

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

(BY M. A. MAJID, M.A.)

I

The editor has asked me to write for his Weekly a critical estimate of the Ahmadi Movement. I am convinced that the best way to be impartial is to be sympathetic. And I have no mind to depart from this rule of tried scientific value.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian was born about the year 1839. Not much is known of his infancy and early manhood. We learn on his own authority that he was put under the best teachers available. He received the customary education in Arabic grammar and the Persian classics. After finishing his education, which lasted quite a number of years, he went to Sialkot and served there as a petty official in a court of law. Those who came into contact with him there have borne testimony to his devotion to religious study and contemplation.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's family had owned, from the Mughal times a large landed property, of the major portion of which they were deprived by the Sikh hordes that sacked and plundered wherever they went, in the anarchy that followed Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death. Ghulam Murtaza, the father of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was anxious to recover the lost estate. The annexation of the Punjab by the British in 1848 lit a candle in his brain. He indulged in endless litigation but all to no purpose. Ghulam Ahmad did not share his father's interest in the law-suits with which the latter had encumbered himself. It was not at all seldom that the father reproached the son for his extreme unworldliness.

For a thorough appreciation of Ghulam Ahmad's mission it is

(Concluded from page 1.)

come in truth enlightened, and progress ever onward and upward to the Kingdom of God. Then shall your hearts be prepared to receive the glad tidings, your eyes shall be opened and you will see the Glory of God; your ears shall be unstopped and you will hear the call of the Kingdom, and with tongue made eloquent shall you call men to the realization of the Divine Power and Love of God!

PARIS :

2nd Novr. 1912. } ABDUL BAHĀ.

necessary to dwell a little on the environment that produced him and with which he had to contend all his life. The political degeneration of the Muslims had also brought their religious degeneration. And there were three danger spots which exposed Muslim India to not a few devitalising influences. In the first place, the Christian missionaries from Europe and America were flooding the Indian sub-continent to propagate their faith. Backed by the prestige of English paramountcy they were an invincible lot. Their pretensions to superior culture could not fail to attract many. Their enterprises were generously financed by Western countries. This gave them an advantage which could amply make up for many of their disadvantages.

In the second place, the Arya Samaj Movement, led by Swami Daya Nand had decided to reclaim the lost sheep of Hinduism gone over to Islam. The ignorant Musalman had no effective weapon against these attacks. His condition was all the more critical because of the priest-class, which was parasitical, in the extreme. The misfortunes of Islam have always been due to its preachers who interpret religion as a means of their own self-aggrandisement. To the Mullah, his bread and butter is more important than his conscience or religion. The Mullah has set afloat a huge library of volumes which has encouraged the Christian missionary and the Arya Samaj propagandist to satirise Islam and the Prophet. To

his self-seeking designs are due the dissensions in the Muslim camp. A divided Islam could not face its enemies as courageously and confidently as it had done in the past.

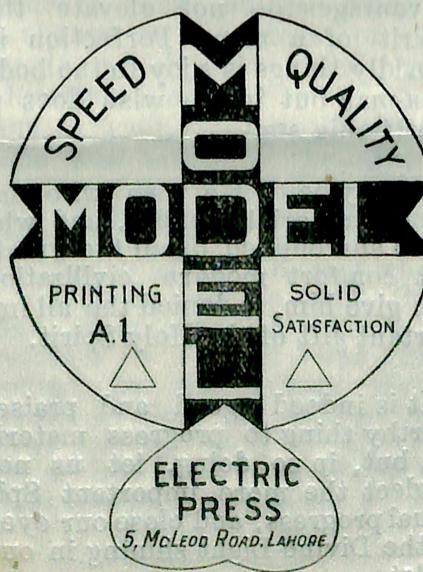
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's missionary career began in the early eighties of the nineteenth century. He wrote a book entitled *Barahin-i-Ahmadiya* (Ahmad's arguments) which found wide acceptance with his community, for it met very candidly and successfully the points of the Hindu and Christian missionaries against Islam. The Mirza was hailed as a defender of Islam. His reputation as a scholar and as a devout Muslim continued to increase till he advanced his claim to the position of the promised latter-day Saviour of Islam.

The claim of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his work would be dealt with separately. In the instalment that will follow I shall be concerned with his work. His claim bears two extremely conflicting interpretations that divided his followers into two hostile camps six years after his death.

Whatever view of the movement the reader might take in the end, nothing can make us withhold from Ghulam Ahmad the liberal and ungrudging tribute that he deserves. His followers were the first to undertake the propagation of Islam in the West. And without in anyway prejudging our conclusions, we may say that it is one of their number who translated the Quran into English, nailing for the first time the lies of interested missionaries to the counter.

The followers of Ghulam Ahmad are characterised by a rare devotion to their faith. They are capable of enduring any trial, hardship or misery for the sake of their conscience. The Ahmadi community has a number of martyrs to its credit which did not increase much because of British rule in India.

(To be continued)



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The Bahā'ī Weekly

NOTES AND NEWS

[BY EDITOR.]

June 29, 1931.

HOLIDAYS

There are nine great holidays in the Bahā'ī Cause. These are the first, ninth and twelfth days of the Ridvan Feast, beginning April 21. This is the greatest celebration of all, marking as it does the Declaration of Bahā'u'llah. The other holidays are the Nawruz Feast, March 21; the Declaration of the Bab, May 23; the ascension of Bahā'u'llah, May 28; the Martyrdom of the Bab, July 9; the birthday of Bahā'u'llah, Nov. 12 and the birthday of the Bab, October 20. These occasions and the memorial services held because of them will be generally observed in future and make them all holidays.

MARTHA ROOT

It has been our aim to make this report as impersonal as was the Convention itself. To record or even mention the beautiful things said by each delegate is beyond the realm of the possible. Thus have we passed by the names! But in the case of Martha, the outstanding personality of the Convention, an exception must be made. Our great international teacher, whose simplicity, severance, devotion, self-sacrifice and ceaseless activity render her a magnet of attraction to numberless souls, was voted the freedom of the floor, a privilege which she did not use unless called. Each time she spoke eager ears and hearts devoured her words. Her clear grasp of the teachings, prayerfulness, humility, unfailing kindness, fearlessness

and love truly make a sign of God. "Like unto a bird she has flown around the world." Always on the wing, ever singing the songs of Abha, how wonderful is she!

Two great meetings were held at both of which Miss Martha Root spoke with impressiveness and power. At the first Miss Root spoke of the progress of the Cause in Germany, Bulgaria, Roumania, Czecko-Slovakia, Turkey, China and Japan, her meeting with educators, statesmen, crowned heads and other great personages, and their receptivity and interest. Germany especially, she reported, is making a profound study of the Cause. A wonderful atmosphere came to the meeting when the chairman, in preparation for her address, read Prof. Browne's description of Bahā'u'llah and the latter's exalted message of the Most Great Peace.—*Bahā'ī News.*

STATUS AND FUNCTION OF INTERNATIONAL BUREAU AT GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

"Geneva, is auxiliary to the centre in Haifa. It does not assume the place of Haifa, but is auxiliary. It exercises no international authority. It does not try to impose but helps and acts as intermediary between Haifa and other centres. It is international because it links the countries and work is accomplished more easily: it is like a distributing centre."

Friends travelling in Europe particularly, are advised that the Geneva Bureau is prepared to provide correct addresses of authentic centres wherever the Cause is represented. Geneva is also a distributing centre for all Bahā'ī literature.

A Tablet to the Americas

BAHĀ'U'LLAH

O rulers of America, and Presidents of the Republics!

Hearken to the strains of the Dove, on the branch of eternity, singing the melody "There is no God but Me, the everlasting, the forgiver, the generous." Adorn the temple of dominion with the embroidered garment of justice and virtue, and crown its head with the diadem of the celebration of your Lord, the creator of heaven and earth,—thus the day-spring of the Names commands you on the part of the One all-knowing and wise. The promised One has appeared in this exalted station, whereat all creation, both seen and unseen smiled and rejoiced.

O people, avail yourselves of the Day of God. Verily, it is better for you to meet Him in this day than in any upon which the sun rises, were you of those who know!

O concourse of statesmen! Harken to that which is raised from the Day spring of Greatness that "There is no God but Me, the speaker, the all-knowing." Assist with the hands of justice the broken-hearted, and crush the great oppressors with the scourges of the commands of your Lord, the powerful, the wise!

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Travels of Abdul-Baha

IN
EGYPT, EUROPE AND AMERICA

BY

Late Mirza Mahmood Zargani.

[Translated by the Editor]

IX

8th April 1912.

Abdul Baha said: "As we moved out of Ramla, no one thought we would traverse the ocean with such ease and in such comfort, and the passengers on the boat said, that the sea had never been so calm before".

As the boat anchored, the luggage was got together and preparations were made for landing. The press representatives were immediately on the boat and came up to Abdul Baha. He said to them: "Our object is no other than to establish Universal Peace and Oneness of mankind." He told them how he made a journey to London and Paris with the same object and now he had come to America at the request of the Peace organisations in that country.

Q. How can Universal Peace be established?

A. It can come by a change in the thoughts of the people and it was the one remedy for all the ills from which human society suffered to-day.

When questioned by the press representative as to the real disease of the world, Abdul Baha in reply said, that the greatest disease was war among nations.

The hard-earned incomes of the people were being spent on the military and expenses connected with armaments were daily on the increase and the burden was very heavy indeed.

Look at Turkey and Italy! What havoc has war wrought in those countries! Parents have been deprived of their children and sons have lost their fathers and what a wicked waste of wealth these wars have been!

This disease can be cured only by having universal peace. If all nations were to give up

HISTORY OF THE BAHĀ'Ī CAUSE

ABDUL BAHĀ

To-night I wish to tell you something of the history of the Bahā'ī Revelation.

The Blessed Perfection Bahā'u'llah belonged to the royal family of Persia. From earliest childhood he was distinguished among his relatives and friends. They said, "This child has extraordinary power." In wisdom, intelligence and as a source of new knowledge he was advanced beyond his age and superior to his surroundings. All who knew him were astonished at his precocity. It was usual for them to say, "Such a child will not live" for it is commonly believed that precocious children do not reach maturity. During the period of youth the Blessed Perfection did not enter school. He was not willing to be taught. This fact is well established among the Persians of Teheran. Nevertheless he was capable of solving the difficult problems of all who came to him. In whatever meeting, scientific assembly or theological discussion he was found, he became the authority of explanation upon intricate and abstruse questions presented.

Until his father passed away Bahā'u'llah did not seek position or political station notwithstanding his connection with the government. This occasioned surprise and comment. It was frequently said "How is it that a young man of such keen intelligence and subtle perception does not seek lucrative appointments? As a matter of fact every position is open to him". This

war then all of us will become comfortable. But this will not come to pass unless there is a change in the ideas of the people which can come with education alone.

Then a photograph of Abdul Baha was taken to be put in the newspapers and the friends who had come to welcome Abdul Baha were asked to go to the house of Mr. Kenny where Abdul Baha was to meet them that afternoon. A poem of welcome in Persian was then recited by the author giving thanks to God and asking blessings for the soil of America which had been touched by the Holy feet of Abdul Baha.

is an historical statement fully attested by the people of Persia.

He was most generous, giving abundantly to the poor. None who came to him were turned away. The doors of his house were open to all. He always had many guests. This unbounded generosity was conducive to greater astonishment from the fact that he sought neither position nor prominence. In commenting upon this his friends said he would become impoverished, for his expenses were many and his wealth becoming more and more limited. "Why is he not thinking of his own affairs?" they inquired of each other: but some who were wise declared: "This personage is connected with another world; he has something sublime within him that is not evident now; the day is coming when it will be manifested." In truth the Blessed Perfection was a refuge for every weak one, a shelter for every fearing one, kind to every indigent one, lenient and loving to all creatures.

He became well-known in regard to these qualities before His Holiness the Bab appeared. Then Bahā'u'llah declared the Bab's mission to be true and promulgated his teachings. The Bab announced that the greater manifestation would take place after him and called the promised one "Him whom God would manifest," saying that nine years later the reality of his own mission would become apparent. In his writing he stated that in

To Our Readers

1. All communications for publication should reach the Editor, the Bahā'ī 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 Bahā'ī Movement can be made at the addresses of Bahā'ī Centres.
4. The Bahā'ī Literature is available at the Bahā'ī Assembly c/o National Hotel Poona.

History of the Baha'i Cause

(Continued from page 4.)

the ninth year this expected one would be known; in the ninth year they would attain to all glory and felicity; in the ninth year they would advance rapidly. Between Baha'u'llah and the Bab there was communication privately. The Bab wrote a letter containing three hundred and sixty derivatives of the root "Baha". The Bab was martyred in Tabriz, and Baha'u'llah, exiled into Irak Arabi in 1852, announced himself in Baghdad. For the Persian Government had decided that as long as he remained in Persia the peace of the country would be disturbed: therefore he was exiled in the expectation that Persia would become quiet. His banishment, however, produced the opposite effect. New tumult arose and the mention of his greatness and influence spread everywhere throughout the country. The proclamation of his manifestation and mission was made in Baghdad. He called his friends together there and spoke to them of God. Afterwards he left the city and went alone into the mountains of Kurdistan where he made his abode in caves and grottoes. A part of this time he lived in the city of Sulimaniyye. Two years passed during which neither his friends nor family knew just where he was.

Although solitary, secluded and unknown in his retirement, the report spread throughout Kurdistan that this was a most remarkable and learned personage gifted with a wonderful power of attraction. During this period Baha'u'llah lived in poverty. His garments were those of the poor and needy. His food was that of the indigent and lowly. An atmosphere of majesty haloed him as the sun at midday. Everywhere he was greatly revered and beloved.

After two years he returned to Baghdad. Friends he had known in Sulimaniyye came to visit him. They found him in his accustomed environment of ease and affluence and were astonished at the appointments of one who had lived in seclusion under such frugal conditions in Kurdistan.

The Persian Government believed the banishment of the Blessed Perfection from Persia would be the extermination of his

cause in that country. These rulers now realized that it spread more rapidly. His prestige increased, his teachings became more widely circulated. The chiefs of Persia then used their influence to have Baha'u'llah exiled from Baghdad. He was summoned to Constantinople by the Turkish authorities. While in Constantinople he ignored every restriction, especially the hostility of ministers of state and clergy. The official representatives of Persia again brought their influence to bear upon the Turkish authorities and succeeded in having Baha'u'llah banished from Constantinople to Adrianople, the object being to keep him as far away as possible and render his communication difficult. Nevertheless the cause still spread and strengthened.

Finally they consulted together and said, "We have banished Baha'u'llah from place to place but each time he is exiled his cause is more widely extended, his proclamation increases in power and day by day his lamp is becoming brighter. This is due to the fact that we have exiled him to large cities and populous centres. Therefore we will send him to a penal colony as a prisoner so that all may know he is the associate of murderers, robbers and criminals; in a short time he and his followers will perish." The Sultan of Turkey then banished him to the prison of Akka in Syria.

When Baha'u'llah arrived at Akka, through the power of God he was able to hoist his banner. His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun and the illumination of his cause expanded from the east to the west. Inside prison

walls he wrote epistles to all the kings and rulers of nations summoning them to arbitration and Universal Peace. Some of the kings received his words with disdain and contempt. One of these was the Sultan of the Ottoman kingdom.

Napoleon III of France did not reply. A second epistle was addressed to him. It stated: "I have written you an epistle before this, summoning you to the cause of God but you are of the heedless. You have proclaimed that you were the defender of the oppressed; now it hath become evident that you are not. Nor are you kind to your own suffering and oppressed people. Your actions are contrary to your own interests and your kingly pride must fall. Because of your arrogance God shortly will destroy your sovereignty, France will flee away from you and you will be overwhelmed by a great conquest."

There will be lamentation and mourning, women bemoaning the loss of their sons." This arraignment of Napoleon III was published and spread.

Read it and consider; one prisoner, single and solitary, without assistant or defender, a foreigner and stranger imprisoned in the fortress of Akka writing such letters to the Emperor of France and Sultan of Turkey. Reflect upon this, how Baha'u'llah upraised the standard of his cause in prison. Refer to history. It is without parallel. No such thing has happened before that time nor since; a prisoner and an exile advancing his cause and spreading his teachings broadcast so that eventually he became powerful enough to conquer the very king who banished him.

His cause spread more and more. The Blessed Perfection was a prisoner twenty-five years. During all this time he was subjected to the indignities and revilement of the people. He was persecuted, mocked and put in chains. In Persia his properties were pillaged and his possessions confiscated. First, banishment from Persia to Baghdad; then to Constantinople; then to Adrianople; finally from Roumelia to the prison fortress of Akka.

During his lifetime he was intensely active. His energy was unlimited. Scarcely one night passed in restful sleep. He bore these ordeals, suffered

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History of the Baha'i Cause

(Concluded from page 5.)

these calamities and difficulties in order that a manifestation of selflessness and service might become apparent in the world of humanity; that the "Most Great Peace" should become a reality; that human souls might appear as the angels of heaven; that heavenly miracles would be wrought among men; that human faith should be strengthened and perfected; that the human mind be developed to its fullest capacity in the temple of the body; and man become the reflection and likeness of God, even as it hath been revealed in the Bible; "We shall create man in our own image".

Briefly: the Blessed Perfection bore all these ordeals and calamities in order that our hearts might become enkindled and radiant, our spirits be glorified, our faults become virtues, our ignorance transformed into knowledge; in order that we might attain the real fruits of humanity and acquire heavenly graces; although pilgrims upon earth we might travel the road of the heavenly kingdom; although needy and poor we might receive the treasures of life eternal. For this has he borne these difficulties and sorrows.

Trust all to God. The lights of God are resplendent. The blessed Epistles are spreading. The blessed teachings are promulgated throughout the East and West. Soon you will see that the heavenly words have established the oneness of the world of humanity. The banner of the "Most Great Peace" has been unfurled and the "great community" is appearing.

ABDUL BAHĀ,

273 West 90th Street,
New York City.
April 18 1912.

IS JESUS GOD?

[BY "YESUDAS"]

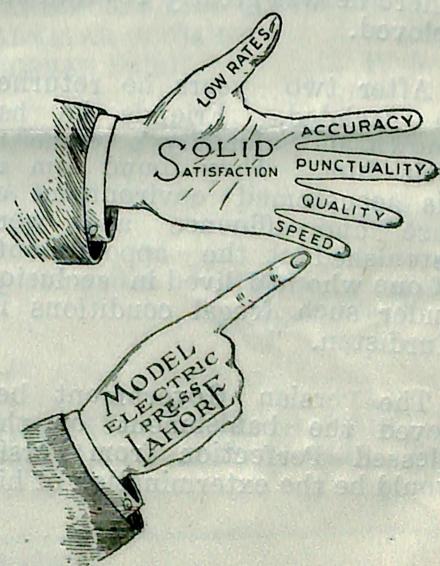
Some people who have come into contact with the message of Jesus and read his life, have put him down as a prophet, yes a great prophet, while some have gone further and said that He was a supernatural being. But is Jesus God must be answered by us in our experience in our daily life. It must be answered with a new meaning every now and then. It is very necessary for us to get a new experience year by year in the deep realization that Jesus is God. On the one hand though man's longing has been for God to descend down and help him, he has not believed in the possibility of God showing such love as we find in Jesus' life. And on the other hand man has taken Jesus the Incarnate One too cheaply, without wonder, love and praise.

Is Jesus then really God? It can be settled very soon by stating the fact that Jesus Himself claimed to be God as no other prophet did, and the only time that He spoke in the trial before the high priest and Pilate, was to affirm in no ambiguous way that he was God. He was crucified for having uttered a blasphemy that he was the Son of God. The world that counts Him good must decide whether He was a great deceiver or what He said was true. Each one has to decide it in his own heart.

What I want to do here is to see in what way we can realize in our lives the divinity of Jesus. When we want to know what God is like or what we recognise as divine we see only the many conceptions of God, good, bad and indifferent. It is only in Jesus we see a character, a life that we can gauge as the heart of God, as the perfect reflection of God. God has been enlightening men in every

country and every time all over the world and we have had great glimpses into the nature of God, long before Jesus was born and even after Him. Still we find the *summum bonum* in Jesus. These are not mere platitudes. Language is too poor to express what one's heart coupled with the mind feels and thinks and does. I feel quite bold to say that Jesus is not the final revelation of God, if it means that in Christianity as we see it now, we have a perfect message. And still I am bold enough to say that in Jesus, whose unsearchable riches are yet to be grasped and appropriated by man, you have a progressive revelation of God that cannot be exhausted by any man, at any time, in any country, but the richness can be comprehended when all the world comes to the feet of Jesus saying "My Lord and my God."

I claim that Jesus' revelation was not only the perfect inexhaustible true picture of God, but more, that apart from Jesus we are not certain what God is like. We might have men's conceptions of what God might be like. They may be noble, high, true, etc. But we cannot stake our lives on probabilities. Whether anything



IS JESUS GOD?

(Concluded from page 6)

is divine we can discern only by the touchstone of the life of Jesus.

What are man's conceptions of God? We can find in comparing the highest ideas of various systems of religion that God is superhuman in power and character, unaffected by the limitations of our senses, as controlling the world, man's welfare and destiny, as being responsive to human acts of piety and worship and having qualities worshipful and adorable, seeking reverence, trust and obedience. Jesus the Incarnate One shows in his life and teaching all the above, with the peculiar modifications which excite the wonder and elicit the admiration of the civilised world. Jesus shows that God is one supreme Father Spirit. That he is personal and omnipotent, limited only by moral responsibility to Himself and to human personalities. He shows God to be consistently responsible and as supremely loving. The highest thoughts of man are seen to be more highly developed in Jesus' life. His peculiar revelation is that God's power though metaphysically omnipotent is yet limited by his own moral responsibility. Again Jesus shows God's redemptive love towards man.

Man by God's grace, has reached some very high conceptions of thought and he can but stand amazed at the revelation of God as a holy loving heavenly Father who actively seeks the welfare, trust and obedience, co-operation, love and worship of all mankind. Again we have in Jesus the only true Incarnation of God who thoroughly emptied Himself and truly lived the life of a man yet without sin, a unique incarnation in a historic person of unblem-

ished character as far as human thought can go. His unique resurrection is a natural outcome in that nothing could bind down the Spotless One in spite of the fact that He voluntarily suffered death. Nowhere in the world, in no personality, historic or imaginary, can man find the highest ideals of love, wisdom, justice and holiness blended and supreme as in Christ Jesus. And men have only to stop and think to realise deeply the greatness of such a combination. Holiness that is tempered by true wisdom and true love, wisdom moulded by true holiness and yet true love, and love modified by the highest ideals of holiness and wisdom. What can be higher than this?

To the early disciples who were strong monotheists and believers only in the transcendence of God, came the experience of Jesus' life and apart from the bright flashes into the very heart of Jesus' message that men had during His life, they all believed in Him at first as a great hero, perhaps the greatest. Later on, thrilled by the resurrection and His living presence with them, they called Him Prince of Life, Holy Servant of God, large titles yet vague.

But soon they had to change their views and realise Jesus as the unique Son. They found Him different from other human beings by the wonder of His moral character. He became their Saviour Mediator and also unique in history as the Son. But in due course these became inadequate and they proclaim Him Jesus the Pre-existent One, "The Word was with God". That which was revealed in Jesus was something eternal, timeless, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. It was of course impossible for them to stop there. So Jesus was seen to be the Agent of Creation, the Perpetual Creator, "the Word was God," "and without Him was not anything made that was made." Finally they took the inevitable step and said *Jesus is God*. "For in Him dwells all the fulness of God." And yet the realisation of God cannot be exhausted.

Oh, brother man, the God indwelling in human hearts must be of such an ideal, and in Jesus only can you see that matchless blending. Consider the truth and realise it in your life and you will enthroned Jesus in your heart, whatever name you might choose to give for that Being. Is Jesus God then? Before this matchless Personality who readily takes you to His heart, fall prostrate and adore and say,—

Jesus my Lord, my God, my all,
To Thee my heart and soul belong,
All that I have or am is Thine
And Thou blessed Saviour, thou art mine.
Jesus, my Lord, I Thee adore :
O make me love Thee more and more,
—*The Fellowship.*

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DISARMAMENT

By a general agreement all the governments of the world must disarm simultaneously. It will not do if one lays down its arms and the others refuse to do so. The nations of the world must concur with each other concerning this supremely important subject, thus they may abandon together the deadly weapons of human slaughter. As long as one nation increases her military or naval budget, another nation will be forced into the crazed competition through her natural and supposed interests. Hence it seems that the only solution lies in universal disarmament on the part of the nations.

When we speak of universal peace, we mean that all the governments must change their fleets of battleships and dreadnaughts to a mighty fleet of merchant-marine, plying the oceans of the world, uniting the different shores and interweaving the commercial, intellectual and moral forces of mankind. Now the question of disarmament must be put into practice by all the nations and not only by one or two. Consequently the advocates of peace must strive day and night, so that the individuals of every country may become peace-loving, public opinion may gain a strong and permanent footing and day by day the army of international peace be increased, complete disarmament be realised and the flag of universal conciliation be waving on the summit of the mountains of the earth.

ABDUL BAHĀ.

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