

# THE BAHÁ'Í 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. 9

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

29th March 1931

## What is the Baha'i Movement ?

It is a movement aiming at the establishment of true religion and universal peace among mankind. It started in Persia about the middle of the nineteenth century and is spreading with wonderful rapidity, not only in the land of its birth, but throughout the world, in both Eastern and Western lands.

### What are its principles ?

Among them are the following:—

- 1.—Unfettered search after truth, and the abandonment of all superstition and prejudice.
- 2.—The Oneness of Mankind: all are "leaves of one tree, flowers in one garden."
- 3.—Religion must be a cause of love and harmony, else it is no religion.
- 4.—The basis of all religions is one.
- 5.—Religion must go hand-in-hand with science. Faith and reason must be in full accord.
- 6.—Universal peace: The establishment of a League of Nations, of International Arbitration and an International Parliament.
- 7.—The adoption of an auxiliary International Language which shall be taught in all the schools of the world.
- 8.—Universal Education—especially for girls, who will be the mothers and the first educators of the next generation.
- 9.—Equal opportunities of development and equal rights and privileges for both sexes.
- 10.—Work for all: No idle rich and no idle poor. "Work in the spirit of service is worship."
- 11.—Abolition of extremes of poverty and wealth: Care for the needy.
- 12.—Devotion to God and obedience to His Revealed Commands, so that the Holy Spirit shall become the prime motive power of both individual and social life.

### How did it Originate ?

Its Fore-runner was a youngman known as the **Bab** (i.e. Gate) who in 1844 began to herald the advent of One greater than himself, who should

inaugurate a New Era in religion and civilisation. After some six years of noble and disinterested effort he was martyred at the early age of thirty-one.

Its Founder was **Baha'u'llah** (i.e. Glory of God) who, over sixty years ago, formulated the principles of the Movement and proclaimed himself as the One whose coming the Bab and all previous prophets had foretold. Like his predecessor he was bitterly opposed and persecuted. During forty years of exile and imprisonment he was chiefly engaged in committing to writing the Revelation of which he was the bearer, and in teaching and training his followers. His last place of banishment was 'Akka, in Palestine, where he passed away in 1892 in his seventy-fifth year.

Its Expounder and Promoter was '**Abdul-Baha** (i.e. Servant of Baha), son of Baha'u'llah, who was appointed by his father as the Centre to whom all Baha'is should turn for instruction and guidance. 'Abdul-Baha was the close companion and constant helper of his father, all of whose sufferings he shared. He remained a prisoner until 1908, when the old regime in Turkey was overthrown and all religious and political prisoners throughout the Empire were liberated. After that date he continued to make his home in Palestine, but made extensive teaching tours in Egypt, Europe and America, being continuously engaged in explaining and exemplifying the principles of the Movement, and in inspiring and directing the activities of his friends and followers throughout the world. His services to sufferers during the Great War were recognised by King George V. who created him a Knight of the British Empire.

He passed away in 1921 at the age of seventy-seven, leaving a will by which he appointed his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi as first Guardian of the Cause and left directions for the election of an International Council, based indirectly on universal suffrage of the believers, which should in the future guide the development of the movement and co-ordinate the activities of its followers in accordance with the principles laid down by Baha'u'llah.

### What has it Accomplished ?

Persia, at the time when the Bab and Baha'u'llah started teaching, was in a state of the greatest decadence.

Religious bigotry and fanaticism were extreme. The government was weak and corrupt. Persecution was rife. Western science and art were regarded as unclean. Women were kept in ignorance and seclusion. The Babis and Baha'is were at first bitterly opposed and tormented. Some 20,000 perished as martyrs and a great many were imprisoned, scourged, robbed of their possession, exiled and otherwise ill-treated. Coming from different religions and sects that hated and despised each other, they joined in a great brother-hood, ready to give their lives for each other or even for their persecutors. Speaking of the number of followers of the movement in Persia in his book "Persia," 1892, Lord Curzon of Kedleston writes: "The lowest estimate places the present number 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 giving up their old prejudices, are establishing schools in every town and village, educating their girls, becoming enlightened, tolerant and progressive.

In Russia, America, India, Burma and Germany, Baha'is are already to be numbered by the thousand, while centres are rapidly being established in other countries of Europe, in China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the islands of the Pacific Ocean and other parts of the globe. Christians, Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Zoroastrians, people of every religion, and people of no religion, are joining this brotherhood in large numbers, dropping their age-long prejudices and animosities in order to unite in working for the promised coming of God's Kingdom upon earth.

The Baha'i Movement has shown its power to change men's hearts and lives, making them new creatures. It has provided a basis on which people of all religions, races, nations and classes may unite, and are uniting into one great harmonious family. It has revealed the means by which can be built up a new civilisation in which co-operation shall replace competition, amity take the place of enmity, and devotion to God's Will be substituted for selfish and worldly desires.

### What is its relation to Christianity and the other great religions of the world ?

The same relation as the fruit has to the flower and the bud—it is their development and fulfilment. Baha'u'llah teaches that all the great religions

are parts of one Divine Plan for the education and salvation of mankind. All the great prophets and religion-founders have taught one and the same religion, which consists in the worship and service of the One and Only God, but each has presented the teaching in the form best adapted for the age and the people to whom he came. There was never want of harmony between the prophets. It is their blind followers who have fallen into quarrels and disagreements. Now through the work of Christ and all the Holy Prophets, man has reached a stage of development at which he is ready for a Universal Teaching, which shall consummate all previous Revelations and reconcile all the different sects and denominations into which humanity has become split up. This New Revelation will inaugurate that age of "peace on earth, goodwill towards men" whose coming has been foretold in the Holy Books of all religions.

Through railways and steamships, postal system and press, telegraph and telephones, aeroplanes and wireless, the mechanical means have been provided for the unification of humanity. Through the invention of Esperanto, an easy and adequate language, a means has been provided for the communication of ideas between the peoples of all countries. But these things cannot of themselves bring about Unity. That change of heart is needed, which only true religion can accomplish.

A new era in religion is always initiated by a Prophet or Mediator, who is the bearer of the New Divine Message to His fellow men. Baha'u'llah comes as the Prophet of the New Era on which humanity is now entering. As such he is not a rival, much less is he an enemy to Christ or any previous Divine Messenger or Manifestation. On the contrary, he fulfils their promises and carries on their work.

## Baha'i Literature in Persian

### BAHA'U'LLAH

Kalamat-i-Maknuna (Hidden Words).  
Book of Iqan (Book of Assurance).  
Haft Wadi (Seven Valleys).  
Alwaha Mubarak (Tablets of Baha'u'llah).  
Munajat (Prayers).

### ABDUL-BAHA

Makatiib—3 Vols. (Tablets of Abdul-Baha).  
Mufavzat (Some Answered Questions).  
Mudnia (Mysterious Forces of Civilization).  
Khitabat-i-Abdul-Baha (Addresses of Abdul-Baha).

### OTHER BOOKS

Travels of Abdul-Baha in Europe and America: 2 Vols. by late Mirza Mahmood Zargani.

# An Address by Abdul Baha

## God's Greatest Gift to Man

PARIS, OCTOBER 26TH, 1912

God's greatest gift to man is that of Intellect, or Understanding.

The Understanding is the power by which Man acquires his knowledge, of the several Kingdoms of Creation, and of various stages of existence, as well as of much which is invisible.

Possessing this gift, he is, in himself, the sum of earlier creations—he is able to get into touch with those kingdoms; and by this gift, he can frequently, through his scientific knowledge, reach out with prophetic vision.

Intellect is, in truth, the most precious gift bestowed upon man by the Divine Bounty. Man alone, among created beings, has this wonderful power.

All creation, preceding Man, is bound by the stern Law of Nature. The great sun, the multitudes of stars, the ocean and seas, the mountains, the rivers, the trees and all animals, great or small—none are able to evade obedience to Nature's Law.

Man alone has freedom, and by his understanding or intellect, has been able to gain control of and adapt some of those natural Laws to his own needs. By the power of his intellect he has discovered means by which he not only traverses great continents in express trains and crosses vast oceans in ships, but, like the fish, he travels under water in submarines, and imitating the birds, he flies through the air in airships.

Man has succeeded in using electricity in several ways—for light, for motive power, for sending messages from one end of the earth to the other—and by electricity he can even hear a voice many miles away!

By this gift of understanding or intellect he has also been able to use the rays of the sun to picture people and things, and even to capture the form of distant heavenly bodies.

We perceive in what numerous ways Man has been able to bend the powers of Nature to his will.

How grievous it is to see how Man has used his God-given gift to frame instruments of war, for breaking the Commandment of God "Thou shalt not kill," and for defying Christ's injunction to "Love one another."

God gave this power to man that it might be used for the advancement of civilization, for the good of humanity, to increase Love and Concord and Peace. But man prefers to use this gift to destroy instead of to build, for injustice and oppression, for hatred and discord and devastation, for the destruction of his fellow-creatures, whom Christ has commanded that he should love as himself!

I hope that you will use your understanding to promote the Unity and tranquility of Mankind, to give enlightenment and civilization to the people, to produce Love in all around you, and to bring about the Universal Peace.

Study the sciences, acquire more and more knowledge. Assuredly one may learn to the end of one's life. Use your knowledge always for the benefit of others; so may war cease from off the face of this beautiful earth, and a glorious edifice of Peace and Concord be raised. Strive that your high ideals may be realized in the Kingdom of God on Earth, as they will be in Heaven.—ABDUL BAHÁ.

## Britain's Lead to World

### ARBITRATION FOR ALL DISPUTES

The House of Commons adopted a Resolution moved by the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Arthur Henderson, by which the British Empire, apart from the Dominions, will adhere to the League of Nations "General Act for the pacific settlement of international disputes."

The Act provides that disputes which cannot be settled by ordinary legal methods shall be submitted to a special Tribunal of five members.

Mr. Henderson said that the accession to the General Act by Great Britain would complete the country's acceptance of arbitration for international disputes of every class, subject to certain reservations. The Government regarded ratification of the General Act as an important part of the preparation which they could make for the success of the coming Disarmament Conference, which, they believed, by its results

would determine the future course of events in Europe and the world.

### PENALTY OF FAILURE

Success would assure the future of constructive international co-operation, while failure would have extremely grave consequences. In the view of the Government acceptance of the General Act was a logical sequence of the Pact of Paris and a logical complement of the Optional Clause. Though not first to take this important step, Britain would be giving a powerful lead to the nations as in the case of the Optional Clause. Before Britain signed the Optional Clause only 17 Governments were bound by it, and to-day 34 were so bound. The United Kingdom would not stand alone, for the Imperial Conference had approved the principle of the General Act after careful consideration.

## Words of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us stirrers 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. 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 blood-shed and discord must cease, 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."

BAHA'U'LLAH.

"O Son of Being! Busy not thyself with this world, for with fire we test

gold, and with gold we test our servants."

BAHA'U'LLAH.

"O Children of Understanding! The closing of an eyelid shutteth out the world and all that is therein; what then if the veil of evil desire blind the sight of the heart?"

BAHA'U'LLAH.

"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."

ABDU'L-BAHA.

"O ye beloved of the Lord! In this sacred Dispensation, conflict and contention are in no wise permitted. Every aggressor deprives himself of God's grace. It is incumbent upon every-one to show the utmost love, righteousness, straight forwardness, and heartfelt kindness unto all the peoples and kindreds of the world, be they friends or strangers. Nay, the spirit of affection and loving kindness must so prevail that the stranger may find himself a friend; the enemy, a true companion; and every least trace of difference be removed; for universality is of God, and all limitations earthly."

ABDU'L-BAHA.

## The Great Discovery

By Esther Davis

It was in my twenty-first year when the first marvelous vision came to me. I had been through a very sad experience, having been greatly deceived in one whom I dearly loved. The thought of going through life with the burden of confidence and love misplaced seemed more than I could bear.

Walking by the river and thinking of this painful event, the words came from my heart. "I cannot bear it. I shall not be able to live through it!"

Suddenly a wonderful thing happened! As I faced the river, and looked up to the heavens as if for help, the sky seemed to open. I saw the form of a man, an old man. At the same time, a ladder appeared, and it reached from the heavens to the earth. I thought the man was God. I then heard a voice, although there was no sound, and these words came from the man.

"Follow my commandments, walk in my paths, and shall be well with thee."

Then I realized I was at the very bottom rung of the ladder.

To do what the voice advised seemed too great a task. It meant I should have to climb that great height from the low place whereon I stood. My poor little brain could not believe it would be possible to attempt so huge a task.

I said, "It is impossible. I cannot!"

The voice again spoke to my soul with soundless words

"You can, if you try".

Would that I could convey to my readers the power of those mighty words! So wonderful were they, I felt they must be true.

I immediately responded, with great resolution: "I will try."

I turned from the river and retraced my steps homeward.

I was a changed being. Life from then on was different. Where before it was dark, now I beheld the light. I was happy, very happy. The question then came. "What shall I do? What course shall I pursue that would be pleasing in the sight of God?"

The thought came. "Study your own religion. It will teach you many things."

I had not been trained very much along religious lines up to this time. At heart I firmly believed in my religion, which was the Jewish faith. I felt that God was guiding my footsteps. His words were in my soul, lighting the path, making even the hard places easier. Prayer and supplication were great helps in changing some of the tendencies to which I inclined.

I found there were many obstacles in the path, much to be overcome in myself, sacrifices to be made.

I went into the homes of the poor. My deepest sympathies were with them and their problems. Giving to them the hand of love and guidance as far as I knew, the recompense was far greater than I could have imagined.

Many years have passed since then. Letters of gratitude still come to me from those who now have reached manhood and womanhood and were children at that time.

I studied long and hard in the faith of my fathers, keeping to the old traditions and customs with the utmost

devotedness until suddenly the thought came to me. "Why not look into other faiths, go into other churches, make comparisons?"

The idea seemed strange, and novel; yet it persisted until I finally went to other places of worship outside of my own. I then realized I had been following the thoughts of others, many of which were old and outworn. I began the search for those pearls of great price, *light and love*, which I found not in any church.

I looked for the Light in the faces of those whom I met in the streets. I did not see it. It was then revealed to me that there *was one* on earth who was next to God. *He* would reveal all things to me and *He* would teach me. I could not speak of this revelation to anyone, thinking no one would understand. It was kept in my innermost being as a sacred, precious possession.

And then, by some fortunate chance or destiny, I heard of Green Acre. It was at Atlantic City, on a visit, that I saw a notice in one of the shop windows of Mrs. Dow Balliet giving lessons in Psychology. I was strangely attracted, and went to see her. After meeting and speaking to her, she said to me.

"You should go to Green Acre."

Never having heard of that place, I inquired where it was?

"If you write to Miss. Sarah J. Farmer, Eliot, Me., she will tell you and give all directions."

## STAR OF THE WEST

A Monthly Baha'i Magazine of America  
(U. S. A.)

Contents for February 1931.

The Man of Science—Abdu'l-Baha.

Editorial—Stanwood Cobb.

Body—Soul—Spirit, Louie A. Mathews.

The Great Discovery. Esther Davis.

The Search Eternal, a Poem, Philip Amalfi Marangella.

Co-operation—Spiritual and Material, Beatrice Irwin.

Civilization, Race and Intelligence, Stanwood Cobb.

The Means of Economic Relief, Dr. Albert D. Heist.

Medical History and the Art of Healing, Zia M. Bagdadi, M.D.

Annual subscription: Rs. 9.

Obtainable from Poona Baha'i Assembly

National Hotel, POONA.

## TO OUR READERS

1. All communications for publication should reach the Editor, the *Baha'i Weekly*, 39 Temple 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 the Baha'i Centres given on page 8.

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

It seemed almost impossible at that time that I should be able to get so far from home. However, events turned out later on that made it not only possible to go, but enabled me to spend the summer there.

I shall never forget the first time I saw Miss Farmer on the platform in the attractive hall where the meetings were held. She was speaking at one of the large afternoon gatherings. Her words literally seemed like pearls and diamonds as they came from her lips. I loved her from the moment that I saw her there. We became great friends and were mutually attracted.

One evening she asked if I would attend a small meeting which she called "The Sunset Group." It was in the little cottage of Miss Mansfield, on the hill facing the beautiful Piscataqua river. Miss Farmer loved to sit on the porch of the cottage to view the sunsets that are so lovely at that spot.

We were a party of about six. I had never attended anything like it. We all sat silently watching that glowing ball of fire as it slowly disappeared over the water. After several moments of silence, each, one by one, gave a short spiritual message.

Each had given out what came to her through the spirit. It was time for me to say something. I was silent. Nothing had come to me. I felt stupid, empty; when suddenly the place seemed filled with a great light, and I saw an immense pair of wings and a hand seemed pushing me to arise, go forward to Miss Farmer, and tell her what I saw.

"Miss Farmer", I said, "I see an immense pair of wings over this place. They are especially over you, as if to protect you".

At that time I knew nothing of the difficulties that Miss Farmer was laboring under. She was trying to do more than her strength would allow, and in consequence was much troubled.

As I uttered the words she cried, "Oh, my child" (she always used that endearing term to me) "you are seeing the wings of the cherubim!" It is my symbol! "See," pointing to the brooch she wore, with its outspreading wings, which I had not noticed, "put your hands upon me and give me the blessing, for you know not how much I need it".

Her voice was filled with anguish. It brought to me a keen sense of her suffering. After that evening there was an added bond between us. She never forgot that message, and, alluded to it many times. Later on, when her troubles seemed to grow greater, we had other spiritual experiences which I shall not dwell on at this time.

The following summer Miss Farmer went abroad. In the course of her travels she met one who told her to go to 'Akka and consult a wise man who lived there.

Miss Farmer was much in need of advice regarding her plans for Green Acre. There seemed to be no one able to give her the required help. She resolved to see this wise man in the East. He might be the one who would solve her problem. Accordingly she went. But before going she made a list of questions regarding her needs;

she would ask and might have them answered satisfactorily.

Miss Farmer's experience with Abdu'l-Baha is a part of her history.

Sarah Farmer had not written to me, not one word, during her entire trip. I only knew she was in Europe. Spiritually, I was in close touch with her and realized she was exceedingly happy; yet knew not what had caused the change in her mental attitude.

Most eager was I to see her when the news came that she had arrived in New York and was stopping in the home of Miss Emma Thursby. I immediately went there. To my astonishment and regret I was told no one was allowed to see her. She had fallen, was hurt, and was ill in bed.

Miss Thursby assured me I would be one of the first to see her when she was able to have her friends; and in about two weeks I received a note saying Miss Farmer was much improved, I could see her. When I hastened there Miss Thursby told me that she was still quite weak and that three minutes must be the limit of my stay.

Upon entering her room, seeing her lying in the bed so white and helpless, I involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh my dear! I don't understand!"

"What is it you do not understand, my child?" she asked,—looking up at me with a wonderful expression in her eyes, "Seeing you lying here so ill. I have been thinking of you being so happy."

"Oh, but I am happy, so very very happy!"

"What is it?"

Her answer came. I have seen Him."

"Tell me about Him", I implored; for a dart of confirmation through the center of my being assured me she had seen The One who was with me in spirit.

She looked up at the little Swiss clock above her bed and said, "Only three minutes," meaning I could be with her only that length of time. It was not possible to explain, then?

Again speaking, she said "Take down this address," and she gave me the name and address of Mr. Hooper Harris. "There is one who came over in the same steamer with me who is a guest there. His name is Raffie. He is a young Persian. Write to him. Ask if he will come here one week from to-day. You also come. I will introduce you. He shall tell you all about it."

Reluctantly I left her. I was burning with the desire to hear and learn more, and could hardly await the time when more would be given me. I wrote at once to Mirza Raffie. He replied promptly. His letter began:

"My dear Sister Esther.

I shall gladly meet you at the place you mention, and give you the message that will bring joy to you and your family."

His letter was signed, "Your brother, Mirza Raffie."

Never had a letter brought such joy to me. He called me his "sister," and signed himself, "your brother." Why, this was the very thing I had been in search of—brotherhood and sisterhood of the human family!

I had looked in vain. Here it was at my door. How wonderful!

Mirza Raffie came as promised. Miss Farmer introduced him to me. He greeted me with a lovely smile. After a little conversation he began to read the prophecies in the Bible. I wondered why he did so, without explaining the great message I craved. There was a vital purpose in it. It was the beginning of a long series of talks and teachings which finally led to the fulfilment—the Coming of the Promised One.

In the October 1930, number of The Baha'i Magazine, in the article, "Searching for Truth," the author has beautifully expressed himself in these words. "The inspiration of those early days in the Baha'i Cause was to me like the fresh and joyous hours of dawn, when the birds sing of the glories of God as expressed throughout His firmament, and the flowers sparkle with transcendent beauty in a fresh morning dew, undissipated by the heat of life."

I testify to those statements.

We were on fire at that period. Each time a lesson was given, my feet were like wings carrying me to the place where I would receive the next part of the glorious message.

The following summer found me again at Green Acre. In the little cottage "Willowcote", a small coterie consisting of "Mother Beecher," Agnes Alexander, young Raffie and myself were exceedingly happy.

How we worked and played together—work that seemed play, it was all so joyous. One night I was left alone. The rest had gone to an evening talk at the Inn. Thinking of this glorious Baha'i Revelation, I saw myself on the edge of a mighty ocean whose broad expanse reached north, south, east and west.

It was the ocean of Truth, of Life, of Love. We all must become immersed in it some day. But now we were just at its border, as if playing with the pebbles on the beach. We little knew how great it would become. This wonderful Baha'i message! Bringing on its wings the comforting assurance of the brotherhood of man, the oneness of God, the banishing of war, and the establishment of the Most Great Peace. Walking down the lane through the pasture one lovely day I sat down to rest beside the Piscataqua river.

It was all so quiet and peaceful, I thought of the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis: "And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Surely, He was in this place. His spirit was here. "Let there be light, and there was light." Yes, the Light had shed its radiance on this old earth, but never had the Light shone so powerfully for me. Its rays are penetrating the dark corners, the shadows are disappearing.

Light and Love, walking hand in hand. How wondrously changed will be the places where men dwell! They will see Light through the eyes of Love.

The ladder of life is still being climbed. Step by step we each must go, slowly making our way, until at last the topmost rung will be reached for 'Man has been created for the knowledge of God, Love of God, said 'Abdu'l-Baha' for the virtues of the human world, for spirituality, heavenly illumination and life eternal."

Star of the West, Feb. 1931.

# Bahá'í Weekly

MARCH 29, 1931.

## Bab and After

After the martyrdom of Bab in Tebrez a fire fell on the households of the followers of Bab and every one of them on whom the slightest suspicion fell was put to sword. It is recorded that in the general massacres of Zanjan and Niriz more than four thousand Babis were put to death. And all these persecutions were due to the arbitrary action of the Regent Mirza Taqi Khan who was also the Prime Minister at that time. The author of *Traveller's Narrative* observes: "Through the ill-considered policy of the Minister this edifice became fortified and strengthened, and these foundations firm and solid."

A certain Babi, Sadiq by name who was deeply devoted to Bab, in a moment of sorrow over the martyrdom of his Master lost the balance of his mind and impelled by frenzy made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Nasir-ud-Din Shah, the Shah of Persia. This incident made the Babis very unpopular and all of them fell under suspicion. Some hid themselves and others fled away. Baha'u'llah who was one of the followers of Bab was also arrested and sent as a prisoner to Tehran. When questioned on this matter, he said:

"The event itself indicates the truth of the affair and testifies that this is the action of a thoughtless, unreasoning, and ignorant man. For no reasonable person would charge his pistol with shot when embarking on so grave an enterprise. At least he would so arrange and plan it that the deed should be orderly and systematic. From the very nature of the event it is clear and evident as the sun that it is not the act of such as myself."

So it was proved that the assassin had done this monstrous deed on his own initiative and had no accomplice in the matter. The innocence of Baha'u'llah was therefore established beyond doubt and he was let off after he had been in prison for four months. We shall know more about him in our next issue.

# Travels of Abdu'l Baha

IN

EGYPT, EUROPE AND AMERICA

(By late Mirza Mahmood Zargani)

(Translated by the Editor)

26th March 1912

The author was standing near the door of the cabin when Abdul-Baha came out and observed: "I slept very well last night and all the pain I had in my body owing to fatigue has disappeared. The sea-breeze is very refreshing and health giving." In the mean time the other Secretaries also came in and Abdul-Baha asked Shoghi Effendi to recite a prayer. After the recitation all sat down to tea. Abdul-Baha then said that we should all rejoice and be thankful for the choicest blessings vouchsafed to us. We should realise this most at the time when we are having them and we should thank the Giver. After this Abdul-Baha had a very refreshing bath in the fresh hot water. Then an American lady from New York who was in the boat sought an interview with Abdul-Baha and said that she had heard of the Cause of Baha'u'llah and also heard of him. She continued and

said that as soon as she saw him, she recognised him to be Abdul-Baha. In reply Abdul-Baha said: "When the heart is purified it becomes the dawning place of reality and there is a spiritual tie that binds purified hearts." She then told Abdul-Baha that she was a Unitarian and wanted a message for her co-religionists in America. Then Abdul-Baha gave the following message to her to be given to the Unitarians:

"Rejoice that the Sun of Love has risen! Rejoice that the Carpet of Love has been spread out; that the flag of the Kingdom has been hoisted! Rejoice that the Day of Divine Spring has dawned! Rejoice that the Rain of Blessings of God is pouring and the Trees of the Garden of Humanity have become green and fresh! Rejoice that God is Speaking in this day!"

This lady came in once again in the evening and had a talk with Abdul-Baha.

## An Indian Prince and the League of Nations

In the Chamber of Princes His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner gave an account of his work both at the Assembly of the League of Nations and at the Imperial Conference in London.

At Geneva he had brought into greater prominence that fact that M. Briand's vision of a European Union should not give rise to a misapprehension that the machinery of the League was to be used merely to protect European aims. Indian delegates had also induced the League to study world economic and agricultural problems.

The Princes of India, he said, were particularly interested in the Imperial Conference scheme for a Commonwealth Tribunal to adjust differences.

His Highness had made it plain that the status and position of Indian Princes and their subjects should not be prejudiced by decisions regarding nationality.

Viewing the last session of the League

in broad perspective, said His Highness, its most important pre-occupations were disarmament and economic co-operation among the nations of the world. Connected with the subject of limitation of armaments, but in a sense wider in scope, was the project of a European Union foreshadowed by M. Briand.

Although M. Briand had disclaimed all idea of organizing Europe in a spirit of antagonism against the rest of the world, there was all the greater need for avoiding anything that might give rise to misapprehension outside Europe, that the machinery of the League—which stood not for Europe or for Asia, but for the world—was being utilized merely to promote European aims.

This aspect of the matter, continued the Maharaja of Bikaner, he had brought out in his speech before the Assembly of the League and a resolution was finally adopted in regard to that subject.

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## Changes in Persia

The Shah, Mr Pope added, is extremely keen on developing his country and reorganising finance, education, transportation, hygiene and agriculture.

"Except for small disturbances among mountain tribes, there is now no lawlessness in Persia. You can go anywhere with perfect confidence," he said, "I travelled all over the country and never carried even a stick. Crime is relatively rare. In Ispahan there was not a single arrest nor theft in a month—and theft used to be the commonest of crimes. When the Shah came into power the roads were not safe anywhere, and caravan insurance was prohibitive. Now you can go where you like in safety. There was hardly an army to speak of, now there is a well-trained one, with motorised field batteries and mountain artillery, armoured cars, and fine cavalry. The Shah's cavalry is the finest in the world. The mounts are Arab steeds which drill with the precision of circus horses.

"He intends to continue friends with Russia, but does not mean Persia to become Bolshevik. He has sometimes disappointed his followers by appearing to be indifferent to situations that call for action, but he knows how to play a long game and to wait till the proper moment, then he is indeed formidable."

### WOMEN EMANCIPATED

During the past five years the position of women has been transformed. They are now free to appear in the streets without the veil, and to visit one another. In Ispahan, as recently as 1925, one never saw a woman without a veil. Now women drive their own cars, take up literary studies, dress in Paris fashion.

Mr. Pope is returning to Persia in the near future to resume his researches and work for preservation of ancient monuments. Already an important American archaeological expedition is on its way there, and it is hoped that its researches will help to throw light on the sources of Aryan civilisation, for some authorities believe that the Sumerian civilisation was a derivative of that of the Persian plateau.—"The Observer."

## The Baha'i Movement

The Baha'i Movement proclaims the time of Universal Peace and provides the base for the Universal Religion—the hope of the ages. It points the way and supplies the means for the unity of mankind in the knowledge and love of Truth under the high banner of Justice and Mercy.

It is divine in origin, human in presentation, sane, practical and applicable to life in its every phase. In belief it inculcates naught but Truth, in action, naught but Good, in human relations, naught but loving Service.

For the information of those who know little or nothing of the Baha'i Movement we quote the following

account translated from the (French) *Encyclopaedia of Larousse*.

Bahaism the religion of the disciples of Baha'u'llah, is an outcome of Babism. Mirza Hussain Ali Nuri Baha'u'llah was born at Teheran in 1817 A. D. From 1844 he was one of the first adherents of the Bab, and devoted himself to the pacific propagation of his doctrine in Persia. After the death of the Bab he was, with the principal Babis exiled to Baghdad, and later to Constantinople and Adrianople, under the surveillance of the Ottoman Government. It is in the latter city that he openly declared his mission.....and in his letters to the principal Rulers of the States of Europe he invited them to join him in establishing religion and universal peace. From this time the Babis who acknowledged him became Baha'is. The Sultan then exiled him (1868 A. D.) to Acca in Palestine, where he composed the greater part of his doctrinal works and where he died in 1892 A. D. (May 29). He had confided to his son, Abbas Effendi (Abdul Baha), the work of spreading the religion and continuing the connection between the Baha'is of all parts of the world. In point of fact there are Baha'is everywhere, not only in Mohammedan countries, but also in all the countries of Europe, as well as in the United States, Canada, Japan, India, etc. This is because Baha'u'llah has known how to transform Babism into a universal religion, which is presented as the fulfillment and completion of all the ancient faiths. The Jews await the Messiah, the Christians the return of Christ, the Moslems the Mahdi, the Buddhists the fifth Buddha, the Zoroastrians Shah Bahram, the Hindoos the reincarnation of Krishna, and the Atheists—a better social organization! Baha'u'llah represents all these, and thus destroys the rivalries and the enmities of the different religions, reconciles them in their primitive purity, and frees them from the corruption of dogmas and rites. For Bahaism has no clergy, no religious ceremonial, no public prayers, its only dogma is belief in God and in his Manifestations.....The principal works of Baha'u'llah are in *Kitab-ul-Ighan*, the *Kitab-ul-Akdas*, the *Kitab-ul-Ahd*, and numerous letters or tablets addressed to sovereigns or to private individuals. Ritual holds no place in the religion, which must be expressed in all the actions of life, and accomplished in neighbourly love. Every one must have an occupation. The education of children is enjoined and regulated. No one has the power to receive confession of sins, or to give absolution. The priests of the existing religions should renounce celibacy, and should preach by their example, mingling in the life of the people. Monogamy is universally recommended, etc. Questions not treated of are left to the civil law of each country, and to the decisions of the *Bait-ul-Adl*, or House of Justice, instituted by Baha'u'llah. Respect toward the Head of the State is a part of respect toward God. A universal language, and the creation of tribunals of arbitrations between nations, are to suppress wars. "Ye are all leaves of the same tree and drops of the same sea."

Baha'u'llah has said Briefly, it is not so much a new religion, as Religion renewed and unified, which is directed to day by Abdul-Baha's grandson Shoghi Effendi.

## The Experience of the New Life

By J. G. Weatherley

### II

Since writing the foregoing article I have come to see how it is possible for us to *desire* earnestly the good gift of God's Holy Spirit to conquer wrong in ourselves or in the world, to make new men and women of us, and lift us on to the plane of spiritual enthusiasm and victory, and yet to remain exactly where we were, never to experience it.

We see it as a beautiful dream, it possesses us as an aspiration, a longing, in moments of feeling we long to possess ourselves of such an uplifting power, but it does not come.

We may even after a spell of spiritual failure and weakness agonize for it, pray for it with our whole heart but still we remain unhelped. We have moments of failing succeeded by fresh effort, but no stability, no abiding victory, no passing out of the old into the new.

Now is there a reason for this? Perhaps you say I must be one of those who is not destined to receive special help from God or my weaknesses are of such a nature that they cannot be met and overcome, or trying has proved useless, let me give up the struggle.

Shall we not try and prove for the *real* reason, for none of these touch the heart of the matter.

In nature we know it is useless to sow seed on unprepared soil and soil not prepared in the right way. For the coming of a guest there must be suitable preparation. For the reception of a truth there must be a prepared mind.

So how about the kind of preparation we have to make for the incoming of God's Holy Spirit to change and vitalize our lives? We have already said, it is not a matter of great endeavour, it is not a question of the culture of certain beliefs and doctrines or of a particular kind or of temperament; but it is a matter of *receptivity*. Every kind of seed must be sown in a receptive soil, passive to the implanting of the life-form. So the question must be how to be passively receptive and what hinders such a condition?

First of all it is only the truly humble spirit that can receive the incoming of life from a higher source. Would you not feel that the greatest hindrance to our reception of the life of God is our own aggressive individualism? What I think, what I feel, what my philosophy teaches me. The spirit of God is like the great ocean compared with the little pool of

my own systems and beliefs. How often unconsciously we are jealously each one guarding his little separate pool, not desiring that its boundaries should be swamped and broken down by the incoming of the tide of the ocean and strange to say this stubborn individualism of ours is not broken down against our will by the Almighty. His life giving power is restrained, whilst we say in our ignorance: this is not for me—No, not for you, until with humble heart-felt longing you open the way! The trouble is that almost unconsciously to ourselves we are resisting.

The heart and will of each one of us has many stubborn concerns, albeit we may outwardly seem eager to receive the preferred blessing. This individualism of ours is hard to break down. We set it up against our fellowman, we set it up against the Spirit of God. We are not prepared for any kind of abandonment of our own ego, for the sake of receiving its true expansion, and fulfilment. We spoke last time of the wonderful union of the two spirits, God's and ours by the passing into our natures of the life of the Spirit of God. We think of it as a kind of absorption for which we are not prepared. But that is not God's way. He never nullifies the individuality that is man's unalienable right, but by first asking that it be offered to Him as a passive instrument, He then renews it, re-vitalizes it, re-charges it with His own life.

The passive ground after preparation receives the seeds, it yields up all it has to give to the fructifying of the life of the seed within itself, and by the partnership a living and life-sustaining grain is produced. It does not happen in a moment. For a time it seems as if the seed had died, but there in the obscurity it is preparing to issue in new life.

So we see it is the offering of the self-life to God, all our own unaided efforts of which we may have been a little proud, and in such place we wait for "The God that worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure".

It is no magical change, but the orderly working of the divine power within the soul of man bringing every part of a man's being into a willing co-operation, and thus producing what the Bible calls "The New Man".

You may say this happens in response to faith, but it is an intelligent faith. When Jesus asked the blind man what he wanted "He said Lord that I may receive my sight": he did not generalize but he particularized. The truly humble man is prepared to face his need, and he defines it to himself. Until a man does this, how can he get any specific help or light?

One of the reasons why the blessing we have asked for does not come is that we are not conscious of what our particular need is. We are in this unlike the blind man. He received because he asked for and escaped a particular blessing.

Let us set out to be always claiming some new spiritual gift, not to rest satisfied until we know we have

# THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

Vol. III (1928-30)

## A REVIEW

THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD:—A Biennial International Record, Vol. III. New York. The Baha'i Publishing Committee. 337 pp. (Illustrated)

Last week we gave a brief review of a book entitled "The Clash of World Forces," in which the author, Mr. Basil Mathews, after analysing present-day world movements, emphasised the point that what Christianity had to do to-day was to strive to "break down with remorseless love the walls of class and race and nation." We wonder if he and Christians in general are sufficiently aware that the followers of Baha'u'llah, a Persian sage, have been proclaiming similar views for many years. Based on the spirit of truth which is essentially at the foundation of all religions, Baha'ism seeks to promote the brotherhood of man and peace and unity among the nations through fellowship, tolerance and justice. It is non-political, and although highly spiritual in the conceptions, has no priestly order. Baha'u'llah its founder, is regarded as a Manifestation of God of this age, and perhaps for that reason he has been looked upon by Christians who know anything of the Baha'i Cause as a sort of new Messiah. That, however, is neither the claim of himself (he died in 1892) nor of his followers, as is made abundantly clear in the beautiful volume now before us. Rather it is that like Christ, he had not come to destroy but to fulfil. The Baha'is accept the spiritual oneness of all the prophets and their mutual consecration to the same task of leading mankind from darkness to light. In a most illuminating article, "The Aims and Purposes of the Baha'i Faith," by Mr. Horace Holley New York, the teachings are thus summarised:

"The harmony of true science and religion; the spiritual equality of man and woman, the education of all people in terms of complete personality, social responsibility for every individual, economic well-being, the addition of a universal secondary language to curriculums, the spiritual obligation of every government to make world peace its first and most important concern, and the organisation of an international tribunal capable of maintaining world order based upon equal justice to the various nations and peoples."

Such, they believe—and who can doubt it?—is the Divine Will. Present day civilisation, despite all its mental activity and scientific marvels can scarcely survive its own forces of disunity without reinforcement by a new, world-wide faith expressive of a regenerated mankind and a higher type of social organism—such is Mr. Holley's

statement of the case. In other words, the principles enunciated by Jesus Christ must become a reality in human relationships as a fundamental need of humanity in the present era.

Sufficient is contained in this volume, as in those of the two previous issues, to show who widely the Baha'i teachings have gripped imagination and commanded the enthusiastic support, of many thoughtful people throughout the world. It would be quite impracticable in this notice to give anything like an adequate idea of the rich and varied contents of the volume. Suffice it to say that no one can peruse it without a deep sense of the lofty aims and purposes of Baha'ism and the noble spiritual conceptions on which it is based.

Considerable space is given to a description of the great Baha'i Temple which is in course of erection at Wilmette, near Chicago and which the present reviewer had the privilege of being shown through last summer. At that time he had the honour of an introduction to the architect M. Louis Bourgeois (since deceased), and was deeply impressed by his wonderful spirituality and evident genius. The design of the Temple seeks in M. Bourgeois' own words, to symbolise the unity of all religions and of all mankind. It will, when finished, be something entirely new in architecture, and from the illustrations given we think it will be easily the most beautiful structure in the world. Such at any rate is the opinion of many prominent architects who have carefully examined the plans.

There is much in the Baha'i Cause which cannot fail to appeal to all who are preplexed by the existing unrest throughout the nations. It is already a greater force than the general public are aware of, and its spiritual, cultural and sociological principles will we think, command a much greater attention in the near future. This new Biennial Record is a very handsomely produced volume. As a frontispiece it contains an illuminated reproduction of a "tablet" or letter in Abdu'l Baha's handwriting, which is one of the finest specimens of the painter's art we have ever seen.

The "Baha'i Magazine" for February is also to hand, and contains many similar thoughtful and high-toned articles.

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