



Faith, Bahá 'U'lláh (1898-99), he gave a copy of the typescript to MacNutt for editing. MacNutt also edited Mírzá Abu'l-Fadl's Bahá'í Proofs before it was first published in 1902, and revised Ali Kuli Khan's manuscript translation of the Kitáb-i-Íqán for publication in 1904. In the early years of the first decade of the twentieth century MacNutt traveled frequently to New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., to lecture about the Bahá'í Faith.

After visiting `Abdu'l-Bahá in Akka in 1905 MacNutt wrote a formal presentation on `Abdu'l-Bahá's teachings, called Unity Through Love, which he gave as a lecture and published as a booklet. It reveals MacNutt not as an original thinker, but as a skilled orator, capable of describing the Bahá'í teachings through imagery drawn from operas and symphonies and beautiful literary metaphors. In the work MacNutt stated that there were two levels of unity—that produced by spiritual knowledge, as brought by the Manifestations, and that produced by love—and emphasized the superiority of the latter form over the former.

Theologically liberal, Howard MacNutt had an extremely high regard for the ability of persons to fulfil their own potential, to the extent of becoming like Christ in one's spiritual abilities. One consequence was a belief that `Abdu'l-Bahá had no extraordinary spiritual station; according to Charles Mason Remey, MacNutt did not "regard Him as being different in Spirit from other men. . . that through works and service and overcoming all He attained to this station." His view contrasted sharply with that of most Bahá'ís, and caused the Washington, D.C. Bahá'ís to cease inviting MacNutt to speak at their meetings, about 1906. It resulted in a severe personality clash with Arthur P. Dodge (q. v.), who viewed `Abdu'l-Bahá as the return of Christ. It also resulted in MacNutt failing to appreciate the Bahá'í teaching that Covenant-breaking is a spiritual disease. When `Abdu'l-Bahá came to the United States in 1912 He assigned to MacNutt the task of meeting with a group of potential Covenant-breakers in Chicago and warning them. He also ordered MacNutt to break all communication with Ibrahim Kheiralla and other Covenant-breakers. When MacNutt failed to cut his connections with the Covenant-breakers and failed to warn the Chicago group of their actions, `Abdu'l-Bahá warned Howard MacNutt that he had violated the Covenant himself and commanded him to repent before a group of New York Bahá'ís, which he did on 18 November 1912. But the matter was not resolved; `Abdu'l-Bahá cabled Ali Kuli Khan on 16 April 1913, "Macnutt repented from violation of covenant but was not awakened." After several months' correspondence between MacNutt and `Abdu'l-Bahá via Ali Kuli Khan, MacNutt satisfied `Abdu'l-Bahá that he had come to understand and repent for his earlier errors, and `Abdu'l-Bahá recognized MacNutt as a Bahá'í.

The early 'teens were a difficult period for MacNutt because his reputation as a Bahá'í lecturer remained tarnished, consequently few communities invited him to speak. Thus the task of assembling `Abdu'l-Bahá's talks in the United States and Canada into a single volume, and editing them, was an

important opportunity for MacNutt to regain his stature in the community. The volume of talks was published as *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* in 1922; MacNutt's preface contains a long and important statement about `Abdu'l-Bahá's station.

After editing *Promulgation*, MacNutt and his wife retired to Miami, Florida. From there MacNutt traveled to teach the Bahá'í Faith in several states; in 1925 he traveled 25,000 miles and visited more than one hundred American Bahá'í communities. In Miami, MacNutt became centrally involved in an effort to befriend the black community and teach the Bahá'í Faith to them; this represents an important change in his attitudes, for a decade earlier MacNutt had written racist statements about blacks in several letters.

On 26 November 1926 Mary MacNutt died after falling down stairs at home. A month later, on 23 December 1926, Howard MacNutt was struck by a motorcycle while walking to a Bahá'í meeting in a black section of Miami; he died of internal injuries three days later, on 26 December 1926.

**Bibliography.** The only biographical essay on Howard MacNutt that has been published is by O. Z. Whitehead in *Some Early Bahá'ís of the West* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1976), 35-42. His death certificate (copy in author's personal papers) contains birth and death information; the 1900 United States census gives information about his birth, marriage, and residence. Information about how he became a Bahá'í may be found in Wendell Phillips Dodge, "In Memoriam: Arthur Pillsbury Dodge, 1849-1915," in *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 19 (2 March 1916), 165. Brief biographical accounts may be found in Robert H. Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith in America, Origins, 1892-1900, Volume One* (Wilmette, Ill.: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1985), 125, and Robert H. Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith in America, Early Expansion, 1900-1912, Volume Two* (forthcoming). The latter volume also has a description of MacNutt's one publication, *Unity Through Love* (Chicago: Bahai Publishing Society, 1906). No Howard MacNutt papers exist, but letters by MacNutt may be found in the Thornton Chase Papers, National Bahá'í Archives, Wilmette, Ill., and in the New York Bahá'í Archives. The Ali Kuli Khan Papers, in the hands of Marzieh Gail, have extensive information about MacNutt's attitudes toward `Abdu'l-Bahá and his brush with Covenant-breaking; they are summarized in Marzieh Gail, *Arches of the Years* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1991), 111-26. Charles Mason Remey's evaluation of MacNutt's beliefs and personality may be found in Charles Mason Remey to Thornton Chase, 25 February 1910, pp. 5-12, Thornton Chase Papers, National Bahá'í Archives. The Archives also contains sixty-three tablets of `Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to Howard and Mary MacNutt.

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