

The Outposts
of
A World Religion
by a
Baha'i Traveler

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Journeys Taken In
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AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

In every Baha'i community, unity is a coveted quality. It is one of the pillars of the New World Order of Baha'u'llah. It is the amalgamating force in groups of people working for a common end. Unity, like a golden chain that threads a string of pearls, holds each in place, yet is itself unseen. The pages of history reveal man's struggle for power, without recognizing in unity a force more compelling than violence.

Only when a divine teacher walks among men do we catch the meaning of this shining quality.

We were approaching New Zealand and it was a comfort to know that the "Franconia" would come to anchor at the wharf, instead of out in midstream as so often had happened in cruising among the South Sea Islands. For here, with rare exceptions, there are no harbors and passengers must be carried ashore in small motor boats that thread their way between dangerous coral reefs over which breaks eternally the surf.

New Zealand is really two separate islands divided by a channel. The north island holds the cities of Auckland and Wellington, while on the south island is the city of Christ Church. One can grasp something of its remoteness when you remember that it is from here that the expeditions for the South Pole set out; it is the last land sighted before reaching the Pole. We were now more than ten thousand miles from the Atlantic seaboard. Some of these facts drifted through my mind as I laid out the name and address of the secretary of the Auckland Baha'i Assembly to whom I had written some months back, telling her that I hoped to be on the S. S. Franconia when she put into port and that I should find my way to her house without delay. How little did I dream that here I was to see a demonstration of the power of unity from which I should gain fresh insight into the workings of this most baffling force.

Early in the morning of March 3rd we docked. The stewardess knocked, usually so calm she seemed all in a flurry. "Hurry," she cried, "there are lots of people here asking for you." "For me?" I queried, incredulous. "Yes, truly, the corridor is filled with people asking for your cabin."

I flew into my clothes and flung open the door. There in the early morning was the whole Auckland Assembly. One after another they repeated the Baha'i greeting, their hands full of flowers and small baskets of fruit - tokens of welcome. My letter had told them my name. They knew nothing more. I was a Baha'i; that was enough. One of their number was waiting on the wharf, a recent stroke having robbed her of speech, but she had

come nevertheless. Breakfast had been prepared uptown so we walked together through the clear sunshine, for it was already autumn in New Zealand and the air was light and slightly chill, as it would be with us in October.

A photograph of Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler taken with the Assembly, the friends had brought to show me; many remembered Martha Root's visit and spoke of the wonderful addresses she had given during her visit to Auckland. We were welded together by our admiration for these two standard bearers of the Cause - two pioneers who had blessed New Zealand by their presence.

As I had errands to do, we parted. I promised to return at noon for we were to lunch together and afterward I was to speak at the Woman's Club.

The friends had secured a surprising number of opportunities for me to speak during our short stay. No one asked me if I was accustomed to speak in public - it was taken for granted that whatever furthered the Cause I would do. Their sublime confidence in my abilities was contagious, and silenced the excuses that naturally rose to my lips. I asked for suggestions and advice as to topics. They replied that they felt confident that I would know exactly what to say when the time came. They did not wish to confuse me with words. The routine of their own lives they would drop in order to be with me, and to pray for the success of the undertaking. The result, they felt, would be remarkable. And so it proved to be without a single exception.

Whatever I mentioned pertaining to myself was received with the greatest interest, but no personal questions were asked me. I could not help thinking of Emerson's definition of culture, "The measure of things taken for granted." I was experiencing what that definition implied.

Soon I was to learn that the friends had been just as active in publicity work as they had been in welcoming me. As I stood that first morning before a window displaying shoes for every sport under the sun I was reminded that I needed shoe laces. I stepped inside and a man advanced briskly, words already forming on his lips, but he uttered no sound. Instead he stood stock-still and stared as though I were a ghost out of Macbeth; then darting behind the counter he emerged, holding up the "Morning News."

"You are a passenger on the cruise boat that came in this morning - there's your picture right enough." He broke off and began reading the caption beneath: "The Baha'i Movement, a world religion that will bring about international peace, inter-racial harmony." "Why," he continued, "when I read about

this in the morning paper, I said to my wife, 'I should like to know something more about that religion' and then you walk right into the store."

"Well, if you are in no hurry we might sit down and talk about it," said I.

"Yes, indeed, but wait, wait. Next door is a factory that lets out at noon today. I'll call the men - they are badly in need of cheer, they have no heart in them."

From the rear of the store he shouted to the foreman and presently the buzz of the machinery slowed and then died away. Into the shop the men came in little bunches - many had leather aprons on, some were in jumpers, all were grimy from machine oil. My friend of the "Morning News" elected himself chairman. He made the men sit down on the floor and then proceeded with a formal speech of welcome as a member of the great Baha'i Movement. He gave a graphic reproduction of the words printed in the morning paper. While this introductory measure was in progress two women looked in at the door, curious to know what was in the wind. Some one beckoned and in they came and seated themselves on the bench as though by appointment. Then we spoke together of The Greatest Thing in the World, the Prophet of this age; of the changes He had wrought in the structure of human society; of the profit sharing program that under the new economic plan labor would be entitled to; and of how Baha'u'llah had placed labor, if carried out with nobility of purpose, as an act of worship. The unwelcome noon-day chimes rang out, no one moved, but it was the hour of my promised return. We shook hands warmly. I told the men how interested the Baha'is in America would be to hear about our impromptu and magic meeting and of how staunchly I should deny that the English were either cold or conventional. As for the parting between the chairman and myself, it was as though lifelong friends separated for the first time.

Who shall say one thing is important and another insignificant when from a shoe string had been built a bridge - a veritable Jacob's ladder that had spanned the distance between earth and heaven!

The days sped by. Each in turn brought fresh opportunities to present the Baha'i Cause. The evenings were devoted to public meetings. Only occasionally we allowed ourselves the privilege of a meeting reserved for ourselves, so that we might talk over the thrilling event about to take place - the forming of a new National Spiritual Assembly for Australia and New Zealand. Then again and again must I describe the beauties of the Temple at Wilmette, and read aloud the letters of Shoghi Effendi.

At last the time came when we had only one day left. In order to prolong it my husband went to the purser and asked permission to hold a reception on board the Franconia. The suggestion met with an unexpected response. The purser beamed and said he would give us what he called "a spread." The management made only one condition - that no one should be a guest without a personal invitation.

The night was clear, a forest of masts stretched across the bay, each with its twinkling lantern, while beyond were the lights that crowned the little hills dotting the entrance to the harbor. When we were all gathered in the tea-garden there were nearly a hundred people. Ministers had come and radicals, too, teachers and members of the varied organizations before which I had spoken. There were chance acquaintances and my chairman of the shoe shop. The Maori's came, their dark eyes and hair set off by shawls of bright colors; they had brought a noted singer so that we might hear the legends and stories of their race - the ancient lays of a most ancient people. The singer, young and fair, sang in the soft accents of the Maori tongue, a language fast becoming obsolete. In song she used the "poi balls" made of delicately tinted straw, attached to the wrist. As the chorus proceeds the ball describes graceful circles over the head and shoulders; when the theme is sad, the motion almost ceases and the ball ripples back and forth, but when the measure is bright and tripping the ball flies about like a humming bird.

The words of Baha'u'llah and His message outlined supplied the spiritual part of the feast, that the light He brought was for all mankind and how we had but to open the doors of our hearts to receive our portion.

Men arose from among the audience and gave thanks for this message, which many were hearing for the first time. Sincerity shone in their faces as they repeated what they had heard and each spoke from a full heart. It was one of those hours when everything but the spiritual realities faded away.

What had brought these days to so high a fulfillment? The answer is to be found in that little word, unity. The Baha'is united in a given program; everything that contributed to that program was fostered, everything not relative to the activities of the Cause was banished. Night and day a strong resolve found us advancing without a moment of retreat.

It was as though a magician had spread a magic carpet that rose above the city of familiar things and carried men into a purer atmosphere, giving them a wider view, a broader horizon. This journey can only be accomplished when everything material is sifted out so that pure spirit remains. Then fellowship becomes a reality. And Baha'u'llah in the Hidden Words tells us that "Fellowship is the cause of unity and unity is the source of order in the world."

A CALL ON THE FRIENDS OF WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Wellington is a night's journey by water from Auckland. We sailed along the coast close enough to watch the rounded hills, dressed in their summer green, give way to grim headlands that stretched further and further out into the sea, their banks steep and forbidding.

At dawn a thin ribbon of water running between high bluffs could be seen; the channel, less than a half mile across, wound and turned until it opened into a magnificent bay that nature had cunningly hidden. Although it was midsummer (February) a cold wind was blowing from the Antarctic Ocean. To protect themselves from this continual wind the houses have high stone walls with fir branches woven and spread along the tops of the walls in order to save the flower beds below.

The deep channel gave ample opportunity for landing directly at the wharf and in the wake of the officials came a Scotch believer accompanied by a brother and sister from New England. Roses were placed in my hands with the Baha'i greeting and the friends told me that they had arranged to have me speak at "The Lyceum", the distinctive woman's club; as the "Franconia" sailed at four, time was an important factor.

First, of course, I must take the famous drive, of which the inhabitants are justly proud. When the motor reaches the top of the hills the panorama is magnificent and all the more so because of the austere character and formation of the land. The roads keep dipping down to the sea where little villages merge with the sand dunes that fringe the tide. There are whole colonies of Norwegians speaking their own tongue, living by fishing in deep waters as they did among the fiords of Norway. Beyond lie reaches of quicksand, no outward sign betrays their danger, they looked innocent enough with smooth white sand curving around the shore, yet beneath are shifting, moving layers of sand that engulf one without hope of rescue. Warnings are posted at definite intervals. It seems strange that even the mineral kingdom should have elements that are false and of which one must beware. We may not judge with the outer eye even the sands. Of the subtle distinctions existing in the human kingdom, Baha'u'llah continuously reminds us. In such words as: "Your example is like unto clear and bitter water, which outwardly appears pure and clear, but, when it falls into the hand of the Divine Assayer, not one drop of it is accepted."

At one o'clock, we were joined by the husband of the Scotch believer and the band of five mounted the steps of a fine business building where the club rooms are. They were tastefully arranged with gay patterned curtains, a piano and a speaker's platform. Looking backward I could picture Mrs. Keith Ramson-Taylor standing there with her fervent spirit aglow, and looking forward we dreamed of a Baha'i Assembly occupying these quarters, spreading peace and unity in this bleak land.

The friends confided to me that they suffered from the conservative element predominant in Wellington, as in all Colonial towns. The endeavor to uphold tradition, to maintain old-world class distinctions, and to stand rigidly on standards of the past so that unless ideas conformed with these, they were frowned upon. I spoke of the necessity of an open mind, I told the audience that they must take off their ancestral spectacles that might make them nearsighted, things might appear in these lens other than they were, and that astigmatism was a grave disease, hard to cure. We followed our short talk with open discussion and urged the asking of questions. When the time came to go, many accompanied us.

So soon the day was over! With the sun already sinking!

The believers had brought a banner with the Greatest Name, that they held aloft as the ship headed into the stream. My heart went out to these brave pioneers, so strong in faith, so restricted in their endeavors.

For a long time I stood by the rail as their figures blurred and faded against the darkening sky.

A BAHAI CLASS AT SEA

As soon as the shores of New Zealand receded from view, my travelling companions crowded round me, curious to hear what had been going on at the various ports, what was the meaning of the word Baha'i, who were all the people who had gathered in the Garden Café. Although they had read the newspaper articles that appeared in the New Zealand dailies, yet it was all so new to them that their ideas were confused. "If you wish to learn the Baha'i teachings then you must be willing to study. I cannot explain in five minutes the many sided, deep and new religion that has appeared upon the earth." An eager chorus proclaimed that they would like nothing better.

Next morning there appeared on the official blackboard of the "Franconia" this notice: "A class for the study of the Baha'i Principles will be held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at five o'clock in the little parlour on deck A."

At once I became related to my fellow passengers in a new and in a deeper sense.

A woman from Connecticut confided to me the following incident: "In 1912 I was returning with my parents from school in England. On the steamer was also Abdu'l-Baha, bound for his first memorable visit to the United States. No word was exchanged between our family and the Master, but one day while I was alone I passed close by the chair in which he was sitting; as I did so, he turned and looked directly into my eyes; that single glance penetrated through every layer of my being to my soul. I trembled, I longed to hide from those eyes that were looking through me, but I could not move, I stood rooted to the spot. Perhaps it was a matter of seconds, I don't know how long I stood there before him. Then he liberated my soul with a smile, that smile released a pent up emotion new to me, tears coursed down my cheeks that in vain I tried to check. It was one moment of eternity. Completely carried out of myself the recollection has remained ever fresh in my memory. Many, many times during the intervening years I have wondered who he was and what was his mission. Imagine my surprise when I realized that you were one of his followers, that I should be able to learn the answers to the questions I long to know. How strange!" she exclaimed, "that I should be on the ocean again, about to study the 'Baha'i Principles after so many years."

I asked if Abdu'l-Baha's personality had impressed the other passengers on shipboard. "Oh yes," she replied, "everyone remarked upon his majesty, his erect carriage, and his snowy hair and turban that seemed to reflect a white light wherever he went."

A southern woman of great reserve next confided to me a strange dream that she had had while we were in Wellington and how it had become the basic reason for her joining the class. "I am," she said, "an orthodox Christian and my only son is

entering the ministry this year. But," and here she paused, "a dream, so vivid, so real, has so impressed my mind, I have decided to study with you. I dreamed," she continued, "that I was travelling a broad highway. I did not seem to know the way, but there were many signposts along the road and I drew near to find out what direction I should take to the town towards which I was travelling. When I was near enough to read the directions, I saw that a line had been drawn through them and underneath in bold type was written "A new path has been opened to humanity-- take it, for it will bring you to the heavenly kingdom that you seek." The very next day I read in the Auckland paper that the Baha'i Cause was a new path for the uniting of all religions and all races. I felt there was some message in it for me, and that is why I am joining your class, which, frankly, I should not have done a week ago."

I went to my cabin and vrought her the Dawn of a New Day and pointed to the quotation "This is a new cycle of human power."

Of especial interest in the class was a New York woman married to a Chinese gentleman. Their union had been bitterly opposed by both occidental and oriental affiliations. Reading that the elimination of race prejudice was one of the Baha'i Principles she felt that in the Cause she might find a solvent for the barriers of race that hemmed her in on both sides of the globe.

At five o'clock the little parlour was crowded; there were social workers, doctors, old women and many young ones whose personal lives were complicated with emotional crises.

Studying the people who came to the class I decided to approach the Cause from the genesis of the Christian religion and opened by reading "The Garden of Eden" from "Some Answered Questions." And from that point spoke of the origin of religions that had become obscured and clouded, how confusion gradually led to farness from God, and superstition in the mass of followers of all religions. Hidden cunningly under fine phrases we find greed and enmity in our own creeds. Child marriage, and class distinction in some of the oriental beliefs, while the fanaticism of others is only too well known.

The world's need of a teacher has been one of the reasons for the advent of Baha'u'llah and his teaching of the unity of both religion and race. The physical means of unity are to be found in the inventions that have knit the world together. The cause of these inventions is not that we should travel round the globe at increased speed, but that we should be provided with means of uniting. The New World Order is a universal program embracing the whole world. This is a day in which all can serve mankind by putting in practice the Baha'i teachings.

One day a woman who was always present at the lessons but who never entered into our discussions asked if she might

explain her viewpoint. She addressed the whole class, saying: "I am a student of the occult and I came here to learn what the Baha'is have to add to the ancient oriental teaching. Frankly, so far, I have been disappointed; the lessons have centered on conduct and affairs of everyday life. The masters of the East take you to the heights, away from the sordid affairs of this world to the sublime. There are men who so control breath that they can lie buried under the earth for eight days and rise again, having experienced no more harm than from an afternoon nap; they walk on the water with the same ability as upon land; while there are well authenticated cases of men who have had the ability to fly through the air without airships. Do not such achievements indicate a very high degree of spiritual attainment and does not this presuppose a greater growth than keeping the mind fixed upon the commonplace affairs attendant upon every day life?"

"The subject is one that interests us all," I replied, "though you must not be disappointed that I do not agree with you. The dialectic method of open discussion is one used in all Baha'i meetings, for we are told from the clash of opinion truth appears. But Baha'u'llah, the prophet for this day and whom we as Baha'is turn to for guidance, has given us a social program, a World Order, a New Civilization in which we learn how to live together in harmony like the flowers of a garden. Not in solitude and not in a world of the occult practices, distinguished though they may be, the lesson we must learn is to know ourselves to the fullest degree of our capacity, and to treat with every living being as though "he were a letter sent us from God." Eight days and nights lying inert under the ground are, from our point of view, eight days in which we have done nothing for our fellow man, therefore eight precious days wasted. Nor is there any special benefit derived from being able to produce phenomenon. Let us suppose that the captain of the "Franconia" wished to demonstrate his ability to walk on the water and we learned that instead of being on the bridge while we pass through the dangers of the Great Barrier Reef, he was taking a constitutional upon the Tasman Sea. Would that seem to us fair? Would any demonstration appeal to us that threatened our lives? Of two such propositions, without question guiding the ship to safety is the one that would receive the vote of the passengers.

There is, however, a spiritual world far away from all phenomena. It is entered by a very little door, hidden and secret; the key that unlocks the door of the mysteries is surrender of self. This conquest is far more difficult than the conquest of material elements, for to the scientist is given the province of phenomena. To man is the task of changing his nature into spirit, to learn by inner discernment how to bestow love, to find joyous exhilaration in giving and serving, then shall he journey through space without material aid, then shall land and water be beneath his feet and he shall "shine with an everlasting shining."

Abdu'l-Baha describes the purpose of religion in the Tablet of East and West; "The cornerstone of the religion of God

is the acquisition of divine perfections and the sharing in his manifold bestowals. The essential purpose of faith and belief is to ennoble the inner being of man with the outpourings of grace from on high." He is a true Baha'i who strives by day and by night to progress along the path of human endeavor, whose cherished desire is so to live and act as to enrich and illumine the world.

PORT MORESEBY, NEW GUINEA

I carried from Wellington a letter of introduction to a believer, Mrs. Malcolm Smith, whose husband was an army officer stationed at Port Moreseby, New Guinea. This remote post has no harbor proper and we were deposited upon land in uncomfortable little cockleshells.

I wandered up and down the one street of shops making such efforts of search as was humanly possible with the thermometer at 98 and the air laden with tropical moisture. By the draper I was directed to a nearby hill crowned by a row of white houses; seen through the rays of the sun dazzling upon the window panes, they appeared to be in perpetual motion. It didn't look far, however, so I decided to make the ascent and I had climbed a considerable distance, when suddenly my legs gave way, my head swam and I was forced down upon a stone in the midst of a sparse and unlovely roadside. While struggling to free myself from the bands of heat that girt me about like an armour, a British soldier came over the brow of the hill, followed by seven natives. Within a few paces of my refuge they halted. The men flung themselves down on the parched, dusty ground while the young commander took off his topee and began fanning himself. He glanced from me to the ship, large and white, riding the breakers beyond the harbor and remarked "Cruising"? It was more of a statement than a question. I nodded, but I added "I had not reckoned with this this heat when I began to climb this hill".

"Don't I know," he replied, with considerable force, "We've just done seven miles through it."

"Did you have to walk? Is there no other way to get about this immense island?" I asked.

"Usually we fly--for there are no roads at all in the interior--a few ponies are in use around the Port--but they're no possible use in the jungle. We couldn't wait on transportation this morning, for we got wind of a scrap between two tribes that have a deadly feud, smoke was already rising from the tribal ovens in the early dawn, and that meant trouble--there wasn't a moment to lose and it fell to my lot to put a stop to the heathen ceremonies. I brought the miscreants in on foot and here they are. The sudden knowledge of their crime rendered me speechless, I could barely articulate the awful word, "CANNIBALS?" He nodded. "But they're not a bad lot--not at all." He ran his eye over them with, what seemed to me, affectionate pride. "They never gave me a bit of trouble--put out the fires and came right along. They know the government won't stand for these practices. But over and against our English laws is the fact - it's part of their religion. You can't rob a man of his belief by forbidding it - he is not convinced - because from time immemorial the tribe has believed that an enemy must be revenged; a hero conquered must

transfer his qualities so that men will be braver fighters for eating him. Their fathers believed it; the strong men of the tribe enjoin it. No use teaching them Christianity for they find in the Savior's death, as well as in some of the practices of the church, similarity to their own beliefs. Much as one of the tribes of the American Indians felt that one of their members should be crucified every Good Friday. No, there is nothing that will grind belief out of the savage but patience, small punishments and lots of time. These black babies will eat better food in jail than they ever had, they will work on the roads without chains, and only be shut up at night. The government is forced to be lenient, otherwise insurrection and bloodshed would spread all over this beautiful land."

The origin and nature of superstition were laid bare before me. I saw how the brands of shame only fade with the march of time. A world Teacher was needed that mankind throw off these shackles. Baha'u'llah commanded us to lay aside such practices. He unlocked the doors of science and placed science beside religion in order to have a twofold weapon with which to fight superstition. His words were not for the past but for the present day. Throughout his writing are repeated warnings against this evil, in the Words of Wisdom He says: "The source of all these utterances is Justice. It is the freedom of man from superstition and imitation, that he may discern the Manifestations of God with the eye of oneness, and to consider all affairs with keen sight."

But are we free from signs and wonders? Does not the taint of superstition linger among us? How else can you explain the fact that every business building in New York places the number 14 on the 13th floor, fearing it will not be let if marked by this unlucky number; pedestrians step out into the street to avoid walking under a ladder; people knock on wood and cross their fingers in every land to avoid bad luck, and use innumerable signs and omens.

My meditation was rudely interrupted by the natives scrambling to their feet. All at once I was reminded of my errand, and I brought forth the letter to Mrs. Smith. The soldier shook his head, "I don't know the women folk here, but there is a man down at the jail who buys supplies and he knows everybody. Why if you asked him about someone and he couldn't tell you he would die of shame. In a jiffy you will find out more about your friend than if you asked every man, woman and child for a hundred miles around." This is how I found myself a part of the cannibalistic parade now forming. First came the natives, shuffling their feet in the heavy dust; then the Lieutenant with marshal stride, and I brought up the rear. The jail, an innocent looking frame house, scarcely different from its neighbors except for a few bent bars in the windows.

The prisoners seemed quite at home, they filed in and found places in the already crowded room. The man who knew everything was introduced. He looked at the blue envelope, fingering it with a bright knowing expression. Then he looked up, cleared his throat and began: "Mrs. Smith is as fine a lady as there is in the Port, but she isn't here right now because those kiddies of hers have outgrown everything they own. Why she said to me last Monday, 'Mr. James, I'm sailing on the "Empress" tomorrow to buy suits for the children.' Yes Ma'm you have never seen anything like it! But you will find her in Sidney at the "King's Crown," there's where she always stops and she'll be glad to see an old friend, I know." The News Column was living up to his reputation. We shook hands all round and as I passed under the prison windows there sat the cannibals, entirely unruffled by their situation. They nodded shyly and as I returned the salute, one among them drew from the folds of his sarong a flower and thrust it into my hand. It was white and already wilting, though still fragrant. The poignant recollection of the battle of the dawn assailed me; had it been snatched from an enemy or had it adorned the brow of a warrior as he hurried forth to battle in the pale dawn. Who knows?

Torris Straits, March 5th '34

Dear Louise:

Sydney, Australia is just like home. I walked in at a Nineteen Day Feast and I could scarcely believe it was not 119 East 57th Street. It was full of familiar things, pictures, books, and there were four people that I knew. I am sure you have heard of Mr. and Mrs. Dunn, they came from the Pacific Coast many years ago, and have built up the Cause in this city. They are reaping the harvest of their labors, for a National Spiritual Assembly is being formed and the Cause is in motion.

I was so affectionately received and answered a million questions about the Temple. They seemed surprisingly well informed about the activities of the United States. I realized anew the solidarity of the Cause, the Guardian's grasp of every phase of activity, his exact knowledge, his energy and his loving spirit. I realized, too, the magnificent performance of our own National Spiritual Assembly during years of depression, poverty and unemployment. Steadfastly they held to the goal--the Temple. The joy, too, which each believer feels in the accomplishments of others is so genuine. The Unity of the Cause is beyond human ken.

Two young people who had been in New York had arranged a meeting for their contemporaries. I was introduced to the Mayor's son and a physician, of the new school, of great brilliancy. The questions asked showed the trend of the mind of youth everywhere. How do you know? What proof have you? It is a healthy state, showing life and not that heavy dead acceptance of things as they have always been. When we descended the steps a full moon was changing everything into gold and silver, waves of silver were lapping the shore and the suspension bridge would have satisfied Midas. It was too lovely to turn in, so we drove along the shore slowly and talked intimately about the coming of the New Day.

The next night a dinner was given in our honor by the Governor's staff. The table was strewn with flowers unfamiliar. Afterwards each one related an incident that had brought them happiness, something out of the ordinary. When it came my turn, I told them this happening: I had brought to Portifino a Baha'i Library and had included a number of books on spiritual life besides ours. I printed a catalogue and sent it broadcast over Europe. Shortly, I received a letter from Germany: "We see you have in your list 'Cosmic Consciousness'; this is the only book that one of the northern Russian prisons for women possesses. Sixty pages are missing. If you will copy these in English, we will translate and smuggle them into the prison. If successful you will receive in return a paper with a number four and three x's." I had never read the book in question but set to work with a will and copied the missing pages. It gave me a peculiar happiness to unite myself with these far off victims of political

enmity. Time passed, I heard nothing. In America amid the press of life I forgot all about the matter. The following spring, upon my return to Portifino, I found a small paper package that Rosa said had been left at the door by a man, unknown to her. On the paper I saw the marks of the Russian prison, the number four, followed by the three x's. I found within the paper a small red scarf and a note in Russian. When it was translated it read: "We, the women of this prison, have secured a piece of string with which to make you this scarf. We have each pricked a finger to make it red as we dare not affix our names. This remembrance goes to you, our unknown friend, as a token of love that binds us to you."

We were only three days in Port, instead of a week as we had been in Auckland, New Zealand. On Sunday, our last day, I spoke at the Centre. Afterwards they all accompanied me back to the ship for tea. It was a lovely day, the sun shining on the deck which had been scrubbed as white as sand. The friends described the visits of Martha Root and Keith with feeling and deep appreciation. Time passed all too quickly, and then came our farewells that were as between old friends.

There are great souls in the Baha'i Cause and some of the greatest are here.

With love to my Assembly at home,

Loulie.

A LETTER FROM HONOLULU

Upon arriving in Honolulu, I argued myself into the belief that I had no special work to do here, since I was really en route for South America, my teaching destination for the season and where I planned an intensive teaching campaign. Besides, here was a splendid Assembly of long standing. Having arrived at this perfect and logical conclusion, according to my notions, I laid my head upon the pillow in righteous rest.

I fell asleep. Abdul Baha opened the door and walked towards me with an expression of sadness upon his countenance and his eyes regarded me with an expression of reproach. I sat up and leaned forward to catch the words he was speaking in a low even voice. "You must not rest here day or night; there is work to be done. I have friends here that do not know me as yet, friends who are workers in the vineyard of the Lord, if they come under the ray of Baha'u'llah, they will bear wonderful fruit."

Swiftly he led me forth and showed me three separate sections of the island. The first was up a little hill with small houses dotted about, I could hear the sea breaking on the rocks below. The second seemed inland. There were large old fashioned houses with giant palms, gnarled trees and a profusion of flowers. The third spot we visited was very confusing as we entered a gateway that enclosed many buildings. In parting, Abdul Baha raised his right arm impressively: "Work! Work!" he commanded.

When I awoke my consciousness was changed. I saw that idleness was wrong to consider, even wicked. I hurried to the Assembly and offered to take as many classes as could be arranged. I was too dazed to tell them of my experience, I had only one idea, how to find the souls who were waiting to learn of the Revelation. I came and went prompted by only one yearning desire.

At first I drove wildly about, trying to recognize the dream houses. That was futile, I found nothing. I ceased to search and I found them all. Through different means and paths the friends of Abdul Baha found their way to one or an other of our meetings. Naturally there was no recognition, but invariably I would be invited to pay them a visit. All unsuspecting I would journey hither and stand transfixed, recalling the scene and the circumstances under which I had been here before. An overwhelming happiness would rush over me. "The workers in the vineyard of the Lord" would come forward and in ways mysterious and guided by the inner spirit, there would follow a recognition of the Cause. The Message had reached them and they accepted it simply and quietly. Life would begin again on a higher plane.

Every Baha'i meeting became a bright chapter of the Book of Life. No effort was involved. My talents, whatever they may be, were not required. My personality was laid aside. Twice in years gone by, universal consciousness has crossed my vision, a

glimpse, never to be forgotten. Both times in sleep. Sometimes one is too active and the spirit cannot direct the conscious mind.

When I returned from South America I found a round-robin from the friends of Honolulu. Every member of the Assembly had sent me a message and every one was like a chaplet of pearls to me. I cannot put down here all these words of encouragement and appreciation, but I am quoting the words of my Dream Friends as well as those of the two Baha'is whose whole lives have been dedicated to the Cause of God.

Perhaps it is to some such super-state of consciousness that Christ refers when He says: "My yoke is sweet and my burden light."

Extracts from Round-Robin

"The light that you gave us, the horizons that you widened, the consciousness that you deepened of the Revelation of Baha'u'llah we would reflect back to you in our own lives, lives of ever expanding capacity in the service of the Cause of God." H.F.

"Your encouraging message gave me comfort. No one will ever be able to tell you the breath of heaven that you have wrapped us in, the power that has been poured into us. The meetings have given me constant joy, the group of women show such a sweet spirit, rare understanding, and I love every member of the Baha'i family you conferred upon me. Lovingly, H.M.F.

"I wonder if you realize what spirit you left upon our island? Every one who heard you was stirred spiritually, you made us into human receiving and sending stations, and thus we follow you in your long journey to foreign lands. Every one in this happy home sends you love and appreciation for the world of Baha'u'llah which you showed us, the seeds that we plant all thrive, I am teaching and studying, so is big John and also little John, and so, I may say, is the whole region, the whole little hillside. Every one has a copy of "Baha'u'llah and the New Era and loves it." K.K.

"My life has flowed back to me, the Cause of God that you gave us has been a source of joy. Only a whole life work can repay the knowledge that you brought. Abdul Baha guided you, may He always continue. Come back." G.P.

"My constant gratitude goes out to you for being the key to the door that has opened into wonderful inspiration, hope and new happiness." T.MacI.

"So much was cold and dark here before you came, so much was misty and obscure and we were groping about not quite knowing how to proceed, then you came, and every heart caught fire and the fire is spreading all over the island by leaps and bounds, and the glow is everywhere." E.M.

SOUTH AMERICA

Journey Taken in the Interest of the Baha'i Cause

By L. A. and E. R. Mathews - Winter of '35

South America can no more be described as a whole than can the continent of Europe. Its vast area comprises variety in language and custom, while its history stretches back into a dim past, from whose shadow archaeologists have rescued broken fragments that show mummies embalmed after the manner of Egypt, skulls that have been trepanned, geometrical ornaments, vases of classic design as well as delicately wrought profiles in silver and gold. Alas! that no Rosetta Stone has been found to enable us to read the characters on the arches and columns that lie prone on the sites of the ancient temples.

Each country of South America has written its own separate history. The West Coast, however, may be said to possess a common denominator - trade, because of the depots of fruit, oil, metal, fertilizers and grain. The Humboldt current, an icy stream of water, flowing up from the Antarctic region encounters the Japan current, chilling the waters of the Pacific and killing thousands of fish upon which the Guana birds feed. Whenever the current wanders off into deep waters the shores become lush and tropical.

The most interesting city of the West Coast is Lima in Peru. Here in the year 1538 Pizarro made himself master, not alone of what he surveyed, but, like Midas, of gold and silver. Having captured the last of the Incas, Pizarro promised him his life if he would fill a lofty chamber with gold, but when this request was complied with Pizarro put him to death with crafty haste. The Conquistador then turned his attention to founding a city that he named for Saint Rosa. Lima today breathes the spirit of Pizarro. From the palace to the Inquisitional Hall his steps may be retraced, and upon reaching the Cathedral one sees him proudly riding a spirited horse, sword in hand. This fine statue is the work of the late Charles Rumsey. Inside the church on the right Pizarro's body has been preserved and is visible through a glass casket, awesome and hideous, but the proud treasure of the city of Lima.

As we had journeyed to South America with a definite Baha'i program, that of forming groups for the study of the Baha'i Faith, as well as to find individuals of capacity, who could comprehend Baha'u'llah's program for a future civilization, we gathered facts about the countries through which we were to travel. Thus we learned that while outwardly the Spanish conquest maintained, commerce was slowly drifting into alien hands. Canadians, hardy and thrifty, were here. Americans

also, their heads crammed with schemes for accelerating trade. Germans by the thousand, driven from the Fatherland by the great war. Italians out of sympathy with present day government. These pioneers were moulding the environment to suit their needs, while each brought his traditions, his culture,

The "Santa Lucia" landed us at Valparaiso and from there the train carried us to the Capitol of Chile, Santiago. The city is set in a bowl enclosed on all sides by the towering Andes. Each hour of light throws a mantle of color over the mountains and at sunset the shadows turn from pink to blue and taper into a soft purple that diffuses its imperial color over the whole city. The streets of the Capitol are narrow and shabby, here and there a richly ornamented building bespeaks a spurt of ambition.

My first definite request to present the Baha' Cause was at the Y. W. C. A. The proposal met with an instant response. The staff made all arrangements and when the afternoon arrived the hall was crowded with notables; the heads of the Sweet Memorial hospital and clinic; the directors of the Valparaiso Y. M. C. A., the leaders of the literary societies as well as President of the college and ministers of various denominations. Mr. Mathews opened by reading a page from the Baha's Scriptures. When he finished, the chairman asked him to read it again. This request became the keynote of the occasion, lifting it beyond the ordinary meeting and when the talk "Widening Our Horizons" was finished, questions were asked from every part of the audience. It was already dark when we left the building, the whole afternoon had been filled with heavenly enthusiasm, so much so that we could scarcely credit the fact that we, the bearers of a New Message, had been so warmly received in this distant land.

Immediate results followed, for both the head and secretary of the Societé de Femina, became students of the Baha'i Cause. This little literary circle of thirty students studied literature in both Spanish and English and it was therefore arranged that they should read "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" and "The Goal of the New World Order" in Spanish and English.

At length the time came when we bade farewell to our new found friends, happy in the thought that in the Capitol of Chile there would be a group studying the Cause. Study would augment capacity and in time an understanding of the principles of the New Civilization would draw these students to become part of the great program of Baha'u'llah.

In 1921 Abdu'l Baha wrote a Tablet to Chile and sent it to Martha Root. It is of the utmost importance and passages are herein quoted.

"You see how the world is attacking one another, how the countries are dyed with human blood. *** Heads have become like grain in a grinding mill. *** Prosperous countries have been ruined, cities devastated, villages demolished. Fathers have lost their sons, sons their fathers, mothers have wept blood for the loss of their children. *** The source of all this unhappiness is racial prejudice, national prejudice, religious prejudice and political prejudice. The source of these prejudices is ancient imitation. So long as blind imitation lasts, the human world will be in ruins and in peril.

Now in such a glorious age, when the realities have appeared and secrets of being have been discovered, the morning of truth hath shone, the world has been illuminated, is it permissible to wage these terrible wars, wars that throw the human world into ruins? No, not by the Lord!

From the horizon of Persia His Holiness Baha'u'llah has shone like a sun upon the world and He has declared that the world was dark and that this darkness would continue with horrible results. From the prison of Akka He clearly addressed the Emperor of Germany saying that there will come a great war and that Berlin will weep and lament. When the Sultan of Turkey wronged Baha'u'llah, he wrote him from the barracks of Akka that Constantinople would fall a victim to a great revolution, one extending even to the women and children so that they would (also) lament, with great cries. In brief, He addressed all the Kings and Presidents of Republics telling them what would happen and that which He wrote has come to pass. The Supreme Pen has written how to prevent war and His words have been scattered all over the world. First among these councils is the independent search after truth, because imitation limits man. The second teaching is of the oneness of the world of humanity - all are the creation of a Creator; God, the kind Shepherd shows kindness to all, He does not differentiate. The Clement Lord sees no differences between His Creatures. All are His servants and all receive his Generosity. The third teaching is that religion is a strong fortress, but it must be the cause of love. *** If it causes hatred and enmity, it is unnecessary. For Religion is like a cure; if the cure causes illness then it is better to dispense with it. Religious, racial, national and political prejudices are the destroyers of the world. These are the causes of bloodshed, prejudice is the ruin of the world of humanity. As long as they last, frightful wars will recur. The cure for these ills is universal peace.

For the world to have universal peace a great world court must be set up by all the governments and nations. The problems of all nations and governments must be turned over to this court and whatever this court decides must be accepted and followed. If a government or nation disobey, the whole world must rise to oppose that government or nation. *** Now it is clear that these teachings are the life of the world and its

true spirit. As you are servants of the human world you must strive with heart and soul until humanity is rescued from darkness, from prejudice and from the world of nature. Strive to reach the light of the divine world. Praise be to God that you are informed of these teachings. Today without Baha'u'llah's instructions the world will have no rest. Of itself the darkness will not disperse, these serious maladies will not be cured, instead conditions will become worse and more difficult day by day. The Balkans will not be tranquilized, they will seek means to inflame the fires of war again. New public movements will use their powers to achieve their own selfish ends. Therefore with bright hearts, divine souls, celestial strength and heavenly will, strive to be to the world of humanity God's bounty and the cause of rest and tranquility to humanity."

(Signed) Abdu'l Baha Abbas.

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There are two ways of reaching the Argentine from Chile; the first is over the Andes, the route Martha Root had taken; the other skirting Chile and Patagonia. We determined upon the Southern route where no Baha'i had yet been. From the south, winter was already enveloping the whole Antarctic region, sending icy winds northward over Patagonia. We decided, however, to risk these hazards and go to the Argentine via the Chilean Lakes.

Orsono, the starting point for this region, lies a day and night journey from Santiago. In the town of Orsono there was but one motor available for reaching Lake Llanquihue, an old and rickety Buick, - in this disqualified vehicle we began our journey, swaying over dirt roads furrowed by continuous rains. Here and there the ruts gave way to beds of lava, over which the machine would roll shaking and groaning. After four and a half weary hours we descried the welcome lights of Ensenada. It nestles beside a sheet of still water surrounded by great trees from whose pointed leaves heavy drops fell rhythmically. The tiny cabin that received us was as narrow as a box, its single window nailed against fresh air. Its furnishings consisted of a straw mattress laid on boards covered by turkey red comforters that did duty for sheets, blankets and pillows. No palace, however, could have seemed more luxurious! Our inquisitorial ride was soon forgotten in the company of the proprietor who was both cultured and charming, and expanded mightily on hearing Mr. Mathews' fluent German.

In this remote land occurred a great spiritual experience. One of those meetings of the spirit that make social amenities pale by comparison. It happened that a German couple had come from Puerto Varas, Chile. Madame de Furmühl spoke English. In whispers in the corner of the office we talked of the New World Order; as I unfolded the Divine Plan she seemed to read it with me as from an open book. Each statement of mine was rounded out and completed by this clear sighted woman. As I explained the simple form of our Administration and the station

of the Guardian of the Cause, she repeated my words to her husband: "Listen Gustave, we have a Guardian--one who holds the world together in this day--one who is preparing humanity for a new civilization." Very thoughtfully he turned the idea over in his mind and then replied in a deep voice. "Yes, yes, I can understand that. It is as it should be--somewhere a spiritual leader must be making the plan that will guide us out of the wilderness and chaos of the present into a new and better path." Madame de Burmühl explained that they belonged to a large group of Germans who met and studied under the name of "Liberal Thought Society." But no more literature from the society was permitted in Germany, so as Winter approached they were without material for study. The Baha'i Revelation formed the link in the chain and they embraced it eagerly and whole-heartedly. They felt sure that the study group would accept it as they did.

The steamers connecting one island with another sail only three times a week. These inland mariners pay small heed to schedules and departing passengers find it wiser to gather on the wharf ahead of time, so we hurried hither accompanied by the German couple now deep in the study of the Cause. We skirted a swift running river now and then crossing it at shallow points and taking occasional dips under water falls that seemed to occasion no surprise. Arriving well in advance we prepared to wait when suddenly the boat decided to start and began churning white foam in long streaks through the green water. Our friends pressed to the edge of the sand, their arms outstretched, calling God's blessing on our Baha'i endeavors. Far out on the water we could hear their voices. The afternoon was bright and still, trees crowded down to the water's edge; snow smooth as frosting rounded the tops of the mountains. A thousand rivulets poured snow water into the lake. The atmosphere was laden with a kind of thrilling, expectant beauty. Nature occupied in seasonal rounds seemed indifferent to man's behavior. Crossing the Lake of All Saints was like witnessing a fraction of creation.

A week we travelled thus. Sometimes mounting over the crests of rocky promontories; sometimes encircling volcanoes where we were lost in steam. We made steep descents on foot and once we were ferried by a crude handmade craft. Physically the journey was hard, spiritually it was revivifying, for everywhere were listeners eager to hear news of the Great Event. It was, indeed, a pilgrimage of the spirit and reflected a degree of capacity in the Germans of that section of South America that is unforgettable.

At length we reached Lake Nahuel Huapi at the far end of which lays Bariloche, the town that terminates the lake trip when coming from Chile. The last journey by water is the longest, and that morning dawned cold and windy. The tiny steamer was tossed and tumbled by the waves. Spray was continually flying overhead, while on the benches it was impossible to avoid a wetting. All through the four and a half hours journey our

eyes strained towards our destination as the wind rose and moaned, grew angry, dropped into silence only to repeat its attack on a higher scale. The pilot hugged the shore and when at last the headland, behind which the steamer was to moor, hove in view a shout of joyous relief rose simultaneously from every throat.

Bariloche has one train a week. It arrives from Buenos Aires every Friday and returns on Sunday. The villagers living along the shore of Nahuel Huapi make of the train's departure a fiesta. Women wearing Spanish shawls, pound the pavement with high heels; peasants carry bright colored dusters with which to shine the inscriptions on the sides of the train. Passengers embarking for the Capitol, forty-two hours distant, are regarded with awe. Cameras click, fruit is vended, tunes hummed, as the crowd gape at the miracle of machinery that has ended an isolation, inviolate for a hundred years. At five sharp the whistle blows, the admiring throng stand back. The engine shakes itself free of lake and mountain, it turns and twists until rugged outlines fade and heavy forests disappear, and then it settles down for a long trek across the plains of the Argentine.

Mile after mile of swaying pampas passes the train window, mysterious, uniform, as though the world had become suddenly a planed floor of exact measurements. Through this moving sea of grass stalk cattle flank high. Up or down, east or west, there is pampas; the mind recedes from all forms of variety and settles back into the subtle peace of complete monotony.

The Argentine is rich enough and big enough to feed the whole world with beef; its markets could supply grain and wool as well. Prices have fallen in the general economic depression and growers fasten their hope of recouping diminished fortunes on war, war in Europe or in fact anywhere. Already they are tinning beef, weaving blankets and rolling bandages so that at the first cry of battle these goods can be set afloat and at the Argentine's own prices. Naturally peace is unpopular, kindness and brotherhood are looked upon as antiquated principles. Old animosities live, though each nationality within the country deplores the fact and wish it otherwise. The churches watch each other in jealous alarm, fearful of the increased in number among opposing denominations. The Argentine and the English leave the whole ethical question alone. The Americans make a weak show of getting together by drinking tea under the entwined flags of all nations, but without the genius of Baha'u'llah who has given us a purpose for meeting; - a definite plan that is practical as well as spiritual, these gestures of unity lead nowhere. Into this land so uniform in appearance, so separate in consciousness will come the Supreme Remedy, namely the Baha'i message. It will gather up the alien threads and weave them into a pattern of universal design. It will set in motion a spark with which mankind will recapture belief in the power of love and suffering. Self interest will be merged into larger

issues. The secrets of Being hidden in the stream of life itself, will emerge and man will experience the condition described by Baha'u'llah in the Seven Valleys. "A servant always draws near unto me with prayers, until I become his ear wherewith he heareth. For in that case the Owner of the house becomes manifest in his own house (the heart) and the pillars of the house are all illuminated and radiative through His light. The action and effect of the light is from the Giver of Light; this is why all move through Him and arise by His Desire."

Buenos Aires greeted us with a downpour of cold rain. The stirring events of the Chilean trip, however, buoyed our spirits above temperature and filled our hearts with strong hope.

It was a strange coincidence that we should arrive on the same day as Krishna Muhdi, for he had come to Auckland, New Zealand on the same date as we, of the previous year. Again our arrival in Sidney, Australia, had been simultaneous; now he landed by steamer from Brazil as our train pulled into Buenos Aires. Naturally the three branches of the Theosophical Society combined on an intensive campaign for him, punctuated by flurries of publicity. Martha Root had been received by them with the utmost cordiality, but I knew I could expect nothing for the present. I had, however, brought letters to other important organizations as well as to diplomats and high officials. Affable conversations, cakes and tea, followed upon the presentation of these letters but when I spoke of the mission that had drawn us hither, invisible barriers descended barring further advances into the Subject. I was encircled by absent minded smiles and polite retreats. Even Peace, that redoubtable and highly honored topic, fell to earth without an echo.

The rain continued. The test of faith is more faith. When difficulties surround one it is best to draw back from the material world into the circle of Divine Protection. The personal will with its desires must be folded up and laid away. A realization of the power within the Cause must be made a reality, so that the knowledge of Baha'u'llah's spirit shining upon the earth filling it with unending rejoicings, may manifest itself in the individual. One must grasp the fact that subjectively the whole world is aware whenever a messenger comes to earth. Success, or failure - neither have anything to do with truth. Under these reflections one may wait for guidance, but once convinced of a course of action, go forward unhesitatingly and leave the results to the guiding spirit that animates and sustains the Cause of God. Abdu'l Baha says:

"Know that the blessings of the Kingdom of Abha are not dependent upon the capacity and worthiness of anyone; the blessings themselves are the worthiness. As the action itself, when it reaches the thing acted upon, makes the thing the action, so the blessings themselves become identical with worthiness."

Opportunity came in the form of an invitation to address the Dramatic Society on the modern drama! I accepted. The afternoon came and dressed in my best I stepped upon my initial platform. The talk received wide-spread publicity and the daily papers carried the entire talk. This brought the editor of "The Standard" to interview us. I confided to him my dilemma. He was so intrigued that he decided to study the Cause with me and investigate its truth for himself. After an intensive course of reading he was carried beyond journalistic impulses and there began to appear in the columns of his paper references to the word Baha'i, its meaning, its origin and finally a two column article on the history of the movement from its inception.

The bridge of sighs was crossed. It became known that a new and constructive movement had been brought to Buenos Aires and I was asked to address first the Contemporary Club and later the American, The Amateur, and the Business Clubs as well as smaller groups. I was elated when approached about addressing the Girls' High School, but the proposal laid before the board of directors, did not prosper and the invitation was withdrawn.

Giving a talk at the Spanish Club I had to employ an interpreter. This was a veritable ordeal and I remembered how many times Abdu'l Baha has passed through the ordeal of having his words redistributed by an alien tongue.

From a variety of public talks there emerged certain personalities that made an indelible impression. First in order of time was Miss Beer, a German from Africa's Gold Coast. Tragedies had rained down upon her ever since the World War. In an agony of spirit she had battered at the door of ancient theology, only to find herself shut out by dogmatic controversies. From the first, she fell in love with the Baha'i principles; she amassed a wealth of quotations from the Writings and studied by night as well as by day. After our third lesson she read a paper on the Baha'i Movement before the German Literary Circle. As the inner commotion of soul subsided, she expressed a happiness that is impossible to describe.

A giant of undaunted courage was Senora Barrill. Her husband had been a pioneer in Argentine finance and from his accumulated fortune had built a veritable palace of medieval splendor. Then, suddenly, she was left alone. It was at this period of her life that an awakening of soul occurred. All at once there flooded her being an inner consciousness that a new Message had come to earth, a Message, that would bind all religions together. She closed the palace and started forth in search of that which her heart foretold. But everywhere she went she encountered creeds, old and new. Saddened by failure she journeyed homeward.

I gave a talk at the Y.W.C.A. on the union of all races, religions and creeds. Though understanding no English she came, to hear it, with her niece as interpreter. All during the talk

I could see that she was in a state of agitation; she clasped and unclasped her hands continuously. As soon as I finished she beckoned me. "All over the world I have been seeking the treasure that you have now placed in my hands this afternoon. 'The New World Order' that you have explained, has been ringing in my heart for many a long day." Often when we sat together before the fire she would cry out "Let us go spread the good news--let us tramp the world over." And though well over seventy as we left, she was preparing to depart on a world crusade.

Another wonderful friendship was formed with a distinguished Argentine family that we had met on the train from Bariloche. There was a widow, her daughters and a niece. They came to hear me speak and presently we found ourselves being entertained by the most hospitable of people. We saw gardens copied from the palaces of Europe, where roses grew as high as young fruit trees, beds of lotus in bloom, white and tranquil beside marble pools. Everywhere were rare tropical plants gathered from the far off islands of the Pacific. One day, while Senorina Lavarello and I were driving, she remarked, "You remind me of someone I met in Geneva--a woman all spirit." Naturally I asked her name. "Lady Bloomfield," she replied, - "Like you she is a Baha'i. It is strange how much this religion attracts me, but I know it is not for me, for should I approach it ever so secretly, the family would know and every member of the clan would arise to save me from Hell that they would see yawning to receive me; - you have no idea of the power of Spanish traditions--the Rock of Gibraltar is a weak defense by comparison--I would be immediately surrounded by an ecclesiastical conference that would go on forever and ever." "Well," I replied, laughing, "If the picture you have painted is even half true, I think you better come to the United States where no one will be interested in your beliefs, nor take heed of the ideas you harbor beneath your charming curls." So we planned that she should come in the Autumn and I pray that this free soul may come under the Baha'i training that will develop, without curtailing her lovely spirit.

One morning the daily papers announced that Mr. Julius Lay had been appointed Minister to Uruguay. This was happy news for me, since they were not only my friends but Mrs. Lay had studied the Cause with me during a visit to a mutual friend. She was a woman of purpose and generosity and one that could be counted upon to uphold the Cause and to use her influence in its behalf.

The visit to Buenos Aires that in the beginning had been fraught with dark difficulty, terminated in great enthusiasm for the Baha'i Principles. Alas, that a rigid code prevented joining my pupils together, nevertheless, as I stood on the deck of the steamer that was carrying us to Brazil, I felt that group consciousness would be the natural consequence of Baha'i study and would come about as a result of it.

I cannot believe that the door first opened by Martha Root and a second time during our voyage will ever be shut again.

A journey of four and a half days by water, brought us to Santos, Brazil. This low-lying unimportant looking island represents the largest output of coffee in South America. We made a special trip to Sao Paulo. One is astonished to see a sky-scraper of twenty-five stories, the largest concrete building in the world. In fact the size and proportion of the buildings is a constant surprise. For example in the Hotel Esplanada of Sao Paulo the seating capacity of the dining room is five hundred. Entering this enormous banquet hall you behold an elaborate display of tropical fruits on illuminated cakes of ice; this frosty feast makes a welcome contrast to the burning sun that is forever shining behind the curtained windows. We drove to the Butantan snake farms, now world famous, where is distilled the serum that has lowered the death rate from snake bites from 90 to 40 percent and they work here night and day to fight a menace that constitutes one of the major difficulties in homesteading this vast terrain.

Twelve hours by rail brought us to Rio de Janeiro, the train winds and slides down, down to the sea. In Rio, Leonora Holsapple joined us. She had come following Martha Root's notable visit to South America. Settling in Bahia, (which in Spanish means bay) she had set herself the task of mastering Spanish and Portuguese, while earning her living in a city directly over the equator. Encouraged by our Guardian, she translated and published "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" and other volumes, thus making an outstanding contribution for all time to the Baha'i Cause.

Through the influence of this true Baha'i friend, we were able to form a class without delay. These people were sufficiently evolved to draw together for study and to meet often. A second class soon followed the first, through important Americans to whom we had brought letters. The members of this class enabled me to place Baha'i books in the circulating libraries. I found only one Baha'i book in Rio, that was a copy of Mr. Holley's "Baha'i, the Spirit of the Age." It was gratifying to learn from the librarian that it had been widely read.

We were invited to spend an evening with the Sufis to address their members. As far as we could learn, they were not connected with the Sufis of Persia. The movement had been brought from India to London and its leaders, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Best were English. The pamphlets describing the belief seemed subjective in character though broad and humanitarian in design.

Sufi Lodge was built on the top of a mountain, literally above the clouds and standing on the roof garden the fleecy white clouds floated below while above was the starry sky. On an opposite mountain carved from rock stands a gigantic figure of Christ with arms outstretched in an attitude of blessing. Far below the sea was visible, breaking into white foam that shimmered

and glistened under the thirty thousand lights that encircle the shore. It was a sight of beauty for which no adjectives seemed adequate. I spoke on the prophecies fulfilled by the Baha'i Religion and gave a short outline of the Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Their reception of the talk impressed us all. It was evident that there existed a strong spiritual tie between us and some day this will be cemented. From that moment they did all in their power to help us spread the Baha'i Message and surrounded us with every kindness.

Through Miss Holsapple's influence I spoke at the Educational League. This important committee controls the education of Brazil as well as the reading matter that goes to schools and libraries. Religion may not be spoken from their platform but the breadth of the Cause gave ample opportunity to outline education from its spiritual standpoint. I also addressed the Y.W.C.A. that throughout the journey had treated our mission with so much cordiality.

We held a Baha'i picnic, on the shores of an inland lake. We talked of Abdu'l Baha's presence at Evergreen Cabin in West Englewood. We discussed the happy 19 day feasts that are held throughout the world, their origin and purpose; the day was sweet and memorable.

In retrospect it is impossible to number the individuals that crossed our path during this voyage of five months. Constantly we were meeting strangers and constantly telling them of the purpose of our visit. By land and by sea, over thousands of miles, the Cause was heralded and its dynamic news spread.

South America needs workers to carry on the Divine Plan. It is not enough that a teacher crosses the continent every few years. It is not enough that one woman gives her life for the spread of the Cause. If North and South America would unite and unfurl the banner of Baha'u'llah's principles they would lead the world into a new era of peace and happiness. Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Baha'i Cause is deeply concerned in the spiritual future of South America. Whosoever arises to labor in this field will be rewarded and every traveler will be upheld by the Holy Spirit. No sacrifice is too great to extend God's glory to the far flung corners of the earth. The hope of the world today is through the message of Baha'u'llah.

Louise A. Mathews