

THE BAHĀ'I WEEKLY

Beware of prejudice ; light is good in whatsoever lamp it is burning. A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may bloom. A star has the same radiance whether it shines from the East or from the West.—Abdul Baha.

Vol. I—No. 23

ISSUED ON 9th, 19th and 29th OF EVERY MONTH

9th September 1931

HIDDEN WORDS

OF

BAHĀ'U'LLĀH

(From the Persian)

[Translation by SHOGHI EFFENDI]

In the Name of the Lord of Utterance, the Mighty.

(24) O YE THAT ARE FOOLISH, YET HAVE A NAME TO BE WISE.

Wherefore wear ye the guise of the shepherd, yet inwardly are but wolves, intent upon My fold ? Ye are even as the star that precedeth the dawn, which appeareth radiant and luminous, and yet leadeth the wayfarers of My city astray into the paths of perdition.

(25) O FAIR IN SEMBLANCE YET INWARDLY FOUL !

Ye are even as clear yet bitter water, which to outward seeming is but crystal pure, but when proved by the divine assayer, not a drop thereof shall be accepted. Yea, the sunbeam is cast alike upon the dust and the mirror, yet differ they in reflection even as doth the star from the earth : nay, immeasurable is the difference !

(26) O MY FRIEND IN WORD !

Ponder a while. Hast thou ever heard that friend and foe should abide in one heart ? Cast out then the stranger, that the Friend may enter His home.

(To be continued)

TALKS BY ABDUL BAHĀ

PARIS, November 8, 1912.

All over the world one hears beautiful sayings extolled and noble precepts admired. All men say they love what is good, and hate everything that is evil ! Sincerity is to be admired, whilst lying is despicable. Faith is a virtue, and treachery is a disgrace to humanity. It is a blessed thing to gladden the hearts of men, and wrong to be the cause of pain. To be kind and merciful is right, while to hate is sinful. Justice is a noble quality and injustice an iniquity. That it is one's duty to be pitiful and harm no one, and to avoid jealousy and malice at all costs. Wisdom is the glory of man, not Ignorance ; Light, not Darkness ! It is a good thing to turn one's face toward God, and foolishness to ignore Him. That it is our duty to guide man upward, and not to mislead him and be the cause of his downfall. There are many more examples like unto these.

But all these sayings are but words and we see very few of them carried into the world of action. On the contrary, we perceive that men are carried away by passion and selfishness, each man thinking only of what will benefit himself even if it means the ruin of his brother. They are all anxious to make their fortune and care little or nothing for the welfare of others. They are concerned about their own peace and comfort, while the condition of their fellows troubles them not at all. Unhappily this is the road most men tread.

But Baha'i must not be thus ; they must rise above this condition. Actions must be more to them than words. By their actions they must be merciful and not

merely by their words. They must on all occasions confirm by their actions what they proclaim in words. Their deeds must prove their fidelity, and their actions must show forth Divine Light.

Let your actions cry aloud to the world that you are indeed Baha'i, for it is actions that speak to the world and are the cause of the progress of humanity.

If we are true Bahai's speech is not needed. Our actions will help on the world, will spread civilization, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop. Without action nothing in the material world can be accomplished, neither can words unaided advance a man in the Spiritual Kingdom. It is not through lip service only that the Elect of God have attained to holiness, but by patient lives of active service they have brought Light into the World.

Therefore strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God, and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope to the hopeless, shelter the destitutes.

This is the work of a true Baha'i, and this is what is expected of him. If we strive to do all this, then are we true Baha'i but if we neglect it, we are not followers of the Light, and we have no right to the name.

God, who sees all hearts, knows how far our lives are the fulfilment of our words.—Abdul Baha.

UNIVERSAL PEACE

Peace by no human will or power,
Can manufactured be;
No Hague Tribunal e'er can hold
Men's hearts in unity;
Enforced submission doth not mean
Peace to the earth hath come,
True unity doth not prevail,
Though hatred's voice be dumb.

The Peace alone which can endure,
And overcome all strife,
Is born within the heart of man,
The breath of Love and Life;
It casts aside all doubt and fear,
Each nation understood
Through education, knowledge, light
And Universal Good.

It knows that all humanity,
Is but One God-grown Tree,
And all are leaves, or buds or flowers
Living in unity;
Within Reality's great Realm;
Then why divisions wide?
All are the children of One God,
Whatever may betide.

So Universal Peace must come,
Through Universal Light;
When righteousness and Law prevail,
And not material Might,
No human power however strong,
Can cause all war to cease,
When man shall love his brother-man,
THEN—shall the world know PEACE.

—Louise R. Waite.

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" THE NEW AGE "

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The main features of the journal will be

- (1) Essays and articles on religious, social and cultural subjects from various modern authors
- (2) Translations of songs and sayings of the Sufis of Sind
- (3) Thoughts and biographies of the seers of ancient as well as modern Europe and Asia
- (4) Reviews of new books and magazines, and
- (5) Notes on the burning topics of the day,

The first issue of the journal is expected to be out in October. Subscription rates are kept low in order to make the journal within the reach of every pocket. Subscriptions are as follows :—

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WRITE TO—THE MANAGER,

" NEW AGE "

15, N. I. LINES, KARACHI.

Notes and News

THE STUDY CIRCLE IN LAHORE.

Regular Sunday Evening meetings of this circle have now started working at the residence of Professor Pritam Singh, M.A., 9, Langley Road, Lahore. Representatives of all the reform movements such as Arya-Smajists, Brahmos, Theosophists among the Hindus and some Muslims attend the circle. One person gives the lead on subjects like the Need of God or of Prophets and their Revelation and then a friendly discussion follows. It is hoped that good and great results will follow.

THE HAZIRATUL QUDS, KARACHI

We are glad to announce that the Baha'i Assembly of Rangoon has contributed Rs. 31 (thirty one) to the Building Fund.

Disarmament of the Spirit

“Not Armies, but Animosities”

BY FATHER BEDE JARRETT.

WE shall only have even that disarmament which in our day is possible by seeing things sane and whole. We cannot, for instance, hope to achieve an exact measure of disarmament unless we make use of experts in armaments to tell us what is really needed at any time. No one has appointed us judges of the needs of the nations. We have our duties, who are the teachers of the Gospel, but other men have their duties too. We have no right to fix the measured requirements of our fleets or armies, of the weapons needed for protection and defence. That must be done by those who know. Indeed, the expert is only harmful when he is a master dictating, whether he be an expert in war or medicine or education or in evolution. As servants of the community they are admirable and essential. As tyrants they do great wrong. We need them anyhow, especially here.

Nor should you think that the expert is averse from ideals. As a matter of fact, the expert who has had, or is likely to have, actual experience of war himself is usually less violent in his attitude to the enemy than are the civilians, who enter into no such personal relationships of understanding, experience and sympathy as do soldiers and sailors and those who fight the foe. That fact was most noticeable during the late war. To the population at home the German was known as the Hun, to the soldier and sailor he was Fritz or Jerry; even those who were wounded by him were more sympathetic to him than those who raged and were furious at home.

Indeed, when all is said and done, to the follower of Christ, what is worst in war is not death or bloodshed, but hate, hate which is not confined to war. War stirs passionate enmities; the alliances it provokes are not founded on a common love but a common hate; and hate precedes war, inspires it, inflames it. We must cast out hate. Disarmament of the spirit, that is our task who are Christ's followers. We are less concerned with fleets and armies, our business lies with the soul. We are not politicians, but teachers of the Gospel. We are to teach the law of Christ; it is for those called to the governance of

nations and indeed for all who share citizenship and its responsibilities, to say what is in practice the expression possible in our day of this particular following of the counsels of Christ.

Hate, then, is what we are to work against. we are to urge on men the Christian duty to disarm their souls. We have to deal not with armies but with animosities, not with cruisers but the heart's cruelty, not with guns but greed. And, furthermore, we cannot hope to get men to lay aside hate unless we can get them to substitute for it its supplanter, love; not love of men as the basis of world peace, but love of God. Few, for all their talk, can honestly love all mankind for mankind's sake. Much of it is not lovable to our human understanding or discovery; nor are we commanded to pretend that our neighbour is lovable to us for his own sake, which is uncertain; but we are commanded to love him for God's sake, which is eternal, and shall not change.

All our resolutions and affirmations, I am afraid, are likely to be of little service unless they are coupled with a personal love of God. Personal religion must be the basis of our disarmament, for what is the Government or Geneva but our larger selves! What are resolutions likely to effect in others that they have not first effected in ourselves?—THE INQUIRER, LONDON.

In Memoriam

Mrs. Claudia Coles, our beloved pioneer Baha'i sister, passed away at her home in London May 25th. Since last September Claudia had not been at all well, she was extremely frail, and failed much during the winter, to such an extent that she was not able to make the long trips to meetings. She grew weaker daily, and finally went to her eternal and radiant life.

One of her outstanding qualities was her generosity. One day a relative gave her a thousand dollars, and she rushed with it as quickly as she could to Mrs. de Lagnel, who was then in charge of Temple funds here, and said excitedly, “Here Lady, send this all to the Temple right away”. She was at the time working in the Government service here and was not wealthy. And that was not all she gave, either. She was wholly and absolutely devoted to the Word of God and was willing at all times to sacrifice for it.

Her spiritual enthusiasm was one of her greatest charms. She never was really very strong, and many of us remember how she would rush home from the office when she lived here, and give an afternoon tea to which she would invite many strangers. It was on such occasions that she would shine radiantly as a teacher. She was brilliant and at times would reach exalted heights. She was unique, fearless and indeed, she was one who always heralded the straight Teachings. Baha'u'llah's words, “Proclaim My Message before the people and do not fear”, might be considered her slogan, if you can use such a term about spiritual things. She knew the teachings and she had courage.

A Memorial Service for her has been held or is going to be held in every large centre in America. She was well known. Her good deeds have been legion; the half will never be known, for she was not one to herald these things. She gave liberally and spontaneously to everything that was for the Cause, and did as much as she could for those who were hungry and distressed. She never thought of herself; had she done so, she would have put into practice the divine injunction “Economy is a great treasure”, but she did possess and practise that other divine law “Generosity is a quality of God”. She was generous with herself; in giving herself to service at all times even when she was tired and sick enough to be in bed; and she was generous with all of her possessions.

She will be forever remembered, for her deeds and life are bound up with the history of the Cause in England and elsewhere. —MARIAM HANEY.

The Baha'i Weekly

(An English Weekly, devoted to the Baha'i Cause).

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9, Langley Road,
LAHORE (India).

What is Not Islam

BY SIR AMIN JUNG OF HYDERABAD (DECCAN).

In my previous Note I tried to sketch briefly what is true Islam. I now offer a few observations on, or illustrations of, what is *not* Islam. In order to know anything quite well, it is desirable not only to know what it *is* but also to know what it *is not*.

The religion taught by the Qur'an and the Traditions of our Prophet is Islam and not "Muhammadanism", as it is often named. Those who profess Islam are Muslims and not "Muhammadans", as they are called. We and our religion have been called after the name of Muhammad just as the terms Christians and Christianity have been derived from the name Christ. But "Muhammadanism" and "Muhammadans" are not at all the correct names of "Islam" and "Muslims" as you will presently see.

Observe that a pure Religion, such as true Islam, comes in between false Religions and mistaken or mixed Religions, just as the Quranic Path of Grace lies between the Path of Sin and the Path of Error. It is the mean between two extremes.

It is not Islam to believe that there has been no true religion besides Islam. Such an erroneous belief leads to intolerance, thereby begetting bigotry and fanaticism. It is contrary to the teaching of the Qur'an and the Prophet. The first verse of the second Sura commands us to believe in not only what was revealed to Muhammad but also in what was revealed to those who went before him. It clearly indicates that there are, and will ever be, many true religions of which Islam is one. Almost the first saying of our Prophet reported in collections of his traditions is "Whoever says 'there is no god but God', will attain Salvation" *i.e.*, will get eternal bliss. This shows clearly that all religions which inculcate belief in one God are true religions, are right Paths of Grace which lead to eternal bliss. Observe that most Muhammadans (not Muslims) of to-day have forgotten this principle and have therefore become intolerant fanatics, which accounts largely for the loss of political power of most Muhammadan Governments of modern times.

Neither is it Islam to believe that all religions are true. Such an erroneous belief leads to indifference thereby begetting caprice and impiety. It is obviously

contrary to the teaching of the Qur'an and the Prophet, for they both denounce many a false religion. If every body thinks that every religion is true, there will be no two men professing the same religion, and there will be no real agreement between their thoughts and actions. Co-operation among men (which is the root of Family, Society and State) would tend to become impossible. Note that it is the indifference to and the consequent impiety of some of the Muhammadans of to-day that accounts mostly for their lack of co-operation and for their loss of political power in modern times. Degradation is the lot of faithless Muslims, for as the Qur'an says, "Ye will be exalted only if ye be faithful Muslims".

From what has been said you can easily infer that we should adopt the mean between two extremes and must therefore believe that neither are all religions true nor are they all false, but that some religions are true and that Islam is one of them. The characteristic mark of true religions is belief in one God; and this indeed is the reason why Muslims are permitted to eat and live with, and even marry, Jewesses, Christians and others who believe in one God and possess sacred Scriptures.

I, for one, would not hesitate to call all Monotheists (Jews, Christians, and other Unitarians) Muslims, because they believe in one God; but I would not call them Momins, because they do not believe in God in accordance with the teaching of our Prophet. You know that our Creed consists of two parts:—

(i) There is no god but God.

(ii) And Muhammad is His Messenger.

Those who believe in the first part are Muslims (the peaceful) and those who believe in the first as well as the second part of the Creed are Momins (the faithful). Both Muslims and Momins are believers in one God; the only difference between them is that Muslims may not (like Momins) accept Muhammad as their guide in the belief. The Qur'an (iii. 8) defines Islam thus:—

Say ye; We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down (revealed) to us, and that which hath been sent to Abraham and

Obituary Notices

Word comes of the passing of two members of the original group formed in Spokane twenty-four years ago, by Mrs. Isabella Brittingham. Mr. Washington McCormick passed into the Abha Kingdom on November 27th, 1930, while engaged in giving the message, and Mr. Leon A. L'Ehmann at his home in Lynwood, California, on May 13th, 1931.

On Friday, May 15th, the body of W. H. Cline was laid to rest at Burlingame, California. A number of San Francisco and East Bay friends were present at the last ceremony, where Episcopalian and Baha'i prayers were offered for the departed. To Mrs. Cline, an active worker in the Burlingame Baha'i group, we send our heartfelt sympathy.

On April 3rd, Mrs. Elizabeth Scheffield, a beloved Baha'i sister of Brooklyn, N. Y., received the summons to enter the unseen world. Mrs. Scheffield has been a faithful, devoted, comprehending Baha'i for ten years or more, during which time her estimate of life and standards of living reflected the teachings of Baha'u'llah which were so dear to her. — BAHĀ'I NEWS (U. S. A.)

Ismail and Issac and Jacob and the tribes; and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus and that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between them and to God we are resigned (Muslims).

"There is no deity but God". Since God is One, His Revelation to Man cannot be other than one and the same for all time. There has therefore been and will ever be but one true religion. All the prophets from Adam to Muhammad received but one and the same Revelation.

Whenever any people went astray and deserted religion for idolatry a prophet arose among them to bring them back to righteousness. Each prophet or messenger of God did nothing but try to restore the universal religion to its pristine simplicity and purity.

It was only in interpreting the Revelation and applying it to the practical needs of their age, that successive prophets and their followers differed; and the differences gave rise to the so-called religions and religious systems of the world. — FROM "NOTES ON ISLAM".

The Plight of Mankind

(BY HORACE HOLLEY)

Compelled by the needs of a Faith which, as Shoghi Effendi has said, is still in its infancy, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly before this time have communicated with their fellow believers mainly in matters related to the internal affairs of the Cause. Neither time nor strength has been granted us to refer in any useful way to those larger problems pressing upon the Cause by reason of events and conditions in the outside world. A certain measure of time has apparently been providentially vouchsafed to the Bahā'īs during which might be founded and developed unhindered by the general public, the administrative institutions provided for the future society, and our capacity for unity and sacrifice tested, in the construction of the universal House of Worship.

The Guardian's communications, however, have from time to time interpreted world conditions and trends for us, preparing the believers gradually for the inevitable moment when we shall be called upon to bear witness to our Faith and uphold its teachings as the inspiration and order of the new age.

How soon this transitional period of public indifference will end we cannot say. But the fact that the construction of the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkar* coincides with an international depression beyond the power of present leaders to remedy or even understand, indicates for believers the swift fulfilment of every prophecy, and the manifestation of the supreme might of Bahā'u'llah as the risen Sun of Truth banishing the shadows of injustice and hate.

It seems eminently desirable, accordingly, to turn at this time to those words of Shoghi Effendi which refer to the crisis through which humanity is passing. As long ago as 1923 the Guardian declared: "Who can fail to recognize the sore need of bleeding humanity, in its present state of uncertainty and peril, for the regenerating Spirit of God manifested this Day so powerfully in this Divine Dispensation? Four years of unprecedented warfare and world cataclysms, followed by another four years of bitter disappointment and suffering, have stirred deeply the conscience of mankind, and opened the eyes of an unbelieving world to the Power of the Spirit that alone

can cure its sicknesses, heal its wounds, and establish the long-promised reign of undisturbed prosperity and peace."

In November of that same year: "And as to the world's evil plight, we need but recall the writings and sayings of Bahā'u'llah who, more than fifty years ago, declared in terms prophetic the prime cause of the ills and sufferings of mankind, and set forth their true and divine remedy. '*Should the Lamp of Religion be hidden*', He declares, '*Chaos and confusion will ensue*'. How admirably fitting and applicable are these words to the present state of mankind!"

This theme was continued a few months later (February 23, 1924): "The plight of mankind, the condition and circumstances under which we live and labour are truly disheartening, and the darkness of prejudice and ill-will enough to chill the stoutest heart. Disillusion and dismay are invading the hearts of peoples and nations, and the hope and vision of a united and regenerated humanity is growing dimmer and dimmer every day... Humanity, torn with dissension and burning with hate, is crying at this hour for a fuller measure of that love which is born of God, that love which in the last resort will prove the one solvent of its incalculable difficulties and problems."

The Guardian wrote in November 1924: "We have but to turn our eyes to the world without to realize the fierceness and the magnitude of the forces of darkness that are struggling with the dawning light of the Abha Revelation. Nations, though exhausted and disillusioned, have seemingly begun to cherish anew the spirit of revenge, of domination and strife. Peoples, convulsed by economic upheavals, are slowly drifting into two great opposing camps with all their menace of social chaos, class hatreds, and worldwide ruin. Races, alienated more than ever before, are filled with mistrust, humiliation and

fear, and seem to prepare themselves for a fresh and fatal encounter. Creeds and religions, caught in this whirlpool of conflict and passion, appear to gaze with impotence and despair at this spectacle of unceasing turmoil... Are we by our thoughts, our words, our deeds, whether individually or collectively, preparing the way?"

Nearly three years intervened between this message and the following words (October 18, 1927): "And now in conclusion, may I be permitted to direct your attention to the lesson which the trend of world events brings home to us - the little band of His chosen workers who, according to the intelligent efforts we exert, can prove ourselves the determining factor in the immediate fortunes of the society we live in. As we witness on all sides the growing restlessness of a restless age, we are filled with mixed feelings of fear and hope - fear, at the prospect of yet another deadly encounter, the inevitability of which is alas! becoming increasingly manifest; hope in the serene assurance that whatever cataclysm may yet visit humanity, it cannot but hasten the approaching era of universal and lasting peace so emphatically proclaimed by Bahā'u'llah."

The great issues interpreted for us by the Guardian have now unmistakably overtaken the world. As the normal activities of material civilization are interrupted, we must rely more and more upon our own Bahā'ī community to create means of co-operation corresponding to the divine teachings and permeated by the spirit of the Cause. In order to prepare ourselves for such a mission, let us study and ponder

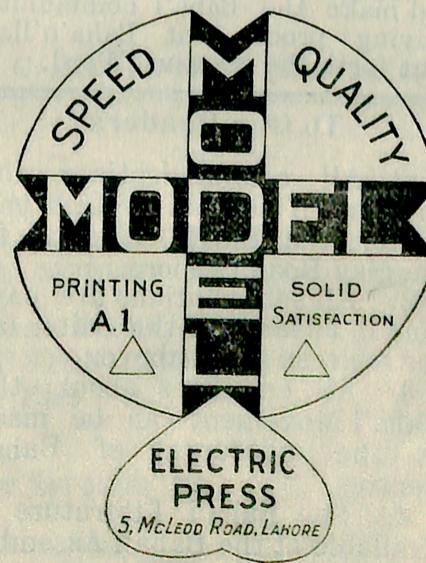
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continuously the laws, the counsels and the advices revealed by Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha, and in our local meetings strive for so true a unity and so prayerful an attitude that we may be collectively inspired to solve whatever spiritual and material problems may arise. To say, "I accept the Cause—I believe in the Revelation of Baha'u'llah" is not enough. Let us, through the mysterious power of consultation, limitless in its possibilities, endeavour to find ways of life wherein our faith, yielding up the station of the seed, may become a strong and fruitful tree.

The Master has said that the secrets of the economic world are divine in nature. "The disease which afflicts the body politic is lack of love and absence of altruism. In the hearts of men no real love is found. . . . The spiritual teachings of the religion of God can alone create this love, unity and accord in human hearts. Until the minds of men become united, no important matter can be accomplished. At present Universal Peace is a matter of great importance, but unity of conscience is essential, so that the foundation of this matter may become secure, its establishment firm and its edifice strong."

Unlike the social plans promoted by various governments, religious leaders and public agencies to remedy the present ills of mankind, the teachings of Baha'u'llah aim first at the hearts, and make social evolution depend upon the mysterious influences of the spirit and not merely upon outer laws and ordinances. His World Order, so rational and complete, is still concealed from unbelievers who have abandoned the ways of God. Ours is the sacred task of attaining that "unity of conscience" which alone will release the beneficent forces of humanity, and make the Baha'i community a living proof that Baha'u'llah sent forth the creative Word.

To Our Readers

1. All communications for publication should reach the Editor, the Baha'i Weekly, 9, Langley Road, Lahore.

2. All subscriptions are payable in advance to the editor at the address given above.

3. All enquiries about the Baha'i Movement can be made at the addresses of Baha'i Centres.

4. The Baha'i Literature is available at the Baha'i Assembly c/o National Hotel Poona.

HOW I BECAME A BAHĀ'I

ANONYMOUS

The following account of a religious experience—the seeking for and finding of that which satisfies the soul—is written by a member of the Baha'i Youth Group in an eastern city. It well demonstrates how the youth of to-day are on the highway of independent investigation of Truth.—*The Baha'i Magazine*.

My religious training was received in a Christian church. When I was a very little girl, I was enrolled in the beginners' department of the Presbyterian Sunday School. My attendance there every Sunday was as much a matter of course as my attendance at the public school on the other days of the week. Some of my teachers were beautiful souls and unusually spiritual. When I grew older, I joined the Church and the Christian Endeavour Society. I then attended four services every Sunday; Sunday School and Church in the morning, Christian Endeavour and Church in the evening, and in addition sang in the choir. I even took a teachers' training course and then taught a class for a short time.

Trained in a knowledge of the Bible and Christianity, I believed, as all good orthodox Christians believe, that Christ was the only divine revelator and Christianity the only true religion. Buddha, Muhammad and the other prophets were all false, so their religions were untrue. The missionary books that I read more or less proved this to me. It almost seemed that the highest calling in life was to be a Christian missionary to the heathen in foreign lands. I was extremely religious by nature, so I liked books and articles on religious subjects. If I looked through a magazine, I would read the religious article and then throw the magazine aside.

This extensive reading broadened me considerably, for many articles written by people of different beliefs arrested my attention and not only interested but deeply impressed me. I began to realize that much of the Bible was written in symbolism.

To be an active member of the Christian Endeavour Society of the Presbyterian Church, one has to sign a pledge to read the Bible every day. Admitting to myself that I had not kept this pledge, my conscience troubled me. I therefore resolved to read the Bible through, and started with the New Testament, intending to read at least one verse every night before retiring. I found

myself reading, instead of a few verses, several chapters. Somehow, to read from the Word of God when the house is quiet and one can truly concentrate is more beneficial than all the sermons and training one receives from teachers. I felt Christ's power and greatness as I never had before and my love for Him was strengthened to a great degree. I read the New Testament through in a very short time, and then started on the Old, but my interest in it was not as great. Certain parts, like the Psalms, I loved, but some of the history and wars seemed very tiresome. When I meditated on the New Testament, I felt that I would like to understand some of the verses which apparently seemed contradictory, and I longed to understand "Revelations" and some of the symbolism. I was not satisfied. I was really seeking to understand the Bible.

My father had been a Baha'i for several years and, without any knowledge of the teachings, the rest of the family had always opposed him. We thought it some peculiar cult, one of those many false religions. He tried to read to us and to get us to read from the teachings, but we thought that in order to be loyal to Christ, whom we truly loved, we should turn a deaf ear to everything he said upon the subject. Strange, how willing I was to read about *New Thought* and other sects, and how I resisted any suggestion to read the teachings of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

One memorable night, however, I was alone in the house. The town library was closed, and there was nothing about the house that I seemed especially to want to read. The bookcase was in my father's room. I went in and looked over the books. Nothing looked interesting. With my usual instinct for choosing something religious, I picked up "Some Answered Questions" by 'Abdu'l-Baha. My first thought was how much I would like some questions answered, but felt very sceptical about 'Abdu'l-Baha's being able to answer them satisfactorily; just some more theorizing, and I could theorise about the meaning of the Bible just as

well as anyone else and was just as apt to be correct in my theories. I opened the book and glanced over the chapter headings. My interest was aroused. The very subjects upon which I wanted more light were discussed. I started to read. I became amazed. I felt great power in the Words,—the same power that I felt when reading the Words of Christ. This teacher likewise spoke *with authority*. It was not like reading other books and articles on religion. I became thrilled. The same Voice which spoke through Christ was speaking through 'Abdu'l-Baha. I was more and more aware of the power and authority with which He spoke. I did not put that marvellous book down until I had finished every word in it.

I not only read it but I drank in the meaning as one starved. I felt like a person who had stepped from a room dimly lighted by a candle, into a room flooded with electric light. Everything was clear. 'Abdu'l-Baha's logic was perfect. He left no room for argument or difference of opinion.

To me the Baha'i Revelation fulfilled the second coming of the Lord. It had not occurred, to be sure, as I had imagined it would, and as the Christian world imagined it would, but "as a thief in the night" He had come

and gone. The reason all of the Christians had not recognized Him when He came, was because they interpreted His coming literally, just as the Jews had done when Christ appeared, and so they, too, were prevented from recognizing Him as the promised Messiah. To interpret literally is to defy science and reason.

The spiritual meanings of the signs and symbols regarding the second coming are clearly explained in the Baha'i teachings, and explained in such a way that they agree with science and reason. It would be beyond the scope of this article to explain them here.

How much more reasonable it is to believe, as 'Abdu'l-Baha teaches, that God has not only sent Christ to train just a part of the people of the world in the things of the spirit and has left the rest to grope in darkness all these years, but that He has also sent all of the other great prophets, Buddha, Muhammad and others. 'Abdu'l-Baha says that each Prophet was sent by the one true God to teach the one true religion, but only in accordance with the capacity of the people to whom He appeared. Our capacity is much greater today, so Baha'u'llah has given us meat instead of milk, as was promised in the Bible. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye

think not, the Son of Man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?"—Matt. 24: 44, 45.

Since all the founders of the great religions of the world were sent by the one true God to teach the one true religion, man-made theology and forms which were introduced after the Prophets had left this world, were the causes of the differences in the beliefs of the peoples of the various religions. 'Abdu'l-Baha shows in "Some Answered Questions" what Muhammad accomplished among those wild Arabian tribes, and one cannot help seeing that more than human power was needed for this resurrection of souls. The same thing is true of all the great spiritual teachers. Muhammad was only taken as an example. The symbolism of the Bible, which no one had ever been able to understand, was explained so that it agreed with science and reason.

The next morning, to the amazement of my family, I stated that I believed 'Abdu'l-Baha was a Divine Messenger of God; that the second coming of the Lord was fulfilled in the person of Baha'u'llah. How sorry I was thereafter, for my human pre-

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judices as I so often read these Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahā.

" Beware of prejudice ! Light is good in whatsoever lamp it is burning. A rose is beautiful in whatsoever garden it may bloom. A star has the same radiance if it shines from the East or the West."

My father rejoiced exceedingly over my great spiritual happiness and suggested a course of reading for me. I read all of the Bahā'ī books which we had, and then went up in the attic and read back numbers of *The Bahā'ī Magazine* for hours at a time. When everything had been read and understood by both mind and heart to the extent of my capacity, I longed to interest others so that they, too, would read. Nothing has such power as the Word of God as spoken through His chosen Messenger. " God, and God alone has the power to do whatever He wills, and the greatest proof of a Manifestation of God is the creative power of His word—its effectiveness to change and transform all human affairs and to triumph over all human opposition. Through the word of the prophets, God announces His will, and the immediate or subsequent fulfillment of that Word is the clearest proof of the Prophet's claim and genuineness of His inspiration."

Those who have read the Words of God the Teachings for this New Day as spoken by Bahā'u'llah, have laid aside their racial, religious and national prejudices. Colored and white, Jews, Christians, Muhammadans, and others, occidentals and orientals, are associating in perfect harmony.

In conclusion it is evident that I became a Bahā'ī because I was not satisfied with the religious knowledge I possessed. I was seeking for Truth always, and the reading of this book** made "the crooked things straight". The illuminating teachings I found therein swept the path which leadeth unto real life clear of "superstitious fancies". I had found that which satisfied me, a religion to live for or to die for. And from that time I could truthfully state that I not only have mere faith about religion, but I know. And only the Word of God could have awakened me to the Divine Realities.

** "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" by Dr. J. E. Esslemont.

*** Some Answered Questions."

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All this Literature can be had from the Bahā'ī Assembly, National Hotel, POONA or through the Bahā'ī Weekly, 9, Langley Road LAHORE.