

moral courage, the unswerving" devotion to duty, and the passion of self-sacrifice for others. These characteristics served to make this frail woman elect to pass her life in an unsavory quarter of this great industrial city, Chicago, and to spend there, in behalf of the poor, her inheritance, which would have maintained her in comfortable idleness amid the beautiful things that she loved. Here she has ministered to and educated those in dire need and thus worked indefatigably for the establishment of the unity and amity of mankind.

As the years unfolded, Jane Addams received her A. B. degree at Rockford College, Rockford, Illinois, in 1881. Then she spent two years in Europe, 1883-1885, because of imperfect health. In 1888 she studied in Philadelphia, and the next year opened Hull House with the assistance of Miss Ellen Gates Starr, and has ever since been its Head Resident. For three years she served as inspector of streets and alleys on the southwest side of Chicago. She received her LL.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1904 and in 1910 was honored in the same way by Smith College. Later she became president of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections. Yale University granted her its A. M. degree in 1910. In 1912 she became vice-president of the National Woman's Suffrage Association and chairman of the Woman's Peace Party. In 1915 she was elected delegate to the first Peace Convention at the Hague, and the same year became the founder-president of the Woman's International League for Peace and Freedom, and still remains its active president. She was the delegate to the Peace Conventions at Zurich in 1917, at Vienna, in 1921, and at the Hague in 1922. On January 12, 1923 she started on a six months tour of the world in the interests of world peace. During all these years many books have come from her pen, and she has served on numerous state and national committees having to do with social, philanthropic, industrial and international problems.

HULL HOUSE, one of the first American settlements, stands as a dream fulfilled. It was established in 1889, to become a spacious and hospitable home, tolerant in spirit, equipped to care for the pressing physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of a poor, alien, complicated community.

About fifty men and women of various races and creeds and backgrounds form the residential staff, mostly college graduates who pledge themselves to remain two years. In addition, one hundred and fifty others come to Hull House each week as teachers, visitors or directors of clubs. About nine thousand persons come to the settlement each week during the winter months, as members of the audiences or classes. Miss Addams explained that the attractions offered include classroom instruction in English, current topics, typing, arts and crafts, music, drawing, folk dancing and nearly all phases of domestic arts. Public lectures and clubs of many kinds supply the needs of men, women and children of all classes, beliefs and shades of color. A circulating library of two thousand volumes stimulates mental interest. A well trained, working boys' band of sixty-two pieces is a source of great joy, as are the many tournaments and contests, enjoyed especially by the little children of foreign lands. The monthly gymnasium attendance is three thousand, and the fifteen showers are

kept in constant use. During the year six thousand paid showers and twelve thousand free showers help to keep up the physical, mental and moral standards. The Italian, Jewish and Greek nationalities seem to predominate in the clubs and classes.

In Miss Addams' high-ceiled living room, the writer asked her, "What has been one of the central ideas of the activities of Hull House?" Her kindly eyes bright which make men alike are finer and better than the things that keep them apart, and these basic likenesses, if they are properly accentuated, easily transcend the less essential difference of race, language, creed and tradition." After a time she continued with an alert enthusiasm.

"Life at the Settlement discovers above all what has been called the extraordinary pliability of human nature; and it seems impossible to set any bounds to the moral capabilities which might unfold under ideal civic and educational conditions. In order to obtain these conditions, the Settlement recognizes the need of cooperation, both with the radical and conservative elements. Hull House casts aside none of those things which cultivated man has come to consider reasonable and goodly, but it insists that those belong as well to that great body of people who because of toilsome and underpaid labor, are unable to procure them for themselves. Added to this is the profound conviction that the common stock of intellectual enjoyment should not be difficult of access because of the economic position of him who would approach it, that "those best interests of civilization' upon which depend the finer, freer and nobler aspects of living must be incorporated into our common life and have free mobility through all the elements of society, if we would have a true, enduring democracy. The educational activities of a Settlement, as well as its philanthropic, civic and social undertakings, are but differing manifestations of the attempt to socialize true democracy, which is the very existence of Hull House itself. It is thus that peace and unity are established."

"Do you think that the people of the world generally are more peace-minded than before the World War?" she was asked. "O, yes. The war startled and shocked them into a realization of the need of peace as never before. It has been more discussed and written about and has become the most vital problem before man."

"What do you consider the greatest forces of the world today working for peace?" "There are three," she replied: First, psychological; second, political; and third, mechanical. First, the psychological includes all the books, newspapers, magazine articles and all the addresses and discussions on the subject, but something more than all of these, the interest and overwhelming desire in the heart for peace. Second, the political, even, has become a force for peace. International instruments to take care of the affairs of all the nations of the world must be created before peace can be maintained. These are only just beginning, in the League of Nations, the World Court, an International Code of Law and an International Police Force to enforce the law. Many other international instruments of this nature will be required. Third, nothing can stay the progress of the machine age, the

invention, the improved methods of intercommunication and intertransportation. This is also a great force, bringing about better understanding in the world which is the basis of peace."

"You ask what I consider to be the greatest need of the world today?" she continued. " I would put it in one word, understanding—understanding between individuals, classes, races, nations. Literature, history and mechanics are bringing it about much more rapidly today. Are not nations simply families living together, learning to adjust themselves to each other for the best good for the greatest number ?"

' "Yes, you are right," she said in reply to my question. "The problems of the world which are caused by wrong mental attitudes are returning to the heart and mind of man and the solution must come through changed mental attitudes."

ALTHOUGH having spoken on the same platform with Miss Addams many times and dined as her guest, yet during this interview at Hull House, alone in the spacious living room with her, the writer was more than ever impressed with a fine quality of innate courtesy, a sympathetic sensitiveness, a queenly dignity and greatest of all the keenness of a brilliant intellect expressing a well-balanced and well-ordered mind.

When the author asked her if she had met that distinguished Personage of Palestine Whom Great Britain had knighted as one of the greatest advocates and establishers of World Peace and the Unity of Mankind that the world had known, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, she replied with an emphatic "Yes." In a low pitched, well modulated voice, she spoke of inviting 'Abdu'l-Bahá to visit Hull House on April thirtieth, 1912, to speak in Bowen Hall, and although the hall seats 750 people, it was far too small to hold the crowds that poured in. In streams the rich and poor, the educated and ignorant, the managers of business and the industrial slaves came. Hull House was all astir. So was Halstead Street, that bit of cross-section, seemingly, of all the markets, bazaars, cafes and wayside churches of all the races, nationalities and creeds of the world.

Miss Addams herself, acting as chairman, welcomed 'Abdu'l-Bahá and graciously presented Him to the audience. Dr. Bagdadi, a physician of Chicago, served as His interpreter, having known and loved 'Abdu'l-Bahá years before in the Holy Land.

To attempt to describe 'Abdu'l-Bahá is like trying to paint the lily. As he stood before the sea of hungry upturned faces, His magnetic personality, His radiance, His penetrating potency, the power of His inspiration, the very purity of His life, and the great understanding compassionate love, made an impression upon His listeners that they can never forget.

Because in 1912 racial prejudice and hatred were very intense and because of the outstanding historical work that Miss Addams had achieved, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of the races being' like many varieties of flowers in one garden, all adding to the fragrance and beauty of the garden. He spoke of the benefit to be derived by all humanity when universal peace and racial amity have spread over

the earth. This depends upon the spirit and intelligence of man. The basis for the establishment of world peace and the amity of man cannot be based upon color, but only upon noble qualities. With an almost overwhelming power, 'Abdu'l-Bahá declared, "The standard can be no other than the divine virtues which are revealed in him. Therefore, every man imbued with divine qualities, who reflects heavenly moralities and perfections, who is the expression of ideal and praiseworthy attributes, is verily in the image and likeness of God . . . a divine station which is not sacrificed by the mere accident of color."

ABDU'L-BAHA at the close of the meeting in Hull House went out into the dingy crowded street, mingled with the little children and the under-privileged poor, and gave to them freely from a bagful of coins, with many kindly words of encouragement, sympathy, love and hope, which brightened the eyes, strengthened the courage and uplifted the faith and hope of all who met Him.

' Abdu'l-Bahá expressed his pleasure at meeting Miss Jane Addams because she was serving mankind. According to His own words, He was chosen by His Father, Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God) to be the Servant of humanity, and because Miss Addams has devoted her life unreservedly to others she certainly reflects the beautiful light of servitude. One of the bounties of the Bahá'í Revelation is that women of heavenly capacities can never more be hindered by the ancient stupid form of male supremacy, but may rise to help in the establishment of the New World Order, and of peace and good will to all mankind.

As the writer said farewell to Miss Addams, who was leaving on an extended trip for her health, she presented her with an autographed copy of her photograph and her book, "Twenty Tears at Hull House," and spoke again of being deeply impressed with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and with the beauty and spirit emanating from, the Bahá'í Temple. She expressed the hope that more people would feel the great need and rise today to help bring amity permanently to the world.

Gazing at the very building in which took place the historic meeting of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Jane Addams, and in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had so perfectly voiced the note of the Oneness of all Mankind, and left His spirit like a benediction hovering over all, one saw people of all races streaming in and out of Hull House, honoring the founder before her departure. With a deeper consciousness of realization, one recognized the fulfillment of those priceless words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: "Today the most important purpose of the Kingdom of God is the promulgation of the cause of Universal Peace and the principle of the Oneness of the World of Humanity. Whosoever rises in the accomplishment of this preeminent service, the confirmation of the Holy Spirit will descend upon him."

METADATA

Views523 views since posted 2026-02-22; last edit 2026-02-23 01:34 UTC;

previous at archive.org.../moffett_abdul-baha_jane_addams

Language

English

Permission
public domain
Share

Shortlink: bahai-library.com/7252

Citation: ris/7252

select Collection:

Archives
Articles
Articles-unpublished
Audio
Bibliographies
BIC
Biographies
Books
Chronologies
Compilations
Compilations-NSA
Compilations-personal
Documents
East-asia
Encyclopedia
Essays
Etc
Excerpts
Fiction
Glossaries
Guardian
Histories
Introductory
Letters
Maps
Music
Newspapers
NSA-documents
NSA-letters
Personal
Pilgrims
Poetry
Presentations
Resources
Reviews
Scripts
Software
Statistics
Study
Talks

[Theses](#)
[Transcripts](#)
[Translations](#)
[UHJ-documents](#)
[UHJ-letters](#)
[Video](#)
[Visual](#)
[Writings](#)

[home](#)

[sitemap](#)

[series](#)

[chronology](#)

[search:](#)

[author](#)

[title](#)

[date](#)

[tags](#)

[adv. search](#)

[languages](#)

[inventory](#)

[bibliography](#)

[abbreviations](#)

[links](#)

[about](#)

[contact](#)

[RSS](#)

[new](#)