

WORLD ORDER

JUNE, 1944

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THE BAHÁ'Í MAGAZINE

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Editorial Office

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C. R. Wood, Business Manager

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WORLD ORDER

The Bahá'í Magazine

VOLUME X

JUNE, 1944

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A Universal House of Worship

1. ITS CONSTRUCTION

ALLEN B. McDANIEL

IN JUNE, 1920, at an Annual Convention in the Engineering Societies Building in New York City, followers of the Bahá'í Faith from the United States and Canada, with many visitors from other parts of the world, assembled to select a design for the Temple to be erected on the site near Chicago. Among seven different designs presented, the one represented by a beautiful plaster model, submitted by Louis Jean Bourgeois, was unanimously chosen. The architect in explaining his design used the following words:

“The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh (Glory of God) unify the religions of the world into one universal religion, and as we know that all great historic religions

developed a new architecture, so the Bahá'í Temple is the plastic expression of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. In the Bahá'í Temple is used a composite architecture, expressing the essence in line of each of the great architectural styles, harmonizing them into one whole.”

Two years later the Temple Trustees completed the construction of the foundation, comprising a circular structure supported on nine concrete caissons extending to bedrock.

Over a period of some nine years, while voluntary contributions were flowing in from the followers of the Faith the world over, studies were made by a special committee of architects and engineers to find practicable

materials and devise efficient and economic methods for the construction of the super-structure of this unique building. Although no precedents were available, when funds became sufficient in the spring of 1930 to proceed with the construction, the Trustees were advised by their consultants to follow a new technique, comprising the building of a skeleton superstructure of steel and concrete, enclosed with a structural glass dome, windows and temporary doors. This plan was adopted, a contract was awarded to the George A. Fuller Company of New York, and such a structure was completed well within the contract price by the summer of 1931.

As the result of years of research on the part of the consultants, the Trustees awarded a contract in 1932 for the exterior ornamentation of the dome and its great ribs. This unique and difficult task was successfully performed by the Earley Studio of Rosslyn, Virginia, by the summer of 1934. A series of subsequent contracts carried on the ornamentation of the Temple in a series of steps comprising the clerestory, the second or gallery story, the main story and finally the steps.

In the prosecution of the Temple ornamentation, it has been necessary to develop the use of new materials, to devise new techniques of design and to work out new methods of construction. Thus over a period of nine years, as funds have become available, the Temple Trustees have authorized the continuance of the work by the contractor, and in spite of many obstacles and difficulties the work has gone forward to its successful completion about a year and a half before the end of the Seven Year Plan.

At the inception of the Seven Year Plan, upon advices from the Guardian of the Faith, presented to the Temple Trustees and the Annual Convention by one of the Trustees, Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher, a special technical committee consisting of Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís, and laymen and technical experts, was appointed and made a thorough investigation of the project. Upon the committee's recommendation the Trustees proceeded with the exterior ornamentation, utilizing the same contractor, supervising engineer, materials and methods that had been employed in the work of the dome and the clerestory.

2. ITS SIGNIFICANCE

CARL SCHEFFLER

This House of Worship is of tremendous importance to the whole Bahá'í world. As you may know, it is the second structure of its kind, the first one being located in southern Russia. This building is much the larger one, and since it is the first one in America, it has the distinction of being the mother Temple in not only America but in the Western world. Its greatest distinction derives not from this but from the fact that 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the ground upon which the building stands in 1912. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, was the great Exemplar of His Father's Teachings. To the Bahá'í world He was known as the Master, a title given to Him by his Father, but he wished only to be known as 'Abdu'l-Bahá, which means the Servant of God. He was not only the Exemplar of the Teachings of the Faith, but he was to the Western world the most perfect teacher of its marvelous tenets. But above all, he was the sole interpreter of the Revelation of His Father, so designated in the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh, and as the interpreter of

the meanings of the books left to the world for the guidance and training of the nations. He insured this Faith from the corruption that has destroyed other religions. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was known also as the Center of the Covenant of God.

Because of the reverence that always will be attached to the mention of His name it is apparent that the Bahá'ís will always regard this structure as their foremost House of Worship in the world. 'Abdu'l-Bahá not only visited this ground, but dedicated it to the service of the Faith. His prayer for the success of the building enterprise was uttered here and He, with his own hands, placed the corner stone in the soil. This stone is now imbedded in the structure.

Bahá'ís everywhere have contributed enthusiastically to its building. They have come from all parts of the world to see it and pictures of it are to be found in every city, village, and hamlet of the world where there are Bahá'ís and this means almost everywhere; in the jungle areas of India, in Africa, in Persia, in China, from the tip of the straights of Magellan to Alaska

and in the islands of the sea. It is a Universal House of Worship, for the members of the Bahá'í Faith are from every religious Faith; they are of every race and nation.

It will be noted that it is a nine sided structure. This unique building form will in the future characterize all Bahá'í Houses of Worship. It is so specified in the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. The number nine is used as a symbol of unification. All of the other numbers are included in nine. Bahá'u'lláh has declared that the greatest need of humanity in this day is unity. The keynote of His guidance to mankind is universal brotherhood. He, in unequivocal language, declares the oneness of humanity; that all are the children of one God. With marvelous clarity He utters Truths that unquestionably will triumph over misunderstanding, ignorance and prejudice.

A startling example of such Teaching is given regarding religious prejudice. He points out that religion is a progressive unfoldment of the Will of God, constantly moving through the instrumentality of a succession of prophets who with unerring guidance advance the growth of the world. Concepts of religion as a fixed, stationary element in life become untenable in the

light of this thought. Through it the different religions are explained, since it is easy to comprehend the idea of a great succession of Divine Manifestations Whom we know as the Prophets Who are the educators of the human race. In this sublime utterance lies the power to demolish the barriers of religious prejudice.

In a similar challenging manner all manner of prejudice is overcome. Have not the events of recent times demonstrated beyond question the permanent necessity of such truths as these? There can be no doubt of the pressing need in every land for this key to human conciliation. Illusions of superiority which have so poisoned the body of humanity, too, are dispelled by the re-establishment of a true standard of value in which inner realities that elevate are made to displace materialistic concepts that have too long degraded mankind. A man rises toward a greater stature not through the accumulation of gold or land or the domination of his fellows, but through the development of spiritual characteristics. He glories in the acquisition of knowledge that enables him to serve man better. His success lies in his ability to promote the love of God and in the attainment

of such things as tend to harmonize, elevate and make truly happy those who are around him.

From the name of the building, Bahá'í House of Worship, everyone instantly perceives the purpose of the structure. Naturally in any land where such a building is erected people will be inclined to regard the word "worship" from the background of their own experience. They, therefore, are puzzled by learning that in this building there will be no chancel or pulpit, no altar of any kind. There will be no organ or other instrumental music. Nor is there a clergy connected with its worship. No set form of service or ritual is to be practiced within its walls. Bahá'ís will enter there singly or collectively to worship, but the prayer and meditation is individual. There is indicated in the Writings that some form of chanting, I think somewhat similar to that of the Greek or Russian chant, may be used, but this is a matter of future development. The Words of Bahá'u'lláh clearly show that the recitation of prayers, the intonation of the Holy Writings, is the cause of the elevation of the human spirit. He says, "Intone, O my servant, the verses of God that have been received by thee, as intoned by them who have

drawn nigh unto Him, that the sweetness of thy melody may kindle thine own soul, and attract the hearts of all men. Whoso reciteth, in the privacy of his chamber, the verses revealed by God, the scattering angels of the Almighty shall scatter abroad the fragrance of the Words uttered by his mouth, and shall cause the heart of every righteous man to throb. Though he may, at first, remain unaware of its effect, yet the virtue of the grace vouchsafed unto him must sooner or later exercise its influence upon his soul. Thus have the mysteries of the Revelation of God been decreed by virtue of the Will of Him Who is the Source of power and wisdom."

In the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the meaning of worship is given a broader meaning than is generally known. A man's life must be made to conform to the precepts that are the standard for the good life in this day. Bahá'u'lláh declares that "the principles of faith is to lessen words and to increase deeds. He whose words exceed his acts, know verily, that his non-being is better than his being and death better than his life." He gives a further emphasis to this by declaring that work performed in the service of humanity is worship, thus elevating and

ennobling work in a manner that will inspire man's efforts and definitely discourage slothfulness. Indeed He commands that all men must work. It is incumbent on all men to learn crafts, trades or professions and to practice them.

Bahá'í Houses of Worship will in future be built in all the cities of the world. These centers of spiritual strength and power will gradually exert a powerful influence on human society. Associated with each of them will be those institutions that represent the public services for the communities. Schools, a hospital, an orphanage, a home for the aged, and such others as may be suited to the needs of the people will become associated with these structures. Thus men will attain a new orientation toward life; they will build a new social order founded on widely expanded concepts. Their relations to their fellow men will be so altered that peace and prosperity will become the rule rather than fleeting experience.

To America, this edifice stands as a beacon of destiny. It points toward the fulfilment of the hopes of the country's founders—heralding to the inhabitants of the whole world the ideals that inspired them and showing the

way toward a united states of the world. The vision of Bahá-'u'lláh was far reaching. The plans that men now strive laboriously to contrive, the hopes they set for world cooperation have all long since been set forth in such form and with such regard for thorough detail as to reveal the failures of lesser efforts even before they are made.

To the western hemisphere this building stands as the center of a new culture. Here the Latins of the southern continent and the Anglo-Saxons of the north find their binding tie. Through its divine inspiration they will now find true unity. For the first time they can be confident that the seemingly insurmountable barriers of religion and different culture will be overcome. A new education will truly unite them.

This Shrine will become a center of pilgrimage to men from all parts of the world. If you regard it as beautiful now, try, if you will, to envision the effect of the love of God that will inspire generations in the future. They will seek to embellish this structure with a grandeur that will surpass all present dreams of beauty.

Excerpts from addresses delivered on the program of the Bahá'í Centenary, Wilmette, Illinois, May 19-25, 1944.

The Meeting of the Americas

I. COSMIC MISSION OF THE AMERICAS

PHILIP LEONARD GREEN

THE honor of speaking in this beautiful House of Worship during the centenary of the Bahá'í Faith which it so fittingly symbolizes and upon a subject so close to the hearts of its leaders, is fraught with great spiritual significance.

My first contact with the ideals promoted by this world-wide community of devoted men and women came almost two decades ago through the late Mary Hanford Ford, who presented me with a booklet entitled "The World of 'Abdu'l-Bahá". Expecting to find in it little more than an interesting explanation of Oriental mysticism, I was overcome with surprise to read not only the exposition of a philosophy which exalted international cooperation to the status of a religion but which even made specific prophecies with regard to inter-American developments, which have since become largely transformed into reality. These were all the more significant when we realize by whom and in what times they were given to the world. They came from the lips of a Persian mystic

who could have had no special interest in singling out the Pan-American movement for preferential mention. He made them in 1912, during a period when relations among the American republics were rapidly degenerating. The interview during which these prophecies were promulgated was reported in these words: "So he said there would be in the end a United States of the World, as compact as the present United States of America." When asked if this change would appear suddenly, he said, no, that it would arise first in the western continent. The bond between North and South America would be greatly strengthened, he declared, and later, the entire two continents, including Mexico and Canada, would grow so harmonious that they would act upon all important questions like one country.

These words could almost be mistaken for those of an enthusiastic Pan-Americanist. Sincere workers in the cause of inter-American concord can find in them that spiritual strength which they need at every turn on the

long road to genuine amity which we in the Americas still have to travel. They lift the mission of the true inter-Americanist far above the shifting sands of arrangements built solely on material convenience. They bring a sense of worthwhileness and assurance even when the forces of cynicism, hard-heartedness and ineffectuality tend to engulf us. They point out in crystal-clear terms to Americans of the South, Center and North, the cosmic mission which has been reserved for them if they can but grasp its meaning and meet its requirements.

The first and foremost among these conditions—one which is far from fulfilment at this time—is a genuine intellectual and spiritual understanding even among that portion of the American nations capable of such understanding. The magnitude of attaining such a goal is enough to discourage most of those who contemplate this task. Yet the pursuit of the Pan-American ideal antedates the establishment of the first free American republic. At the Battle of Savannah, eight hundred volunteer troops from Haiti fought alongside the English colonists. Again, it was President Pétion of Haiti who supplied the great Liberator of northern South America, with

valuable assistance in the struggle for Venezuelan freedom. Bolívar referred to Pétion as “the author of our liberties”.

Another example of inter-American cooperation was given by that other great figure of Latin American history, the Argentine General, José de San Martín, who was instrumental in freeing both Chile and Peru. Various forefathers of the Latin American republics had broad visions of inter-American unity in the earliest days of their national life. Among these were the distinguished Honduran intellectual, José Cecilio del Valle and the Argentine Bernardo Monteagudo. The former published a plan which he called “Federation of all the states of America” in his paper *Amigo de la Patria* at Guatemala City as early as 1822. The latter was the author of another comprehensive blueprint for inter-American union, which is said to have had a profound effect on the thinking of Simón Bolívar. These were but a few in the galaxy of early Latin American protagonists of the Pan-American cause.

In our own country, they had their counterparts in such distinguished figures as Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams and, of course, the great Henry Clay, whose

name is perhaps more widely known in Latin America than in his own land. For ten long years, Henry Clay fought almost single-handedly on behalf of recognition for the newly arising Spanish-American nations. He was one of the first leaders in our country to call attention to the cultural attainments of Latin Americans. First, in the common struggles for their political independence and then in the common dangers of their early national existence, the young republics of America found bonds of brotherhood which strengthened them in days of stress.

The Monroe Doctrine, a warning to non-American nations against further encroachments on the American Hemisphere, became upon its declaration a rallying point for inter-American unity, a far cry from the symbol of imperialism into which it was later converted by a long list of errors. The Doctrine in its original form received a most cordial welcome from many Latin American political leaders. It was only in later years, when it became confused with other ideas which followed in its wake, that Latin Americans began to suspect the United States of sinister motives. That this suspicion had ample basis in a long train of unhappy events, no impartial

student of inter-American affairs would now deny. The acquisition of one-half of Mexico's territory by the United States, the exploits of the filibuster William Walker in Central America, the Panama Canal incident, the tendency of our leading statesmen during a certain era to speak glibly of our "manifest destiny" and the unfair exploitation of Latin American peoples by certain of our fellow-citizens to whom profits meant more than the good name of their own country, were just a few of the causes that operated against the promotion of inter-American friendship over many years. Under these conditions, can we be surprised that Latin Americans increasingly referred to the United States as the "Octopus of the North" rather than in terms of admiration such as they had used in the time of Henry Clay?

You may naturally ask how much of this feeling of distrust remains at the present time. I wish I could tell you that it has been completely eliminated. Unfortunately, such as not the case and we might as well know it and face it. Professional Good Neighborism may in part save the day in wartime, when self-preservation leaves no other course open but cooperation; but huge expenditures of money in

themselves will never achieve the kind of friendship which we must have in the Americas if we are to assume a unique mission. President Avila Camacho of Mexico recently expressed the concern of most Latin American leaders when he said "The Good Neighbor policy will lose all of its historical meaning if we look at it only as an instrument of Pan-American conciliation in the moment of danger".

There is no happy prospect for the endurance and growth of a movement that is built on negative motivations. Upon the close of the present war, a sharp decline in Pan-American effort is bound to set in unless we refuse now to lose our perspective under the unusual stresses of war and unless we determine to hold fast to the tenets of unadulterated, Bolivarian Pan-Americanism. For this ideal has nothing whatsoever to do with the type of synthetic friendship which is superinduced temporarily by spending fantastic sums of money. The type of Pan-American friendship which Bolívar and all the other great Pan-American leaders envisioned cannot be bought that way. The exchange of material things may have a large part in it but in the last analysis, it cannot be attained except through the operation of spiritual forces.

Bolívar first sensed this, when, as an exile on the island of Jamaica in the year 1815, he sent out his famous letter, frequently referred to as the Prophetic Letter, in which he expressed the hope that one day Panama might be for the New World what Corinth had been for the Old. Eleven years passed before his vision of a congress of the Americas began to take shape with the small but famous gathering at Panama. To practical-minded people, the Bolivarian Congress of 1826 was beyond doubt a failure. Yet the seeds of subsequent inter-American cooperation were sown there. They were nurtured at a number of international Latin-American gatherings that followed, though at one time the very existence of the inter-American ideal was threatened.

Finally, the Pan-American movement was given substantial impetus when Secretary of State James B. Blaine of the United States brought together the delegates of the American republics in 1899, at what was to be the first in a long series of international conferences, the eighth of which was held at Lima, Peru, in 1938. Some of these were characterized by acrimonious debates on sundry issues; others

were the springboards for many a constructive effort.

At the very first of these gatherings, the American republics organized an international office which later became known as the Pan-American Union—the first practical approach to a working society of nations in the history of the world. Started as a unit for the compilation and publication of economic data only, the Pan-American Union of today is an institution that serves such widely differing interests as agriculture, labor, music and travel. Aside from the Pan-American Union, a number of specialized organizations have been set up by the American republics at their various general and technical conferences. Among these are the American Institute for the Protection of Childhood, the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, the Inter-American Commission of Women, the Inter-American Radio Office, the Inter-American Trade-Marks Bureau, the Pan-American Highway Confederation, the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History, the Pan-American Railway Committee and the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau. Recently, the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences was organized. Since about two-thirds of the people of the Americas derive

their living from agriculture in one form or another, it is quite evident that an organization which is intended to serve as a channel for mutual helpfulness in solving common problems can contribute in no small measure to the type of rapprochement that has a sound basis.

Supplementing these organizations is a rather intricate network of treaties and commissions for the conciliation and arbitration of disputes that may arise in the Americas. Though it must be admitted that they have not always succeeded in avoiding conflict, no one will deny that the record of the Americas in this regard can still be considered as exemplary.

Governmental machinery alone, however, will not guarantee the ultimate triumph of the inter-American cause. Official effort must be ably supplemented by enlightened cooperation on the part of the people. To this end, it is highly important that the tools for marshalling and dispensing the information so necessary to such understanding, be forged and kept in good working order. In this connection, it is to the credit of the schools, colleges, universities, libraries, museums and professional organizations of the American republics that they have taken up the

cause of inter-American understanding with so much interest and zeal. Business associations, labor organizations, teachers' associations, student leagues, learned societies, women's associations, political and religious bodies, the press and the radio have also seen a new vision of usefulness in recent years through bringing the message of inter-American friendship to their constituencies.

Students of Latin American affairs whose interest goes back beyond the heyday of war-begotten enthusiasm for things Latin American, cannot forget that until about seven years ago, the spiritual descendants of Henry Clay in the United States could be counted in three figures if indeed three figures were needed. Now, in the general confusion of values aggravated by war, these devoted trail blazers frequently find the basic significance of their long-time dedication to the inter-American ideal obscured by newcomers, many of whom three or four years ago would have had difficulty in locating Latin America on the map, assuming that they had even been interested.

Under such conditions, it takes a peculiar brand of courage to keep one's faith. The spiritual

nourishment which such groups as yours can make available is of supreme importance in this connection. It can bring to the true guardians of the inter-American cause the inescapable truth that they must not consider their movement as a casual, detached effort in the realm of human association only, but rather, as part of a vast plan having far greater significance than any individual or group of individuals. The goal of inter-American amity is one that has ever required untold sacrifices of those who chose to pursue it honorably. There is nothing in past experience to warrant the assumption that it will be attained by people who are indifferent to the higher disciplines it demands. Fortunately, in every American nation there is already a small group of effective people thoroughly convinced of the path which the Americas must follow in the challenging days ahead and ready to act in accordance with their beliefs at the appointed time. It is only because of this that we can dare to assert our supreme confidence in a future day, when, under God, the Americas will stand truly united, both for their own welfare and in unselfish service to all mankind.

2. BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S GIFT TO LATIN AMERICA

OCTAVIO ILLESCAS

To a failing world in which the seeds of greed and hatred were germinating, to the human race over which the black clouds of Armageddon were gathering, Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, the divine manifestation of this Age, brought a great gift.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Center of the Covenant, described it in these words: "The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and the fundamental oneness of religion."

Bahá'u'lláh expressed the center theme of his teachings in these words:

"The tabernacle of Unity has been raised, regard ye not one another as strangers—of one tree ye are the fruit and of one bough the leaves—the world is but one country, and mankind its citizens."

These words are not mere religious platitudes; no, they are the Will of God for the people of the earth at this time. Together with this vibrant message, Bahá'u'lláh has brought to this new cycle of religion the power to bring these things to pass.

Whatever is necessary to bring the peoples of the earth under

the Banner of Unity unfurled by Bahá'u'lláh, will happen, is already happening.

The forces that cause destruction among the human family will be destroyed by their own doings. The civilization based on greed and suspicion that changes the gifts of God to humanity: inventions, scientific and industrial development, commercial expansion, etc., into new causes for strife and new and more powerful instruments of destruction, will give way to a new civilization based on good will and cooperation in which the gifts of God will be used only for the welfare of the human family.

Bahá'u'lláh's message is the light that will guide the world out of chaos, it is the clarification, the summing up, the climax of the teachings of all the prophets of God that have come before. It is the divine banner under which chastized humanity will gather to build a new civilization based on the true principles of religion.

But how will Latin America respond to this gift of God? Will they hear the message? Will they see the vision? And what will

the Bahá'í teachings do for the Latin American people?

To those of us who know and love Latin America, and to those of us who are Latin Americans, it is evident that the Bahá'í teachings are the needed stimulus that will enable Latin America not only to make rapid strides on the path of a new and better civilization, but to take active part in helping to establish it on the Earth.

The characteristic politeness and hospitality of the Latin Nations, where the expression: "This is your home," as a welcome to the stranger is commonly heard, is a step towards the divine pattern.

The religious heritage, the well-known fervor and devotion of the masses, in the Latin American Nations will be the fertile soil on which the seeds of the Bahá'í Faith, a religion of action, a religion in which service to humanity is worship of God—will grow and bear rich fruits.

Unity, the center theme of the Bahá'í teachings, is not new to Latin America. The Latin American Nations, because of the strong links forged during those glorious days when national independence was won, believe in the lasting solidarity of the Western Hemisphere. Simon Bolívar, the great liberator, the man of

vision, after the war of independence was won, became an apostle of Continental Unity—a concert of American nations living and working together in unison. Back in 1826, he called the first inter-American Conference to meet in Panama City. Unfortunately, this meeting was a disappointment, mostly because Bolívar was so far ahead of his time. So clear was his vision, so great his love for this hemisphere, that Pan-Americanism in over fifty years of work, after its new start, sixty years later, in the Washington Conference of 1889, is not ready yet to perform the functions set forth by Bolívar for the first Conference. It won't be very difficult for the Bahá'í teachings to extend this belief in Continental Unity to the saving belief in World Unity.

Yes, we are sure Latin America will hear the message and will see the inspiring vision.

Latin America has been called, with a smile, the land of mañana, the land of tomorrow. Due to the limitations imposed upon individual effort during the Colonial period and the influence of that period left as an heritage to the Latin American Nations, the people of these countries have not yet caught the tempo of the more industrialized nations of the North.

They have proved through their history that when they have an inspiring goal, they are capable of overcoming insurmountable difficulties to reach that goal.

Just as its mountains, forests, and virgin soil contain untapped riches, so do the people of Latin America contain outstanding capacities, signs of which have been already seen. Sons and daughters of Latin America have earned respect for their attainments in scientific and literary fields.

When the heart and soul of Latin America is reached by the

quickenning power of the Bahá'í teachings, these so far hidden capacities will come to light and Latin America will take its God-given station among the sister nations of the world.

In this "mañana", this tomorrow, the crops from its fertile soil will help to feed the peoples of the Earth; the metal from its mines will contribute to the happiness and welfare of humanity; and the Latin American people will, by the bounty of God, help to establish the Unity of Mankind.

3. THE AWAKENING OF LATIN AMERICA

MRS. STUART W. FRENCH

The Words of Bahá'u'lláh are the origin of the all-compelling force which has set astir the whole world. He especially directs the following to the American Republics when He says:—

"Of ye elected representatives of the people in every land! Take ye counsel together and let your concern be only for that which profiteth Mankind and bettereth the condition thereof, if ye be of them that scan heedfully. Regard the world as a human body afflicted through various causes with grave disorders and

maladies. . . . That which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy, the mighty instrument for the healing of the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful Physician. This verily is the Truth and all else naught but error."

Fired by these Utterances and further sensing the urge to go forth on this great Mission where Shoghi Effendi addresses the

prospective pioneers in the "Advent of Divine Justice" when further quoting Bahá'u'lláh, he says: "And finally, let these soul stirring Words of Bahá'u'lláh, as they pursue their course throughout the length and breadth of the southern American continent, be ever ready on their lips, a solace to their hearts, a light on their path, a companion in their loneliness and a daily sustenance in their journeys:—

"O wayfarer in the path of God! Take thou thy portion of the ocean of His grace, and deprive not thyself of the things that lie hidden in its depths. . . . With the hands of renunciation draw forth from its life-giving waters, and sprinkle therewith all created things, that they may be cleansed from all man-made limitations and may approach the Mighty Seat of God. . . . By the righteousness of God! Whoso openeth his lips in this day, and maketh mention of the name of his Lord the hosts of divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. . . ."

Thus "putting their whole trust in God as the best provision for their journey" our devoted heralds have fared forth on their heavenly mission. We cannot fathom the inscrutable Wisdom of God that designed the north-

ern section of the American continent, (speaking now as of one continent formed by the two Americas) to be the harbinger of the Kingdom to the southern section. But in this divine decree there was a two-fold blessing for Latin America; first because of the abundance of literature with which our teachers are now equipped, and which will increase as more and more translations are made and printed, and secondly because Latin America, through a period of unconscious waiting, has been spared all the trials and tumult of our early days. Latin America has received the Great Announcement that the Faith will be firmly established, when the significance of the Mighty Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh has been thoroughly rooted in the hearts, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá has definitely directed our procedure, when the Administrative Order has been set up with the Guardian to watch over it, to guide the way and to protect it from the encroachment of every enemy.

Our pioneer teachers have given their all to Latin America. Enfolded in the breast of that continent lies the beloved shell of one of our greatest souls, whose shrine will become a place of pilgrimage and whose spirit now hovers over that land like a

radiant, burning flame of love which must find reflection in the hearts of all.

In each of the Latin American Republics there is now a nucleus; in all but five there are Spiritual Assemblies, and the five which are still lacking the necessary quota are so near to it that even as we are meeting here tonight the goal may be reached! In every country these pioneers have met with the greatest courtesy. They have grown to love those lands and to wish to make their home there. From the border line of Mexico to the Straits of Magellan, from the tropics of Brazil to the mountain peaks of Bolivia, "The length and breadth of that land" as the Guardian instructed, has the Cause of God been heralded, by radio and by press, by lectures and by the loving example of their service have these pioneers accomplished the "meeting of the Americas".

And now as we stand on the threshold of the second Bahá'í century we witness the crumbling of the old order as we pass forever out of its orbit and arm ourselves for the spiritual conquest of the entire world. In this great mission we look forward confidently to the increasing cooperation of the people of Latin

America themselves who already have begun pioneering in their own lands. For to all pioneers 'Abdu'l-Bahá addresses these Words:

"O ye apostles of Bahá'u'lláh! May my life be sacrificed for you! Behold the portals which Bahá'u'lláh hath opened before you! Consider how exalted and lofty is the station you are destined to attain; how unique the favors with which you have been endowed." . . . "The full measure of your success is as yet unrevealed, its significance still unapprehended. Ere long you will, with your own eyes, witness how brilliantly every one of you, even as a shining star, will radiate in the firmament of your country the light of Divine Guidance and will bestow upon its people the glory of an everlasting life." . . . "Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory be firmly established."

Excerpts from addresses delivered on the program of the Bahá'í Centenary, Wilmette, Illinois, May 19-25, 1944.

DURING the past month Bahá'ís all over the world have commemorated the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of their Faith. In the United States Bahá'ís from Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America and nearby islands have spent a week together at the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette, fittingly celebrating the event and counselling together. On the evening of May 22nd, two hours and eleven minutes after sunset, sacred services in that Universal House of Worship commemorated the very hour when the Báb, in the privacy of His own home, declared to His first disciple that He was the long expected Promised One, the Inaugurator of the New Age. As revealed that night this Message was to be carried to "lands in both the East and the West." That night marked the dawn of the age of peace, the age of unity, when the hearts of all people should become united in one religion and all nations should come under one world government.

But by no means do all people as yet recognize the importance of this festival. As we look back it seems strange that it was fifty years before this great glad news came to America, and we find many saying, if this event is really so important to us in the Western World why have we not heard of it before? Such inquirers scarcely realize how widely separated Orient and Occident were one hundred years ago in distance and even more in interests.

What was happening in America in 1844 and the years nearby, before and after? What were the interests of the people? Were they looking for a fresh revelation from God? There were indeed stirrings in the religious world, revivals, missionary activity, and the birth of new sects. And we must not forget that it was in 1844 that the thousands of followers of William Miller who had set that date for the miraculous return of Christ were bitterly disappointed having been led astray by too literal interpretation of the Scriptures. These are not the things, however, which cause the wonder and com-

ment of those who survey the past century. Rather it is the phenomenal development of science and invention, a development again and again termed marvelous, yet never explained.

One writer marking the centenary of his own publication says: "To an extraordinary degree, 1844 was a year which marked the division of the old and the new." He notes particularly that it was in 1844 that the historic first message, "What hath God wrought", went over the telegraph wires and that it was at this time that steam was applied in earnest to ocean transportation.

So while in the East spiritual forces were being released which changed the hearts of men and united those who had been of opposing races and religions in a brotherhood so true that they gave their lives for their belief, in the West the inventive spirit of man was quickened to bring forth means for rapid communication and transportation, the physical means for uniting the East and the West.

Can we believe that it was quite by accident that a fresh revelation of religion in the East and the unparalleled development of science in the West took place simultaneously? Is it not plain that science and vital relig-

ion are both necessary to unite the opposing forces in East and West and bring all into one world community? There is no need to point out to what straits the misapplication of science has led us, to repeat "that each new invention intended for peaceful benefits has been drafted into the service of war". Do we need to be told that the only force powerful enough to rightly direct this inventive genius of man is true religion? "Had material civilization been combined with Divine civilization," asserts 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "these fiery weapons would never have been invented. Nay, rather, human energy would have been wholly denoted to useful inventions and would have been concentrated on praiseworthy discoveries."

It is idle to speculate as to what a different world this might now have been had the majority of people listened and obeyed when fifty years ago the great Message of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb did come to the Western World. But it is not too late to accept and follow the Divine guidance which this fresh revelation of God's will has given for building the new world in which science is made, not the master, but the servant of religion.

—B. H. K.

The Oneness of Humanity

WILLIAM KENNETH CHRISTIAN

“THE Tabernacle of Unity has been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers. . . . Of one tree are all ye the fruit and of one bough the leaves. . . . The world is but one country and mankind its citizens.”

So wrote Bahá'u'lláh seventy years ago, at a time when the masses of the world's peoples were concerned with local problems, local needs, and local aspirations. And Bahá'u'lláh wrote this at a time when the leaders of the world's peoples were giving no heed to questions of world order.

Yet in the first half of this first Bahá'í century, two momentous things were occurring. Every force making for change in the lives of men was being accelerated at a rate beyond any comparison with a previous era in history. Steel rails were flung across continents. The human voice was projected over a wire; the human voice was captured on a disk. The center of living was changed from a particular city, town, village, or isolated farm. Travel and communication, with an awesome swiftness, revolutionized the area of men's activity. The practical meaning of

time changed. The five continents, the seas and oceans of the world, and the islands on their waters, were all drawn steadily closer.

During this same period, Bahá'u'lláh, in prison and in exile, lifted high the spiritual banner of world unity and justice. He claimed to be a Messenger of God, a Manifestation of Truth with the same spiritual power and divine authority that had characterized Jesus and the High Prophets of the past. He restated the spiritual obligations of man to God. He exhorted men to a life of honesty, truthfulness, purity, and service.

He decried the growing injustice in the world, the increasing blight and horror of war, the insidious poisons of racial prejudice, of class antagonism, of false national doctrines. He urged the leaders of the world to assemble an international legislature which might act to remove the causes of the world's distress. But the mighty ones of the earth ignored His plea, and so the world's peoples now move relentlessly through this bloody epoch, unconscious of the fact that a divine remedy has already been

given to them.

The chief purpose of Bahá'u'lláh's mission is to establish world-wide justice through unity. He has proclaimed: "The best-beloved of all things in My sight is Justice." And this is a proclamation of justice for all men. Bahá'u'lláh did not mean justice for a certain class, for a certain race, for a certain nation, or for a limited combination of nations. He looked at the world as a unit with planetary needs. He regarded the needs, the hopes, and the possibilities of all men. He meant, quite literally, justice for all men, everywhere.

The keynote to this unity which Bahá'u'lláh has declared the basis for universal justice, is the principle of the Oneness of Humanity. This principle is neither "a pious hope" nor a mere restatement of the ideal of brotherhood. Bahá'u'lláh has established again in the heart and the mind the living reality of faith. He creates the desire to achieve justice for all men. He creates an awareness of God's love and purpose. He creates a desire to praise God in word and in deed. But far more than this, Bahá'u'lláh has inseparably joined the spiritual and the practical aspects of life. The Oneness of Humanity is "the

pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh revolve." The social principles of Bahá'u'lláh — consultation, collective security for the maintenance of peace, universal government, universal education — these, and others, are all methods for establishing human oneness. Bahá'u'lláh places social action and responsibility on the same high level of obligation with individual morality. In fact, the divine order for human society, found in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, is so practical that, in its basic elements, it is being applied now among the Bahá'ís of the world.

By the Oneness of Humanity is meant that all human beings are the children of God; that there is no specially-chosen race in the sight of God; that differing colors of skin constitute an element of variety, and not an element of innate difference or superiority; that differences of religious background are no longer a sufficient excuse for one group of people remaining aloof from another; that variations in political views and economic advantages do not constitute a justification for dominance and exploitation.

And the Oneness of Humanity requires the recognition of the equality of men and women. It requires the formulating of a

world system of education, with some basic curriculum, and with this universal educational program open to boys and girls alike. It requires the selection of an international auxiliary language to facilitate trade, travel, and communication. It means that religion and science should be regarded as co-partners, since they are the great and complementary instruments which can lead the human race along the road of decency and enriched living. This dynamic principle also requires the erection of a world federal government, a super-government, representing the peoples of the earth, dedicated to justice without regard to race, religion, or region.

When this war subsides, the human and material wreckage will be dreadful. We will see the evidence on every hand. And the statisticians will compile their lists. But they will not be able to measure the dark cesspool of hatred, of prejudice, of warped and crooked doctrines.

No limited nationalistic principle, no limited racial principle can serve as the basis for rebuilding our shattered world. We cannot return to the localisms of the past. The habits of the past are no longer safe. The thinking of the past can only betray us now. The world needs the

vision of Bahá'u'lláh. It needs the impact of His loving spirit. It needs the solid unity which only He can create. We must, therefore, sound a warning that the Oneness of Mankind is "the sole means for the salvation of a greatly suffering world."

The American people, especially, are challenged by this principle. For this republic which has developed a high form of just government and which has many times stretched the hand of assistance to oppressed peoples, this republic harbors also one of the most virulent forms of race hatred. Millions of people in this country, because of a mere difference in color, are cursed with an economic, social, and psychological stigma. This is the gravest internal problem for the American people in these years when a world order is evolving.

Besides a warning, this principle, enunciated eloquently and insistently by Bahá'u'lláh, brings "a promise that its realization is at hand." The first beam of this sun of promise flashed across the darkened sky of Persia when the youthful Báb heralded a new religious dispensation. The words of this Forerunner cut the thick veils of bigotry and ignorance which lay like a vast fog over that land. He inspired His followers to deeds of such

valor that the promise of spiritual regeneration in Persia was heard by great scholars in the continent of Europe. The second beam of promise might well be the announcement by Bahá'u'lláh of His mission as God's Manifestation in our age. The third beam of promise would be the embryonic world order, found in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and erected by the believers under the guidance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Faith.

Shoghi Effendi has written: "Leaders of religion, exponents of political theories, governors of human institutions, who at present are witnessing with perplexity and dismay the bankruptcy of their ideas, and the disintegration of their handiwork, would do well to turn their gaze to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, and to meditate upon the World Order which, lying enshrined in His teachings, is slowly and imperceptibly rising amid the welter and chaos of present-day civilization."

Bahá'u'lláh already has created the impossible—the uniting of peoples of all races and cultures in one world-wide spiritual community. The methods and the standard of the Bahá'í world community incline neither to the East nor the West, neither to the

Jew nor the Gentile, neither to the rich nor the poor, neither to the white nor the colored. Within the Bahá'í community, the Oneness of Humanity is already an accomplished fact. A divine pattern of world order has been given, and it is already taking form in the communities of Bahá'ís throughout the world.

The Oneness of Humanity demands the moral and intellectual regeneration of the individual. Each age requires the new measure of a man. Bahá'u'lláh sets the standard thus: "All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization." . . . "Bend your energies to whatever may foster the education of men." . . . "Let your vision be world-embracing rather than confined to your own self." . . . "Equity is the most fundamental among human virtues. The evaluation of all things must needs depend upon it." . . . "Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue." . . . "That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race."

The new measure of a man—

what can create a new type of thinking and conduct? What force can so inspire and sharpen the minds of men that they may be fit instruments for the creation of a just and enduring world order? The answer is religious faith. Religion, renewed in our age by a Manifestation of God; religion, purified from the prejudices and superstitions of the past; religion, restated in the terms of our age and fashioned for the needs and possibilities of our age—such a Faith, Bahá'ís are convinced, has the power to regenerate mankind. Such a Faith is the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh—a divine remedy sent by God for the healing of the nations and the resurrection of man.

The Bahá'í lives and moves and has his being in the belief that the Kingdom of God will be established upon the earth. The Bahá'í is that individual who, through the confirming power of faith in Bahá'u'lláh, struggles against the currents of disunity and prejudice in the whirlpool of public opinion, and struggles within himself, in an effort to rise to a level of spiritual maturity and social action where he lives the principle of the Oneness of Mankind. The Bahá'í is the promise and the sign that a new type of conduct is being fashioned—men and women with a

world vision and a sense of humanity that is deep and all-inclusive.

The Oneness of Humanity also “implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society.” Bahá'u'lláh foresaw that humanity was about to enter a crisis of unparalleled magnitude, and that the final resolution of that crisis would require the establishment of a world government. In the words of the Guardian of the Faith: “Some form of a world Super-State must needs be evolved, in whose favor all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. Such a state will have to include within its orbit an International Executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a World Parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a Supreme Tribunal whose judgment will have a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not volun-

tarily agree to submit their cases to its consideration." This world government would promulgate "a single code of international law—the product of the considered judgment of the world's federated representatives." Such a World Order as this which Bahá'u'lláh anticipated, would make the Oneness of Humanity a living fact everywhere upon the earth.

The spiritual regeneration of men and women, and the erection of a world government will mark the beginning of the greatest era in human history. Slowly men have progressed from the filthy, diseased, superstitious, and ignorant conditions of the early ages. Starting with the tribal form of society, larger and more orderly units of government have been evolved. The knowledge of men and their sense of idealism have also developed.

But the childhood of the human race is over. The wars and chaos of our time mark the height of humanity's adolescence. World unity will mark the beginning of humanity's maturity. Bahá'u'lláh heralds the achievement of this goal. The objective of His Faith is to unite the peoples of the world in "one faith and one order." This will be "humanity's coming of age."

We discover, then, that this

pivotal principle of Bahá'u'lláh, the Oneness of Humanity, is not "a pious hope" nor a mere restatement of the ideal of brotherhood. It is a clear warning, yet also holds the promise of definite realization. It demands the moral and intellectual regeneration of the individual. It "implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society." Finally, it "represents the consummation of human evolution."

Bahá'u'lláh has written: "This is the Day in which God's most excellent favors have poured out upon men, the Day in which His most mighty grace hath been infused into all created things. It is incumbent upon all the peoples of the world to reconcile their differences, and, with perfect unity and peace, abide beneath the shadow of the Tree of His care and loving-kindness. . . . Soon will the present-day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead."

This is the consummating age, the climactic age, the fruit-bearing age in human history. But a consummation is not an easy thing, no matter how much men may devoutly wish for it. A great climax is never reached without pain. The tree cannot bear fruit unless the fragile beauty of the blossom dies, to be reborn in a form and with a sub-

stance that will nourish men and women. The peoples of the earth dwell in the fear, misery, and blood of war. But this war marks the death pangs of the old order of materialism, of greed for power, of exploitation, and of disunity. God moves in human history. His hand is above all things. The old order is perishing around us. A new order, founded on the Oneness of Humanity, is taking shape under the guidance and protection of God.

When we think, at this Centennial, of the glorious events of the past one hundred years, of the rich treasury of truth in the Bahá'í Revelation, and of the undreamed and immeasurable possibilities of the future, our joy is mixed with a great gratitude. Is it any wonder that 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said: "Behold the portals which Bahá'u'lláh hath opened to you."

Address delivered on the program of the Bahá'í Centenary, May 19-25, 1944.

God is one; the effulgence of God is one; and humanity constitutes the servants of that one God. God is kind to all. He creates and provides for all; and all are under his care and protection. The Sun of Truth, the Word of God shines upon all mankind; the divine cloud pours down its precious rain; the gentle zephyrs of his mercy blow and all humanity is submerged in the ocean of his eternal justice and loving-kindness. God has created mankind from the same progeny in order that they may associate in good-fellowship, exercise love toward each other and live together in unity and brotherhood.

But we have acted contrary to the will and good-pleasure of God. We have been the cause of enmity and disunion. We have separated from each other and risen against each other in opposition and strife. How many have been the wars between the peoples and nations! What bloodshed! Numberless are the cities and homes which have been laid waste. All of this has been contrary to the good-pleasure of God for he hath willed love for humanity. He is clement and merciful to all his creatures. He hath ordained amity and fellowship amongst men.

—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

America and the Most Great Peace

ROWLAND ESTALL

IF EVIDENCE were needed to prove the prophetic insight of the Founders of the Bahá'í Faith, surely none more powerful could be offered than this gathering here in the heart of the American continent, where over a thousand of its members from every part of North and South America have assembled to do honor to their Faith, and to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of its birth.

How far removed did Persia seem, and how remote the possibility of its influence upon the life and future of this country, when the first reference was made to this new world religion by an obscure clergyman speaking in Chicago in 1893. Not so remote, however, that the potentiality of the brief message there spoken could fail to strike a responsive chord in at least the hearts of a few receptive souls who heard it. From their historic journey to 'Akká just fifty years ago of which we have heard tonight, and the subsequent early development of the Faith on this Continent, climaxed by the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to America in 1912, followed by the steady consolidation and growth of the

American Bahá'í Community, crowned eventually by this most recent and challenging expansion of the Faith to all parts of this hemisphere, has now come about this extraordinary gathering. If from so unlikely a beginning such tremendous progress has taken place; what, we may well ask ourselves, is likely to be the result fifty years from now of this present Convention. Here we must draw again upon the vision and wisdom of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and of Shoghi Effendi, His appointed successor, to gain further insight into the world mission which has been given to America. For 'Abdu'l-Bahá specially laid upon America the responsibility of becoming the standard-bearer of the Most Great Peace and of carrying to all corners of the world His Father's universal teachings for the ultimate unity and solidarity of the human family. "May this American Democracy", He declared, "be the first nation to establish the foundation of international agreement. May it be the first nation to proclaim the unity of mankind. May it be the first to unfurl the Standard of the Most Great Peace." And

again: "... The 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 both the East and the West for the triumph of its people. . . . 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. It will lead all nations spiritually."

Shoghi Effendi after Him, in a recent letter to the Bahá'ís of America, has referred clearly both to the conscious efforts exerted towards the fulfillment of this purpose by the organized community of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh in the North American continent and the unconscious forces that are simultaneously although insensibly shaping the destiny of America and moulding it into an instrument fitted to "lay the corner-stone of a universal and enduring peace, to proclaim the solidarity, the unity and maturity of mankind and assist in the establishment of the promised reign of righteousness on earth."

The initial goal in this great world purpose often referred to as the Lesser Peace by Bahá'u'lláh, is expected to terminate in the achievement of political

unity throughout the world. Speaking to an official of the United States Government during His visit to America in 1912, who had questioned him as to the best manner in which to promote the interests of his Government and people, 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied, "You can best serve your country if you strive, in your capacity as a citizen of the world, to assist in the eventful application of the principle of federalism underlying the government of your own country to the relationships now existing between the peoples and nations of the world." Evidences are accumulating rapidly that the people of America are at last willing to accept this advice given so long ago, and to see in it their own best self-interest. Such evidences might be cited as the change from historic isolationism, so rapid since Pearl Harbour, the almost simultaneous participation in the common world war, and the enormous part which the American people and the resources of this Continent are playing in the fight against Fascism, that dark nightmare of repressed and ancient fears sprung suddenly into conscious expression again for a last battle between the world of nature and its evil spirits personified in the mind of Man, and the

maturing God-like consciousness which seeks now to attain a final victory after its long journey through the lesser worlds. Signs are not wanting also that we are recognizing the need to clean up our own festering prejudices and give effect to the equality of racial rights so that we can properly speak out against similar prejudices in other parts of the world and under different flags. So common is the assumption now that America must play its part in creating some lasting form of collective security, with the necessary power to back it up, that we even begin at times to lose sight of the importance of keeping this next specific goal in mind, lest at the last minute reactionary forces should abort again the sincere attempts of America's leaders, as happened under similar circumstances following the last war, to throw the weight of this country's enormous political and material power behind the will of its people for an effective world peace. Already, however, beginnings are being made to organize the world's resources, and the promise is not lacking that all peoples everywhere shall have access to an equitable share in its goods and services, which only the growing consciousness of world unity could have engendered. The beginnings made

in this direction by the United Nations' Relief and Rehabilitation Administration are themselves a conspicuous contribution towards the achievement of economic and political unity which, as I have indicated, is the meaning of the Lesser Peace.

While this secular activity is going on, the American Bahá'ís, spurred by the specific challenge of their teachings, are preparing now, after the accomplishments of the last fifty years, to play an ever-increasing role in the world propagation of their Faith, and the ultimate realization of all its principles, which is the goal of the Most Great Peace. For peace cannot be secured by legislation alone, nor can science effect it, but only the recognition of the Divine purpose for all mankind and the ultimate adoption of one world faith can ever insure the peace and tranquillity of the world. This ultimate goal is best expressed in a passage from Bahá'u'lláh's letter to Queen Victoria in which He said: "That which the Lord hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of all the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful and

inspired Physician. This verily is the truth, and all else naught but error."

Here are some of the more specific tasks which American Bahá'ís have already been given. On the teaching front they have been enjoined by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in those historic tablets to America which enunciated America's Spiritual Mission, to undertake the spreading of the Faith throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and Australasia after its secure establishment in this hemisphere. This alone is a task of unparalleled magnitude. Simultaneously, and on the administrative front, Shoghi Effendi, the first Guardian of the Faith, has provided the following summary of some of the opportunities in the development of the Faith in which the American Bahá'ís will be called upon to play a part: "The election of the International House of Justice and its establishment in the Holy Land, the spiritual and administrative center of the Bahá'í world, together with the formation of its auxiliary branches and subsidiary institutions; the gradual erection of the various dependencies of the First Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West, and the intricate issues involving the establishment and the extension of the structural basis of Bahá'í community life;

the codification and promulgation of the ordinances of the Most Holy Book, necessitating the formation, in certain countries of the East, of properly constituted and officially recognized courts of Bahá'í law; the building of the Third Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Bahá'í world in the outskirts of the city of Tíhrán, to be followed by the rise of a similar House of Worship in the Holy Land itself; the deliverance of Bahá'í communities from the fetters of religious orthodoxy in such Islamic countries as Persia, 'Iráq, and Egypt, and the consequent recognition, by the civil authorities in those states, of the independent status and religious character of Bahá'í National and local Assemblies; the precautionary and defensive measures to be devised, coordinated and carried out to counteract the full force of the inescapable attacks which the organized efforts of ecclesiastical organizations of various denominations will progressively launch and relentlessly pursue; and last, but not least, the multitudinous issues that must be faced, the obstacles that must be overcome and the responsibilities that must be assumed, to enable a sore-tried Faith to pass through the successive stages of unmitigated obscurity, of active repression, and of com-

plete emancipation, leading in turn to its being acknowledged as an independent Faith, enjoying the status of full equality with its sister religions, to be followed by its establishment and recognition as a State religion, which in turn must give way to its assumption of the rights and prerogatives associated with the Bahá'í State, functioning in the plenitude of its powers, a stage which must ultimately culminate in the emergence of the worldwide Bahá'í Commonwealth, animated wholly by the spirit, and operating solely in direct conformity with the laws and principles of Bahá'u'lláh."

Here then are two goals—the Lesser and the Most Great Peace. The former looks towards the establishment of a preliminary and intermediary form of world order built upon the existing, although fundamentally inadequate political institutions. The latter represents a complete transformation in both the spirit and form of society throughout the world, and the conscious, voluntary integration of humanity with the Divine purpose. For Man does not live by bread alone. It is not enough to provide food, clothing and shelter—the necessities of life—and to distribute these throughout the rest of this devastated world.

Not only food and material necessities are required, but new spiritual life and healing. Ours is the task to sow again in the earth of men's hearts, scorched by the fires of conflict and hatred, the fertile seeds of love and unity, to bring sustenance once more to the starved and suffering spirits of men. From this Continent we must send forth men and women to associate in fellowship with the peoples of the world, and to unite them, even as the people of this continent associate together in friendship and freedom.

This is our opportunity both as individuals and citizens of this free Continent. The task is God's, but we must rise to do our part. Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness can no longer be the ideal of one nation and not of others. We can no longer escape from an old world to a new. Such former conceptions of geographic isolation and refuge are gone forever. We are but one world. If there is death and destruction anywhere it is ours. The bell tolls for America, too. If there is to be happiness for us, there must be happiness too for all people everywhere. This is the new self-evident truth, and is the world logic of the premise that all men are created equal.

From Centenary Program, May 19-25, 1944.

WITH OUR READERS

THIS issue of *World Order* is a souvenir of the Bahá'í Centenary celebration just passed, a record in part of that great occasion. From time to time we expect to print other Centenary addresses for which we lack space in this issue.

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Friday evening, May 19, when the first meeting of the Centenary celebration was held was devoted to the history and meaning of the Bahá'í House of Worship, the exterior ornamentation of which was completed in 1943 as preparation for this anniversary. Allen B. McDaniel whose address on the construction of this universal house of worship we print is a consulting engineer of Washington, D. C., and Waterford, Virginia; a Bahá'í of long standing, and from the beginning of its construction, the wise and devoted consultant in building problems of the edifice.

Carl Scheffler, well known to our readers as one of the early followers of Bahá'u'lláh, has also been associated for many years with the building of the House of Worship. Mr. Scheffler is an artist and art teacher in Evanston, Illinois.

Tuesday evening's theme, May 23, was that of North America. At that time, Mr. Rowland Estall spoke on "America and the Most Great Peace." Mr. Estall is secretary of the Regional Teaching Committee of that part of Canada in which he now lives, Manitoba. He not only helped found the Winnipeg Assembly but also has been active in the Cause in

Montreal and Vancouver. He is a graduate of McGill University.

The program Wednesday evening, May 24, was devoted to the general topic of the meeting of the Americas. Eleven delegates from Latin American republics were present. The historic background of the rise of the Pan-American movement was presented by the guest speaker, Philip Leonard Green of Washington, D. C., an authority in this field.

Sr. Octavio Illescas, a Peruvian now residing in Los Angeles, California, who is chairman of the Bahá'í Inter-America teaching committee, spoke the same evening on the subject, "Bahá'u'lláh's Gift to Latin America." His address and that of Mrs. Stuart French, "The Awakening of Latin America," appear in this number of *World Order*.

Mrs. French is secretary of the Bahá'í Inter-America Teaching Committee which has dispatched teachers and settlers to many parts of Central and South America.

William Kenneth Christian whose address, "The Oneness of Humanity" appears in this issue is a frequent contributor to *World Order*. Mr. Christian is a graduate of New York State College for Teachers and Cornell University. He is now teaching at Syracuse University. He has also taught at Bahá'í summer schools and is secretary of the Bahá'í College Teacher's Bureau.

The July issue will present a number of additional Centenary talks.

—THE EDITORS.

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BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

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The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh has assimilated, by virtue of its creative, its regulative and ennobling energies, the varied races, nationalities, creeds and classes that have sought its shadow, and have pledged unswerving fealty to its cause.

—SHOGHI EFFENDI