



commitment may have contributed to his interest in the Bab. In a letter dated 6 Jan 1870 he wrote, "We are all very much interested in the Babi sect. The chief of the sect in this city often calls on Mr. Labaree and he has had several long and interesting conversations with him." [3]

In 1894 his paper entitled "Babism - Its Doctrines and Relations to Mission Work" was published in vol. 17 (pp 894-904) of the *Missionary Review of the World* [online here].

His son William was born in Persia and, after schooling in America, became a missionary and served with his father. He also carried on his father's interest in the local people. As a student at Princeton Seminary in 1889 he had written, "My ambition is to become a competent Orientalist along some line and add some light to the rays that come from the East, and to do it so as to help the missionary work.[4]

When his father died in 1895 Rev. William Shedd became the Head of the mission station, again following his father's lead. It was at his father's death that he sent to E.G. Browne a copy of Dr. Cormick's letter describing the Bab.[5] This action will assure him and the other Christian missionaries a place in Bahá'í history books.

By 1899 he had added to his administrative, preaching, teaching, and circuit duties, an attempt to regularize the spelling of Syriac. He was also making progress on a Jewish version of the Sermon on the Mount and had written up a proposal for a new dictionary. These scholarly endeavors were interrupted by the revolutionary turmoil of 1906.

From that time civil order increasingly deteriorated reaching near total collapse of all Persian administration during the first World War. At first the separate Missions set up their own courts to settle issues among Christians and between Christians and Muslims. Eventually, "not only Christians came to him for judgement and protection, but also Mohammedans who could not trust their own leaders." [6] Gradually Shedd found thrust upon him the responsibilities normally carried out by the government, this was officially recognized on 1 Jan 1918 when he was officially designated Honorary Vice Consul for the United States Government.

The Turkish troops advancing through Persia eventually succeeded in over-running Urumiyeh. There were hopes that the British army could arrive before the Turkish, but that was not to be. Thousands of refugees who had collected in the area, plus thousands of residents, including the missionaries fled before the Turks. Hundreds contracted cholera in flight and died en route, including Rev. Shedd. His remains were later retrieved and buried in Tabriz. During the sack of Urumiyeh and the complete destruction of the mission all of Shedd's scholarly work was destroyed. His legacy is the only western description of the Bab.

Appendix: Bibliography of works by John & William Shedd about the Bábí and Bahá'í faiths:

John H. Shedd, "Babism: Its Doctrine and Relation to Mission Work," *The Missionary Review of the World*, vol. 17, Dec 1894, pp.894-904 [online here].

William A. Shedd, "Babism: A Warning," *Evangelical Christendom*, Nov-Dec 1911, p.199. Online at [hathitrust.org](http://hathitrust.org).

William A. Shedd, "Bahatism and its Claims," *Missionary Review of the World*, vol. 34, Oct 1911, pp.727-734.

William A. Shedd, "Bahatism and its Claims," *Evangelical Christendom*, Nov-Dec 1911, p.210-214.

William A. Shedd, "A Most Interesting Document on the Bab," *Moslem World*, vol. 5, #1, Jan 1915, pp.111-112.

William A. Shedd, "Second Study," *The Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam* (J.H. Golden (ed.), 1915, pp.51-51, 57, 62-63, 74.

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Samuel M. Jackson, ed., *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*; New York & London, Funk and Wagnalls Co.: 1911, p. 388.

William A. Shedd, *The Life of John Haskell Shedd*, unpublished bound manuscript in the possession of Mrs. Louise Barker, Oskaloosa, Kansas, undated (circa 1911), p. 38

*The Life* p. 95

Mary Lewis Shedd, *The Measure of a Man: The Life of William Ambrose Shedd, Missionary to Persia*; New York, George H. Doran Co.: 1922, p. 52

Moojan Momen, *The Babi and Bahá'í Religions, 1844-1944: Some Contemporary Western Accounts*; Oxford, George Ronald: 1981, p. 74

*Measure*, p. 92

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