the meeting of the promised one of whom I have spoken." He mentioned the Blessed Perfection BAHÁ 'ULLAH by the title "Him whom God should make manifest." In brief, that blessed soul offered his very life in the pathway of BAHÁ 'ULLAH even as it is recorded in historical writings and records. In his first book *The Best of Stories* he says "O Remnant of God! I am wholly sacrificed to thee; I am content with curses in thy path; I crave nought but to be slain in thy love; and God the Supreme sufficeth as an eternal protection."

Consider how His Holiness the Bab endured difficulties and tribulations; how he gave his life in the cause of God; how he was attracted to the love of the Blessed Beauty BAHÁ 'ULLAH; and how he announced the glad-tidings of his manifestation. We must follow his heavenly example; we must be self-sacrificing and aglow with the fire of the love of God. We must partake of the bounty and grace of the Lord, for His Holiness the Bab has admonished us to arise in service to the cause of God, to be absolutely severed from all else save God during the day of the Blessed Perfection BAHÁ 'ULLAH, to be completely attracted by the love of BAHÁ 'ULLAH, to love all humanity for his sake, be lenient and merciful to all for him and to upbuild the oneness of the world of humanity. Therefore this day May 23 is the anniversary of a blessed event.

II

May 25, 1912, at Huntington Chambers, Boston, Mass.

From Stenographic Notes

I AM going away from your city but I leave my heart with you. My spirit will be here; I will not forget you. I ask confirmation for you from the kingdom of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. I pray that

you may advance continually in spiritual susceptibilities, that day by day you may grow more radiant and draw nearer to God until you become instrumental in illumining the world of humanity. May these confirmations of the kingdom of God encompass you. This is my hope, my prayer.

In the estimation of historians this radiant century is equivalent to one hundred centuries of the past. If comparison be made with the sum total of all former human achievements it will be found that the discoveries, scientific advancement and material civilization of this present century have equaled, yea far exceeded the progress and outcome of one hundred former centuries. The production of books and compilations of literature alone bear witness that the output of the human mind in this century has been greater and more enlightening than all the past centuries together. It is evident therefore that this century is of paramount importance. Reflect upon the miracles of accomplishment which have already characterized it, the discoveries in every realm of human research, inventions, scientific knowledge, ethical reforms and regulations established for the welfare of humanity, mysteries of nature explored, invisible forces brought into visibility and subjection, a veritable wonder-world of new phenomena and conditions heretofore unknown to man now open to his uses and further investigation. The east and west can communicate instantly. A human being can soar in the skies or speed in submarine depths. The power of steam has linked the continents. Trains cross the deserts and pierce the barriers of mountains; ships find unerring pathways upon the trackless oceans. Day by day discoveries are increasing. What a wonderful century this is! It is an age of universal reformation. Laws and statutes of governments civil and federal are in process of change and transformation. Sciences and arts are being moulded anew. Thoughts are metamorphosed. The foundations of human society are changing and strengthening. Today sciences of the past are useless. The ptolemaic system of astronomy, numberless other systems and theories of scientific and philosophical explanation are discarded, known to be false and worthless. Ethical precedents and principles cannot be applied to the needs of the modern world. Thoughts and theories of past ages are fruitless now. Thrones and governments are crumbling and falling. All conditions and requisites of the past unfitted and inadequate for the present time, are undergoing radical reform. It is evident therefore that counterfeit and spurious religious teaching, antiquated forms of belief and ancestral imitations which are at variance with

the foundations of divine reality must also pass away and be reformed. They must be abandoned and new conditions be recognized. The morals of humanity must undergo change. New remedy and solution for human problems must be adopted. Human intellects themselves must change and be subject to the universal reformation. Just as the thoughts and hypotheses of past ages are fruitless today, likewise dogmas and codes of human invention are obsolete and barren of product in religion. Nay, it is true that they are the cause of enmity and conducive to strife in the world of humanity; war and bloodshed proceed from them and the oneness of mankind finds no recognition in their observance. Therefore it is our duty in this radiant century to investigate the essentials of divine religion, seek the realities underlying the oneness of the world of humanity and discover the source of fellowship and agreement which will unite mankind in the heavenly bond of love. This unity is the radiance of eternity, the divine spirituality, the effulgence of God and the bounty of the kingdom. We must investigate the divine source of these heavenly bestowals and adhere unto them steadfastly. For if we remain fettered and restricted by human inventions and dogmas, day by day the world of mankind will be degraded, day by day warfare and strife will increase and satanic forces converge toward the destruction of the human race.

If love and agreement are manifest in a single family, that family will advance, become illumined and spiritual; but if enmity and hatred exist within it destruction and dispersion are inevitable. This is likewise true of a city. If those who dwell within it manifest a spirit of accord and fellowship it will progress steadily and human conditions become brighter whereas through enmity and strife it will be degraded and its inhabitants scattered. In the same way the people of a nation develop and advance toward civilization and enlightenment through love and accord, and are disintegrated by war and strife. Finally, this is true of humanity itself in the aggregate. When love is realized and the ideal spiritual bonds unite the hearts of men, the whole human race will be uplifted, the world will continually grow more spiritual and radiant and the happiness and tranquillity of mankind be immeasurably increased. Warfare and strife will be uprooted, disagreement and dissension pass away and Universal Peace unite the nations and peoples of the world. All mankind will dwell together as one family, blend as the waves of one sea, shine as stars of one firmament and appear as fruits of the same tree. This is the happiness and felicity of mankind. This is the illumination of man, the glory eternal and life

everlasting; this is the divine bestowal. I desire this station for you and I pray God that the people of America may achieve this great end in order that the virtue of this democracy may be insured and their names be glorified eternally. May the confirmations of God uphold them in all things and their memories become revered throughout the east and the west. May they become the servants of the Most High God, near and dear to him in the oneness of the heavenly kingdom.

His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH endured ordeals and hardships sixty years. There was no persecution, vicissitude or suffering he did not experience at the hand of his enemies and oppressors. All the days of his life were passed in difficulty and tribulation; at one time in prison, another in exile, sometimes in chains. He willingly endured these difficulties for the unity of mankind, praying that the world of humanity might realize the radiance of God, the oneness of humankind become a reality, strife and warfare cease and peace and tranquillity be realized by all. In prison he hoisted the banner of human solidarity, proclaiming Universal Peace, writing to the kings and rulers of nations summoning them to international unity and counselling arbitration. His life was a vortex of persecution and difficulty, yet catastrophes, extreme ordeals and vicissitudes did not hinder the accomplishment of his work and mission. Nay, on the contrary his power became greater and greater, his efficiency and influence spread and increased until his glorious light shone throughout the Orient, love and unity were established and the differing religions found a center of contact and reconciliation.

Therefore we also must strive in this pathway of love and service, sacrificing life and possessions, passing our days in devotion, consecrating our efforts wholly to the cause of God, so that, God willing, the ensign of universal religion may be uplifted in the world of mankind and the oneness of the world of humanity be established.

In your hearts I have beheld the reflection of a great and wonderful love. The Americans have shown me uniform kindness and I entertain a deep spiritual love for them. I am pleased with the susceptibilities of your hearts. I will pray for you asking divine assistance and then say farewell.

O my God! O my God! verily these servants are turning to thee, supplicating thy kingdom of mercy. Verily they are attracted by thy holiness and set aglow with the fire of thy love, seeking confirmation from thy wondrous kingdom and hoping for attainment in thy heavenly realm. Verily they long for the descent of thy

bestowal, desiring illumination from the Sun of Reality. O Lord! make them radiant lamps, merciful signs, fruitful trees and shining stars. May they come forth in thy service and be connected with thee by the bonds and ties of thy love, longing for the lights of thy favor. O Lord! make them signs of guidance, standards of thy immortal kingdom, waves of the sea of thy mercy, mirrors of the light of thy majesty. Verily thou art the generous! Verily thou art the merciful! Verily thou art the precious, the beloved!

III

May 24, 1912, at Free Religious Association or Unitarian Conference, Boston, Mass.

From Stenographic Notes

CREATION is the expression of motion. Motion is life. A moving object is a living object whereas that which is motionless and inert is as dead. All created forms are progressive in their planes or kingdoms of existence under the stimulus of the power or spirit of life. The universal energy is dynamic. Nothing is stationary in the material world of outer phenomena or in the inner world of intellect and consciousness.

Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to re-formation. This is a century of life and renewal. Sciences and arts, industry and invention have been reformed. Law and ethics have been reconstituted, reorganized. The world of thought has been regenerated. Sciences of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today. Present exigencies demand new methods of solution; world problems are without precedent. Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete. Ancient laws and archaic ethical systems will not meet the requirements of modern conditions, for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of the reality and therefore the greatest of all centuries. Consider how the scientific developments of fifty years have surpassed and eclipsed the knowledge and achievements of all the former ages combined. Would the announcements and theories of ancient astronomers explain our present knowledge of the sun-worlds and planetary systems? Would the mask of obscurity which beclouded mediaeval

centuries meet the demand for clear-eyed vision and understanding which characterizes the world today? Will the despotism of former governments answer the call for freedom which has risen from the heart of humanity in this cycle of illumination? It is evident that no vital results are now forthcoming from the customs, institutions and standpoints of the past. In view of this, shall blind imitations of ancestral forms and theological interpretations continue to guide and control the religious life and spiritual development of humanity today? Shall man gifted with the power of reason unthinkingly follow and adhere to dogma, creeds and hereditary beliefs which will not bear the analysis of reason in this century of effulgent reality? Unquestionably this will not satisfy men of science, for when they find premise or conclusion contrary to present standards of proof and without real foundation, they reject that which has been formerly accepted as standard and correct and move forward from new foundations.

The divine prophets have revealed and founded religion. They have laid down certain laws and heavenly principles for the guidance of mankind. They have taught and promulgated the knowledge of God, established praiseworthy ethical ideals and inculcated the highest standards of virtues in the human world. Gradually these heavenly teachings and foundations of reality have been beclouded by human interpretations and dogmatic imitations of ancestral beliefs. The essential realities which the prophets labored so hard to establish in human hearts and minds while undergoing ordeals and suffering tortures of persecution, have now well nigh vanished. Some of these heavenly messengers have been killed, some imprisoned; all of them despised and rejected while proclaiming the reality of divinity. Soon after their departure from this world, the essential truth of their teachings was lost sight of and dogmatic imitations adhered to.

Inasmuch as human interpretations and blind imitations differ widely, religious strife and disagreement have arisen among mankind, the light of true religion has been extinguished and the unity of the world of humanity destroyed. The prophets of God voiced the spirit of unity and agreement. They have been the founders of divine reality. Therefore if the nations of the world forsake imitations and investigate the reality underlying the revealed Word of God they will agree and become reconciled. For reality is one and not multiple.

The nations and religions are steeped in blind and bigoted imitations. A man is a Jew because his father was a Jew. The Moham-medan follows implicitly the footsteps of his ancestors in belief and

observance. The Buddhist is true to his heredity as a Buddhist. That is to say they profess religious belief blindly and without investigation, making unity and agreement impossible. It is evident therefore that this condition will not be remedied without a reformation in the world of religion. In other words the fundamental reality of the divine religions must be renewed, reformed, revoiced to mankind.

From the seed of reality, religion has grown into a tree which has put forth leaves and branches, blossoms and fruit. After a time this tree has fallen into a condition of decay. The leaves and blossoms have withered and perished; the tree has become stricken and fruitless. It is not reasonable that man should hold to the old tree, claiming that its life forces are undiminished, its fruit unequalled, its existence eternal. The seed of reality must be sown again in human hearts in order that a new tree may grow therefrom and new divine fruits refresh the world. By this means the nations and peoples now divergent in religion will be brought into unity, imitations will be forsaken and a universal brotherhood in the reality itself will be established. Warfare and strife will cease among mankind; all will be reconciled as servants of God. For all are sheltered beneath the tree of his providence and mercy. God is kind to all; he is the giver of bounty to all alike, even as His Holiness Jesus Christ has declared that God "sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust;" that is to say, the mercy of God is universal. All humanity is under the protection of his love and favor, and unto all he has pointed the way of guidance and progress. Progress is of two kinds, material and spiritual. The former is attained through observation of the surrounding existence and constitutes the foundation of civilization. Spiritual progress is through the breaths of the Holy Spirit and is the awakening of the conscious soul of man to perceive the reality of divinity. Material progress insures the happiness of the human world. Spiritual progress insures the happiness and eternal continuance of the soul. The prophets of God have founded the laws of divine civilization. They have been the root and fundamental source of all knowledge. They have established the principles of human brotherhood or fraternity which is of various kinds, such as the fraternity of family, of race, of nation and of ethical motives. These forms of fraternity, these bonds of brotherhood are merely temporal and transient in association. They do not insure harmony and are usually productive of disagreement. They do not prevent warfare and strife; on the contrary they are selfish, restricted and fruitful causes of enmity and hatred among mankind. The spiritual brotherhood which

is enkindled and established through the breaths of the Holy Spirit unites nations and removes the cause of warfare and strife. It transforms mankind into one great family and establishes the foundations of the oneness of humanity. It promulgates the spirit of international agreement and insures Universal Peace. Therefore we must investigate the foundation reality of this heavenly fraternity. We must forsake all imitations and promote the reality of the divine teachings. In accordance with these principles and actions and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, both material and spiritual happiness shall become realized. Until all nations and peoples become united by the bonds of the Holy Spirit in this real fraternity, until national and international prejudices are effaced in the reality of this spiritual brotherhood, true progress, prosperity and lasting happiness will not be attained by man. This is the century of new and universal nationhood. Sciences have advanced, industries have progressed, politics have been reformed, liberty has been proclaimed, justice is awakening. This is the century of motion, divine stimulus and accomplishment; the century of human solidarity and altruistic service; the century of Universal Peace and the reality of the divine kingdom.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in New York and Fanwood.

*May 26, 1912, at Mount Morris Baptist Church, Fifth Ave. and
126th Street, New York.*

Notes by Esther Foster

AS I entered the church this evening I heard the hymn "Nearer my God, to Thee." The greatest attainment in the world of humanity is nearness to God. Every lasting glory, honor, grace and beauty which comes to man comes through nearness to God. All the prophets and apostles longed and prayed for nearness to the creator. How many nights they passed in sleepless yearning for this station; how many days they devoted to supplication for this attainment, seeking ever to draw nigh unto him! But nearness to God is not an easy accomplishment. During the time His Holiness Jesus Christ was upon the earth mankind sought nearness to God, but in that day no one attained save a very few, his disciples. Those blessed souls were confirmed with divine nearness through the love of God. Divine nearness is dependent upon attainment to the knowledge of God, upon severance from all else save God. It is contingent upon self-sacrifice, and to be found only through forfeiting wealth and worldly possessions. It is made possible through the baptism of water and fire revealed in the gospels. Water symbolizes the water of life which is knowledge, and fire is the fire of the love of God; therefore man must be baptized with the water of life, the Holy Spirit and the fire of the love of the kingdom. Until he attains these three degrees, nearness to God is not possible. This is the process by which the Bahais of Persia have attained. They gave their lives for this station, sacrificed honor, comfort and possessions, hastened with the utmost joy to the place of martyrdom; their blood was spilled, their bodies were tortured and destroyed, their homes pillaged, their children carried into captivity. They endured all these conditions joyfully and willingly. Through such sacrifice nearness to God is made possible. And be it known that this nearness is not dependent upon time or place. Nearness to God is dependent upon purity of the heart and exhilaration of the spirit through the glad-tidings of the kingdom. Consider how a pure, well-polished mirror fully reflects the effulgence of the sun, no matter how distant the sun may be. As soon as the mirror is cleaned and purified the sun will manifest itself. The more pure

and sanctified the heart of man becomes, the nearer it draws to God and the light of the Sun of Reality is revealed within it. This light sets hearts aglow with the fire of the love of God, opens in them the doors of knowledge and unseals the divine mysteries so that spiritual discoveries are made possible. All the prophets have drawn near to God through severance. We must emulate those holy souls and renounce our own wishes and desires. We must purify ourselves from the mire and soil of earth contact until our hearts become as mirrors in clearness and the light of the most great guidance reveals itself in them.

His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH proclaims in his *Hidden Words* that God inspires his servants and is revealed through them. He says "Thy heart is my abode; purify it for my descent. Thy spirit is my outlook; prepare it for my manifestation." Therefore we learn that nearness to God is possible through devotion to him, through entrance into the kingdom, and service to humanity; it is attained by unity with mankind and through loving-kindness to all; it is dependent upon investigation of truth, acquisition of praiseworthy virtues, service in the cause of Universal Peace, and personal sanctification. In a word, nearness to God necessitates sacrifice of self, severance and the giving up of all to him. Nearness is likeness.

Behold how the sun shines upon all creation but only surfaces that are pure and polished can reflect its glory and light. The darkened soul has no portion of the revelation of the glorious effulgence of reality, and the soil of self, unable to take advantage of that light, does not produce growth. The eyes of the blind cannot behold the rays of the sun; only pure eyes with sound and perfect sight can receive them. Green and living trees can absorb the bounty of the sun; dead roots and withered branches are destroyed by it. Therefore man must seek capacity and develop readiness. As long as he lacks susceptibility to divine influences he is incapable of reflecting the light and assimilating its benefits. Sterile soil will produce nothing even if the cloud of mercy pours rain upon it a thousand years. We must make the soil of our hearts receptive and fertile by tilling, in order that the rain of divine mercy may refresh them and bring forth roses and hyacinths of heavenly planting. We must have perceiving eyes in order to see the light of the sun. We must cleanse the nostril in order to scent the fragrances of the divine rose-garden. We must render the ears attentive in order to hear the summons of the supreme kingdom. No matter how beautiful the melody, the ear that is deaf

cannot hear it, cannot receive the call of the Supreme Concourse. The nostril that is clogged with dust cannot inhale the fragrant odors of the blossoms. Therefore we must ever strive for capacity and seek readiness. As long as we lack susceptibility, the beauties and bounties of God cannot penetrate. His Holiness Christ spoke a parable in which he said his words were like the seeds of the sower; some fall upon stony ground, some upon sterile soil, some are choked by thorns and thistles but some fall upon ready, receptive and fertile ground of human hearts. When seeds are cast upon sterile soil no growth follows. Those cast upon stony ground will grow a short time but lacking deep roots will wither away. Thorns and thistles destroy others completely; but the seed cast in good ground brings forth harvest and fruitage.

In the same way, the words I speak to you here tonight may produce no effect whatever. Some hearts may be affected, then soon forget; others owing to superstitious ideas and imaginations may even fail to hear and understand, but the blessed souls who are attentive to my exhortation and admonition, listening with the ear of acceptance, allowing my words to penetrate effectively will advance day by day toward full fruition, yea even to the Supreme Concourse. Consider how the parable makes attainment dependent upon capacity. Unless capacity is developed, the summons of the kingdom cannot reach the ear, the light of the Sun of Truth will not be observed and the fragrances of the rose-garden of inner significance will be lost. Let us endeavor to attain capacity, susceptibility and worthiness, that we may hear the call of the glad tidings of the kingdom, become revived by the breaths of the Holy Spirit, hoist the standard of the oneness of humanity, establish human brotherhood, and under the protection of divine grace attain the life everlasting and eternal.

O thou forgiving God! These servants are turning to thy kingdom and seeking thy grace and bounty. O God! make their hearts good and pure in order that they may become worthy of thy love. Purify and sanctify the spirits that the light of the Sun of Reality may shine through them. Purify and sanctify the eyes that they may perceive thy lights. Purify and sanctify the ears in order that they may hear the call of thy kingdom. O Lord! verily we are weak but thou art mighty. Verily we are poor but thou art rich. We are seekers and thou art the one sought. O Lord! have compassion upon us and forgive us; bestow upon us capacity and readiness in order that we may be responsive to thy favors, attracted to thy kingdom, enkindled with the fire of thy love and resuscitated

through the breaths of thy Holy Spirit in this radiant century. Thou art powerful; thou art almighty; thou art merciful; and thou art most generous!

II

May 28, 1912, at Metropolitan Temple (Reception), Seventh Avenue and Fourteenth Street, New York.

Notes by Esther Foster

THE fatherhood of God, his loving-kindness and beneficence are apparent to all. In his mercy he provides fully and amply for his creatures and if any soul sins he does not suspend his bounty. All created things are visible manifestations of his fatherhood, mercy and heavenly bestowals. Human brotherhood is likewise as clear and evident as the sun, for all are servants of one God, belong to one humankind, inhabit the same globe, are sheltered beneath the overshadowing dome of heaven and submerged in the sea of divine mercy. Human brotherhood and dependence exist because mutual helpfulness and cooperation are the two necessary principles underlying human welfare. This is the physical relationship of mankind. There is another brotherhood, the spiritual, which is higher, holier and superior to all others. It is heavenly; it emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit and the effulgence of merciful attributes; it is founded upon spiritual susceptibilities. This brotherhood is established by the manifestations of the Holy One.

The divine manifestations since the day of Adam have striven to unite humanity so that all may be accounted as one soul. The function and purpose of a shepherd is to gather and not disperse his flock. The prophets of God have been divine shepherds of humanity. They have established a bond of love and unity among mankind, made scattered peoples one nation and wandering tribes a mighty kingdom. They have laid the foundation of the oneness of God and summoned all to Universal Peace. All these holy, divine manifestations are one. They have served one God, promulgated the same truth, founded the same institutions and reflected the same light. Their appearances have been successive and correlated; each one has announced and extolled the one who was to follow and all laid the foundation of reality. They summoned and invited the people to love and made the human world a mirror of the Word of God. Therefore the divine religions they established have one foundation; their teachings, proofs and evi-

dences are one; in name and form they differ but in reality they agree and are the same. These holy manifestations have been as the coming of springtime in the world. Although the springtime of this year is designated by another name according to the changing calendar, yet as regards its life and quickening it is the same as the springtime of last year. For each spring is the time of a new creation, the effects, bestowals, perfections and life-giving forces of which are the same as those of the former vernal seasons although the names are many and various. This is 1912, last year's was 1911 and so on, but in fundamental reality no difference is apparent. The sun is one but the dawning-points of the sun are numerous and changing. The ocean is one body of water but different parts of it have particular designation, Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean, Antarctic, etc. If we consider the names, there is differentiation, but the water, the ocean itself is one reality.

Likewise the divine religions of the holy manifestations of God are in reality one though in name and nomenclature they differ. Man must be a lover of the light no matter from what day-spring it may appear. He must be a lover of the rose no matter in what soil it may be growing. He must be a seeker of the truth, no matter from what source it come. Attachment to the lantern is not loving the light. Attachment to the earth is not befitting but enjoyment of the rose which develops from the soil is worthy. Devotion to the tree is profitless but partaking of the fruit is beneficial. Luscious fruits no matter upon what tree they grow or where they may be found must be enjoyed. The word of truth no matter which tongue utters it must be sanctioned. Absolute verities no matter in what book they be recorded must be accepted. If we harbor prejudice it will be the cause of deprivation and ignorance. The strife between religions, nations and races arises from misunderstanding. If we investigate the religions to discover the principles underlying their foundations we will find they agree, for the fundamental reality of them is one and not multiple. By this means the religionists of the world will reach their point of unity and reconciliation. They will ascertain the truth that the purpose of religion is the acquisition of praiseworthy virtues, betterment of morals, spiritual development of mankind, the real life and divine bestowals. All the prophets have been the promoters of these principles; none of them has been the promoter of corruption, vice or evil. They have summoned mankind to all good. They have united people in the love of God, invited them to the religions of the unity of mankind and exhorted them to amity and agreement. For example, we mention Abraham and

Moses. By this mention we do not mean the limitation implied in the mere names but intend the virtues which these names embody. When we say "Abraham" we mean thereby a manifestation of divine guidance, a center of human virtues, a source of heavenly bestowals to mankind, a dawning-point of divine inspiration and perfections. These perfections and graces are not limited to names and boundaries. When we find these virtues, qualities and attributes in any personality, we recognize the same reality shining from within and bow in acknowledgment of the Abrahamic perfections. Similarly we acknowledge and adore the beauty of Moses. Some souls were lovers of the name Abraham, loving the lantern instead of the light and when they saw this same light shining from another lantern they were so attached to the former lantern that they did not recognize its later appearance and illumination. Therefore those who were attached and held tenaciously to the name Abraham were deprived when the Abrahamic virtues reappeared in Moses. Similarly the Jews were believers in His Holiness Moses, awaiting the coming of the Messiah. The virtues and perfections of Moses became apparent in His Holiness Jesus Christ most effulgently but the Jews held to the name Moses, not adoring the virtues and perfections manifest in him. Had they been adoring these virtues and seeking these perfections they would assuredly have believed in His Holiness Jesus Christ when the same virtues and perfections shone in him. If we are lovers of the light we adore it in whatever lamp it may become manifest but if we love the lamp itself and the light is transferred to another lamp we will neither accept nor sanction it. Therefore we must follow and adore the virtues revealed in the messengers of God whether in Abraham, Moses, Jesus or other prophets but we must not adhere to and adore the lamp. We must recognize the sun no matter from what dawning-point it may shine forth, be it Mosaic, Abrahamic or any personal point of orientation whatever, for we are lovers of sunlight and not of orientation. We are lovers of illumination and not of lamps and candles. We are seekers for water no matter from what rock it may gush forth. We are in need of fruit in whatsoever orchard it may be ripened. We long for rain it matters not which cloud pours it down. We must not be fettered. If we renounce these fetters we shall agree, for all are seekers of reality. The counterfeit or imitation of true religion has adulterated human belief and the foundations have been lost sight of. The variance of these imitations has produced enmity and strife, war and bloodshed. Now the glorious and brilliant twentieth century has dawned and the divine bounty is radiating universally. The Sun of Truth

is shining forth in intense enkindlement. This is verily the century when these imitations must be forsaken, superstitions abandoned and God alone worshiped. We must look at the reality of the prophets and their teachings in order that we may agree.

Praise be to God! the springtime of God is at hand. This century is verily the spring season. The world of mind and kingdom of soul have become fresh and verdant by its bestowals. It has resuscitated the whole realm of existence. On one hand the lights of reality are shining; on the other the clouds of divine mercy are pouring down the fullness of heavenly bounty. Wonderful material progress is evident and great spiritual discoveries are being made. Truly this can be called the miracle of centuries for it is replete with manifestations of the miraculous. The time has come when all mankind shall be united, when all races shall be loyal to one fatherland, all religions become one religion and racial and religious bias pass away. It is a day in which the oneness of humankind shall uplift its standard and international peace like the true morning flood the world with its light. Therefore we offer supplications to God, asking him to dispel these gloomy clouds and uproot these imitations in order that the east and west may become radiant with love and unity; that the nations of the world shall embrace each other and the ideal spiritual brotherhood illumine the world like the glorious sun of the high heavens. This is our hope, our wish and desire. We pray that through the bounty and grace of God we may attain thereto. I am very happy to be present at this meeting which has innate radiance, intelligence, perception and longing to investigate reality. Such meetings are the glory of the world of mankind. I ask the blessing of God in your behalf.

III

May 29, 1912, at 780 West End Avenue, New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward B. Kinney.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

THE divine manifestations have been iconoclastic in their teachings, uprooting error, destroying false religious beliefs and summoning mankind anew to the fundamental oneness of God. All of them have likewise proclaimed the oneness of the world of humanity. The essential teaching of His Holiness Moses was the law of Sinai, the ten commandments. His Holiness Christ renewed and again revealed the commands of the one God and precepts of human action. In His Holiness Mohammed although the circle was

wider the intention of his teaching was likewise to uplift and unify humanity in the knowledge of the one God. In His Holiness the Bab the circle was again very much enlarged but the essential teaching was the same. The books of His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH number more than one hundred. Each one is an evident proof sufficient for mankind; each one from foundation to apex proclaims the essential unity of God and humanity, the love of God, abolition of war and the divine standard of peace. Each one also inculcates divine morality, the manifestation of lordly graces; in every word a book of meanings. For the Word of God is collective wisdom, absolute knowledge and eternal truth.

Consider the statement recorded in the first chapter of the book of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This is a brief statement but replete with greatest meanings. Its applications are illimitable and beyond the power of books or words to contain and express. Heretofore the doctors of theology have not expounded it but have restricted it to Jesus as "The Word made flesh," the separation of Jesus from God the father, and his descent upon the earth. In this way the individualized separation of the Godhead came to be taught.

The essential oneness of father, son and spirit has many meanings and constitutes the foundation of Christianity. Today we will merely give a synopsis of explanation. Why was Jesus the Word?

In the universe of creation, all phenomenal beings are as letters. Letters in themselves are meaningless and express nothing of thought or ideal; as for instance "a," "b," etc. Likewise all phenomenal beings are without independent meaning. But a word is composed of letters and has independent sense and meaning. Therefore as Christ conveyed the perfect meaning of divine reality and embodied independent significance he was the Word. He was as the station of reality compared to the station of metaphor. There is no intrinsic meaning in the leaves of a book but the thought they convey leads you to reflect upon the reality. The reality of Jesus was the perfect meaning, the Christhood in him which in the holy books is symbolized as the Word.

"The Word was with God." The Christhood means not the body of Jesus but the perfection of divine virtues manifest in him. Therefore it is written "He is God." This does not imply separation from God; even as it is not possible to separate the rays of the sun from the sun. The reality of Christ was the embodiment of divine virtues and attributes of God. For in divinity there is no duality. All adjectives, nouns and pronouns in that court of

sanctity are one; there is neither multiplicity nor division. The intention of this explanation is to show that the words of God have innumerable significances and mysteries of meanings; each one a thousand and more.

The tablets of BAHÁ 'ULLAH are many. The precepts and teachings they contain are universal, covering every subject. He has revealed scientific explanations ranging throughout all the realms of human inquiry and investigation; astronomy, biology, medical science, etc., etc. In *Kitab-el-Ighan* he has given expositions of the meanings of the gospel and other heavenly books. He wrote lengthy tablets upon civilization, sociology and government. Every subject is considered. His tablets are matchless in beauty and profundity. Even his enemies acknowledge the greatness of BAHÁ 'ULLAH, saying he was the miracle of humanity. This was their confession although they did not believe in him. He was eulogized by Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Mohammedans who denied his claim. They frequently said "He is matchless, unique." A Christian poet in the Orient wrote "Do not believe him a manifestation of God, yet his miracles are as great as the sun." Mirza Abul Fazl has mentioned many poems of this kind and there are numerous others. The testimony of his enemies witnessed that he was the "miracle of mankind," that he "walked in a special pathway of knowledge" and was "peerless in personality." His teachings are universal and the standard for human action. They are not merely theoretical and intended to remain in books. They are the principles of action. Results follow action. Mere theory is fruitless. Of what use is a book upon medicine if it is never taken from the library shelf? When practical activity has been manifested, the teachings of God have borne fruit.

The great and fundamental teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLAH are the oneness of God and unity of mankind. This is the bond of union among Bahais all over the world. They become united among themselves, then unite others. It is impossible to unite unless united. Christ said "Ye are the salt of the earth; if the salt has lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" This proves there were dissensions and lack of unity among his followers. Hence his admonition to unity of action.

Now must we likewise bind ourselves together in the utmost unity, be kind and loving to each other, sacrificing all our possessions, our honor, yea even our lives for each other. Then will it be proved that we have acted according to the teachings of God; that we have been real believers in the oneness of God and unity of mankind.

IV

May 30, 1912, at Broadway and 79th Street, New York.

Theosophical Lodge.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

I AM greatly pleased with these expressions of kindly feeling and evidences of spiritual susceptibility. Tonight I am very happy in the realization that our aims and purposes are the same, our desires and longings are one. This is a reflection and evidence of the oneness of the world of humanity and the intention toward accomplishment of the "Most Great Peace." Therefore we are united in will and purpose. In the world of existence there are no greater questions than these. Oneness of the world of humanity insures the glorification of man. International peace is the assurance of the welfare of all human kind. There are no greater motives and purposes in the human soul. As we are agreed upon them, the certainty of unity and concord between Bahais and Theosophists is most hopeful. Their purposes are one, their desires one, and spiritual susceptibilities are common to both. Their attention is devoted to the divine kingdom; they partake alike of its bounty.

Today the human world is in need of a great power by which these glorious principles and purposes may be executed. The cause of peace is a very great cause; it is the cause of God, and all the forces of the world are opposed to it. Governments for instance, consider militarism as the step to human progress, that division among men and nations is the cause of patriotism and honor, that if one nation attack and conquer another, gaining wealth, territory and glory thereby, this warfare and conquest, this bloodshed and cruelty are the cause of that victorious nation's advancement and prosperity. This is an utter mistake. Compare the nations of the world to the members of a family. A family is a nation in miniature. Simply enlarge the circle of the household and you have the nation. Enlarge the circle of nations and you have all humanity. The conditions surrounding the family surround the nation. The happenings in the family are the happenings in the life of the nation. Would it add to the progress and advancement of a family if dissensions should arise among its members, fighting, pillaging each other, jealous and revengeful of injury, seeking selfish advantage? Nay, this would be the cause of the effacement of progress and advancement. So it is in the great family of nations, for nations are but an aggregate of families. Therefore

as strife and dissension destroy a family and prevent its progress, so nations are destroyed and advancement hindered.

All the heavenly books, divine prophets, sages and philosophers agree that warfare is destructive to human development, and peace constructive. They agree that war and strife strike at the foundations of humanity. Therefore a power is needed to prevent war and to proclaim and establish the oneness of humanity.

But knowledge of the need of this power is not sufficient. Realizing that wealth is desirable is not becoming wealthy. The admission that scientific attainment is praiseworthy does not confer scientific knowledge. Acknowledgment of the excellence of honor does not make a man honorable. Knowledge of human conditions and the needed remedy for them is not the cause of their betterment. To admit that health is good does not constitute health. A skilled physician is needed to remedy existing human conditions. As a physician is required to have complete knowledge of pathology, diagnosis, therapeutics and treatment, so this world physician must be wise, skillful and capable before health will result. His mere knowledge is not health; it must be applied and the remedy carried out.

The attainment of any object is conditioned upon knowledge, volition and action. Unless these three conditions are forthcoming there is no execution or accomplishment. In the erection of a house it is first necessary to know the ground and design the house suitable for it; second, to obtain the means or funds necessary for the construction; third, to actually build it. Therefore a power is needed to carry out and execute what is known and admitted to be the remedy for human conditions; namely, the unification of mankind. Furthermore, it is evident that this cannot be realized through material process and means. The accomplishment of this unification cannot be through racial power, for races are different and diverse in tendencies. It cannot be through patriotic power, for nationalities are unlike. Nor can it be effected through political power since the policies of governments and nations are various. That is to say, any effort toward unification through these material means would benefit one and injure another because of unequal and individual interests. Some may believe this great remedy can be found in dogmatic insistence upon imitations and interpretations. This would likewise be without foundation and result. Therefore it is evident that no means but an ideal means, a spiritual power, divine bestowals and the breaths of the Holy Spirit will heal this world sickness of war, dissension and discord. Nothing else is

possible; nothing can be conceived of. But through spiritual means and the divine power it is possible and practicable.

Consider history. What has brought unity to nations, morality to peoples and benefits to mankind? If we reflect upon it we will find that establishing the divine religions has been the greatest means toward accomplishing the oneness of humanity. The foundation of divine reality in religion has done this; not imitations of ancestral religious forms. Imitations are opposed to each other and have ever been the cause of strife, enmity, jealousy and war. The divine religions are collective centers in which diverse standpoints may meet, agree and unify. They accomplish oneness of nativities, races and policies. For instance, His Holiness Christ united various nations, brought peace to warring peoples and established the oneness of human kind. The conquering Greeks and Romans, the prejudiced Egyptians and Assyrians were all in a condition of strife, enmity and war but His Holiness gathered these varied peoples together and removed the foundations of discord; not through racial, patriotic or political power but through divine power, the power of the Holy Spirit. This was not otherwise possible. All other efforts of men and nations remain as mere mention in history, without accomplishment.

As this great result is contingent upon divine power and bestowals, where shall the world obtain that power? God is eternal and ancient; not a new God. His sovereignty is of old, not recent; not merely existent these five or six thousand years. This infinite universe is from everlasting. The sovereignty, power, names and attributes of God are eternal, ancient. His names presuppose creation and predicate his existence and will. We say God is creator. This name creator appears when we connote creation. We say God is the provider. This name presupposes and proves the existence of the provided. God is love. This name proves the existence of the beloved. In the same way God is mercy, God is justice, God is life, etc., etc. Therefore as God is creator, eternal and ancient, there were always creatures and subjects existing and provided for. There is no doubt that divine sovereignty is eternal. Sovereignty necessitates subjects, ministers, trustees and others subordinate to sovereignty. Could there be a king without country, subjects and armies? If we conceive of a time when there were no creatures, no servants, no subjects of divine lordship we dethrone God and predicate a time when God was not. It would be as if he had been recently appointed and man had given these names to him. The divine sovereignty is ancient, eternal. God from everlasting was love, justice, power, creator, provider, the omniscient, the bountiful.

As the divine entity is eternal, the divine attributes are co-existent, co-eternal. The divine bestowals are therefore without beginning, without end. God is infinite; the works of God are infinite; the bestowals of God are infinite. As his divinity is eternal, his lordship and perfections are without end. As the bounty of the Holy Spirit is eternal, we can never say that his bestowals terminate, else he terminates. If we think of the sun and then try to conceive of the cessation of the solar flame and heat, we have predicated the non-existence of the sun. For separation of the sun from its rays and heat is inconceivable. Therefore if we limit the bestowals of God we limit the attributes of God and limit God.

Let us then trust in the bounty and bestowal of God. Let us be exhilarated with the divine breath, illumined and exalted by the heavenly glad-tidings. God has ever dealt with man in mercy and kindness. He who conferred the divine spirit in former times is abundantly able and capable at all times and periods to grant the same bestowals. Therefore let us be hopeful. The God who gave to the world formerly will do so now and in the future. God who breathed the breath of the Holy Spirit upon his servants will breathe it upon them now and hereafter. There is no cessation to his bounty. The divine spirit is penetrating from eternity to eternity for it is the bounty of God and the bounty of God is eternal. Can you conceive of limitation of the divine power in atomic verities or cessation of the divine bounty in existing organisms? Could you conceive the power now manifest in this glass in cohesion of its atoms, becoming non-existent? The energy by which the water of the sea is constituted, failing to exert itself and the sea disappearing? A shower of rain today and no more showers afterward? The effulgence of the sun terminated and no more light or heat?

When we observe that in the kingdom of minerals the divine bounties are continuous, how much more shall we expect and realize in the divine spiritual kingdom! How much greater the radiation of the lights of God and the bounty of life everlasting upon the soul of man! As the body of the universe is continuous, indestructible, the bounties and bestowals of the divine spirit are everlasting.

I praise God that I am privileged to be present in this revered assembly which is quickened with spiritual susceptibilities and heavenly attraction; its members investigating the reality; their utmost hope the establishment of international peace and their greatest purpose service to the world of humanity.

When we observe the world of created phenomena we discover that each atom of the atoms of substance is moving through the

various degrees and kingdoms of organic life. For instance, consider the ethereal element which is penetrating and traveling through all the contingent realities. When there is vibration or movement in the ethereal element, the eye is affected by that vibration and beholds what is known as light.

In the same manner the bestowals of God are moving and circulating throughout all created things. This illimitable divine bounty has no beginning and will have no ending. It is moving, circulating and becomes effective wherever capacity is developed to receive it. In every station there is a specialized capacity. Therefore we must be hopeful that through the bounty and favor of God, this spirit of life infusing all created beings shall quicken humanity and from its bestowals the human world become a divine world, this earthly kingdom the mirror of the realm of divinity, the virtues and perfections of the world of humanity become unveiled and the image and likeness of God be reflected from this temple.

I am most grateful to the President of this Society and express my most respectful greetings to him. It is my hope that all of you may be assisted in attaining the good-pleasure of God. The spiritual susceptibility of those present has made me very happy and I beg of God assistance and confirmation for all.

V

May 31, 1912, at Town Hall, Fanwood, N. J.

From Persian Notes

THE material world is subject to change and transformation. The cause of the kingdom is eternal; therefore it is the most important. But alas! day by day the power of the kingdom in human hearts is weakened and material forces gain the ascendancy. The divine signs are becoming less and less and human evidences grow stronger. They have reached such a degree that materialists are advancing and aggressive while divine forces are waning and vanishing. Irreligion has conquered religion. The cause of the chaotic condition lies in the differences among the religions, and finds its origin in the animosity and hatred existing between sects and denominations. The materialists have availed themselves of this dissension amongst the religions and are constantly attacking them, intending to uproot the tree of divine planting. Owing to strife and contention among themselves the religions are being weakened and vanquished. If a commander is at variance with

his army in the execution of military tactics there is no doubt he will be defeated by the enemy. Today the religions are at variance; enmity, strife and recrimination prevail among them; they refuse to associate, nay, rather, if necessary they shed each other's blood. Read history and record to see what dreadful events have happened in the name of religion. For instance, the Hebrew prophets were sent to announce Christ, but unfortunately the talmud and its superstitions veiled His Holiness so completely that they crucified their promised Messiah. Had they renounced the talmudic traditions and investigated the reality of the religion of Moses, they would have become believers in Christ. Blind adherence to forms and imitation of ancestral beliefs deprived them of their messianic bounty. They were not refreshed by the downpouring rain of mercy nor were they illumined by the rays of the Sun of Truth.

Imitation destroys the foundation of religion, extinguishes the spirituality of the human world, transforms heavenly illumination into darkness and deprives man of the knowledge of God. It is the cause of the victory of materialism and infidelity over religion; it is the denial of divinity and the law of revelation; it refuses prophethood and rejects the kingdom of God. When materialists subject imitations to the intellectual analysis of reason they find them to be mere superstitions; therefore they deny religion. For instance, the Jews have ideas as to the purity and impurity of religion but when you subject these ideas to scientific scrutiny they are found to be without foundation.

Is it impossible for us to receive the infinite bounties of God? Is it impossible to attain the virtues of the spiritual world because we are not living in the time of His Holiness Moses, the period of the prophets or the era of His Holiness Christ? Those were spiritual cycles. Can we not develop spiritually because we are far from them and are living in a materialistic age? The God of Moses and Jesus is able to bestow the same favors, nay greater favors upon his people in this day. For example, in past ages he bestowed reason, intelligence and understanding upon his servants. Can we say he is not able to confer his bounties in this century? Would it be just if he sent His Holiness Moses for the guidance of past nations and entirely neglected those living now? Could it be possible that this present period has been deprived of divine bounties while past ages of tyranny and barbarism received an inexhaustible portion of them? The same merciful God who bestowed his favors in the past has opened the doors of his kingdom to us. The rays of his sun are shining, the breath of the Holy Spirit is quickening. That omniscient God still assists and confirms us,

illumines our hearts, gladdens our souls and perfumes our nostrils with the fragrances of holiness. Divine wisdom and providence have encircled all and spread the heavenly table before us. We must take a bountiful share of this generous favor.

The work of the shepherd is to bring together the scattered sheep. If he disperses the united flock he is not the shepherd. As the prophets fulfilled their mission in this respect, they are the true shepherds. When His Holiness Moses appeared the Israelitish people were disorganized. Enmity and discord increased their disunion. With divine power he assembled and united this scattered flock, placed within their hearts the pearl of love, freed them from captivity and led them out of Egypt into the Holy Land. They made wonderful progress in sciences and arts. Bonds of social and national strength cemented them. Their progress in human virtues was so rapid and wonderful that they rose to the zenith of the Solomonic sovereignty. Could it be said that Moses was not a real shepherd and that he did not gather these scattered people together?

His Holiness Christ was a real shepherd. At the time of his manifestation, the Greeks, Romans, Assyrians and Egyptians were like so many scattered flocks. Christ breathed upon them the spirit of unity and harmonized them.

Therefore it is evident that the prophets of God have come to unite the children of men and not to disperse them; to establish the law of love and not enmity. Consequently we must lay aside all prejudice whether it be religious, racial, political or patriotic; we must become the cause of the unification of the human race. Strive for Universal Peace, seek the means of love and destroy the basis of disagreement so that this material world may become divine, the world of matter the realm of the kingdom and humanity attain to the world of perfection.

VI

*June 2, 1912, at Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. and Tenth St.,
New York.*

Notes by Esther Foster

IN the terminology of the holy books, the church has been called the "house of the covenant" for the reason that the church is a place where people of different thoughts and divergent tendencies,—where all races and nations may come together in a coven-

ant of permanent fellowship. In the temple of the Lord, in the house of God, man must be submissive to God. He must enter into a covenant with his Lord in order that he shall obey the divine commands and become unified with his fellow-man. He must not consider divergence of races nor difference of nationalities; he must not view variation in denomination and creed nor should he take into account the differing degrees of thoughts; nay, rather, he should look upon all as mankind and realize that all must become united and agreed. He must recognize all as one family, one race, one nativity; see all as the servants of one God, dwelling beneath the shelter of his mercy. The purport of this is that the church is a collective center. Temples are symbols of the reality and divinity of God; the collective center of mankind. Consider how within a temple every race and people is seen and represented; all in the presence of the Lord, covenanting together in a covenant of love and fellowship; all offering the same melody, prayer and supplication to God. Therefore it is evident that the church is a collective center for mankind. For this reason there have been churches and temples in all the divine religions; but the real collective centers are the manifestations of God, of whom the church or temple is a symbol and expression. That is to say, the manifestation of God is the real divine temple and collective center of which the outer church is but a symbol.

Recall the statement of His Holiness Jesus Christ in the gospel. Addressing Peter, he said "Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my church." It is evident therefore that the church of God is the law of God and that the actual edifice is but one symbol thereof. For the law of God is a collective center which unites various peoples, nativities, tongues and opinions. All find shelter in its protection and become attracted by it. For example, His Holiness Moses and the Mosaic law were the unifying center for the scattered sheep of Israel. He united these wandering flocks, brought them under control of divine law, educated and unified them, caused them to agree and uplifted them to a superlative degree of development. At a time when they were debased they became glorified; ignorant they were made knowing; in the bonds of captivity they were given freedom; in short they were unified. Day by day they advanced until they attained the highest degree of progress witnessed in that age. We prove therefore that the manifestation of God and the law of God accomplish unity.

It is self-evident that humanity is at variance. Human tastes differ; thoughts, nativities, races and tongues are many. The need of a collective center by which these differences may be counter-

balanced and the people of the world be unified is obvious. Consider how nothing but a spiritual power can bring about this unification; for material conditions and mental aspects are so widely different that agreement and unity are not possible through outer means. It is possible however for all to become unified through one spirit, just as all may receive light from one sun. Therefore assisted by the collective and divine center which is the law of God and the reality of his manifestation, we can overcome these conditions until they pass away entirely and the races advance.

Consider the time of His Holiness Christ. Peoples, races and governments were many, religions, sects and denominations were various but when His Holiness appeared, the messianic reality proved to be the collective center which unified them beneath the same tabernacle of agreement. Reflect upon this. Could His Holiness Jesus Christ have united these divergent factors or brought about such results through political power? Was this unity and agreement possible through material forces? It is evident that it was not; nay, rather, these various peoples were brought together through a divine power, through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They were blended and quickened by the infusion of a new life. The spirituality of Christ overcame their difficulties so that their disagreements passed away completely. In this way these divergent peoples were unified and became welded in a bond of love which alone can unite hearts. Therefore it is shown that the divine manifestations, the holy mouth-pieces of God are the collective centers of God. These heavenly messengers are the real shepherds of humanity, for whenever they appear in the world they unite the scattered sheep. The collective center has always appeared in the Orient. His Holiness Abraham, His Holiness Moses, His Holiness Jesus Christ, His Holiness Mohammed were collective centers of their day and time, and all arose in the east. Today His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLAH is the collective center of unity for all mankind and the splendor of his light has likewise dawned from the east. He founded the oneness of humanity in Persia. He established harmony and agreement among the various peoples of religious beliefs, denominations, sects and cults by freeing them from the fetters of past imitations and superstitions; leading them to the very foundation of the divine religions. From this foundation shines forth the radiance of spirituality which is unity, the love of God, the knowledge of God, praiseworthy morals and the virtues of the human world. BAHÁ'ULLAH renewed these principles, just as the coming of spring refreshes the earth and confers new life upon all phenomenal beings. For the freshness of the former spring-

times had waned, the vivification had ceased, the life-giving breezes were no longer wafting their fragrances, winter and the season of darkness had come. His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH came to renew the life of the world with this new and divine springtime which has pitched its tent in the countries of the Orient in the utmost power and glory. It has refreshed the world of the Orient and there is no doubt that if the world of the Occident should abandon dogmas of the past, turn away from empty imitations and superstitions, investigate the reality of the divine religions, holding fast to the example of His Holiness Jesus Christ, acting in accordance with the teachings of God and becoming unified with the Orient, an eternal happiness and felicity would be attained.

In the western world material civilization has attained the highest point of development but divine civilization was founded in the land of the east. The east must acquire material civilization from the west and the west must receive spiritual civilization from the east. This will establish a mutual bond. When these two come together, the world of humanity will present a glorious aspect and extraordinary progress will be achieved. This is clear and evident; no proof is needed. The degree of material civilization in the Occident cannot be denied; nor can any one fail to confirm the spiritual civilization of the Orient, for all the divine foundations of human uplift have appeared in the east. This likewise is clear and evident. Therefore you must assist the east in order that it may attain material progress. The east must likewise promulgate the principles of spiritual civilization in the western world. By this commingling and union, the human race will attain the highest degree of prosperity and development. Material civilization alone is not sufficient and will not prove productive. The physical happiness of material conditions was allotted to the animal. Consider how the animal has attained the fullest degree of physical felicity. A bird perches upon the loftiest branch and builds there its nest with consummate beauty and skill. All the grains and seeds of the meadows are its wealth and food; all the fresh water of mountain springs and rivers of the plain are for its enjoyment. Truly this is the acme of material happiness to which even a human creature cannot attain. This is the honor of the animal kingdom. But the honor of the human kingdom is the attainment of spiritual happiness in the human world, the acquisition of the knowledge and love of God. The honor allotted to man is the acquisition of the supreme virtues of the human world. This is his real happiness and felicity. But if material happiness and spiritual felicity be conjoined, it will be "delight upon delight," as the Arabs say.

We pray that God will unite the east and the west in order that these two civilizations may be exchanged and mutually enjoyed. I am sure it will come to pass for this is the radiant century. This is an age for the outpouring of divine mercy upon the exigency of this new century,—the unity of the east and the west. It will surely be accomplished.

Question: What is the status of woman in the Orient?

Answer: The status of woman in former times was exceedingly deplorable for it was the belief of the Orient that it was best for woman to be ignorant. It was considered preferable that she should not know reading or writing, in order that she might not be informed of events in the world. Woman was considered to be created for rearing children and attending to the duties of the household. If she pursued educational courses it was deemed contrary to chastity; hence women were made prisoners of the household. The houses did not even have windows opening upon the outside world. His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLAH destroyed these ideas and proclaimed the equality of man and woman. He made woman respected by commanding that all women be educated; that there be no difference in the education of the two sexes and that man and woman share the same rights. In the estimation of God there is no distinction of sex. One whose thought is pure, whose education is superior, whose scientific attainments are greater, whose deeds of philanthropy excel, be that one man or woman, white or colored, is entitled to full rights and recognition; there is no differentiation whatsoever. Therefore the status of women in the east has undergone change. At present they attend schools and colleges, pursue the ordinary curriculum and day by day are becoming indispensable to men and equal to them. This is the present condition of womankind in Persia.

Question: What relation do you sustain to the founder of your belief? Are you his successor in the same manner as the Pope of Rome?

Answer: I am the servant of BAHÁ'ULLAH the founder and in this I glory. No honor do I consider greater than this and it is my hope that I may be confirmed in servitude to BAHÁ'ULLAH. This is my station.

Question: Is it not a fact that Universal Peace cannot be accomplished until there is political democracy in all the countries of the world?

Answer: It is very evident that in the future there shall be no centralization in the countries of the world, be they constitu-

tional in government, republican or democratic in form. The United States may be held up as the example of future government, that is to say, each province will be independent in itself but there will be federal union protecting the interests of the various independent states. It may not be a republican or a democratic form. To cast aside centralization which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time. This will be productive of international peace. Another fact of equal importance in bringing about international peace is woman's suffrage. That is to say, when perfect equality shall be established between men and women, peace may be realized for the simple reason that womankind in general will never favor warfare. Women will not be willing to allow those whom they have so tenderly cared for to go to the battlefield. When they shall have a vote they will oppose any cause of warfare. Another factor which will bring about Universal Peace is the linking together of the Orient and the Occident.

Question: What is your belief about reincarnation?

Answer: The subject of reincarnation has two aspects. One is that which the Hindostanese people believe, and even that is subdivided into two;—reincarnation and metempsychosis. According to one belief the soul goes and then returns in certain reincarnations; therefore they say that a sick person is sick because of actions in a previous incarnation and that this is retribution. The other school of Hindooism believes that man sometimes appears as an animal, a donkey for instance, and that this is retribution for past acts. I am referring to the beliefs in that country, the beliefs of the schools. There is a reincarnation of the prophetic mission. Jesus Christ speaking of John the Baptist, declared he was Elias. When John the Baptist was questioned, he said "I am not Elias." These two statements are apparently contradictory but in reality they do not contradict. The light is one light. The light which illumined this lamp last night is illuminating it tonight. This does not mean that the identical rays of light have reappeared but the virtues of illumination. The light which revealed itself through the glass reveals itself again so that we can say the light of this evening is the light of last evening relighted. This is as regards its virtues and not as regards its former identity. This is our view of reincarnation. We believe in that which Jesus Christ and all the prophets have believed. For example His Holiness the Bab states "I am the return of all the prophets." This is significant of the oneness of the prophetic virtues, the oneness of power, the oneness of bestowal, the oneness of radiation, the oneness of expression, the oneness of revelation.

Question: What is the attitude of your belief toward the family?

Answer: According to the teachings of BAHÁ' ULLÁH, the family being a human unit must be educated according to the rules of sanctity. All the virtues must be taught the family. The integrity of the family bond must be constantly considered and the rights of the individual members must not be transgressed. The rights of the son, the father, the mother, none of them must be transgressed, none of them must be arbitrary. Just as the son has certain obligations to his father, the father likewise has certain obligations to his son. The mother, the sister and other members of the household have their certain prerogatives. All these rights and prerogatives must be conserved, yet the unity of the family must be sustained. The injury of one shall be considered the injury of all; the comfort of each the comfort of all; the honor of one the honor of all.

Question: What is the relation of the Bahai teaching to the ancient Zoroastrian religion?

Answer: The religions of God have the same foundation but the dogmas appearing later have differed. Each of the divine religions has two aspects. The first is essential. It concerns morality and development of the virtues of the human world. This aspect is common to all. It is fundamental; it is one; there is no difference, no variation in it. As regards the inculcation of morality and the development of human virtues there is no difference whatsoever between the teachings of Zoroaster, Jesus and BAHÁ' ULLÁH. In this they agree; they are one. The second aspect of the divine religions is non-essential. It concerns human needs and undergoes change in every cycle according to the exigency of the time. For example, in the time of Moses divorce was conformable to the needs and conditions. His Holiness Moses therefore established it; but in the time of His Holiness Christ divorces were numerous and the cause of corruption. As they were not suitable for the time, he made divorce unlawful and likewise changed other laws. These are needs and conditions which have to do with the conduct of society; therefore they undergo change according to the exigency of the time. His Holiness Moses dwelt in the desert. As there were no penitentiaries, no means of restitution in the desert and wilderness, the laws of God were "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Could this be carried out now? If a man destroys another man's eye are you willing to destroy the eye of the offender? If a man's teeth are broken or his ear cut off will you demand a corresponding mutilation of his assailant?

This would not be conformable to conditions of humanity at the present time. If a man steals shall his hand be cut off? This punishment was just and right in the law of Moses but it was applicable to the desert where there were no prisons and reformatory institutions of later and higher forms of government. Today you have government and organization, a police system, a judge and trial by jury. The punishment and penalty is now different. Therefore the non-essentials which deal with details of community are changed according to the exigency of the time and conditions. But the essential foundation of the teachings of Moses, Zoroaster, Jesus and BAHÁ' ULLAH is identical, is one; there is no difference whatsoever."

Question: Is peace a greater word than love?

Answer: No! love is greater than peace, for peace is founded upon love. Love is the objective point of peace and peace is an outcome of love. Until love is attained, peace cannot be; but there is a so-called peace without love. The love which is from God is the fundamental. This love is the object of all human attainment, the radiance of heaven, the light of man.

Question: Will you state the tenets of your faith?

Answer: First; investigate the reality. Man must leave imitation and seek reality. The contemporaneous religious beliefs differ because of their allegiance to dogma. It is necessary therefore to abandon imitations and seek their fundamental reality.

Second; the oneness of humanity. All human creatures are the servants of God. All are submerged in the sea of his mercy. The creator of all is one God; the provider, the giver, the protector of all is one God. He is kind to all; why should we be unkind? All live beneath the shadow of his love; why should we hate each other? There are certain people who are ignorant; they must be educated. Some are like children; they must be trained and educated until they reach maturity. Others are sickly, intellectually ill, spiritually ill; they must be treated and healed. But all are the servants of God.

Third; religion must be conducive to love of all, the cause of fellowship, unity and light. If it be the cause of enmity, bloodshed and hatred, its non-being is better than its being, its non-existence better than its existence. Religion and science conform and agree. If a question of religion violates reason and does not agree with science, it is imagination and not worthy of credence.

Fourth; equality between men and women. In all degrees they are equal. The readjustment of the economic laws for the liveli-

hood of man must be effected in order that all humanity may live in the greatest happiness according to their respective degrees.

Fifth; spiritual brotherhood. All mankind must attain to spiritual fraternity, that is to say, fraternity in the Holy Spirit; for patriotic, racial and political fraternity are of no avail. Their results are meager but divine fraternity, spiritual fraternity is the cause of unity and amity among mankind. As heretofore material civilization has been extended, the divine civilization must now be promulgated. Until the two agree, real happiness among mankind will be unknown. By mere intellectual development and power of reason, man cannot attain to his fullest degree; that is to say, by means of intellect alone he cannot accomplish the progress effected by religion. For the philosophers of the past strove in vain to revivify the world of mankind through the intellectual faculty. The most of which they were capable was educating themselves and a limited number of disciples; they themselves have confessed failure. Therefore the world of humanity must be confirmed by the breath of the Holy Spirit in order to receive universal education. Through the infusion of divine power all nations and peoples become quickened and universal happiness is possible.

These are some of the principles of the Bahais.

Question: Will women or men aid this new religion most? Which will be most capable?

Answer: In Persia the men have aided it more but in the west perchance the women. In the west women evidently have precedence in religion but in the east men surpass the women.

Question: What will be the food of the united people?

Answer: As humanity progresses, meat will be used less and less, for the teeth of man are not carnivorous. For example, the lion is endowed with carnivorous teeth which are intended for meat and if meat be not found, the lion starves. The lion cannot graze; its teeth are of different shape. The digestive system of the lion is such that it cannot receive nourishment save through meat. The eagle has a crooked beak; the lower part shorter than the upper. It cannot pick up grain; it cannot graze; therefore it is compelled to partake of meat. The domestic animals have herbivorous teeth formed to cut grass which is their fodder. The human teeth, the molars, are formed to grind grain. The front teeth, the incisors, are for fruits, etc. It is therefore quite apparent according to the implements for eating, man's food is intended to be grain and not meat. When mankind is more fully developed, the eating of meat will gradually cease.

VII

June 8, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by John G. Grundy

THE body-politic today is greatly in need of a physician. It is similar to a human body afflicted with severe ailments. A doctor diagnoses the case and prescribes treatment. He does not prescribe however until he has made the diagnosis. The disease which afflicts the body-politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found and the condition is such that unless their susceptibilities are quickened by some power so that unity, love and accord may develop within them, there can be no healing, no agreement among mankind. Love and unity are the needs of the body-politic today. Without these there can be no progress or prosperity attained. Therefore the friends of God must adhere to the power which will create this love and unity in the hearts of the sons of men. Science cannot cure the illness of the body-politic. Science cannot create amity and fellowship in human hearts. Neither can patriotism nor racial allegiance effect a remedy. It must be accomplished solely through the divine bounties and spiritual bestowals which have descended from God in this day for that purpose. This is an exigency of the times and the divine remedy has been provided. The spiritual teachings of the religion of God can alone create this love, unity and accord in human hearts.

Therefore hold to these heavenly agencies which God has provided, so that through the love of God this soul bond may be established, this heart attachment realized and the light of the reality of unity be reflected from you throughout the universe. If we do not hold fast to these divine agencies and means, no result will be possible. Let us pray to God that he will exhilarate our spirits so we may behold the descent of his bounties, illumine our eyes to witness his great guidance and attune our ears to enjoy the celestial melodies of the heavenly Word. This is our greatest hope. This is our ultimate purpose,

Discourses of Abdul-Baha delivered in Philadelphia.

*June 9, 1912, at Unitarian Church, 15th Street and Girard Ave.,
Philadelphia, Pa.*

Notes by Edna McKinney

I HAVE come from distant countries of the Orient where the lights of heaven have ever shone forth; from regions where the manifestations of God have appeared and the radiance and power of God have been revealed to mankind. The purpose and intention of my visit is that perchance a bond of unity and agreement may be established between the east and west, that divine love may encompass all nations, divine radiance enlighten both continents and the bounties of the Holy Spirit revivify the body of the world. Therefore I supplicate the threshold of God that the Orient and Occident may become as one, that the various peoples and religions be unified and souls be blended as the waves of one sea. May they become as trees, flowers and roses which adorn and beautify the same garden.

The realm of divinity is an indivisible oneness wholly sanctified above human comprehension; for intellectual knowledge of creation is finite whereas comprehension of divinity is infinite. How can the finite comprehend the infinite? We are utter poverty whereas the reality of divinity is absolute wealth. How can utter poverty understand absolute wealth? We are utter weakness whereas the reality of divinity is absolute power. Utter weakness can never attain nor apprehend absolute power. The phenomenal beings which are captives of limitations are ever subject to transformation and change in condition. How can such phenomenal beings ever grasp the heavenly, eternal, unchanging reality? Assuredly this is an absolute impossibility, for when we study the creational world we see that the difference of degree is a barrier to such knowing. An inferior degree can never comprehend a higher degree or kingdom. The mineral, no matter how far it may advance can never attain knowledge of the vegetable. No matter how the plant or vegetable may progress it cannot perceive the reality of the animal kingdom; in other words it cannot grasp a world of life that is endowed with the power of the senses. The animal may develop a wonderful degree of intelligence but it can never attain the power of ideation and conscious reflection which

belong to man. It is evident therefore that difference in degree is ever an obstacle to comprehension of the higher by the lower, the superior by the inferior. This flower, so beautiful, fresh, fragrant and delicately scented, although it may have attained perfection in its own kingdom, nevertheless cannot comprehend the human reality, cannot possess sight and hearing; therefore it exists unaware of the world of man although man and itself are both accidental or conditional beings. The difference is difference of degree. The limitation of an inferior degree is the barrier to comprehension.

This being so, how can the human reality which is limited comprehend the eternal, unmanifest creator? How can man comprehend the omniscient omnipresent Lord? Undoubtedly he cannot, for whatever comes within the grasp of human mind is man's limited conception whereas the divine kingdom is unlimited, infinite. But although the reality of divinity is sanctified beyond the comprehension of its creatures, it has bestowed its bounties upon all kingdoms of the phenomenal world, and evidences of spiritual manifestation are witnessed throughout the realms of contingent existence. The lights of God illumine the world of man even as the effulgences of the sun shine gloriously upon the material creation. The Sun of Reality is one, its bestowal is one, its heat is one, its rays are one; it shines upon all the phenomenal world, but the capacity for comprehending it differs according to the kingdoms; each kingdom receiving the light and bounty of the eternal Sun according to its capacity. The black stone receives the light of the material sun; the trees and animals likewise are recipients of it. All exist and are developed by that one bounty. The perfect soul of man, that is to say, the perfect individual is like a mirror wherein the Sun of Reality is reflected. The perfections, the image and light of that Sun have been revealed in the mirror; its heat and illumination are manifest therein, for that pure soul is a perfect expression of the Sun.

These mirrors are the messengers of God who tell the story of divinity just as the material mirror reflects the light and disc of the outer sun in the skies. In this way the image and effulgence of the Sun of Reality appear in the mirrors of the manifestations of God. This is what His Holiness Jesus Christ meant when he declared "the father is in the son," the purpose being that the reality of that eternal Sun had become reflected in its glory in Christ himself. It does not signify that the Sun of Reality had descended from its place in heaven or that its essential being had effected an entrance into the mirror, for there is neither entrance nor exit

for the reality of divinity; there is no ingress or egress; it is sanctified above all things and ever occupies its own holy station. Changes and transformations are not applicable to that eternal reality. Transformation from condition to condition is the attribute of contingent realities.

At a time when warfare and strife prevailed among nations, when enmity and hatred separated sects and denominations and human differences were very great, BAHÁ 'ULLÁH appeared upon the horizon of the east proclaiming the oneness of God and the unity of the world of humanity. He promulgated the teaching that all mankind are the servants of one God; that all have come into being through the bestowal of the one creator; that God is kind to all, nurtures, rears and protects all, provides for all and extends his love and mercy to all races and people. Inasmuch as God is loving, why should we be unjust and unkind? As God manifests loyalty and mercy, why should we show forth enmity and hatred? Surely the divine policy is more perfect than human plan and theory; for no matter how wise and sagacious man may become he can never attain a policy that is superior to the policy of God. Therefore we must emulate the attitude of God, love all people, be just and kind to every human creature. We must consider all as the leaves, branches and fruit of one tree, children of one household; for all are the progeny of Adam. We are waves of one sea, grass of the same meadow, stars in the same heaven and find shelter in the universal divine protector. If one be sick he must be treated, the ignorant must be educated, the sleeping must be awakened, the dead must be quickened with life. These were principles of the teachings of His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLÁH.

In proclaiming the oneness of mankind, he taught that men and women are equal in the sight of God and there is no distinction to be made between them. The only difference between them now is due to lack of education and training. If woman is given equal opportunity of education, distinction and estimate of inferiority will disappear. The world of humanity has two wings as it were, one is the female, the other is the male. If one wing be defective the strong perfect wing will not be capable of flight. The world of humanity has two hands. If one be imperfect the capable hand is restricted and unable to perform its duties. God is the creator of mankind. He has endowed both sexes with perfections and intelligence, given them physical members and organs of sense, without differentiation or distinction as to superiority; therefore why should woman be considered inferior? This is not according to the plan and justice of God. He has created them equal; in his esti-

mate there is no question of sex. The one whose heart is purest, whose deeds are most perfect is acceptable to God, male or female. Often in history women have been the pride of humanity; for example, Mary the mother of Jesus. She was the glory of mankind. Mary Magdalene, Ayesbah daughter of Pharaoh, Sarah wife of Abraham and innumerable others have glorified the human race by their excellences. In this day there are women among the Bahais who far outshine men. They are wise, talented, well-informed, progressive, most intelligent and the light of men. They surpass men in courage. When they speak in meetings, the men listen with great respect. Furthermore, the education of women is of greater importance than the education of men, for they are the mothers of the race and mothers rear the children. The first teachers of children are the mothers. Therefore they must be capably trained in order to educate both sons and daughters. There are many provisions in the words of BAHÁ 'ULLAH in regard to this.

He promulgated the adoption of the same course of education for man and woman. Daughters and sons must follow the same curriculum of study, thereby promoting unity of the sexes. When all mankind shall receive the same opportunity of education and the equality of men and women be realized, the foundations of war will be utterly destroyed. Without equality this will be impossible because all differences and distinction are conducive to discord and strife. Equality between men and women is conducive to the abolition of warfare for the reason that women will never be willing to sanction it. Mothers will not give their sons as sacrifices upon the battlefield after twenty years of anxiety and loving devotion in rearing them from infancy, no matter what cause they are called upon to defend. There is no doubt that when women obtain equality of rights war will entirely cease among mankind.

BAHÁ 'ULLAH promulgated the fundamental oneness of religion. He taught that reality is one and not multiple, that it underlies all divine precepts and that the foundations of the religions are therefore the same. Certain forms and imitations have gradually arisen. As these vary, they cause differences among religionists. If we set aside these imitations and seek the fundamental reality underlying our beliefs we reach a basis of agreement because it is one and not multiple.

Among other principles of BAHÁ 'ULLAH's teachings was the harmony of science and religion. Religion must stand the analysis of reason. It must agree with scientific fact and proof so that science will sanction religion and religion fortify science. Both are indissolubly welded and joined in the reality. If statements

and teachings of religion are found to be unreasonable and contrary to science, they are outcomes of superstition and imagination. Innumerable doctrines and beliefs of this character have arisen in the past ages. Consider the superstitions and mythology of the Romans, Greeks and Egyptians; all were contrary to religion and science. It is now evident that the beliefs of these nations were superstitions but in those times they held to them most tenaciously. For example, one of the many Egyptian idols was to those people an authenticated miracle whereas in reality it was a piece of stone. As science could not sanction the miraculous origin and nature of a piece of rock the belief in it must have been superstition. It is now evident that it was superstition. Therefore we must cast aside such beliefs and investigate reality. That which is found to be real and conformable to reason must be accepted, and whatever science and reason cannot support must be rejected as imitation and not reality. Then differences of belief will disappear. All will become as one family, one people, and the same susceptibility to the divine bounty and education will be witnessed among mankind.

O Lord! O thou hope of people! Thou art the shelter of all these thy servants. Thou knowest the secrets and mysteries. We are all sinners and thou art the shelter of sinners, the merciful, the clement. O Lord! look not at our shortcomings. Deal with us according to thy grace and bestowal. Our shortcomings are many but the ocean of thy forgiveness is boundless. Therefore confirm and strengthen us. Assist us in that which will make us acceptable at thy threshold. Illumine the hearts, make the eyes seeing, render the ears attentive, resuscitate the dead and heal the sick. Render the poor rich and the fugitive confident. Accept us in thy kingdom. Illumine us with the light of kindness. Thou art the generous! Thou art the clement! Thou art the kind!

II

*June 9, 1912, at Baptist Temple, Broad and Berks Streets,
Philadelphia, Pa.*

Notes by Edna McKinney

I AM greatly pleased to be present this evening. Truly this is a spiritual gathering. I perceive the fragrances of the heavenly kingdom among you; devotion to God, sincere intention and spiritual love. Glad-tidings!

From the time of the creation of Adam to this day there have

been two pathways in the world of humanity; one the natural or materialistic, the other the religious or spiritual. The pathway of nature is the pathway of the animal realm. The animal acts in accordance with the requirements of nature, follows its own instincts and desires. Whatever its impulses and proclivities may be it has the liberty to gratify them; yet it is a captive of nature. It cannot deviate in the least degree from the road nature has established. It is utterly minus spiritual susceptibilities, ignorant of divine religion and without knowledge of the kingdom of God. The animal possesses no power of ideation or conscious intelligence; it is a captive of the senses and deprived of that which lies beyond them. It is subject to what the eye sees, the ear hears, the nostrils sense, the taste detects and touch reveals. These sensations are acceptable and sufficient for the animal. But that which is beyond the range of the senses, that realm of phenomena through which the conscious pathway to the kingdom of God leads, the world of spiritual susceptibilities and divine religion,—of these the animal is completely unaware, for in its highest station it is a captive of nature.

One of the strangest things witnessed is that the materialists of today are proud of their natural instincts and bondage. They state that nothing is entitled to belief and acceptance except that which is sensible or tangible. By their own statements they are captives of nature, unconscious of the spiritual world, uninformed of the divine kingdom and unaware of heavenly bestowals. If this be a virtue the animal has attained it to a superlative degree, for the animal is absolutely ignorant of the realm of spirit and out of touch with the inner world of conscious realization. The animal would agree with the materialist in denying the existence of that which transcends the senses. If we admit that being limited to the plane of the senses is a virtue the animal is indeed more virtuous than man, for it is entirely bereft of that which lies beyond, absolutely oblivious of the kingdom of God and its traces whereas God has deposited within the human creature an illimitable power by which he can rule the world of nature.

Consider how all other phenomenal existence and beings are captives of nature. The sun, that colossal center of our solar system, the giant stars and planets, the towering mountains, the earth itself and its kingdoms of life lower than the human,—all are captives of nature except man. No other created thing can deviate in the slightest degree from obedience to natural law. The sun in its glory and greatness millions of miles away is held prisoner in its orbit of universal revolution, captive of universal natural control.

Man is the ruler of nature. According to natural law and limitation he should remain upon the earth, but behold how he violates this command and soars above the mountains in aeroplanes. He sails in ships upon the surface of the ocean and dives into its depths in submarines. Man makes nature his servant; harnesses the mighty energy of electricity for instance and imprisons it in a small lamp for his uses and convenience. He speaks from the east to the west through a wire. He is able to store and preserve his voice in a phonograph. Though he is a dweller upon earth he penetrates the mysteries of starry worlds inconceivably distant. He discovers latent realities within the bosom of the earth, uncovers treasures, penetrates secrets and mysteries of the phenomenal world and brings to light that which according to nature's jealous laws should remain hidden, unknown and unfathomable. Through an ideal inner power man brings these realities forth from the invisible plane to the visible. This is contrary to nature's law.

It is evident therefore that man is ruler over nature's sphere and province. Nature is inert, man is progressive. Nature has no consciousness, man is endowed with it. Nature is without volition and acts perforce whereas man possesses a mighty will. Nature is incapable of discovering mysteries or realities whereas man is especially fitted to do so. Nature is not in touch with the realm of God, man is attuned to its evidences. Nature is uninformed of God, man is conscious of him. Man acquires divine virtues, nature is denied them. Man can voluntarily discontinue vices, nature has no power to modify the influence of its instincts. Altogether it is evident that man is more noble and superior; that in him there is an ideal power surpassing nature. He has consciousness, volition, memory, intelligent power, divine attributes and virtues of which nature is completely deprived, bereft and minus; therefore man is higher and nobler by reason of the ideal and heavenly force latent and manifest in him.

How strange then it seems that man, notwithstanding his endowment with this ideal power, will descend to a level beneath him and declare himself no greater than that which is manifestly inferior to his real station. God has created such a conscious spirit within him that he is the most wonderful of all contingent beings. In ignoring these virtues he descends to the material plane, considers matter the ruler of existence and denies that which lies beyond. Is this virtue? In its fullest sense this is animalistic, for the animal realizes nothing more. In fact from this standpoint the animal is the greater philosopher because it is completely ignorant of the kingdom of God, possesses no spiritual susceptibilities and

is uninformed of the heavenly world. In brief, this is a view of the pathway of nature.

The second pathway is that of religion, the road of the divine kingdom. It involves the acquisition of praiseworthy attributes, heavenly illumination and righteous actions in the world of humanity. This pathway is conducive to the progress and uplift of the world. It is the source of human enlightenment, training and ethical improvement; the magnet which attracts the love of God because of the knowledge of God it bestows. This is the road of the holy manifestations of God for they are in reality the foundation of the divine religion of oneness. There is no change or transformation in this pathway. It is the cause of human betterment, the acquisition of heavenly virtues and the illumination of mankind.

Alas! that humanity is completely submerged in imitations and unrealities notwithstanding the truth of divine religion has ever remained the same. Superstitions have obscured the fundamental reality, the world is darkened and the light of religion is not apparent. This darkness is conducive to differences and dissensions; rites and dogmas are many and various; therefore discord has arisen among the religious systems whereas religion is for the unification of mankind. True religion is the source of love and agreement amongst men, the cause of the development of praiseworthy qualities; but the people are holding to the counterfeit and imitation, negligent of the reality which unifies; so they are bereft and deprived of the radiance of religion. They follow superstitions inherited from their fathers and ancestors. To such an extent has this prevailed that they have taken away the heavenly light of divine truth and sit in the darkness of imitations and imaginations. That which was meant to be conducive to life has become the cause of death; that which should have been an evidence of knowledge is now a proof of ignorance; that which was a factor in the sublimity of human nature has proved to be its degradation. Therefore the realm of the religionist has gradually narrowed and darkened and the sphere of the materialist has widened and advanced; for the religionist has held to imitation and counterfeit, neglecting and discarding holiness and the sacred reality of religion. When the sun sets it is the time for bats to fly. They come forth because they are creatures of the night. When the lights of religion become darkened the materialists appear. They are the bats of night. The decline of religion is their time of activity; they seek the shadows when the world is darkened and clouds have spread over it.

His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH has risen from the eastern horizon.

Like the glory of the sun he has come into the world. He has reflected the reality of divine religion, dispelled the darkness of imitations, laid the foundation of new teachings and resuscitated the world.

The first teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH is the investigation of reality. Man must seek the reality himself, forsaking imitations and adherence to mere hereditary forms. As the nations of the world are following imitations in lieu of truth and as imitations are many and various, differences of belief have been productive of strife and warfare. So long as these imitations remain the oneness of the world of humanity is impossible. Therefore we must investigate the reality in order that by its light the clouds and darkness may be dispelled. Reality is one reality; it does not admit multiplicity or division. If the nations of the world investigate reality they will agree and become united. Many people and sects in Persia have sought reality through the guidance and teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH. They have become united and now live in a state of agreement and love; among them there is no longer the least trace of enmity and strife.

The Jews were expecting the appearance of the Messiah, looking forward to it with devotion of heart and soul but because they were submerged in imitations they did not believe in His Holiness Jesus Christ when he appeared. Finally they rose against him even to the extreme of persecution and shedding his blood. Had they investigated reality they would have accepted their promised Messiah. These blind imitations and hereditary prejudices have invariably become the cause of bitterness and hatred and have filled the world with darkness and violence of war. Therefore we must seek the fundamental truth in order to extricate ourselves from such conditions and then with illumined faces find the pathway to the kingdom of God.

The second teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH concerns the unity of mankind. All are the servants of God and members of one human family. God has created all and all are his children. He rears, nourishes, provides for and is kind to all. Why should we be unjust and unkind? This is the policy of God, the lights of which have shone throughout the world. His sun bestows its effulgence unsparingly upon all, his clouds send down rain without distinction or favor, his breezes refresh the whole earth. It is evident that humankind without exception is sheltered beneath his mercy and protection. Some are imperfect; they must be perfected. The ignorant must be taught, the sick healed, the sleepers awakened. The child must not be oppressed or censured because it is unde-

veloped; it must be patiently trained. The sick must not be neglected because they are ailing; nay, rather, we must have compassion upon them and bring them healing. Briefly; the old conditions of animosity, bigotry and hatred between the religious systems must be dispelled and the new conditions of love, agreement and spiritual brotherhood be established among them.

The third teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH is that religion must be the source of fellowship, the cause of unity and the nearness of God to man. If it rouses hatred and strife it is evident that absence of religion is preferable and an irreligious man better than one who professes it. According to the divine will and intention religion should be the cause of love and agreement, a bond to unify all mankind for it is a message of peace and good-will to man from God.

The fourth teaching of BAHA 'ULLAH is the agreement of religion and science. God has endowed man with intelligence and reason whereby he is required to determine the verity of questions and propositions. If religious beliefs and opinions are found contrary to the standards of science they are mere superstitions and imaginations; for the antithesis of knowledge is ignorance, and the child of ignorance is superstition. Unquestionably there must be agreement between true religion and science. If a question be found contrary to reason, faith and belief in it are impossible and there is no outcome but wavering and vacillation.

BAHA 'ULLAH has also taught that prejudices, whether religious, racial, patriotic or political are destructive to the foundations of human development. Prejudices of any kind are the destroyers of human happiness and welfare. Until they are dispelled the advancement of the world of humanity is not possible, yet racial, religious and national bias are observed everywhere. For thousands of years the world of humanity has been agitated and disturbed by prejudices. As long as it prevails, warfare, animosity and hatred will continue. Therefore if we seek to establish peace we must cast aside this obstacle, for otherwise agreement and composure are not to be attained.

Fifth: BAHA 'ULLAH set forth principles of guidance and teaching for economic readjustment. Regulations were revealed by him which insure the welfare of the commonwealth. As the rich man enjoys his life surrounded by ease and luxuries, so the poor man must likewise have a home and be provided with sustenance and comforts commensurate with his needs. This readjustment of the social economic is of the greatest importance inasmuch as it insures the stability of the world of humanity; and until it is effected, happiness and prosperity are impossible.

Sixth: BAHÁ 'ULLAH teaches that an equal standard of human rights must be recognized and adopted. In the estimation of God all men are equal; there is no distinction or preferment for any soul in the dominion of his justice and equity.

Seventh: Education is essential and all standards of training and teaching throughout the world of mankind should be brought into conformity and agreement; a universal curriculum should be established and the basis of ethics be the same.

Eighth: A universal language shall be adopted and be taught by all the schools and institutions of the world. A committee appointed by national bodies of learning shall select a suitable language to be used as a medium of international communication. All must acquire it. This is one of the great factors in the unification of man.

Ninth: BAHÁ 'ULLAH emphasized and established the equality of man and woman. Sex is not particularized to humanity; it exists throughout the animate kingdoms but without distinction or preference. In the vegetable kingdom there is complete equality between male and female of species. Likewise in the animal plane equality exists; all are under the protection of God. Is it becoming to man that he the noblest of creatures should observe and insist upon such distinction? Woman's lack of progress and proficiency has been due to her need of equal education and opportunity. Had she been allowed this equality there is no doubt she would be the counterpart of man in ability and capacity. The happiness of mankind will be realized when women and men coordinate and advance equally, for each is the complement and helpmeet of the other.

The world of humanity cannot advance through mere physical powers and intellectual attainments; nay, rather, the Holy Spirit is essential. The divine father must assist the human world to attain maturity. The body of man is in need of physical and mental energy but his spirit requires the life and fortification of the Holy Spirit. Without its protection and quickening the human world would be extinguished. His Holiness Jesus Christ declared "Let the dead bury their dead." He also said "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." It is evident therefore according to His Holiness that the human spirit which is not fortified by the presence of the Holy Spirit is dead and in need of resurrection by that divine power; otherwise though materially advanced to high degrees man cannot attain full and complete progress.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in New York and Brooklyn.

June 11, 1912, at 780 West End Ave., New York.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Kinney.

Open Committee Meeting.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

IT is my hope that the meetings of the Bahai Assembly in New York shall become like meetings of the Supreme Concourse. When you assemble you must reflect the lights of the heavenly kingdom. Let your hearts be as mirrors in which the radiance of the Sun of Reality is visible. Each bosom must be a telegraph station; one terminus of the wire attached to the soul, the other fixed in the Supreme Concourse, so that inspiration may descend from the kingdom of Abha and questions of reality be discussed. Then opinions will coincide with truth; day by day there will be progression and the meetings become more radiant and spiritual. This attainment is conditioned upon unity and agreement. The more perfect the love and agreement, the more the divine confirmations and assistance of the Blessed Perfection will descend. May this prove to be a divine meeting and may boundless bestowals come down upon you. Strive with all your hearts and with the very power of life that unity and love may continually increase. In discussions look toward the reality without being self-opinionated. Let no one assert and insist upon his own mere opinion; nay, rather, let each investigate the reality with the greatest love and fellowship. Consult upon every matter and when one presents the point of view of the reality itself, that shall be acceptable to all. Then will spiritual unity increase among you, individual illumination will be greater, happiness more abundant and you will draw nearer and nearer to the kingdom of God.

II

June 11, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

WE have just returned from a visit to Philadelphia, spending two nights there and speaking in two large churches. The weather proved unpleasant and affected my health. The purpose

in these movements here and there is a single purpose; it is to spread the light of truth in this dark world. On account of my age it is difficult to journey. Sometimes the difficulties are arduous but out of love for the friends of God and with desire to sacrifice myself in the pathway of God, I bear them in gladness. The purpose is the result which is accomplished, love and unity among mankind. For the world is dark with discord and selfishness, hearts are negligent, souls bereft of God and his heavenly bestowals. Man is submerged in the affairs of this world. His aims, objects and attainments are mortal whereas God desires for him immortal accomplishments. In his heart there is no thought of God. He has sacrificed his portion and birthright of divine spirituality. Desire and passion like two unmanageable horses have wrested the reins of control from him and are galloping madly in the wilderness. This is the cause of the degradation of the world of humanity. This is the cause of its retrogression into the appetites and passions of the animal kingdom. Instead of divine advancement we find sensual captivity and debasement of heavenly virtues of the soul. By devotion to the carnal, mortal world human susceptibilities sink to the level of animalism.

What are the animals' propensities? To eat, drink, wander about and sleep. The thoughts, the minds of the animals are confined to these. They are captives in the bonds of these desires. Man becomes a prisoner and slave to them when his ultimate desire is no higher than his welfare in this world of the senses. Consider how difficult for man is the attainment of pleasures and happiness in this mortal world. How easy it is for the animal. Look upon the fields and flowers, prairies, streams, forests and mountains. The grazing animals, the birds of the air, the fishes neither toil nor undergo hardships; they sow not nor are they concerned about the reaping; they have no anxiety about business or politics; no trouble or worry whatsoever. All the fields and grasses, all the meadows of fruits and grains, all the mountain slopes and streams of salubrious water belong to them. They have no labor for their livelihood and happiness because everything is provided and made possible for them. If the life of man be confined to this physical, material outlook the animal's life is a hundred times better, easier and more productive of comfort and contentment. The animal is nobler, more serene and confident because each hour is free from anxiety and worryment; but man, restless and dissatisfied, runs from morn till eve, sailing the seas, diving beneath them in submarines, flying aloft in aeroplanes, delving into the lowest strata of the earth to obtain his livelihood; all with the greatest difficulty, anxiety and

unrest. Therefore in this respect the animal is nobler, more serene, poised and confident. Consider the birds in the forest and jungle, how they build their nests high in the swaying tree-tops, build them with the utmost skill and beauty, swinging, rocking in the morning breezes, drinking the pure, sweet water, enjoying the most enchanting views as they fly here and there high overhead, singing joyously, all without labor, free from worry, care and forebodings. If man's life be confined to the elemental, physical world of enjoyment, one lark is nobler, more admirable than all humanity because its livelihood is prepared, its condition complete, its accomplishment perfect and natural.

But the life of man is not so restricted; it is divine, eternal, not mortal and sensual. For him a spiritual existence and livelihood is prepared and ordained in the divine creative plan. His life is intended to be a life of spiritual enjoyment to which the animal can never attain. This enjoyment depends upon the acquisition of heavenly virtues. The sublimity of man is his attainment of the knowledge of God. The bliss of man is the acquiring of heavenly bestowals which descend upon him in the outflow of the bounty of God. The happiness of man is in the fragrance of the love of God. This is the highest pinnacle of attainment in the human world. How preferable to the animal and its hopeless kingdom!

Therefore consider how base a nature it reveals in man that notwithstanding the favors showered upon him by God he should lower himself into the animal sphere, be wholly occupied with material needs, attached to this mortal realm, imagining that the greatest happiness is to attain wealth in this world. How purposeless! How debased is such a nature! God has created man in order that he may be a dove of the kingdom, a heavenly candle, a recipient of life eternal. God has created man in order that he may be resuscitated through the breaths of the Holy Spirit and become the light of the world. How debased the soul which can find enjoyment in this darkness, occupied with itself, the captive of self and passion, wallowing in the mire of the material world! How degraded is such a nature! What an ignorance this is! What a blindness! How glorious the station of man who has partaken of the heavenly food and builded the temple of his everlasting residence in the world of heaven!

The manifestations of God have come into the world to free man from these bonds and chains of the world of nature. Although they walked upon the earth they lived in heaven. They were not concerned about material sustenance and prosperity of this world.

Their bodies were subjected to inconceivable distress but their spirits ever soared in the highest realms of ecstasy. The purpose of their coming, their teaching and suffering was the freedom of man from himself. Shall we therefore follow in their footsteps, escape from this cage of the body or continue subject to its tyranny? Shall we pursue the phantom of a mortal happiness which does not exist or turn toward the tree of life and the joys of its eternal fruits?

I have come to this country in the advanced years of my life, undergoing difficulties of health and climate because of excessive love for the friends of God. It is my wish that they may be assisted to become servants of the heavenly kingdom, captives in the service of the will of God. This captivity is freedom, this sacrifice is glorification, this labor is reward, this need is bestowal. For service in love for mankind is unity with God. He who serves has already entered the kingdom and is seated at the right hand of his Lord.

III

June 11, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Emma C. Melick

MAN must be lofty in endeavor. He must seek to become heavenly and spiritual; to find the pathway to the threshold of God and become acceptable in the sight of God. This is eternal glory; to be near to God. This is eternal sovereignty; to be imbued with the virtues of the human world. This is boundless blessing; to be entirely sanctified and holy above every stain and dross.

Consider the human world. See how nations have come and gone. They have been of all minds and purposes. Some were mere captives of self and desire, engulfed in the passions of the lower nature. They attained to wealth, to the comforts of life, to fame. And what was the final outcome? Utter evanescence and oblivion. Reflect upon this. Look upon it with the eye of admonition. No trace of them remains, no fruit, no result, no benefit; they have gone utterly; complete effacement.

Souls have appeared in the world who were pure and undefiled, who have directed their attention toward God, seeking the reward of God, attaining nearness to the threshold of God, acceptable in the good-pleasure of God. They have been the lights of guidance and stars of the Supreme Concourse. Consider these souls, shining like stars in the horizon of sanctity forevermore.

It must not be implied that one should give up avocation and

attainment of livelihood. On the contrary, in the cause of BAHÁ 'ULLAH monasticism and asceticism are not sanctioned. In this great cause the light of guidance is shining and radiant. His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH has even said that occupation and labor are devotion. All humanity must obtain a livelihood by sweat of the brow and bodily exertion; at the same time seeking to lift the burden of others, striving to be the source of comfort to souls and facilitating the means of living. This in itself is devotion to God. BAHÁ 'ULLAH has thereby encouraged action and stimulated service. But the energies of the heart must not be attached to these things; the soul must not be completely occupied with them. Though the mind is busy the heart must be attracted toward the kingdom of God in order that the virtues of humanity may be attained from every direction and source.

We have forsaken the path of God; we have given up attention to the divine kingdom; we have not severed the heart from worldly attractions; we have become defiled with qualities which are not praiseworthy in the sight of God; we are so completely steeped in material issues and tendencies that we are not partakers of the virtues of humanity.

Little reflection, little admonition is necessary for us to realize the purpose of our creation. What a heavenly potentiality God has deposited within us! What a power God has given our spirits! He has endowed us with a power to penetrate the realities of things; but we must be self-abnegating, we must have pure spirits, pure intentions, and strive with heart and soul while in the human world, to attain glory everlasting.

I have come for the purpose of admonition and voicing the teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. It is my hope that his will and guidance may influence your spirits, souls and hearts, causing them to become pure, holy, sanctified and illumined and making you lamps of heavenly illumination to the world. This is my desire; this is my hope through the assistance of God.

IV

June 12, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Mary J. MacNutt

YOU are all exceedingly welcome. Do you realize how much you should thank God for his blessings? If you should thank him a thousand times with each breath it would not be sufficient, because God has created and trained you. He has protected you

from every affliction and prepared every gift and bestowal. Consider, what a kind father he is. He bestows his gift before you ask. We were not in the world of existence but as soon as we were born we found everything prepared for our needs and comfort without question on our part. He has given us a kind father and compassionate mother, provided for us two springs of salubrious milk, pure atmosphere, refreshing water, gentle breezes and the sun shining above our heads. In brief, he has supplied all the necessities of life although we did not ask for any of these great gifts. With pure mercy and bounty he has prepared this great table. It is a mercy which precedes asking. There is another kind of mercy which is realized after questioning and supplication. He has bestowed both upon us—without asking and with supplication. He has created us in this radiant century, a century longed for and expected by all the sanctified souls in past periods. It is a blessed century; it is a blessed day. The philosophers of history have agreed that this century is equal to one hundred past centuries. This is true from every standpoint. This is the century of science, inventions, discoveries and universal laws. This is the century of the revelation of the mysteries of God. This is the century of the effulgence of the rays of the Sun of Truth. Therefore you must render thanks and glorification to God that you were born in this age. Furthermore, you have listened to the call of BAHÁ'ULLAH. Your nostrils are perfumed with the breezes of the paradise of Abha. You have caught glimpses of the light from the horizon of the Orient. You were asleep; you are awakened. Your ears are attentive; your hearts are informed. You have acquired the love of God. You have attained to the knowledge of God. This is the most great bestowal of God. This is the breath of the Holy Spirit and this consists of faith and assurance. This life eternal is the second birth; this is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. God has destined this station for you all. He has prepared this for you. You must appreciate the value of this bounty and engage your time in mentioning and thanking the true One. You must live in the utmost happiness. If any trouble or vicissitude comes into your lives, if your heart is depressed on account of health, livelihood or vocation, let not these things affect you. They should not cause unhappiness, for BAHÁ'ULLAH has brought you divine happiness. He has prepared heavenly food for you; he has destined eternal bounty for you; he has bestowed everlasting glory upon you. Therefore these glad-tidings should cause you to soar in the atmosphere of joy forever and ever. Render continual thanks unto God so that the confirmations of God may encircle you all.

V

June 15, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

I HAVE made you wait awhile, but as I was tired I slept. While I was sleeping I was conversing with you as though speaking at the top of my voice. Then through the effect of my own voice I awoke. As I awoke, one word was upon my lips,—the word “*Imtiyaz*” (Distinction). So I will speak to you upon that subject this morning.

When we look upon the world of existence we realize that all material things have a common bond; and yet on the other hand there are certain points of distinction between them. For instance, all earthly objects have common bodily ties. The minerals, vegetables and animals have elemental bodies in common with each other. Likewise they have place in the order of creation. This is the common tie or point of contact between them. All of them pass through the process of composition and decomposition; this is a natural law to which all are subject. This law is ruling throughout creation and constitutes a bond of connection among created things. But at the same time there are certain distinguishing features between these objects. For instance, between the mineral and vegetable, the vegetable and animal, the animal and human, points of distinction exist which are unmistakable and significant. Likewise there are distinctions between kinds and species of each kingdom. When we consider the mineral kingdom in detail, we observe not only points of similarity between objects but points of distinction as well. Some are immovable bodies, some hard and solid, some have the power of expansion and contraction, some are liquid, some gaseous, some have weight, others, like fire and electricity, have not. So there are many points of distinction among these kinds of elements.

In the vegetable kingdom also we observe distinction between the various sorts and species of organisms. Each has its own form, color and fragrance. In the animal kingdom the same law rules, as many distinctions in form, color and function are noticeable. It is the same in the human kingdom. From the standpoint of color, there are white, black, yellow and red people. From the standpoint of physiognomy there is a wide difference and distinction among races. The Asian, African and American have different physiognomies; the men of the north and men of the south are very different in type and features. From an economic standpoint, in the law

of living there is a great deal of difference. Some are poor, others wealthy; some are wise, others ignorant; some patient and serene, some impatient and excitable; some are prone to justice, others practice injustice and oppression; some are meek, others arrogant. In brief, there are many points of distinction among humankind.

I desire distinction for you. The Bahais must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction; that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humanity; for unity and accord; for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world; for faithfulness and sincerity; for justice and fidelity; for firmness and steadfastness; for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world; for love toward every human being; for unity and accord with all people; for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you.

VI

*June 16, 1912, at Fourth Unitarian Church, Beverly Road,
Flatbush, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Notes by Esther Foster

THIS is a unitarian church, and in the Arabic tongue, this Day may well be called "Yauml'ittihad," the "Unitarian Day." Therefore I consider it appropriate to speak to you upon the subject of "Unity."

What is real unity? When we observe the human world we find various collective expressions of unity therein. For instance, man is distinguished from the animal by his degree or kingdom. This comprehensive distinction includes all the posterity of Adam and constitutes one great household or human family which may be considered the fundamental or physical unity of mankind. Furthermore, a distinction exists between various groups of humankind according to lineage, each group forming a racial unity separate from the others. There is also the unity of tongue among

those who use the same language as a means of communication; national unity where various peoples live under one form of government such as French, German, British, etc.; and political unity which conserves the civil rights of parties or factions of the same government. All these unities are imaginary and without real foundation, for no real result proceeds from them. The purpose of true unity is real and divine outcomes. From these limited unities mentioned only limited outcomes proceed whereas unlimited unity produces unlimited result. For instance, from the limited unity of race or nationality the results at most are limited. It is like a family living alone and solitary; there are no unlimited or universal outcomes from it.

The unity which is productive of unlimited results is first a unity of mankind which recognizes that all are sheltered beneath the overshadowing glory of the All-Glorious; that all are servants of one God; for all breathe the same atmosphere, live upon the same earth, move beneath the same heavens, receive effulgence from the same sun and are under the protection of one God. This is the most great unity, and its results are lasting if humanity adheres to it; but mankind has hitherto violated it, adhering to sectarian or other limited unities such as racial, patriotic or unity of self-interests; therefore no great results have been forthcoming. Nevertheless it is certain that the radiance and favors of God are encompassing, minds have developed, perceptions have become acute, sciences and arts are widespread and capacity exists for the proclamation and promulgation of the real and ultimate unity of mankind which will bring forth marvelous results. It will reconcile all religions, make warring nations loving, cause hostile kings to become friendly and bring peace and happiness to the human world. It will cement together the Orient and Occident, remove forever the foundations of war and upraise the ensign of the "Most Great Peace." These limited unities are therefore signs of that great unity which will make all the human family one by being productive of the attractions of conscience in mankind.

Another unity is the spiritual unity which emanates from the breaths of the Holy Spirit. This is greater than the unity of mankind. Human unity or solidarity may be likened to the body whereas unity from the breaths of the Holy Spirit is the spirit animating the body. This is a perfect unity. It creates such a condition in mankind that each one will make sacrifices for the other and the utmost desire will be to forfeit life and all that pertains to it in behalf of another's good. This is the unity which existed among the disciples of His Holiness Jesus Christ and bound

together the prophets and holy souls of the past. It is the unity which through the influence of the divine spirit is permeating the Bahais so that each offers his life for the other and strives with all sincerity to attain his good-pleasure. This is the unity which caused twenty thousand people in Persia to give their lives in love and devotion to it. It made the Bab the target of a thousand arrows and caused BAHÁ 'ULLAH to suffer exile and imprisonment forty years. This unity is the very spirit of the body of the world. It is impossible for the body of the world to become quickened with life without its vivification. His Holiness Jesus Christ—may my life be a sacrifice to him!—promulgated this unity among mankind. Every soul who believed in Jesus Christ became revived and resuscitated through this spirit, attained to the zenith of eternal glory, realized the life everlasting, experienced the second birth and rose to the acme of good fortune.

In the Word of God there is still another unity, the oneness of the manifestations of God, His Holiness Abraham, Moses, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, the Bab and BAHÁ 'ULLAH. This is a unity divine, heavenly, radiant, merciful; the one reality appearing in its successive manifestations. For instance, the sun is one and the same but its points of dawning are various. During the summer season it rises from the northern point of the ecliptic; in winter it appears from the southern point of rising. Each month between it appears from a certain zodiacal position. Although these dawning-points are different, the sun is the same sun which has appeared from them all. The significance is the reality of prophethood which is symbolized by the sun, and the holy manifestations are the dawning-places or zodiacal points.

There is also the divine unity or entity which is sanctified above all concept of humanity. It cannot be comprehended nor conceived because it is infinite reality and cannot become finite. Human minds are incapable of surrounding that reality because all thoughts and conceptions of it are finite, intellectual creations and not the reality of divine being which alone knows itself. For example, if we form a conception of divinity as a living, almighty, self-subsisting, eternal being, this is only a concept apprehended by a human intellectual reality. It would not be the outward, visible reality which is beyond the power of human mind to conceive or encompass. We ourselves have an external, visible entity but even our concept of it is the product of our own brain and limited comprehension. The reality of divinity is sanctified above this degree of knowing and realization. It has ever been hidden and secluded in its own holiness and sanctity above our compre-

hending. Although it transcends our realization, its lights, bestowals, traces and virtues have become manifest in the realities of the prophets, even as the sun becomes resplendent in various mirrors. These holy realities are as reflectors, and the reality of divinity is as the sun which although it is reflected from the mirrors, and its virtues and perfections become resplendent therein, does not stoop from its own station of majesty and glory and seek abode in the mirrors; it remains in its heaven of sanctity. At most it is this, that its lights become manifest and evident in its mirrors or manifestations. Therefore its bounty proceeding from them is one bounty but the recipients of that bounty are many. This is the unity of God; this is oneness;—unity of divinity, holy above ascent or descent, embodiment, comprehension or idealization;—divine unity—the prophets are its mirrors; its lights are revealed through them; its virtues become resplendent in them, but the Sun of Reality never descends from its own highest point and station. This is unity, oneness, sanctity; this is glorification whereby we praise and adore God.

O my God! O my God! Verily these are servants at the threshold of thy mercy, and maid-servants at the door of thy oneness. Verily they have gathered in this temple to turn to thy face of glory, holding to the hem of thy garment and to thy singleness, seeking thy good-pleasure, and ascent into thy kingdom. They receive effulgence from the Sun of Reality in this glorious century and they long for thy good-will in all great affairs. O Lord! Illumine their sight with a vision of thy signs and riches and quicken their ears with hearkening to thy word. Render their hearts replete with thy love and gladden their spirits with thy meeting. Deign to bestow upon them spiritual good in thy earth and heaven and make them signs of unity among thy servants, in order that the real unity may appear and all may become one in thy cause and kingdom. Verily thou art the generous! Verily thou art the mighty, the spiritual! Thou art the merciful, the clement!

To the children in the Sunday School.

I am glad to see these bright, radiant children. God willing, all of them may realize the hopes and aspirations of their parents.

Praise be to God! I see before me these beautiful children of the kingdom. Their hearts are pure, their faces are shining. They shall soon become the sons and daughters of the kingdom. Thanks be to God! they are seeking to acquire virtues and will be the cause of the attainment of the excellences of humanity. This is the cause of oneness in the kingdom of God. Praise be to God!

they have kind and revered teachers who train and educate them well and who long for confirmation in order that, God willing, like tender plants in the garden of God they may be refreshed by the downpour of the clouds of mercy, grow and become verdant. In the utmost perfection and delicacy may they at last bring forth fruit.

I supplicate God that these children may be reared under his protection and that they may be nourished by his favor and grace until all, like beautiful flowers in the garden of human hopes and aspirations, shall blossom and become redolent of fragrance.

O God! Educate these children. These children are the plants of thy orchard, the flowers of thy meadow, the roses of thy garden. Let thy rain fall upon them; let the Sun of Reality shine upon them with thy love. Let thy breeze refresh them in order that they may be trained, grow and develop and appear in the utmost beauty. Thou art the giver! Thou art the compassionate!

VII

June 16, 1912, at 935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard MacNutt.

Notes by Esther Foster

THIS is a splendid gathering; a meeting of the maid-servants of the merciful and the beloved of God. Whenever such gatherings have taken place in this world the results have been very great. They have exerted an influence upon the world of hearts and minds. Wherever a lamp is lighted in the night, naturally people are attracted and gather around it. When you see such an assemblage as this you may know that a light is illumining the darkness. There are lamps the light of which is limited. There are lamps the light of which is unlimited. There are lamps which illumine small places and lamps which illumine the horizons. The lamp of the guidance of God wherever lighted has shed its radiance throughout the east and the west. Praise be to God! it has been lighted in this country; day by day its radiance is becoming more resplendent and its effulgence more widespread. This is not known now but later on its traces will become evident. Consider the days of His Holiness Christ, how the light of guidance brightened twelve hearts. How limited it seemed but how expansive it became afterward and illumined the world! You are not a large body of people but because the lamp of guidance has been lighted in your hearts the effects will be

wonderful in the years to come. It is evident and manifest that the world will be illumined by this light; therefore you must thank God that—Praise be to God!—through his grace and favor the lamp of the most great guidance has been ignited in your hearts and he has summoned you to his kingdom. He has caused the call of the Supreme Concourse to reach your ears. The doors of heaven have been opened unto you. The Sun of Reality is shining upon you, the cloud of mercy is pouring down and the breezes of providence are wafting through your souls. Although the bestowal is great and the grace is glorious, yet capacity and readiness are requisite. Without capacity and readiness the divine bounty will not become manifest and evident. No matter how much the cloud may rain, the sun may shine and the breezes blow, the soil that is sterile will give no growth. The ground that is pure and free from thorns and thistles receives and produces through the rain of the cloud of mercy. No matter how much the sun shines it will have no effect upon the black rock but in a pure and polished mirror its lights become resplendent. Therefore we must develop capacity in order that the signs of the mercy of the Lord may be revealed in us. We must endeavor to free the soil of the hearts from useless weeds and sanctify it from the thorns of worthless thoughts in order that the cloud of mercy may bestow its power upon us. The doors of God are open but we must be ready and fitted to enter. The ocean of divine providence is surging but we must be able to swim. The bestowals of the almighty are descending from the heaven of grace but capacity to receive them is essential. The fountain of divine generosity is gushing forth but we must have thirst for the living waters. Unless there be thirst the salutary water will not assuage. Unless the soul hungers the delicious foods of the heavenly table will not give sustenance. Unless the eyes of perception be opened the lights of the sun will not be witnessed. Until the nostrils are purified the fragrance of the divine rose-garden will not be inhaled. Unless the heart be filled with longing the favors of the Lord will not be evident. Unless a perfect melody be sung the ears of the hearers will not be attracted. Therefore we must endeavor night and day to purify the hearts from every dross, sanctify the souls from every restriction and become free from the discords of the human world. Then the divine bestowals will become evident in their fullness and glory. If we do not strive and sanctify ourselves from the defects and evil qualities of human nature we will not partake of the bestowals of God. It is as if the sun is shining in its full glory but no reflection is

forthcoming from hearts that are black as stone. If an ocean of salubrious water is surging and we be not thirsty, what benefit do we receive? If the candle be lighted and we have no eyes, what enjoyment do we obtain from it? If melodious anthems should rise to the heavens and we are bereft of hearing, what enjoyment can we find?

Therefore we must endeavor always, cry, supplicate and invoke the kingdom of God to grant us full capacity in order that the bestowals of God may become revealed and manifest in us. And as we attain to these heavenly bounties we shall offer thanks unto the threshold of oneness. Then shall we rejoice in the Lord that in this wonderful century and glorious age, under the shelter of the kingdom of God we have enjoyed these bestowals and will arise in praise and thanksgiving. Therefore I first exhort myself and then I entreat you to appreciate this great bestowal, recognize this most great guidance, accept these bounties of the Lord. You must endeavor day and night to become worthy of a generous portion of these gifts and realize full capacity of attainment. Praise be to God! your hearts are illumined, your faces are turned toward the kingdom of God. It is my hope that all of these degrees may be reached and these friends attain a station which shall be an example and stimulus for all friends in the world. May the love of God spread from here onward and outward; may the knowledge of God be sent broadcast from this place; may spiritual forces become effective here; may the lights of the kingdom shine; may intelligent souls be found here so that with all power they may be occupied in the service of God, furthering the oneness of the human world and the cause of the "Most Great Peace." May these souls be lighted candles and fruitful trees; may they be pearls of the shells of providence; may they be stars of heaven. This is my supplication to God. This is my request from the Beauty of Abha that he may submerge all of you in the ocean of his grace.

Afterward, speaking of numbers.

Such suppositions regarding lucky or unlucky numbers are purely imaginary. The superstition concerning thirteen had its origin in the fact that His Holiness Jesus Christ was surrounded by twelve disciples and that Judas Iscariot was the thirteenth member of their gathering. This is the source of the superstition but it is purely imaginary. Although Judas was outwardly a disciple, in reality he was not. Twelve is the original number of significance and completion. Jacob had twelve sons from whom descended twelve tribes. The disciples of Jesus were twelve; the

imams of Mohammed were twelve. The zodiacal signs are twelve; the months of the year are twelve, etc., etc.

The mysteries of the holy books have become explained in the manifestation of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. Before he appeared these mysteries were not understood. BAHÁ 'ULLAH opened and unsealed these mysteries. It was my wish to come here today to have this meeting.

VIII

*June 16, 1912, at Central Congregational Church,
Hancock Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

Notes by Esther Foster

THIS is a goodly temple and congregation, for—Praise be to God!—this is a house of worship wherein conscientious opinion has free sway. Every religion and every religious aspiration may be freely voiced and expressed here. Just as in the world of politics there is need for free thought, likewise in the world of religion there should be the right of unrestricted individual belief. Consider what a vast difference exists between modern democracy and the old forms of despotism. Under an autocratic government the opinions of men are not free, and development is stifled whereas in democracy, because thought and speech are not restricted the greatest progress is witnessed. It is likewise true in the world of religion. When freedom of conscience, liberty of thought and right of speech prevail, that is to say, when every man according to his own idealization may give expression to his beliefs, development and growth are inevitable. Therefore this is a blessed church because its pulpit is open to every religion the ideals of which may be set forth with openness and freedom. For this reason I am most grateful to the reverend doctor; I find him indeed a servant of the oneness of humanity.

The holy manifestations who have been the sources or founders of the various religious systems were united and agreed in purpose and teaching. His Holiness Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, the Bab and BAHÁ 'ULLAH are one in spirit and reality. Moreover each prophet fulfilled the promise of the one who came before him and likewise each announced the one who would follow. Consider how His Holiness Abraham foretold the coming of Moses and Moses embodied the Abrahamic statement. His Holiness Moses prophesied the messianic cycle and His Holiness Christ fulfilled the law of Moses. It is evident therefore that

the holy manifestations who founded the religious systems are united and agreed; there is no differentiation possible in their mission and teachings; all are reflectors of reality and all are promulgators of the religion of God. The divine religion is reality and reality is not multiple; it is one. Therefore the foundations of the religious systems are one because all proceed from the indivisible reality; but the followers of these systems have disagreed; discord, strife and warfare have arisen among them, for they have forsaken the foundation and held to that which is but imitation and semblance. Inasmuch as imitations differ, enmity and dissension have resulted. For example, His Holiness Jesus Christ—may my spirit be a sacrifice unto him!—laid the foundation of eternal reality, but after his departure many sects and divisions appeared in Christianity. What was the cause of this? There is no doubt that they originated in dogmatic imitations, for the foundations of Christ were reality itself in which no divergence exists. When imitations appeared, sects and denominations were formed.

If Christians of all denominations and divisions should investigate reality, the foundations of His Holiness Christ will unite them. No enmity or hatred will remain for they will all be under the one guidance of reality itself. Likewise in the wider field, if all the existing religious systems will turn away from ancestral imitations and investigate the reality, seeking the real meanings of the holy books, they will unite and agree upon the same foundation, the reality itself. As long as they follow counterfeit doctrines or imitations instead of reality, animosity and discord will exist and increase. Let me illustrate this. His Holiness Moses and the prophets of Israel announced the advent of the Messiah but expressed it in the language of symbols. When His Holiness Christ appeared, the Jews rejected him although they were expecting his manifestation, and in their temples and synagogues were crying and lamenting, saying "O God, hasten the coming of Messiah!" Why did they deny him when he announced himself? Because they had followed ancestral forms and interpretations and were blind to the reality of Christ. They had not perceived the inner significances of the holy bible. They voiced their objections, saying "We are expecting His Holiness Christ but his coming is conditioned upon certain fulfillments and prophetic announcements. Among the signs of his appearance is one that he shall come from an unknown place whereas now this claimant of messiahship has come from Nazareth. We know his home and we are acquainted with his mother.

"Second: One of the signs or messianic conditions is that his scepter would be an iron rod, and this Christ has not even a wooden staff.

"Third: He was to be seated upon the throne of David whereas this messianic king is in the utmost state of poverty and has not even a mat.

"Fourth: He was to conquer the east and the west. This person has not even conquered a village. How can he be Messiah?

"Fifth: He was to promulgate the laws of the bible. This one has not only failed to promulgate the laws of the bible but he has broken the law of the sabbath.

"Sixth: Messiah was to gather together all the Jews who were scattered in Palestine and restore them to honor and prestige but this one has degraded the Jews instead of uplifting them.

"Seventh: During his sovereignty even the animals were to enjoy blessings and comfort, for according to the prophetic texts he should establish peace to such a universal extent that the eagle and quail would live together, the lion and deer would feed in the same meadow, the wolf and lamb would lie down in the same pasture. In the human kingdom warfare was to cease entirely, spears would be turned into pruning hooks and swords into ploughshares. Now we see in the day of this would-be Messiah such injustice prevails that even he himself is sacrificed. How could he be the promised Christ?"

And so they spoke infamous words regarding him.

Now inasmuch as the Jews were submerged in the sea of ancestral imitations, they could not comprehend the meaning of these prophecies. All the words of the prophets were fulfilled but because the Jews held tenaciously to hereditary interpretations, they did not understand the inner meanings of the holy bible; therefore they denied His Holiness Jesus Christ the Messiah. The purpose of the prophetic words was not the outward or literal meaning but the inner symbolical significance. For example, it was announced that Messiah was to come from an unknown place. This did not refer to the birthplace of the physical body of Jesus. It has reference to the reality of the Christ; that is to say, the Christ reality was to appear from the invisible realm, for the divine reality of Christ is holy and sanctified above place.

His sword was to be a sword of iron. This signified his tongue which should separate the true from the false and by which great sword of attack he would conquer the kingdoms of hearts. He did not conquer by the physical power of an iron rod; he conquered the east and the west by the sword of his utterance.

He was seated upon the throne of David but his sovereignty was not a Napoleonic sovereignty nor the vanishing dominion of a Pharaoh. The Christ kingdom was everlasting, eternal in the heaven of the divine will.

By his promulgating the laws of the bible, the reality of the law of Moses was meant. The sinaitic law is the foundation of the reality of Christianity. Christ promulgated it and gave it higher, spiritual expression.

He conquered and subdued the east and west. His conquest was effected through the breaths of the Holy Spirit which eliminated all boundaries and shone from all horizons.

In his day, according to prophecy the wolf and the lamb were to drink from the same fountain. This was realized in Christ. The fountain referred to was the gospel from which the water of life gushes forth. The wolf and lamb are opposed and divergent races symbolized by these animals. Their meeting and association were impossible, but having become believers in Jesus Christ those who were formerly as wolves and lambs became united through the words of the gospel.

The purport is that all the meanings of the prophecies were fulfilled but because the Jews were captives of ancestral imitations and did not perceive the reality of the meanings of these words, they denied His Holiness Christ; nay, they even went so far as to crucify him. Consider how harmful is imitation. These were interpretations handed down from fathers and ancestors, and because the Jews held fast to them, they were deprived.

It is evident then that we must forsake all such imitations and beliefs so that we may not commit this error. We must investigate reality, lay aside selfish notions and banish hearsay from our minds. The Jews consider His Holiness Christ the enemy of Moses whereas on the contrary His Holiness Christ promoted the Word of Moses. He spread the name of Moses throughout the Orient and Occident. He promulgated the teachings of Moses. Had it not been for His Holiness Christ you would not have heard the name of Moses; and unless the manifestation of messiahship had appeared in Christ we would not have received the old testament.

The truth is that His Holiness fulfilled the Mosaic law and in every way upheld Moses; but the Jews blinded by imitations and prejudices considered His Holiness the enemy of Moses.

Among the great religious systems of the world is Mohammedanism. About three hundred millions of people acknowledge it. For more than a thousand years there has been enmity and strife

between Mohammedans and Christians, owing to misunderstanding and spiritual blindness. If prejudices and imitations were abandoned there would be no enmity whatever between them, and these hundreds of millions of antagonistic religionists would adorn the world of humanity by their unity.

I wish now to call your attention to a most important point. All Islam considers the koran the Word of God. In this sacred book there are explicit texts which are not traditional, stating this His Holiness Christ was the Word of God, that he was the Spirit of God, that Jesus Christ came into this world through the quickening breaths of the Holy Spirit, and that Her Grace Mary his mother was holy and sanctified. In the koran a whole chapter is devoted to the story of Jesus. It records that in the time of his youth he worshipped God in the temple at Jerusalem; that manna descended from heaven for his sustenance and that he uttered words immediately after his birth. In brief, in the koran there is eulogy and commendation of Christ such as you do not find in the gospel. The gospel does not record that the child Jesus spoke at birth or that God caused sustenance to descend from heaven for him; but in the koran it is repeatedly stated that God sent down manna day by day as food for him. Furthermore, it is significant and convincing that when His Holiness Mohammed proclaimed his work and mission, his first objection to his own followers was "Why have you not believed on Jesus Christ? Why have you not accepted the gospel? Why have you not believed in Moses? Why have you not followed the precepts of the old testament? Why have you not understood the prophets of Israel? Why have you not believed in the disciples of Christ? The first duty incumbent upon ye O Arabians! is to accept and believe in these. You must consider Moses as a prophet. You must accept Jesus Christ as the Word of God. You must know the old and the new testament as the Word of God. You must believe in Jesus Christ as the product of the Holy Spirit." His people answered "O Mohammed! we will become believers although our fathers and ancestors were not believers and we are proud of them. Tell us what is going to become of them?" Mohammed replied "I declare unto you that they occupy the lowest stratum of hell because they did not believe in Moses and Christ and because they did not accept the bible; and although they are my own ancestors, yet they are in despair in hell." This is an explicit text of the koran; it is not a story or tradition but from the koran itself which is in the hands of the people. Therefore it is evident that

ignorance and misunderstanding have caused so much warfare and strife between Christians and Mohammedans. If both should investigate the underlying truth of their religious beliefs, the outcome would be unity and agreement; strife and bitterness would pass away forever and the world of humanity find peace and composure. Consider that there are two hundred and fifty million Christians and three hundred million Mohammedans. How much blood has flowed in their wars; how many nations have been destroyed; how many children have been made fatherless; how many fathers and mothers have mourned the loss of children and dear ones! All this has been due to prejudice, misunderstanding, and imitations of ancestral beliefs without investigation of the reality. If the holy books were rightly understood none of this discord and distress would have existed, but love and fellowship would have prevailed instead. This is true with all the other religions as well. The conditions I have named will apply equally to all. The essential purpose of the religion of God is to establish unity among mankind. The divine manifestations were founders of the means of fellowship and love. They did not come to create discord, strife and hatred in the world. The religion of God is the cause of love, but if it is made to be the source of enmity and bloodshed, surely its absence is preferable to its existence; for then it becomes satanic, detrimental and an obstacle to the human world.

In the Orient the various peoples and nations were in a state of antagonism and strife, manifesting the utmost enmity and hatred toward each other. Darkness encompassed the world of mankind. At such a time as this, BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared. He removed all the imitations and prejudices which had caused separation and misunderstanding, and laid the foundation of the one religion of God. When this was accomplished, Mohammedans, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Buddhists all were united in actual fellowship and love. The souls who followed BAHÁ 'ULLAH from every nation have become as one family living in agreement and accord, willing to sacrifice life for each other. The Mohammedan will give his life for the Christian, the Christian for the Jew, and all of them for the Zoroastrian. They live together in love, fellowship and unity. They have attained to the condition of rebirth in the spirit of God. They have become revived and regenerated through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Praise be to God! this light has come forth from the east and eventually there shall be no discord or enmity in the Orient. Through the power of BAHÁ 'ULLAH all will be united. His Holiness upraised this standard of the one-

ness of humanity, in prison. When subjected to banishment by two kings, while a refugee from enemies of all nations and during the days of his long imprisonment he wrote to the kings and rulers of the world in words of wonderful eloquence arraigning them severely and summoning them to the divine standard of unity and justice. He exhorted them to peace and international agreement, making it incumbent upon them to establish a board of international arbitration; that from all nations and governments of the world there should be delegates selected for a congress of nations which should constitute a universal arbitral court of justice to settle international disputes. He wrote to Victoria queen of Great Britain, the czar of Russia, the emperor of Germany, Napoleon III of France, and others, inviting them to world unity and peace. Through a heavenly power he was enabled to promulgate these ideals in the Orient. Kings could not withstand him. They endeavored to extinguish his light but served only to increase its intensity and illumination. While in prison he stood against the shah of Persia and sultan of Turkey and promulgated his teachings until he firmly established the banner of truth and the oneness of humankind. I was a prisoner with him for forty years until the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress overthrew the despotism of Abdul Hamid, dethroned him and proclaimed liberty. This committee set me free from tyranny and oppression; otherwise I should have been in prison until the days of my life were ended. The purport is this, that BAHÁ' ULLÁH in prison was able to proclaim and establish the foundations of peace, although two despotic kings were his enemies and oppressors. The king of Persia, Nasr-ed-Din-Shah had killed twenty thousand Bahais, martyrs who in absolute severance and complete willingness offered their lives joyfully for their faith. These two powerful and tyrannical kings could not withstand a prisoner; this prisoner upheld the standard of humanity and brought the people of the Orient into agreement and unity. Today in the east, only those who have not followed BAHÁ' ULLÁH are in opposition and enmity. The people of the nations who have accepted him as the standard of divine guidance enjoy a condition of actual fellowship and love. If you should attend a meeting in the east you could not distinguish between Christian and Mussulman; you would not know which was Jew, Zoroastrian or Buddhist, so completely have they become fraternized and their religious differences been leveled. They associate in the utmost love and spiritual fragrance as if they belonged to one family, as if they were one people.

IX

June 17, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York

Notes by Emma C. Mellick

WE should all visit the sick. When they are in sorrow and suffering it is a real help and benefit to have a friend come. Happiness is a great healer to those who are ill. In the east it is the custom to call upon the patient often and meet him individually. The people in the east show the utmost kindness and compassion to the sick and suffering. This has greater effect than the remedy itself. You must always have this thought of love and affection when you visit the ailing and afflicted.

The world of humanity may be likened to the individual man himself; it has its illness and ailments. A patient must be diagnosed by a skilful physician. The prophets of God are the real physicians. In whatever age or time they appear they prescribe for human conditions. They know the sicknesses; they discover the hidden sources of disease and indicate the necessary remedy. Whosoever is healed by that remedy finds eternal health. For instance, in the day of His Holiness Jesus Christ the world of humanity was afflicted with various ailments. His Holiness Jesus Christ was the real physician. He appeared, recognized the symptoms and prescribed the real remedy. What was that remedy? It was his revealed teaching especially applicable to that age. Later on many new ailments and disorders appeared in the body-politic. The world became sick, other severe maladies appeared, especially in the peninsula of Arabia. God manifested His Holiness Mohammed there. He came and prescribed for the conditions so that the Arabs became healthy, strong and virile in that time.

In this present age the world of humanity is afflicted with severe sicknesses and grave disorders which threaten death. Therefore His Holiness BAHÁ' ULLÁH has appeared. He is the real physician bringing divine remedy and healing to the world of man. He has brought teachings for all ailments, the *Hidden Words*, *Ishrakhat*, *Tarazat*, *Tajalleyat*, *Words of Paradise*, *Glad-Tidings*, etc., etc. These holy words and teachings are the remedy for the body-politic, the divine prescription and real cure for the disorders which afflict the world. Therefore we must accept and partake of this healing remedy in order that complete recovery may be assured. Every soul who lives according to the teachings of BAHÁ' ULLÁH is free from the ailments and indispositions which prevail throughout the world of humanity;

otherwise selfish disorders, intellectual maladies, spiritual sicknesses, imperfections and vices will surround him and he will not receive the life-giving bounties of God.

BAHA 'ULLAH is the real physician. He has diagnosed human conditions and indicated the necessary treatment. The essential principles of his healing remedies are the knowledge and love of God, severance from all else save God, turning our faces in sincerity toward the kingdom of God, implicit faith, firmness and fidelity, loving-kindness toward all creatures and the acquisition of the divine virtues indicated for the human world. These are the fundamental principles of progress, civilization, international peace and the unity of mankind. These are the essentials of BAHÁ 'ULLAH's teachings, the secret of everlasting health, the remedy and healing for man.

It is my hope that you may assist in healing the sick body of the world through these teachings, so that eternal radiance may illumine all the nations of mankind.

X

June 18, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Emma C. Mellick

NO matter how much the world of humanity advances in material civilization it is nevertheless in need of the spiritual development mentioned in the gospel. The virtues of the material world are limited whereas divine virtues are unlimited. Inasmuch as material virtues are limited, man's need of the perfections of the divine world is unlimited.

Throughout human history we find that although the very apex of human virtues has been reached at various times yet they were limited whereas divine attainments have ever been unbounded and infinite. The limited is ever in need of the unlimited. The material must be correlated with the spiritual. The material may be likened to the body but divine virtues are the breathings of the Holy Spirit itself. The body without spirit is not capable of real accomplishment. Although it may be in the utmost condition of beauty and excellence it is nevertheless in need of the spirit. The chimney of the lamp, no matter how polished and perfect it be, is in need of the light. Without the light, the lamp or candle is not illuminating. Without the spirit, the body is not productive. The teacher of material principles is limited. The philosophers who claimed to be the educators of mankind were at most only able to

train themselves. If they educated others it was within a restricted circle; they failed to bestow general education and development. This has been conferred upon humanity by the power of the Holy Spirit.

For example, His Holiness Christ educated and developed mankind universally. He rescued nations and peoples from the bondage of superstition and idolatry. He summoned them all to the knowledge of the oneness of God. They were dark, they became illumined; they were material, they became spiritual; earthly they were, they became heavenly. He enlightened the world of morality. This general, universal development is not possible through the power of philosophy. It is only attainable through the pervading influence of the Holy Spirit. Therefore no matter how far the world of humanity advances, it fails to attain the highest degree unless quickened by the education and divine bestowals of the Holy Spirit. This insures human progress and prosperity.

Therefore I exhort you to be devoted to your spiritual development. Just as you have striven along material lines and have attained to high degrees of worldly advancement, may you likewise become strengthened and proficient in the knowledge of God. May divine susceptibilities be increased and awakened; may your devotion to the heavenly kingdom become intense. May you be the recipients of the impulses of the Holy Spirit, be assisted in the world of morality and attain ideal power, so that the sublimity of the world of mankind may become apparent in you. Thus may you attain the highest happiness, the life eternal, the glory everlasting, the second birth, and become manifestations of the bestowals of God.

XI

June 20, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

I AM about to leave the city for a few days rest at Montclair. When I return it is my wish to give a large feast of unity. A place for it has not yet been found. It must be outdoors under the trees, in some location away from city noise; like a Persian garden. The food will be Persian food. When the place is arranged all will be informed and we will have a general meeting in which hearts will be bound together, spirits blended and a new foundation for unity established. All the friends will come. They will be my guests. They will be as the parts and members of one body. The

spirit of life manifest in that body will be one spirit. The foundation of that temple of unity will be one foundation. Each will be a stone in that foundation, solid and interdependent. Each will be as a leaf, blossom or fruit upon one tree. For the sake of fellowship and unity I desire this feast and spiritual gathering.

Whatsoever is conducive to unity is merciful and from the divine bounty itself. Every universal affair is divine. Everything which conduces to separation and estrangement is satanic because it emanates from the purposes of self. Consider how clearly it is shown in creation that the cause of existence is unity and cohesion and the cause of non-existence is separation and dissension. By a divine power of creation the elements assemble together in affinity and the result is a composite being. Certain of these elements have united and man has come into existence. Certain other combinations produce plants and animals. Therefore this affinity of the inanimate elements is the cause of life and being. Through their commingling therefore human affinity, love and fellowship are made possible. If the elements were not assembled together in affinity to produce the body of man, the higher intelligent forces could not be manifest in the body. But when these elements separate, when their affinity and cohesion are overcome, death and dissolution of the body they have builded, inevitably follow. Therefore affinity and unity among even these material elements mean life in the body of man and their discord and disagreement mean death. Throughout all creation, in all the kingdoms, this law is written, that love and affinity are the cause of life, and discord and separation are the cause of death.

Consider the bodies of all the natural organisms. Certain elements have gathered and combine in chemical affinity. The tree, the man, the fish are due to this attraction and cohesion which have brought the elements together. A composition or composite being has resulted. The outcome of certain atomic grouping for instance, is a mirror, table or clock, because a cohesive power has magnetized and bound these atoms together. When that attracting power is withdrawn, dissolution and disintegration follow; no mirror, table or clock remain, no trace, no existence. Therefore commingling of the atoms brings forth a reality, while dispersion or dissemination of them is equivalent to non-existence.

Study the law of affinity among the domestic animals. They manifest fellowship; they live in flocks and herds; the love of association is evident among them. Among birds we see evidences of instinctive fellowship and love. But the ferocious animals and birds of prey are just the reverse of the domestic. Sheep, cows and

horses graze together in concord and agreement but ferocious animals are never seen associating in love and fellowship. Each lives solitary and alone or with a single mate. When they see each other they manifest the utmost ferocity. Dogs pounce upon dogs; wolves, tigers, lions rage, snarl and fight to the death. Their ferocity is instinctive. There is a creative reason for it. Birds of prey, like eagles and hawks live solitary and build their nests apart, but doves fly in flocks and nest in the same branches. When an eagle meets another eagle there is a furious battle. The meeting of two doves is a peace meeting. Therefore it is evident that these blessed characteristics as well as the reverse are found among the creatures of a lower kingdom.

The great mass of humanity does not exercise real love and fellowship. The elect of humanity are those who live together in love and unity. They are preferable before God because the divine attributes are already manifest in them. The supreme love and unity is witnessed in the divine manifestations. Among them unity is indissoluble, changeless, eternal and everlasting. Each one is expressive and representative of all. If we deny one of the manifestations of God we deny all. To inflict persecution upon one is to persecute the others. In all degrees of existence each one praises and sanctifies the others. Each of them holds to the solidarity of mankind and promotes the unity of human hearts. Next to the divine manifestations come the believers whose characteristics are agreement, fellowship and love. The Bahai friends in Persia attained such a brotherhood and love that it really became a hindrance in the conduct of material affairs. Each one, into whatever house of the friends he went considered himself the owner of the house, so to speak. There was no duality but complete mutuality of interests and love. The visiting friend would have no hesitation in opening the provision box and taking out enough food for his needs. They wore each others clothes as their own when necessary. If in need of a hat or cloak they would take and use it. The owner of the clothing would be thankful and grateful that the garment had gone. When he returned home he would perhaps be told "So and so was here and took away your coat." He would reply "Praise be to God! I am so grateful to him. Praise be to God! I am so thankful I have been given this opportunity of showing my love for him." To such an extreme degree this love and fellowship expressed itself that BAHÁ'ULLAH commanded no one should take possession of another's belongings unless presented with them. The intention is to show to what an extent unity and love prevailed among the Bahai friends in the east.

I hope that this same degree and intensity of love may become manifest and apparent here; that the spirit of God shall so penetrate your hearts that each one of the beloved of God shall be considered as all; that each one may become a cause of unity and center of accord; and all mankind be bound together in real fellowship and love.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in Montclair and West Englewood.

June 23, 1912, at Montclair, New Jersey.

Notes by Frank E. Osborne

Abdul Baha—You are always smiling.

Mr. Osborne—Surely our faces should reflect happiness in this presence.

Abdul Baha—Yes!—This is the day of BAHÁ' ULLÁH; the age of the Blessed Perfection; the cycle of the Greatest Name. If you do not smile now, for what time will you await and what greater happiness could you expect? This is the springtime of manifestation. The vernal shower has descended from the cloud of divine mercy; the life-giving breeze of the Holy Spirit is wafting the perfume of blossoms. From field and meadow rises a fragrant breath of thanksgiving like pure incense ascending to the throne of God. The world has become a new world; souls are quickened, spirits renewed, refreshed. Truly it is a time for happiness.

(To people coming in)

Welcome! Welcome! You are very welcome!

(The church bells begin to ring)

I WAS not feeling very well this morning or I would have gone to church. Everywhere we hear the call of the spiritual world; in everything we behold the works of God. The church bells are pealing in memory of His Holiness Jesus Christ although more than nineteen hundred years have passed since he lived upon the earth. This is through the power of the spirit. No material power could do this. Yet people in their blindness deny Christ, seeking to perpetuate their names in worldly deeds. Everyone wishes to be remembered. Through earthly and material accomplishments one will hardly be remembered nine years, while the memory and glory of Christ continue after nineteen hundred have passed. For his name is eternal and his glory everlasting. Therefore man should hear with attentive ear the call of the spiritual world, seeking first the kingdom of God and its perfections. This is eternal life; this is everlasting remembrance.

How great the difference between the glory of Christ and the glory of an earthly conqueror! It is related by historians that Napoleon Bonaparte I embarked secretly by night from Egypt.

His destination was France. During his campaign in Palestine revolution had broken out and grave difficulties had arisen in the home government. Christian worship had been forbidden by the revolutionists. The priests of Christianity had fled in terror. France had become atheistic; anarchy prevailed. The ship sailed out into a night brilliant with the light of the moon. Napoleon was pacing up and down the deck. His officers were sitting together, talking. One of them spoke of the similarity between Bonaparte and Christ. Napoleon stopped and said grimly "Do you think I am going back to France to establish religion?"

His Holiness Jesus Christ established the religion of God through love. His sovereignty is everlasting. Napoleon overthrew governments in war and bloodshed. His dominion passed away; he himself was dethroned. Bonaparte destroyed human life; Christ was a saviour. Bonaparte controlled the physical bodies of men; Christ was a conqueror of human hearts. None of the prophets of God were famous men but they were unique in spiritual power. Love is the eternal sovereignty. Love is the divine power. By it all the kings of earth are overthrown and conquered. What evidence of this could be greater than the accomplishment of BAHÁ'ULLAH? He appeared in the east and was exiled. He was sent to the prison of Akka in Palestine. Two powerful despotic kings arose against him. During his exile and imprisonment he wrote tablets of authority to the kings and rulers of the world, announcing his spiritual sovereignty, establishing the religion of God, upraising the heavenly banners of the cause of God. One of these tablets was sent to Napoleon III, emperor of France. He received it with contempt and cast it behind his back. BAHÁ'ULLAH addressed a second tablet to him containing these words "Hadst thou spoken truly concerning the wronging of the servants of God (during the Crimean War), thou wouldst not have cast the book of God behind thy back when it was sent unto thee. Verily we tested thee therewith and did not find thee in the state thou didst pretend. Arise and make reparation. The world shall perish and what thou hast, but the kingdom remains to God. Because of what thou hast done, affairs shall be changed in thy kingdom. Empire shall depart from thy hands as a punishment for thy action. Thou shalt find thyself in manifest loss; thy glory shall pass away unless thou takest hold of this firm rope. We have seen humiliation hastening after thee." All this happened just as announced by BAHÁ'ULLAH. Napoleon III was dethroned and exiled. His empire passed away and became non-existent while the dominion and sovereignty of BAHÁ'ULLAH the prisoner has become eternal

through the confirmation of God. This is as evident as the light of the sun at midday except to those who are spiritually blind. If we are afflicted with a cold we cannot inhale the delicate fragrances emanating from the rose-garden of the divine kingdom.

In brief; the nations of the world are becoming united under the sovereignty of the divine kingdom. The east and the west are embracing here in love and affection today. This is not a commercial or political unity, but unity through the love of God. We have crossed the sea to spread that love in America; to announce the call of the kingdom; to establish the spiritual foundations of international peace. Although men may arise against the kingdom, the dominion and sovereignty of God will be set up. It is an eternal kingdom, a divine sovereignty. In his day Christ was called satan, beelzebub, but hear the bells now ringing for him! He was the Word of God and not satan. They mocked him, led him through the city upon a donkey, crowned him with thorns, spat upon his blessed face and crucified him, but he is now with God and in God because he was the Word and not satan. Fifty years ago no one would touch the Christian bible in Persia. BAHÁ 'ULLAH came and asked "Why?" They said "It is not the Word of God." He said "You must read it with understanding of its meanings, not as those who merely recite its words." Now Bahais all over the east read the bible and understand its spiritual teaching. BAHÁ 'ULLAH spread the cause of Christ and opened the book of the Christians and Jews. He removed the barriers of "Names." He proved that all the divine prophets taught the same reality and that to deny one is to deny the others, for all are in perfect oneness with God.

In London some of the Christians said we were deniers of Christ. We say His Holiness the Christ is the Word of God. We are gathered here this morning for his mention. The bells have called us together in love and unity. This house is the temple of God. All are welcome! Very welcome!

Question: How shall we determine the truth or error of certain biblical interpretation, as for instance the "higher criticism" and other present day Christian teachings?

Abdul Baha: Your question is an abstruse and important one. Complete answer to it would require a long time. I will reply to it briefly. The only true explainer of the book of God is the Holy Spirit, for no two minds are alike, no two can comprehend alike, no two can speak alike. That is to say, from the mere human

standpoint of interpretation there could be neither truth nor agreement."

Question: Do you approve of the "new thought" in which the control of mind over matter is the central principle?

Abdul Baha: Philosophy develops the mind. Christ and the Word of God are revealed through the Spirit. Plato says "The mental conclusions are so and so." Christ says "Be led of the Spirit."

Question: Should children be allowed to read the "higher criticism"?

Abdul Baha: They should first be taught the reality of religion as a foundation. For instance, in the catholic church the child is taught that through some act of the priest the bread and wine of the sacrament become the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The mind cannot accept this. The child must be taught that this transformation is symbolical of the truth that Christ is the food from heaven, the eating of which produces eternal life. The Jews had memorized the bible but failed to grasp its meanings. If they had understood the spiritual significances of the scriptures they would have been the first believers in Christ. You are among the first believers in this country. You are the children of the kingdom. BAHÁ' ULLÁH has taught you the reality of religion. There are many of the Bahai Friends in Persia whom we do not know but we know you here in America. Turn your faces to the Sun of Reality. That Sun has always risen in the east. Find the answer to your questions in your heart. Be as little children. Until the soil is prepared it cannot receive the benefit of planting.

II

June 29, 1912, at West Englewood, New Jersey.

Unity Feast, Outdoors.

Notes by Esther Foster

THIS is a delightful gathering; you have come here with sincere intentions and the purpose of all present is the attainment of the virtues of God. The motive is attraction to the divine kingdom. Since the desire of all is unity and agreement it is certain that this meeting will be productive of great results. It will be the cause of attracting a new bounty for we are turning to the kingdom of Abha seeking the infinite bestowals of the Lord. This is a new Day and this hour is a new Hour in which we have come together. Surely the Sun of Reality with its full effulgence will

illumine us and the darkness of disagreements will disappear. The utmost love and unity will result, the favors of God will encompass us, the pathway of the kingdom will be made easy. Like candles these souls will become ignited and made radiant through the lights of supreme guidance. Such gatherings as this have no equal or likeness in the world of mankind where people are drawn together by physical motives or in furtherance of material interests, for this meeting is a prototype of that inner and complete spiritual association in the eternal world of being.

True Bahai meetings are the mirrors of the kingdom wherein images of the Supreme Concurrence are reflected. In them the lights of the most great guidance are visible. They voice the summons of the heavenly kingdom and echo the call of the angelic hosts to every listening ear. The efficacy of such meetings as these is permanent throughout the ages. This assembly has a name and significance which will last forever. Hundreds of thousands of meetings shall be held to commemorate this occasion and the very words I speak to you today shall be repeated in them for ages to come. Therefore be ye rejoiced for ye are sheltered beneath the providence of God. Be happy and joyous because the bestowals of God are intended for you and the life of the Holy Spirit is breathing upon you.

Rejoice, for the heavenly table is prepared for you.

Rejoice, for the angels of heaven are your assistants and helpers.

Rejoice, for the glance of the Blessed Beauty BAHÁ 'ULLAH is directed upon you.

Rejoice, for BAHÁ 'ULLAH is your protector.

Rejoice, for the glory everlasting is destined for you.

Rejoice, for the life eternal is awaiting you.

How many blessed souls have longed for this radiant century their utmost hopes and desires centered upon the happiness and joy of one such day as this. Many the nights they passed sleepless and lamenting until the very morn in longing anticipation of this age, yearning to realize even an hour of this time. God has favored you in this century and has specialized you for the realization of its blessings. Therefore you must praise and thank God with heart and soul in appreciation of this great opportunity and the attainment of this infinite bestowal; that such doors have been opened before your faces, such abundance is pouring down from the cloud of mercy and that these refreshing breezes from the paradise of Abha are resuscitating you. You must become of one heart, one spirit and one susceptibility. May you become as the waves of

one sea, stars of the same heaven, fruits adorning the same tree, roses of one garden; in order that through you the oneness of humanity may establish its temple in the world of mankind, for you are the ones who are called to uplift the cause of unity among the nations of the earth.

First, you must become united and agreed among yourselves. You must be exceedingly kind and loving toward each other, willing to forfeit life in the pathway of another's happiness. You must be ready to sacrifice your possessions in another's behalf. The rich among you must show compassion toward the poor, and the well-to-do must look after those in distress. In Persia the friends offer their lives for each other, striving to assist and advance the interests and welfare of all the rest. They live in a perfect state of unity and agreement. Like the Persian friends you must be perfectly agreed and united to the extent and limit of sacrificing life. Your utmost desire must be to confer happiness upon each other. Each one must be the servant of the others, thoughtful of their comfort and welfare. In the path of God one must forget himself entirely. He must not consider his own pleasure but seek the pleasure of others. He must not desire glory nor gifts of bounty for himself but seek these gifts and blessings for his brothers and sisters. It is my hope that you may become like this; that you may attain to the supreme bestowal and be imbued with such spiritual qualities as to forget yourselves entirely and with heart and soul offer yourselves as sacrifices for the Blessed Perfection. You should have neither will nor desire of your own but seek everything for the beloved of God and live together in complete love and fellowship. May the favors of BAHÁ 'ULLAH surround you from all directions. This is the greatest bestowal and supreme bounty. These are the infinite favors of God.

Discourses of Abdul Baha delivered in New York.

July 1, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

WHAT could be better before God than thinking of the poor? For the poor are beloved by our heavenly father. When His Holiness Christ came upon the earth those who believed in him and followed him were the poor and lowly, showing the poor were near to God. When a rich man believes and follows the manifestation of God it is a proof that his wealth is not an obstacle and does not prevent him from attaining the pathway of salvation. After he has been tested and tried it will be seen whether his possessions are a hindrance in his religious life. But the poor are especially beloved of God. Their lives are full of difficulties, their trials continual, their hopes are in God alone. Therefore you must assist the poor as much as possible, even by sacrifice of yourself. No deed of man is greater before God than helping the poor. Spiritual conditions are not dependent upon the possession of worldly treasures or the absence of them. When physically destitute, spiritual thoughts are more likely. Poverty is stimulus toward God. Each one of you must have great consideration for the poor and render them assistance. Organize in an effort to help them and prevent increase of poverty. The greatest means for prevention is that whereby the laws of the community will be so framed and enacted that it will not be possible for a few to be millionaires and many destitute. One of BAHÁ' ULLÁH's teachings is the adjustment of means of livelihood in human society. Under this adjustment there can be no extremes in human conditions as regards wealth and sustenance. For the community needs financier, farmer, merchant and laborer just as an army must be composed of commander, officers and privates. All cannot be commanders; all cannot be officers or privates. Each in his station in the social fabric must be competent; each in his function according to ability; but justness of opportunity for all.

Lycurgus king of Sparta who lived long before the day of Christ conceived the idea of absolute equality in government. He proclaimed laws by which all the people of Sparta were classified into certain divisions. Each division had its separate rights and function. First, farmers and tillers of the soil. Second, artisans

and merchants. Third, leaders or grandees. Under the laws of Lycurgus the latter were not required to engage in any labor or vocation but it was incumbent upon them to defend the country in case of war and invasion. Then he divided Sparta into nine thousand equal parts or provinces, appointing nine thousand leaders or grandees to protect them. In this way the farmers of each province were assured of protection but each farmer was compelled to pay a tax to support the grandee of that province. The farmers and merchants were not obliged to defend the country. In lieu of labor the grandees received the taxes. Lycurgus in order to establish this forever as a law, brought nine thousand grandees together, told them he was going upon a long journey and wished this form of government to remain effective until his return. They swore an oath to protect and preserve his law. He then left his kingdom, went into voluntary exile and never came back. No man ever made such a sacrifice to insure equality among his fellowmen. A few years passed and the whole system of government he had founded collapsed, although established upon such a just and wise basis.

Difference of capacity in human individuals is fundamental. It is impossible for all to be alike, all to be equal, all to be wise. BAHÁ' ULLAH has revealed principles and laws which will accomplish the adjustment of varying human capacities. He has said that whatsoever is possible of accomplishment in human government will be effected through these principles. When the laws he has instituted are carried out there will be no millionaires possible in the community and likewise no extremely poor. This will be effected and regulated by adjusting the different degrees of human capacity. The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture, tillage of the soil. All must be producers. Each person in the community whose income is equal to his individual producing capacity shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, a man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds he will pay no tax; if his necessities exceed his production he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore taxation will be proportionate to capacity and production and there will be no poor in the community.

BAHÁ' ULLAH likewise commanded the rich to give freely to the poor. In the *Kitab-el-Akdas* it is further written by him that those who have a certain amount of income must give one-fifth of it to God the creator of heaven and earth.

II

July 1, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

From Stenographic Notes

I DESIRE to make manifest among the friends in America a new light that they may become a new people, that a new foundation may be established and complete harmony be realized; for the foundation of BAHÁ'ULLAH is love. When you go to Green Acre you must have infinite love for each other, each preferring the other before himself. The people must be so attracted to you that they will exclaim "What happiness exists among you!" and will see in your faces the lights of the kingdom; then in wonderment they will turn to you and seek the cause of your happiness. You must give the message through action and deed, not alone by word. Word must be conjoined with deed. You must love your friend better than yourself; yes be willing to sacrifice yourself. The cause of BAHÁ'ULLAH has not yet appeared in this country. I desire that you be ready to sacrifice everything for each other, even life itself; then I will know that the cause of BAHÁ'ULLAH has been established. I will pray for you that you may become the cause of upraising the lights of God. May everyone point to you and ask "Why are these people so happy?" I want you to be happy in Green Acre, to laugh, smile and rejoice in order that others may be made happy by you. I will pray for you.

III

July 5, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

Question: "You have stated that 'we are living in a universal cycle the first manifestation of which was Adam and the universal manifestation of which is BAHÁ'ULLAH.' Does this imply that other universal cycles preceded this one and that all traces of them have been effaced; cycles in which the ultimate purpose was the divine spiritualization of man just as it is the creative intention in this one?"

THE divine sovereignty is an ancient sovereignty not an accidental sovereignty.

If we imagine this world of existence has a beginning we can say the divine sovereignty is accidental, that is there was a time when it did not exist. A king without a kingdom is impossible. He cannot be without a country, without subjects, without an army,

without dominion, or he would be without kingship. All these exigencies or requirements of sovereignty must exist for a king. When they do exist we can apply the word sovereignty to him. Otherwise his sovereignty is imperfect, incomplete. If none of these conditions exist, sovereignty does not exist.

If we acknowledge there is a beginning for this world of creation, we acknowledge the sovereignty of God is accidental; that is, we admit a time when the reality of divinity has been without dominion (lit. "defeated"). The names and attributes of divinity are requirements of this world. The names "powerful," the "living," the "provider," the "creator," require and necessitate the existence of creatures. If there were no creatures "creator" would be meaningless. If there were none to provide for, we could not think of the "provider." If there were no life, the "living" would be beyond the power of conception. Therefore all the names and attributes of God require the existence of objects or creatures upon which they have been bestowed and in which they have become manifest. If there was a time when no creation existed, when there was none to provide for, it would imply a time when there was no existent one, no trainer, and the attributes and qualities of God would have been meaningless and without significance. Therefore the requirements of the attributes of God do not admit of cessation or interruption, for the names of God are actually and forever existing and not potential. Because they convey life they are called life-giving; because they provide they are called bountiful, the provider; because they create they are called creator; because they educate and govern, the name Lord God is applied. That is to say, the divine names emanate from the eternal attributes of divinity. Therefore it is proved that the divine names presuppose the existence of objects or beings.

How then is a time conceivable when this sovereignty has not been existent? This divine sovereignty is not to be measured by six thousand years. This interminable, illimitable universe is not the result of that measured period. This stupendous laboratory and workshop has not been limited to six thousand revolutions of the earth about the sun, in its production. With the slightest reflection man can be assured that this calculation and announcement is childish, especially in view of the fact that it is scientifically proved the terrestrial globe has been the habitation of man long prior to such limited estimate.

As to the record in the bible concerning His Holiness Adam entering paradise, eating from the tree and his expulsion through the temptation of satan, these are all symbols beneath which there are

wonderful and divine meanings not to be calculated in years, dates and measurement of time. Likewise the statement that God created the heaven and the earth in six days is symbolic. We will not explain this further today. The texts of the holy books are all symbolical needing authoritative interpretation.

When man casts even a cursory glance of reflection upon the question of the universe, he discovers it is very ancient. A Persian philosopher was looking up into the heavens, lost in wonder. He said "I have written a book containing seventy proofs of the accidental appearance of the universe, but I still find it very ancient."

BAHA 'ULLAH says "the universe hath neither beginning nor ending." He has set aside the elaborate theories and exhaustive opinions of scientists and material philosophers by the simple statement "There is no beginning, no ending." The theologians and religionists advance plausible proofs that the creation of the universe dates back six thousand years; the scientists bring forth indisputable facts and say "No! these evidences indicate ten, twenty, fifty thousand years ago," etc., etc. There are endless discussions pro and con. BAHA 'ULLAH sets aside these discussions by one word and statement. He says "The divine sovereignty hath no beginning and no ending." By this announcement and its demonstration he has established a standard of agreement among those who reflect upon this question of divine sovereignty; brought reconciliation and peace in this war of opinion and discussion.

Briefly, there were many universal cycles preceding this one in which we are living. They were consummated, completed and their traces obliterated. The divine and creative purpose in them was the evolution of spiritual man, just as it is in this cycle. The circle of existence is the same circle; it returns. The tree of life has ever borne the same heavenly fruit.

IV

July 5, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Emma C. Mellick and Howard MacNutt

YOU are very welcome, very welcome, all of you! In the divine holy books there are unmistakable prophecies giving the glad-tidings of a certain Day in which the promised one of all the books would appear, a radiant dispensation be established, the banner of the "Most Great Peace" and conciliation be hoisted and the oneness of the world of humanity proclaimed. Among the various nations and peoples of the world no enmity or hatred should remain.

All hearts were to be connected one with another. These things are recorded in the torah or old testament, in the gospel, the koran, the zend-avesta, the books of Buddha and the book of Confucius. In brief, all the holy books contain these glad-tidings. They announce that after the world is surrounded by darkness, radiance shall appear. For just as the night when it becomes excessively dark precedes the dawn of a new day, so likewise when the darkness of religious apathy and heedlessness overtakes the world, when human souls become negligent of God, when materialistic ideas overshadow spirituality, when nations become submerged in the world of matter and forget God, at such a time as this shall the divine Sun shine forth and the radiant morn appear.

Consider to what a remarkable extent the spirituality of people has been overcome by materialism, so that spiritual susceptibility seems to have vanished, divine civilization become decadent, and guidance and knowledge of God no longer remain. All are submerged in the sea of materialism. Although some attend churches and temples of worship and devotion, it is in accordance with the traditions and imitations of their fathers and not for the investigation of reality. For it is evident they have not found the reality and are not engaged in its adoration. They are holding to certain imitations which have descended to them from their fathers and ancestors. They have become accustomed to passing a certain length of time in temple worship and conforming to imitations and ceremonies. The proof of this is that the son of every Jewish father becomes a Jew and not a Christian; the son of every Mohammedan becomes a follower of Islam; the son of every Christian proves to be a Christian; the son of every Zoroastrian is a Zoroastrian, etc., etc. Therefore religious faith and belief is merely a remnant of blind imitations which have descended through fathers and ancestors. Because this man's father was a Jew he considers himself a Jew; not that he has investigated the reality and proved satisfactorily to himself that Judaism is right; nay, rather, he is aware that his forefathers have followed this course, therefore he has held to it himself.

The purpose of this is to explain that the darkness of imitations encompasses the world. Every nation is holding to its traditional religious forms. The light of reality is obscured. Were these various nations to investigate the reality, there is no doubt they would attain to it. As reality is one, all nations would then become as one nation. So long as they adhere to various imitations and are deprived of the reality, strife and warfare will continue and rancor and sedition prevail. If they investigate the reality, neither enmity

nor rancor will remain and they will attain to the utmost concord among themselves.

During the years when the darkness of heedlessness was most intense in the Orient and the people were so submerged in imitations that nations were thirsting for the blood of each other, considering each other as contaminated and refusing to associate; at such a time as this His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH appeared. He arose in the Orient, uprooting the very foundations of imitations and brought the dawn of the light of reality. Through him various nations became united because all desired the reality. Inasmuch as they investigated the reality in religion, they found that all men are the servants of God, the posterity of Adam, children of one household and that the foundations of all the prophets are one. For inasmuch as the teachings of the prophets are reality their foundations are one. The enmity and strife of nations therefore are due to religious imitations and not the reality which underlies the teachings of the prophets. Through BAHÁ 'ULLAH the nations and peoples grew to understand and comprehend this. Therefore hearts became united and lives were cemented together. After centuries of hatred and bitterness the Christian, Jew, Zoroastrian, Mohammedan and Buddhist met in fellowship; all of them in the utmost love and unity. They became welded and cemented because they had perceived the reality.

The divine prophets are conjoined in the perfect state of love. Each one has given the glad-tidings of his successor's coming and each successor has sanctioned the one who preceded him. They were in the utmost unity but their followers are in strife. For instance, Moses gave the message of the glad-tidings of Christ and Christ confirmed the prophethood of Moses. Therefore between Moses and Jesus there is no variation or conflict. They are in perfect unity but between the Jew and the Christian there is conflict. Now therefore if the Christian and Jewish peoples investigate the reality underlying their prophets' teachings they will become kind in their attitude toward each other and associate in the utmost love, for reality is one and not dual or multiple. If this investigation of the reality becomes universal the divergent nations will ratify all the divine prophets and confirm all the holy books. No strife or rancor will then remain and the world will become united. Then will we associate in the reality of love. We will become as fathers and sons, as brothers and sisters living together in complete unity, love and happiness, for this century is the century of light. It is not like former centuries. Former centuries were epochs of oppression. Now human intellects have developed and human

intelligence has increased. Each soul is investigating the reality. This is not a time when we shall wage war and be hostile toward each other. We are living at a time when we should enjoy the real friendship.

Fifty years ago His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH sent epistles to all the kings and nations of the world, at a time when there was no mention of international peace. One of these epistles was sent by him to the president of the American democracy. In these communications he summoned all to international peace and the oneness of the human world. He summoned mankind to the fundamentals of the teachings of all the prophets. Some of the European kings were arrogant. Among them was Napoleon Bonaparte III. BAHÁ 'ULLAH wrote a second epistle to him which was published thirty years ago. The context is this: "O Napoleon! thou hast become haughty indeed. Thou hast become proud. Thou hast forgotten God. Thou dost imagine that this majesty is permanent for thee, that this dominion is abiding for thee. A letter have we sent unto thee for acceptance with thy greatest love; but instead thou hast shown arrogance. Therefore God shall uproot the edifice of thy sovereignty; thy country shall flee away from thee. Thou shalt find humiliation hastening after thee because thou didst not arise for that which was enjoined upon thee, whereas that which was a duty incumbent upon thee was the cause of life to the world. The punishment of God shall soon be dealt out to thee."

This epistle was revealed in the year 1869 and after one year the foundations of the Napoleonic sovereignty were completely uprooted.

Among these epistles was a very lengthy one to the shah of Persia. It was printed and spread broadcast throughout all the countries. This epistle was revealed in the year 1870. In it BAHÁ 'ULLAH admonished the shah of Persia to be kind to all his subjects, summoning him to dispense justice, counselling him to make no distinction between the religions, charging him to deal equally with Jew, Christian, Mohammedan and Zoroastrian and remove the oppression prevailing in his country.

At that time the Jews were greatly oppressed in Persia. BAHÁ 'ULLAH especially recommended justice for them, saying that all people are the servants of God, and in the eye of the government they should be equally estimated. "If justice is not dealt out, if these oppressions are not removed and if thou dost not obey God, the foundations of thy government will be razed and thou shalt become evanescent, become as nothing. Thou shouldst gather all the learned men and then summon me. There I shall be present.

I will then advance proofs and evidences as to my validity. I will manifest my proof and anything that you may ask. I am ready. But if no attention is paid to this book, thou, like unto the kings who became non-existent shalt likewise become non-existent." The shah did not answer this epistle of the Blessed Perfection. Then God destroyed the foundations of his sovereignty.

Among those to whom BAHÁ 'ULLAH wrote was the sultan of Turkey. In it he arraigned him, saying "Verily thou didst incarcerate and make me a prisoner. Dost thou imagine that imprisonment is a loss to me, that imprisonment is a humiliation for me? This imprisonment is a glory for me because it is in the pathway of God. I have not committed a crime. It is for the sake of God that I have received this ordeal. Therefore I am very happy; I am exceedingly joyous. But thou must wait; God will send thee a punishment; thou shalt receive retribution. Ere long thou shalt observe how ordeals shall descend upon thee like rain and thou shalt become non-existent." And even so it was.

Likewise he sent messages to the other kings and crowned heads of the earth, summoning all of them to love, equity, international peace and the oneness of humanity, in order that mankind might become unified and agreed; that strife, warfare and sedition should pass away; that bitterness and enmity might cease and all arise to serve the one God.

In brief, two kings arose against BAHÁ 'ULLAH,—the shah of Persia and the sultan of Turkey. They imprisoned His Holiness in the fortress of Akka in order to extinguish his light and exterminate his cause. But BAHÁ 'ULLAH while in prison wrote severe letters of arraignment to them. He declared that imprisonment was no obstacle to him. He said "This imprisonment will prove to be the means of the promotion of my cause. This imprisonment shall be the incentive for the spreading of my teachings. No harm shall come to me because I have sacrificed my life, I have sacrificed my blood, I have sacrificed my possessions, I have sacrificed all and for me this imprisonment is no loss." And just as he declared, so it came to pass. In prison he hoisted his banner and his cause spread throughout the world. It has reached America. Now the cause of BAHÁ 'ULLAH is extending to all nations of the earth. You go to Asia and wherever you travel you will find Bahais. You go to Africa, Europe, there you will find the cause of BAHÁ 'ULLAH. In America it is just beginning to grow and spread.

These two kings could not do anything to withstand BAHÁ 'ULLAH but God through him, was capable of destroying both of

them. I too was in prison. God removed the chains from my neck and placed them around the neck of Abdul Hamid. It was done suddenly, not a long time, in a moment as it were. The same hour that the Young Turks declared liberty, the Committee of Union and Progress set me free. They lifted the chains from my neck and threw them around the neck of Abdul Hamid. That which he did to me was inflicted upon him. Now the position is precisely reversed. His days are spent in prison just as I passed the days in prison at Akka, with this difference, that I was happy in imprisonment. I was in the utmost elation because I was not a criminal. They had imprisoned me in the path of God. Every time I thought of this, that I was a prisoner in the pathway of God, the utmost elation overcame me. Abdul Hamid is now suffering punishment for his deeds. Because of the sins he committed he is now in prison. This is retribution for his acts. Every hour he is mortified anew and his ignominy revived. He is in the utmost sorrow and disappointment while I am in perfect happiness. I was happy that—praise be to God!—I was a prisoner in the cause of God, that my life was not wasted, that it was spent in the divine service. Nobody who saw me imagined that I was in prison. They beheld me in the utmost joy, complete thankfulness and health, paying no attention to the prison.

V

July 6, 1912, at 309 West 78th Street, New York.

Notes by Emma C. Mellick

IN the world of existence man has traversed successive degrees until he has attained the human kingdom. In each degree of his progression he has developed capacity for advancement to the next station and condition. While in the kingdom of the mineral he was attaining the capacity for promotion into the degree of the vegetable. In the kingdom of the vegetable he underwent preparation for the world of the animal and from thence he has come onward to the human degree or kingdom. Throughout this journey of progression he has ever and always been potentially man.

In the beginning of his human life man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that limited condition. In this world he needed eyes; he received them potentially in the other. He needed ears; he obtained them there in readiness and preparation for his new existence. The powers requisite in this

world were conferred upon him in the world of the matrix, so that when he entered this realm of real existence he not only possessed all necessary functions and powers but found provision for his material sustenance awaiting him.

Therefore in this world he must prepare himself for the life beyond. That which he needs in the world of the kingdom must be obtained here. Just as he prepared himself in the world of the matrix by acquiring forces necessary in this sphere of existence, so likewise the indispensable forces of the divine existence must be potentially attained in this world.

What is he in need of in the kingdom which transcends the life and limitation of this mortal sphere? That world beyond is a world of sanctity and radiance; therefore it is necessary that in this world he should acquire these divine attributes. In that world there is need of spirituality, faith, assurance, the knowledge and love of God. These he must attain in this world so that after his ascension from the earthly to the heavenly kingdom he shall find all that is needful in that life eternal ready for him.

That divine world is manifestly a world of lights; therefore man has need of illumination here. That is a world of love; the love of God is essential. It is a world of perfections; virtues or perfections must be acquired. That world is vivified by the breaths of the Holy Spirit; in this world we must seek them. That is the kingdom of life everlasting; it must be attained during this vanishing existence.

By what means can man acquire these things? How shall he obtain these merciful gifts and powers? First, through the knowledge of God. Second, through the love of God. Third, through faith. Fourth, through philanthropic deeds. Fifth, through self-sacrifice. Sixth, through severance from this world. Seventh, through sanctity and holiness. Unless he acquires these forces and attains to these requirements he will surely be deprived of the life that is eternal. But if he possesses the knowledge of God, becomes ignited through the fire of the love of God, witnesses the great and mighty signs of the kingdom, becomes the cause of love among mankind, and lives in the utmost state of sanctity and holiness, he shall surely attain to second birth, be baptized by the Holy Spirit and enjoy everlasting existence.

Is it not astonishing that although man has been created for the knowledge and love of God, for the virtues of the human world, for spirituality, heavenly illumination and life eternal, nevertheless he continues ignorant and negligent of all this?

Consider how he seeks knowledge of everything except knowledge of God. For instance, his utmost desire is to penetrate the mysteries of the lowest strata of the earth. Day by day he strives to know what can be found ten metres below the surface, what he can discover within the stone, what he can learn by archaeological research in the dust. He puts forth arduous labors to fathom terrestrial mysteries but is not at all concerned about knowing the mysteries of the kingdom, traversing the illimitable fields of the eternal world, becoming informed of the divine realities, discovering the secrets of God, attaining the knowledge of God, witnessing the splendors of the Sun of Truth and realizing the glories of everlasting life. He is unmindful and thoughtless of these. How much he is attracted to the mysteries of matter and how completely unaware he is of the mysteries of divinity! Nay, he is utterly negligent and oblivious of the secrets of divinity. How great his ignorance! How conducive to his degradation! It is as if a kind and loving father had provided a library of wonderful books for his son in order that he might be informed of the mysteries of creation; at the same time surrounding him with every means of comfort and enjoyment; but the son amuses himself with pebbles and playthings, neglectful of all his father's gifts and provision. How ignorant and heedless is man! The Father has willed for him glory eternal and he is content with blindness and deprivation. The Father has built for him a royal palace but he is playing with the dust; prepared for him garments of silk but he prefers to remain unclothed; provided for him delicious foods and fruits while he seeks sustenance in the grasses of the field.

Praise be to God! you have heard the call of the kingdom. Your eyes are opened; you have turned to God. Your purpose is the good-pleasure of God, the understanding of the mysteries of the heart and investigation of the realities. Day and night you must strive that you may attain to the significances of the heavenly kingdom, perceive the signs of divinity, acquire certainty of knowledge and realize that this world has a creator, a vivifier, a provider, an architect,—knowing this through proofs and evidences and not through susceptibilities,—nay, rather, through decisive arguments and real vision; that is to say, visualizing it as clearly as the outer eye beholds the sun. In this way may you behold the presence of God and attain to the knowledge of the holy, divine manifestations.

You must come into the knowledge of the divine manifestations and their teachings through proofs and evidences. You must unseal the mysteries of the supreme kingdom and become capable of discovering the inner realities of things. Then shall you be

the manifestations of the mercy of God, and true believers, firm and steadfast in the cause of God.

Praise be to God! the door of divine knowledge has been opened by BAHÁ 'ULLAH; for he has laid the foundation whereby man may become acquainted with the verities of heaven and earth and has bestowed the utmost confirmation in this day. He is our teacher and adviser; he is our seer and the one clement toward us. He has prepared his gifts and vouchsafed his bounties, revealed every admonition and behest, prepared for us the means of eternal glory, breathed upon us the life-quickenings breaths of the Holy Spirit, opened before our faces the doors of the paradise of Abhá and caused the lights of the Sun of Truth to shine upon us. The clouds of mercy have poured down their precious rain. The sea of favor is swelling and surging toward us.

The spiritual springtime has come. Infinite bounties and graces have appeared. What bestowal is greater than this? We must appreciate the divine generosity and act in accordance with the teachings of BAHÁ 'ULLAH, so that all good may be stored up for us and in both worlds we shall become precious and acceptable to God, attain to everlasting blessings, taste the delicacy of the love of God, find the sweetness of the knowledge of God, perceive the heavenly bestowal and witness the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is my advice and this is my admonition.

VI

*July 14, 1912, at All Souls Unitarian Church,
Fourth Avenue and 20th Street, New York.*

Notes by John G. Grundy and Howard MacNutt

TODAY I wish to speak to you upon the subject of "Oneness of Humanity" for in this great century the most important accomplishment is the unity of mankind. Although in former centuries and times this subject received some measure of mention and consideration, it has now become the paramount issue and question in the religious and political conditions of the world. History shows that throughout the past there has been continual warfare and strife among the various nations, peoples and sects, but now, Praise be to God! in this century of illumination, hearts are inclined toward agreement and fellowship and minds are thoughtful upon the question of the unification of mankind. There is an emanation of the universal consciousness today which clearly indicates the dawn of a great unity.

In the investigation of a subject the right method of approach is to carefully examine its premises. Therefore we must go back to the foundation upon which human solidarity rests, namely: that all are the progeny of Adam, the creatures and servants of one God; that God is the protector and provider; that all are submerged in the sea of divine mercy and grace and God is loving toward all.

Humanity shares in common the intellectual and spiritual faculties of a created endowment. All are equally subject to the various exigencies of human life and are similarly occupied in acquiring the means of earthly subsistence. From the viewpoint of creation human beings stand upon the same footing in every respect, subject to the same requirements and seeking the enjoyment and comfort of earthly conditions. Therefore the things humanity shares in common are numerous and manifest. This equal participation in the physical, intellectual and spiritual problems of human existence is a valid basis for the unification of mankind.

Consider how discord and dissension have prevailed in this great human family for thousands of years. Its members have ever been engaged in war and bloodshed. Up to the present time in history the world of humanity has neither attained nor enjoyed any measure of peace, owing to incessant conditions of hostility and strife. History is a continuous and consecutive record of warfare brought about by religious, sectarian, racial, patriotic and political causes. The world of humanity has found no rest. Mankind has always been in conflict, engaged in destroying the foundations, pillaging the properties and possessing the lands and territory of each other, especially in the earlier periods of savagery and barbarism where whole races and peoples were carried away captive by their conquerors. Who shall measure or estimate the tremendous destruction of human life resulting from this hostility and strife? What human powers and forces have been employed in the prosecution of war and applied to inhuman purposes of battle and bloodshed! In this most radiant century it has become necessary to divert these energies and utilize them in other directions; to seek the new path of fellowship and unity; to unlearn the science of war and devote supreme human forces to the blessed arts of peace. After long trial and experience we are convinced of the harmful and satanic outcomes of dissension; now we must seek after means by which the benefits of agreement and concord may be enjoyed. When such means are found we must give them a trial.

Consider the harmful effect of discord and dissension in a

family; then reflect upon the favors and blessings which descend upon that family when unity exists among its various members. What incalculable benefits and blessings would descend upon the great human family if unity and brotherhood were established! In this century when the beneficent results of unity and the ill effects of discord are so clearly apparent, the means for the attainment and accomplishment of human fellowship have appeared in the world. His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLÁH has proclaimed and provided the way by which hostility and dissension may be removed from the human world. He has left no ground or possibility for strife and disagreement.

First, he has proclaimed the oneness of mankind and specialized religious teachings for existing human conditions. The first form of dissension arises from religious differences. His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLÁH has given full teachings to the world which are conducive to fellowship and unity in religion. Throughout past centuries each system of religious belief has boasted of its own superiority and excellence, abasing and scorning the validity of all others. Each has proclaimed its own belief as the light and all others as darkness. Religionists have considered the world of humanity as two trees, one divine and merciful, the other satanic; they themselves the branches, leaves and fruit of the divine tree and all others who differ from them in belief, the product of the tree which is satanic. Therefore sedition and warfare, bloodshed and strife have been continuous among them. The greatest cause of human alienation has been religion because each party has considered the belief of the other as anathema and deprived of the mercy of God.

The teachings specialized in BAHÁ'ULLÁH are addressed to humanity, saying "Ye are all the leaves of one tree." He does not say "Ye are the leaves of two trees,—one divine, the other satanic." He has declared that each individual member of the human family is a leaf or branch upon the Adamic tree; that all are sheltered beneath the protecting mercy and providence of God; that all are the children of God; fruit upon the one tree of his love. God is equally compassionate and kind to all the leaves, branches and fruit of this tree. Therefore there is no satanic tree whatever; "satan" being a product of human minds and of instinctive human tendencies toward error. God alone is creator and all are creatures of his might. Therefore we must love mankind as his creatures, realizing that all are growing upon the tree of his mercy, servants of his omnipotent will and manifestations of his good-pleasure.

Even though we find a branch or leaf upon this tree of humanity defective or a blossom imperfect it nevertheless belongs to this tree and not to another. Therefore it is our duty to protect and cultivate this tree until it reaches perfection. If we examine its fruit and find it imperfect we must strive to make it perfect. There are souls in the human world who are ignorant; we must make them knowing. Some growing upon the tree are weak and ailing; we must assist them toward health and recovery. If they are as infants in development we must minister to them until they attain maturity. We should never detest and shun them as objectionable and unworthy. We must treat them with honor, respect and kindness, for God has created them and not satan. They are not manifestations of the wrath of God but evidences of his divine favor. God the creator has endowed them with physical, mental and spiritual qualities that they may seek to know and do his will; therefore they are not objects of his wrath and condemnation. In brief, all humanity must be looked upon with love, kindness and respect, for what we behold in them are none other than the signs and traces of God himself. All are evidences of God; therefore how shall we be justified in debasing and belittling them, uttering anathema and preventing them from drawing near unto his mercy. This is ignorance and injustice, displeasing to God, for in his sight all are his servants.

Another cause of dissension and disagreement is the fact that religion has been pronounced at variance with science. Between scientists and the followers of religion there has always been controversy and strife for the reason that the latter have proclaimed religion superior in authority to science and considered scientific announcement opposed to the teachings of religion. His Holiness BAHA 'ULLAH declared that religion is in complete harmony with science and reason. If religious belief and doctrine is at variance with reason, it proceeds from the limited mind of man and not from God; therefore it is unworthy of belief and not deserving of attention; the heart finds no rest in it and real faith is impossible. How can man believe that which he knows to be opposed to reason? Is this possible? Can the heart accept that which reason denies? Reason is the first faculty of man and the religion of God is in harmony with it. BAHA 'ULLAH has removed this form of dissension and discord from among mankind and reconciled science with religion by revealing the pure teachings of the divine reality. This accomplishment is specialized to him in this day.

Still another cause of disagreement and dissension has been the

formation of religious sects and denominations. BAHÁ'ULLAH said that God has sent religion for the purpose of establishing fellowship among humankind and not to create strife and discord, for all religion is founded upon the love of humanity. His Holiness Abraham promulgated this principle; His Holiness Moses summoned all to its recognition; His Holiness Christ established it and His Holiness Mohammed directed mankind to its standard. This is the reality of religion. If we abandon hearsay and investigate the reality and inner significance of the heavenly teachings we will find the same divine foundation of love for humanity. The purport is that religion is intended to be the cause of unity, love and fellowship and not discord, enmity and estrangement. Man has forsaken the foundation of divine religion and adhered to blind imitations. Each nation has clung to its own imitations and because these are at variance, warfare, bloodshed and destruction of the foundation of humanity have resulted. True religion is based upon love and agreement. His Holiness BAHÁ'ULLAH has said "If religion and faith are the causes of enmity and sedition, it is far better to be non-religious, and the absence of religion would be preferable; for we desire religion to be the cause of amity and fellowship. If enmity and hatred exist, irreligion is preferable." Therefore the removal of this dissension has been specialized in BAHÁ'ULLAH, for religion is the divine remedy for human antagonism and discord. But when we make the remedy the cause of the disease, it would be better to do without the remedy.

Other sources of human dissension are political, racial and patriotic prejudices. These have been removed by BAHÁ'ULLAH. He has said and has guarded his statement by rational proofs from the holy books, that the world of humanity is one race, the surface of the earth one place of residence and that these imaginary racial barriers and political boundaries are without right or foundation. Man is degraded in becoming the captive of his own illusions and suppositions. The earth is one earth and the same atmosphere surrounds it. No difference or preference has been made by God for its human inhabitants; but man has laid the foundation of prejudice, hatred and discord with his fellow-man by considering nationalities separate in importance and races different in rights and privileges.

Diversity of languages has been a fruitful cause of discord. The function of language is to convey the thought and purpose of one to another. Therefore it matters not what language man speaks or employs. Sixty years ago BAHÁ'ULLAH advocated one language as the greatest means of unity and the basis of interna-

tional conference. He wrote to the kings and rulers of the various nations recommending that one language should be sanctioned and adopted by all governments. According to this, each nation should acquire the universal language in addition to its natal tongue. The world would then be in close communication, consultation would become general and dissensions due to diversity of speech would be removed.

Another teaching of BAHÁ 'ULLAH is in relation to Universal Peace; that all mankind must be awakened to and become conscious of the harm of war; that they should be brought to realize the benefits of peace and know that peace is from God while warfare is satanic. Man must emulate the merciful God and turn away from satanic promptings in order that universal inclination shall be toward peace, love and unity and the discord of war vanish.

Lack of equality between man and woman is likewise a cause of human dissension. BAHÁ 'ULLAH has named this as an important factor of discord and separation, for so long as humankind remains unequally divided, male and female in right and importance, no unity can be established. In a perfect human body it is not possible for one organ to be complete and another defective. In the great body of human society it is impossible to establish unity and co-ordination if one factor is considered perfect and the other imperfect. When the perfect functions of both factors are in operation harmony will prevail. God has created man and woman equal as to faculties. He has made no distinction between them. Woman has not reached the level of man in human accomplishment because of the lack of opportunity and education. If educational opportunities were made equal and similar the two factors man and woman would equalize in attainment. God has intended no difference between them that should be productive of discord. He has endowed all with human faculties and all are manifestations of his mercy. If we say man and woman differ in creational endowment it is contrary to divine justice and intention. Both are human. If God has created one perfect and the other defective he is unjust. But God is just; all are perfect in his intention and creative endowment. To assume imperfection in the creature is to presuppose imperfection in the almighty creator. The soul that excels in attainment of his attributes and graces is most acceptable before God.

We are considering the divine plan for the reconciliation of the religious systems of the world. His Holiness BAHÁ 'ULLAH has said that if one intelligent member be selected from each of the varying religious systems, and these representatives come together

seeking to investigate the reality of religion, they would establish an interreligious body before which all disputes and differences of belief could be presented for consideration and settlement. Such questions could then be weighed and viewed from the standpoint of reality and all imitations be discarded. By this method and procedure all sects, denominations and systems would become one.

Do not question the practicability of this and be not astonished. It has been accomplished and effected in Persia. In that country the various religionists have conjoined in investigating the reality and have united in complete fellowship and love. No traces of discord or differences remain among them; now affection and unity are manifest instead. They live together in harmony and accord like a single family. Antagonism and strife have passed away; love and agreement have taken the place of hatred and animosity. Furthermore, those souls who have followed BAHÁ'ULLAH and attained this condition of fellowship and affiliation are Moham-medans, Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists, Nestorians, Sunnites, Shiites and others. No discord exists among them. This is a proof of the possibility of unification among the religionists of the world through practical means. Imitations and prejudices which have held men apart have been discarded and the reality of religion envelops them in a perfect unity. When reality envelops the soul of man love is possible. The divine purpose in religion is pure love and agreement. The prophets of God manifested complete love for all. Each one announced the glad-tidings of his successor and each subsequent one confirmed the teachings and prophecies of the prophet who preceded him. There was no disagreement or variance in the reality of their teaching and mission. Discord has arisen among their followers who have lost sight of the reality and hold fast to imitations. If imitations be done away with and the radiant shining reality dawn in the souls of men love and unity must prevail. In this way humanity will be rescued from the strife and wars which have prevailed for thousands of years; dissensions will pass away and the illumination of unity dawn. Consider how all the prophets of God were persecuted and what hardships they experienced. His Holiness Jesus Christ endured affliction and accepted martyrdom upon the cross in order to summon mankind to unity and love. What sacrifice could be greater? He brought the religion of love and fellowship into the world. Shall we make use of it to create discord, violence and hatred among mankind?

Moses was persecuted and driven out into the desert. Abraham was banished; Mohammed took refuge in caves; the Bab was killed

and BAHÁ 'ULLAH was exiled and imprisoned forty years. Yet all of them desired fellowship and love among men. They endured hardships, suffered persecution and death for our sakes that we might be taught to love one another and be united and affiliated instead of discordant and at variance. Enough of these long centuries which have brought such vicissitudes and hardships into the world through strife and hatred. Now in this radiant century let us try to do the will of God that we may be rescued from these things of darkness and come forth into the boundless illumination of heaven, shunning division and welcoming the divine oneness of humanity. Perchance, God willing, this terrestrial world may become as a mirror celestial upon which we may behold the imprint of the traces of divinity and the fundamental qualities of a new creation may be reflected from the reality of love shining in human hearts. From the light and semblance of God in us may it be indeed proved and witnessed that God has created man after his own image and likeness.

O my God! O my God! Verily I invoke thee and supplicate before thy threshold asking thee that all thy mercies may descend upon these souls. Specialize them for thy favor and thy truth. O Lord! unite and bind together the hearts, join in accord all the souls and exhilarate the spirits through the signs of thy sanctity and oneness. O Lord! make these faces radiant through the light of thy oneness. Strengthen the loins of thy servants in the service of thy kingdom. O Lord, thou possessor of infinite mercy! O Lord of forgiveness and pardon! forgive our sins, pardon our shortcomings and cause us to turn to the kingdom of thy clemency, invoking the kingdom of might and power, humble at thy shrine and submissive before the glory of thy evidences. O Lord God! make us as waves of the sea, as flowers of the garden, united, agreed through the bounties of thy love. O Lord! dilate the breasts through the signs of thy oneness and make all mankind as stars shining from the same height of glory, as perfect fruits growing upon thy tree of life. Verily thou art the almighty, the self-subsistent, the giver, the forgiving, the pardoner, the omniscient, the one creator!

VII

July 15, 1912, at 830 Park Ave., New York.

Home of Mrs. Florian Krug.

Notes by Howard MacNutt

I AM greatly pleased to see you. Your hearts are illumined by the lights of Baha. This meeting is in reality a divine, celestial

assembly under the favor of God, for we have no other purpose than praising and meeting God. The prayer you have just offered is a prayer of thankfulness.

Thankfulness is of various kinds. There is a verbal thanksgiving which is confined to a mere utterance of gratitude. This is of no importance because perchance the tongue may give thanks while the heart is unaware of it. Many who offer thanks to God are of this type; their spirits and hearts unconscious of thanksgiving. This is mere usage, just as when we meet, receive a gift and say "thank you," speaking the words without significance. One may say "thank you" a thousand times while the heart remains thankless, ungrateful. Therefore mere verbal thanksgiving is without effect. But real thankfulness is a cordial giving of thanks from the heart. When man in response to the favors of God manifests susceptibilities of conscience, the heart is happy, the spirit is exhilarated. These spiritual susceptibilities are ideal thanksgiving.

There is a cordial thanksgiving too which expresses itself in the deeds and actions of man when his heart is filled with gratitude. For example, God has conferred upon man the gift of guidance and in thankfulness for this great gift certain deeds must emanate from him. To express his gratitude for the favors of God man must show forth praiseworthy actions. In response to these bestowals he must render good deeds, be self-sacrificing, loving the servants of God, forfeiting even life for them, showing kindness to all the creatures. He must be severed from the world, attracted to the kingdom of Abha, the face radiant, the tongue eloquent, the ear attentive, striving day and night to attain the good-pleasure of God. Whatsoever he wishes to do must be in harmony with the good-pleasure of God. He must observe and see what is the will of God and act accordingly. There can be no doubt that such commendable deeds are thankfulness for the favors of God.

Consider how grateful any one becomes when healed from sickness, when treated kindly by another or when a service is rendered by another, even though it may be of the least consequence. If we forget such favors it is an evidence of ingratitude. Then it will be said a loving-kindness has been done but we are thankless, not appreciating this love and favor. Physically and spiritually we are submerged in the sea of God's favor. He has provided our foods, drink and other requirements; his favors encompass us from all directions. The sustenances provided for man are blessings. Sight, hearing and all his faculties are wonderful gifts. These blessings are innumerable; no matter how many are mentioned

they are still endless. Spiritual blessings are likewise endless; spirit, consciousness, thought, memory, perception, ideation and other endowments. By these he has guided us and we enter his kingdom. He has opened the doors of all good before our faces. He has vouchsafed eternal glory. He has summoned us to the kingdom of heaven. He has enriched us by the bestowals of God. Every day he has proclaimed new glad-tidings. Every hour fresh bounties descend.

Consider how all the people are asleep and ye are awake. They are dead and ye are alive through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. They are blind while ye are endowed with perceptive sight. They are deprived of the love of God but in your hearts it exists and is glowing. Consider these bestowals and favors.

Therefore in thanksgiving for them ye must act in accordance with the teachings of BAHÁ' ULLÁH. Ye must read the tablets,—*Hidden Words*,—*Ishrakhat*,—*Glad-Tidings*—all the holy utterances, and act according to them. This is real thanksgiving, to live in accord with these utterances. This is true thankfulness and the divine bestowal. This is thanksgiving and glorification of God.

I hope you all may attain thereto, be mindful of these favors of God and be attentive. It is my hope that I may go away from New York with a happy heart; and my heart is happy when the friends of God love each other; when they manifest the mercy of God to all people. If I see this I shall go away happy.

Salutations!

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