

past half-century. It was but a huddle of mud huts, when Baha'o'llah first directed some of his followers to settle there. Now this is replaced by a large and prosperous city of buildings of brick and stone.

The Mashrak-el-Azkar stands in the center of the city, surrounded by a large garden, which is bounded by four streets. It rises high above the surrounding buildings and trees, its dome being visible for miles, as the traveler approaches the city over the plain. The building in plan is a regular polygon of nine sides. One large doorway and portico, flanked by turrets, facing the direction of the Holy City (Akka), forms the principal motive of the facade, while the dome dominates the whole composition.

The walls of the Temple are of brick covered with a firm and hard stucco, [p. 154] which in that climate resists quite well the action of the elements, while the floors are concrete supported by iron or steel beams.

In plan the building is composed of three sections: the central rotunda, the aisle or ambulatory which surrounds it, and the loggia which surrounds the entire building.

The interior of the rotunda is five stories in height. The first or main floor story consists of nine arches, supported by piers, which separate the ambulatory from the rotunda proper. The second story consists of a similar treatment of arches and piers and balustrades, which separate the triforium gallery (which is directly above the ambulatory) from the wall of the rotunda. The third story is decorated with nine flank arcades, between which is a shield upon which is inscribed, in Persian characters, "Ya Baha-el-Abha." The fourth story contains nine large windows, while the wall of the fifth story, which is not as high as the others, is pierced by eighteen bull's-eye windows.

Above, there is the dome which is hemispherical in shape. The rotunda from the floor to the top of the dome is elaborately decorated with fret work and other designs, all in relief. We were told that the ultimate aim was that color and gilding should be added to this interior decoration.

The inner dome is of iron or steel and concrete, while the outer dome or roof is entirely of metal-the intention is that this shall be gilded.

The main portico of the temple is two stories in the clear, while the loggias, which surround the building, are on two floors, the lower being on the main floor level, while the upper one is on the level of the triforium gallery. This upper loggia is reached by two stair-cases, one to the right and one to the left of the main entrance, and the gallery is entered from the loggia.

On the main floor the principal entrance is through the large doorway, but there are also several inner doors, which connect the ambulatory with the loggia. An abundance of light is admitted through the windows in the upper part of the rotunda, as well as through the windows of the upper gallery and ambulatory, which open upon the loggias.

The Persian style of architecture has been used in treating the details and

decorations of the buildings. At present the stucco work is not quite completed. The interior of the rotunda is finished, but the decoration of the loggias and gallery and ambulatory is only done in part. However, the work is continuing and it will not be long before all will be complete.

From what I saw and heard in Ishkabad, I found that those believers who superintended the building of the Temple were competent business men and that, although they had undertaken a large enterprise, every possible economy was made, yet at the same time no expense seemed to be spared when necessary for the beauty and solidity of the building.

The layout of the garden is not yet complete. Nine avenues of approach lead to the Temple. The main avenue of the nine, leading to the entrance portico, will be entered from the street by a monumental gateway. Last July they were completing the plans for this principal gateway of the grounds.

At the four corners of the garden are four buildings. One is a school. One is a house, where traveling Bahais are entertained. One is to be used as a hospital, and the other is for workmen, storage, etc. Much of the property in the immediate vicinity of this enclosure belongs to Bahais, so the Mashrak-el-Azkar is the center of the community materially, as well as spiritually.

That which impressed me more than all else, as I stood before this Mashrak-el-Azkar, was the fact that the Bahai of the east had all worked with one accord and had given freely toward its erection. The Temple in America can be accomplished only as we give up self and unite in this service. The beloved in the east made their offerings and left them with all personal desires upon the altar of sacrifice. Now we in this country must do likewise. We need something more than money for the Temple. It must be built of the material of sacrifice and cemented together by the spirit of unity.

In the building of the Temple, every one must lay before God his material offering together with his ideas, desires and aspirations - give them to the Lord completely, and then, as we come together to construct the material building, we will find that we have ample means for the work in hand.

Each one of us has sufficient means, both material and spiritual, for the work which God has given us to perform. We need not trouble thinking that we may not have enough means, but we should seek to apply to the best advantage the means which God has given us.

Faithfully, your brother in the service of Abdul-Baha,

Charles Mason Remey.

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