

Appreciations of the Baha'i Faith

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Appreciations of the Bahá'í Faith

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Introduction

THE Revelation proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh, His followers believe, is divine in origin, all-embracing in scope, broad in its outlook, scientific in its method, humanitarian in its principles and dynamic in the influence it exerts on the hearts and minds of men. The mission of the Founder of their Faith, they conceive it to be to proclaim that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that Divine Revelation is continuous and progressive, that the Founders of all past religions, though different in the non-essential aspects of their teachings, "abide in the same Tabernacle, soar in the same heaven, are seated upon the same throne, utter the same speech and proclaim the same Faith." His Cause, they have already demonstrated, stands identified with, and revolves around, the principle of the organic unity of mankind as representing the consummation of the whole process of human evolution. This final stage in this stupendous evolution, they assert, is not only necessary but inevitable, that it is gradually approaching, and that nothing short of the celestial potency with which a divinely ordained Message can claim to be endowed can succeed in establishing it.

The Bahá'í Faith recognizes the unity of God and of His Prophets, upholds the principle of an unfettered search after truth, condemns all forms of superstition and prejudice, teaches that the fundamental purpose of religion is to promote concord and harmony, that it must go hand-in-hand with science, and that it constitutes the sole and ultimate basis of a

peaceful, an ordered and progressive society. It inculcates the principle of equal opportunity, rights and privileges for both sexes, advocates compulsory education, abolishes extremes of poverty and wealth, exalts work performed in the spirit of service to the rank of worship, recommends the adoption of an auxiliary international language, and provides the necessary agencies for the establishment and safeguarding of a permanent and universal peace.

SHOGHI EFFENDI

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Prof. Norman Bentwich, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

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Arthur Moore

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Princess Marie Antoinette de Broglie Aussenac

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APPRECIATIONS OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

BY DOWAGER QUEEN MARIE OF RUMANIA

I.

I was deeply moved on reception of your letter.

Indeed a great light came to me with the message of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It came as all great messages come at an hour of dire grief and inner conflict and distress, so the seed sank deeply.

My youngest daughter finds also great strength and comfort in the teachings of the beloved masters.

We pass on the message from month to month and all those we give it to see a light suddenly lighting before them and much that was obscure and perplexing becomes simple, luminous and full of hope as never before.

That my open letter was balm to those suffering for the cause is indeed a great happiness to me, and I take it as a sign that God accepted my humble tribute.

The occasion given me to be able to express myself publicly, was also His Work-for indeed it was a chain of circumstances of which each link led me unwittingly one step further, till suddenly all was clear before my eyes and I understood why it had been.

Thus does He lead us finally to our ultimate destiny.

Some of those of my caste wonder at and disapprove my courage to step forward pronouncing words not habitual for Crowned Heads to pronounce, but I advance by

an inner urge I cannot resist. With bowed head I recognize that I too am but an instrument in greater Hands and rejoice in the knowledge.

Little by little the veil is lifting, grief tore it in two. And grief was also a step leading me ever nearer truth, therefore do I not cry out against grief!

May you and those beneath your guidance be blessed and upheld by the sacred strength of those gone before you.

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2.

A woman brought me the other day a Book. I spell it with a capital letter because it is a glorious Book of love and goodness, strength and beauty.

She gave it to me because she had learned I was in grief and sadness and wanted to help.... She put it into my hands saying: "You seem to live up to His teachings." And when I opened the Book I saw it was the word of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, prophet of love and kindness, and of his father the great teacher of international goodwill and understanding-of a religion which links all creeds.

Their writings are a great cry toward peace, reaching beyond all limits of frontiers, above all dissension about rites and dogmas. It is a religion based upon the inner spirit of God, upon the great, not-to-be-overcome verity that God is love, meaning just that. It teaches that all hatreds, intrigues, suspicions, evil words, all aggressive patriotism even, are outside the one essential law of God, and that special beliefs are but surface things whereas the heart that beats with divine love knows no tribe nor race.

It is a wondrous Message that Bahá'u'lláh and his son 'Abdu'l-Bahá have given us. They have not set it up aggressively, knowing that the germ of eternal truth which lies at its core cannot but take root and spread.

There is only one great verity in it: Love, the mainspring of every energy, tolerance toward each other, desire of understanding each other, knowing each other, helping each other, forgiving each other.

It is Christ's Message taken up anew, in the same words almost, but adapted to the thousand years and more difference that lies between the year one and today. No man could fail to be better because of this Book.

I commend it to you all. If ever the name of Bahá'u'lláh or 'Abdu'l-Bahá comes to your attention, do not put their writings from you. Search out their Books, and let their glorious, peace-bringing, love-creating words and lessons sink into your hearts as they have into mine.

One's busy day may seem too full for religion. Or one may have a religion that

satisfies. But the teachings of these gentle, wise and kindly men are compatible with all religion, and with no religion.

Seek them, and be the happier.

(From the Toronto Daily Star, May 4, 1926.)

Miss Martha L. Root-Editor

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Of course, if you take the stand that creation has no aim, it is easy to dismiss life and death with a shrug and a "that ends it all; nothing comes after."

But how difficult it is so to dismiss the universe, our world, the animal and vegetable world, and man. How clearly one sees a plan in everything. How unthinkable it is that the miraculous development that has brought man's body, brain and spirit to what it is, should cease. Why should it cease? Why is it not logical that it goes on? Not the body, which is only an instrument, but the invisible spark or fire within the body which makes man one with the wider plan of creation.

My words are lame, and why should I grope for meanings when I can quote from one who has said it so much more plainly, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whom I know would sanction the use of his words:

"The whole physical creation is perishable. Material bodies are composed of atoms. When these atoms begin to separate, decomposition sets in. Then comes what we call death.

"This composition of atoms which constitutes the body or mortal element of any created being, is temporary. When the power of attraction which holds these atoms together is withdrawn, the body as such ceases to exist.

"With the soul it is different. The soul is not a combination of elements, is not composed of many atoms, is of one indivisible substance and therefore eternal.

"It is entirely out of the order of physical creation; it is immortal! The soul, being an invisible, indivisible substance, can suffer neither disintegration nor destruction. Therefore there is no reason for its coming to an end.

"Consider the aim of creation: Is it possible that all is created to evolve and develop through countless ages with merely this small goal in view-a few years of man's life on earth? Is it not unthinkable that this should be the final aim of existence? Does a man cease to exist when he leaves his body? If his life comes to an end, then all previous evolution is useless. All has been for nothing. All those eons of evolution for nothing! Can we imagine that creation had no greater aim than this?

"The very existence of man's intelligence proves his immortality. His intelligence is the intermediary between his body and his spirit. When man allows his spirit, through his soul, to enlighten his understanding, then does he contain all creation; because man being the culmination of all that went before, and thus

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superior to all previous evolutions, contains all the lower already-evolved world within himself. Illumined by the spirit through the instrumentality of the soul, man's radiant intelligence makes him the crowning point of creation!"

Thus does 'Abdu'l-Bahá explain to us the soul-the most convincing elucidation I know.

(From the Toronto Daily Star, September 28, 1926.)

4.

At first we all conceive of God as something or somebody apart from ourselves. We think He is something or somebody definite, outside of us, whose quality, meaning and so-to-say "personality" we can grasp with our human, finite minds, and express in mere words.

This is not so. We cannot, with our earthly faculties entirely grasp His meaning-no more than we can really understand the meaning of Eternity.

God is certainly not the old Fatherly gentleman with the long beard that in our childhood we saw pictured sitting amongst clouds on the throne of judgment, holding the lightning of vengeance in His hand.

God is something simpler, happier, and yet infinitely more tremendous. God is All, Everything. He is the power behind all beginnings. He is the inexhaustible source of supply, of love, of good, of progress, of achievement. God is therefore Happiness.

His is the voice within us that shows us good and evil.

But mostly we ignore or misunderstand this voice. Therefore did He choose his Elect to come down amongst us upon earth to make clear His word, His real meaning. Therefore the Prophets; therefore Christ, Muhammad, Bahá'u'lláh, for man needs from time to time a voice upon earth to bring God to him, to sharpen the realization of the existence of the true God. Those voices sent to us had to become flesh, so that with our earthly ears we should be able to hear and understand.

Those who read their Bible with "peeled eyes" will find in almost every line some revelation. But it takes long life, suffering or some sudden event to tear all at once the veil from our eyes, so that we can truly see....Sorrow and suffering are the surest and also the most common instructors, the straightest channel to God-that is to say, to that inner something within each of us which is God.

Happiness beyond all understanding comes with this revelation that God is within us, if we will but listen to His voice. We need not seek Him in the clouds. He is the All-Father whence we came and to whom we shall return when, having done with this earthly body, we pass onward.

If I have repeated myself, forgive me. There are so many ways of saying things, but what is important is the truth which lies in all the many ways of expressing it. (From the Philadelphia "Evening Bulletin," Monday, September 27, 1926.)

5.

"Lately a great hope has come to me from one, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I have found in His and His Father, Bahá'u'lláh's Message of Faith all my yearning for real religion satisfied. If you ever hear of Bahá'ís or of the Bahá'í Movement which is known in America, you will know what that is. What I mean: these Books have strengthened me beyond belief and I am now ready to die any day full of hope. But I pray God not to take me away yet for I still have a lot of work to do."

6.

"The Bahá'í teaching brings peace and understanding.

"It is like a wide embrace gathering together all those who have long searched for words of hope.

"It accepts all great prophets gone before, it destroys no other creeds and leaves all doors open.

"Saddened by the continual strife amongst believers of many confessions and wearied of their intolerance towards each other, I discovered in the Bahá'í teaching the real spirit of Christ so often denied and misunderstood:

"Unity instead of strife, hope instead of condemnation, love instead of hate, and a great reassurance for all men."

7.

"The Bahá'í teaching brings peace to the soul and hope to [sic]

"To those in search of assurance the words of the Father are as a fountain in the desert after long wandering." 1934.

8.

"More than ever today when the world is facing such a crisis of bewilderment and unrest, must we stand firm in Faith seeking that which

binds together instead of tearing asunder." 1936

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"To those searching for light, the Bahá'í Teachings offer a star which will lead them to deeper understanding, to assurance, peace and good will with all men."

BY PROFESSOR E. G. BROWNE

I. Introduction to Myron H. Phelps' 'Abbas Effendi, pages
xi-xx

1903 rev. 1912

I have often heard wonder expressed by Christian ministers at the extraordinary success of Bábí missionaries, as contrasted with the almost complete failure of their own. "How is it," they say, "that the Christian doctrines the highest and the noblest which the world has ever known, though supported by all the resources of Western civilization, can only count its converts in Muhammadan lands by twos and threes, while Bábíism can reckon them by thousands?" The answer, to my mind, is plain as the sun at midday. Western Christianity, save in the rarest cases, is more Western than Christian, more racial than religious; and by dallying with doctrines plainly incompatible with the obvious meaning of its Founder's words, such as the theories of "racial supremacy," "imperial destiny," "survival of the fittest," and the like, grows steadily more rather than less material. Did Christ belong to a "dominant race," or even to a European or "white race"?

...

I am not arguing that the Christian religion is true [sic], but merely that it is in manifest conflict with several other theories of life which practically regulate the conduct of all States and most individuals in the Western world, a world which on the whole, judges all things, including religions, mainly by material, or to use the more popular term, "practical," standards....

There is, of course, another factor in the success of the Bábí propagandist, as compared with the Christian missionary, in the conversion of Muhammadans to his faith: namely, that the former admits, while the latter rejects, the Divine inspiration of the Qur'an and the prophetic function of Muhammad. The Christian missionary must begin by attacking, explicitly or by implication, both these beliefs; too often forgetting that if (as happens but rarely) he succeeds in destroying them, he destroys with them that recognitions [sic] of former prophetic dispensations (including the Jewish and the Christian) which Muhammad and the Qur'an proclaim, and converts his Muslim antagonist not to Christianity, but to Skepticism or Atheism.

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What, indeed, could be more illogical on the part of Christian missionaries to

Muhammadan lands than to devote much time and labor to the composition of controversial works which endeavor to prove, in one and the same breath, first, that the Qur'an is a lying imposture, and, secondly, that it bears witness to the truth of Christ's mission, as though any value attached to the testimony of one proved a liar! The Bábí (or Bahá'í) propagandist, on the other hand, admits that Muhammad was the prophet of God and that the Qur'an is the Word of God, denies nothing but their finality, and does not discredit his own witness when he draws from that source arguments to prove his faith. To the Western observer, however, it is the complete sincerity of the Bábís, their fearless disregard of death and torture undergone for the sake of their religion, their certain conviction as to the truth of their faith, their generally admirable conduct towards mankind and especially towards their fellow-believers, which constitutes their strongest claim on his attention.

2.

Introduction to Myron H. Phelps' 'Abbas Effendi, pages xii-xiv

It was under the influence of this enthusiasm that I penned the introduction to my translation of the Traveller's Narrative.... This enthusiasm, condoned, if not shared, by many kindly critics and reviewers, exposed me to a somewhat savage attack in the Oxford Magazine, an attack concluding with the assertion that my Introduction displayed "a personal attitude almost inconceivable in a rational European, and a style unpardonable in a university teacher." (The review in question appeared in the Oxford Magazine of May 25, 1892, page 394,..."the prominence given to the Báb in this book is an absurd violation of historical perspective; and the translations of the Traveller's Narrative a waste of the powers and opportunities of a Persian Scholar.") Increasing age and experience (more's the pity!) are apt enough, even without the assistance of the Oxford Magazine, to modify our enthusiasm; but in this case, at least, time has so far vindicated my judgment against that of my Oxford reviewer that he could scarcely now maintain, as he formerly asserted, that the Bábí religion "had affected the least important part of the Muslim World and that not deeply." Everyone who is in the slightest degree conversant with the actual state of things (September 27, 1903), in Persia now recognizes that the number and influence of the Bábís in that country is immensely greater than it was fifteen years ago.

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3.

A Traveller's Narrative, page 309

The appearance of such a woman as Qurratu'l-'Ayn is in any country and any age a rare phenomenon, but in such a country as Persia it is a prodigy-nay, almost a miracle. Alike in virtue of her marvelous beauty, her rare intellectual gifts, her fervid eloquence, her fearless devotion and her

glorious martyrdom, she stands forth incomparable and immortal amidst her country-women. Had the Bábí religion no other claim to greatness, this were sufficient-that it produced a heroine like Qurratu'l-'Ayn.

4.

Introduction to A Traveller's Narrative, pages ix, x

Though I dimly suspected whither I was going and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me), a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner where the divan met the wall sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head-dress of the kind called *taj* by dervishes, but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small white turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet-black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to the waist seemed to belie. No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain.

A mild, dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued: "Praise be to God, that thou hast attained!...Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile.... We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer-up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment.... That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled-what harm is there in this? ... Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come.... Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold?...Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind.... These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease,

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and all men be as one kindred and one family.... Let not a man glory in this that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this: that he loves his kind...."

Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words which, besides many others, I heard from Bahá. Let those who read them consider well with themselves whether such doctrines merit death and bonds, and whether the world is more likely to gain or lose by their diffusion.

5.

Introduction to A Traveller's Narrative, pages xxxv, xxxvi

Seldom have I seen one whose appearance impressed me more. A tall, strongly built man holding himself straight as an arrow, with white turban and raiment, long black locks reaching almost to the shoulder, broad powerful forehead, indicating a strong intellect, combined with an unswerving will, eyes keen as a hawk's, and strongly marked but pleasing features-such was my first impression of 'Abbas Effendi, "The Master" ('Agha) as he par excellence is called by the Bábís. Subsequent conversation with him served only to heighten the respect with which his appearance had from the first inspired me. One more eloquent of speech, more ready of argument, more apt of illustration, more intimately acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, the Christians and the Muhammadans, could, I should think, be scarcely found even amongst the eloquent, ready and subtle race to which he belongs. These qualities, combined with a bearing at once majestic and genial, made me cease to wonder at the influence and esteem which he enjoyed even beyond the circle of his father's followers. About the greatness of this man and his power no one who had seen him could entertain a doubt.

BY DR. J. ESTLIN CARPENTER

Excerpts from Comparative Religions, page 70, 71

From that subtle race issues the most remarkable movement which modern Muhammadanism has produced.... Disciples gathered round him, and the movement was not checked by his arrest, his imprisonment for nearly six years and his final execution in 1850. . . . It, too, claims to be a universal teaching it has already its noble army of martyrs and its holy books; has Persia, in the midst of her miseries, given birth to a religion which will go round the world?

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BY THE REV. T. K. CHEYNE, D.LITT., D.D.

Excerpts from The Reconciliation of Races And Religions,
(1914)

There was living quite lately a human being of such consummate excellence that many think it is both permissible and inevitable even to identify him mystically with the invisible Godhead.... His combination of mildness and power is so rare that we have to place him in a line with super-normal men.... We learn that, at great points in his career after he had been in an ecstasy, such radiance of might and majesty streamed from his countenance that none could bear to look upon the effulgence of his glory and beauty. Nor was it an uncommon occurrence for unbelievers involuntarily to bow down in lowly obeisance on beholding His Holiness.

The gentle spirit of the Báb is surely high up in the cycles of eternity. Who can fail, as Professor Browne says, to be attracted by him? "His sorrowful and persecuted life his purity of conduct and youth; his courage and

uncomplaining patience under misfortune his complete self-negation; the dim ideal of a better state of things which can be discerned through the obscure mystic utterances of the Bayán; but most of all, his tragic death, all serve to enlist our sympathies on behalf of the young prophet of Shiraz."

"Il sentait le besoin d'une reform profond à introduire dans les moeurs publiques.... Il s'est sacrifié pour l'humanité; pour elle il a donné son corps et son âme, pour elle il a subi les privations, les affronts, les injures, la torture et le martyr." (Mons. Nicholas.)

If there has been any prophet in recent times, it is to Bahá'u'lláh that we must go. Character is the final judge. Bahá'u'lláh was a man of the highest class-that of prophets. But he was free from the last infirmity of noble minds [sic], and would certainly not have separated himself from others. He would have understood the saying: "Would God all the Lord's people were prophets!" What he does say, however, is just as fine: "I do not desire lordship over others; I desire all men to be even as I am."

The day is not far off when the details of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's missionary journeys will be admitted to be of historical importance. How gentle and wise he was, hundreds could testify from personal knowledge, and I, too, could perhaps say something.... I will only, however, glue here the outward framework of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's life, and of his apostolic journeys, with the help of my friend Lutfullah.

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During his stay in London he visited Oxford (where he and his party-of Persians mainly-were the guests of Professor and Mrs. Cheyne), Edinburgh, Clifton and Woking. It is fitting to notice here that the audience at Oxford, though highly academic, seemed to be deeply interested, and that Dr. Carpenter made an admirable speech....

BY PROFESSOR VAMBERY

Testimonial to the Religion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

(Published in Egyptian Gazette, Sept. 24, 1913, by Mrs. J. Standard.)

I forward this humble petition to the sanctified and holy presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbas, who is the center of knowledge, famous throughout the world, and loved by all mankind. O thou noble friend who art conferring guidance upon humanity-May my life be a ransom to thee!

The loving epistle which you have condescended to write to this servant, and the rug which you have forwarded, came safely to hand. The time of the meeting with your Excellency, and the memory of the benediction of your presence, recurred to the memory of this servant, and I am longing for the time when I

shall meet you again. Although I have traveled through many countries and cities of Islam, yet have I never met so lofty a character and so exalted a personage as your Excellency, and I can bear witness that it is not possible to find such another. On this account, I am hoping that the ideals and accomplishments of your Excellency may be crowned with success and yield results under all conditions; because behind these ideals and deeds I easily discern the eternal welfare and prosperity of the world of humanity.

This servant, in order to gain first-hand information and experience, entered into the ranks of various religions, that is, outwardly, I became a Jew, Christian, Muhammadan and Zoroastrian. I discovered that the devotees of these various religions do nothing else but hate and anathematize each other, that all their religions have become the instruments of tyranny and oppression in the hands of rulers and governors, and that they are the causes of the destruction of the world of humanity.

Considering those evil results, every person is forced by necessity to enlist himself on the side of your Excellency, and accept with joy the prospect of a fundamental basis for a universal religion of God, being laid through your efforts.

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I have seen the father of your Excellency from afar. I have realized the self-sacrifice and noble courage of his son, and I am lost in admiration.

For the principles and aims of your Excellency, I express the utmost respect and devotion, and if God, the Most High, confers long life, I will be able to serve you under all conditions. I pray and supplicate this from the depths of my heart.

Your servant,

(Mamhenyn.) VAMBERY.

BY HARRY CHARLES LUKACH

Quotation from *The Fringe of the East*, (Macmillan & Co., London, 1913.)

Bahá'ísm is now estimated to count more than two million adherents, mostly composed of Persian and Indian Shi'ih's, but including also many Sunnis from the Turkish Empire and North Africa, and not a few Brahmans, Buddhists, Taoists, Shintoists and Jews. It possesses even European converts, and has made some headway in the United States. Of all the religions which have been encountered in the course of this journey - the stagnant pools of Oriental Christianity, the strange survivals of sun-worship, and idolatry tinged with Muhammadanism, the immutable relic of the Sumerians - it is the only one which is alive, which is aggressive, which is extending its frontiers, instead of secluding itself within its ancient haunts. It is a thing which may revivify

Islam, and make great changes on the face of the Asiatic world.

BY SIR VALENTINE CHIROL

Quotations from *The Middle Eastern Question or Some Political Problems of Indian Defense*, chapter XI, page 116. (The Revival of Babiism.)

When one has been like Saudi, a great personage, and then a common soldier, and then a prisoner of a Christian feudal chief when one has worked as a navvy on the fortifications of the Count of Antioch, and wandered back afoot to Shiraz after infinite pain and labor, he may well be disposed to think that nothing that exists is real, or, at least, has any substantial reality worth clinging to. Today the public peace of Persia is no longer subject to such violent perturbations. At least, as far as we are concerned, the appearances of peace prevail, and few of us care or have occasion to look beyond the appearances. But for the Persians themselves, have the conditions very much changed? Do they not witness one day the sudden rise of this or that favorite of fortune and the next day his sudden fall?

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Have they not seen the Atabak-i-A'zam twice hold sway as the Shah's all-powerful Vazir, and twice hurled down from that pinnacle by a bolt from the blue? How many other ministers and governors have sat for a time on the seats of the mighty and been swept away by some intrigue as sordid as that to which they owed their own exaltation? And how many in humbler stations have been in the meantime the recipients of their unworthy favors or the victims of their arbitrary oppression? A village which but yesterday was fairly prosperous is beggared today by some neighboring landlord higher up the valley, who, having duly propitiated those in authority, diverts for the benefit of his own estates the whole of its slender supply of water. The progress of a governor or royal prince, with all his customary retinue of ravenous hangers-on, eats out the countryside through which it passes more effectually than a flight of locusts. The visitation is as ruinous and as unaccountable. Is it not the absence of all visible moral correlation of cause and effect in these phenomena of daily life that has gone far to produce the stolid fatalism of the masses, the scoffing skepticism of the more educated classes, and from time to time the revolt of some nobler minds? Of such the most recent and perhaps the noblest of all became the founder of Babiism.

Chapter XI, page 120

The Báb was dead, but not Babiism. He was not the first, and still less the last, of a long line of martyrs who have testified that even in a country gangrene with corruption and atrophied with indifferentism like Persia, the soul of a nation survives, inarticulate, perhaps, and in a way helpless, but still capable of sudden spasms of vitality.

Chapter XI, page 124

Socially one of the most interesting features of Babiism is the raising of woman to a much higher plane than she is usually admitted to in the East. The Báb himself had no more devoted a disciple than the beautiful and gifted lady, known as Qurratu'l-'Ayn, the "Consolation of the Eyes," who, having shared all the dangers of the first apostolic missions in the north, challenged and suffered death with virile fortitude, as one of the Seven Martyrs of Tihiran. No memory is more deeply venerated or kindles greater enthusiasm than hers, and the influence which she wielded in her lifetime still inures to her sex.

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BY PROFESSOR JOWETT OF OXFORD

Quotation from Heroic Lives, pages 305

Prof. Jowett of Oxford, Master of Balliol, the translator of Plato, studied the movement and was so impressed thereby that he said: "The Babite [Bahá'í] movement may not impossibly turn out to have the promise of the future." Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter quotes Prof. Edward Caird, Prof. Jowett's successor as Master of Balliol, as saying, "He thought Babiism (as the Bahá'í movement was then called) might prove the most important religious movement since the foundation of Christianity." Prof. Carpenter himself gives a sketch of the Bahá'í movement in his recent book on Comparative Religions and asks, "Has Persia, in the midst of her miseries, given birth to a religion that will go around the world?"

BY ALFRED W. MARTIN

Excerpts from Comparative Religion and the Religion of the Future,

pages 81-91

Inasmuch as a fellowship of faiths is at once the dearest hope and ultimate goal of the Bahá'í movement, it behooves us to take cognizance of it and its mission.... Today this religious movement has a million and more adherents, including people from all parts of the globe and representing a remarkable variety of race, color, class and creed. It has been given literary expression in a veritable library of Asiatic, European, and American works to which additions are annually made as the movement grows and grapples with the great problems that grow out of its cardinal teachings. It has a long roll of martyrs for the cause for which it stands, twenty thousand in Persia alone, proving it to be a movement worth dying for as well as worth living by.

From its inception it has been identified with Bahá'u'lláh, who paid the price of prolonged exile, imprisonment, bodily suffering, and mental anguish for the faith he cherished—a man of imposing personality as revealed in his writings, characterized by intense moral earnestness and profound

spirituality, gifted with the self same power so conspicuous in the character of Jesus, the power to appreciate people ideally, that is, to see them at the level of their best and to make even the lowest types think well of themselves because of potentialities within them to which he pointed, but of which they were wholly unaware; a prophet whose greatest contribution was not any specific doctrine he proclaimed, but an informing spiritual power breathed into the world through the example of his life and thereby quickening souls into new spiritual activity. Surely a movement of

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which all this can be said deserves-nay, compels-our respectful recognition and sincere appreciation.

Taking precedence over all else in its gospel is the message of unity in religion.... It is the crowning glory of the Bahá'í movement that, while deprecating sectarianism in its preaching, it has faithfully practiced what it preached by refraining from becoming itself a sect.... Its representatives do not attempt to impose any beliefs upon others, whether by argument or bribery; rather do they seek to put beliefs that have illumined their own lives within the reach of those who feel they need illumination. No, not a sect, not a part of humanity cut off from all the rest, living for itself and aiming to convert all the rest into material for its own growth; no, not that, but a leaven, causing spiritual fermentation in all religions quickening them with the spirit of catholicity and fraternalism.

Who shall say but that just as the little company of the Mayflower, landing on Plymouth Rock, proved to be the small beginning of a mighty nation, the ideal germ of a democracy which, if true to its principles, shall yet overspread the habitable globe, so the little company of Bahá'ís exiled from their Persian home may yet prove to be the small beginning of the world-wide movement, the ideal germ of democracy in religion, the Universal Church of Mankind?

BY PROF. JAMES DARMESTETER

Excerpt from Art in "Persia: A Historical and Literary Sketch" (translated by G. K. Nariman), and incorporated in Persia And Parsis, Part 1, edited by G. K. Nariman. Published under patronage of the Iran League, Bombay, 1925. (The Marker Literary Series for Persia, No. 2.)

The political reprieve brought about by the Sufis did not result in the regeneration of thought. But the last century which marks the end of Persia has had its revival and twofold revival, literary and religious. The funeral ceremonies by which Persia celebrates every year for centuries-the fatal day of the 10th of Muharram, when the son of 'Ali breathed his last at Karbila-have developed a popular theater and produced a sincere poetry, dramatic and human, which is worth all the rhetoric of the poets. During the same times an attempt at religious renovation was made, the religion of Babiism. Demoralized for centuries by ten foreign conquests,

by the yoke of a composite religion in which she believed just enough to persecute, by the enervating influence of a mystical philosophy which disabled men for action and divested life of all aim and objects, Persia has been making unexpected efforts for the last fifty five years to remake for herself a virile ideal. Babiism has little of originality in its dogmas and mythology. Its mystic doctrine takes its rise from Sufism and the old sects of the 'Aliides formed around the dogma of divine incarnation. But the morality it inculcates is a revolution. It has the ethics of the West. It suppresses lawful impurities which are a great barrier dividing Islam from Christendom. It denounces polygamy, the fruitful source of Oriental degeneration. It seeks to reconstitute the family and it elevates man and in elevating him exalts woman up to his level. Babiism which diffused itself in less than five years from one end of Persia to another, which was bathed in 1852 in the blood of its martyrs, has been silently progressing and propagating itself. If Persia is to be at all regenerate it will be through this new faith.

BY CHARLES BAUDOUIN

Excerpts from Contemporary Studies, Part 111, page 131. (Allen & Unwin, London, 1924.)

We Westerners are too apt to imagine that the huge continent of Asia is sleeping as soundly as a mummy. We smile at the vanity of the ancient Hebrews, who believed themselves to be the chosen people. We are amazed at the intolerance of the Greeks and the Romans, who looked upon the members of all races as barbarians. Nevertheless, we ourselves are like the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Roman. As Europeans we believed Europe to be the only world that matters, though from time to time we may turn a paternal eye towards America, regarding our offspring in the New World with mingled feelings of condescension and pride.

Nevertheless, the great cataclysm of 1914 is leading some of us to undertake a critical examination of the inviolable dogma that the European nations are the elect. Has there not been of late years a demonstration of the nullity of modern civilization-the nullity which had already been proclaimed by Rousseau, Carlyle, Ruskin, Tolstoy, and Nietzsche? We are now inclined to listen more attentively to whispers from the East. Our self-complacency has been disturbed by such utterances as that of Rabindranath Tagore, who,

lecturing at the Imperial University of Tokio on June 18, 1916, foretold a great future for Asia. The political civilization of Europe was "carnivorous and cannibalistic in its tendencies." The East was patient, and could afford to wait till the West, "hurry after the expedient," had to halt for want of breath. "Europe, while busily speeding to her engagements, disdainfully casts her glance from her carriage window at the reaper reaping his harvest in the

field, and in her intoxication of speed, cannot but think him as slow and ever receding backwards. But the speed comes to its end, the engagement loses its meaning, and the hungry heart clamors for food, till at last she comes to the lonely reaper reaping his harvest in the sun. For if the office cannot wait, or the buying and selling, or the craving for excitement-love waits, and beauty, and the wisdom of suffering and the fruits of patient devotion and reverent meekness of simple faith. And thus shall wait the East till her time comes."

Being thus led to turn our eyes towards Asia, we are astonished to find how much we have misunderstood it; and we blush when we realize our previous ignorance of the fact that, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, Asia gave birth to a great religious movement-a movement signalized for its spiritual purity, one which has had thousands of martyrs, one which Tolstoy has described. H. Dreyfus, the French historian of this movement, says that it is not "a new religion," but "religion renewed," and that it provides "the only possible basis for a mutual understanding between religion and free thought." Above all, we are impressed by the fact that, in our own time, such a manifestation can occur, and that the new faith should have undergone a development far more extensive than that undergone in the same space of time nearly two thousand years ago, by budding Christianity.

.At the present time, the majority of the inhabitants of Persia have, to a varying extent, accepted the Babist faith. In the great towns of Europe, America, and Asia, there are active centers for the propaganda of the liberal ideas and the doctrine of human community, which form the foundations of Bahá'í teaching.

We shall not grasp the full significance of this tendency until we pass from the description of Bahá'ísm as a theory to that of Bahá'ísm as a practice, for the core of religion is not metaphysics, but morality.

The Bahá'í ethical code is dominated by the law of love taught by Jesus and by all the prophets. In the thousand and one details of practical life, this law is subject to manifold interpretations. That of Bahá'u'lláh is unquestionably one of the most comprehensive of these, one of the most exalted, one of the most satisfactory to the modern mind....

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That is why Bahá'u'lláh is a severe critic of the patriotism which plays so large a part in the national life of our day. Love of our native land is legitimate, but this love must not be exclusive. A man should love his country more than he loves his house (this is the dogma held by every patriot); but Bahá'u'lláh adds that he should love the divine world more than he loves his country. From this standpoint, patriotism is seen to be an intermediate stage on the road of renunciation, an incomplete and hybrid religion, something we have to get beyond. Throughout his life Bahá'u'lláh regarded the ideal universal peace as one of the most important of his aims....

Bahá'u'lláh is in this respect enunciating a novel and fruitful idea. There is a better way of dealing with social evils than by trying to cure them after they have come to pass. We should try to prevent them by removing their causes, which act on the individual, and especially on the child. Nothing can be more plastic than the nature of the child. The government's first duty must be to provide for the careful and efficient education of children, remembering that education is something more than instruction. This will be an enormous step towards the solution of the social problem, and to take such a step will be the first task of the Baytu'l-'Ad'l (House of Justice). "It is ordained upon every father to rear his son or his daughter by means of the sciences, the arts, and all the commandments; and if any one should neglect to do so, then the members of the council, should the offender be a wealthy man, must levy from him the sum necessary for the education of his child. When the neglectful parent is poor, the cost of the necessary education must be borne by the council, which will provide a refuge for the unfortunate."

The Baytu'l-'Ad'l, likewise, must prepare the way for the establishment of universal peace, doing this by organizing courts of arbitration and by influencing the governments. Long before the Esperantists had begun their campaign, and more than twenty years before Nicholas II had summoned the first Hague congress, Bahá'u'lláh was insisting on the need for a universal language and courts of arbitration. He returns to these matters again and again: "Let all the nations become one in faith, and let all men be brothers, in order that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men may be strengthened.... What harm can there be in that? ... It is going to happen. There will be an end to sterile conflicts, to ruinous

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wars; and the Great Peace will come!" Such were the words of Bahá'u'lláh in 1890, two years before his death.

While adopting and developing the Christian law of love, Bahá'u'lláh rejected the Christian principle of asceticism. He discountenanced the machinations which were a nightmare of the Middle Ages, and whose evil effects persist even in our own days....

Bahá'ísm, then, is an ethical system, a system of social morality. But it would be a mistake to regard Bahá'íst teaching as a collection of abstract rules imposed from without. Bahá'ísm is permeated with a sane and noble mysticism; nothing could be more firmly rooted in the inner life, more benignly spiritual; nothing could speak more intimately to the soul, in low tones, and as if from within....

Such is the new voice that sounds to us from Asia such is the new dawn in the East. We should give them our close attention; we should abandon our customary mood of disdainful superiority. Doubtless, Bahá'u'lláh's teaching is not definitive. The Persian prophet does not offer it to us as such. Nor can we Europeans assimilate all of it; for modern science leads us to make certain claims in matters of thought-claims we cannot relinquish, claims we should not

try to forego. But even though Bahá'u'lláh's precepts (like those of the Gospels) may not fully satisfy all these intellectual demands, they are rarely in conflict with our scientific outlooks. If they are to become our own spiritual food, they must be supplemented, they must be relived by the religious spirits of Europe, must be rethought by minds schooled in the Western mode of thought. But, in its existing form, Bahá'í teaching may serve, amid our present chaos, to open for us a road leading to solace and to comfort; may restore our confidence in the spiritual destiny of man. It reveals to us how the human mind is in travail; it gives us an inkling of the fact that the greatest happenings of the day are not the ones we were inclined to regard as the most momentous, not the ones which are making the loudest noise.

DR. HENRY H. JESSUP, D.D.

From the World Parliament of Religion; Volume II, 13th Day, under Criticism and Discussion of Missionary Methods, page 1122. At the Columbian Exposition of 1893, at Chicago. Edited by the Rev. John Henry Barrows, D.D.(The Parliament Publishing Company, Chicago, 1893.)

This, then, is our mission: that we who are made in the image of God should remember that all men are made in God's image. To this divine knowledge we owe all we are, all we hope for. We are

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rising gradually toward that image, and we owe to our fellow men to aid them in returning to it in the Glory of God and the Beauty of Holmes [sic]. It is a celestial privilege and with it comes a high responsibility, from which there is no escape.

In the Palace of Bahjí , or Delight, just outside the Fortress of 'Akká, on the Syrian coast, there died a few months since, a famous Persian sage, the Bábí Saint, named Bahá'u'lláh-the "Glory of God"-the head of that vast reform party of Persian Muslims, who accept the New Testament as the Word of God and Christ as the Deliverer of men, who regard all nations as one, and all men as brothers. Three years ago he was visited by a Cambridge scholar and gave utterance to sentiments so noble, so Christlike, that we repeat them as our closing words:

"That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religions should cease and differences of race be annulled. What harm is there in this? Yet so it shall be. These fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come. Do not you in Europe need this also? Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind."

BY THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL CURZON

Excerpts from Persia, Vol. 1, pages 496-594. (Written in 1892.)

Beauty and the female sex also lent their consecration to the new creed and the heroism of the lovely but ill-fated Poetess of Qazvin, Zarrin-Taj (Crown of Gold) or Qurratu'l-'Ayn (Solace of the Eyes), who, throwing off the veil, carried the missionary torch far and wide, is one of the most affecting episodes in modern history.

The lowest estimate places the present number of Bábís in Persia at half a million. I am disposed to think, from conversations with persons well qualified to judge, that the total is nearer one million. They are to be found in every walk of life, from the ministers and nobles of the Court to the scavenger or the groom, not the least arena of their activity being the Mussulman priesthood itself. It will have been noticed that the movement was initiated by Siyyids, Hajis and Mullas, i.e., persons who, either by descent, from pious inclination, or by profession, were intimately concerned with the Muhammadan creed; and it is among even the professed votaries of

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the faith that they continue to make their converts.... Quite recently the Bábís have had great success in the camp of another enemy, having secured many proselytes among the Jewish populations of the Persian towns. I hear that during the past year (1891) they are reported to have made 150 Jewish converts in Tihran, 100 in Hamadan, 50 in Kashan, and 75 per cent of the Jews at Gulpayigan.... The two victims [sic], whose names were Haji Mirza Hasan and Haji Mirza Husayn, have been renamed by the Bábís-Sultanu'sh-Shuhada', or King of Martyrs, and Mahbubu'sh-Shuhada', or Beloved of Martyrs-and their naked graves in the cemetery have become places of pilgrimage where many a tear is shed over the fate of the "Martyrs of Isfahan."

It is these little incidents, protruding from time to time their ugly features, that prove Persia to be not as yet quite redeemed, and that somewhat staggers the tall talkers about Iranian civilization. If one conclusion more than another has been forced upon our notice by the retrospect in which I have indulged, it is that a sublime and unassuming devotion has been inculcated by this new faith, whatever it be. There is, I believe, but one instance of a Bábí having recanted under pressure of menace of suffering, and he reverted to the faith and was executed within two years. Tales of magnificent heroism illumine the bloodstained pages of Bábí history. Ignorant and unlettered as many of its votaries are, and have been, they are yet prepared to die for their religion, and fires of Smithfield did not kindle a nobler courage than has met and defied the more refined torture-mongers of Tihran. Of no small account, then, must be the tenets of a creed that can awaken in its followers so rare and beautiful a spirit of self-sacrifice. From the facts that Babiism in its earliest years found itself in conflict with the civil powers and that an attempt was made by Bábís upon the life of the Shah, it has been wrongly inferred

that the movement was political in origin and Nihilist in character. It does not appear from a study of the writings either of the Báb or his successors, that there is any foundation for such a suspicion.... The charge of immorality seems to have arisen partly from the malignant inventions of opponents, partly from the much greater freedom claimed for women by the Báb, which in the oriental mind is scarcely dissociable from profligacy of conduct.... if Babiism continues to grow at its present rate of progression, a time may conceivably come when it will oust Muhammadanism from the field in Persia.... Since its recruits are won from the best soldiers of the garrison whom it is attacking, there is greater reason to believe that it may ultimately

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prevail.... The pure and suffering life of the Báb, his ignominious death, the heroism and martyrdom of his followers, will appeal to many others who can find no similar phenomena in the contemporaneous records of Islam....

BY SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND

Excerpts from *The Gleam*. (1923.)

The story of the Báb, as Mirza 'Ali-Muhammad called himself, was the story of spiritual heroism unsurpassed in Svabhava's experience; and his own adventurous soul was fired by it. That a youth of no social influence and no education should, by the simple power of insight, be able to pierce into the heart of things and see the real truth, and then hold on to it with such firmness of conviction and present it with such suasion that he was able to convince men that he was the Messiah and get them to follow him to death itself, was one of those splendid facts in human history that Svabhava loved to meditate on. This was a true hero whom he would wish to emulate and whose experiences he would profit by. The Báb's passionate sincerity could not be doubted, for he had given his life for his faith. And that there must be something in his message that appealed to men and satisfied their souls, was witnessed to by the fact that thousands gave their lives in his cause and millions now follow him.

If a young man could, in only six years of ministry, by the sincerity of his purpose and the attraction of his personality, so inspire rich and poor, cultured and illiterate, alike, with belief in himself and his doctrines that they would remain staunch, though hunted down and without trial sentenced to death, sawn asunder, strangled, shot, blown from guns and if men of high position and culture in Persia, Turkey and Egypt in numbers to this day adhere to his doctrines, his life must be one of those events in the last hundred years which is really worth study. And that study fortunately has been made by the Frenchman Gobineau and by Professor E. G. Browne, so that we are able to have a faithful representation of its main features.... Thus, in only his thirtieth year, in the year 1850, ended the heroic career of a true God-man. Of

the sincerity of his conviction that he was God-appointed, the manner of his death is the amplest possible proof. In the belief that he would thereby save others from the error of their present beliefs he willingly sacrificed

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his life. And of his power of attaching men to him, the passionate devotion of hundreds and even thousands of men who gave their lives in his cause is convincing testimony....

He himself was but "a letter out of that most mighty book, a dewdrop from that limitless ocean." The One to come would reveal all mysteries and all riddles. This was the humility of true insight. And it has had its effect. His movement has grown and expanded, and it has yet a great future before it.

During his six years of ministry, four of which were spent in captivity, he had permeated all Persia with his ideas. And since his death the movement has spread to Turkey, Egypt, India and even into Europe and America. His adherents are now numbered by millions. "The Spirit which pervades them," says Professor Browne, "is such that it cannot fail to affect most powerfully all subject to its influence."

2.

For many years I have been interested in the rise and progress of the Bahá'í Movement. Its roots go deep down into the past and yet it looks far forward into the future. It realizes and preaches the oneness of mankind. And I have noticed how ardently its followers work for the furtherance of peace and for the general welfare of mankind. God must be with them and their success therefore assured. Excerpts from *Modern Mystic*. (1935, p. 142.)

3.

This martyrdom of the Báb took place on July 9, 1850, thirty-one years from the date of his birth.

His body was dead. His spirit lived on. Husayn had been slain in battle. Quddus had been done to death in captivity. But Bahá'u'lláh lived. The One who shall be made manifest was alive. And in him and in others had been engendered such love for the Báb and what he stood for as, in the words of the chronicler, no eye had ever beheld nor mortal heart conceived: if branches of every tree were turned into pens, and all the seas into ink, and Earth and Heaven rolled into one parchment, the immensity of that love would still remain untold. This love for the Cause still survived. And it was sufficient. Bahá'u'lláh was, indeed, despoiled of his possessions, deserted by his friends, driven into exile from his native land and, even in exile, confined to his house. But in him the Cause was still alive- and more than alive, purified and ennobled by the fiery trials through which it had passed.

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Under the wise control, and direction of Bahá'u'lláh from his prison-house, first at Baghdad and then at 'Akká in Syria, there grew what is now known as the Bahá'í Movement which, silently propagating itself, has now spread to Europe and America as well as to India and Egypt, while the bodily remains of the Báb, long secretly guarded, now find a resting-place on Mount Carmel in a Tomb-shrine, which is a place of pilgrimage to visitors from all over the world.

Excerpt from The Christian Commonwealth, January 22, 1913:
"Abdu'l-Bahá at Oxford"

'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a large and deeply interested audience at Manchester College, Oxford, on December 31. The Persian leader spoke in his native tongue, Mirza Ahmad Sohrab interpreting. Principal Estlin Carpenter presided, and introduced the speaker by saying that they owed the honor and pleasure of meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá to their revered friend, Dr. Cheyne, who was deeply interested in Bahá'í teaching. The movement sprung up during the middle of the last century in Persia, with the advent of a young Muhammadan who took to himself the title of the Báb (meaning door or gate, through which men could arrive at the knowledge or truth of God), and who commenced teaching in Persia in the year 1844. The purity of his character, the nobility of his words, aroused great enthusiasm. He was, however, subjected to great hostility by the authorities, who secured his arrest and imprisonment, and he was finally executed in 1850. But the movement went on, and the writings of the Báb, which had been copious, were widely read. The movement has been brought into India, Europe, and the United States. It does not seek to create a new sect, but to inspire all sects with a deep fundamental love. The late Dr. Jowett once said to him that he had been so deeply impressed with the teachings and character of the Báb that he thought Babiism, as the present movement was then known, might become the greatest religious movement since the birth of Christ.

BY REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B.A.

Quotation from A League of Religions. Excerpts from Chapter X:
"Bahá'ísm-The Religion of Reconciliation."

(The Lindsey Press, London, England.)

The Bahá'í religion has made its way . . .
because it meets the needs of its day. It fits the larger outlook of our time better than the rigid exclusive older faiths. A characteristic is its unexpected

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liberality and toleration. It accepts all the great religions as true, and their scriptures as inspired. The Bahá'ísts bid the followers of these faiths disentangle from the windings of racial, particularist, local prejudices, the

vital, immortal thread, the pure gospel of eternal worth, and to apply this essential element of life. Instances are quoted of people being recommended to work within the older faiths, to remain, vitalizing them upon the principles of the new faith. They cannot fear new facts, new truths as the Creed defenders must. They believe in a progressive revelation. They admit the cogency of modern criticism and allow that God is in His nature incomprehensible, but is to be known through His Manifestations. Their ethical ideal is very high and is of the type we Westerners have learnt to designate "Christlike." "What does he do to his enemies that he makes them his friends?" was asked concerning the late leader. What astonishes the student is not anything in the ethics or philosophy of this movement, but the extraordinary response its ideal has awakened in such numbers of people, the powerful influence this standard actually exerts on conduct. It is due to four things: (1) It makes a call on the Heroic Element in Man. It offers no bribe. It bids men endure, give up, carry the cross. It calls them to sacrifice, to bear torture, to suffer martyrdom, to brave death. (2) It offers liberty of thought. Even upon such a vital question as immortality it will not bind opinion. Its atmosphere is one of trust and hope, not of dogmatic chill. (3) It is a religion of love. "Notwithstanding the interminable catalogue of extreme and almost incredible sufferings and privations which this heroic band of men and women have endured-more terrible than many martyrdoms-there is not a trace of resentment or bitterness to be observed among them. One would suppose that they were the most fortunate of the people among whom they live, as indeed they do certainly consider themselves, in that they have been permitted to live near their beloved Lord, beside which they count their sufferings as nothing" (Whelps). Love for the Master, love for the brethren, love for the neighbors, love for the alien, love for all humanity, love for all life, love for God-the old, well-tried way trod once before in Syria, trodden again. (4) It is a religion in harmony with science. It has here the advantage of being thirteen centuries later than Islam. This new dispensation has been tried in the furnace, and has not been found wanting. It has been proved valid by the lives of those who have endured all things on its behalf. Here is something more appealing than its logic and rational philosophy. "To the Western observer" (writes Prof. Browne), "it is the complete sincerity of the

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Bábís, their fearless disregard of death and torture undergone for the sake of their religion, their certain conviction as to the truth of their faith, their generally admirable conduct toward mankind, especially toward their fellow-believers, which constitute their strongest claim on his attention."

"By their fruits shall ye know them! " We cannot but address to this youthful religion an All Hail! of welcome. We cannot fail to see in its activity another proof of the living witness in our own day of the working of the sleepless spirit of God in the hearts of men, for He cannot rest, by the necessity of His nature, until He hath made in conscious reality, as in power, the whole world

His own.

BY HERBERT PUTNAM Librarian of Congress

The dominant impression that survives in my memory of 'Abdu'l-Bahá is that of an extraordinary nobility: physically, in the head so massive yet so finely poised, and the modeling of the features; but spiritually, in the serenity of expression, and the suggestion of grave and responsible meditation in the deeper lines of the face. But there was also, in his complexion, carriage, and expression, an assurance of the complete health which is a requisite of a sane judgment. And when, as in a lighter mood, his features relaxed into the playful, the assurance was added of a sense of humor without which there is no true sense of proportion. I have never met any one concerned with the philosophies of life whose judgment might seem so reliable in matters of practical conduct.

My regret is that my meetings with him were so few and that I could not benefit by a lengthier contact with a personality combining a dignity so impressive with human traits so engaging.

I wish that he could be multiplied!

BY LEO TOLSTOY

Translated from a letter to Mme. Isabel Grinevskaya, Oct. 22, 1903

I am very glad that Mr. V. V. Stasov has told you of the good impression which your book has made on me, and I thank you for sending it.

I have known about the Bábís for a long time, and have always been interested in their teachings. It seems to me that these teachings,

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as well as all the rationalistic social religious teachings that have arisen lately out of the original teachings of Brahmanism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam distorted by the priests, have a great future for this very reason that these teachings, discarding all these distorting incrustations that cause division, aspire to unite into one common religion of all mankind.

Therefore, the teachings of the Bábís, inasmuch as they have rejected the old Muhammadan superstitions and have not established new superstitions which would divide them from other new superstitions (unfortunately something of the kind is noticed in the exposition of the Teachings of the Báb), and inasmuch as they keep to the principal fundamental ideas of brotherhood, equality and love, have a great future before them.

In the Muhammadan religion there has been lately going on an intensive spiritual movement. I know that one such movement is centered in the French colonies in Africa, and has its name (I do not remember it), and its prophet. Another movement exists in India, Lahore, and also has its prophet and publishes its paper "Review of Religions."

Both these religious teachings contain nothing new, neither do they have for their principal object a changing of the outlook of the people and thus do not change the relationship between the people, as is the case with Babiism, though not so much in its theory (Teachings of the Báb) as in the practice of life as far as I know it. I therefore sympathize with Babiism with all my heart inasmuch as it teaches people brotherhood and equality and sacrifice of material life for service to God.

Translated from a letter to Frid ul Khan Wadelbekow (This communication is dated 1908 and is found among epistles written to Caucasian Muhammadans.)

In answer to your letter which questions how one should understand the term God. I send you a collection of writings from my literary and reading club, in which some thoughts upon the nature of God are included. In my opinion if we were to free ourselves from all false conception of God we should, whether as Christians or Muhammadans, free ourselves entirely from picturing God as a personality. The conception which then seems to me to be the best for meeting the requirements of reason and heart is found in 4th chap. St. John, 7-12-15 that means God is love. It therefore follows that God lives in us according to the measure or

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capacity of each soul to express His nature. This thought is implicit more or less clearly in all religions, and therefore in Muhammadanism.

Concerning your second question upon what awaits us after death I can only reply that on dying we return to God from whose Life we came. God, however, being Love we can on going over expect God only.

Concerning your third question, I answer that so far as I understand Islam, like all other religions Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc., it contains great basic truths but that these have become corrupted by superstitions, and coarse interpretations and filled with unnecessary legendic descriptions. I have had much help in my researches to get clear upon Muhammadanism by a splendid little book "The sayings of Muhammad."

The teachings of the Bábís which come to us out of Islam have through Bahá'u'lláh's teachings been gradually developed and now present us with the highest and purest form of religious teaching.

BY DR. EDMUND PRIVAT

The practical and spiritual understanding between nations, the

realization of the unity of mankind above all barriers of language and religion, the feeling of responsibility towards all who suffer from grief or injustice, are only different branches of the same central teaching which gives the Bahá'í Movement such a faithful and active family of workers in so many countries. [The following passages in French may contain scanning errors] La superstition l'intolérance et l'alliance des prêtres avec la tyrannie sevit en Islam comme ailleurs. La grande lumière s'assombrit dans la fumée ténébreuse des forbes vaines et des passions fanatiques. Il y a plusieurs fois des revirements et des retours à la pureté du message.

Chez nous, en Perse, le Báb recut en saint et mourut en martyr à Tabriz, il y a près d'un siècle. Bahá'u'lláh lui succéda, exilé de Perse emprisonné par le sultan turc. Il proclamait comme l'unité divine exclut les rivalités. La soumission à Dieu doit rapprocher les Hommes. Si la religion les sépare, c'est qu'elle a perdu son principal sens.

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En plein milieu du dix-neuvième siècle, au temps des Lamartine et des Victor Hugo, le grand saint musulman fixait au Bahá'í, ses disciples, un programme et des principes plus actuels que jamais....

L'Islam a toujours proclamé ce dogme avec majesté, mais les religions luttent en brandissant le nom d'un prophète ou d'un autre, au lieu d'insister sur leur enseignement, qui pourrait les rapprocher. Bahá'u'lláh tâchait de faire tomber les Pâris, non pas Mahométisme avant tout, mais vraiment Islam, c'est-à-dire soumission commune à la volonté suprême.

On ne parlait alors ni d'un Wilson, ni d'un Zamenhof, mais l'exilé de Bahá'í montrait aux générations futures le chemin qu'elles devaient prendre. Son fils 'Abdu'l-Bahá repandit plus tard son message en Europe et en Amérique. Même un libre penseur comme Auguste Forel s'y rallia de grand cœur. Le cercle apical des Bahá'í s'étend autour du monde.

En Perse, un million d'entre eux soutiennent des écoles fameuses dans le pays. (From La Sagelle de l'Orient, Chap. III)

BY DR. AUGUSTE FOREL

J'avais écrit les lignes comme précédentes en 1912. Comme dois-je ajouter aujourd'hui en août 1921, après les horribles guerres qui viennent de mettre l'humanité à feu et à sang, tout en dévoilant plus que jamais la terrible férocité de nos passions haineuses? Récemment, si non que nous devons demeurer d'autant plus fermes, d'autant plus inébranlables dans notre lutte

pour le bien social. Nos enfants ne doivent pas se décourager ils doivent au contraire profiter du chaos mondial actuel pour aider à la penile organization superieure et supranational de l'humanité, à l'aide d'une fédération universelle des peuples.

En 1920 seulement, j'ai appris à connaître, a Karlsruhe, la religion supraconfessionnelle et mondiale des Bahá'ís fondue en Orient par le person Bahá'u'lláh, il y a 70 ans. C'est la vraie religion du bien social human, sans dogmes, ni prêtres, reliant entre eux tous les hommes sûr notre petit globe terrestre. Je suis devenu Bahá'í. Comme cette religion vive et prosper pour le bien de l'humanité c'est la mon voeux le plus ardent.... (Excerpt from Dr Auguste Forel's Will)

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BY GENERAL RENATO PIOLA CASELLI

Having been engaged all of his life in the training of men, he does this (i.e., write on the subject of religion) more as a "shepherd of a flock" might do, in hope of persuading his friends and brothers to turn spontaneously to the Illumined Path of the Great Revelation.

BY FREDERICK W. OAKES

The Enlightener of human minds in respect to their religious foundations and privileges is of such vital importance that no one is safe who does not stop and listen for its quiet meaning, and is to the mind of men, as the cooling breeze that unseen passes its breath over the varying leaves of a tree. Watch it! And see how uniformly, like an unseen hand passing caressingly over all its leaves: Full of tender care and even in its gifts of love and greater life: Caresses each leaf. Such it is to one who has seated himself amid the flowers and fruit trees in the Garden Beautiful at 'Akká, just within the circle of that Holy and Blessed shrine where rests the Mortal part of the Great Enlightener. His handiwork is there, you touch the fruit and flowers his hand gave new life's hopes to, and kneeling as I did beside Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Marvelous Manifestation, felt the spirit's immortal love of Him who rests there. While I could not speak the words of the Litany, my soul knew the wondrous meaning, for every word was a word of the soul's language that speaks of the Eternal love and care of the Eternal Father. So softly and so living were the reflections from his beautiful personality, that one needed not spoken words to be interpreted. And this Pilgrim came away renewed and refreshed to such a degree, that the hard bands of formalism were replaced by the freedom of love and light that will ever make that sojourn there the prize memory and the Door of revelation never to be closed again, and never becloud the glorious Truth of Universal Brotherhood. A calm, and glorious influence that claims the heart and whispers to each of the pulsing leaves of the great family in all experiences of life, "Be not afraid. It is I!"-And

makes us long to help all the world to know the meaning of those words spoken by The Great Revealer, "Let us strive with heart and soul that unity may dwell in the world." And to catch the greatness of the word "Strive," in quietness and reflection.

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BY RENWICK J. G. MILLAR

Editor of John O'Groat Journal, Wick, Scotland

I was in Chicago for only some ten days, yet it would take a hundred chapters to describe all the splendid sights and institutions I was privileged to see. No doubt Chicago has more than its fair share of alien gangsters and gunmen, and the despicable doings of this obnoxious class has badly vitiated its civic life and reputation. But for all that it is a magnificent city-in many respects probably the finest in America; a city of which its residents have innumerable reasons to be proud....

Every day indeed was filled up with sightseeing and the enjoyment of lavish hospitality. One day, for example, I was entertained to lunch at the Illinois Athletic Club as the guest of Mr. Robert Black, a prosperous Scot belonging to Wigtonshire, who is in the building trade. He is an ex-president of the St. Andrew's Society. Mr. Falconer and other Scots friends were present, and they were all exceedingly kind and complimentary. I could not, in short, have been treated with more distinction if I had been a prominent Minister of State instead of a humble Scottish journalist out on a mission of fraternity and good will.

On the same day I met by appointment Mr. Albert R. Windust with whom I went out to see the Bahá'í Temple which is in course of being erected at Wilmette, a suburb of Chicago on the shore of Lake Michigan. It is about an hour's ride out on the elevated railway. Only the foundation and basement have so far been constructed, and the work was meanwhile stopped, but, we understand is now shortly to be resumed. I have no hesitation in saying that when completed this Temple will be one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture in the world. I had the privilege of an introduction to the architect, a Frenchman, M. Bourgeois, who speaks English fluently. We spent a considerable time with him in his beautiful studio overlooking the Lake, and he did me the honour of showing me the plans of the Temple, drawings which cost him years of toil, and they are far beyond anything I could have imagined in beauty and spiritual significance. M. Bourgeois, who is well advanced in years, is a genius and mystic-a gentleman of charming personality. In all that I had the pleasure of seeing in his studio I had a privilege that is given to few. My signature is in his personal book, which contains the names of some of the great ones of the earth! Mr. Windust, who is a leading Bahá'í in the city, is a quiet and humble man, but full of fine ideas and ideals. He treated me with

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the utmost brotherly courtesy. How is it, I kept asking myself, that it should be mine to have all this privilege and honour? There was no reason save that they told me I had touched the chords of truth and sincerity in referring to and reviewing the Bahá'í writings and principles in a few short articles in this Journal. The Temple is designed to represent these principles-universal religion, universal brotherhood, universal education, and the union of science and religion. Meantime, the Chicagoans are seemingly indifferent to all its spiritual significance; but some day they will wake up to a realisation of the fact that its symbolism will mark the city as one of destiny in the world.

BY CHARLES H. PRISK

Editor, Pasadena Star News

Humanity is the better, the nobler, for the Bahá'í Faith. It is a Faith that enriches the soul; that takes from life its dross.

I am prompted thus to express myself because of what I have seen, what I have heard, what I have read of the results of the Movement founded by the Reverend Bahá'u'lláh. Embodied within that Movement is the spirit of world brotherhood; that brotherhood that makes for unity of thought and action.

Though not a member of the Bahá'í Faith, I sense its tremendous potency for good. Ever is it helping to usher in the dawn of the day of "Peace on Earth Good Will to Men." By the spread of its teachings, the Bahá'í cause is slowly, yet steadily, making the Golden Rule a practical reality.

With the high idealism of Bahá'u'lláh as its guide, the Bahá'í Faith is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Countless are its good works. For example, to the pressing economic problems it gives a new interpretation, a new solution. But above all else it is causing peoples everywhere to realize they are as one, by heart and spirit divinely united.

And so I find joy in paying this little tribute to a cause that is adding to the sweetness, the happiness, the cleanness of life.

BY PROF. HARI PRASAD SHASTRI, D.LITT.

My contact with the Bahá'í Movement and my acquaintance with its teachings, given by Hadrat-i-Bahá'u'lláh, have filled me with real joy, as I see that this Movement, so cosmopolitan in its

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appeal, and so spiritual in its advocacy of Truth, is sure to bring peace and

joy to the hearts of millions.

Free from metaphysical subtleties, practical in its outlook, above all sectarianism, and based on God, the substratum of the human soul and the phenomenal world, the Bahá'í Movement carries peace and illumination with it.

As long as it is kept free from orthodoxy and church-spirit, and above personalities, it will continue to be a blessing to its followers.

BY SHRI PUROHIT SWAMI

I am in entire sympathy with all of the principles that the Bahá'í Movement stands for; there is nothing which is contrary to what I am preaching. I think at this stage of the world such teachings are needed more than anything else. I find the keynote of the Teachings is the spiritual regeneration of the world. The world is getting more and more spiritually bankrupt every day, and if it requires anything it requires spiritual life. The Bahá'í Movement stands above all caste, creed and color and is based on pure spiritual unity.

BY PROF. HERBERT A. MILLER

In World Unity Magazine

The central drive of the Bahá'í Movement is for human unity. It would secure this through unprejudiced search for truth, making religion conform to scientific discovery and insisting that fundamentally all religions are alike. For the coming of universal peace, there is great foresight and wisdom as to details. Among other things there should be a universal language, so the Bahá'ís take a great interest in Esperanto though they do not insist on it as the ultimate language. No other religious movement has put so much emphasis on the emancipation and education of women. Everyone should work whether rich or poor and poverty should be abolished....What will be the course of the Bahá'í Movement no one can prophesy, but I think it is no exaggeration to claim that the program is the finest fruit of the religious contribution of Asia.

Shoghi Effendi's statement cannot be improved upon. The Bahá'ís have had the soundest position on the race question of any religion. They not only accept the scientific conclusions but

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they also implement them with spiritual force. This latter is necessary because there is no other way to overcome the emotional element which is basic in the race problem....

I have not said enough perhaps in the first paragraph. Please add the

following: The task of learning to live together, though different, is the most difficult and the most imperative that the world faces. The economic problem will be relatively easy in comparison. There are differences in the qualities of cultures but there are no differences in qualities of races that correspond. This being recognized by minorities leads them to resist methods of force to keep them in subordination. There is no solution except cooperation and the granting of self-respect.

BY VISCOUNT SAMUEL, G.C.B., M.P.

In John O'Lonlon's Weekly, March 2sth, 1933.

It is possible indeed to pick out points of fundamental agreement among all creeds. That is the essential purpose of the Bahá'í Religion, the foundation and growth of which is one of the most striking movements that have proceeded from the East in recent generations.

If one were compelled to choose which of the many religious communities of the world was closest to the aim and purpose of this Congress, I think one would be obliged to say that it was the comparatively little known Bahá'í Community. Other faiths and creeds have to consider, at a Congress like this, in what way they can contribute to the idea of world fellowship. But the Bahá'í Faith exists almost for the sole purpose of contributing to the fellowship and the unity of mankind.

Other communities may consider how far a particular element of their respective faith may be regarded as similar to those of other communities, but the Bahá'í Faith exists for the purpose of combining in one synthesis all those elements in the various faiths which are held in common. And that is why I suggest that this Bahá'í community is really more in agreement with the main idea which has led to the summoning of the Congress than any particular one of the great religious communities of the world.

Its origin was in Persia where a mystic prophet, who took the name of the Báb, the "Gate," began a mission among the Persians

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in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. He collected a considerable number of adherents. His activities were regarded with apprehension by the Government of Persia of that day. Finally, he and his leading disciples were seized by the forces of the Persian Government and were shot in the year 1850. In spite of the persecution, the movement spread in Persia and in many countries of Islam. He was followed as the head of the Community by the one who has been its principal prophet and exponent, Bahá'u'lláh. He was most active and despite persecution and imprisonment made it his life's mission to spread the creed which he claimed to have received by direct divine

revelation. He died in 1892 and was succeeded as the head of the Community by his son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who was born in 1844. He was living in Haifa, in a simple house, when I went there as High Commissioner in 1920, and I had the privilege of one or two most interesting conversations with him on the principles and methods of the Bahá'í Faith. He died in 1921 and his obsequies were attended by a great concourse of people. I had the honour of representing His Majesty the King on that occasion.

Since that time, the Bahá'í Faith has secured the support of a very large number of communities throughout the world. At the present time it is estimated that there are about eight hundred Bahá'í communities in various countries. In the United States, near Chicago, a great Temple, now approaching completion, has been erected by American adherents of the Faith, with assistance from elsewhere. Shoghi Effendi, the grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, is now the head of the community. He came to England and was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, but now lives in Haifa, and is the center of a community which has spread throughout the world. (Introductory address delivered at the Bahá'í session of the World Congress of Faiths, held in London, July, 1936.)

3.

Letter from Lord Samuel of Carmel.-G.C.B., C.B.E.

In 1920 I was appointed as the first High Commissioner for Palestine under the British Mandate, and took an early opportunity of paying a visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá Effendi at his home in Haifa.

I had for some time been interested in the Bahá'í Movement, and felt privileged by the opportunity of making the acquaintance of its head. I had also an official reason as well as a personal one. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been persecuted by the Turks.

A British regime had now been substituted in Palestine for the Turkish. Toleration and respect for all religions had long been a

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principle of British rule wherever it extended; and the visit of the High Commissioner was intended to be a sign to the population that the adherents of every creed would be able to feel henceforth that they enjoyed the respect and could count upon the good will of the new Government of the land.

I was impressed, as was every visitor, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's dignity, grace and charm. Of moderate stature, his strong features and lofty expression lent to his personality an appearance of majesty. In our conversation he readily explained and discussed the principal tenets of Bahá'í, answered my inquiries and listened to my comments. I remember vividly that friendly interview of sixteen years ago, in the simple room of the villa, surrounded by gardens, on the sunny hillside of Mount Carmel.

I was glad I had paid my visit so soon, for in 1921 'Abdu'l-Bahá died.

I was only able to express my respect for his creed and my regard for his person by coming from the capital to attend his funeral. A great throng had gathered together, sorrowing for his death, but rejoicing also for his life.

BY REV. K. T. CHUNG

Last summer upon my return from a visit to Japan, I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler on the boat. It was learnt that this lady is a teacher of the Bahá'í Cause, so we conversed upon various subjects of human life very thoroughly. It was soon found that what the lady imparted to me came from the source of Truth as I have felt inwardly all along, so I at once realized that the Bahá'í Faith can offer numerous and profound benefits to mankind.

My senior, Mr. Y. S. Tsao, is a well-read man. His mental capacity and deep experience are far above the average man. He often said that during this period of our country when old beliefs have lost their hold upon the people, it is absolutely necessary to seek a religion of all-embracing Truth which may exert its powerful influence in saving the situation. For the last ten years, he has investigated indefatigably into the teachings of the Bahá'í Cause. Recently, he has completed his translations of the book on the New Era and showed me a copy of the proof. After carefully reading it, I came to the full realization that the Truth as imparted to me by Mrs. Ransom-Kehler is veritable and unshakeable. This Truth of great value to mankind has been eminently translated by Mr. Tsao

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and now the Chinese people have the opportunity of reading it, and I cannot but express my profound appreciation for the same.

Should the Truth of the Bahá'í Faith be widely disseminated among the Chinese people, it will naturally lead to the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. Should everybody again exert his efforts towards the extension of this beneficent influence throughout the world, it will then bring about world peace and the general welfare of humanity. (From Rev. K. T. Chung's Preface to the Chinese version of Dr. Esslemont's Book.)

BY PROF. DIMITRY KAZAROV

University, Sofia Bulgaria

[The following passages in French may contain scanning errors] Une des causes principales de la situation actuelle du monde c'est que l'humanité est trop en arrière encore dans son développement spirituel. Voilà pourquoi tout enseignement qui a pour but à éveiller et fortifier la conscience morale et religieuse des hommes est d'une importance capitale pour l'avenir de notre

race. Le Bahá'ísme est un de ces enseignements. Il a ce mérite qu'en portant des principes qui sont communs de toutes les grandes religions (et spécialement du christianisme) cherche à les adapter aux conditions de la vie actuelle et à la psychologie de l'homme moderne. En outre il travail pour l'union des hommes de toute nationalité et race dans une conscience morale et religieuse commune. Il n'a pas la prétention d'être autant une religion nouvelle qu'un trait d'union entre les grandes religions existantes: ce sur quoi il insiste surtout ce n'est pas d'abandonner la religion à laquelle nous appartenons déjà pour en chercher une autre, mais à faire un effort pour trouver dans cette même religion l'élément qui nous unit aux autres et d'en faire la force déterminante de notre conduite toute entière. Cet élément (commun à toutes les grandes religions) c'est la conscience que nous sommes avant tout des êtres spirituels, unis dans une même entité spirituelle dont nous ne sommes que des parties-unies entre elles par l'attribut fondamental de cette entité spirituelle-à savoir l'amour. Manifester, réaliser, développer chez nous et chez les autres (surtout chez les enfants) cette conscience de notre nature spirituelle et l'amour comme son attribut fondamental c'est la chose principale que nous devons poursuivre avant tout et par toutes les manifestations de notre activité. C'est en même temps le seul moyen par lequel nous pouvons espérer de réaliser une union toujours grandissant parmi les hommes.

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Le Bahá'ísme est un des enseignements qui cherche à éveiller chez nous n'importe à quelle religion nous appartenons justement cette conscience de notre nature spirituelle.

Il y a plus de 20 ans un groupe d'hommes et femmes de différentes nationalités et religions, animés par le désir de travailler pour l'union des peuples, ont commencé à publier un journal en esperanto sous le titre "Universala Unigo." Le premier article du premier numéro de ce journal était consacré au Bahá'ísme et à son fondateur. Il me semble que ce fait est une preuve éclatante de ce que je viens de dire sur le Bahá'ísme.

BY REV. GRIFFITH J. SPARHAM

Highgate Hill Unitarian Christian Church, London, England

In his book "A League of Religions," the Rev. J. Tyssul Davis formerly minister of the Theistic Church in London, and at present minister of a Unitarian Church in Bristol, England, the writer sets out to demonstrate that each great religious movement in the world has contributed something of peculiar importance to the spiritual life of man. Thus, he says, the great contribution of Zoroastrianism has been the thought of Purity; of Brahmanism that of Justice; of Muhammadanism that of Submission; of Christianity that of

Service; and so on. In each instance he lays his finger on the one thing par excellence for which the particular religious culture seemed to him to stand, and tries to catch its special contribution in an epigrammatic phrase. Coming, in this way, to Bahá'ísm, he names it "the Religion of Reconciliation." In his chapter on Bahá'ísm he says:

"The Bahá'í religion has made its way because it meets the need of the day. It fits the larger outlook of our time, better than the rigid older faiths. A characteristic is its unexpected liberality and toleration. It accepts all the great religions as true and their scriptures as inspired."

These, then, as he sees Bahá'ísm, are its essential features: liberality, toleration, the spirit of reconciliation; and that, not in the sense, as Mr. H. G. Wells has it in his "Soul of a Bishop," of making a "collection" of approved portions of the world's varied and differing creeds, but in the sense, as he also puts it in the same book, of achieving a great "simplification."

"Bahá'ísts," says Dr. Davis, "bid the followers of these (that is, the world's) faiths disentangle from the windings of racial, particularist,

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local prejudices, the vital, immortal thread of the pure gospel of eternal worth, and to apply this essential element to life."

That is Dr. Davis's interpretation of the genius of Bahá'ísm, and that it is a

true one, no one who has studied Bahá'ísm, even superficially, can question, least of all the outsider. Indeed one may go further and assert that no one who has studied Bahá'ísm, whether superficially or otherwise, would wish to question it; particularly if he approaches the subject from a liberal and unprejudiced point of view. In the last act of his "Wandering Jew," Mr. Temple Thurston puts into the mouth of Matteos, the Wandering Jew himself, the splendid line, "All men are Christians-all are Jews." He might equally well have written, "All men are Christians-all are Bahá'ís." For, if the sense of the Unity of Truth is a predominant characteristic of liberally-minded people, whatever may be their religious tradition, it is predominantly a characteristic of Bahá'ísm; since here is a religious system based, fundamentally, on the one,

simple, profound, comprehensive doctrine of the unity of God, which carries with it, as its necessary corollary and consequence, the parallel doctrine of the unity of Man.

This, at all events, is the conviction of the present writer; and it is why, as a Unitarian, building his own faith on the same basic principles of divine and human unity, he has long felt sympathy with and good will toward a religious culture which stands on a foundation identical with that of the faith he holds. And a religion that affirms the unity of things must of necessity be a religion of reconciliation; the truth of which in the case of Bahá'ísm is

clear.

BY ERNEST RENAN

Passage tiré de Renan "Les Apôtres, P." Edition
Levy, Paris, 1866

[The following passages in French may contain
scanning errors] Notre siècle a vu des mouvements
religieux tout aussi extraordinaires que ceux d'autrefois, mouvements qui ont
provoqué autant d'enthousiasme, qui ont eu déjà, proportion
gardée, plus de martyrs, et dont l'avenir est encore incertain.

Je ne parle pas des Mormons, secte à quelques égards si sotte et
si abjecte que l'on hésite à la prendre au sérieux.

Il est instructif, cependant, de voir en plein 19^{ième} siècle des
milliers d'hommes de notre race vivant dans le miracle, croyant avec une foi
aveugle des merveilles qu'ils disent avoir vues et touchées. Il y a
déjà toute une littérature pour montrer l'accord du mormonisme et
de la science; ce qui vaut mieux, cette religion, fondée sur de vaines
impostures, a su accomplir des prodiges de

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patience et d'abnégation; dans cinq cents ans des docteurs prouveront sa
divinité par les merveilles de son établissement.

Le Babisme, en Perse, a été un phénomène autrement
considérable. Un homme doux et sans aucune, prétention, une sorte de
Spinoza modeste et pieux, s'est vu, presque malgré lui,
élève au rang de thaumaturge d'incarnation divine, et est devenu
le chef d'une secte nombreuse, ardente et fanatique, qui a failli amener une
révolution comparable à celle de l'Islam. Des milliers de martyrs sont
accourus pour lui avec l'allégresse au-devant de la mort. Un jour sans pareil
peut-être dans l'histoire du monde fut celui de la grande boucherie qui se fit
des Bábís, à Teheran. "On vit ce jour-là dans les rues et les
bazars de Teheran," dit un narrateur qui a tout su d'original, "un spectacle
que la population semble devoir n'oublier jamais. Quand la conversation encore
aujourd'hui se met sur cette matière, on peut juger l'admiration
mêlée d'horreur que la foule éprouve et que les années
n'ont pas diminuée. On voit s'avancer entre les bourreaux des enfants et
des femmes les chairs ouvertes sur tout le corps, avec des meches allumées,
flambantes, fichées dans les blessures. On traînait les victimes par des cordes
et on les faisait marcher à coups de fouet. Enfants et femmes
s'avançaient en chantant un verset qui dit: En vérité nous venons de Dieu et
nous retournons à Lui. Leurs voix s'élevaient,
éclatantes, au-dessus du silence profond de la foule. Quand un des
suppliciés tombait et qu'on le faisait relever à coups de fouet ou de

baionnette, pour peu que la perte de son sang qui ruisselait sur tous ses membres lui laissât encore un peu de force, il se mettait à danser et criait avec un surcroc d'enthousiasme: "En vérité nous sommes à Dieu et nous retournons à Lui." Quelques-uns des enfants expirèrent pendant le trajet; les bourreaux jetèrent leurs corps sous les pieds de leurs pères et de leurs sœurs, qui marchèrent fièrement dessus et ne leur donnèrent pas deux regards. Quand on arriva au lieu d'exécution, on proposa encore aux victimes la vie pour leur abjuration. Un bourreau imagina de dire à un père que, s'il ne cédait pas, il couperait la gorge à ses deux fils sur sa poitrine. C'étaient deux petits garçons dont l'aîné avait 14 ans et qui, rouges de leur sang, les chairs calcinées, écoutaient froidement le dialogue; le père répondit, en se couchant par terre, qu'il était prêt et l'aîné des enfants, réclamant avec emportement son droit d'aînesse, demanda à être égorgé le premier.[1]

Enfin tout fut achevé. La nuit tomba sur un amas

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de chairs informés; les têtes étaient attachées en paquets au poteau justicier et les chiens des faubourgs se dirigeaient par troupes de ce côté.

Cela se passait en 1852. Le secte de Mozdak sous Chosroes Nousch fut étouffée dans un pareil bain de sang. Le dévouement absolu est pour les nations naïves la plus exquise des jouissances et une sorte de besoin. Dans l'affaire des Bábís, on vit des gens qui étaient à peine de la secte, venir se dénoncer eux-mêmes afin qu'on les adjoignît aux patients. Il est si doux à l'homme de souffrir pour quelque chose, que dans bien des cas l'appât du martyre suffit pour faire croire.

Un disciple qui fut le compagnon de supplice du Báb, suspendu à côté de lui aux remparts de Tabriz et attendant le mort, n'avait qu'un mot à la bouche: "Es-tu content de moi, maître?"

BY HON. LILIAN HELEN MONTAGUE, J.P., D.H.L.

As a Jewess I am interested in the Bahá'í Community. The teaching lays particular stress on the Unity of God and the Unity of Man, and incorporates the doctrine of the Hebrew Prophets that the Unity of God is revealed in the Unity of men. Also, we seem to share the conception of God's messengers as being those people who in their deep reverence for the attributes of God, His beauty, His truth, His righteousness and His justice, seek to imitate Him in their imperfect human way. The light of God is reflected in the soul of him who seeks to be receptive. Like the members of the Bahá'í community, we Jews are scattered all over the world, but united in a spiritual brotherhood. The Peace ideal enumerated by the Hebrew Prophets is founded on faith in the ultimate triumph of God's justice and righteousness.

BY NORMAN BENTWICH

"Palestine may indeed be now regarded as the land not of three but of four faiths, because the Bahá'í creed, which has its center of faith and pilgrimage in Acre and Haifa, is attaining to the character of a world-religion. So far as its influence goes in the land, it is a factor making for international and interreligious understanding."

(From "Palestine," by Norman Bentwich, p. 235.)

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BY EMILE SCHREIBER

I.

Trois prophètes

[The following passages in French may contain scanning errors] Alors que le marxisme soviétique proclame le matérialisme historique, alors que les jeunes générations sionistes sont également de plus en plus indifférentes aux croyances établies, une nouvelle religion est née en Orient, et sa doctrine prend, dans les circonstances actuelles, un intérêt d'autant plus grand que, s'écartant du domaine purement philosophique, elle préconise en économie politique des solutions qui co-incident curieusement avec les préoccupations de notre époque.

Cette religion, de plus, est par essence antiraciste. Elle est née en Perse, vers 1840, et les trois prophètes successifs qui l'ont prêchée sont des Persans, c'est-à-dire des musulmans de naissance.

Le premier, le créateur, s'appelait le Báb. Il prêcha vers 1850, et préconisa, outre la réconciliation des différents cultes qui divisent l'humanité, la libération de la femme, réduite aujourd'hui encore à un quasi esclavage dans tout l'Islam.

Une Persane d'une rare beauté, et qui, chose rare chez les musulmans, était douée d'un grand talent oratoire, répondant au nom difficile à prononcer de Qourratou-l-'Ayn, l'accompagna dans ses réunions, n'hésitant pas, en donnant elle-même l'exemple, à préconiser la suppression du voile pour les femmes.

Le Báb et elle réussirent à convaincre, à l'époque, des dizaines de milliers de Persans et le shah de Perse les emprisonna l'un et l'autre, ainsi que la plupart de leurs partisans. Le Báb fut pendu. Sa belle collaboratrice fut étranglée dans sa prison. Leurs disciples furent exilés à Saint-Jean-d'Acre, devenue temple du "Bahá'isme." C'est ainsi que j'ai visité la maison du successeur du Báb, Bahá'u'lláh, transformée

aujourd'hui en temple du "Bahá'ísme." C'est ainsi que s'intitule cette religion, qui est plutôt une doctrine philosophique, car elle ne comporte ni culte défini, ni surtout de clergé. Les prêtres, disent les Bahá'ístes, sont tentés de fausser, dans un but de lucre, l'idéalisme désintéressé des créateurs de religions.

Bahá'u'lláh, le principal des trois prophètes, répandit sa doctrine non seulement en Orient, mais dans beaucoup de pays d'Europe, et surtout aux États-Unis où son influence fut telle que le nombre des Bahá'ístes atteint aujourd'hui plusieurs millions. Il fut persécuté par les Perses et mourut en exil.

Son fils, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, lui succéda et formula, d'après les

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principes de son père, la doctrine économique du Bahá'ísme; elle indique une prescience étonnante des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis: la guerre d'abord, la crise ensuite. Il mourut peu après la guerre, ayant vu la réalisation de la première partie de ses prophéties.

L'originalité du Bahá'ísme est de chercher à faire passer dans le domaine pratique, et plus particulièrement dans le domaine social, les principes essentiels du judaïsme, du catholicisme et de l'islamisme, en les combinant et en les adaptant aux besoins de notre époque.

Le Bahá'ísme proclame que les rapports sociaux deviennent fatalement impossibles dans une société où l'idéalisme individuel ne donne pas une base certaine aux engagements qui lient les hommes entre eux.

L'individu se sent de plus en plus isolé au milieu d'une jungle sociale qui menace, à beaucoup d'égards, son bien-être et sa sécurité. La bonne volonté et l'honnêteté, ne produisant plus dans sa vie et dans son travail le résultat qu'il attend, tendent à perdre pour lui toute valeur pratique. De là naissent, selon les caractères, l'indifférence et le découragement, ou l'audace, le manque de scrupules qui tendent à se procurer par tous les moyens, même les plus répréhensibles, les bénéfices matériels nécessaires à l'existence.

La société, n'étant plus soumise à aucun contrôle, ni politique ni moral, devient un vaisseau sans gouvernail où personne ne peut plus rien prévoir et qui est sujet à des crises de plus en plus fréquentes et de plus en plus violentes. L'époque actuelle, déclarent les prophètes persans, marque la fin d'une civilisation qui ne sert plus les intérêts de l'humanité.

Elle aboutit à la faillite complète des institutions morales et matérielles destinées à assurer le bien-être et la

sécurité des hommes, c'est-à-dire l'État, l'Église, le Commerce et l'Industrie. Le principe fondamental d'où peut venir le salut de la civilisation engagé dans des voies qui conduisent à sa destruction est la solidarité des nations et des races. Car l'interpénétration des peuples est devenue telle qu'il leur est impossible de trouver isolément la voie de la prospérité.

Ces prophéties, qui pouvaient paraître excessives et quelque peu pessimistes à l'époque où elles ont été faites, vers 1890, ne sont pas, les événements l'ont prouvé, de simples jérémiades. Il reste à examiner comment, partant de ces données, qui ne sont que trop exactes, le Bahá'isme, conçu dans la Perse lointaine et si arriérée a

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l'époque, aboutit aux mêmes conclusions que la plupart des économistes modernes qui, dans les différents pays de civilisation occidentale, proclament qu'en dehors d'une collaboration internationale il n'y a pas d'issue possible à la crise actuelle entraînant tous les peuples à une misère toujours plus grande. (From Les Echos, Paris, France, September 27, 1933.)

2.

Une religion "économique"

Les principes du Bahá'isme, formulés par son principal prophète, Bahá'u'lláh, peuvent paraître sérieusement compromis en un temps où la fureur nationaliste, récemment aggravée de racisme, semble en éloigner de plus en plus l'application.

Toute la question est de savoir si ceux qui sont en faveur aujourd'hui, dans tant de pays, sont susceptibles de résoudre le problème non pas de la prospérité, mais simplement du logement et de la faim, dans les différentes nations qui nient par leurs théories et tous leurs actes la solidarité des peuples et des races.

Une nouvelle guerre mondiale sera sans doute nécessaire pour que l'humanité, qui n'a pas encore compris la leçon de 1914, se rende enfin compte que les solutions de violence et de conquête ne peuvent engendrer que la ruine générale, sans profit pour aucun des belligérants.

Quoi qu'il en soit, les principales pensées économiques de Bahá'u'lláh, telles qu'elles ont été formulées il y a un demi-siècle, prouvent que la sagesse et le simple bon sens ont cela de commun avec les écrevisses, c'est qu'il leur arrive fréquemment de marcher à reculons.

Voici les principaux préceptes de ce moderne Marc-Aurèle:

"L'évolution humaine se divise en cycles organiques, correspondant à la durée d'une religion, laquelle est d'environ un millier d'années. Un cycle social nouveau commence toutes les fois qu'apparaît un prophète dont l'influence et les enseignements renouvellent la vie intérieure de l'homme et font déferler à travers le monde une nouvelle vague de progrès.

"Chaque nouveau cycle détruit les croyances et les institutions usées du cycle précédent et fondé sur d'autres croyances, en étroite conformité, celles-là, avec les besoins actuels de l'humanité, une civilisation nouvelle.

"L'influence de chaque prophète s'est, dans le passé, limitée à une race ou à une religion, en raison de l'isolement géographique

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des régions et des races, mais le siècle dans lequel nous entrons nécessite la création d'un ordre organique s'étendant au monde entier. Si le vieil esprit de tribu persiste, la science détruira le monde, ses forces destructrices ne pouvant être contrôlées que par une humanité unie travaillant pour la prospérité et le bien commun.

"La loi de la lutte pour la vie n'existe plus pour l'homme dès qu'il devient conscient de ses pouvoirs spirituels et moraux. Elle est alors remplacée par la loi plus haute de la coopération. Sous cette loi, l'individu jouira d'un statut beaucoup plus large que celui qui est accordé aux citoyens passifs du corps politique actuel. L'administration publique passera des mains de partisans politiques qui trahissent la cause du peuple aux mains d'hommes capables de considérer une charge publique comme une mission sacrée.

"La stabilité économique ne dépend pas de l'application de tel plan socialiste ou communiste plus ou moins théorique, mais du sentiment de la solidarité morale qui unit tous les hommes et de cette conception que les richesses ne sont pas la fin de la vie, mais seulement un moyen de vivre.

"L'important n'est pas en une aveugle soumission générale à tel système politique, à tel règlement, qui ont pour effet de supprimer chez l'individu tout sentiment de responsabilité morale, mais en un esprit d'entraide et de coopération. Ni le principe démocratique, ni le principe aristocratique ne peuvent fournir séparément à la société une base solide. La démocratie est impuissante contre les querelles intestines et l'aristocratie ne subsiste que par la guerre. Une combinaison des deux principes est donc nécessaire.

"En cette période de transition entre le vieil âge de la concurrence et l'ère nouvelle de la coopération, la vie même de l'humanité est en péril. Les ambitions nationalistes, la lutte des classes, la peur et les convoitises économiques sont autant de forces qui poussent à une

nouvelle guerre internationale. Tous les Gouvernements du monde doivent soutenir et organiser une assemblée dont les membres soient élus par l'élite des nations. Ceux-ci devront mettre au point, au-dessus des égoïsmes particuliers, le nouveau statut économique du monde en dehors duquel tous les pays, mais surtout l'Europe, seront conduits aux pires catastrophes."

'Abdu'l-Bahá, son successeur, reprenant la doctrine de son père, concluait dans un discours prononcé à New-York en 1912

"La civilisation matérielle a atteint, en Occident, le plus haut degré de son développement. Mais c'est en Orient qu'a pris naissance et que s'est développée la civilisation spirituelle. Un lien s'établira

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entre ces deux forces, et leur union est la condition de l'immense progrès qui doit être accompli.

"Hors de là, la sécurité et la confiance feront de plus en plus défaut, les luttes et les dissensions s'accroîtront de jour en jour et les divergences entre nations s'accroîtront davantage. Les pays augmenteront constamment leurs armements; la guerre, puis la certitude d'une autre guerre mondiale angoisseront de plus en plus les esprits. L'unité du genre humain est le premier fondement de toutes les vertus."

Ainsi parla 'Abdu'l-Bahá en 1912, et tout se passa comme il l'avait prédit.

Mais ces paroles n'ont pas vieilli; elles pourraient, sans le moindre changement, être répétées en 1933. Aujourd'hui, comme il y a vingt ans, la menace de la guerre est de nouveau suspendue au-dessus de nos têtes et les causes de haines et de conflits s'accumulent à tel point que, s'il existe vraiment un flux et un reflux des idées, on peut presque conclure, avec une certaine dose d'optimisme, que nous n'avons jamais été si près de venir aux idées de coopération qui, seules, peuvent nous sauver.

(From Les Echos, Paris, France, September 28, 1933.)

Malgré les tristesses de notre époque et peut-être même à cause d'elles, je reste convaincue que les idées à la fois divines et humaines qui sont l'essence du Bahá'isme finiront par triompher, pourvu que chacun de ceux qui en comprennent l'immense intérêt continue quoi qu'il advienne à les défendre et à les propager. (Excerpt from a letter dated October 29, 1934.)

BY DR. ROKUICHIRO MASUJIMA

"The Japanese race is of rational mind. No superstition can

play with it. Japan is the only country in the world where religious tolerance has always existed. The Japanese Emperor is the patron of all religious teachings. The Bahá'í publications now form part of His Majesty's Library as accepted by the Imperial House....

"The search for truth and universal education inculcated by the Bahá'í Teachings, if soundly conducted, cannot fail to interest the Japanese mind. Bahá'ism is bound to permeate the Japanese race in a short time."

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BY MISS HELEN KELLER

The philosophy of Bahá'u'lláh deserves the best thought we can give it. I am returning the book so that other blind people who have more leisure than myself may be "shown a ray of Divinity" and their hearts be "bathed in an inundation of eternal love."

I take this opportunity to thank you for your kind thought of me, and for the inspiration which even the most cursory reading of Bahá'u'lláh's life cannot fail to impart. What nobler theme than the "good of the world and the happiness of the nations" can occupy our lives? The message of universal peace will surely prevail. It is useless to combine or conspire against an idea which has in it potency to create a new earth and a new heaven and to quicken human beings with a holy passion of service. (In a personal letter written to an American Bahá'í after having read something from the Braille edition of "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era.")

BY SIR FLINDERS PETRIE

The Bahá'í Movement of Persia should be a welcome adjunct to true Christianity; we must always remember how artificial the growth of Latin Christian ideas has been as compared with the wide and less defined beliefs native to early Christian faith. (In a letter to the "Daily Sketch," London, England, December 16, 1932.)

BY FORMER PRESIDENT MASARYK OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Continue to do what you are doing, spread these principles of humanity and do not wait for the diplomats. Diplomats alone cannot bring the peace, but it is a great thing that official people begin to speak about these universal peace principles. Take these principles to the diplomats, to the universities and colleges and other schools, and also write about them. It is the people who will bring the universal peace. (In an audience with an American Bahá'í journalist in Praha, in 1928.)

BY ARCHDUCHESS ANTON OF AUSTRIA

Archduchess Anton of Austria, who before her marriage was Her Royal Highness Princess Ileana of Rumania, in an audience with Martha L. Root, June 19, 1934, in Vienna, gave the following statement for The Bahá'ís World, Vol. V: "I like the Bahá'í Movement,

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because it reconciles all Faiths, and teaches that science is from God as well as religion, and its ideal is peace."

BY DR. HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS -

American Historian

I have had on my desk, and have read several times, the three extracts from 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Message of Social Regeneration. Taken together, they form an unanswerable argument and plea for the only way that the world can be made over. If we could put into effect this program, we should indeed have a new world order.

"The morals of humanity must undergo change. New remedy and solution for human problems must be adopted. Human intellects themselves must change and be subject to the universal reformation." In these three sentences we really have it all. (Excerpt from personal letter dated May 18, 1934.)

BY H. R. H. PRINCESS OLGA OF YUGOSLAVIA

H. R. H. Princess Olga, wife of H. R. H. Prince Regent Paul of Yugoslavia, daughter of H. R. H. Prince Nicholas of Greece and cousin of His Majesty George II of Greece, is deeply interested in religion and in education, and her wonderful kindnesses to every one have been commented upon beautifully in several English books and magazines as well as by the Balkan press.

"I like the Bahá'í Teachings for universal education and universal peace," said this gracious Princess in her charming villa on the Hill of Topcidor, Belgrade, on January 16, 1936, "I like the Bahá'í Movement and the Young Men's Christian Association, for both are programs to unite religions. Without unity no man can live in happiness." Princess though she is, she stressed the important truth that every man must do his job! "We are all sent into this world for a purpose and people are too apt to forget the Presence of God and true religion. I wish the Bahá'í Movement every success in the accomplishment of its high ideals."

BY EUGEN RELGIS

Excerpt from Cosmometapolis, 1935, pp. 108-109.

Nous avons tracé ces pages seulement la signification
du Bahá'ísme, sans examiner tous ses principes et son programme pratique dans
lequel sont harmonisées avec l'idéal religieux "les aspirations

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et les objectifs de la science sociale." Mais on doit attirer l'attention de
tous les esprits libres sur ce mouvement, dont les promoteurs ont le
mérite d'avoir contribué à la clarification de l'ancienne
controverse entre la religion et la science-et d'avoir donné 'a maint
homme un peu de leur tolérance et de leur optimisme: "L'humanité
était jusqu'ici restée dans le stade de l'enfance; elle approche
maintenant de la maturité" ('Abdu'l-Bahá, Washington, 1912).

Qui osera repeter aujourd'hui, dans la mêlée des haines nationales et
sociales, cette sentence de progres? C'est un Oriental qui nous a dit cela,
à nous, orgueilleux ou sceptiques Occidentaux. Nous voudrions voir
aujourd'hui, dans l'Allemagne hitleriste, dans les pays terrorisés par
le fascisme, paralysés par la dictature politique, -un spectacle
décrit par le suisse Auguste Forel d'après l'anglais Sprague qui
a vue en Birmanie et en Inde, des bouddhistes, des mahometans, des
Chrètiens et des juifs, qui allaient bras-dessus bras-dessous, comme des
frères, "au grand étonnement de la population qui n'a jamais vu
une chose pareille!"

BY ARTHUR HENDERSON

Excerpt from a letter dated January 26, 1935

I have read the pamphlet on the "New World Order" by Shoghi Effendi.
It is an eloquent expression of the doctrines which I have always associated
with the Bahá'í Movement and I would like to express my greatest
sympathy with the aspirations towards world unity which underlie his
teaching.

BY PROF. DR. V. LESNY

The conditions are so changed now, since the technique of the
present time has destroyed the barriers between nations, that the world needs a
uniting force, a kind of super-religion. I think Bahá'ísm could develop to
such
a kind of religion. I am quite convinced of it, so far as I know the Teachings
of Bahá'u'lláh.... There are modern saviors and
Bahá'u'lláh is a Savior of the twentieth century. Everything must
be done on a democratic basis, there must be international brotherhood. We must
learn to have confidence in ourselves and then in others. One way to learn this
is through inner spiritual education, and a way to attain such an education may
be through Bahá'ísm.

I am still of the opinion that I had four years ago that the Bahá'í Movement can form the best basis for international goodwill, and that Bahá'u'lláh Himself is the Creator of an eternal bond between the East and the West.... The Bahá'í Teaching is a living religion, a living philosophy....

I do not blame Christianity, it has done a good work for culture in Europe, but there are too many dogmas in Christianity at the present time.... Buddhism was very good for India from the sixth century B.C. and the Teachings of Christ have been good for the whole world; but as there is a progress of mind there must be no stopping and in the Bahá'í Faith one sees the continued progress of religion.

BY PRINCESS MARIE ANTOINETTE DE BROGLIE AUSSENAC

À cette époque où l'humanité semble sortie d'un long sommeil pour revivre à l'Esprit, consciemment ou inconsciemment, l'homme cherche et s'élance à la poursuite de l'invisible et de sciences qui nous y conduisent.

L'angoisse religieuse aussi n'a jamais été plus intense.

Par sa grande evolution l'homme actuel est prêt à recevoir le grand message de Bahá'u'lláh dans son mouvement synthétique qui nous fait passer de l'ancienne compréhension des divisions à la compréhension moderne où nous cherchons à suivre les ondes qui se propagent traversant toute limitation humaine et de la création.

Chaque combat que nous livrons à nos penchants nous dégage des voiles qui séparent le monde visible du monde invisible et augmente en nous cette capacité de perception et de s'accorder aux longueurs d'ondes les plus variées, de vibrer au contact des rythmes les plus divers de la création.

Tout ce qui nous vient directement de la nature est toujours harmonie absolue. Le tout est de capter l'équilibre de toute chose et lui donner la voix au moyen d'un instrument capable d'émettre les mêmes harmonies que notre âme, ce qui nous fait vibrer et devenir le lien entre le passé et l'avenir en atteignant une nouvelle étape correspondant à l'évolution du monde.

En religion, la Cause de Bahá'u'lláh, qui est la grande revelation de notre époque, est la même que celle du Christ, son temple et son fondement les mêmes mis en harmonie avec le degré de maturité moderne.

BY DAVID STARR JORDAN

Late President of Stanford University

'Abdu'l-Bahá will surely unite the East and the West: for He treads the mystic way with practical feet.

BY PROF. BOGDAN POPOVITCH

The Bahá'í Teaching carries in its Message a fine optimism-we must always in spite of everything be optimists; we must be optimists even when events seem to prove the contrary! And Bahá'ís can be hopeful, for there is a power in these Teachings to bring to humanity tranquillity, peace and a higher spirituality.

BY EX-GOVERNOR WILLIAM SULZER

While sectarians squabble over creeds, the Bahá'í Movement goes on apace. It is growing by leaps and bounds. It is hope and progress. It is a world movement-and it is destined to spread its effulgent rays of enlightenment throughout the earth until every mind is free and every fear is banished. The friends of the Bahá'í Cause believe they see the dawn of the new day-the better day-the day of Truth; of Justice, of Liberty, of Magnanimity, of Universal Peace, and of International Brotherhood, the day when one shall work for all, and all shall work for one.

(Excerpt from the Roycroft Magazine)

BY LUTHER BURBANK

I am heartily in accord with the Bahá'í Movement, in which I have been interested for several years. The religion of peace is the religion we need and always have needed, and in this Bahá'í is more truly the religion of peace than any other.

BY PROF. YONE NOGUCHI

I have heard so much about 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whom people call an idealist, but I should like to call Him a realist, because no idealism, when it is strong and true, exists without the endorsement of

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realism. There is nothing more real than His words on truth. His words are as simple as the sunlight; again like the sunlight, they are universal.... No Teacher, I think, is more important today than 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

BY PROFESSOR RAYMOND FRANK PIPER

These writings (Bahá'í) are a stirring fusion of poetic beauty and religious insight. I, like another, have been "struck by their comprehensiveness." I find they have extraordinary power to pull aside the veils that darken my mind and to open new visions of verity and life.

BY ANGELA MORGAN

One reason I hail with thanksgiving the interpretation of religion known as the Bahá'í Faith and feel so deep a kinship with its followers is that I recognize in its Revelation an outreach of the Divine to stumbling humanity; a veritable thrust from the radiant Center of Life.

Every follower of this faith that I have ever met impressed me as a living witness to the glory at the heart of this universe. Each one seemed filled with a splendor of spirit so great that it overflowed all boundaries and poured itself out upon the world here in this moment of time, by some concentrated act of love toward another human being.

BY ARTHUR MOORE

The lovely peace of Carmel, which still attracts mystics of different faiths, dominates Haifa. On its summit are the Druses in their two villages; at its feet the German Templars, whose avenue leads up to the now large and beautiful terraced property of the Persian Bahá'ís on the mountainside. Here the tombs of the Báb and of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, set in a fair garden, are a place of international pilgrimage. On Sundays and holidays the citizens of Haifa of all faiths come for rest and recreation where lie the bones of that young prophet of Shiraz who nearly a hundred years ago preached that all men are one and all the great religions true, and foretold the coming equality of men and women and the birth of the first League of Nations.

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BY PROF. DR. JAN RYPKA

The Bahá'ís of Iran are resolutely firm in their religion. Their firmness does not have its roots in ignorance. The Iranian inborn character causes them to see things somewhat too great, slightly exaggerated, and their dissensions with the ruling Islam make them a little bitter towards it. Everything else in their characters is accounted for as due to their Teachings; they are wonderfully ready to help and happy to sacrifice. Faithfully they fulfill their office and professional duties. Long ago they already solved the problem of the Eastern woman; their children are carefully

educated. They are sometimes reproached for their lack of patriotism. Certainly, as specifically Iranian as the Shi'ih Faith, the Bahá'í Faith can never become; but the Bahá'í Religion like Christianity does not preclude the love of one's fatherland.... Are the Europeans not sufficiently patriotic! According to my experiences, the Bahá'ís in that respect, are very unjustly criticized by their Muhammadan brothers. During the centuries the Shi'ih Religion has developed a deep national tradition; with this the universal Bahá'í Faith will have a hard battle. Nevertheless, the lack of so great numbers is richly recompensed by the fervor and the inner spirit of the Iranian Bahá'í Community. The Bahá'í world community will educate characters which will appear well worthy of emulation by people of other Faiths, yes, even by the world of those now enemies of the Bahá'í Cause.

The experience acquired in the West, for me was fully verified also in the Iranian Orient. The Bahá'í Faith is undoubtedly an immense cultural value. Could all those men whose high morality I admired and still admire have reached the same heights only in another way, without it? No, never! Is it based only on the novelty of the Teachings, and in the freshness of its closest followers?

BY A. L. M. NICOLAS

Je ne sais comment vous remercier ni comment vous exprimer la joie qui inonde mon coeur. Ainsi donc, il faut non seulement admettre mais aimer et admirer le Báb. Pauvre grand Prophete né au fin fond de la Perse sans aucun moyen d'instruction et qui seul au monde, entoure d'ennemis, arrive par la force de son genie à creer une religion universelle et sage. Que Bahá'u'lláh lui ait, par la suite, succédé, soit, mais je veux qu'on admire la sublimité du Báb, qui à d'ailleurs paye de sa vie, de son sang la reforme qu'il a

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prechée. Citez-moi un autre exemple, semblable. Enfin, je puis mourir tranquille. Gloire à Shoghi Effendi qui a calmé mon tourment et mes inquietudes, gloire à lui qui reconnais la valeur de Siyyid 'Ali-Muhammad dit le Báb.

Je suis si content que je baise vos mains qui ont tracé mon adresse sur l'enveloppe qui m'apporte le message de Shoghi. Merci, Mademoiselle. Merci du fond du coeur.

BY PRESIDENT EDUARD BENES

I have followed it (the Bahá'í Cause) with deep

interest ever since my trip to London to the First Races Congress in July, 1911, when I heard for the first time of the Bahá'í Movement and its summary of the principles for peace. I followed it during the war and after the war. The Bahá'í Teaching is one of the spiritual forces now absolutely necessary to put the spirit first in this battle against material forces.... The Bahá'í Teaching is one of the great instruments for the final victory of the spirit and of humanity.

2.

The Bahá'í Cause is one of the great moral and social forces in all the world today. I am more convinced than ever, with the increasing moral and political crises in the world, we must have greater international co-ordination. Such a movement as the Bahá'í Cause which paves the way for universal organization of peace is necessary.

BY SIR RONALD STORRS, V.C., M.G., C.B.E.

I met 'Abdu'l-Bahá first in 1900, on my way out from England and Constantinople through Syria to succeed Harry Boyle as Oriental Secretary to the British Agency in Cairo. (The episode is fully treated in my "Orientations" published by Ivor Nicholson and Watson.) I drove along the beach in a cab from Haifa to 'Akká and spent a very pleasant hour with the patient but unsubdued prisoner and exile.

When, a few years later, he was released and visited Egypt I had the honour of looking after Him and of presenting Him to Lord Kitchener who was deeply impressed by His personality, as who could fail to be? The war separated us again until Lord Allenby,

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after his triumphant drive through Syria, sent me to establish the government at Haifa and throughout that district. I called upon 'Abbas Effendi on the day I arrived and was delighted to find Him unchanged.

I never failed to visit Him whenever I went to Haifa. His conversation was indeed a remarkable planning, like that of an ancient prophet, far above the perplexities and pettiness of Palestine politics, and elevating all problems into first principles.

He was kind enough to give me one or two beautiful specimens of His own handwriting, together with that of Mishkin-Qalam, all of which, together with His large signed photograph, were unfortunately burned in the Cyprus fire.

I rendered my last sad tribute of affectionate homage when in 1921 I accompanied Sir Herbert Samuel to the funeral of 'Abbas Effendi. We walked at the head of a train of all religions up the slope of Mount Carmel, and I have never known a more united expression of regret and respect than was called forth by the utter simplicity of the ceremony.

BY COL. RAJA JAI PRITHVI BAHADUR SINGH,

Raja Of Bajang (Nepal)

Even as early as 1929 or perhaps even a little earlier, I used to hear the names of Bahá'u'lláh and Bahá'ísm; and in 1929, when I undertook a lecturing tour in Europe on the humanistic methods of promoting peace and unity among races, nations and individuals my attention was once again drawn to Bahá'u'lláh and his teachings by my friend Lady Blomfield, who gave me some books too on the subject. But my eyes were then too weak to permit any reading, and the need and urgency of some expert treatment for my eyes was in fact an additional reason for my leaving for Europe. Besides, I was then too full of my own philosophy of "Humanism," and was too busy with my own programme of lectures for Europe, and did not acquaint myself with any full details about the Bahá'ís and their tenets and principles. Perhaps I imagined that the Bahá'ís were some sort of religious or philosophical mystics, and I was not particularly interested in any mere mysticism or in any merely theoretical creed, however much its conclusions might be logical and satisfying to the intellect.

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When afterwards, in 1933, the Second Parliament of Religions or the World Fellowship of Faiths was held in Chicago, a conference inspired by the high ideals of mutual understanding, good-will, co-operation and peace and progress, and I went there to attend and participate in the conference, my attention was again drawn to the Bahá'í Faith by some of its followers there, who took me to their temple at Wilmette, Illinois, which was then under construction but was nearly finished, and showed me the nine gates and chambers of worship for the nine principal religions of the world. Naturally enough, I took it that Bahá'ísm was something like theosophy, which is interested in studying and comparing the respective merits of religions and in recognising their respective greatness, and which can therefore appeal only to the intellectual section of mankind and hardly appeal to the masses.

Later, in 1936, however, while I was in Rangoon, I had an opportunity-rather, the opportunity was thrust upon me-to acquaint myself more fully with the tenets and teachings of Bahá'ísm. Mr. S. Schopflocher, a Bahá'í from Canada, who was on a lecturing tour, was then in Rangoon, and I was asked to introduce him to the public and to preside over a lecture of his. Therefore I secured a few books on the subject, and on reading them, I was struck with the remarkable fact that Bahá'ísm is a faith, which not merely recognises the respective merits of the world religions, but goes a step further and teaches that all religions are One, all the religious seers, saints and prophets are the religious seers, saints and prophets of One religion only, that all mankind is One, and that we must think and feel and act in terms of brotherhood. "We must realise," as a Bahá'í very beautifully puts it, "that, as the aeroplane, radio and other instruments have crossed the frontiers drawn

upon the map, so our sympathy and spirit of one-ness should rise above the influences that have separated race from race, class from class, nation from nation and creed from creed. One destiny now controls all human affairs. The fact of world-unity stands out above all other interests and considerations."

Sometime back, in this year, Mr. N. R. Vakil, a Bahá'í gentleman of Surat, gave me a copy of the book, "The Bahá'í World: 1936-1938. Though I have not been able to read the whole book through, I find it is a mine of information, a regular cyclopaedia on the subject. It is interesting to read that the origin of the faith was in Persia, where a mystic prophet who took the name of "Báb" (which means "gate") began the mission among the Persians in the

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early part of the nineteenth century, that he and his disciples were persecuted by the Persian Government and were finally shot in 1850 that, notwithstanding the persecution, the movement spread under the able and inspiring leadership of Bahá'u'lláh, its principal prophet and exponent, that on his death in 1892 he was succeeded by his son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who continued the work till 1921, when, on his death his grandson, Shoghi Effendi, became the head of the community-a community now numbering nearly a million and spread in all the five continents of the world.

Though the traditionally orthodox Hindus, Muslims, Christians, etc., may not agree to call themselves Bahá'ís or even to subscribe to its main tenet, viz., that all religions are One, I think that the really enlightened among them can have no conscientious objection and will indeed wholeheartedly subscribe to it.

Another important aspect of the Bahá'í Faith is its absolutely non-political nature. In the "Golden Age of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh" Shoghi Effendi categorically rules out any participation by adherents of the Faith, either individually or collectively, in any form of activity which might be interpreted as an interference in the political affairs of any particular government. So that, no government need apprehend any sort of danger or trouble from Bahá'ísm.

On the whole, the perusal of the book, "The Bahá'í World: 1936-1938, has deeply impressed me with the belief that the principles of Bahá'ísm, laying stress as they do on the One-ness of mankind, and being directed as they are towards the maintenance of peace, unity and co-operation among the different classes, creeds and races of people, will go a long way in producing a healthy atmosphere in the world for the growth of Fellowship and Brotherhood of Man. Further, I see no harm in the followers of other faiths accepting these main principles of Bahá'ísm, wherein, I think, they can find nothing against the teachings of their own prophets, saints and seers. I rather think that by accepting these main principles of Bahá'ísm they will help in

hastening the establishment of a New World Order, an idea perhaps first clearly conceived by Bahá'u'lláh and which every thinking man will now endorse as a "consummation to be devoutly wished for."

An article in the January (1922) number of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland

The death of 'Abbas Effendi, better known since he succeeded his father, Bahá'u'lláh, thirty years ago as 'Abdu'l-Bahá, deprives

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Persia of one of the most notable of her children and the East of a remarkable personality, who has probably exercised a greater influence not only in the Orient but in the Occident, than any Asiatic thinker and teacher of recent times. The best account of him in English is that published in 1903 by G. P. Putnam's Sons under the title of the "Life and Teachings of 'Abbas Effendi" compiled by Myron H. Phelps chiefly from information by Bahiyyih Khanum. She states that her brother's birth almost coincided with the "manifestation" of Mirza 'Ali Muhammad the Báb (24th May, 1844), and that she was his junior by three years. Both dates are put three years earlier by another reputable authority, but in any case both brother and sister were mere children when, after the great persecution of the Bábís in 1852 their father Bahá'u'lláh and his family were exiled from Persia first to Baghdad (1852-63) then to Adrianople (1863-8), and lastly to 'Akká (St. Jean d'Acre) in Syria, where Bahá'u'lláh died on 28th May, 1892, and which his son 'Abdu'l-Bahá was only permitted to leave at will after the Turkish Revolution in 1908. Subsequently to that date he undertook several extensive journeys in Europe and America, visiting London and Paris in 1911, America in 1912, Budapest in 1913, and Paris, Stuttgart, Vienna, and Budapest in the early summer of 1914. In all these countries he had followers, but chiefly in America, where an active propaganda had been carried on since 1893 with very considerable success, resulting in the formation of important Bahá'í Centers in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and other cities. One of the most notable practical results of the Bahá'í ethical teaching in the United States has been, according to the recent testimony of an impartial and qualified observer, the establishment in Bahá'í circles in New York of a real fraternity between black and white, and an unprecedented lifting of the "color bar," described by the said observer as "almost miraculous."

Ample materials exist even in English for the study of the remarkable personality who has now passed from our midst and of the doctrines he taught; and especially authoritative are the works of M. Hippolyte Dreyfus and his wife (formerly Miss Laura Clifford Barney), who combine intimacy and sympathy with their hero with sound knowledge and wide experience. In their works and in that of Mr. Myron H. Phelps must be sought those particulars which it is impossible to include in this brief obituary notice.

[The following passage may
contain scanning errors]

[1] Un autre détail que je tiens de
source première est celui-ci. Quelques sectaires, qu'on voulait amener à
retractation, furent attachés à la gueule de canons amorcée d'une
mèche longue et brûlant lentement. On leur proposait de couper la
mèche, s'ils reniaient le Báb. Eux, les bras tendus ne le firent pas, le
suppliaient de hater et de venir bien vite consommer leur bonheur.

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