BAHAI

LEADS

OUT of the LABYRINTH

BY

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I 7

I meet Abdul Baha and follow a spiritual trail—Anniversary of Bab celebrated — Scientific knowledge and inner significances—Communism not a panecea for humanity — Human solidarity accomplished through religion of God.

CHAPTER II 15

No centralization of government in future: it promotes despotism—Warning of Abdul Baha in 1919 nations should extinguish fire of Bolshevism—Two kinds of distinction—Necessity of prayer.

CHAPTER III 23

Superstition an inversion of faith — Experiment in prevision — Dreams truthful and untruthful — Earth-bound souls — Automatic writing — Connection between living and dead.

CHAPTER IV 38

All things revealed through prayer — A guidance stranger than fiction — I find an Aladdin's Lamp—Life in an old house—The value of tests.

CHAPTER V 57

A pilgrimage to Haifa—What we learned at the table of Abdul Baha — He who would be master must be servant to humanity—The Druses noblest of Arabian sects.

CHAPTER VI 74

Abdul Baha knighted by British Government—Visit the "Most Great Prison" at Acca—Example in Self-abnegation—The law of giving.

CHAPTER VII 83

Food of the future — What Abdul says on vegetarianism. Assemblies in the Tomb of the Bab — Description of the martyrdom of the early Babis by Professor Browne—Two kinds of fate and predestination.

CHAPTER VIII 91

Trip to Jerusalem — Visit judges, shieks and women of the Orient — We enter the Mosque of Abraham—Station of Manifestations of God—Return to America.

CHAPTER IX 106

London and early contacts—Atheistic complex worst of all complexes—Spiritual consciousness the genius of man.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER X 117

A second trip to Palestine — Spiritual nourishment versus material nourishment — Violation of the Covanent—Followers of the inner Light.

CHAPTER XI 143

Egypt—Prophecies of the Great Pyramid—Book of the Dead — Daniel's 1335 days — Passing of Abdul Baha—Meaning of the resurrection of Christ.

CHAPTER XII 152

Primitive man's tribal conception of God — Modern man's tribal conception of the Messiahs — Essentials of spiritual laws the same—Local laws vary in every era—Relativity of religions.

CHAPTER XIII 164

Psychic forces — Each kingdom dies to itself — born into the kingdom above — Freedom not a matter of place — Progressing civilizations require changes in religions.

CHAPTER XIV 177

Greek culture and reforms are like the coal derived from the sun of religions — Allegories in Sacred Books interpreted as facts — Meaning of Adam and Eve.

CHAPTER XV 183

Prophecies of Second Coming of Christ—Meaning of the end of the world — End of old dispensation — Clouds symbolize catastrophies—Falling stars crumbling monarchies.

CHAPTER XVI 190

More prophecies — Wars due to materialism — Must attain spiritual fraternity—Law of Cause and Effect —Karma—Mechanism versus Vitalism.

CHAPTER XVII 209

Excerpts from the writings of Baha'o'Ilah — Hidden Words — Words of Wisdom — Tablet of Wisdom — Tablet of Joseph—Tablet of Ahmad.

CHAPTER XVIII 221

Excerpts from the writings of Abdul Baha—On education — Divine civilization and material civilization— International peace — Capital and Labor — War — Science and religion — Unity — Faith, Prayer and Healing — Life after death — Reincarnation — Pantheism — Evolution of man — Solution of the Jewish question—Miracles.

FOREWORD

The Power, of which Aladdin's Lamp is a symbol, is the Gift of religion to man. But he has almost forgotten how to use it. This is the century for his re-awakening to the beneficence of the Gift which lies entombed within every religion that ever existed. It awaits only the magic touch of the right application of our religion to release it not only with benefit to ourselves but to all mankind.

This book is written in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Bahai Cause, which will be celebrated in many countries of the world on May 23rd, 1944. On that date, one hundred years ago, there occurred the double event of the Declaration of the Bab* and the birth of Abdul Baha.

These two great Lights, together with Baha-o-llah are the Founders of the Bahai Cause.

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*Meaning THE GATE, or PRECURSOR.

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CHAPTER I.

I meet Abdul Baha and follow a spiritual trail — A birthday celebration — Scientific knowledge and inner significances — Communism not a panacea for humanity — Human solidarity accomplished only through the religion of God.

As I walked across Boston Common, on a May morning during 1912, my eye was caught by a remarkable photograph in the paper which a newsboy thrust toward me. It was the photograph of Abdul Baha, gazing at me with benign serenity and the wisdom of the ages written on his face.

What was the extraordinary power that had enabled him to survive forty years imprisonment in the City of Acca, and still retain that serenity; enabled him in the evening of his life to travel through many countries giving the Message to mankind for which he had suffered this imprisonment?

Did he really have a panacea for human ills? Was he a great seer, who could look into the future and tell us the best course to follow? Half believing this to be so, instead of continuing my way toward the newspaper office whither I was bound, my feet began involuntarily to move toward the Copley Plaza, where he was staying. I would learn his Message, and perhaps write an article about him.

When I arrived I did not have to knock nor ask permission to enter. The door was open and the rooms overflowing with people — the poor, the wealthy, the professional class, as well as the artisan. Some one made room for me to sit down by squeezing closer to his neighbor as every available seat was taken.

A sudden hush fell upon the room as Abdul Baha entered, and all those who had found seats arose. A little boy next to me whispered to his mother:

"Is that Moses, Mama?"

"Hush! Of course it isn't."

"But he looks like a picture I saw of Moses."

No better description could be given of Abdul Baha than this short graphic one by the child. His white turban and golden brown abba set off the ruddy glow of his face and made his long white beard and hair, and the blue of his eye, stand out in vivid contrast. For unlike most Orientals his eyes were blue. There was the same patriarchal look, the same atmosphere of another world about him which probably made everyone there feel, as the child felt, that he belonged to another race, another world.

"Marhaba! You are welcome, welcome," he said with infinite graciousness. Then he seated himself at an open window and gave a short informal talk. When he had finished he withdrew into another room.

One of the secretaries approached me, and to him

I made known my wish for an interview with Abdul Baha. When he returned to the room, the secretary who had in the meanwhile given him my message, led me to him. He greeted me with indescribable cordiality and gentleness, and then invited me to come the next morning at eight o'clock. As I was leaving the secretary hastened after me and said:

"Oh, Miss Berkeley, Abdul Baha wishes you to be present this evening at the commemoration anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Breed, in Cambridge. Here is the address."

"I shall be there without fail. Please thank him for me," I replied.

I was happy beyond words to join the gathering that night which I learned, when I arrived, was also to celebrate the sixty-eighth birthday of Abdul Baha. For he was born on May 23, 1844, on the same date that the Bab, the Precursor of the Bahai Religion, had declared his mission.

After a delicious supper was served, Abdul Baha gave a brief talk, part of which is as follows:

Scientific knowledge is the highest attainment upon the human plane; for science is the discoverer of realities. It is of two kinds, material and spiritual. Material science is the investigation of natural phenomena; divine science is the discovery and realization of spiritual verities. The world of humanity must acquire both. A bird has two wings; it cannot fly with one. Material and spiritual science

are the two wings of human uplift and attainment. Both are necessary, one the natural, the other supernatural; one material, the other divine. By the divine we mean the discovery of the mysteries of God, the comprehension of spiritual realities, the wisdom of God, inner significances of the heavenly religions and foundation of the law.*

Then he recounted some of the historical events of the Bab's life and the many persecutions which he, as the Herald of Baha'o'llah, had been subjected to. With much feeling he described his martyrdom at Tabriz, and enjoined upon us likewise to become self-sacrificing and aglow with the fire of the love of God.

This that Abdul Baha had said was a new viewpoint of religion to me — that it is as much a part of science to discover spiritual truths as it is to discover physical inventions. This being so, lack of faith precludes the possibility of making discoveries on the supernatural plane, in the same way that a man who lacked faith in scientific inventions would have little chance of succeeding in that field.

The next morning when I arrived for my interview with Abdul Baha, early though it was, other callers had preceded me. But soon together with Alice Buckton and another woman I was ushered into his presence.

I had formulated several questions to ask him, but now that we stood before him the importance of my

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* Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. I, pages 133-4.

interview dwindled into insignificance. For I realized that he was not the one to be interviewed but that I, like everyone who came into his presence, was interviewed. For he turned a spiritual searchlight upon each one of us, and revealed us to ourselves. Therefore I asked him but one question:

"Do you think socialism, or communism, a panacea for the ills of mankind?"

"Surely this philosophy is nothing new," he replied. "Lycurgus, King of Sparta, who lived in the days of Christ, tried to establish a government on such a basis. He divided Sparta among the people, and then left his kingdom. But after a few years the whole system of this government collapsed. As for present day socialism and communism, no good can be accomplished by breeding class hatred—by making divisions. We can bring the Kingdom of heaven to earth only by unifying the whole race—by imbuing people with love for all their fellow men. In the Bahai teachings you will find a complete economic plan suited for this age.

After replying to a number of personal questions asked by Miss Buckton, a silence fell upon us like a soft benediction and I knew my unasked questions were being answered. For this was one of the extraordinary gifts of Abdul Baha, I afterwards learned —he spoke to each one more powerfully in silence than he did in words.

Finally he arose and presented us with beautiful silk handkerchiefs. He then said some amazingly encouraging things to me which I felt were meant only

potentially, yet it had the effect of galvanizing me into new life and helped me to overcome my atheistic complex. He then ended his glowing encouragement with: "Do . ot do newspaper work. Other things are in store for you."

This astonished me, as the fact that I was doing it had not been mentioned. It answered in part one of the questions I had wanted to ask him—which of the three professions would be best to continue with—the stage, art, or writing? I accepted his advice gratefully as from one who knows the hidden wisdom and speaks to each person according to his need. A spiritual assignment had been hinted to me — a cue, and I would follow that trail wherever it lead.

For I was very unhappy at this time due to an inner conflict. My parents were Roman Catholics, and their belief held by all religionists, was that life is ruled by Design. My later belief was influenced by my contact with communists and other materialists who believed that life is ruled by Chance. These conflicting beliefs caused me great unhappiness.

That same evening I went with several Bahais to the Unitarian Conference. This is what Abdul Baha said in part:

> **Creation is the expression of motion. Motion is life. A moving object is a living object whereas that which is motionless and inert is as dead . . . Nothing is stationary in the material world or in the inner world of intellect and consciousness.**
>
> **Religion is the outer expression of the divine**

reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive it is without divine life; it is dead . . . All things are subject to re-formation. This is a century of life and renewal . . . Sciencies of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today . . . Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete . . . for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of the reality and therefore the greatest of all centuries . . .

. . . The prophets of God have founded the laws of divine civilization. They have been the root and fundamental source of all knowledge . . . The spiritual brotherhood which is enkindled and established through the breaths of the Holy Spirit unites nations and removes the cause of warfare and strife. It transforms mankind into one great family and establishes the foundation of the oneness of humanity. It promulgates the spirit of international agreement and insures Universal Peace . . . Until all nations and peoples become united by the bonds of the Holy Spirit in this real fraternity, until national and international prejudices are effaced in the reality of this spiritual brotherhood, true progress, prosperity and lasting happiness will not be attained by man. This is the century of new and universal nationhood. Sciences have advanced, industries have progressed, politics have been reformed, liberty has been proclaimed, justice is awakening. This is the century of motion, divine stimulus and accomplishment; the century of human solidarity and altruistic service; the century of Universal Peace and the reality of the divine kingdom*

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* The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. 1, pages 138-9.

At the end of the meeting many in the audience pressed about Abdul Baha as if they would draw from him the last drop of anything he could give them. I saw his weariness and knew it was caused by the parasitical attitude of getting instead of giving, of which so many of us are guilty.

At that moment he did not seem like the great Seer who knows everything and can do everything.

"Poor old man," I said to my companion. "Don't they see how weary he is. Why don't they let him alone."

A Bahai who was standing near me was shocked that I would call Abdul Baha a "poor old man," and she said: "He doesn't need our help. He has command over every condition in the world."

"But even so I think he would be pleased if he saw in us a desire to help."

My words could not possibly have been heard by him with his outer ear, yet he evidently heard them inwardly for he instantly flashed around, radiant and joyful, and nodded his head to me, every vestige of his former weariness gone.

CHAPTER II.

No centralization of government in future, it promotes despotism — Warning of Abdul Baha in 1919 — Nations should extinguish fire of Bolshevism — Two kinds of distinction — Necessity of prayer.

Three days after my first meeting Abdul Baha he left for New York City and I, with several hundred believers, went to the station to bid him farewell.

"Do not do newspaper work," he had said to me, "other things are in store for you."

As this had been my object in coming to Boston I decided to leave the next day for New York City. I could work at commercial art there, which could be done at home, thereby giving me time to attend the meetings of Abdul Baha.

Until I made progress on this trail I would keep away from my friends there who were extremely materialistic. For now the compelling truth of the Bahai Religion was seeping into all the crevices of my former doubts bringing me solace even before I fully believed.

When in New York the next day I presented myself at the home of one of the friends of Abdul Baha where he was temporarily living, the rooms were again overflowing with the same representative group as those who had attended the meetings in Boston.

Wherever Abdul Baha made his home, that too was the home of anyone who wished to come to him from early morning until late at night, for his door was never locked, and he saw everyone irrespective of who or what they were.

His secretary met me as I came in. "I am so glad you have come," he said. "We were expecting you."

"How could you expect me when I didn't expect to come?" I replied in amazement.

Thereafter I went daily to the meetings held in a four story house on west Seventy-Eighth Street, to which he had moved and I took copious notes of everything he said and did.

My interest grew. For underneath everything he said I realized that the greater part of his wisdom remained unspoken and uncommunicated save through other powers than those of speech.

One of the enigmas that confronted me was the disparity between the universality of Abdul Baha and the sectarianism of many of his followers. The reason for this disparity did not become clear to me until many years later.

The men and women who seemed most receptive to the real spirit of religion were not always the conventionally "good" types. For these often were satisfied with a nominal acceptance of the faith without experiencing an inner transformation.

One day, to the chagrin of one of these types, a man came to the meeting saturated with nicotine

and traces of whiskey. When Abdul Baha singled him out as apparently good material, a man next to me — an anti-tobacco crusader, said:

"Doesn't Abdul Baha see what that man is? I should think he could see right through him."

That is what Abdul Baha did. He saw right through the whiskey and nicotine straight to the man's possibilities.

And that was the difference between Abdul Baha's method and that of most people. Instead of attacking the problem directly he ignored the whiskey and tobacco, and saw the possibilities of the man, his innate goodness. Gradually all traces of his former weakness disappeared.

Later the man told me how his reformation had taken place. One morning he went to see Abdul Baha very early, and finding no one on the main floor, he walked up to the reception room on the second floor. Through a partly open door he saw Abdul Baha prone on his face praying. Not knowing whether to advance or retreat he stood rooted to the spot. And as he stood there, Abdul Baha ever and anon raised himself to jot down the guidance that he was receiving from on High.

"It was," he said, "the transfiguration that I saw in Abdul Baha's face that seemed to transfer itself to me, and made me suddenly wonder why I had ever felt the need for the stimulation of whiskey and tobacco, for I haven't touched them since."

Abdul Baha spoke at the Church of the Ascension on June 2, 1912. At the end of the meeting the question was asked:

"Is it not a fact that Universal Peace cannot be accomplished until there is political democracy in all the countries of the world?"

The following is the answer given in part:

It is very evident that in the future there shall be no centralization in the countries of the world, be they constitutional in government or democratic in form. The United States may be held up as the example of future government; that is to say, each province will be independent in itself but there will be federal union, protecting the interests of the various independent states. It may not be a republican or a democratic form. To cast aside centralization which promotes despotism is the exigency of the time. This will be productive of international peace.*

This answer given in 1912 is prophetic, indicating as it did that unless the world awakens to the danger of centralization, which is another name for totalitarianism, it will lead to despotism and dictators — that the urgent need is a realization of this in order to avert it.

This was supplemented in 1919 by the answer that Abdul Baha gave to Mr. W. H. Randall, who asked him: "What will be the future of Russia?"

The future is bad, the future will be great destruction. Nations should rise to extinguish this fire

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* The Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. 1, pages 161-2.

(of Bolshevism) so that it would not spread to other countries. Soon it will affect them . . . *

But as nations did not heed this warning given twenty-five years ago to extinguish the fire of Bolshevism, it has now spread to other countries. For as a result of the first totalitarian government, the Soviet Union, practically all Europe is under different forms of it, Nazism and Fascism, with democracies fighting desperately against this bondage.

Every day while Abdul Baha was in town there were informal gatherings at his home, and almost invariably he favored us with a short talk. On June 15, 1912 he said in part:

I have made you wait awhile, but as I was tired I slept. While I was sleeping I was conversing with you as though speaking at the top of my voice. Then through the effect of my own voice I awoke. As I awoke one word was upon my lips, — the word 'Imtiyaz' (Distinction). So I will speak to you upon that subject this morning.

I desire distinction for you. The Bahais must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction; that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humani-

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* The Light of the World, page 117.

ty; for unity and accord; for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world; for faithfulness and sincerity; for justice and *fidelity*; *for firmness and steadfastness*; for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world; for love toward every human being; *for unity and accord with all people*; for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you.*

While on my way to the home of Abdul Baha one day with a friend whom I was trying to interest in the Bahai Cause, we saw him sitting alone on a seat facing the Hudson River. His back was toward us and as we walked along on the other side of the street she said to me, "Do you really think Abdul Baha knows everything as some people claim?"

"Yes, I've noticed in dozens of instances that he *seems* to know everything — the past, the present and the future."

"Then if that is the case he knows we are here and would like to speak to him," she replied skeptically.

No sooner were the words out of her mouth than Abdul Baha flashed around and beckoned us to him with the outward hooking of the forefinger characteristic of the Orientals.

At this confirmation we hastened to him joyously.

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* The Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. I, pages 184-5.

"Marhaba. You are welcome," he said.

Then motioning us to a seat beside him he spoke to us in English—short simple sentences, such as anyone not knowing a language would use.

"The day is good," he began, looking reflectively across the river, "the earth, the air, the ships sailing in the sunshine — God — everything is good."

After these few words he lapsed into a prayerful stillness that imparted a peculiar and special blessing to us. This was why he had called us to him — to sit in silent prayer for a few moments out in the sunshine, in the glory of a perfect day.

Then we saw the blackrobed Persian secretary approaching, but he suddenly stopped. For he knew that Abdul Baha was transmitting through prayer a much more powerful message than he could have given through the medium of words.

One day a believer in the Bahai Cause asked me:

"Have you heard the Greatest Name?"

Upon receiving a reply in the negative, she said:

"Come and lunch with me tomorrow, and I will tell you about it."

What she told me, and what she gave me, I would not have missed for any material wealth. The precious gift was a rosary of ninety-five wooden beads, the value of which was only a few pennies, but to me untold riches.

"You must have your time of relaxation and prayer, night and morning," she instructed me, "and,

emptying yourself of all worldly thoughts, say at each bead, 'Allah'o'Abha' which means "Glory to *God*'."

Immediately I saw the spiritual value, as well as the therapeutic value of this — that through relaxation and prayer we connect ourselves with a Higher Wisdom, and learn what is the Will of God.

Prayer had been a stranger to me for years, and it was what I most needed. I had been influenced by two materialistic movements; those who do not believe in God, nor in prayer; and those who believe that nature is the only God — the pantheistic school. Therefore to pray would be the same as praying to oneself.

From the time I began to use my rosary, and turned to God for guidance, I became infinitely happier. Abdul Baha has said that if we attain spiritual health our condition improves on all the planes, spiritual, physical, mental, and in every other possible way, enabling us to govern our lives with wisdom. Worldly lack is very frequently a symptom of *the spiritual lack.*

CHAPTER III.

Superstition an inversion of faith — Experiment in prevision—Dreams truthful and untruthful—Earth bound souls — Automatic writing — Connection between living and dead.

Much of the time that I had devoted to earning my livelihood was now taken attending the meetings at the home of Abdul Baha, and elsewhere. But I made this financial adjustment by going to live in a tiny room in a business woman's hotel. And just at this particular time when I had to all appearances dropped to zero point in worldly success I met Nonie, one of my former fellow workers on the stage.

"Where have you been all this while, and where are you playing now?" was her greeting.

"I've given up the stage," I replied laconically.

"Given up the stage! What possessed you? And what are you doing now?"

"Art work," I replied, wishing she would stop her prodding.

"What kind of art work?"

"Fashion drawings," I confessed somewhat sheepishly.

"Do you mean to say you've given up the stage for that! You made such a splendid start and could

be earning a big salary. Come on — out with it. Let's have luncheon together and you can tell me all about it."

As Nonie was extremely superstitious, and believed in the rabbit-foot principle of life, it was a little embarrassing to start talking religion to her. Then it dawned on me that it was not so difficult as it would have been with my cynical or worldly communistic friends, since the superstitious types are often more receptive to religion than the worldly types.

For superstition is an inversion of faith. It is easier to swing these types into the right conception of the supernatural powers of God, than it is to instill faith into those who have no faith except in materialism. And I approached Nonie from her angle, according to Abdul Baha's method.

"Well, I've found an Aladdin's Lamp," I began tentatively.

"What are you talking about!"

"I mean I've found something that's equivalent to it. For Aladdin's Lamp is a symbol of the Power that exists in spiritual truths if we apply them."

"I never thought of it that way. Go on. What is your Aladdin's Lamp?"

"Just what I've said. It's the inner Truths of religion, if we apply them. During the dark ages people didn't dare to teach the inner truths of religion openly, so they hid them in the form of fairy tales.

They knew that some people would understand these Truths back of the symbols."

"You mean there's something in religion that if we understand it will bring us luck?"

"Yes, provided we apply it also. Applying it is the most important of all."

"Tell me how. I certainly need some luck."

"First stop believing that inanimate things, such as rabbits' feet will bring you luck, and believe instead that the right application of religion will bring you everything good."

"Oh, is that all?" she asked disappointedly. "Suppose I have no faith, what then? I don't go to church."

"There are good people outside the churches as well as inside. You can cultivate faith. Pray for it — use a rosary . . ."

"But I'm not a Catholic," she protested.

"That makes no difference. Most of the followers of the world religions have used rosaries — Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, and most Christians. Here is one that the Bahais are taught to use," I replied, drawing a string consisting of ninety-five small wooden beads from my bag. "Use it morning and night. Say at every bead, 'Glory to God'. The monotonous repetition of this quiets our outward faculties, and puts us *en rapport* with God. Even from the psychological point of view it is beneficial."

"It sounds sort of Mumbo Jumbo. But I'll try it. I'll try anything that will bring me luck."

"Stop thinking of the luck, or the material good things it might bring you. But keep on no matter what happens."

"But tell me this," she suddenly exclaimed, "if religion is an Aladdin's Lamp it doesn't look as if you had learned how to use it — living in a cheap business woman's hotel and all."

"Oh, that doesn't matter. My life is incredibly interesting. I feel that wonderful things are waiting for each of us just around the corner, ready to pop out at us if we have faith. Religion is the greatest adventure and the only really worth while thing in the world."

"Well I'll admit you look happier than the last time I saw you, and I'm going to try it."

"I'll send you some Bahai literature," I called to her from the bus.

Although I really believed, as I had told Nonie, that marvelous things are waiting for each of us just around the corner yet the corner at times seemed very far away, and the internal upheavals that were taking place sometimes plunged me into a discouraged mood. One day while in this mood I prayed long and loud and tearfully, and even defiantly, that I might understand the Bahai Religion better in order to correlate it with the facts of life.

Immediately my prayer was answered in the conviction that came to me that I had been trying to understand it with my intellect only, and it must be understood through the heart and the emotions also.

Shortly after this I became definitely aware of a different state of consciousness. In the most unlikely place at the most unlikely time while walking through a semi-lighted passageway in the business section, an exquisite joyousness surged through me. The light of a thousand suns seemed faceted on me in soft rosecolored brilliancy, and for a split second I thought this light was from without. I looked up to find its source, and in all the ecstatic happiness that ran through me, my everyday mind wondered what a chance passerby would think if he saw me standing there gazing up at the ceiling. But in that split second I knew it was the inner light bathing me in its glory.

Later I wrote to Abdul Baha recounting this experience and in answer I received the following reply.

To the maid servant of God
Miss Ruth Berkeley
Upon her be Baha'o'llah El Abha
He is God!
O thou spiritual daughter!

Thy letter written from Philadelphia was received. Its reading produced the utmost happiness, for it was an evidence that thou art attracted to the Kingdom

of Abha and enkindled with the Fire of the Love of God. It is impossible to explain this Station, for it is beyond and above praise. It is the heavenly illumination, divine spirituality, everlasting glory and eternal life. What bounty is there greater than this? Therefore strive thou so that day by day thou mayest draw nearer unto God. I will not forget thee and will ever pray in thy behalf.

Upon thee be Baha El Abha
(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas
Translated by M. Ahmad Sohrab,
August 24th, 1912.

Dating from this period several things happened to me which I had never experienced before. I began to have previsions of events and people that afterwards invariably proved to be correct. I also received guidance in dreams either as specific injunctions, or else in symbolic form, the meaning of which was always clear.

My first dream of this kind although it was about a trifling matter, was proof that we have a consciousness that knows the past, the present and the future.

One morning on the borderland between sleeping and waking, I though with annoyance that I had no glass to drink from, as the night before I had broken the one on the table at my bedside. As I held the glass under the faucet, it had slipped from my hand and shattered — some pieces flying into the bowl, some on the floor, and one large piece in the bath-

tub. I had then taken a newspaper which lay on a chair, and as I gathered up the pieces, I cut my finger.

As this scene of the night before flashed to me, now fully awake, I looked at my finger but there was no indication of a cut. I looked toward the table, and there was my glass, the only one of its kind in the house, intact upon the table.

"How odd," I thought. "I was certain that I had broken it — but it was just a dream."

I then went to the bathroom for my morning drink, and the scene which I thought had happened the night before occurred exactly in every detail—the glass falling as I had seen it — one large piece landing in the bathtub — the identical newspaper lying on the chair, which I used to gather up the broken glass —the cut occurring at the very spot where I thought it had — all happening as I had pre-visioned. This was a precursor of many experiences I had of this kind but which involved more important things.

Before this period my mother who had been dead a number of years was to me really dead. That is, being an agnostic before I met Abdul Baha, I doubted there was life beyond the grave.

Therefore, my astonishment was great when I began to have vivid dreams about her in which she advised or warned me about things which always proved to be correct. This was all the more strange because prior to this I had never dreamt of her at all.

When she appeared to me in my first dream, I said:

"How wonderful, mother, that you have come back from the grave. Now you can tell me about life after we die."

To this she replied quickly and emphatically:

"No, no! You must not ask. You would not want to know."

I could not fathom whether she meant that I would not want to know because it was so terrifying, or because it was so beautiful that this life in comparison would seem unendurable. I rather think it was the latter judging from another dream I had of her. She appeared so young and beautiful in the dream that I said in astonishment:

"Why, how young and lovely and happy you look, Mother."

"Yes, I am happy," she replied. "I'm doing all the *things I've always wanted to do, and I'm becoming* all the things I've always wanted to become, and I'm so happy about *you*." She emphasized the "you" so strongly that I knew it was due to my new found faith in God and prayer.

This was the beginning of many dreams of guidance all of which were helpful to me. Not all my dreams were of guidance. Some were "wishful thinking" dreams, and some were the opposite of what happened. But I always knew immediately the significance of each.

Concerning dreams of guidance Abdul Baha says:

When thou desirest and yearnest for meeting in the world of vision; . . . turn toward the court of the Peerless One, offer prayer to Him and lay thy head upon the pillow. When sleep cometh, the doors of revelation shall be opened and all thy desires shall become revealed.*

He also said:

As to truthful dreams: I beg of God that thy inner eye (insight) may be opened that thou mayest thyself differentiate between truthful and untruthful dreams.[1]

These guidances either in the sleeping or waking state must not be construed as spiritualism, in the ordinary acceptance of that term. Someone asked Abdul Baha the question:

Are there 'earth-bound, souls who try to have and do have an influence over people, sometimes taking entire possession of their wills?

To this he replied:

There are no earth-bound souls. When the souls that are not good die they go entirely away from this earth and so cannot influence anyone. They are spiritually dead . . . But the good souls are given eternal life and sometimes God permits their thoughts to reach the earth to help people.

The question was then asked Abdul Baha: "What is the power used in automatic writing?"

Answer:

This power is neither heavenly nor spiritual;

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* Tablets of Abdul Baha. Vol. 1, page 104.

[1] Tablets, Vol. 1, page 196.

neither is it an influence from desembodied spirits. It is of the human spirit—magnetism within the self of the one doing the writing.[2]

But there is a true connection between the living and the dead which Abdul Baha describes as follows:

. . . Those who have ascended have different attributes from those who are on earth, yet there is no real separation.

In prayer there is a mingling of station, a mingling of condition. Pray for them as they pray for you! When you do not know it, and are in a receptive attitude, they are able to make suggestions to you, *if you are in difficulty.* This sometimes happens in sleep. But there is no phenomenal intercourse! That which seems like phenomenal intercourse has another explanation . . . The spirit of those that have passed on are freed from sense-life, and do not use physical means . . .[3]

One of the teachings of the Bahai Religion is intercessory prayer. Abdul Baha says:

Followers of the prophets have also this power of praying for the forgiveness of souls; therefore we may not think that any soul is condemned to a stationary condition of suffering or loss, arising from their absolute ignorance of God. The power of effective intercession for them always exists. All the people in the other world, are they not the creatures of God? Therefore they can progress in the other world. As they can receive light from supplication here, there, they can also receive light from supplication. The rich in the other world can help the

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2 "Daily Lessons reeceived at Acca."

3 "Abdul Baha in London."

poor, as the rich can help the poor here. In every world all are the creatures of God. They are always dependent upon Him, not independent, nor can they ever be so. While they are needful of God, the more they supplicate, the richer they bccome. What is their merchandise? What is their wealth? In the other word what is the means of help and assistance? It is intercession. First undeveloped souls must gain progress through the supplications of the spiritually rich; afterwards, they can progress through their own supplications.

From magazine "Star of the West"
March 2, 1919

Although I was now much happier than I had ever been, there were times when I needed reinforcing from other angles while being weaned away from the atheistic outlook which my contact with communists and other materialists had indoctrinated me.

Since meeting Abdul Baha I had kept away from friends with these convictions as I feared my new found faith might be undermined before it had completely taken root, and I longed to meet someone who was not only broad and universal but spiritual as well.

The discrepancy that I observed between the universality of Abdul Baha and the sectarianism of many of his followers, I learned later was due to the fact that they had been taught many years before Abdul Baha came to America by a man who presented to Bahai Religion to them in terms more or less of Phariseeism. He and the people whom he

taught were unconscious of this. But I saw and felt this in hundreds of ways. For my revolt against religion, while still in my teens, had not been a revolt against the spirit of religion, but against the Phariseeism which I mistook for religion until I met Abdul Baha.

At one of the meetings I met Lawrence White, and his conversation was like a refreshing breeze from the universal. I told him of many of the spiritual things that had happened to me, and he reinforced my beliefs and helped me to understand intellectually some of these experiences. He gave me two books that enlightened me still further—"Cosmic Consciousness", by Richard Bucke, and "Some Varieties of Religious Experiences," by William James, and one day I took "Cosmic Consciousness" to a Bahai meeting.

"You shouldn't read anything but Bahai literature," I was gently reproved by a well-meaning Bahai, as we walked home together after the meeting," for it is the ultimate truth."

"But this book reinforces me in the Bahai Cause," I replied. "It helps me to understand some aspects of it which were difficult for me to accept."

"What for instance?" she asked.

"The belief in the miraculous powers of the *founders of religion, and the effects they have had* on the lives of men; particularly the miracle of the second birth. It helps to rid me of the atheistic com-

plex which I had acquired from my contact with materialists."

"Oh, if it has that effect, well and good," she replied in a relieved tone as we parted.

Five months after my first meeting with Lawrence White we were married. This happened very strangely, due to an inner experience, and with the blessing of Abdul Baha. It was his first marriage and my second. Ruth Berkeley was the stage name of Mrs. George Rowell; the result of my first marriage had been a daughter.

Although Lawrence and I were opposites temperamentally yet we were alike in many respects, each supplementing the other. He lived in a luxuriously beautiful house, and I had known great poverty and at times struggled incessantly to maintain myself and others.

Lawrence had graduated in law at Cornell University, but as he had a more inventive mind than a legal one his father had set him up in business—the Utica Drop Forge and Tool Company where his inventive talent could find an outlet.

But his real talent lay in another direction. He was a researcher in comparative religion, psychology, and other subjects, twenty years ahead of his time. He had acquired one of the most remarkable libraries in America through which he hoped to help others. Since this meant far more to him than accumulating money, his finances were almost nil when we were married. But we were rich in faith. Subse-

quent events showed that faith is one's most important asset.

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The day before Abdul Baha sailed for Europe, December 4, 1912, he spoke at the Theosophical Society concerning the Manifestations of God. Since their knowledge is innate and not acquired, and is founded on intuition and not tuition, the progress throughout the ages is due to their religions. Part of his talk is as follows:

Thus there have been many holy Manifestations of God. One thousand years ago, two hundred thousand years ago, one million years ago the bounty of God was flowing, the radiance of God was shining, the dominion of God was existing.

. . . *These holy Manifestations of God are the* educators and trainers of the world of existence, the teachers of the world of humanity. They liberate man from the darkness of the world of nature, deliver him from despair, error, ignorance, imperfections and all evil qualities . . .

. . . Were it not for the coming of these holy Manifestations of God all mankind would be found on the plane of the animal. They would remain *darkened and ignorant like those who have been* denied schooling and who never had a teacher or trainer . . .

. . . The holy Manifestations are the ideal gardeners of human souls, the divine cultivators of human hearts. The world of existence is but a jungle of disorder and confusion, a state of nature producing nothing but fruitless, useless trees. The ideal gardeners train these wild uncultivated human trees, cause them to become fruitful, water and cul-

tivate them day by day so that they adorn the world of existence and continue to flourish in the utmost beauty.

Although the stars are scintillating and brilliant, the sun is superior to them in lumious effulgence. Similarly these holy divine Manifestations are and must always be distinguished above all other beings in every attribute of glory and perfection, in order that it may be proven that the Manifestation is the true teacher and real trainer; that he is the Sun of Truth endowed with a supreme splendor and reflecting the beauty of God. Otherwise it is not possible for us to train one human individual and then after training him, believe in him and accept him as the holy manifestation of divinity. The real Manifestation of God must be endowed with divine knowledge and not dependent upon learning acquired in schools. He must be the educator, not the educated; his standard intuition instead of tuition. He must be perfect and not imperfect, great and glorious instead of being weak and impotent. He must be wealthy in the riches of the spiritual world and not indigent. In a word, the holy divine Manifestation of God must be distinguished above all others of mankind in every aspect and qualification, in order that he may be able to effectively train the human body-politic, eliminate the darkness enshrouding the human world, uplift humanity from a lower to a higher kingdom, be able through the penetrative power of his Word to promote and spread broadcast the beneficent message of Universal Peace among men, bring about the unification of mankind in religious belief through a manifest divine power, harmonize all sects and denominations and convert all nativities and nationalities into one nativity and fatherland.*

* The Promulgation of Universal Peeace. Vol. I, pp. 458-464.

CHAPTER IV.

All things revealed through prayer — A Guidance stranger than fiction — I find an Aladdin's Lamp — Life in an old house — The value of tests.

Abdul Baha was gone! He had travelled through many countries warning mankind that colossal disasters threatened the world, which could be averted if we awakened from our materialism.

After he had sailed for Europe, Lawrence and I received an offer from a wealthy Bahai to the effect that if we would travel as teachers of the Bahai Cause he would defray our expenses.

We appreciated this well-meant offer, but we could not accept, knowing that both Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha had said that the Bahai Cause should be kept free from money and every worldly consideration.

Another reason was that I had not assimilated the religion myself. For, as Abdul Baha says, it is not sufficient to merely point the schoolhouse out to others, we ourselves must master the lessons taught therein.

Later we realized that our decision had been a wise one. For if we had accepted this offer we would have lost the chance to do other very necessary work which soon followed.

For while we were alert for outward opportuni-

ties I also was alert on the inner plane recommended by Abdul Baha—to use the science of prayer jointly with material science. Unless we do so we are as handicapped as a crippled bird trying to fly with one wing. Prayer is the most practical thing in the world. He says:

> **. . . Prayer is a key by which the doors of the kingdom are opened. There are many subjects which are difficult for man to solve. But during prayer and supplication they are unveiled and there is nothing that man cannot find out.**

Believing in, and following this advice, I prayed to know what to do at the right time and to act according to the Will of God. Then with an impact so sudden that it left us breathless with astonishment my prayer was answered, and we were transferred to another environment, and other work was given us to do.

On the morning of March 14th, 1913, I awakened at three-thirty in a state of superawareness, and chanted my rosary softly to myself. Then reaching for a pad and pencil I jotted down with lightnin-like rapidity that which was surging through me, lest I miss a word of it.

"Come away to the heather, for the guidance of the Lord is upon you. There is a little house in Dexterville, New York, owned by a man named Farnum. Go there with Lawrence and live as soon as you can conveniently get ready. Remain there fifty days, then go to Utica. Lawrence's affairs are

being mismanaged and there is great waste of trust funds. More directions will be given to you later."

As soon as Lawrence awakened I read this to him, and he was dumfounded about the information concerning his affairs as Mr. X—— had been his agent and attorney for years.

Although Lawrence was skeptical about the other information, we went to the library as soon as it opened and to our joy learned that such a place as Dexterville really did exist in New York state.

The fact that it was a tiny hamlet of less than a hundred inhabitants lessened the probability of finding a man there by the name of "Farnum", and increased the miraculous aspect of it if we did find him, especially if he owned an empty house.

Although Lawrence did not have the faith in this guidance that I had, he agreed with me that the trip was worth the risk.

Three days later we arrived at Fulton, the town adjacent to Dexterville, which we learned was six miles away from the railroad. We spent the night at Fulton and the next morning at dawn we hired a horse and carriage and set forth to find Mr. Farnum.

After we had been driving about an hour through the exquisitely fragrant air of a premature spring, we came to a cross road with a few scattered houses which we learned from a passing farmer was Dexterville.

"Does a man by the name of Farnum live here?"

I eagerly inquired, "and has he a house to rent?"

The farmer looked at us in blank amazement and said, "A house to rent! Well, he has an empty house but no such house as you would want to live in."

"Why not?" my husband asked.

"Well it's an old tumble down place, and—"

I gave a joyous laugh. "Which way is it?"

"About half a mile further down the road to the right, you will find two houses — that's the place."

We could scarcely conceal our delight at this confirmation of our hope. We wanted to sing, to shout, and to dance with glee, as we drove toward the place. What did a tumble down house matter compared to the extraordinary fact that my guidance had been verified! I had been directed to an unknown man in an unknown place, and had found them both.

I had found the Aladdin's Lamp! I could do anything with this Power! I could go places, do things as extraordinary in one way as Aladdin did, provided I used it altruistically. For spiritual guidance is an extension of intuition that transports us into the hidden knowledge of things as miraculously as Aladdin was transported through the air. But this Power departs in exact ratio as we misuse it, or use it selfishly.

Presently we approached the two houses described by the farmer. One was a neat looking white house; the other which stood diagonally across the road was small and muddy-looking, as the paint was almost

entirely worn off. In the garden of the white house a man was raking the ground.

"Are you Mr. Farnum?" Lawrence asked.

"Yes, that's my name."

"We are Mr. and Mrs. White. Have you a house to let?"

He also looked at us in utter amazement. For though Lawrence was collarless and unshaved, and we had both dressed for the part, apparently there were evidences of the city sticking to us.

"No, I have no house to let," he replied.

"How about that empty house across the way?" I said coaxingly.

"That's for a hired man, if I can get one."

Of a sudden I said, "My husband will be your hired man."

"Yes . . . I . . . I will," Lawrence hesitated. For the idea was so novel that it required a few moments to readjust his mind to it. But he felt as I did—that if there were no other way of securing the house, to which we had been so miraculously guided, save by being the hired man, then the hired man he would be.

The alacrity with which Mr. Farnum responded to our offer was evidence of the difficulty he must have had in securing help. For Lawrence was undesirable from a physical point of view, as he looked less robust that he really was.

"All right, it's a bargain," he said cordially. "Your

wages will be thirty dollars a month — house rent and milk thrown in, and you can start work on the first of April. If you want to get board while you're getting fixed up, you'll find it over in Hannabel."

After meeting his sister, Miss Farnum, a sweet faced intelligent woman, we went over to inspect our new quarters, and found there was only one habitable room in the whole house. But we rejoiced that it was sunny. I could do much of my housework on the back porch as soon as the weather became warmer.

Although nothing could lessen the happiness that this incredible miracle had brought us, we could not help questioning why had we been sent to this particular old house. Why hadn't guidance lead us to something better? It would have been just as easy.

Yes, just as easy but perhaps not such good discipline; this was a test that we could turn into an opportunity. For suddenly I remembered the advice that Abdul Baha had given Lawrence just before he left America. We had been at his home practically all day, and all day Lawrence had talked to various Bahais except when Abdul Baha was giving his brief morning and afternoon address. At nine o'clock that night Lawrence was still talking. Unexpectedly Abdul Baha came into the room and said to Lawrence three little words in English: "Go to work."

Lawrence's special need which would have taken

a psycho-analyst days and perhaps weeks of probing to find, Abdul Baha had spoken in three words. For he knew everything about everyone instantly and innately, and the remedy each person needed. He knew that Lawrence was too theoretical — too much of a book worm, and not practical enough.

And now the advice of Abdul Baha had come to pass. Lawrence was thrust into hard physical labor while at the same time being prepared for his next job — going to work on his financial affairs which I learned later were in a bad condition.

Everything had adjusted itself according to our special needs. The physical labor would be excellent for Lawrence after his too bookish life, and more of the bookish life would be good for me after my too active one.

With the advent of each day of spring our happiness increased, despite the fact that occasionally when I had been doing some particularly distasteful work to the accompaniment of a tattoo of rain on the roof, city life appeared extremely interesting to me. At such times I felt that fate had played some strange prank on me, and I repeated to myself rebelliously:

"Why couldn't I have been directed to something better than this? It would have been just as easy if directed at all."

But one morning when I awakened the conviction came to me that if I complained it would spoil the

magic of everything—that my trials must strengthen my faith—that there was a great wisdom in this work, and when the time came for me to be better circumstanced I would be, if I learned the lessons here. But if I rebelled that rebellion would be the invisible chains binding me longer to disagreeable tasks.

Despite these rare moods the golden thread of happiness ran almost continuously through our life. Lawrence accepted his assignment like a good sport, never complaining of his work. Yet in a way he had invited this sort of thing upon himself. For years he had believed in and talked about the value of doing the most humble tasks, while keeping the Presence of God as expounded in the booklet, BROTHER LAWRENCE, the medieval saint. He had given away dozens of these booklets, little dreaming that the experience he had been advocating for others would inevitably fall to his own lot.

For it seems to be a spiritual law that our attitude toward life acts as a challenge. If we believe in certain attainments and teach these to others then we ourselves, sooner or later, are given an opportunity to put our theories into practice—sometimes much to our chagrin. For we can be assured that only the practice of religion brings results — develops our supernatural powers. We must apply our religion or lose it.

Not long after we moved into Mr. Farnum's

tumble down house a registered letter came for Lawrence from Mr. X——, his agent and attorney, asking him to sign a renewal on a note that was enclosed for $10,000 which Mr. X—— had negotiated for him.

"How can you lend this money to the Tool Company if you have no funds?" I asked.

"Because he borrowed on my collateral—my share of the timber lands which I own jointly with my family," he replied.

"Please don't sign it," I urged. "Don't you remember the guidance I received that Mr. X—— was mismanaging your affairs?"

But Lawrence resisted and even became angry, as he would rather lose a fortune than have any unplesantness over it.

That night I dreamed: "Do not contend with your husband. When fifty days have elapsed go to Utica and investigate his affairs."

When I told him this I could see he was a great deal more receptive to the idea of going, and I knew when the time came he would go.

The clergyman from the neighboring village called one day and caught me with three books on my lap as I sat reading under an apple tree. I say "caught" because that was his attitude when he discovered that one of the books was the Koran.

"I am sorry to see you reading this heathen book," he reproved.

"It isn't heathen," I replied, "Mohammed fostered the arts and sciences during the dark ages while the Christians were burning and torturing the men of science. He was a true Prophet of God."

"But his teachings are incompatible with those of Christ's."

"Not in their essentials. Mohammed taught the same three fundamental truths that Christ taught — the Oneness of God, the immortality of the soul, and the brotherhood of man. The local laws only differ."

"What do you mean by 'local' laws?"

"The laws about marriage, divorce, and such things. In some ages, among some races, polygamy and easy divorce were sanctioned, because the races were not developed sufficiently to enforce stricter laws. To try and enforce the non-essentials would mean to lose the essentials."

"Well, at any rate I'm glad to see that you are interested in the Bible," he conceded a little more graciously.

"But I owe my interest in the Bible, as well as in the Koran to this book of Abdul Baha's—SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS. It is the key to both of these books."

"In what way is it the key?"

"It shows that religion is not incompatible with science if we understand that some things in the

Bible are only symbolically true, some historically true, and some literally true."

"What things does he assert that are only symbolically true?"

"Most of the miracles in the Bible are symbols."

"Then he doesn't believe in real miracles?" asked Mr. Smythe almost irately.

"Yes, he does, but not in the kind that are a violation of nature. He says that Christ did not come to make a tree talk but to enlighten us — to make us kinder."

"Not to make a tree talk!" he snorted. "Of course he didn't come to make a tree talk but he did things just as wonderful."

"He certainly did," I heartily agreed. "For instance the allegory of Lazarus being raised from the dead. Isn't it a greater miracle to raise a man from the death of materialism than it would be to restore him to physical life? In a few years he would die again anyway. But to raise him to spiritual life, as Christ did Lazarus, and the twelve apostles — that miracle is still effective after two thousand years."

"Of course that's a great miracle, but why deny that Lazarus was literally raised from the dead?"

"Because it's incompatible with science. And that's the reason people have become skeptical of all religions — the allegories have been treated as facts, and the facts have been slighted as if they were allegories."

"Give me a specific instance of how facts were slighted as if they were allegories."

"Suppose a captain of a ship instructed the crew exactly how to run it in order to avoid dangers of the ocean, then instead of obeying these orders the crew said; 'If we believe the captain can vicariously do this for us, there is no need of our doing it.' This is what the Church did when it substituted belief and the Doctrine of Vicarious Atonement in place of the kind of faith that knows it must be carried into action."

"Then you don't believe in the Virgin Birth!" he exclaimed aghast.

"Abdul Baha said such a miracle is possible but it is not necessary."

"But it plainly states in the Bible that Mary was a virgin," he protested.

"True. But in those days all pure women were spoken of as virgins. Christ insisted on our applying his principles. Didn't he say, 'As a man soweth so shall he reap.' He also gave us specific directions how to cultivate our supernormal faculties."

"Where does he give such direction?"

"In almost every word he uttered. He said if we practiced his teachings, 'Greater things than I do shall ye do'."

As Mr. Smythe arose to go he asked, in a somewhat challenging tone, "May I borrow that book, SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS?"

"You certainly may, with great pleasure," I replied.

One afternoon as I seated myself on the porch for my usual hour's reading, I saw in the distance a man sitting by the roadside. Presently he came to my gate — a swarthy-looking foreigner, fumbling with a slip of paper, and mumbling:

"My brooder, my brooder, I must findet him."

He handed me the slip of paper on which was written a name, and the address—the post office at Hannabel. I told him where it was, but he shook his head and pointed in the opposite direction, saying that a man had told him it was over that way. I repeated my direction, but again he shook his head. Seeing that I could not convince him by words I went with him although the way was long and lonely.

When we arrived at the Post Office I learned that his brother had worked there with a group of men the week before, but had since been shifted to New Jersey. At this information the man almost wrung his hands in anguish, and the terror lest he never see his brother again was in his eyes. Anxiously he drew from his pocket a few small pieces of money, and asked if that were enough for his fare. It plainly was not, so I added a dollar to it — all that I had with me. Then one by one the villagers who were standing around listening, contributed a little — sufficient to carry him to his destination and a trifle besides. To insure his making the right connections I

wrote the directions on a tag and fastened it to his coat.

As the train did not leave for an hour, I asked him if he were hungry. The look he gave me sufficed. To the good housewife across the way I explained the situation, and she supplied me bountifully with bread and butter, ham and crullers.

When I gave them to the man he, with the simplicity of a Millet peasant, and oblivious of the people in the station, fell upon his knees, made the sign of the cross and bowed his head in prayer. Then he arose, opened the bag and ate — lost in a daydream of happiness, with wonder and gratitude plainly written on his face that God had answered his prayer. For I then realized that when I first saw him in the distance he was not sitting by the roadside, as I supposed, but kneeling in prayer, praying that God would help him find his brother. He had sent out a spiritual S.O.S. and it had been answered through me.

Using prayer, or the spiritual S.O.S., is the highest form of wisdom whether used by a laboring man or a scientist. Louis Pasteur says:

> **Everything grows clear in the reflections of the Infinite. The more I know, the more nearly is my faith that of the Breton peasant. Could I but know all I would have the faith of the Breton peasant woman.**

Eagerly we awaited the time when we were to take up our next assignment, and the expectancy of what awaited us at the expiration of the fifty days en-

hanced our whole sojourn in the country.

Early in the morning of that fiftieth day we left Dexterville, left the cherry-ripened trees and all the lovely growing things. In place of the thin scholastic-looking dreamer, Lawrence emerged muscular and strong. We had had a delightful health-building vacation and earned a little money besides.

The work we were to undertake was delicate and involved. Lawrence the bookish dreamer must now become the aggressive executor. He had relegated the management of his business and finances completely to Mr. X——, who also looked after the trust funds of the other members of the family, as well as those of some relatives.

As soon as we arrived in Utica Lawrence revoked the power of attorney that he had given to Mr. X——. He also requested that the estate books and the books of the Tool Company be turned over to him for inspection. This Mr. X—— emphatically refused to do. As Lawrence hesitated, non-plussed at this unexpected refusal, I interposed quickly.

"Unless the books are opened to us by tomorrow noon, we shall indict you."

At this Mr. X—— paled, although he still refused but with less force. At noon the next day he telephoned us that the books were open to us. We had won our first round. And though we were untrained in accounting, we were confident and hopeful. For Abdul Baha's words often came to me:

Remember not your own limitations. The help of God will come to you. Forget yourself. God's help will surely come.

When you call on the mercy of God waiting to reinforce you, your strength will be tenfold.*

After days and weeks of inspection we learned that Mr. X—— had made such illegal investments of trust funds that, had we not checked his activities, the family would have gone into bankruptcy.

Mr. Charles A. Miller, a brother-in-law of Lawrence's, told us that the whole thing was so involved that it would require twenty lawyers, twenty years to untangle, and long before that time had elapsed the White family would be penniless. This I felt might be true under ordinary circumstances, but it did not apply in our case.

Sustained by this faith we plodded on, and found great waste of trust funds. One of the leaks was a vast timber tract; on which a railroad had been started but abandoned. Lawrence urged the family again and again to sell this tract which he owned jointly with them, but Mr. X—— opposed this.

Yet we both felt so strongly that these lands should be sold that we made a trip there and talked with a man who owned and adjacent tract. The result proved that we had been prompted to do the right thing at the right time which indirectly brought about the sale of these lands to another man.

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* London Talks, page 27.

We had acted in the nick of time, as the deal was closed four days before the outbreak of the world war in August 1914.

If these lands had not been sold at that time, if there had been a delay of only four days, years might have elapsed before another opportunity came, and the expenses involved in maintaining them would have forced their sacrifice. The raising of this money at this particular time, aside from the benefit that accrued to the family, was extremely necessary in order to adjust affairs from an ethical and legal standpoint.

Our task was so difficult and harrowing that at one point we were tempted to give it up. This conclusion was strengthened by our mutual belief that non-resistance is the most spiritual attitude to take. Once we went so far as to write a letter to this effect, but before sending it I thought it wise to pray and sleep over it.

The next morning we had the conviction that although non-resistance is a great virtue, yet if practiced with some people they construe it as cowardice. We therefore did not send the letter but redoubled our efforts.

These difficulties were more than compensated for by our thrill in mystifying clever lawyers and business men, and outwitting them by our knowledge of things that apparently only they were aware of. For we felt that in solving a problem in a new kind of a

way we were adding to our spiritual values as well as to material ones.

Finally, at the end of a year and a half despite Mr. Miller's gloomy prognostication, the affair was settled. Mr. Miller had been very helpful as a mediator giving his services without compensation. Although Lawrence salvaged only about a fourth of what he otherwise would have had if his property had not been mismanaged, yet we were more than grateful for this portion and grateful for an experience fraught with wonder and mystery far beyond anything we had ever dreamed of.

At this point I wish to express my belief in the spiritual law of compensation which, applied to our case, worked out in this way: If we had accepted the offer made to us earlier, to travel as paid teachers of the Bahai Cause, and had allowed our expenses to be defrayed by another, the way would not have opened to do this present work. And this work at this time was vitally important. For it not only righted wrongs that had been done to Lawrence but to others also, and it gave us the wherewithal to carry on our Bahai work independently.

It was also vitally important in the years to come. It formed the habit of prayer and dependence on guidance. It must not be inferred from this that guidance is ever given for the exclusive use of anyone. In this case although my husband benefited by it, yet others did likewise, some of whom were aged

women who would have been left destitute had we not intervened.

Those who wish for guidance must be willing to follow it even when they know losses will accrue to them from the worldly point of view. But it is always a bounty, whether given for ourselves individually or for others.

CHAPTER V.

A pilgrimage to Haifa — What we learned at the table of Abdul Baha —He who would be master must be servant to humanity — The Druses noblest of Arabian sects

During Abdul Baha's visit to America in 1912, he had said to me, "You will visit me at Haifa."

At that time I was so poor that this trip, covering a third of the world's surface, seemed as remote a possibility as a trip to Mars. And now it was to become an actuality. On December 17, 1918, in answer to a letter I wrote to Abdul Baha, the following Tablet was received:

To the friends of God:
Ruth White and H. Lawrence White
R.D.2 Santa Cruz, California

Upon them be Baha'o'llah El-Abha!

He is God!

O ye two revered souls:—

Your letter dated December 17, 1918 was received. The contents indicate that, praise be to God, ye are firm in the Testament and the Covenant, attracted to the Divine Kingdom and baptized with the fire of the Love of God and the water of Life.

Tender your gratitude to God for having attained unto such a station and sought such an illumination. The mass of the people are slumbering; thank God, ye are awake; they are destitute of sight but ye can see; they are dead and ye have been resuscitated.

Day and night engage ye in gratitude and thanksgiving for this unbounded blessing and beg God that ye may ever remain firm and resolute and day by day be strengthened in faith and assurance. Verily this is the highest wish of those souls who have entered into the Divine Kingdom and have attained unto the Supreme Bounty.

Convey on my behalf, greeting and kindness to the friends and maid-servants of the Merciful.

In case travel to the Holy Land may be performed in perfect comfort ye are permitted to come.

Upon ye be Baha'o'llah-el-Abha!

At present we shall despatch the copy of the translation into English of this letter; the original copy in Persian shall be forwarded later on as the censorship on letters written in Persian are subject to delay.

Upon ye be greeting and praise,

(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas

Translated on January 30th, 1919 in Haifa, Mount Carmel, Palestine.

As soon as the way was open and we could arrange our affairs we left for Haifa. On March 16th, 1920, we sailed on what to us was an incredible journey fraught with significances impossible to imagine.

All through the years it had seemed to me that such a journey would resemble travelling into another kingdom. And so it proved to be, but quite different from anything I had expected. For it was to a kingdom of discipline and tests I went, and not to one of enjoyment in the ordinary acceptance of the word.

No sooner had Lawrence and I set sail from New York than I was confronted with my first test. For there on the boat embodied in the personality of Mr. and Mrs. O—— was everything I disliked in religion, and they were likewise bound for a visit to Abdul Baha.

For a moment I felt like jumping overboard as the thought came to me that all the things I loved in religion would be talked right out of it by the O——'s, for their method was that of the go-getter salesman, and their conception of religion was an organization into which people must be enticed.

If I had realized that it is much more of an adventure, and much more enlightening to journey into a kingdom of tests and difficulties than it is to journey into a kingdom of mere enjoyment, the trip would have proved to be one of happiness as well.

Although the method of the O——'s in making converts did not appeal to me, their attempts to make me adopt the same tactics appealed to me still less. But I hid my feelings as best I could, remembering Abdul Baha's admonition — that if two people dispute about religion both are wrong.

However they did not observe the same attitude toward me. For they hinted many times that in their opinion I was not a Bahai, obviously because I did not use their methods in making converts. But I let it pass, and schooled myself to attain the union in

diversity which is a fundamental teaching of the Bahai Religion.

Our two weeks' journey with the O——'s ended when we landed at Naples. Despite our differences of temperament we remained friendly throughout the trip. They were booked on a fast steamer which left the next day for Alexandria, while we were booked on one which left via Brindisi, eight days later.

On reaching Cairo we were dismayed to learn that several Bahai pilgrims had not been permitted to proceed to Palestine on account of the trouble that was taking place there, and that we likewise would not be permitted to leave.

"But Abdul Baha is expecting us," Lawrence protested to the official in charge.

"He is also expecting others," he replied, "and some of them have been waiting here nearly a week. No one is allowed to go there at present."

No sooner had he finished speaking than the telephone rang. The official picked up the receiver and presently we heard him repeat the message that he was receiving: "The White party is permitted to proceed to Haifa, but no one else. Yes sir, I understand."

This incident, as well as many other experiences that I had later, convinced me that Abdul Baha is always master over worldy conditions whenever he wishes to exercise his power. For some reason he

exercised it in our behalf, and we were given priority over the others to proceed on our way.

On April 21, 1920, we arrived at Haifa and were met at the station by several Persian pilgrims. When we reached the home of Abdul Baha although he was occupied with important visitors, he left them to greet us, and the cordiality and warmth of his greeting made us feel the actuality of what he said.

"You are welcome, welcome. I am happy to see that you are both looking well. You must feel that this is your house, this is your home."

He had not aged at all, and looked more vital than when we last saw him eight years ago. Yet we knew he had been over-burdened every moment during the world war, in raising food on a large scale, and feeding the people, regardless of race, color, or religion.

We were escorted across the road to a tent, the largest, and most beautiful imaginable which had been given to Abdul Baha by the Bahais of India. Its brilliant orange color and Indian decorations made a beautiful picture silhouetted against Mount Carmel, while in the foreground lay the blue half-moon circle of the Bay of Acca.

To my dismay I found that the O——'s were not only in Haifa, but were occupying the same tent — just us four — they at the far end and we at the other.

Again I consoled myself with the thought that inasmuch as their visit had begun eight days prior to our

arrival, they would depart that much earlier.

How foolish of me, to look for happiness already made instead of accepting things as they are. It took me a long tome to learn that the O——'s in one form or another would follow me all through life until I conquered that within me that permitted myself to be disturbed by them.

Although I had read much on what Abdul Baha had written about the meaning of tests yet I could not always transcend them by any means — among which is the following:

In this day everyone must be tested, as the time of the Chosen Ones to prove their worth is indeed very short. The Day of Attainment is drawing to a close for them. The First Fruits must be ripened in Spirit, mellowed in Love, and consumed by their self-sacrifice and severance. None other are acceptable as First Fruits and all that fail to attain to the standard through the tests are relegated to the many who are called.

The more one is severed from the world, from desires, from human affairs and conditions, the more impervious does one become to the tests of God. Tests are a means by which a soul is measured as to its fitness and proven out by its own acts. God knows its fitness beforehand and also its unpreparedness, but man, with an ego, would not believe himself unfit unless proof were given. Consequently his susceptibility to evil is proven to him when he falls into the tests and the tests are continued until the soul realizes its own unfitness, then remorse and regret tend to root out the weakness.

The same test comes again in greater degree, until it is shown that a former weakness has become a strength and the power to overcome evil has been established.

In the evening when we entered the banquet hall of Abdul Baha I left my personal feelings and prejudices behind which everyone must perforce do, as Abdul Baha is the great lion tamer. There before our eyes in miniature was being enacted that prophecy in the Bible: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb," in the forty guests gathered from many races and climes, as well as from different religions and grades of society. For the miracle of harmonizing the prejudices and limitations of Moslems, Jews, and Christians is a far greater miracle than to harmonize the wolf and the lamb literally.

The sixteen Americans personifying wealth and worldly power sat at one end of the table, and at the other end personifying meekness and the subjective part of religion were the Oriental guests. As the food was passed they acknowledge it with their customary salute, touching the forehead as they make a low bow.

Mysterious and wonderful they seemed to me, for they typified the Orient so completely, as those at the other end typified the Occident.

The glow of the flickering candles making elongated shadows on the wall, and Abdul Baha pacing up and down the long room with the majesty of a

king while talking to us, added to the mellow charm. Often he personally assisted a young East Indian and a Japanese in serving the food.

Several evenings later, after Abdul Baha had finished his discourse, one of the guests asked him if he would not sit down and dine with us.

"Since the time I was five years old," he replied, "I have been trained by Baha'o'llah to wait on others, and always to be last. Do you not know that he who would be master among you must be your servant?"

As Abdul Baha finished speaking Mrs. K—— moved the candle that was in front of her down the table, saying: "It's unpleasant to have it shining in my eyes."

"How about my eyes," her neighbor whispered, and she likewise moved it farther down the table directly in front of one of our Parsee brothers. He responded with a meek bow, reverently touching his heart and his forehead.

Abdul Baha was showing us by his example and talks that if we were real Bahais each one of us would have preferred the light to shine in our own eyes, rather than in our neighbor's; each one of us would have preferred to be the last and the least, and to go hungry rather than that our brothers should suffer.

Often in after years when the truth of these principles came to me with an overwhelming impact, and I have put them into practice, it has transported me automatically from the position of the last and

the least to that of the first. For we are in thrall to the Universal Law, and those who scrambled to be first find themselves last eventually.

When we walked over to the Guest House adjoining our tent the next evening, we saw an array of chickens of all sizes out in the rain. The tiny ones were peeping dolefully on the steps. Wondering why they were not housed in their usual quarters, the basement, we opened the door and found Mrs. K—— trying to hang up a heap of partly wet exquisite finery. She tearfully told us that on her way from the station to the home of Abdul Baha a sudden storm arose, and rain poured in such torrents that it had seeped through her trunks and ruined her gowns.

"It wouldn't have mattered to some people who don't care about clothes," she wailed, "but that it had to happen to all my lovely gowns that I took such care in selecting. And the place is so crowded upstairs that I had to hang them here to dry."

"Couldn't we make room for the chickens as well as the clothes?" I suggested.

"Oh, don't let them in! Don't let them in!" she almost shrieked, at the thought of the further damage that the roosting hens might do to her finery.

Lawrence rummaged around and discovered a hen coup, and the tiny ones were safely housed but the older fowls had to shift for themselves out in the rain for the rest of the night.

While Mrs. K—— was being tested through her

attachment to clothes, I was being tested in another way. In fact each guest I talked with said he found conditions there which happened to be the most trying to him personally. These conditions were the measuring rod which brought us self-realization.

I had made the pilgrimage in the mood of one who approaches a visit to an unknown and mysterious Tibetan monastery expecting to meet marvelous people and to learn many wonderful things. Not until later did I realize that I was meeting marvelous people, and I was learning wonderful things.

For in these ordinary commonplace contacts there is as great a chance, and perhaps greater, to *learn the application of religion than there would be* in contacting what might appear to be more wonderful people. For often our opportunities are hidden behind unattractive fronts, and conversely many liabilities are often dressed up attractively.

But not realizing this I actually wished to run away—run away from everything that I had been searching for all my life — and miss the great opportunity. So I went to Abdul Baha a few days after arrival and I said:

"As there are so many pilgrims waiting for the chance to come here, and as Lawrence and I have already had a visit of several days, we wish to leave so that others may take our place."

He knew that what I really meant to say was: "As there are so many uncongenial persons here with

whom I have nothing in common, I wish to go."

He sat at the open window and the imprint of his forty years' imprisonment was unmistakably stamped at that moment on his face, as with an ineffable gesture of sadness he pushed his turban back from his forehead and looked a long time toward the Bay of Acca.

That gesture and that silence rebuked me. For I became conscious of the fact that I was a self-willed egoist — that I wanted everything my own way — I wanted a paradise ready made whereas Abdul Baha wanted me to learn to snatch my heaven out of any place I happened to be, instead of chafing against the things that displeased me.

In a flash I saw his life and his attitude toward it; saw the prison of Acca where he had spent forty years, and the room next to it, the morgue, to which he frequently went for prayer, the only place in which he could be alone. Then I saw myself in contrast, unable to endure a few days' visit because things were not exactly as pleasant as I had anticipated.

"No, you must not go," came the voice of Abdul Baha, as a gentle refrain to my thoughts. "If you remain, spiritual confirmations will come to you."

Before he had uttered the words it was what I most wished to do — what I longed to do more than anything else in the world. And he confirmed this inner conviction with a smile.

So I returned to my tent where I abode twenty-nine days. And although these days were not the continual paradise that I had at first expected, they were so unusually interesting and significant that it made mere personal happiness seem utterly unimportant.

Passing the door of my tent was a pathway frequented by Moslems and other Orientals, many of whom were fanatically opposed to the Bahai Religion, and though I knew that they knew Bahais were in that tent, yet I slept as if a host of angels were on guard at my wide open door.

I was made happier by rereading what Abdul Baha had said to two Arabs, who were antagonistic to each other:

> **Are not men really children? The life of men is but a few days; then death overtakes them. Is it not foolish to attach one's heart to the worldly love and hate? Why should we let envy and hatred separate us? The strange part of it is that they have no outward existence. Happiness is the king of our hearts. Let us not part from it. If the candle of happiness is ignited in the chamber of our heart, all the forboding gloom of evil suggestions will be dispelled. My home is the home of peace . . . of joy and delight . . . of laughter and exultation. Whosoever enters through the portals of this home, must go out with gladsome heart. This is the home of light; whosoever enters here must become illumined. This is the home of knowledge; the one who enters it must receive knowledge. This is the home of**

love; those who come in must learn the lessons of love; thus may they know how to love each other. Whenever I see people exercise love and good-fellowship among themselves, my heart is exceedingly rejoiced . . . God willing, you will always love one another . . .

—From Diary of Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, March 26, 1914.

Before I went to Haifa my three chief fears had been fear of burglars, thunderstorms, and spiders. Yet here I was housed in such a way as to offer the least possible protection from these dangers yet I slept more soundly and more refreshingly than ever before. Such is the therapeutic value of religion. Faith removes all fears through the belief in the protective power of God.

The longer I remained the more interesting my visit became. It was not so much a visit to a place as it was to another kingdom, or I might say a university. For if Abdul Baha had, by some magical power, purposely evoked a group of people from the furthermost ends of the earth who would react on one another in the self-illuminating and salutary way in which we did, he could not have been more successful. It was illuminating not always in a delightful way but always in the sense of self-measurement.

One day Abdul Baha said at dinner:

"I thought I had to go to Acca today, and it would have been beyond my strength and endurance. Still

I intended to go, irksome though it would have been to me, because we must always try to bring happiness to others. No matter how much we dislike doing a thing we must always try to make others happy. That is why I intended to go to Acca today. But now General Allenby has gone there, and I do not have to go. This is the way it is always ordained."

In other talks that Abdul Baha gave on this subject, the burden of it was always the same. If we are more concerned about the welfare of others than we are about our own, then God protects and assists us in many ways that we may be unawere of, such as the example he had just given us.

Every nook of Abdul Baha's home was filled with Oriental pilgrims. Even the basement was occupied a few days after our arrival by eight Parsee refugees. He had given them sanctuary from the Moslems and the Jews who were burning and mobbing their houses, as well as those of one another, in their native village of Oddasey. Yet now they were fraternizing with representatives of each of these, and other races, in perfect amity.

In remarkable contrast to the Parsee refugees were three Druses from the mountains of Labanon, whom we found at dinner another day. One was the king of his sect—in reality if not officially so. They were poised and powerful, and their illumined faces were as fair and blue eyed as those of Englishmen. Added to this they were distinguished by the inner glow of

purity of living and spiritual illumination. This is what Abdul Baha said of their race, as he personally assisted the guests:

> **The Druses are the noblest and the most distinguished of Arabian sects. They have zeal, courage, patience, endurance and nobility of character. They lived in Mesopotamia for about a thousand years; after the Moslems conquered them they migrated to the region around Damascus, and settled in the vicinity of Mount Lebanon and Mount Hermon. They are extremely wise, great politicians, more civilized *than the other Arabian tribes, and they are clean* and well versed in physical culture. Their union is such that they may be likened to many people in one body. For four hundred years the Turks have tried in vain to subjugate them, but they have maintained themselves up to the present without paying taxes. Originally they were of the same race as the Persians.**

One morning as I peeped out from my tent at sunrise I saw Abdul Baha taking his customary walk. All the Orientals were assembled on each side of the narrow road with hands folded on their breasts, ready to make obeisance as he passed. Not one of the fourteen Occidentals pilgrims was represented in the group, and I felt it was not a good example for us to set to the Eastern brothers. Lawrence and I joined this group, and a peculiar blessing seemed to communicate itself to us as we received his joyous greeting and salute.

He always walked alone, and he always carried an

amber rosary which he used in prayer. For he considered prayer and meditation one of the most important things in life.

After he had vanished in the distance, one of the Parsees said to us:

When I return to my native land I am going to tell my co-religionists that the prophecy of Zoroaster has been fulfilled.

"What is it?" I asked.

He prophesied that in the last days the East and the West would gather together—that a strange people from an unknown continent far across the ocean would meet and fraternize with the Zoroastrians and other religionists on Mount Carmel. At the time of the prophecy America had not been discovered, and now you see how actually true it has become.

The subject of dreams and their meaning was being discussed one day by several Orientals and Americans, and I recounted a dream that I had just had: I was dining with a number of the great Prophets of the past ages, and they were discoursing and trying to enlighten me. But everytime I tried to speak I could not do so, as my mouth was so full of food. Although I tried again and again this always happened.

"The meaning of that dream is very obvious," the American said. "You eat too much."

"No! No! No!" one of the Orientals replied emphatically. "We believe that when a Holy Prophet appears to us in a dream, and speaks to us, that he

has actually spoken in order to enlighten us. The meaning of the dream is that you were receiving so much spiritual food that you could not answer, because you had not digested what you were receiving. When you do you will be able to give it out."

This incident, and many others that occurred, typifies the difference between the average Westerner and the average Oriental. The latter has more of the spirit of religion, while the Occidental is more materialistic in his interpretation of life and religion and everything.

Abdul Baha has said many times that the East and the West have vital things to learn from each other. The East can learn the scientific aspect of life, and the West can learn reverence and the subjective and spiritual aspect of it.

Abdul Baha makes it clear that the *kind* of dreams we have is conditioned on our stage of development. We can have very undesirable dreams, and we can have "wishful thinking" dreams, and we can have dreams of instruction and enlightment. In fact sleep can be made the school house of the soul. Baha'o'llah says:

> **. . . if we reflect upon any of the creations we shall behold a hundred thousand consummate wisdoms and learn a hundred thousand knowledges. One of these worlds is that of sleep (or dreams): consider what mysteries are deposited therein, what widoms are stored therein! . . .***

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* Seven Valleys.

CHAPTER VI.

Abdul Baha knighted by British Government — Visit to the Most Great Prison at Acca — Example in self-abnegation — The law of giving.

The British government knighted Abdul Baha on April 25, 1920, and we were privileged to be present.

He rode to the ceremony that afternoon in his shabby old carriage. On account of the high cost of gasoline he seldom used the car that someone had given him. And yet at this same time he was host to thirty or forty guests daily. But always where any expenditure for his personal wants were concerned he eliminated everything except the bare necessities of life.

This honor of knighthood was confered upon him in appreciation of his splendid help and good advice in straightening out the problems between Jews, Moslems and Christians; and in recognition of his services in saving thousands from starvation during the war, due to his foresight in planting vast areas of grain which he gave to people without distinction of race, creed, or political affiliations.

Immediately after the ceremony he slipped through a side entrance and left for his home.

That night he sat in an alcove adjoining the dining room which was in full view of the guests, and he

seemed unusually sad and weary. I surmised that this mood was due to the seeming hopelessness of awakening mankind spiritually. This included us, his guests.

Presently Abdul Baha arose and began to help Koshro and Fugeta wait on the table. Mrs. K—— always spoke of it in this way:

"The Master does everything to make us happy. Nothing is too good for us. He even waits on us at table."

This complacency so irked me that I replied:

"He does it for an example that we might act likewise toward mankind. For the same reason Christ washed the feet of the disciples, as an example of self-abnegation."

Then I leaned over and whispered to one of the interpreters:

"Please ask Abdul Baha if he will permit me to wait on the table in his place so that he can sit and eat with the guests."

"It would be useless to ask him," the interpreter replied," he would not permit it."

But as I insisted he reluctantly conveyed my request to the Master. Much to the surprise of everyone it was granted. As I passed the food to Abdul Baha he said significantly:

"This is my task—my service. You have assumed my task, and it is a very responsible and difficult one."

He knew that I knew what he meant. It did not refer merely to waiting on the table — my wish to help him was a symbol of my willingness to shoulder some of the real burdens of the Bahai Cause, and not merely to play at religion.

Later I realized that through this act I had thrown a challenge which would put me to the severest tests in the years to come.

At the next meal Abdul Baha said: "I am very pleased with Mrs. White."

This was too much for Mrs. K—— who was never happy unless dominating the limelight. She begged Abdul Baha to permit her also to wait on the table. To this he graciously consented. Then turning to me he said: "It is no longer necessary for you to do so."

May 2, 1920, Abdul Baha sent a large party of the pilgrims to the fortress city of Acca, where Baha'o'-llah was confined twenty-five years as a prisoner for his faith, and Abdul Baha for forty years. From this prison Abdul Baha was released by the "Young Turks" in 1908.

After visiting "The Most Great Prison" and other places of interest, we were the dinner guests of a very noted citizen of Acca. The dinner was in reality a banquet, for not only were many oriental delicacies served but many European dishes as well.

Later the women of our party were permitted to visit the women of the household. Our delight was

as great as theirs in contacting a world so different from our own in thought, education, and environment.

It is an oriental custom that when a guest expresses admiration for anything in the home of his host it is, almost invariably, presented to him. Therefore when Mrs. K—— became voluble in her admiration of the exquisite old amber rosary that our hostess was wearing, the latter gave it to her. But instead of Mrs. K——'s responding by presenting our hostess with some of the jewelry she was wearing, she accepted it without demur, as a tribute to her powers.

Upon seeing my kodak, our hostess said timidly: "Will you please take photographs of me and my daughters? We've never had our pictures taken; our religion forbids it."

"Nothing will please me better," I replied. "Shall we go into the garden."

"Oh, no, no!" she cried in a frightened manner. "Come with me where the men can't see us."

Like children on a forbidden escapade we climbed out of a window opening on the back porch. Their breathless eagerness conveyed to me that being photographed unveiled, after generations of seclusion, was an event as daring to them as it would have been for an occidental to be photographed nude.

"Please send back the photographs and the films by a trusted messenger," our hostess pleaded, "it

would cause serious trouble if anyone happened to see them." This we did a few days later.

Our visit ended in a glow of happiness born of the consciousness that whenever personal friendships are established between different races and faiths of men we speed up world unification, and help keep pace spiritually with the science that united the world physically.

That night at dinner although it is customary for the guests to eat in silence out of deference to Abdul Baha who frequently discourses, Mrs. K—— shook her amber beads, as well as her earings, in order to gain attention of the guests. Then she told them that the beads had been given her by our hostess that day at luncheon, implying that it was due to her personal powers.

As she continued I am sure the whole scene became clear to Abdul Baha, who happened to be standing beside me, for he laid his hand on my shoulder and said very significantly, "I know, I know."

One morning when we went to see Abdul Baha very early, we found that a visitor had already preceded us — a very poor woman petitioning Abdul Baha to cure her little daughter who was desperately ill. He not only gave her the assurance of his spiritual help but as she started to leave he handed her a sum of money. The amount evidently astonished her for she looked at it incredulously, and

then with a muffed cry of joy threw herself at his feet and poured forth incoherent words of thanks.

This is only one instance among thousands where he has done likewise according to the particular need of the case. His time, his money, and his liberty he has given for love of mankind. It is said he could have been released from prison long before 1908, but that he would not accept his freedom unless the other religious and political prisoners were also liberated.

This quality of giving is one of Abdul Baha's strongest characteristics. He understood supremely, and was the perfect example of the results of the Law of Giving.

Many materialists believe that there is not enough of the good things of life to supply everyone even with bare comforts. But when people understand and apply the spiritual law they know that there is a superabundance in the world for everyone. If we live in accordance with the law of giving we tap inexhaustible wealth. The more we give the more we enrich ourselves spiritually, physically, mentally, and even financially. If we are selfish and try to get without giving, we block this supply and gradually become parasites — rootless beings.

Today the rootless parasites are looking to the government to supply their needs, and have forgotten the supreme magic that lies in the service of giving. We can give even if we are a beggar on the

street; we can share some little thing — a crust, a *newspaper — with someone. When we obey the Law* of Giving we gravitate out of our station of poverty into better conditions.

The intense humanitarian sympathy for the underprivileged that pervaded everything Abdul Baha said and did, was one of the reasons for my attraction to the Bahai Cause. When he was in London Lady B—— had invited him to be her guest. The first day of his arrival as he and those assembled to meet him were about to dine, the door bell rang. The butler had stepped into an adjoining room for a moment so Lady B—— herself opened the door. There in the entry stood the shabbiest man imaginable, carrying a package wrapped in a newspaper.

"Is 'e 'ere?" asked the man.

"Yes, he is here," replied Lady B——.

"I 'ave something for 'im."

At that moment Abdul Baha appeared and gently lead the man indoors. Taking the package that had been presented to him, he unwrapped it and discovered a loaf of bread.

"Bring me a plate," he said to Lady B——.

On her return with it he said:

"No, not this one, bring me your best."

This she did, and then Abdul Baha put the bread upon it as a worthy repository for such a precious gift. Breaking it in pieces he passed a portion to each guest.

"Eat," he said.

As they gingerly made a pretense of tasting it he urged more insistently:

"Eat! You will never have another chance to eat such food as this, for it was purchased at the expense of this man's starvation."

It is the spirit of appreciation and giving that Abdul Baha wishes to undue us with. Every act of his life shows that to apply religion is the great achievement. When a professor in one of the great American universities asked him:

"If I become a Bahai can I keep the religion of my saintly Christian mother?" he replied:

"Of course you may keep it. If you become a Bahai you will apply it."

One night at dinner Abdul Baha ate entirely with his fingers. As if in answer to the somewhat surprised glances of several of the American group, he said:

"This was the method of eating long before knives and forks were thought of."

Perhaps he did this in order to put at ease some of the oriental pilgrims who followed this custom at home. Perhaps it was also a silent rebuke to the over-mincing, artificial manners of some of the occidental guests present, as well as a reminder that what is considered good manners in one country is sometimes considered bad manners in another. For instance among certain Arab tribes, when a person is

served coffee the more noise he makes in drinking it, the more polite is he considered. It is an evidence that he is enjoying its deliciousness.

If we have the kindliness of heart that the Master so often exhorts us to have, we shall become the essence of good manners — we shall never be surprised, shocked or amused at habits and customs differing from ours.

CHAPTER VII.

Foods of the future — What Abdul Baha says on vegetarianism — Assemblies in the Tomb of the Bab — Description of the martyrdom of the early Babis by Professor Browne — Two kinds of fate and predestination

A little Arabian shepherd boy romped most of the day with a small flock of sheep in the yard at our door, and every evening his shirt was in shreds. Despite my admonitions, and the fact that I had mended it several times, he continued frolicking with his beloved companions. One by one his sheep disappeared. I did not notice their diminishing numbers at first, nor guess where they had gone, until one night I found him alone on the steps of the Pilgrim House weeping bitterly in the dark. Then I knew where the lambs had gone — we had just eaten the last one.

This I know will shock the Theosophists and followers of other cults who make a fetish of vegetarianism. But Abdul Baha says that all things are the eaters and the eaten. He indicates that it is a bounty for the animal to be transformed into the human kingdom through being eaten. Whether it is a bounty for man to eat the animal is left for each one to decide. On this subject of eating meat he speaks as follows:

O thou who are uttering the praise of God:

Verily I read thy letter, which expressed thy surprise at some of the commandments of the law of God, such as that concerning the hunting of innocent animals. Be not surprised at this. Ponder over the contingent realities, their mysteries, wisdom, connection and relations. The world is harmonious in all things and the connection therein is mighty and nothing is missing. All things are eaters and eaten in the physical creation. The plant sucks from the mineral, the animal eats and swallows the plant, and the human eats the animal. Then the mineral (in turn) eats the human body. Physical bodies are transferred from death to death and life to life. Therefore, all things are subject to transferrence and change except the Cause of existence, which cannot be changed or transferred, because it is the foundation for life in all kinds and species and in all possible realities in the world of creation.

If thou observeth closely through a microscope the water which man drinks and the air which he breathes, thou wilt see that in every breath which man breathes, that breath contains numerous animals, and in every draught of water great number of animals exist. This could not be prevented because the existent beings are eaters and eaten and, by this, existence is caused; otherwise, the relations between existent things would cease. When a thing decomposes and decays, being bereft of life, it becomes promoted to a world of life greater than the former. For instance, it ceased in a mineral life and was promoted to the vegetable life, and is elevated to that of the animal; then leaving the animal life it advances to the human, and this is on account

of the favor of God thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement.

I ask God to strengthen thee in comprehending the mysteries deposited in the reality of existence, to lift up the veil from before thee and thy sister, so that the concealed mystery and hidden reality become manifest as the sun at noon, and to confirm thy sister and thy husband in entering the Kingdom of God, and heal thee from all physical and spiritual diseases in the world of creation.

Furthermore Abdul Baha considers it a greater sin to offend people than it is to eat or not eat meat. Yet some vegetarians look upon those who eat meat as if they had committed a crime. Their fetish seems to be more precious to them than kindliness of heart, which is the first attribute from the Bahai point of view. It is said that Buddha died of eating pork rather than offend his host.

As the guests of Abdul Baha are representatives of every race and clime and creed and religion, it would be impossible to observe their fetishes while under his roof. But he himself eats very little meat. The main dish served is rice topped with a combination of onions, pine nuts, and small pieces of lamb.

But in justice to the vegetarians Abdul Baha says that as man gains a better understanding of the science of food he will know such perfect combinations that the question of meat eating will be solved — that the food of the future will be nuts, grains,

vegetables, and fruits, and in the meanwhile to eat as little meat as possible.

Every Sunday afternoon the pilgrims and other believers at Haifa, walked up to the Tomb of the Bab on Mount Carmel and assembled in the adjacent garden for tea. One Sunday afternoon the martyrdom of the Bab was commemorated in this manner, and after tea a meeting was held in one of the lofty chambers of the Tomb. We sat in Quaker-like silence for awhile broken presently by a soft chant. As it arose in cadence and volume it drew our thoughts and feelings with it in its ascent toward God. Then another silence, and from another part of the room came another chant, a little different but none the less effective.

At the end of this period of meditation Abdul Baha said a few words. Then we proceeded to the inner chamber — first removing our shoes before entering to pray.

After prayer we walked into the garden and waited for Abdul Baha to pass by. But instead of coming forth he stood in the doorway of the Tomb and looked out at the peaceful beautiful scene before him; Haifa nestling at the foot of Mount Carmel just below us, and beyond, following the half-moon circle of the bay, the town of Acca glistening white in the sunshine. He began to speak of the martyrdom of "The Bab" and the persecution of the early believers. Perhaps the peacefulness and serenity per-

vading that fragrant garden made it difficult for us of the Western world who happened to be there, to visualize those harrowing times. But suddenly we were shaken out of our somewhat placid acceptance of these events by a new aspect of Abdul Baha. As he described the martyrdom of the Bab and the suffering of the thousands of early believers, the torrential sorrow that shook his body communicate itself to us.

He told us that we should meditate often upon these events and upon the suffering and crucifixion of Christ, that we might become sympathetic and awakened.

After he had finished this poignant description we followed him down Mount Carmel sadly and thoughtfully. This had been an exceptional glimpse of the Master for he was usually buoyant, powerful, and poiseful. His whole being was super-alert, his step strong, and his back straight despite his seventy-six years.

This scene, as well as many other incidnets that I witnessed in the Orient, brought home to me the fact that we of the occidental world have repressed our emotional nature far too much under the mistaken idea that lack of emotion is a sign of good breeding.

If one wishes to be stirred emotionally in a salutary way, one could do no better than to take the

advice of Prof. Edward G. Browne, of the University of Cambridge, who says concerning the Bahai Faith:

> **To the study of the Babi Religion I was irresistibly attracted, even before I undertook my journey to Persia in 1887-88, by the vivid and masterful narrative of its birth and baptism of blood contained in the Comte de Gobineau's *Religions et Philosophies dans l'Asia Centrale*—a narrative which no one interested in the Babi (or, if the term be preferred, Bahai) faith, or indeed in the history of religion in general, should on any account omit to read with careful attention. My enthusiasm was still further increased by what I saw of the Babis in Persia, and by my subsequent visits to Baha'o'llah at Akka . . .**

Again we went to see Abdul Baha very early in the morning, and he served us with small cookies and honey of which he was also eating, while his daughter Monavvar Khanum, poured tea for us.

He spoke of the riots and bloodshed that had recently taken place in Jerusalem, and instantly the thought leapt to my mind: "I'm so glad I'm not there." As if in answer to this thought he added: "On your way back to America you must first go to Jerusalem, and then to Alexandria."

This indicated that we were soon to leave, and it saddened us, for as time elapsed Lawrence and I both wished that our visit might be extended indefinitely. We had also wanted to visit the Druses on Mount Lebanon. The fragments of conversation we had had with them, the austerity of their

lives, the mystery in which their religion is shrouded, and the unmistakable marks of spirituality which illuminated their faces had interested us greatly.

So I momentarily forgot that it was a great honor to receive specific directions from Abdul Baha, as this favor was not often vouchsafed to people, and I said:

"If there is no special reason for our going to Jerusalem could we not first go to the village of Abu-Anon (Father Teeth) and remain there for awhile?"

He shook his head and replied:

"If you follow my first advice then all will be well. Sometimes when people plead with me to change and reconsider I vary my first advice, then it is not so good. My first advice is always right. I know all things, and I know what is best."

Immediately I knew what he meant — that his first words are the flash of innate knowledge, the flash of intuition. If I had persisted in my desire to go, he would have acquiesced, and then Lawrence and I would have missed very important contacts in Jerusalem, as well as missing many interesting experiences. Conversely if we had gone to Mount Lebanon we might have encountered grave dangers, the consequences of which would have rebounded on us.

The following that Baha'o'llah wrote on fate and predestination bears light on what Abdul Baha had said:

The decrees of God as related to fate and predestination are of two kinds. Both are to be obeyed and accepted. The one is irrevocable, the other is, as termed by men, impending. To the former all *must unreservedly submit, inasmuch as it is fixed* and settled. God, however, is able to alter or repeal it. As the harm that must result from such a change will be greater than if the decree had remained unaltered, all, therefore, should willingly acquiesce in what God hath willed and confidently abide by the same.

The decree that is impending, however, is such that prayer and entreaty can succeed in averting it.

* * *

After spending twenty-nine unforgettable days on the slopes of Mount Carmel as the guests of Abdul Baha, Lawrence and I left Haifa for Jerusalem. Just prior to our departure Abdul Baha gave me a large white silk scarf. To Miss George of London who was also leaving on the same train with us for Jerusalem, he gave silk material for a dress. As he presented the gifts to us he said to me:

"Yours is smaller but it is hand-woven."

CHAPTER VIII.

Trip to Jerusalem — Visit Judges, Shieks and women of the Orient — We enter the Mosque of Abraham — Station of the Manifestations of God — Return to America.

In Jerusalem at the Hotel Notre Dame de France where we stayed, an Englishman whose face was terribly scarred, told us how miraculously he had escaped being killed during the riots in Egypt. His enemies had beaten him almost to insensibility, yet he had managed to elude them by jumping on a street car. A minute later his pursuers entered the car.

"Where is he?" they shouted to the three women who were the only passengers on the car.

"He ran out the front door and down that alley," one of them said.

"Not until the street car reached the home of the women did I dare emerge from under their voluminous skirts, where one of the good women had hidden me," the Englishman said. Then he added: "I would advise you to wear small American flags pinned on your lapels. It will be much safer for you."

"After such an experience, I shouldn't think you would want to live here," I said.

His face suddenly assumed a new sadness:

"Well you see it's like this: My wife's religion demands that a light be kept burning on her grave

perpetually, and I promised her that as long as I lived I would keep it burning. And I don't dare relegate this duty to anyone else."

At two-thirty on the morning after we arrived in Jerusalem I was awakened by the loud booming of a cannon. With the Englishman's story fresh in my mind I called to Lawrence who was peacefully sleeping: "Wake up Lawrence. I'm afraid the riots have begun again."

"Nonsense," he replied. "It's the fast of Ramadan. That cannon is to waken the Moslems for breakfast before sunrise. Go to sleep."

But I couldn't sleep, and as I stood at the window overlooking the Mount of Olives, I heard in the distance the musical call from the minaret: "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet," chanted in Arabic. The scene was so beautiful and peaceful that the recent battling in this Holy Place was difficult to visualize.

The Moslems not only fast from before sunrise until after sunset during this month of Ramadan, but they also abstain from liquids of every kind including water. This is no small achievement in a hot arid country. Their religion is not only a very serious thing to them, but it is also a very joyous and practical one. Their repetition of the hypnotic drone: "There is no God but God," that they use as they work, all chanting in unison while lifting some heavy object or rowing their boats, not only lightens

their labor but it is also one of the most pleasing and picturesque of sights and sounds.

Mr. Dawson, in the Forgotten Secret, says.

> **All the higher religions that exist today witness to the belief in prayer. Within a Mohammedan Mosque there once stood two ministers of the Christian religion, the one a Roman Catholic, the other a Protestant. Said the Roman Catholic to the Protestant, as they listened to the impressive prayers from the Koran, 'Men who pray like this cannot be far from the Kingdom of God.'**

Nothing could have made us more conscious of the poverty that the world war had left in its wake than our breakfast that morning consisting of a substitute coffee, black bread, and a watery syrup. One of the guests drew from her bag a small jar which she proudly displayed as butter. Grease of some kind it undoubtedly was, and those of the guests who had lived long in Palestine viewed it enviously.

After breakfast as we were walking through the new part of the town, we passed a school which was so unlike anything we had ever seen that we paused a moment in the wide open doorway. Immediately, at a motion from the schoolmaster, all the children stood up, and with hands over their hearts reverently saluted us.

This was an example of the courtesy that we met everywhere from the Moslems, and it was so different from the attitude that I had heard they displayed toward the Christians, that we thrilled with happi-

ness as we returned their salute and proceeded on our way.

Abdul Baha had told us to contact Rhuhi, who held an important governmental position in Jerusalem, and we lost no time in doing so. Through him we met a number of Moslem judges and sheiks as well as a number of Persians, Jews, and Copts. This enabled us to see a little of oriental home life which otherwise would not have been vouchsafed us.

One evening we went to the home of an Arabian judge and his two sons who were Bahais recruited from the Moslem faith. As they had only recently become Bahais the women of the household were not present.

"Our women," the judge explained, "have been secluded so long that they are like canary birds, afraid to come forth even after the cage has been opened, so they will be pleased if you will go and see them."

In a chamber flooded with the golden tints of a setting sun I found an elderly woman, the wife of the judge, and two beautiful young women, the wives of the sons. As I entered they arose from their task of rug-weaving and graciously greeted me. Upon my begging them to continue their weaving, one of the young women again seated herself at the loom and worked with incredible dexterity.

The only male present was a Persian boy of twelve who acted as interpreter as best he could. The young

woman at the loom said something to the boy, and he translated it with complete simplicity and lack of self-consciousness.

"She is about to be born," he said pointing to the young woman, who was large with child, and she wants you to pray for her."

"I shall be happy to pray for her, every day," I replied, "so that her child will be brought into the world safely."

It touched me deeply that this young Moslem stranger should ask me, a Christian, to pray for her. I had the feeling that the orientals' contentment with the simple wholesome things of life has enabled them to retain a faith that the material civilization of the Western world has well nigh lost.

By and by we bade one another farewell, and I, and my small escort joined the male members at dinner. First delicious soup was served to us with spiced noodle balls floating on top. I observed that I had been favored with seven of these while the judge had only three. Some instinct prompted me to take my spoon and deposit three of these in his plate. He was much pleased and acknowledged this with the customary salute of the Moslem, touching his forehead and his heart as he bowed. To my delight I aftewards learned that I had unwittingly done the most polite thing imaginable when I gave my host some of the titbits of my own food.

The judge was much interested in the freedom and

education that the women of the occident have attained. He heartily endorsed Abdul Baha's advice—that in the matter of education first preference should be given to the girls of a family, as the girls are the rearers of the race, and their education is more important than that of the males.

"But I suppose it will take a long time for this view to be accepted even in America," he deplored.

"Yes, preference is still more or less given to the males over there," Lawrence assented.

"But not to the same extent as in England," the judge replied. "The extraordinary freedom you have attained has made me realize how very far behind we are in this respect. But the transition will surely take place. Already we are seeing more evidences of it."

In commemoration of the double event of the anniversary of the declaration of the Bab and the birthday of Abdul Baha we, with two of our new found friends, one a Persian Bahai and his two children, the other an Arabian Sheik, drove to Hebron. There we visited a Bahai family and met many other Bahais, and also went to the Mosque of Abraham.

As we had come unexpectedly, and as it was the month of Ramadan, our host apologized for serving what he considered such a poor dinner. Only the two children, my husband and I partook of it.

"I am so ashamed, you will excuse," he said with downcast eyes and hands folded on his chest.

To me it was a delightful banquet. Not only was the food good but it was pervaded with the spirit of brotherly love — that evocative power which had brought us together from the furthermost ends of the earth.

After our meal which consisted of unleavened bread, eggs, herbs mixed with sour milk, and some delicious vegetables, we were escorted by our host to the Mosque of Abraham. On our way he cautioned: "When you enter the Mosque, do everything I do, for it would be dangerous if you were known to be Christians."

Our host introduced us to some Moslems who were standing just outside the door of the Mosque.

"These are my American friends," he said, "and they believe Mohammed was a true Prophet of God."

They were astonished at this information, and wanted to know how it had happened.

"Once a great and good man* went to America," Lawrence replied, "and told the people there that Mohammed, Moses and Zoroaster taught the same essential truths to mankind. He also told them that each of the Founders of religion acknowledged the others; it is only the followers who disagree."

After thinking this over the Moslems evinced great delight that we had come from a far-away land to do homage to their Prophet.

Later our host said to us: "If we had used the

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* Abdul Baha.

name 'Bahai' instead of telling them of the Bahai principles it would have been dangerous. Baha'o'llah says: 'Blessed is he who is free from the sea of names'."

At the door of the Mosque we donned the slippers provided for all who enter. I thrilled at the thought that we were taking part in a world movement of which this place stood as a symbol — the evolution of religion. Underneath us was the Cave of Machpelah, mentioned in Genesis XXIII — the very cave that Abraham had purchased from the Children of Heth to bury his family in; where he himself was laid side by side with Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, and Leah.

When our host prostrated himself in prayer, we did likewise, happy to make obeisance in the name of Zoroaster, Moses, Christ and Mohammed, in this spot venerated by each of their followers in turn.

In the early centuries a synagogue stood over this site and was possessed by the Jews. Next it belonged to the Christians as evidenced by their Church that was still standing there in 1119. But after the downfall of the Frankish Kingdom the Christian Church was converted into a Mosque. And now though the Moslems have possessed it since that time, yet the custodian of the Mosque today is a Bahai harbinger of that era when all religions shall be recognized for what they are — identical in their fundamentals.

For the first time in history the custodian of this sacred spot belongs to a religion which teaches that

just as Jews, Christians and Moslems, worship and venerate the dead bones of their great prophets and saints, whom they all share in common, so likewise must they venerate the living religions of one another.

So zealously do the Moslems guard this spot today that practically no Jews or Christians have been admitted to the Mosque since the Moslem conquest. In 1862 the Prince of Wales accompanied by Dean Stanley were among the favored few to be admitted. And the reason that we, two unknown American travellers, had been privileged to enter was solely through the power of the Bahai Religion.

For in acknowledging our belief in Mohammed we spoke the truth. When one becomes a Bahai he automatically becomes a believer in all the Founders of all religions, and is no longer following the superstitions of any of them. Whereas when a person is converted to any of the other religions it is on condition that he reject all the others.

This all inclusive belief of a Bahai does not mean that he accepts the Founders of religion merely as great teachers. For a person may be an atheist and yet accept Christ in the same way that he accepts a Socrates, or a Plato — merely as a teacher.

But this does not constitute true faith, nor does it lead to the unfoldement of the spiritual life. The spiritual life has many other aspects besides merely practicing the ethics of some great teacher. For the

vital point of every religion is this — to believe that the Founders of religion are the Mediators between God and Man, whose teachings are a revelation from God, and therefore infallible. They are the Dynamos, and without this faith we are as dead spiritually as a piece of wire is dead electrically before it has been connected with a dynamo.

Concerning the station of these Manifestations Abdul Baha says:

> **. . . the reality of the spirit of Peter, however far it may progress, will not reach to the condition of the Reality of Christ; it progresses only in its own environment.**
>
> **. . . However far the disciples might progress, they could never become Christ. It is true that coal could become a diamond, but both are in the mineral condition and their component elements are the same.**
>
> **—*Some Answered Questions*, p. 270-1**

> **". . . Good actions alone, without the knowledge of God, cannot be the cause of eternal salvation, everlasting success, and prosperity, and entrance into the Kingdom of God.**
>
> **—*Some Answered Questions*, p. 276**

One of our Jewish Bahai friends called at our hotel a few days after our arrival to escort us to a festival in the suburbs of Jerusalem, held by his race on the grounds of the Tomb of Simon. With him were two other friends — a Moslem, and a Copt. When we arrived we found English soldiers with gattling guns, standing outside the gate reminding us vividly of

what had recently happened, and might happen again.

"There are sixty different nationalities of Jews represented here," our escort informed us, "from as many different countries. Although each speaks a different language, they also speak their mother tongue, Hebrew."

"But what are those Negroes celebrating here for?" I asked glancing toward a group of them conversing with another group of fair-skinned English Jews.

"They are not Negroes," our escort replied, "they are Jews. But they and their ancestors have lived for so many generations in Africa that they have become as dark as Negroes."

As we strolled through the grounds we could see that our party created many hostile comments among the merrymakers. Why was a Jew, a Moslem, a Copt, and two Christians, fraternizing together? For the white turban of the shiek was especially conspicuous, and was singled out as the target of fierce glances. Our Jewish friend became more and more nervous as he sensed the danger.

"I think we had better go," he said at last. "It wouldn't be pleasant if a disturbance started."

"Yes, by all means," I assented with alacrity. "Those gattling guns don't look good to me."

Once outside the gate we breathed more freely.

"I'm glad I saw this festival," said the sheik, "for

it's a demonstration in Jewish unity. In time the Bahai Religion will achieve a like unity, but on a universal plane and for all mankind."

"That is what Baha'o'llah and Abdul Baha have prophesied and it will surely come to pass."

* * *

We left Jerusalem nine days after our arrival with almost as much reluctance as we had felt at leaving Haifa, for we had been greatly enriched by our experience there.

The day before we left one of our Moslem friends presented us with a beautiful Koran printed throughout on green paper, the sacred color of the Moslems. We in turn gave him a Bible which, he assured us he would read with great interest. He had the advantage over us as he was a perfect English scholar, and we could not read Arabic. But we had a translation of the Koran, with commentaries by M. Muhammed Ali, M.A., LL.B., which we looked forward to reading on our return voyage.

"You will reverence this Koran, I know," he said at parting, "for we consider it a living reality, and even such a thing as accidentally sitting upon it is considered a great sin."

"Have no fear," I assured him, "we shall reverence and treasure it."

We were glad to exchange our Sacred Books with each other — glad to enter, with equal reverence each other's places of worship in the spirit of the

liberalism that arises from true faith. This is entirely different from the liberalism of the materialists who are liberal because they do not believe, and are indifferent to all religions. Abdul Baha says:

All must abandon prejudices and must even go to each other's churches and mosques, for, in all of these worshipping places, the name of God is mentioned. Since all gather to worship God, what difference is there? . . . The Mohammedans must go to the churches of the Christians and the synagogues of the Jews, and vice versa the others must go to the Mohammedan mosques. They hold aloof from one another merely because of unfounded prejudices and dogmas. In America I went to Jewish synagogues, which are similar to the Christian churches, and I saw them worshiping God everywhere.

* * *

There are prepared souls in every religion. Today God is working in all the churches instructing many souls in celestial brotherhood. These souls are related by invisible and spiritual ties and are being ripened by the Holy Spirit.

We had not made reservations for our return trip, not knowing how long we would remain in Palestine. We therefore found ourselves at the beginning of June in Egypt, at which time the exodus is greatest, and it might be weeks and perhaps a month, before we could secure passage.

Finally after ten days we succeeded in booking accommodations. The delay proved fortunate as we were able to contact many Bahais, and others, in

Cairo and Alexandria — contacts and experiences we valued greatly.

Although the boat was virtually a tramp steamer, it had its compensations as its destination was Piraeus, Greece. This would enable us to see Athens, which we both wanted to see, yet had felt loath to spend the time and money to do so.

After our return to America we received the two following tablets from Abdul Baha:

I.

To Mrs Ruth White and Mr. Lawrence White, unto them be the Glory of God, the Most Glorious,
C/o Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm,
New York City,
N.Y., U.S.A.

He is God.

O ye two who are firm in the Covenant!

Your letter which was full of spiritual susceptibilities has been received. Verily ye are two firm and steadfast in the Covenant, and have no thought and mention no word save in the service to the Kingdom of God. Through the Graces of God do I hope that ye will be assisted and confirmed.

The time when ye were in the Desired Land (Holy Land) will never be forgotten. Now ye should, with the utmost spirituality, call the souls (people) to the Kingdom of God and propagate the oneness of the world of humanity, so that these besotted people who are adhering to blind imitations may attain to Truth and become kind to all the people, because these people are the sheep of God. If some of the sheep are out of the flock, thy should be gathered

with the utmost kindness, so that they may come under the care of the kind Shepherd.

Unto ye be the Glory of Abha!
(Sig.) Abdul Baha Abbas.

Translated by:
Azizullah S. Bahadur,
(Bahji, At the Holy Tomb of The Blessed Beauty, (Akka) Oct. 10. 1920).

II.

New York:
To
Mrs. Lawrence White and her revered husband, unto them be the Glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God.

O ye two firm souls in the Covenant!

Ye have been always remembered since the day ye left Haifa. Ye will never be forgotten, because ye are firm in faith and attached to the Covenant and Testament. Your hearts are like unto a rose-garden whose sweet fragrance perfumes the nostrils and imparts joy to the hearts.

It is my hope that ye will, day by day, grow in firmness and steadfastness and that ye will be confirmed in spreading the teachings of His Holiness, Baha'o'llah Who is the founder of the oneness of the world of humanity.

Unto ye be the Glory of Abha!
(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

December 2, 1920
Translated by: Azizullah S. Bahadur,
Mount Carmel,
Palestine.

CHAPTER IX.

London and early contacts — Atheistic complex worst of all complexes — Spiritual consciousness the genius of man.

We did not dream that in little more than a year we would be contemplating another trip to Palestine. But the inner urge was so strong that I knew this urge must be obeyed.

Dr. P—— whom we had met at Haifa during our first visit, expressed a wish to accompany us, as Abdul Baha had said to him during his first visit to Palestine:

"When you return to America, settle your affairs and then come back to me here."

This instruction was in accord with Dr. P——'s own wish. When we told him that we were going but expected to spend some time in Europe and arrive in Palestine the early part of November, he said:

"I would like to go, and meet you in Europe, but it would be impossible to settle my affairs by November. Why don't you wait until January?"

"January will be too late," I replied with the same conviction that I had felt about the whole thing. "We must get there sometime during the first part of November."

Why I felt this so strongly I do not know. But it

came to me with such a feeling of inevitability that nothing could have dissuaded me from going.

Dr. P—— must have often lamented in after years that he did not visit Haifa in November, in lieu of what actually happened there at that time.

We decided to spend the summer in England on our way to Palestine as we wanted to look up some information at the British Museum and also to visit friends in various places.

And now there happened one of those strange guidances which again proves that knowledge of the past, the present, and the future can be conveyed to us by the Higher Power if we have faith. In answer to my prayer to find out what steamer would be best to sail on, I received the following guidance:

"Engage passage on Steamship Kroonland sailing May 21."

I wrote this immediately on a pink pad on the table near my bed, and as soon as the morning paper arrived I eagerly looked up the steamship information. To my disappointment I learned that the Kroonland did not sail on the twenty-first, but on the fourteenth instead.

"That proves your guidance was just your imagination," Lawrence twitted, "otherwise the correct date would have been given."

We both concluded that it did not matter what boat we sailed on. However to make sure, when we arrived in New York three weeks later I again prayed

to know if it mattered what steamer we sailed on.

The next morning when I awoke, there on my table was a crumpled slip of pink paper. To my astonishment I found that it was the identical slip of paper on which I had written three weeks before: "Engage passage on Steamship Kroonland sailing May 21." It seemed as if it had dropped out of the sky. But Lawrence said he had picked it up fom the floor, where it must have fallen from my hand bag, although I thought I had thrown it away long ago.

It now seemed to us both that the Kroonland was the right boat to sail on, even though the right date had not been given. For the fact that that pink paper had survived packing and moving and travelling, and then had been apparently thrust under my nose at the last moment indicated this strongly to me.

All this leads to an astonishing climax. When we reached the office and Lawrence asked for a stateroom reservation on the steamship Kroonland sailing on the fourteen the clerk replied:

"I'm sorry, but owing to an accident the sailing of the Kroonland has been postponed to the twenty-first."

"Th— the twenty-first!" I stuttered.

The Supreme Power knew and had communicated to me three weeks before the accident occurred that the steamship would sail on the twenty-first — three weeks before any human being knew that it would be postponed from the fourteenth to the twenty-first.

This is one of many experiences that I had during the following years, demonstrating that information can be given to us about future events. As no human being was aware of these events at the time it proves that it was not mental telepathy but something wholly outside the ken of ordinary human knowledge.

With more than usual interest we scanned the faces of the passengers on the steamship Kroonland to find the enlightened soul we felt sure would prove to be the reason of our sailing on this ship.

The second day of our voyage I saw Lawrence approaching with a young Chinese. Immediately I knew, not only from his outward mien which was spiritual as well as scholarly, but also from an inner conviction, that he was one of the reasons for our sailing on this particular boat. T. Z. Koo, a Chinese Christian, proved to be a man high up in the circles working for the formation of the new China. Every afternoon during the voyage we talked together. He gave us a vivid description of the activities of Young China, and we gave him the Message of the new world religion.

"This is just what China needs," he said. "It is Christianity and all other religions without their dogmas."

He too had felt that because of certain strange circumstances which had diverted him from sailing on the boat he had intended, that there was some special

reason why he had been destined to sail on the KROONLAND.

As the days passed he became convinced that though his apparent object in travelling from China to Europe was to attend an international conference of the Y.M.C.A., yet the important object was that he might hear of the Bahai Message and carry it back to China.

Abdul Baha has spoken very highly of China. He says of Confucius:

> **. . . *let us take His Holiness the Buddha or His* Holiness Confucius. Both achieved results greater than Moses. They educated the body-politic, trained mighty nations, and there is no doubt whatever that they were prophets, for the mission of prophethood is education, and these wondrous souls trained and educated mankind.***

When last I had visited London ti was as a member of the Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson Company. Although I had been greatly interested in my stage career, running like a strong undercurrent through everything I did and said was my sympathy for the under-privileged. Economic conditions was my absorbing interest.

In the Guest House where I had boarded, there lived a clergyman who had a parish in the most poverty-stricken district — Whitechapel. Seeing my interest in the poor one day he took me on his rounds in that district. After this first trip I visited it fre-

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* The Promulgation of Universal Peace, page 339.

quently. And there in a sunless garden where lunchless children flocked from an adjacent school, I sketched and wrote.

These sketches with articles were later published in a socialist newspaper. Now after long years I felt I had a spiritual debt to pay to anyone I might have influenced in communism, and likewise to anyone who had influenced me.

At that time I had come in contact with a family who had been largely responsible for my interest in communism.

I was eager to tell them that economic poverty was only the sympton of a greater poverty — the lack of spiritual understanding among mankind in general.

Lawrence and I looked them up and found them poorer than ever — only two of the family left, Jason and his mother. After we had exchanged news of our activities since last we met, and while Lawrence was conversing with Mrs. Jason and helping her prepare tea, I began on the real object of my visit.

"Well, Jason, some years ago you persuaded me to believe in a reactionary philosophy that kept me in bondage for ages, and—"

"Wait," he interrupted, "what reactionary philosophy did I persuade you to believe in?"

"Communism, or socialism, they are the same."

"But they're progressive."

"No, they're definitely a trend backward. Karl Marx made this ancient philosophy popular nearly a hundred years ago when our modern civilization didn't exist."

"Show me, if you can, where it is a trend backward. You can't show me a single instance."

"*I could cite many. One of the worst is the class* hatred the communists foment — trying to divide mankind, poor against the rich."

"Well, what of it? Haven't the poor suffered enough?"

"Yes, they have, but that's not a good reason. Their aim—the brotherhood of the proletariat is a reversion to the primitive warfare of tribe against tribe. Let me tell you of a remedy for uniting *all* mankind.

"Probably something about God," he said skeptically.

"Yes, in relation to the Bahai Cause," I replied.

"You're wasting your time. I don't believe in God."

"That's your misfortune. The Eskimos didn't believe in radio at first. They thought it witchcraft — a man hidden in the box. But that didn't alter the fact of radio."

"The case is different," he retorted.

"The principles are the same," I replied. "The *trouble is you've atrophied your spiritual sight* through disuse. When that happens we lose the genius part of our nature — the gift of intuition, or, as some call it — God's guidance."

"Nonsense! Intuition has nothing to do with God."

"Yes, it has. And if you weren't suffering from an atheistic complex, you'd realize it has."

"Atheistic complex?" he blinked. I never thought of it that way."

"I've suffered from the same thing myself, and—"

"Tell me about it," he interrupted.

"I was dissatisfied and confused with the conflicting dogmas in Christianity, so I discarded all religion, and turned to materialistic philosophy."

"It probably did you a lot of good," he replied.

"It did me a lot of harm. What we need, and millions like us, both in and out of the churches, mosques, and synagogues, is to apply the real teachings of religion, and stop being intolerant."

"You're right," he replied more warmly. "I'm beginning to see that perhaps the communists are just as intolerant as those they condemn."

"Of course they are. And they are also defeatists."

"In what way?"

"They blame capitalism for their poverty, their ills and misfortunes, and they believe an outside force — the State will remedy them."

"Well, what's wrong with that?"

"Don't you see that it's the same attitude as that of primitive man who blamed even his aching tooth on forces outside his body, instead of looking for the decay within."

"And what is the decay within communism?"

"Their inability to see that their poverty is only a symptom of a greater poverty — the loss of the spiritual or intuitional consciousness. They have bred it out of themselves, and are trying to breed it out of the race."

"Well, if I'm in such a mess—a defeatist, with an atheistic complex, how am I going to break it?"

"Start by reading books that will show you how all the really great ones of the earth are great because they have believed in God — books that will show you how they transcended the ordinary knowledge of the materialists."

"Then you really believe that through faith we connect ourselves with what you might call a dynamo and—"

"Yes, and *without this connection we are only* dead pieces of wire. That is why atheism is not only the greatest sin but the greatest foolishness as well."

"I think I'll take a look into this Bahai Cause. It sounds modern and up-to-date."

"Do. And if you do you'll have the greatest adventure of your life."

"As I understand it, you say that religion is evolution on the spiritual plane, and atheism halts this spiritual evolution?"

"Yes. Right understanding, and right application of religion sprouts the wings of a new consciousness that help us to leap into a new zone of thought

exactly as squirrels sprouted their bat-like wings through eons of effort at leaping, and were at last able to fly."

"Tell me, what Bahai literature shall I read?"

"I'll write a list for you:

"Hidden Words," "Seven Valleys," "The Book of Ighan," by Baha'o'llah; "Some Answered Questions," "Tablets" Vols. I, II, III, Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vols. I, II, III, by Abdul Baha; "The Life of Abbas Effendi" (Abdul Baha) by Myron Phelps.

"I certanly shall read every one of them," replied Jason enthusiastically as he took the list.

While in Europe we wrote to Abdul Baha of our trip, and of our meeting with Mr. Koo. We received the following reply:

To

His Honor, Mr. an Mrs. White, unto them be the glory of God, the Most Glorious!

He is the Most Glorious!

O ye two who are attracted to the Kingdom of God!

Your letter was received. Praise be unto God, it had the glad tidings of the comfort and health of those two spiritual souls. It became the cause of happiness.

Ye have written that ye have met Mr. Koo from China, and taught him the word of God. In whatever place ye may be surely will ye be confirmed and assisted in the service of the Cause of God, because ye are luminous, spiritual, and have attached your heart to the Kingdom of God. Such souls are un-

questionably confirmed and assisted, for the gates of the Kingdom are open and the Bounties of God unlimited.

As to the book ye have written, I will speak with you after its perusal. Extend my attachment of heart and spiritual bonds to Mr. Koo the Chinese.

Unto you be the Glory of Abha!

(Signed) Abdul Baha Abbas.

Haifa, July 9, 1921

Translated by: Aziz'ullah S. Bahadur.
Haifa, Palestine.

CHAPTER X.

A second trip to Palestine — Spiritual nourishment versus material nourishment — Violation of the Covenant — Followers of the inner Light.

We arrived in Palestine again, on November 10, 1921. The chill of autumn was in the air—so different from the bright spring days of our first visit. At that time therewas not sufficient room to house the guests who flocked there from all parts of the world. Now there were but seven of us, among whom was the son of Subh-i-Azal. A strange forboding filled me that something was to happen. But Abdul Baha's radiant presence dispelled this feeling when he came to the Guest House to luncheon. Someone commented on his vital health and he replied:

Yes, I feel better than I have ever felt before. When I was in America, nine years ago, I had four different ailments, and I did not sleep; now by the grace and bounty of Baha'o'llah I am entirely well.

When we eat we must think of the spiritual food, which Baha'o'llah has conferred upon us. The material food nourishes only the body, but the Divine Food, which comes from heaven, nourishes the spirit.

Everything in one way or another is nurtured. The eyes receive the nourishment of light, the ears that of sound, the heart that of the love of God, and the spirit receives the Divine News.

Different species receive different kinds of nourish-

ment; the bee feeds from the nectar of flowers, the cow from herbs and leaves, and the beetle from the dirt. But you must ever strive to receive more of the Divine Food, which comes from heaven, and never be satisfied with material nourishment only.

Although we are gathered here from different parts of the earth, America, India, Beyreuth, Greece, Persia, and from different religions and races, and speak in different tongues, yet this diversity matters not when the hearts are unified.

The day after our arrival in Haifa, Abdul Baha gave a short talk on the violation of the Covenant. It was not recorded literally, but correlating it with other talks that he gave on this subject, the gist of it is this:

There are two main types of violators of the Covenant; those who reject the religion that God reveals from age to age, and those who accept it but drag it down to meet their own limitations or exploit it for self-glorification or money.

The world war was the result of the spiritual calamity of the violation of the Covenant of Christ by mankind in general; of those who accepted Him but did not live up to His teachings, and of those who rejected Him. For when we do not live up to the highest good and the highest knowledge that has been revealed to the age in which we live, to just that extent do we bring suffering to ourselves and chaos in the world.

* * *

Not only should the inner and relative meaning be

applied to the understanding of the Bahai-Religion but applied also to many things that Abdul Baha has said to individuals, otherwise his advice may sometimes seem conflicting. The following incidents illustrate what is meant.

A Mrs. C—— who went to Acca a number of years ago had formed the habit of spending a half hour each morning thinking how she could fulfill her duties for the day, and another half hour before going to sleep, regretting that she had not carried her morning plan into action. Abdul Baha always greeted her with the words: "Be happy, be happy."

When he was asked why she was always greeted in this way he replied: "I tell you to be happy because we cannot know the spiritual life unless we are happy."*

Mrs. C—— was too introspective. When she became happy and absorbed in heavenly ideals the block was removed that had hindered her activities, and her plans were then carried into action easily and without worry.

To a man of a different temperament Abdul Baha gave other advice. He told him to review his activities at the end of each day to see wherein he had failed, and then try to do better the next day. This man took life too casually, and was not sufficiently introspective.

Likewise when Abdul Baha speaks of the "Friends

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*The Oriental Rose, by Mary Hanford Ford.

of God" he really means friends of God, and not merely those who call themselves "Bahais" or some other name. He says:

> **There are prepared souls in every religion. Today God is working in all the churches instructing many *souls in Celestial brotherhood. These souls are* related by invisible and spiritual ties, and are being ripened by the Holy Spirit.**

Baha'o'llah says: "We speak one word and by it we intend one and seventy meanings, each one of which we can explain."

Abdul Baha sent for us the next afternoon, and when we entered the spacious room we found him seated on the divan correcting tablets, having worked since dawn. After greeting us he said:

> **In the heaven there are large groups of stars that are *always together. Likewise in this world those* who have established the spiritual union are always together. This spiritual union is the thing to desire, the thing to achieve.**

He continued correcting tablets for what may have been minutes or hours. Time's flight was lost in the immensity of feelings that surged through me. Suddenly looking up he said:

> **Although we have been silent, yet the conversation of the heart *has been all the more potent.* When the lips are silent then spiritual communion takes place. That is real speaking, for the conversation of the lips is liable to err; but that of the heart, or spiritual communion, is perfect. That never errs.**

Sometimes the meals were passed in silence es-

pecially if there were not many Westerners present, for the oriental custom is to eat in silence. Only as we finished eating one evening did Abdul Baha speak:

"Tomorrow we shall have three new guests—Mr. and Mrs. B—— and Miss R——. Do you know them?" he inquired of me. Upon receiving a reply in the negative, he said: "Although you do not know them physically yet you know them spiritually. The physical friendship is nothing, the spiritual friendship is everything. This assembly here is only a trace of the Kingdom, it will pass away; but in the Heavenly Kingdom we shall be the guests of Baha'o'llah and that will be unending."

One day at luncheon after Mrs. B—— had asked Abdul Baha her fourth question, he replied:

"You must excuse me. I am very tired, I have been working since dawn. I have explained these things in SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS. Read them over again. There is no need of my elucidating them further."

Later he said: "Every man may be likened to a tree. There are some good trees, some blessed trees, and some trees which bear only bitter fruit. If a man's deeds cause spiritual life to the world, then that man may be likened to a good tree. That is why Christ said: 'By their fruits shall ye know them'."

Mrs. B—— then recounted episodes of her trip to Tahiti. She said that the natives there consider their island the paradise spoken of in the Bible. Abdul Baha replied:

"The paradise spoken of in the Bible does not

mean a material paradise, it means a spiritual paradise. Heaven and hell are states of consciousness and not places. Likewise man's mind is not from the material, it is from the supernatural."

Then Mrs. B—— told Abdul Baha that when she went to these islands to give the Bahai Message, the natives had crowned her with a wreath of National flowers. Abdul Baha replied:

"These flowers wither very quickly. But the crowns of the disciples of Christ are still fresh; they have never withered."

Abdul Baha had a cold next day so he did not come to the Guest House either for lunch or for dinner. Yet he had been as much occupied as usual, for he never permitted any physical indisposition to interfere with his activities. Some years ago attesting to this he said:

"I work by the confirmations of the Holy Spirit; I do not work by hygienic laws. If I did I would get nothing done."

Unlike the votaries of many of the New Thought cults who believe sickness is error, and unnecessary, Abdul Baha admits his illness but transcends it.

He once implied that if he wished he could live on a plane where none of these things would enter his life, yet he preferred to live as the last and the least, not arrogating to himself anything except what the lowliest might have. To an American pilgrim he said in 1919:

In one prayer I could have health for the re-

mainder of my life, but it is necessary for me to suffer in order to show to others that these things can be borne and overcome.

He also says that when we become spiritually enlightened we do not wish to prolong our life, for we then realize that this world is a prison, "narrow, dark, and frightful," compared to the life thereafter.

Yet he advises using medical help when necessary, in connection with prayer, and all other scientific inventions and discoveries. He says that as science is part of God's revelation to man, we must use the bounty God has bestowed on us in the form of physicians and medicine, and reinforce these with prayer which makes them both more powerful.

What he wishes us to realize is that over and above our own will and scientific knowledge, the Will of God should be acceded first place. He gives a good illustration of what is meant by this subservience of everything to the Will of God, in speaking of the Titanic disaster. He said that although man should use every modern invention to build the best and finest ships, yet he must not put all his faith in science. For though the Titanic was the greatest boat that had been built up to that time, yet on her maiden voyage she encountered the iceberg that wrecked her.

We also may use every scientific means to attain health, wealth, or longevity, but unless the Will of God be given first place we may encounter an unsuspected danger that will frustrate all our plans. But

with faith a person may escape dangers that a more powerful person from the worldly point of view could not escape. For through faith we know intuitively how to avoid dangers that the materialist might not foresee.

Some one had urged Abdul Baha, when he was preparing to come to this country in 1912, to engage passage on the Titanic because she was the finest and newest ship on the ocean, and he replied: "God did not move me to do so."

Later in the afternoon the women of the household invited the four Western women to meet some of the native believers. The first thing that met our vision as we entered the door was a Persian woman picturesquely seated on the floor before a large samovar serving fragrant oriental tea. In sharp contrast to the women of the West were these women of the East with their simple garbs, uncorseted figures and comfortable footwear, the latter standing just outside the door.

Many stories of the early days of the Bahai Movement were told, showing the sacrifices that were then made. One of these was recounted by the woman at the samovar:

"A group of Persian believers who wished to make the pilgrimage to the 'Most Great Prison' walked the whole way from Persia to Acca, in Palestine, a distance of about a thousand miles. Their food was unleavened bread, their drink water, when they could

get it. But poor as they were they remembered to buy a gift of a potted plant for Baha'o'llah.

"When they arrived in rags and bleeding feet, and other evidences of the long months of fearful hardships that they had endured, the plant was unscathed; for it had never lacked the water they themselves needed so badly. As a fitting symbol of their sacrifice it had blossomed into such amazing beauty that all wondered at it, and Baha'o'llah said that no other gift would have been as acceptable as this."

Just as the meeting was about to disband Abdul Baha came into the room, and his voice was noticeably hoarse from the effects of his cold, as he graciously greeted us. A little later he summoned the four western pilgrims into the adjoining room.

Tomorrow you will go to the Tomb of Baha'o'llah, he said, and a new assistance will come to you; then when you return to America you will be ignited with the fire of the love of God.

The Tomb of Baha'o'llah is like a beautiful garden. Those whose nostrils are opened can inhale the heavenly fragrances. But a person who goes into a beautiful garden and who has neither the open nostril, nor the open sight, will not be conscious of the fragrance and beauty of the flowers, therefore if one would ask him what he saw there he will reply, 'Nothing.'

I hope your nostrils in the Tomb of Baha'o'llah will inhale the heavenly fragrances—the fragrances that Jacob inhaled from the garment of Joseph. I hope you will inhale the real fragrances of Joseph.

The following day Abdul Baha sent for the five

American pilgrims, and after greeting us, he said:

I must apologize, for I have caught cold and have not been able to be with you; but I have been with you in spirit, and that is the real meeting. Distance does not interfere with this communion, neither mountains nor seas. One person may be here, and another in America, yet they may be in the utmost harmony and spiritual communion; while there may be someone right here, physically near, and yet spiritually far away. I want you to attain the real union and harmony.

All your thoughts are centered on the Kingdom. My hope is that you may each become the means of awakening people—that you will have great influence on the hearts of mankind.

Man's existence on this earth will come to an end, for this world is not enduring. No matter how much one may progress even if one attains to kingship, or becomes a queen, at last this will end. But those who turn towards the Kingdom of God are like stars that never set; their lamps are never extinguished, they are like trees which always bear fruit. You should be glad and thankful that you have attained to such bounty. This station is like a seed in the earth, which grows and becomes a tree. The disciples of Christ were unknown in their own time, yet consider how they grew like seeds, until everyone of them became a great tree. Always try and keep your mind centered upon this.

Every material thing changes, but the things of God are eternal—without end. These traces of the Divine will remain forever. So man should always strive for the eternal, and attach no importance to the temporal. To be sure, you will sometimes face

difficulties, you will meet those who will contend with you, and blame you. This will come to pass, for the sake of Baha'o'llah and for the sake of your love for me, but it is the utmost kindness and bounty. Those who have borne trouble for the sake of God, and to enlighten people wave like a banner in the air, on the apex of the Spirit.

I am waiting to see spiritual effects—that the Divine Powers may be breathed into you, that the Divine Confirmations may come to you. I hope that you may progress and shine like the stars, and educate the people in the Cause of God. See how in the time of Christ he was persecuted and troubled. One cursed him, another spat at him and put a crown of thorns upon his head. Yet consider what great fruits these tribulations bore, all for the sake of guiding people.

Every afternoon between six and seven o'clock, Abdul Baha spoke to the oriental believers. One afternoon an American gentleman was present, and Abdul Baha said to him through the interpreter:

Although you meet friends and they cannot speak with you, yet we speak in heart with one another. The speech of the heart is more talkative than that of the tongue, and is far more truthful and encompassing.

When those who love each other come together, although they do not speak with their lips, yet their hearts speak together, just as the clouds speak with the earth and the rain comes down. The wind talks with the trees, and the sun talks with the eyes of man, although in reality they do not speak. In the same way the susceptibilities of the heart between

two persons speak with each other. This susceptibility of the heart is such that when you were in America and I in the Holy Land, although we could not speak with the material tongue, yet at heart we were speaking together.

The friends love you very much. They have a real attachment for you, yet outwardly they do not talk with you. The attachment, if it be from the heart, is true and self-sacrificing. In a worldly attachment people may love one another yet not sacrifice even a hair's breadth for each other.

But his Holiness, Christ, loved both his disciples and the believers to such an extent that he sacrificed his life for them. His Holiness, the Bab, loved the friends so much that he, too, gave his life for them. Baha'o'llah loved the friends so much that he received thousands of calamities and afflictions in this Path. Four times he was exiled from place to place, his property confiscated, his family renounced, His Holy Person confined in the fotress of Acca up to the last moment of his life. The calamities and difficulties that befell him cannot be described. He had not a moment's rest. Innumerable trials were inflicted upon him by his enemies and relatives. He accepted all these in order that he might educate us—that he might make us spiritual—that he might illumine us and make us heavenly—that he might change our life.

Verily, verily, he sacrificed his life for us. This love is the real love. This is the real attachment for which he gave his life for us. He accepted all kinds of troubles and afflictions, because of his love for us. And this entirely different from that which can be expressed by the lips saying: 'I love you.

How is your health? You are my beloved. You are much esteemed.' This is not love. This is attachment, and it will become known in the time of tests. That is why you see some people associating together, who express the utmost praise and devotion for each other, yet after they part they are indifferent to each other. This is human love. It is not spiritual love. It is not divine love. It has no foundation and in the time of tests it will become apparent.

If you should go to Persia and be the guest of one of the friends and trouble should arise so that life became endangered, then your host would sacrifice himself completely for you. It has happened that the friends have sacrificed themselves very often in this way for one another, and this is the true love, for it is the love of God.

While Abdul Baha was suffering from a cold "The Greatest Holy Leaf" (Abdul Baha's sister) was convalescing from an attack of influenza. Each afternoon, for the three days, I visited her and each time she kissed me on both cheeks, much to my surprise, yet without fear on my part, of contagion. During one of these visits she recounted some incidents in the life of Baha'o'llah, as best she could, with one of the little maids interpreting.

Although Abdul Baha's cold continued, yet he was as much occupied as usual. At five thirty he was already receiving visitors who came for advice and help. Later he dictated Tablets to many individuals across the seas. By and by, we saw him in a funeral procession walking down the road shouldering the

coffin; a couple of hours later he was hurrying to the hospital with a man who had met with an accident; then visiting the sick, leaving sprays of flowers and fruit with his words of solace.

Side by side with the simple duties of everyday life, he was equally active in world affairs. People traveled thousands of miles to confer with him on all kinds of questions — economic, scientific, political, as well as religious. For all recognized his power even if they failed to recognize his station.

So despite his seventy-seven years, his days were spent in a bewildering kaleidoscope of work that started at dawn and ended somewhere about midnight; yet he always took time for meditation and prayer as he considered this of the first importance. In fact, from what I observed, Abdul Baha loved the inner aspect of religion — silence, meditation, and prayer, perhaps better than anything else in the world. It was this aspect that he, in the winter of his life, wished to impress upon those of the Western world who happened to be there. For the occidental needs to cultivate this aspect of religion as the oriental needs to cultivate the scientific aspect of it.

The following talk that he delivered to the Society of Friends, St. Martin's Lane, London, January 12, 1913, testifies to this:

> **About six hundred years ago a Society was formed in Persia called the Society of Friends, the members of which gathered together for silent communion with the Almighty.**

They divided Divine Philosophy into two parts: That which can be acquired through lectures and study in schools and colleges; and the philosophy of the Illuminati, or Followers of the Inner Light. The schools of this philosophy were held in Silence and meditation, and by turning to the Source of Light. From that Central Light the mysteries of the Kingdom were reflected in their hearts. All the Divine problems were solved by this power of illumination.

Among the great questions unfolding through the rays of Divine Reality upon the mind of man, is the question of the reality of the spirit of man; of the birth of the Spirit; of his birth from this world into the world of God; the question of the inner life of the Spirit, and of the fate of the Spirit after its ascension from the body.

They, likewise, meditate upon the scientific questions of the day, and these also are solved. "Followers of the Inner Light," they attain to a superlative degree of power, and are entirely freed from blind dogmas and imitations. Men rely on their statements. By themselves, within themselves, they solve all mysteries.

If they find a solution by the assistance of the Inner Light, they accept it, and afterwards declare it; otherwise they would consider it a matter of blind imitation.

They go so far as to reflect upon the essential nature of Divinity, Divine Revelation, and the Manifestation of God in this world. All philosophical, divine, and scientific questions are solved by them through the power of the Spirit.

Baha'o'llah says there is a sign from God in every

phenomenon. The sign of the intellect is contemplation, and the sign of contemplation is silence, because it is impossible for a man to do two things at the same time. He cannot both speak and meditate.

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your Spirit, the Spirit answers, the Light breaks forth, and reality is revealed.

You cannot apply the name of "man" to any being devoid of the faculty of meditation. Without it he would be a mere animal.

Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the Breath of the Holy Spirit. The bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation. Through it, the Spirit of man is informed and strengthened. Through it, affairs of which man knows nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it one receives Divine inspiration. Through it one partakes of Heavenly food.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. In that subjective mood, withdrawing himself from all outside objects, man can unfold the secrets of things within himself, because he is immersed in the ocean of spiritual life.

Through the power of meditation man frees himself from the animal nature, discerns the reality of things, and is put in touch with God. This faculty brings forth from the invisible plane the sciences and arts. Through the meditative faculty inventions are made possible, and colossal undertakings are carried out. Through it governments can be run

smoothly. Through this faculty man enters into the very Kingdom of God.

Nevertheless, some thoughts are useless to man. They are like the waves ebbing to and fro in the sea without result.

But if the faculty of meditation is bathed in the Inner Light, and characterized with Divine attributes, then the results will be wonderful.

The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror. If you put before it earthly objects it will reflect them. Therefore, if the spirit of man is contemplating earthly subjects, he will be informed of these. But *if the mirror of the Spirit is turned heavenwards*, the heavenly constellations and the rays of the Sun of Reality will be reflected in the heart, and the virtues of the Kingdom will be attained.

Let us, therefore, keep this faculty rightly directed, turning it to the Heavenly Sun and not to earthly objects, so that we may discover the secrets of the Kingdom, comprehend the allegories of the Bible, and the mysteries of the Spirit. May we indeed become mirrors reflecting Heavenly Realities, and may we become so pure as to reflect the Constellations of Heaven.

At the evening meal the cat persistently forced his attention upon Abdul Baha in order to receive his usual food. As Abdul Baha handed it to him he said:

The cat is not true in its love, the dog is just the opposite. The same danger that confronts the dog does not confront the cat. The dog is subject to rabies, and when it becomes mad it may bite its master, but because it is true in its love it is liked.

As for the cat it has no fidelity. If the fidelity of the dog, the forbearance of the camel, and the intelligence of the fox were combined in man, in a degree relative to his plane, then man would be perfect.

When man enters the Kingdom then all good qualities will become apparent to him. The natural characteristics which are destructive will be banished, and the Divine attributes will take their place, just as the iron when put in the fire is transformed. The natural characteristics of the iron are hardness, coldness, and blackness, but in the fire these are changed. The blackness turns to redness, the coldness to heat, the hardness to softness and liquidity. All its natural qualities are transmuted and it takes on the condition of the fire.

In the same way when man receives spiritual light the characteristics of the world of nature are transmuted. In some animals there is great cruelty, in others great greed and ferociousness; these are the necessities of the world of nature. In man these traits are also seen, but when he enters the Kingdom his selfish animalistic nature changes. That is why we say man is reborn. He has become freed from the traits of the world of nature, and attained a new life—the life of the Kingdom.

When man is ill he is not good tempered—he becomes irritable and morose; but when he attains health he becomes more kindly and is happy. Likewise man's traits change completely when he is endowed with the health of the Kingdom.

A Moslem guest told us how he happened to become a Bahai.

"One day a friend and I could not make our Ford

tractor go, so my friend took his Koran from his pocket, and began to read it over the car. By and by a stranger came along and said:

"You can't start that car merely by praying over it. Science invented it, so why don't you use the same science to run it and not depend on prayer alone."

"He then showed us what was wrong. But as my friend had continued to read the Koran over the tractor while I and the stranger worked over it, he believes to this day that it was entirely due to the reading of the Koran that started it.

"Later the stranger told me that he was a Bahai, and one of the things his faith helped him to see was that science and religion are one. The stranger lent me some books, and after months of research I finally saw the truth of the Bahai Religion. But it was very difficult for me, a Moslem, to reconcile science and religion, for many of us are like my friend who tried to start the Ford by prayer alone."

"We've gone to the other extreme in America," I assured him. "Many people think it is as foolish to use the science of prayer, as your friend thought it foolish to use the other aspect of science."

"But in the Bahai Religion we find a happy medium," he replied smilingly.

"Did your friend believe that the jinns, spoken of in the Koran, prevented his car from going?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Do many of the Moslems believe that the jinns are actual entities who take possession of us and cause us to act in a good or bad manner?" I asked.

"I'm afraid a great many still do."

"Isn't that what our modern psychologists call 'projecting'—blaming someone or something else, for what we ourselves are guilty of?"

"Yes," he replied. And I believe now that what Mohammed meant was that these jinns are our good and bad impulses."

"I agree with you. And there is this same principle of mis-interpretation of symbols both in Judaism and in Christianity," I assured him—"making others the scape-goat for our sins."

"Thank Allah, all that is gradually being eliminated."

Fugeta was ill so the work at the Guest House devolved upon the guests themselves. But, as the meals were prepared at the home of Abdul Baha and brought over to us, this work was trifling. Yet it became apparent that Mrs. K——, who had arrived on the 18th, had no intention of doing her share of the work which peeved me. I had not freed myself from the wrong attitude toward the wealthy classes, with which communism had indoctrinated me, so I decided to trap her into doing her share of the work.

"Suppose we each make our own beds, and take turns in doing the dishes."

"Do the dishes!" she expostulated. And then she resorted to her old alibi, "Do you think it would be pleasing to the Master? He wants us to be happy."

"But he has shown us by example that the best way to be happy is to be useful," I replied.

Dr. Lotfully, a Persian, who is so humble that he would not sit at the table with Abdul Baha, but stood behind the kitchen door and took notes of *everything he said*, intervened:

"I'll be glad to do the dishes. Let that be my task."

Mrs. K—— gave a sigh of relief at her escape.

"That wouldn't be fair," I protested. "We should each take our turn in washing, as well as in wiping them."

After some demur Dr. Lotfulla consented to this *arrangement*.

On the third morning it fell to the lot of Mrs. K—— to wash the dishes. As she prepared to begin her task in her dainty Parisian moring gown, with delicately manicured nails and faultlessly waved coiffure, I felt an un-Bahai joy that for once she was going to get a taste of doing a bit of real work of which I, and millions of others, had had far too much.

But the thing that happened at this particular moment was a reprimand to me that my attitude was *not the right one*.

Suddenly Mrs. K—— dropped her dish cloth and

at the same time she, and each of us, involuntarily turned around at the sound of firm loud footsteps.

There stood Abdul Baha in the doorway with a maid. "This girl will do your work henceforth," he said in such a peremptory manner, and so unlike his usual one, that we knew that he knew what our attitude toward those dishes had been. We were enacting on a small scale the condition that exists on a large scale between the rich and the poor—between capital and labor.

Probably most of us remembered what he had said only a short time ago. People should not be coerced into doing things, otherwise they are robbed of their initiative — robbed of the opportunity to make the attainment without compulsion. The conscience of the slothful must be awakened so that he will rejoice in doing his share of the world's work, whatever it may be.

Abdul Baha advocated this middle way — freedom of the individual to make his own choice. But a personal responsibility goes with this freedom. For according to the way we exercise our free will depends our development. Our deeds set in motion the machinery of the spiritual law of Cause and Effect, which brings to each of us the results of our actions.

This is what Abdul Baha said at luncheon:

It is necessary for man to eat otherwise he becomes feeble. He cannot say that the food he ate yesterday suffices for today.

God's bounty is unending. Every day he bestows a new bounty. For example, yesterday the sun gave out light, heat, and energy, and today it has repeated that bounty. It does not say, 'Yesterday's rays and heat are sufficient.'

Every day should have its new nourishment, for all things are constantly renewed—thoughts, policies, science, medicine, and the arts. Then is it possible that the bounty of God should not be renewed?

In ancient times old thoughts sufficed. People felt there was no need of new methods. But material civilization has advanced a thousandfold. How foolish it would be if man were to say that the old civilization suffices. The same is true regarding the Divine Civilization. This has also been renewed. Today it is not possible to put some of the commandments of the earlier prophets into practice, for people have progressed to a higher state of civilization. For instance, in the time of Moses, a man's hand was cut off for a comparatively slight theft. Today if a man stole a million dollars this law would not be enforced.

As long as the sun exists we shall have the bounties of light, heat, and energy, which are the manifestations of the sun. And as long as God exists we shall have His bounties, graces, and activities, renewed through His Manifestations. As long as God is King, He will have soldiers, riches, empires, because this is the basis of His Kingdom. We cannot say that God created an empire and left it.

Again at luncheon the next day Abdul Baha favored us with another talk:

No matter how much one helps a brother it is animated largely by a sense of duty. But regarding

a spiritual brother it is not the same. Any help that might be given is animated by the spirit and is never forgotten, for it is not done for the sake of duty.

The important relationship is the spiritual kinship. This is composed of the heart and soul, while the material relationship is of water and clay. It often happens that the ordinary brother becomes an enemy, but with the spiritual brother this is an impossibility.

When they brought Christ's mother to him someone said: 'Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to speak with thee.' But he answered and said unto him that told him, 'Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? . . . For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother.'

How many times has it happened that a gardener cuts off a weak branch from a tree and grafts a strong one in its place. The weak branch is fit only for the fire.

One of the American pilgrims asked if Isaac was such a grafted son of Abraham.

No, he was the real son because his character was the character of Abraham. But Cain who was the brother of Abel, in reality was not his brother although both were born from the same father and mother.

Question: "Was Sarah really ninety years old when she bore her son."

No. For the years of the Bible are not our years. For example, Noah was nine hundred years old, but it deos not mean our years, because another kind of calendar was used in those days. It is because these

statements, and others in the Bible, have been interpreted in the literal sense that religion has appeared to conflict with science. This is the reason people leave the churches and become materialists. In ancient times one month was similar to our year. The year was counted from the planet Jupiter. A calendar based on Mars was also used as well as one based on Mercury and one based on Saturn.*

Abdul Baha walked over to the Pilgrim House the following evening, and again graced us with his presence. At this meal he seemed in unusually good spirits as if he had heard some joyful news, and except for the slight traces of a cold he appeared to be well. Not until sometime after we had left Haifa did we learn what the good news was. This is what he said:

Man has two aspects, the spiritual and the physical. His body is made of clay but his spirit is from the Divine. His body is the shell, and his mind the pearl within the shell. The shell is not so important, but the pearls are very precious. This is the case with man. But the Manifestations of God have other Powers and these Powers are supernatural. They are the Powers which produce such marvelous effects in the world—through which events are foretold thousands of years in advance.

Then he arose from the table and, after washing his hands in the custmoary oriental fashion, stood in the doorway looking so thoughtfully and for so long

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* Dr. Herbert Spinden of Harvard University discovered in 1926 that the Mayas of 588 B.C. used a calendar in which time was fixed with precision by means of the planet Venus.

a time toward his prison home across the Bay of Acca, that it seemed a portent of something about to happen. Suddenly he turned and bade us good-night. With one accord we followed him down the steps and watched him as he went up the road, preceded by his tiny grandchild who always lighted her grandfather on his way although she could hardly toddle with the weight of the lantern.

The next afternoon Abdul Baha sent for Lawrence and me and told us we were to depart on the train that left that night. That same evening he said to us:

I shall always be with you, always. Try to remember this—that the physical presence is nothing—that the real union is the spiritual union. In the days of Baha'o'llah many people believed in him who had never seen him, and there were others who lived close to him all the days of their lives, yet were very far from him.

CHAPTER XI.

Egypt — Prophecies of the Great Pyramid — Book of the Dead — Daniel's 1335 days — Passing of Abdul Baha — Meaning of the resurrection of Christ

On our way back to America we visited the Great Pyramid at Cairo. In anticipation of this event we had read many books concerning it, some of which viewed it from the materialistic angle, and some from the prophetic angle. These latter interested us the most.

According to Sir Gaston Maspero, Director-General of Antiquities in Egypt:

"The Pyramids and 'The Book of the Dead' reproduce the same original, the one in words and the other in stone."

He further states that it contains vast spiritual and scientific knowledge, which an ancient civilization wished to impart to future generations. This was done in the most enduring way possible, by geometrical symbols in stone.

Whether one believes in the prophetic aspect of the Great Pyramid or not, those who take time to study the evolution of religion, as revealed in the Bahai Teachings, must be impressed with the fact that the passages and chambers in the Great Pyramid coincide exactly with this evolution which is as follows:

The downward tendency of man, if left to him-

self without God's teachings, is symbolized in the Pyramid by the first descending passage which leads to a bottomless pit. But branching off from this descending passage is an ascending one which was called by the Ancient Egyptians, THE HALL OF TRUTH IN DARKNESS. This passage represents the Mosaic dispensation which deflected man's downward tendency toward materialism, and led him upward to the consciousness of God. This passage is as many pyramid inches long as there are number of years from the advent of Moses to the advent of Christ.

The second ascending passage, or Grand Gallery, was called by the Egyptians, THE HALL OF TRUTH IN LIGHT, and it symbolizes the Christian dispensation. This also is as many pyramid inches long as there are years from the advent of Christ to the year 1844, on which date, according to Daniel, the New Dispensation would be ushered in.

Mr. D. Davidson, one of the greatest of the pyramidists, states in his book TALKS ON THE GREAT PYRAMIDS " . . . the central epoch of the Great Pyramid falls in the year 1844 A.D. This is the epoch of the Great Step, which lies in the central plane of the Apex, symbolic of our Lord enthroned as King."

Most pyramidists agree that the Great Step symbolizes some colossal event. Today thousands of people believe that the colossal event happening in that year, was the inception of the Bahai Religion.

For on May 23rd, 1844, the Bab who is the forerunner of Baha'o'llah, the Founder of the Bahai Religion, declared his mission. On that same day also was born Abdul Baha, who became its expounder.

After climbing the Great Step, we walked a little way until we were confronted by the first low passage. This passage foretold accurately the date of the World War in 1914. For here again we find there are as many pyramid inches between the Great Step to this first low passage as there are years between this date, 1844 to 1914, and the low passage ends November 11, 1918, the date of the ending of the first world war.

To enable us to get through this passage it was necessary to assuming a crouching position.

"We are creeping through the time of 'The Great Tribulation' according to the pyramidists," I whispered to Lawrence, for whispering seemed to be the medium best suited to the place. "To think that this foretold the beginning and the end of the World War, to the very day and hour!"

We straightened ourselves to an upright position as we emerged into the antechamber which the Ancient Egyptians called, "A Truce in Chaos." This chamber symbolizes a breathing space — a cessation of hostilities between the war ending in 1918 and the beginning of the final armageddon.

From there we walked to the second low passage which is called, "The Next Great Woe," symbolizing

the years of the great depression, and the chaos of the real armageddon, compared to which the first great war was a minor one.

We then emerged into the King's Chamber, emblematic of universal peace, but not achieved until the end of the King's Chamber is reached, which indicates the year 1957.

Not only do many pyramidists believe this date signifies the beginning of universal peace, but Abdul Baha says that the verse in Daniel, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days," means that *1957 will see* the beginning of universal peace. (The 1335 days mean A.H., after Mohammed. The Mohammedan era began in 622. Add this to 1335 and we have 1957.)

But before we attain this universal peace, Abdul Baha said in 1911 that such cataclisms will befall us, the like of which has never been seen.

As we entered the King's Chamber I peered around in the semi-darkness and saw nothing except an empty coffin in an empty chamber, emblem of immortality. The triumph of the spirit over death.

Involuntarily I began to chant a Bahai prayer. My chant, soft though it was, reverberated and boomed through the stillness of that chamber to the amazement of the Mohammedan guides, at hearing a Christian chanting in Arabic.

As it ceased, out of the stillness a low tense voice

said: "Come here and I will tell what the fates prophesy for you."

I looked around to find the ghostly voice and saw a figure squatted on the floor before a small pile of sand and a flickering lighted candle. There were several other Arabs present also all of whom, we discovered later, had appointed themselves our guides.

I approached the man, actuated more by courtesy than by interest in anything he might say, as my mind was filled with the awesomeness of the chamber. Not until he came to the end of his prognostication did something finally register.

"Tomorrow you will receive the greatest shock of your life. Remember what I tell you — you will receive the greatest shock of your life."

I could not get his prediction out of my mind, and I was a little more cautious next day lest some accident befall us. But seemingly nothing happened.

Three days after the man's prognostication, while we were in Alexandria, I learned it had come true. For the catastrophe did happen the next day although the knowledge of it did not come to me until the 30th of November.

When I opened the "Egyptian Gazette" that morning, staring at me in great headlines was the announcement of the death of Abdul Baha. I read it several times before it was fully conveyed to me that this was the same Abdul Baha who less than five

days ago was in such vigor of mental and physical health, except for the traces of an apparently slight cold.

This Great Light had come and gone almost unheeded by the world at large, exemplifying the verse in the Bible: which prophesies that he shall come and go as a thief in the night . . .

He passed from this world early Monday morning, November 28th, 1921, between two and three o'clock, and was buried the next morning in the Tomb of The Bab on Mount Carmel.

Although his life did not terminate in a physical crucifixion, as many people believed it would, yet his life was one long crucifixion, infinitely more difficult to bear than that which ends in a few hours. For the real martyrdom of every founder of religion is the crucifixion of his teachings, due to the limitations of mankind in general.

Once when someone asked Abdul Baha if the Manifestations of God are limited, he replied that they are limited only by the capacity of the people. Professor Jowett, one of the greatest scholars in the last century, has truly said about the Bahai Religion:

"It is too high and too great for the present to understand its full import, but the future will comprehend it."

Major W. Tudor-Pole wrote from London December 2, 1921:

"Probably there is no one who knows so well as

the present writer that the Master (Abdul Baha) and his whole family narrowly escaped crucifixion on the Mount of Carmel, two days before we entered Haifa in August, 1918. This tragic event was only frustrated by the unexpected swift advance of Allenby's troops which forced the Turkish authorities out of Haifa before they even had time to carry out their terrible threat, or to take the Master and his family with them into the hills as hostages."

It was this faith in the union of the spirit that Abdul Baha tried always to instill in us. This is the vital point of religion in contrast to all reforms and cults. When the leader of a reform movement dies he is irretrievably dead to his followers, and some one else must take his place. This is because reforms and cults revolve around the personality of some leader, and if a personality is lacking, on whom the votaries are accustomed to depend, the movement sooner or later fails.

But the contrary is true regarding religion. When the founder of a religion dies, if his followers have learned their lesson rightly, they feel certain that his creative spirit is still with them as surely as when he walked among them in the flesh. This is the meaning of the resurrection of Christ. Abdul Baha says:

> **. . . the meaning of Christ's resurrection is as follows: the disciples were troubled and agitated after the martyrdom of Christ. The Reality of Christ, which signifies his teachings, his bounties, his perfections, and his spiritual power, was hidden and**

concealed for two or three days after his martyrdom . . . The Cause of Christ was like a lifeless body; and when after three days the disciples became assured and steadfast, . . . the Reality of Christ became resplendent and his bounty appeared; his religion found life, his teachings and his admonitions became evident and visible . . .

So the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles means their attraction by the Christ Spirit, whereby they acquired stability and firmness. Through the spirit of love of God they gained new life, and they saw Christ living, helping, and protecting them. They were like drops and they became seas, they were like feeble insects and they became majestic eagles, they were weak and they became powerful . . .*

SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS, pages 120-21-23.

The same applies today. To the extent that we rely upon the Holy Spirit, to just that extent shall we become illumined lamps with immense power. And conversely to the extent that we depend upon leaders, to that extent does our power decrease.

There is a Supreme Concourse on the other side, and during prayer they are able to reach us. This is the "Communion of Saints" spoken of in the New Testament. Prayer is the ladder that bridges the gap between the sense world and the spirit world. Such are the teachings of Baha'o'llah and of Abdul Baha.

Abdul Baha had prepared us for his departure from this world without our realizing it. He had repeated many times the importance of the spiritual union —

awaken faith in an individual whose believing nature has been atrophied.

The bandits of the dark ages who promised that if their pilgrimage of robbery succeeded they would donate part of their spoils to the Church, thought they had real faith. The bigots, who burned and tortured people in the name of Jesus, thought likewise. So did the Pharisees, because they abstained from many of the obvious sins. But they were guilty of the sins of omission — pride, self-righteousness, and bigotry, which Christ condemned more severely than he did the sins of commission.

When Christ said: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you," he confirmed that which the Bahai Religion now teaches — that life here and hereafter is a continual progression; for these mansions are the different stations and states of the soul. These are as varied in the next world as they are here, for our progress is in a constant state of flux. To assume that we are saved in the sense of complete attainment is to believe that religion is static, not dynamic.

The modern tendency is, as it was with the Greeks, to overemphasize the importance of the material well-being. When Christ appeared he struck a new note — that God must be worshiped in the spirit of disinterestedness, and not in order to acquire quick assets in this world. It was difficult for the Greeks

to get this new point of view, and cease worshiping their gods of self-interest. In fact neither they nor any race since that time has ever attained to this new point of view except to a limited extent.

Today people petition the god of self-interest in order to get their heart's desire. The names of the gods and idols have been changed to that of some cult but the principle is the same. If we try to use the Higher Powers to further our own ends it is just as bad a form of idol worshiping as that in which the Greeks indulged.

In a world that seems to have forgotten this new note that Christ struck, the Bahai religion reiterates today the wonder and glory that accrues to those who practice unselfishness for the larger good instead of self-interest.

Most of the modern cults are a reversion to the hedonism of the Greeks — overemphasis on material things — wealth, will-to-power, and egocentricity. Their votaries try to escape the remedial lessons that God sends to us for soul discipline. If we try to escape these we stultify our spiritual sensibilities as surely as a child's mental development is stultified if he evades his lessons in school. Abdul Baha says on this subject:

> **. . . Grief and sorrow do not come to us by chance, they are sent to us by Divine Mercy for our own perfecting.**
>
> ***While a man is happy he may forget his God;***

but when grief comes and sorrows overwhelm him, then will he remember his Father who is in Heaven, and who is able to deliver him from his humiliations.

Men who suffer not, attain no perfection. The plant most pruned by the gardener is that one which, when the summer comes, will have the most beautiful blossoms and the most abundant fruit.

CHAPTER XIII.

Psychic forces — Each kingdom dies to itself — Born into the kingdom above — Freedom not a matter of place — Progressive civilizations require changes in religions.

When we look upon this world as a school, the aim of which is to master our lessons instead of shirking them, we find ourselves on a spiritual trail that becomes more interesting the longer we follow it.

Children, because of their mental immaturity, would like to escape the discipline which is necessary for their development. They would like to lead a life full of candy, cake and play, but this would result in physical deterioration if persisted in.

Adults likewise who lead a life of worldliness, absorbed in selfish pleasures, deteriorate to an even worse degree, and they believe that God, if they believe in Him at all, is unjust to them if they are thwarted in their desires. As a consequence the psychiatrists are reaping an abundant harvest.

But the spiritually mature person sees in the apparent injustice of things the greatest wisdom. His misfortunes, ill health, or proverty, are different multiplication problems which must be mastered instead of shirked or chafed at. He looks upon these as signs that he is not living in harmony with God's laws, and he tries to learn the lessons that God is

trying to convey to him through these mediums.

The founders of many cults are usually wealthy, and have many adherents because they try to teach people how to reconcile God and Mammon; how to acquire quick assets in this world. Conversely the founders of religion are always persecuted because religion appears to be opposed to the self-interest of man. But if rightly understood and practiced, it always enriches one, physically, mentally, morally and spiritually.

Today, side by side with the utmost materialism, there is a great revival in occultism. In fact the modern cults are a mixture of occultism, materialism and stoicism. The votaries of these may think they are following the spiritual path but if they will study religion as each founder taught it, and before it became corrupted with false dogmas, they would perceive that they are following the psychic path.

Concerning psychic or occult forces, Abdul Baha says:

> **To tamper with psychic forces while in this world interferes with the condition of the soul in the world to come. These forces are real, but are not to be active on this plane.**
>
> **The child in the womb has its eyes, ears, hands and feet, but these powers are not in activity. The whole purpose of the womb-life is the coming forth into this world. So, the whole purpose of this matrix-world life is the coming forth into the world of Reality, where all these (psychic) forces will be active. They belong to that world.**

This mineral and these trees have no knowledge of the animal and human world; they cannot imagine them, they deny their very existence. While the human world is helping the animal and developing the vegetable kingdoms, those kingdoms are unconscious of it. Similarly, the human world cannot comprehend the world of the Kingdom; it is absolutely ignorant of the Kingdom, while the heavenly spirits have influence in the human world.

Observe how clear this point is; yet the professors and philosophers of the world ignore this Reality! The psychic mediums, however, are speaking of the world of thought and not the world of Reality. But a heavenly soul who is conscious of the divine world, whose eye of discernment is open, who is severed from the world of nature, and has attained to spiritual power—this soul is cognizant of the divine world and the world of spirits. Reality is pure spirit, it is not physical. That is, it occupies no space.

We can see from the foregoing that spiritual attainment is the result of having lived in comformity to spiritual laws, exactly as the birth of a normal child takes place because it has conformed to physical laws. The development of our spiritual faculties depends upon how well we put into practice the brotherhood of man, unselfishness and detachment from worldly ambitions, combined with faith in God.

When these conditions are fulfilled, then the hidden mysteries of the mind and soul unfold naturally, and we become intuitional beings — God-guided beings, acutely aware of the oneness of mankind.

I should like to repeat on every page of this book what Baha'o'llah said seventy years ago: "The foundation of the Palace of Peace is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind."

The highest achievement that each kingdom can attain is to die to itself in order that it may be born into the kingdom above. If the mineral instead of gradually dying as a mineral to be absorbed into the higher state of the vegetable existence refused to evolve toward the vegetable life, and if the vegetable refused to evolve toward the animal kingdom, we can see that the lower kingdom in each case would lose something.

The lower kingdoms cannot refuse; they are captives of nature but we have been given free will. Yet unless we too die to our human self will we cannot be born into the Larger will.

The Founders of religion are the Mediators who have the power to transpose mankind from the death of the human spirit into the life of the Universal Spirit; but it is on one condition only — dying to the human self-will, just as the seed dies to itself in order to live as a tree.

The reason that social reforms and the various cults have been unsuccessful in their attempts to establish Universal peace, is that they are trying to do this on a lower kingdom basis — without giving up. It is the clashing of the wills of mankind down

in the lower kingdom of self-will which causes all the trouble individually and nationally.

Nietzsche, the exponent of the superman of the materialists and of the will to power (who ended in a mad house) is a symbol of where all roads lead to, more or less, which are attempts based on the wrong kind of power. Abdul Baha says:

The human will must be subdued and trained into the Will of God. It is a great power to have a strong will, but a greater power to give that will to God.

* * *

Sacrifice your will to the Will of God. The Kingdom is attained by the one who forgets self. Everything becomes yours by the renunciation of everything.

* * *

. . . Whosoever is occupied with himself is wandering in the desert of heedlessness and regret! The *master key to self-mastery is self-forgetfulness.* The road to the palace of life is through the path of renunciation.

Religion, in whatever age it is revealed, is always ultra modern; in fact it is so modern that even after hundreds of years have elapsed, and sometimes thousands, its benefits are not understood. Christ's teachings, if they had been applied, would have made super-modern geniuses of the race and all wars would have been averted.

That is why we have such chaos in the world today, because people are striving for the weak things which they consider the strong, while the strong

things they ignore considering them the weak. Some of the weak things are love of leadership, self-will, deification of the ego, pride, love of money power, social power, and occult power. The strong things are unselfishness, non-resistance, non--attachment to worldly things, and most of all faith in God. Two thousand five hundred years ago the Chinese understood these things far better than we do today. Lao Tsze said.

There is nothing weaker than water,
Or easier to efface,
But for attacking the hard and the strong
Nothing can take its place.
That the tender conquers the rigid,
That the weak overcomes the strong,
The whole world knows, but in practice who
Can carry the work along?

This was emphasized by Christ but it is more or less one of the lost truths of Christianity. Today the Bahai Religion reiterates the power that lies in the practice of non-resistance and renunciation which Abdul Baha calls "Radiant acquiescence." The following exemplifies this, in Abdul Baha's attitude toward the forty years which he spent as a prisoner in the fortress of Acca:

Freedom is not a matter of place, it is a condition. I was thankful for the prison, and the lack of liberty was very pleasing to me, for those days were passed in the path of service, under the utmost difficulties and trials, bearing fruits and results.

Unless one accepts dire vicissitudes, he will not

attain. To me prison is freedom, troubles rest me, death is life, and to be despised is honor. Therefore I was happy all that time in prison. When one is released from the prison of self, that is indeed release, for self is the greater prison. When this release takes place, then one cannot be outwardly imprisoned. When they put my feet in stocks, I would say to the guard, "You cannot imprison me, for here I have light and air and bread and water. There will come a time when my body will be in the ground, and I shall have neither light nor air, nor food nor water, but even then I shall not be imprisoned." The afflictions which come to humanity sometimes tend to center the consciousness upon the limitations, and this is a veritable prison. Release comes by making of the will a door through which the confirmations of the Spirit come.

* * *

The confirmations of the Spirit are all those powers and gifts with *which some are born* (*and* which men sometimes call genius) but for which others have to strive with infinite pains. They come to that man or woman who accepts his or her life with radiant acquiescence.*

Here is a direct statement that through the practice of the attributes of religion — of radiant acquiescence we can become geniuses. Not he who strives with infinite pains for worldly success but he who trascends his limitations, just as the disciples of Christ transcended theirs and became infinitely

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* From ABDUL BAHA on DIVINE PHILOSOPHY. Compiled by Isabel Fraser Chamberlain.

greater in every way compared to their former state.

It was this consciousness that Christ and every Manifestation of God tried to instill into mankind in order to bring us spiritual health. When we attain this spiritual health we attain well-being on all the planes, physical, mental and moral. Over and over again Christ showed how little he thought of the physical, and how much he thought of the spiritual. "Let the dead bury their dead," meant those dead spiritually.

Paul, in speaking of himself as having been raised from the dead, was referring to his former state which compared to the spiritual life he had experienced was analogous to death.

The greatest miracle that the founders of every religion have accomplished, and the only one needed to prove their mission, is that they were able despite the most fearful handicaps and persecutions to establish a religion that completely changed conditions, lasted for ages and has millions of adherents.

The difference between occultism and true spirituality is that the followers of occult practices try to impose their will upon people, conditions and things in order to mould them to some personal end. They accomplish this through coercive prayer, or affirmations, or in concentrating upon their subject. This is self-will trying to use the Higher Power to further self-interest and personal ends. It is psychic but not spiritual.

A spiritually awakened person puts himself in the flow of the Will of God, and is used by the Higher Power to further Divine ends. Instead of praying that his desires and intentions may succeed, he prays for more spiritual enlightment for himself and mankind. In this way he leaves it to God to judge what is best.

In fact this is the mystery of inner guidance of which Abdul Baha so often speaks. True guidance is often given to us in such a way as to seem contrary to our self-interest. This is in order to test us. Anyone would follow a guidance that appeared to be for his self-interest, and there would be no merit in following it.

Development of the spiritual radio depends as much upon spiritual attunement as the physical radio does. One cannot be attuned to the Larger Will and at the same time attuned to selfishness. When worldliness steps in this connection is broken.

Abdul Baha says that the Bahai Movement is not so much a new religion, as it is religion renewed. It helps people to understand and appreciate their own religion and all others. For each religion constitutes the different letters of God's alphabet. It was necessary for the Founders of religion to teach the different races the alphabet of spiritual knowledge first because they had not yet attained to the capacity of reading.

We can never eradicate the different religions any

more than we could eradicate the letters of the alphabet. The Bahai Movement helps us to combine them and to learn how to read the Message that each was a part of.

Instead of the one-sided training that the converts to each religion receive, a Bahai is taught to appreciate the truth and greatness of all religions and is counseled to read, with unbiased mind, the Sacred Books of all the Manifestations of God. In doing this he becomes a better Christian, a better follower of Islamism, and a better follower of Judaism, than he ever could have been by trying to follow the many confusing dogmas and superstitions that the adherents of each religion have drifted into.

That is why, according to Professor Edward Granville Browne of the University of Cambridge, the Babi missionary has so much success. Writing in the introduction of the LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF ABBAS EFFENDI (Abdul Baha), Professor Browne says:

> **I have often heard wonder expressed by Christian ministers at the extraordinary success of the Babi* missionaries, as contrasted with the almost complete failure of their own. 'How is it,' they say, 'that the Christian Doctrine, the highest and noblest which the world has ever known, though supported by all the resources of Western civilization, can only count its converts in Mohammedan lands by twos and threes, while Babism can reckon them by thousands?' The answer, to my mind, is as plain as the sun at midday. Western Christianity, save in the**

* The name "Babi" was later changed to "Bahai".

rarest cases, is more Western than Chritian, more racial than religious; and, by dallying with doctrines plainly incompatible wtih the obvious meaning of its Founder's words, . . . grows steadily more, rather than less material . .

* *

There is, of course, another factor in the success of the Babi propagandist, as compared with the Christian Missionary, in the conversion of Mohammedans to his faith; namely, that the former admits, while the latter rejects, the divine inspiration of the Quran and the prophetic function of Muhammed. The Christian missionary must begin by attacking, explicitly or by implication, both these beliefs; too often forgetting that if (as happens but rarely) he succeeds in destroying them, he destroys with them that recognition of former prophetic dispensations (including the Jewish and the Christian) which Muhammed and the Quran proclaim, and converts his Muslim antagonist not to Christianity but to Skepticism and Atheism. What, indeed, could be more illogical on the part of Christian missionaries to Muhammedan lands than to devote much time and labor to the composition of controversial works which endeavor to prove, in one and the same breath, first that the Quran is a lying imposture, and, sceondly, that it bears witness to the truth of Christ's mission, as though any value attached to the testimony of one proved a liar! The Babi (or Behai) propagandist, on the other hand, admits that Muhammed was the Prophet of God and that the Quran is the Word of God, denies nothing but their finality, and does not discredit his own witness when he draws from that source arguments to prove his faith.

To the Western observer, however, it is the complete sincerity of the Babis, their fearless disregard of death and torture undergone for the sake of their religion, their certain conviction as to the truth of their faith, their general admirable conduct towards mankind, and especially towards their fellow-believers, which constitute their strongest claim on his attention . . .

This comment of Professor Browne is only one among many testimonies of this sort. A Bahai who had lived a long time in India spoke of an army missionary there who had tried in vain to convert a Jewish soldier to Christianity, and became very angry when finally the Jewish soldier did believe in Christ through the efforts of this Bahai.

Progressing civilizations require changes in religion every thousand or two thousand years. When Christians assert that Christ's teachings are perfect they are right but Christ himself said they were not all the perfection that was to be given for all time.

Christ did not deal with problems that had never arisen. For example two thousand years ago one person could not have instructed another how to run an automobile, for the simple reason that it had not yet been invented. Likewise Christ did not teach people who were in the A.B.C.'s of material development the same things that a Manifestation of God would teach them in a much more complex civilization. It would have been premature to try and unite the world spiritually before the scientific inventions

had come into existence which have united it materially.

We know that when Christ, and later Mohammed, appeared there were comparatively no religions to unite. Therefore not until the fundamental teachings of religion had been given to the whole world, and the adherents of each became convinced that their religion was the only true one, could the question of antagonism have arisen between them, and thus an attempt to unite them would have been premature.

When people ask: "If all religions are the same in their fundamentals and are true revelations from God, why should we trouble about a new one?"

The answer is the same as if this question had been asked regarding Christianity and Judaism, or if asked why should a child go on to the next stage of learning — because religion is evolutionary.

The new note that the Bahai Teaching strikes is that religion is relative dynamic and evolutionary. Science and religion are one, and mankind is one. All divisions and incompatibilities are due to man's limited understanding.

CHAPTER XIV.

Greek culture and reforms are like the coal derived from the sun of religions — Allegories in Sacred Books interpreted as facts — Meaning of Adam and Eve.

Religion is to man on the spiritual plane what the sun is to him on the physical plane. We know that if it were not for the sun nothing would grow or develop. The coal and petroleum exist because of the sun, but they do not exist independently nor have they the power of the sun. Likewise all the reforms and cults and philosophies that have ever existed are the coal derived from, and dependent upon, the teachings that the Manifestations of God gave in their purity.

They are to the race exactly what is needed for its spiritual development just as the different grades in school are what is needed for a child's mental development.

If it had not been for the Manifestations of God, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Moses, Christ, and Mohammed, there would have been no Greek philosophers, no science, no art, no literature, and no reforms or cults. All these are the coal derived from the sun of the Manifestations of God. Their religions have been the cause of all the progress of the race, but the false dogmas that have gradually accumu-

lated around each religion have halted this progress to a large extent, and deflected it to materialism.

Let us examine a few of the false dogmas, that have been the outcome of interpreting the allegories in the Bible as facts, and the same principle applies to all the other religions.

Clergymen have preached that because Adam and Eve ate the apple they were cast out of the Garden of Eden; due to their disobedience, all men were born in sin. When they died they were thrown into hell, where they remained until Christ offered himself as a sacrifice to appease God, who was angry because of the sin of Adam and Eve. Those who believed in these dogmas were saved — those who did not were damned.

Contrary to these dogmas Christ taught that those who believed in him as the Messiah and practiced his teachings would be saved — that is endowed with the spiritual consciousness. It was due to lack of practice by men in general, that they lost the vivid sense of the reality of God.

The complicated theology that resulted is utterly unlike the beautiful simple teachings of Christ, the basis of which is the Sermon on the Mount. Concerning the story of Adam and Eve, Abdul Baha says:

> **. . . if the literal meaning of this story were attributed to a wise man, certainly all would logically deny that this arrangement, this invention, could have emanated from an intelligent being. There-**

fore, this story of Adam and Eve, who ate from the tree, and their expulsion from Paradise, must be thought of simply as a symbol. It contains divine mysteries and universal meanings, and it is capable of marvelous explanations. Only those who are initiated into mysteries, and those who are near the Court of the All-Powerful, are aware of these secerts. Hence these verses of the Bible have numerous meanings.

We will explain one of them, and we will say: Adam signifies the spirit of Adam, and Eve his soul. For in some passages in the Holy Books where women are mentioned, they represent the soul of man. The tree of good and evil signifies the human world; for the spiritual and divine world is purely good and absolutely luminous, but in the human world light and darkness, good and evil exist in opposite conditions.

The meaning of the serpent is attachment to the human world. This attachment of the spirit to the human world led the soul and spirit of Adam from the world of freedom, to the world of bondage, and caused him to turn from the Kingdom of Unity to the human world. When the soul and spirit of Adam entered the human world, he came out from the paradise of freedom and fell into the world of bondage. From the height of purity and absolute goodness, he entered into the world of good and evil.

* * *

. . . For the spirit and soul of Adam, when they were attached to the human world, passed from the world of freedom into the world of bondage. This attachment of the soul and spirit to the human

world, which is sin, was inherited by the descendents of Adam, and is the serpent which is always in the midst of, and at enmity with, the spirits of the descendents of Adam . . .

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 140-1-2

This is only one of the symbolisms in the Bible that has been interpreted in a literal sense. The followers of all the great world religions have, more or less, treated their Sacred Books likewise, and this has been the cause of the seeming incompatibility between them.

Each Founder of religion taught only as much of the Truth as the people, in each age, could assimilate. Christ said:

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

* * *

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus was referring to his Light that existed before Abraham and not to his personality—or to the lamp as the Jews thought. If we are following the Light, and not the lamp, we shall not confuse the personali-

ty of Jesus with the Spirit. The personalities of the Saviors differ, but the Light is One.

Mohammed said:

We prophets were sent to talk to the people according to the measure of their minds.

In the Bhagavad-Gita it is written:

For whensoever, O son of Bharata, there is a decay of righteousness, and a rising up of unrighteousness, then I create myself. For the protecting of the good, and for the destroying of evil doers, and for the establishing of righteousness, I arise from age to age.

Guatama Buddha said:

I am not the first Buddha who came upon the earth, nor shall I be the last. In due time another Buddha will arise in the world, a Holy One, a supremely enlightened One, endowed with wisdom in conduct, knowing the universe, an incomparable leader of men, a Master of angels and mortals. He will reveal to you the same truths, which I have taught you. He will preach his religion, glorious in its origin, glorious at its climax, glorious at its goal, in the spirit and in the letter. He will proclaim a religious life, wholly perfect and pure, such as I now proclaim.

In the words of Abdul Baha:

Each religion teaches that a mediator is necessary between man and the creator—one who receives the full light of the divine splendor and radiates it over the human world, as the earth's atmosphere receives and diffuses the warmth of the rays of the sun. This mediator between God and humanity has different designations, though he always brings the

same spiritual commands. In one era he is called Abraham, in other time Moses, again he is called Buddha, another time Jesus, and yet another time Mohammed . . . Alas! the majority of men attach themselves to the name of the mediator and lose sight of the real purport.

"Therefore did Baha-'u'llah cry, 'O God, deliver us from the sea of names'."

—STAR OF THE WEST, Vol. 14, July 1923.

Baha'o'llah proclaimed:

Verily we revealed according to thy capacity and perception, and not according to my State and Reality.

CHAPTER XV.

Prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ — Meaning of the end of the world — End of old dispensation — Clouds symbolize catastrophes — Falling stars — Crumbling monarchies.

Adherents of each of the world religions are expecting the return of their "Promised One" but they are expecting him according to their preconceived ideas of how he is to come, and what he is to be. That is they are expecting the return of the personality of their Savior, instead of looking for the same Light but in a different Lamp.

These misconceptions are due to the fact that the adherents of many religions have interpreted the prophecies regarding the Socond Coming literally.

But all these must necessarily be disappointed for the same reason that the Jews were disappointed when Christ appeared as a poor carpenter. They had interpreted the verses in the Bible which referred to the coming Messiah as a King, in a literal sense, without perceiving that these prophecies referred to a spiritual King.

Many other sects, in different religions, have made similar mistakes and have likewise been disappointed, and or the same reason — interpreting symbolisms literally.

For instance here in America the "Millerites" be-

lieve that Christ would return to earth on May 23, 1844, literally sitting on the clouds, and that the world was to end. So sure were they that these events would take place, that hundreds of them gave their property away, and on the day predicted they gathered on the roofs of their houses in a number of cities as well as on the lake fronts of Buffalo, New York, expecting to be taken up bodily by the Lord who was to come down to meet them.

It was very remarkable that the Reverend Mr. Miller predicted so accurately the date of the prophecy, but was wrong regarding the manner of its fulfillment His beliefs were based on the following verses in the New Testament:

And this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand.:)

* * *

Immediately after the tribulations of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. "Clouds" symbolize the catastrophes apparent in

the world today; the "stars" falling from heaven are the kings deposed from their thrones; the "end" means the end of the old dispensation, and the beginning of the new.

For on that date prophesied by the Reverend Mr. Miller, there occurred in Persia two events; A young man, "The Bab" announced that he was the Precursor of "He whom God would manifest," who would soon follow him and establish a new world religion. On the same day that "The Bab" declared himself, May 23rd, 1844, Abdul Baha was born. And these two great Lights together with Baha'o'llah, are the founders of the Bahai Religion.

It is also significant that on May 23, 1844, the first telegraph message was sent, between Baltimore and Washington, reading, "What hath God wrought." Thus the invention that united the world on the material plane happened on the very day and year that the new dispensation was ushered in, which will eventually unite it on the spiritual plane.

David Starr Jordan, of Leland Stanford University, said:

Abdul Baha will unite the East and the West for he travels the mystic path with practical feet.

Professor Jowett, the celebrated scholar of Oxford, England, said to a young professor:

Never let the Bahai Movement out of your notice. This Bahai Movement is the greatest Light that has come into the world since the days of Jesus Christ. It is too high and too great for the present to under-

stand its full import, but the future will comprehend it.

The incredible modern inventions are now forcing mankind to accept many of the principles which Baha'o'llah taught eighty years ago, and were later exemplified by Abdul Baha.

Radio is a physical evidence of the reality of the spiritual radio. For everyone in the world has been affected by the Bahai Religion whether he has ever heard of it or not.

Despite the dreadful war that is now taking place, people are becoming alive with a new spiritual awareness without knowing the source from whence the Power arose.

The "Bab", Baha'o'llah, and Abdul Baha disseminated their religion orally, by writing, and by deeds. These three methods obviously could reach only a limited number of people, but the spiritual Message, which they emanated and still are emanating was far more powerful, for it quickened the whole world, each receiving according to his capacity. Even the materialists were quickened to strive for a better social organiation.

The new impetus which the race received subjectively made itself evident on the one hand by innumerable cults which emphasized the supernatural, the healing and transcendental aspect of every religion.

These cults, such as Theosophy, New Thought,

Christian Science, Spiritualism and many others, all originated since 1844. Their influence has been a good reaction against nineteenth century materialists, which is rampant inside many churches, as well as outside.

Those gifted with the scientific mind, on the other hand, received the Bahai Message by a quickening of their being which they translated into scientific discoveries. They were the unconscious instruments which God used to unite the world physically.

The awakened interest in religion as well as the scientific awakening of mankind is due to the Bahai Religion. That is the reason more scientific discoveries have been made since 1844 than in all the two thousand years prior to that date.

These activities are as inevitable a result of the recurrence of the spiritual spring which was ushered in in 1844, as the budding of trees and blossoming of flowers are the results of the recurrence of the physical spring.

Not until man had attained the capacity intellectually to make use of the scientific aspect of God's revelation for uniting the world materially, did He send his universal Manifestation to unite it spiritually. The fact that humanity can now talk, and ride, on and under and over the water and earth, makes him potentially a universal being preparing him for the application of the universal Bahai principles.

In the time of Christ the philosophers and re-

formers were occupied, as they are today, trying to rectify conditions according to their own conceptions, and they treated with contempt the early Christians' faith in Christ as the remedy of mankind.

Mr. Lecky, the historian, describes in the following words the attitude of the philosophers toward *Christianity during the transitional stage in Ancient* Rome:

> **That the greatest change in the history of mankind should have taken place under the eyes of a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and historians who were profoundly conscious of the decomposition around them; that all these writers should have utterly failed to predict the issue of the movement they were observing, and that during the space of three centuries they should have treated as simply contemptible an agency, which all men must now admit to have been, for good or evil, the most powerful moral lever that has ever been applied to the affairs of men, are facts well worthy of meditation in every period of religious transition.**

We are likewise in the transitional stage today — *emerging from the winter of materialism into the* springtime of renewed religion, and humanity at large is unaware of it.

In each age when the Messiahs have appeared man has either crucified or imprisoned or tortured them. That is what Christ meant when he said on his way to crucifixion:

"For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

If people could put him to death during the green stage, or springtime of his teachings, for announcing that he was the Messiah, what would they not do during the dry stage, or winter of his teachings, *which is today. The spiritual crucifixion of his* teachings has continued ever since his physical crucifixion — culminating in the world war.

But the joyous part of it is that in this age when the anti-God governments are trying to indoctrinate the world with atheism, the Spirit of religion rises again in the Bahai Movement. For it glorifies and explains all religions in the same way that Christ glorified the teachings of Moses which otherwise would have remained unknown except to a limited extent. But due to Christ, the Old Testament was translated into six hundred different languages, and spread throughout the world in connection with the New Testament.

The Bahai Cause is enabling all religions to be better understood, for it is the synthesis of every religion and it cannot be explained without explaining all the others.

CHAPTER XVI.

More prophecies — Wars due to materialism — Must attain spiritual fraternity — Law of Cause and Effect — Karma — Mechanism versus Vitalism.

Abdul Baha said in 1912 that so many afflictions would befall man because of his materialism, that he would be obliged to turn to God. Among his many predictions is the following one, made to Charles Mason Remey during 1911, when Mr. Remey asked him the following questions:

What is the significance of the prophecy, 'Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand, three hundred and five and thirty days (1335)?' Daniel 12:12.

A. After that date a great disturbance—a terrible (material) calamity is to happen in the world.

Q. Is it to be in the form of war and strife, or will it be as an earthquake, such as has happened in Messina and elsewhere?

A. Wars and earthquakes, such as you have mentioned ,will happen, but these, compared with this great catastrophe to come, will be as nothing. As in the past whole peoples and civilizations have, through physical changes, been obliterated, so that not a trace has remained, so it will be when this great change shall take place.

Q. In the Bible there is a prophecy: "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third part shall be left therein" (Zechariah 13:8-9.)

Does this refer to the happening in question?

A. Yes.

Q. Will this take place soon after the date 1917 (which is the date mentioned, 13335 days) or 1335 A.H. (after Mohammed), or 1917 A.D., or will it happen in the very distant future?

A. It is not so very soon after nor again is it in the so very distant future.

At a later date Abdul Baha explained that these 1335 days mean 1335 solar years, from the flight of Mohammed from Medina to Mecca, which is the beginning of the Mohammedan era 622. This date added to 1335 is 1957.

Eighty years ago Baha'o'llah said:

Consider the civilization of the people of the Occident—how it has occasioned commotion and agitation to the people of the world. There has appeared an infernal instrument, and such attrocity is displayed in the destruction of life, the like of which was not seen by the eye of the world, nor heard by the ears of nations. It is impossible to reform (or remove) these violent, overwhelming evils, except the peoples of the world become united in affairs, or in one Religion. Hearken ye unto the Voice of this Oppressed One, and adhere to the Most Great Peace!

A strange and wonderful instrument exists in the earth; but it is concealed from the minds and souls. It is an instrument which has the power to change the atmosphere of the whole earth, and its infection causes destruction.

—*Tablets of Baha'o'llah*, page 54.

When this was revealed, poison gas and other infernal instruments of modern warfare had not been invented. Do these "violent overwhelming evils" refer specifically to a yet more terrible and subtle form of poison gas, which threatens the extinction of mankind, unless the peoples of the world become "one in religion?"

The dreadful wars and catastrophes happen in order to arouse man from the thrall of materialism. It is being said today, "There are no atheists in the fox holes." In the horrors of battle, man instinctively and involuntarilly turns to God in prayer.

Prayer is the aspect of religion most emphasized by Abdul Baha, because it is the part most neglected by mankind in general. Unless we make a great effort to revivify the faith in the efficacy of prayer it will atrophy. We know that this is true of any attribute.

Charles Darwin writes in his journal that due to his complete absorption in science, he atrophied the feeling part of his brain that would have enabled him to enjoy music, poetry, and art. He said that if he had to live his life over again he would have kept these faculties alive by hearing some fine music, seeing a beautiful picture, or reading some poetry every day.

This same principle applies to the necessity of keeping the God-conscious, intuitional part of our nature alive through prayer. Even if we have no

faith to start with, if we pray for it, and persist, it will be galvanized into life.

Anti-God propaganda, so rampant in the world today, is responsible for the almost universal malady of spiritual atrophication. Even in the churches this malady is frightfully apparent.

Alexis Carrel says:

Mystical activity has been banished from most religions. Even its meaning has been forgotten. Such ignorance is probably responsible for the decadence of the churches. The strength of religion depends upon the focuses of mystical activity where its life constantly grows . . .

* * *

Mysticism is splendidly generous. It brings to man the fulfillment of his highest desires. Inner strength, spiritual light, divine love, ineffable peace . . .*

And again Dr. Carrel says:

"Prayer is not only worship; it is also an invisible emanation of man's worshiping spirit — the most powerful form of energy that one can generate. The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of secreting glands. Its results can be measured in terms of increased physical buoyancy, greater intellectual vigor, moral stamina, and a deeper understanding of the realities underlying human relationships.

If you make a habit of sincere prayer, your life will be very noticeably and profoundly altered. Prayer stamps with its indelible mark our actions and demeanor. A tranquility of bearing, a facial

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* Man the Unknown. Harper and Brothers.

and bodily repose, are observed in those whose inner lives are thus enriched. *Within the depths of consciousness* a flame kindles. And man sees himself. He discovers his selfishness, his silly pride, his fears, his greeds, his blunders. He develops a sense of moral obligation, intellectual humility. Thus begins a journey of the soul toward the realm of grace.

Prayer is a force as real as terrestrial gravity. As a physician, I have seen men, after all other therapy had failed, lifted out of disease and melancholy by *the serene* effort of prayer. It is the only power in the world that seems to overcome the so-called "laws of nature"; . . .

PRAYER IS POWER

Reader's Digest. March, 1941

C. G. Jung, the world famous psychologist says:

During the past thirty years, people from all the civilized countries of the earth have consulted me . . . Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook. *This of course* has nothing whatever to do with a particular creed or membership of a church.†

The worst calamity that can happen to any of us is to lose faith in God. We then become idiots spiritually unable to correlate cause and effect on the

† Modern Man in Search of a Soul.
Harcourt Brace and Company, New York.

inner plane, in the same way that a congenital idiot is unable to correlate it on the physical plane.

One of the cardinal points of every religion is that the spiritual law of cause and effect operates as concretely as it does on the material plane.

The Buddhist's Law of Karma is the belief that through good deeds we lay up good Karma, and through bad deeds we lay up bad Karma, and we are rewarded or punished accordingly.

Confucius said: "In the practice of archery we have something resembling the principle in a moral man's life. When the archer misses the center of the target he turns around and seeks for the cause of his failure within himself."

Christ said: "For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Mohammed said: "It is your own conduct which will lead you to reward or punishment, as if you had been destined therefor.

Swedenborg called this law, "The Law of Correspondence" — our punishment and reward corresponds to our deeds."

No one can stay the hand of divine reward and punishment that we each bring on ourselves according to our own acts. But through true repentance, and desisting from our faults and sins we can avert further punishment. This not only applies individually but to nations collectively.

Innumerable people are trying to establish universal peace through material means. But the Bahai Cause emphasizes what every religion has taught —

that it cannot be established except through spiritual evolution. Universal peace is the reward of the graduating class of humanity made spiritual. We cannot graduate into it without having mastered the grades leading to it. For this world is the university for the training of the soul, and spiritual evolution is the consummation of man's achievement.

The present global war, as well as World War I, while seeming to stem from many causes stems from one cause only — the struggle between those who adhere to the mechanistic conception of life, the communists and other atheists on the one hand, and those who hold the vitalistic conception of life, the religionists, on the other hand.

The mechanists believe there is no God — that life is merely mass and motion, a mere change happening. Karl Marx applied this ancient philosophy to the economic field nearly a hundred years ago. His followers have believed ever since that they are really progressive, without realizing that they are reactionary.

For this paternalism and mechanistic conception of life retards man's initiative, his intellectual and his scientific development. But worst of all it retards the development of his super faculties, such as the intuitive powers. For the development of these depends upon belief in God and His guidance.

Recently the chaplain of Columbia University, the Reverend Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., said in sub-

stance that through the infiltration of communistic theories, and other mechanistic conceptions of life, we are creating a community of robots instead of fine, dignified human beings.

In opposition to these mechanistic conceptions are those of the vitalists who believe there is something back of life other than mass and motion — those who believe in God. They believe in the democratic form of government because all religions have taught the freedom and equality of man. This freedom is expressed on the economic plane by granting all the peoples of the world the right to elect their own government from a two, or more, party choice. This is opposed to all the totalitarian forms of government based on dictatorship.

Christianity is a spiritual democracy, and so is Islam, but the followers of these and other religions have, more or less, neglected the spiritual part of it. Today the Bahai Cause, which is the essence of modernity, emphasizes that the highest form of government is a spiritual democracy.

That is why the present struggle of paramount importance today is the struggle between the pro-Gods and the anti-Gods.

Those who are pro-God are faced with the problem of a world that is fast becoming anti-God through communism, the first canon of which is atheism, and the aim of which is to indoctrinate the peoples of the world with its propaganda.

The communists are doing their work effectively because they are united as one man, while the religionists are hampered because they are dis-united due to the fact that the false dogmas within each religion make them seem incompatible with one another as well as with science.

But there is no incompatibility between Zoroastrianism, Buddhaism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islamism and other religions as the Founders gave them to the world. They each taught the same essential Truths — the oneness of God, the immortality of the soul, and the brotherhood of man.

On these three teachings, and all that they connote, the religions of the world could, and should unite. Not to the exclusion of any being on earth but in the sense that the followers of each cease to oppose one another; cease to believe that their religion is the only true one, or the greatest one, or that their conception of it is the only right one.

When this happens, as it surely will, then the Power of religion will become so apparent that even those who are trying to destroy it will realize that they have been trying to destroy the very genius of man — the spiritual consciousness.

The hunch of the man in the street is this consciousness in embryo; it is the Ahimsa of the Buddhists; the Tao of the Chinese; the Waconda of the American Indians; the Kingdom of God to Christ; the Resignation of Mohammed; and the Radiant Ac-

quiescence of the Bahai Religion. But by whatever name it is called it is different aspects of the same thing.

This consciousness gives us the intense spiritual conviction that men are the cells of the body of mankind, and as intimately related to one another as the cells in our own body are related, and we cannot harm a living soul without harming ourselves.

Unity in diversity can be achieved only through the power of religion. Christ united the idol-worshiping nations; the Romans, the Greeks, the Assyrians and others, solely through the belief in one God and all that this connotes.

Mohammed united the savage tribes of Arabs through this same Power. He smashed the three hundred and sixty idols that they had been worshiping and instilled in them the belief in one God.

The idols today are not of stone but of false dogmas existing in every religion, and the tribes are the different nations of the world.

To unify the present day tribes is global in its scope. But this can be accomplished if each religion will discard its confusing and false dogmas, and unite on a platform of the three beliefs common to every religion that ever existed — belief in God, the immortality of the soul, and the brotherhood of man.

This will unite the occidentals and the orientals, all religions and races, and make them invincible to all anti-God propaganda.

What the followers of both Christianity and Judaism need is more tolerance in their religion and in their attitude toward other religions. The Moslems are much more tolerant than either of these, and so are the Chinese.

For instance, in the Mosques are four different pulpits from which the preachers of the four different sects, within their religion, recite their prayers. Pearl Buck says that the Chinese are so tolerant that one may be a Confucian, a Taoist, and a Buddhist at once.[1]

This tolerance among the religionists is of the most vital importance. For the world must unite in a spiritual fraternity in order to counteract the onslaught of organized atheism of the communists, and other totalitarian governments. Abdul Baha says:

> **All mankind must attain to spiritual fraternity, that is to say, *fraternity in the Holy Spirit*; for patriotic, racial, and political fraternity are of no avail. Their results are meager but . . . spiritual faternity is the cause of unity and amity among mankind . . .**[2]

* * *

If you desire to love God, love thy fellowmen. In them you can see the image and likeness of God. If you are eager to serve God, serve mankind. Renounce the self in the Self of God. When the aerial mariner steers his airship skyward, little by little the inharmony and incongruity of the world of

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[1] What America Means to me.
[2] Promulgation of Universal Peace. Vol. 1, page 165.

matter are lost, and before his astonished vision he sees widespread the wonderful panorama of God's *creation. Likewise when* the student of the Path of Reality has attained unto the loftiest summit of Divine Love, he will not look upon the ugliness and misery of mankind; *he will not observe any differences;* he will not see any racial and patriotic differences; but he will look upon humantiy with the glorified vision of a seer and a prophet. Let us all strive that we may attain to this highest pinnacle of ideal and spiritual life.[3]

Abdul Baha has said that universal peace would first be proclaimed in America, and he spoke in glowing terms of our possibilities.

The reason for this is partly due to the fact that America is the melting pot of the world, and is, therefore, more receptive to the melting pot of religion — the Bahai teachings.

From every country there have migrated to these shores those of each nation who had initiative enough to face a strange land, and people and language, and to live in exile and loneliness, to seek the freedom they could not find in their own country.

Among many things that Abdul Baha has said about America is the following, spoken twenty-six years ago (1917), at Haifa, Palestine:

The Republican or Democratic form of Government of the United States is so organized and the relations between the States and the National administration, the Congress and the legislatures, so

[3] Diary notes of Ahmad Sohrab. April 11, 1913.

defined and determined, that generally speaking they all work together smoothly for the public weal. The founders of the Republic and the writers of this Democratic Constitution were in reality the well-wishers of the world of humanity. They laid down such a body of laws, the mighty effect of which was the change of the course of history on the surface of the globe. The influence of the American idea of freedom, right, equality and representative form of government traveled to all parts of the world, and was indeed an inspirational example to other downtrodden nations to rise against absolutism and shake off the yoke of drudgery and serfdom. In the future, all the Governments of the world, including the Asiatic Governments, even this part of Asia, called the Near East, will become democratic and constitutional. This is certain. No doubt can be entertained regarding this matter. The Spirit of the time will remove every obstacle and crush out every opposition, for the Constitution of the United States gives to men all those sacred rights of political and individual liberty, protection of life, the pursuit of happiness, and the free exercise of religious belief. Every country, with certain modifications and changes, having regard to climate, education, aptitude and progress of the inhabitants, will take that Constitution as a guide to draw their own Bill of Rights.

All the future governments of the world, large and small, will become democratic, based upon the Will of the Governed. This is also assured. In the course of years, the North, Central and South American Republics will be drawn nearer and nearer together, and will become united in a general con-

federate Democracy. In other words, the various Republics will find their national and international interests so identical and akin, that they will forget all their petty jealousies and apprehensions and work together for the advancement and prosperity of all America. There will be a Pan-American Parliament, meeting regularly in which all questions of a general nature, affecting the vital interests of that Western hemisphere, will be discussed and deliberated upon.

From his prison home in the fortress City of Acca, Baha'o'llah made a promise, and gave a command to humanity through Professor Edgar G. Browne, in 1890. He spoke the word that wars must cease, and universal peace must be established. These good predictions will be fulfilled as surely as the terrible predictions were fulfilled that he made seventy-five years ago, regarding the fall of kings and rulers. The present universal war was also part of the predictions that both he and Abdul Baha said would happen, and would continue, until people "were obliged to turn to God." The following is professor Browne's description of his interview with Baha'o'llah:

Before a curtain suspended from the wall of this great ante-chamber my conductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then, with a quick movement of the hand, he withdrew, and, as I passed, replaced the curtain. I found myself in a large apartment, along the upper end of which ran a low divan, while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going and whom I was to

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

A mild, dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued:—'Praise be to God that thou hast attained! . . . Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile . . . We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment . . .

That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in this? Yet so it shall be; these fruitless strifes, thee ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most

Great Peace' shall come . . . Do not you in Europe need this also? Is not this that which Christ foretold? . . . Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the *happiness* of *mankind* . . . These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, 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 . . .*

The Power of which Aladdin's Lamp is symbol, is the gift of religion to man but he has almost forgotten how to use it. Now the time has come for his reawakening to the beneficence of this gift which lies entombed within every religion that ever existed. It awaits only the magic touch of the right application of religion to release it, not only with benefit to ourselves but to all mankind.

The one hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Bahai Religion will take place on May 23rd, 1944. Yet here also the Power within it has been more or less entombed due to the fact that since the passing of Abdul Baha from this world the organized group of Bahais (The National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais) under the dictatorship of Shoghi Effendi, have brought Fascism or totalitarianism into it.

Unbelievable as it may seem, they tried to copyright the Bahai Religion, and they instituted two law-

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*** A Traveller's Narrative. Cambridge University Press.**

suits during 1941* against Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chanler, to prohibit them, or anyone else, from calling themselves "Bahais", or from spreading the religion unless they did so through their organization, and according to their dictates.

Naturally the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais lost both suits, and they were severely reprimanded by the judge. He made it clear to them that in this day of religious freedom, no one can copyright a religion or claim the exclusive rights to it.

Mirza Sohrab and Mrs. Chanler who are the founders of The New History Society, established to spread the Bahai teachings, did a great service to mankind, by winning these two suits. They won religious freedom for the Bahai Movement and broke the strangle hold that the National Spiritual Assembly of Bahais had over it which had impeded its progress. Abdul Baha says:

> **No one can bottle up the Bahai Spirit. The Bahai Spirit is the most illusive ether; it is here, it is there, it is everywhere. It is the origin and substance of the highest ideals of this and the coming ages. The Bahai Spirit is undogmatic, super-racial, inter-social and non-partisan.**
>
> **"The Bahai Religion is not an exclusive society, but a Divine congregation, the dome of which is the Infinite Heaven, and the temple of which is the expanse of the earth.**

Among the many teachings that Baha'o'llah gave

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* See BROKEN SILENCE by Mirza Sohrab. Universal Publishing Co., 132 East 65th Street, New York City.

to the world eighty years ago, which were later exemplified by Abdul Baha, are the following:

1. The independent investigation of religious Truths and freedom of religion.
2. The unity and oneness of mankind.
3. The unity and oneness of all religions.
4. The unity of religion and sicence.
5. The unity of all countries.
6. Universal education.
7. A universal auxiliary language.
8. Equal rights between man and woman.
9. Solution of the economic problem.
10. Prejudices of all kinds must be forgotten.
11. Universal Peace.
12. An international tribunal and parliament of the world.
13. The demonstration of divinity and inspiration.
14. The necessity of the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

The last two of these are the most important for on them depends the carrying to successful fruition of all the other principles.

In the words of Abdul Baha:

. . . True distinction among mankind is through divine bestowals and receiving the intuitions of the Holy Spirit. If man does not become the recipient of the heavenly bestowals and spiritual bounties, he remains in the plane and kingdom of the animal. For the distinction between animal and man is that man is endowed with the potentiality of divinity in

his nature whereas the animal is entirely bereft of *that gift and attainment.* Therefore if man is bereft of the intuitive breathings of the Holy Spirit, deprived of divine bestowals, out of touch with the heavenly world and negligent of the eternal truths, though in image and likeness he *is human, in reality* he is an animal; even as His Holiness Christ declared, 'That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.'*

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* The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Vol. II, page 311.

CHAPTER XVII.

Excerpts from the writings of Baha'o'llah.
Hidden words — Words of Wisdom — Tablet of Wisdom — Tablet of Joseph — Tablet of Ahmad.

O Son of Spirit!

The first counsel is: Possess a good, a pure, an enlightened heart, that thou mayest possess a Kingdom eternal, immortal, ancient, and without end.

O Son of Spirit!

Justice is loved above all. Neglect it not, if thou desirest Me. By it thou wilt be strengthened to perceive things with thine own eyes and not by the eyes of men, to know them by thine own knowledge and not by the knowledge of any in the world. Meditate on this—how thou oughtest to be. Justice is of My Bounty to thee and of My Providence over three; therefore, keep it ever before thy sight.

O Son of Man!

In My Ancient Entity and in My Eternal Being, was I hidden. I knew My Love in thee, therefore I created thee; upon thee I laid My Image, and to thee revealed My Beauty.

* * *

O Son of Spirit!

I have created thee rich: Why dost thou make thyself poor? Noble have I made thee: Why dost thou degrade thyself? Of the essence of Knowledge have I manifested thee: Why searchest thou for another than Me? From the clay of Love I have kneaded thee: Why seekest thou another? Turn thy sight

unto thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing within thee, Powerful, Mighty and Supreme.

* * *

O Son of Man!

Go not beyond thy limitation, nor claim what is not for thee. Venerate the countenance of thy Lord, the Almighty.

O Son of Spirit!

Boast not of thine own glory over the poor, for I walk before him, and I see thee in thy miserable condition and ever grieve for thee.

O Son of Existence!

Why hast thou overlooked thine own faults and art observing defects in My Servants? Whosoever does this is condemned of Me.

* * *

O Son of Man!

Breathe not the sins of anyone as long as thou art a sinner. If thou doest contrary to this command thou art not of me: To this I bear witness.

O Son of Spirit!

Know verily that he who exhorts men to equity and himself does injustice, is not of Me, even though he bear MY Name.

O Son of Existence!

Attribute not to any soul that which thou desirest not to be attributed to thyself, and do not promise that which thou dost not fulfil. This is My Command to thee: Obey it.

O Son of Man!

Withhold not from My Servant in whatsoever he may ask of thee for his face is My Face, and thou *must reverence Me.*

O Son of Existence!

Examine thy deeds each day, before thou art judged, for death will suddenly overtake thee, and then thy deeds shall judge thee.

* * *

O Son of Man!

If thou run through all immensity and speed through the space of heaven, thou shalt find no rest save in obedience to Our Command and in devotion before Our Face.

* * *

O Son of Existence!

Remember Me in My earth that I may remember thee in My Heaven, thus may our eyes delight therein.

O Son of the Throne!

Thy hearing is My Hearing: hear thou with it. Thy sight is My Sight: see thou with it. Thus mayest thou attest within thyself My Holiness, that I may attest within Myself a place of exaltation for thee.

* * *

O Son of Existence!

If thou encounter poverty, grieve not; for, in the Time, the King of riches will descend to thee. Fear not humiliation, for glory shall be thy portion.

* * *

O Son of Man!

Distribute My possessions among My poor, that in Heaven thou mayest receive from the boundless treasures of Glory and from the stores of Eternal Bliss. But by My Life! The sacrifice of the spirit is more glorious, couldst thou see with Mine Eye.

* * *

O Children of Men!

Do ye know why We have created ye from one clay? That no one should glorify himself over the

other. Be ye ever mindful of how ye were created. Since We created ye all from the same substance, ye must be as one soul, walking with the same feet, eating with one mouth and living in one land, that ye may manifest with your being, and by your deeds and actions, the signs of unity and the spirit of oneness. This is My Counsel to ye, O people of Lights! Therefore follow it, that ye may attain the fruits of holiness from the Tree of Might and Power.

* * *

O Children of Dust!

Let the rich learn the midnight sighing of the poor, lest negligence destroy them and they be deprived of their portion of the tree of wealth. Giving and Generosity are qualities of Mine. Happy is he who adorns himself with My Virtues.

From "The Hidden Words"

"He who is a true philosopher never denies God and His authority which is the protection against all the world. In truth some sages have produced that which the people have profited by, and we have upheld them by a command on our part. Verily, we are able to do this! Beware, O ye my beloved, lest ye deny the supremacy of my sages, the servants whom God hath made the day-springs of His name, and the creator amidst the worlds! Make an effort that from you may appear arts and the things whereby everyone, whether young or old, may profit. Verily, we are quite of the foolish and ignorant ones who think that wisdom is confined to speaking of desires and passions, or to turning away from God, the Lord of the worlds, as we hear the same today declared by those who are heedless.

Bahai Scriptures, pages 198-9

". . . Know thou, therefore, that in every age and dispensation all Divine Ordinances are changed and transformed according to the requirements of the time, except the law of love, which, like unto a fountain, flows always and is never overtaken by change . . ." Page 249

* * *

"The people of Baha who have drunk of the pure wine of reality must associate with all the world with the perfect spirit of joy and fragrance; and remind them of that which is for the benefit of all . . .

"The creatures were created through love, and all are commanded to live in friendship and unity . . .

"Do not allow the opportunity to fall from your grasp; and spend not your time uselessly. I swear by the oecan of Godly knowledge that a moment in these days is more excellent than past centuries and ages; to this beareth witness your Lord, the Chooser, the Generous."

Pages 232-3

* * *

"The sword of wisdom is warmer than summer, and sharper than steel.

"It is better that you be killed than that you kill one another.

"We have taken from you the law of murder."

* * *

"The earth is one country; and mankind is its citizens."

* * *

"The foundation of the Palace of Peace is the consciousness of the oneness of mankind."

WORDS OF WISDOM

The Sun of Truth is the Word of God, upon which depends the training of the people of the country of thought. It is the Spirit of Reality and the Water of Life. All things owe their existence to It. Its manifestation is ever according to the capacity and coloring of the mirror through which is may reflect. For example: *Its Light*, when cast on the mirrors of the wise, gives expression to wisdom; when reflected from the minds of artists it produces manifestations of new and beautiful arts; when it shines through the minds of students it reveals knowledge and unfolds mysteries.

All things of the world arise through man and are manifest in him, through whom they find life and development; and man is dependent for his (Spiritual) existence upon the Sun of the Word of God. All the good names and lofty qualities are of *the Word. The Word is the Fire of God, which*, glowing in the hearts of people, burns away all things that are not of God . . . It is the essence of water, which has manifested itself in the form of fire. Outwardly it is the burning fire, while inwardly it is calm light. This is the Water which giveth life to all things.

We beg of God that we may partake of this Life-Giving Water of Heaven and quaff from the Spiritual chalice of rest, and thus be free from all that tends to withhold us from approaching His Love.

Glory be upon the people of Glory!

* * *

O Son of Man! Wert thou to observe Mercy thou wouldst not regard thine own interest, but the in-

terest of mankind. Wert thou to observe Justice, choose thou for others what thou choosest for thyself.

* * *

Verily, man is uplifted to the heaven of glory and power through Meekness; again, through Pride, is he degraded to the lowest station.

* * *

O ye discerning ones of the people; Verily the Words which have descended from the heaven of the Will of God are the source of unity and harmony for the world. Close your eyes to racial differences and welcome all with the light of Oneness. Be the cause of comfort and promotion of humanity. This handful of dust, the world, is one home: let it be in unity. Forsake pride, it is a cause of discord. Follow that which tends to harmony.

* * *

Consort with all the people with love and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity is the source of order in the world. Blessed are they who are kind and serve with love.

* * *

Oneness, in its true significance, means that God alone should be realized as the One Power which animates and dominates all things, which are but manifestations of Its energy.

* * *

God, singly and alone, abideth in His Own Place which is Holy above space and time, mention and utterance, sign, description and definition, height and depth.

* * *

The progress of man depends upon faithfulness,

wisdom, chastity, intelligence and deeds. He is ever degraded by ignorance, lack of faith untruth and selfishness. Verily, man is not called man until he be imbued with the attributes of the merciful. He is not man because of wealth and adornment, learning and refinement. Blessed is he who is free from the names, seeking the shore of the sea of Purity, and loving the melody of the dove of Virtue.

In this day all must serve God with purity and virtue. The effect of the word spoken by the teacher depends upon his purity of purpose and his severance. Some are content with words, but the truth of words is tested by deeds and dependent upon life. Deeds reveal the station of the man. The words must be according to what has proceeded from the Mouth of the Will of God and is recorded in Tablets.

* * *

The source of all good is trust in God, obedience to His Command, and satisfaction in His Will.

The principle of religion is to acknowledge what is revealed by God, and to obey the Laws established in His Book.

The origin of glory is to be content with that which God has provided, and be satisfied with what He has ordained.

The source of love is to advance to the Beloved and to abandon all else save Him, and to have no hope save His Will.

The principle of faith is to lessen words and to increase deeds. He whose words exceed his acts, know verily, that his non-being is better than his being and death better than his life.

The root of all knowledge is the Knowledge of

God: Glory be to Him! And this Knowledge is impossible save through His Manifestations.

The beginning of strength and bravery is to promote the Word of God and to remain firm in His Love.

The cause of all benefit is to manifest the blessings of God and to be thankful under all conditions.

The source of all these utterances is Justice. It is the freedom of man from superstition, and imitation, that he may discern the Manifestations of God with the eye of Oneness, and to consider all affairs with keen sight.

The source of all utterances is Justice. It is the freedom of man from superstition, and imitation, that he may discern the Manifestations of God with the eye of Oneness, and to consider all affairs with keen sight.

TABLET OF WISDOM

"O people, shun vice and adopt virtue, be perfect examples unto people, and become a monitor whereby mankind is reached to and admonished.

"He who arises with steadfastness to serve the cause of God must be a manifestation of wisdom, striving to remove ignorance from amongst human beings.

"Say! Let your words be one and agree in your opinions and make your morning preferable to your evenings and the morrow better than yesterday. The merit of man depends upon his service and perfection and not upon the ornaments of riches, and wealth. Let your words be free from falsehood and lust, and your actions sanctified and above suspicion and pure from hypocrisy.

"Say! Spend not the wealth of your precious lives on lustful desires and do not confine things only to your private interests, but bestow when you have and be patient when you have not. Distress is followed by affluence and confusion by clearness. Shun mendacity and slothfulness and take hold of that whereby the people will be profited, whether young or old, aged or widows.

"Say, beware of sowing the tares of discord among the creatures or the thorns of doubts and suspicions in the pure and brilliant hearts.

"Say, O beloved of God, commit not that which will disturb the clearness of the pure water of love or sever the perfumed ties of friendship.

"By my life, you are created for love and affection and not for hatred and obstinacy.

"Boast not of love to your own people but of love to your fellow creatures. Glory not in loving your homes but in loving the whole world.

"Let your eye be chaste, and your hand faithful, your tongue truthful, and your heart instructed. Abase not the glorious station of the learned and do not belittle the honor of the chief men who justly judge amongst you.

"Let equity be your army, reason your arms, and pardon and forgiveness your character and nature. By my life, it grieved me to hear of the sorrows thou hast mentioned. Regard not the people and their actions; but look to the truth and His dominion, verily He shall mention thee in that which which was the origin of the gladness of the world."

TABLET OF JOSEPH

"But the souls who succeed in attaining the pleasure of God and believing in His Cause, will gain the reward of their deeds in the world to come, after their spirits leave their bodies; because all seen things in their world are not ready (nor able) to bear more than that (which has been given to them).

"Though the worlds of God are circulating around this world, yet for each soul in any of these worlds (there is) a fixed and pre-ordained command.

"Do not think (or imagine) that anything mentioned in the Books of God is false and foolish; verily God is exalted above all that.

"I swear by the sun of the horizon of the meanings, that there are forever and ever many divine paradises which have no equal nor comparisons.

"In (this) the first life the meaning of paradise is pleasing God, and entering His Cause.

"But after departing from this world the faithful ones will enter into paradises which have no likeness, and enjoy winnning graces which are beyond comprehension; verily those paradises are the fruits of their deeds which they have accomplished in this world."

TABLET OF AHMAD

"This world is a show without reality, and is a non-existence adorned in the form of existence. Do not attach your hearts thereto. Do not sever yourselves from the Creator and be not of those who are heedless!

"Truly, I say, the world is like unto a mirage which has the show of water. The thirsty make

abundant efforts in their search, but, when reaching it, remain deprived and portionleses. Or, it is like unto the image of a loved one which is destitute of life and soul. When the lover reaches it, he finds it of no worth and value, and finds no gain save great pain and despondency.

"O servants! If in these visible days and this present world matters appear from the realm of decree contrary to your wish, be not depressed, for happy and divine days shall come and spiritual worlds of holiness shall become manifest. In all those days and worlds, for you a portion is ordained, a sustenance is determined and a food is established. Ye shall certainly attain to all these, were ye to exchange the garment of mortality for the garment of immortality and enter the station of the Paradise of Abha, which is the everlasting abode of glorious, sacred souls. All things are a proof of your existence. Be not grieved at the hardships of these numbered *days, and be not dejected if your outward bodies* are destroyed in the path of the Beloved One, for every destruction is followed by a construction and a paradise of rest is concealed in every hardship."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Excerpts from the writings of Abdul Baha.

On education — Divine civilization and material civilization — International peace — Capital and labor — War — Science and Religion — Unity — Faith prayer and healing — Life after death — Reincarnation — Pantheism — Evolution of man — Miracles — Solution of Jewish question.

. . . the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human worlds are all in need of an educator.

. . . man, if he is left without training, becomes bestial, and moreover, if left under the rule of nature, becomes lower than an animal; whereas if he is educated he becomes an angel.

* * *

But education is of three kinds: material, human, and spiritual. Material education is concerned with the progress and development of the body, through gaining its material comfort and ease. This education is common to animals and man.

Human education signifies civilization and progress: that is to say, government, administration, charitable works, trades arts and handicrafts, sciences, great inventions and discoveries of physical laws, *which are the activities essential of man as distinguished from the animal.*

Divine education is that of the Kingdom of God; it consists in acquiring divine perfections, and this is true education . . .

Now we need an educator who will be at the same

time a material, human, and spiritual educator, and whose authority will be effective in all conditions . . .

He must also impart spiritual education; so that intelligence and comprehension may penetrate the metaphysical world, and may receive benefit from the sanctifying breeze of the Holy Spirit, and may enter into relatoinship with the Supreme Concourse . . .

It is clear that human power is not able to fill such a great office, and that the reason alone could not undertake the responsibility of so great a mission . . .

* * *

. . . For example, Christ, alone and solitary, upraised the standard of spiritual peace and righteousness, a work which all the victorious governments with all their hosts were unable to accomplish . . .

* * *

. . . There is no doubt that this divine power is due to inspiration, and that the world must be educated through this power which is above human power.

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 8, 9, 10

DIVINE CIVILIZATION AND MATERIAL CIVILIZATION

There are two kinds of civilizations in the world of existence: a natural and a material civilization which serves the physical world, and a divine and heavenly civilization which renders service to the world of morality. The founders of natural civilization are the scientists and philosophers of the earth. The establishers of divine civilization are the holy,

celestial Manifestations of God. Religion is the basis of divine civilization. Natural civilization is life unto the body. Divine civilization is life unto the spirit. A body without the spirit is dead, although it may be in the utmost of beauty and comeliness.

For man two wings are necessary: One wing is the physical power and material civilization; the other is the spiritual power and divine civilization. With one wing only, flight is impossible; two wings are essential. Therefore, no matter how much material civilization advances it cannot attain to perfection except through the uplift of the spiritual civilization.

* * *

Consequently, it is impossible that economic contentment be realized by the people of the world save through the transforming power of faith. For faith is the solver of every problem, therefore, you must strive to strengthen the foundation of the religion of God. Through the power of the religion of God every difficulty will be disentangled. The power of the religion of God will humble kings and set at naught crooked motives of those who are in supreme authority. Then endeavor ye, that the power of true religion, which breathes the spirit of life into the dead body of the world of humanity, may be promulgated. This is the antidote for the poisoned body of the world and a quick-healing remedy for the rancorous diseases of man. For this reason, diffuse thou as much as thou art able the sweet fragrances of the Holy Spirit, teach the people the divine advice and exhortations and spread far and wide the heavenly teachings . . .

I want you to know that material progress and spiritual progress are two very different things, and that only if material progress goes hand in hand with spirituality can any real progress come about and the Most Great Peace reign in the world. If men followed the holy counsels and teachings of the prophets, if divine light shone in all hearts and men were really religious, we would soon see peace on earth and the Kingdom of God among men. The laws of God may be likened unto the soul and material progress unto the body. If the body were not animated by the soul it would cease to exist. It is my earnest prayer that spirituality may ever grow and increase in the world, so that customs may become enlightened and peace and concord may be established.

War and rapine, with their attendant cruelties, are an abomination to God and bring their own punishment, for the God of love is also a God of justice and each man must inevitably reap what he sows. Let us try to understand the command of the Most High and order our lives as He directs. True happiness depends on spiritual good and having the heart ever open to receive the divine bounty . . .

God in His infinite goodness has exalted us to do so much honor and has made us masters over the material world. Shall we then become her slaves? Nay rather, let us claim our birthright and strive to live the life of the spiritual sons of God.

INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE

. . . Furthermore, the most important issue of the day is that which concerns international peace and arbitration, and universal peace is impossible without universal suffrage. Children are educated by the women. The mother bears the troubles of rearing the child, she undergoes the ordeals of birth and training, therefore, it is most difficult for mothers to send to the battlefield their dear ones, their offspring upon whom they have lavished such love and care. Consider a child reared and trained twenty years by a mother. How many nights she has passed sleepless; how many days restless and anxious! With the utmost difficulty she has brought him to the age of maturity. How difficult then it is to sacrifice him upon the battlefield! These mothers, therefore, will not sanction war, nor be satisfied with it. So it will come to pass that when womankind partakes fully and equally in the affairs of the world, in the great arena of laws and politics, war will cease; for women will prove the obstacle or hindrance to it. This is certain and without doubt.*

STATION OF WOMAN

. . . In this revelation of Baha'o'llah the women go neck and neck with the men. In no movement will they be left behind. Their rights with men are equal in degree. They will enter all the administrative branches of politics. They will attain in all such a degree as will be considered the very highest station of the world of humanity and will take part in

* Star of the West. Vol. 3, No. 8, page 19.

all affairs. Rest ye assured. Do not look upon the present conditions; in the not far distant future the world of women will become all-refulgent and all-glorious, for His Holiness Baha'o'llah hath willed it so: At the time of elections the right to vote is the inalienable right of women, and the entrance of *women into all human departments is an irrefutable* and incontrovertible question.

CAPITAL AND LABOR

The solution of this problem is one of the fundamental principles of His Holiness Baha'o'llah. But it must be solved with justice and not with force. If this problem is not solved lovingly it will result in war. Perfect communism and equality are an impossibility because they would upset the affairs and the order of the world. But there is a fair method which will not leave the poor in such need, nor the rich in such wealth. The poor and the rich, according to their degrees, can live happily, with ease and tranquility. The first person in the world who had this idea was the king of Sparta . . . he divided the people of Sparta into three divisions . . . He desired real equality among these three divisions . . . He also made other laws and ordinances for the citizens . . . This equality of distribution, in a short time, became the cause of discord . . . Differences accrued and the whole thing was upset. Therefore the matter of equality is an impossibility . . .

But here is a real solution. The rich should be merciful to the poor, but with their free will, not with force. Should it be with force it would be useless. It should be according to law and not by vio-

lence, so that through a general law every one might know his duty . . .

* * *

The question of socialization is very important. It will not be solved by strikes or wages. All the governments of the world must be united and organize an assembly, the members of which should be elected from the parliaments and nobles of the nations. These must plan, with the utmost wisdom and power, so that neither the capitalists suffer from enormous losses, nor the laborers become needy. In the utmost moderation they should make the law, then announce to the public that the rights of the working people are to be strongly preserved. Also the rights of the capitalists are to be protected. When such a general plan is adopted by the will of both sides, should a strike occur, all the governments of the world collectively should resist it. Otherwise, the work will lead to much destruction, especially in Europe. Terrible things will take place. One of the several causes of a universal European war will be this question . . .

No more trusts will remain in the future . . . In reality, so far, great injustice has befallen to common people. Laws must be made because it is impossible for the laborers to be satisfied with the present system . . .

* * *

The essence of this matter is that strikes are conducive to destruction, but laws are the cause of life. Law should be framed. Demands should be according to the laws, and not with strikes, force and harshness . . .

Star of the West, Vol. 7, No. 9

WAR.

These dreadful events (the war of 1914-18) are as warnings on the part of God so that they may quicken the people and make them mindful. But the majority of mankind are like unto children, who are being rocked in a cradle. The harder they are rocked to be awakened, the deeper they fall into sleep. East and West the affairs of the people are in utter confusion and the markets of the world are afflicted with lethargy. The wheels of international transactions are at a standstill. We shall wait and see what God has decreed to be the outcome of this universal upheaval.

* * *

It is said that once a Mohammedan, a Christian, and a Jew were rowing a boat. Suddenly a tempest arose, the boat was tossed on the crest of the waves, and their lives were in danger. The Mohammedan began to pray: "O God, drown this infidel of a Christian!" The Christian supplicated to the Almighty: "O Father, send to the bottom of the sea this polytheistic Moslem!"

They observed that the Jew was not offering any prayer and therefore asked him, "Why dost thou not pray for relief?" He answered, "I am praying. I am asking the Lord to answer the prayers of both of you!"

Now this is the stern attitude of the combatants in Europe. (During 1914-18) Each government, claiming its cause is right and just, is calling on God to help and assist its army. But we are praying day and night that peace and reconciliation may be established amongst them; that they may abandon this

slaughter of their fellowmen and devote the rest of their lives to the progress of the world and to laying for eternity the cornerstone of a lasting peace. . .

HOW WE SHOULD PRAY REGARDING WAR

I charge you all that each one of you concentrate all the thoughts of your hearts on love and unity. When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed *by a more powerful thought of love.* Thoughts of war bring destruction to all harmony, well being, restfulness, and content.

Thoughts of love are constructive of brotherhood, peace, friendship, and happiness.

* * *

If you desire with all your heart friendship with every race on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men.

Do not despair! Work steadily. Sincerity and love will conquer hate. How many seemingly impossible events come to pass in these days. Set your faces *steadily towards the Light of the world.* Show love to all . . . God never forsakes his children who strive and work and pray . . . So will success crown your efforts, and with the universal brotherhood will come the Kingdom of God in peace and good-will.

Paris Talks, page 23

SCIENCE AND RELIGION

There is no contradition between true religion and science . . .

* * *

If religion were contrary to logical Reason, then it would cease to be a Religion and be merely a tradition. Religion and science are the two wings upon which man's intelligence can soar into the heights, with which the human soul can progress. It is not possible to fly with one wing alone! Should a man try to fly with the wing of Religion alone, he would quickly fall into the quagmire of superstition, whilst, on the other hand with the wing of Science, he would also make no progress, but fall into the despairing slough of materialism. All religions of the present day have fallen into superstitious practices, out of harmony alike with the true principles of the teaching they represent and with the scientific discoveries of the time. Many Religious Leaders have grown to think that the importance of Religion lies mainly in the adherence to a collection of certain dogmas and the practice of rites and ceremonies . . .

Now, these forms and rituals differ in the various churches, and amongst the different sects, and even contradict one another; giving rise to discord, hatred, and disunion. The outcome of all this dissension is the belief of many cultured men, that Religion and Science and contradictory terms; . . .

* * *

. . . the Religion which does not walk hand in hand with Science, is itself in the Darkness of Superstition and Ignorance.

. . . When Religion, shorn of its superstitions, traditions, and unintelligent dogmas, shows its conformity with science, then will there be a great unifying, cleansing force in the world, which will sweep before it all wars, disagreements, discords and struggles—and then will mankind be united in the Power of the Love of God.

***Talks by Abdul Baha*, given in Paris.**

UNITY

If the members of a family are perfectly united it will add to their comfort and joy. If the people of a city are inspired with civic unity, the whole community will advance. If the inhabitants of a great continent are united, marvelous progress will be made, and if the people of the entire world are welded into one great commonwalth, the prayer, 'They kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven,' will be a reality, for each will have the Kingdom of God within himself.

* * *

A divine power is necessary to unite the world, for only the divine power is able to triumph over these religious, racial, and patriotic prejudices. In the time of Christ, how many divisions there were, but his influence had been able to unite many people. Alas! they have lost sight of his most important principles, and are in a way to forget them entirely.

AUTOMATIC WRITING

Question: What is the power used in automatic writing?

Answer: This power is neither heavenly nor spiritual; neither is it an influence from disembodied spirits. It is of the human spirit—magnetism within the self of the one doing the writing.

Daily Lessons Received at Acca.

FAITH, PRAYER AND HEALING

There are three kinds of Faith: first . . . a child is born of Mohammedan parents, he is a Mohammedan. This faith is weak traditional faith: secondly that which comes from knowledge, and is the faith of understanding. This is good, but there is a better, the faith of practice—this is real faith.

* * *

There is now power which heals — that is God. The state or condition through which the healing takes place is the confidence of the heart. By some this state is reached through pills, powders, and physicians. By others through hygiene, fasting, and prayer. By others through direct perception.

* * *

All that we see around us is the work of mind. It is mind in the herb and in the mineral that acts on the human body, and changes its condition.

Disease is of two kinds: material and spiritual. Take for instance, a cut hand; if you pray for the cut to be healed and do not stop its bleeding, you will not do much good; a material remedy is needed.

Sometimes if the nervous system is paralized through fear, a spiritual remedy is necessary. Madness, incurable otherwise, can be cured through prayer. It often happens that sorrow makes one ill, this can be cured by spiritual means.

There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer.

Man must live in a state of prayer. The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication. Prayer is conversation with God. The greatest attainment, or the sweetest state is none other than conversation with God. It creates spirituality, creates mindfulness and celestial feelings, begets new attractions of the Kingdom, and engenders the susceptibilities of the higher intelligence, The highest attribute given Moses is the following verse: "God carried along a conversation with Moses."

What is prayer? It is conversation with God. While man prays he sees himself in the presence of God. If he concentrates his attention he will surely at the time of prayer realize that he is conversing with God. Often at night I do not sleep, and the thoughts of this world weigh heavily on my mind. I toss uneasily on my bed. Then in the darkness of the night I get up and pray—converse with God. It is most sweet and uplifting.

Prayer and supplication are so effective that they inspire one's heart for the whole day with high ideals and supreme sanctity and calmness. One's heart must be sensitive to the music of prayer. He must feel the effect of prayer. He must not be like an organ from which softest notes stream forth without having consciousness of sensation in itself.

TO A PHYSICIAN

The powers of the sympathetic nerve are neither entirely physical nor spiritual, but are between the two (systems). The nerve is connected with both. Its phenomena shall be perfect when its spiritual and physical relations are normal.

When the material world and the divine world are well co-related, when the hearts become heavenly and the aspirations grow pure and divine, perfect connection shall take place. Then shall this power produce a perfect manifetsation. Physical and spiritual diseases will then receive absolute healing.

—*Tablets of Abdul-Baha*, Vol. II, page 309

PRAYER AND LIFE AFTER DEATH

A friend asked: "How should one look forward to death?"

Abdul Baha answered: "How does one look forward to the goal of any journey? With hope and with expectation. It is even so with the end of this earthly journey. In the next world, man will find himself freed from many of the disabilities under which he now suffers. Those who have passed on through death, have a sphere of their own. It is not removed from ours; their work, the work of the Kingdom, is ours; but it is sanctified from what we call 'time and space'. Time with us is measured by the sun. When there is no more sunrise, and no more sunset, that kind of time does not exist for man. Those who have ascended have different attributes from those who are still on earth, yet there is not real separation.

In prayer there is a mingling of station, a mingling of condition. Pray for them as they pray for you! When you do not know it, and are in a receptive attitude, they are able to make suggestions to you, if you are in difficulty. This sometimes happens in sleep. But there is no phenomenal intercourse! That which seems like phenomenal intercourse has another explanation.

. . . The spirit of those who have passed on are freed from sense-life, and do not use physical means. It is not possible to put these great matters into human words; the language of man is the language of children, and man's explanation often leads astray."

Someone present asked how it was that in prayer and meditation the heart often turns with instinctive appeal to some friend who has passed into the next life.

Abdul Baha answered: "It is a law of God's creation that the weak should lean upon the strong. Those to whom you turn may be the mediators of God's Power to you, even as when on earth. But it is the One Holy Spirit that strengthens all men." Hereupon another friend referred to the communing of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration with Moses and Elijah; and Abdul Baha said: "The faithful are ever sustained by the Supreme Concourse. In the Supreme Concourse are Jesus, and Moses, and Elijah, and Baha'Ullah, and other Supreme Souls: there, also, are the martyrs."

—Abdul Baha in London.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

As to the question whether the souls will recognize each other in the spiritual world: This (fact) is certain; for the Kingdom is the world of vision (i.e., things are visible in it), where all the concealed realities will become disclosed. How much more the well-known souls will become manifest. The mysteries of which man is heedless in this earthly world, those will he discover in the heavenly world, and there will he be informed of the secret truth; how much more will he recognize or discover persons with whom he hath been associated. Undoubtedly, the holy souls who find a pure eye and are favored with insight will, in the kingdom of lights, be acquainted with all mysteries, and will seek the bounty of witnessing the reality of every great soul. Even they will manifestly behold the Beauty of God in that world. Likewise will they find all the friends of God, both those of the former and recent times, present in the heavenly assemblage.

As to the difference and distinction between Lazarus and that "rich man": The first was spiritual, while the second was material. One was in the highest degree of knowledge and the other in the lowest depths of ignorance. The difference and distinction will naturally become realized between all men after their departure from this mortal world. But this (distinction) is not in respect to place, but it is in respect to the soul and conscience. For the Kingdom of God is sanctified (or free) from time and place; it is another world and another universe. But the holy souls are promised the gift of intercession. And know thou for a certainty, that in the divine worlds, the spiritual beloved ones

(believers) will recognize each other, and will seek union (with each other), but a spiritual union. Likewise, a love that one may have entertained for any one will not be forgotten in the world of the Kingdom. Likewise, thou wilt not forget (there) the life that thou hast had in the material world.

—*Tablets*, Vol. 1, pages 205, 206.

* * *

As to the soul of man after death, it remains in the degree of purity to which it has evolved during life in the physical body, and after it is freed from the body it remains plunged in the Ocean of God's Mercy.

From the momenet the soul leaves the body and arrives in the Heavenly World, its evolution is Spiritual, and that evolution is' THE APPROACHING UNTO GOD.

In the physical creation, Evolution is from one degree of perfection to another. The mineral passes with its mineral perfections to the vegetable; the vegetable, with its perfections, passes to the animal world, and so on to that of Humanity. This world is full of seeming contradictions; in each of these kingdoms (mineral, vegetable and animal) life exists in its degree; although, when compared to the life in a man, the earth appears to be dead, yet she, too, lives and has a life of her own. In this world things live and die, and live again in other forms of life, but in the world of the spirit it is quite otherwise.

The soul does not evolve from degree to degree as a law—it only evolves nearer to God, by the mercy and bounty of God.

* * *

Question: What will be the food of the future?

Answer: Fruit and grains. The time will come when meat will no longer be eaten. Medical science is only in its infancy, yet it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of this natural food.

* * *

There is no appointed length of life for man.

Lengthen your life by living according to God's spiritual laws. Then you will live forever. This is the true longevity, the real life. The real life is eternal happiness and existence in the Knowledge of God.

* * *

Everything in life ministers to our development. Our lesson is to study and learn. Money and difficulties are alike adventages to us. Tests are either stumbling-blocks or stepping-stones, just as we make them.

* * *

Do not grieve on account of the death of thy son, neither sigh nor lament. That nightingale soared upward to the divine rose-garden; that drop returned to the most great ocean of Truth; that foreigner hastened to his native abode; and that ill one found salvation and life eternal.

Why shouldst thou be sad and heartbroken? This separation is temporal; this remoteness and sorrow is counted only by days. Thou shalt find him in the Kingdom of God and thou wilt attain to the everlasting union. Physical companionship is ephemeral, but heavenly association is eternal. Whenever thou rememberest the eternal and never ending union, thou will be comforted and blissful.

Be not grieved at the death of that infant child, for it is placed in trust for thee before thy Lord in His great Kingdom.

—*Tablets of Abdul Baha*, Vol. I, pages 99-195

REPLY TO THE NATURALISTS

The Naturalists say, for example, that the universal 'Nature' is like the ocean, and the existent beings are like the waves of that ocean. Now, can we imagine some perfections in the waves without believing that perfection also exists in the ocean itself?

Man is in the position of a little worm in a seed; the seed is in an apple; the apple is on a tree; the tree is in a garden, and the garden is under the care of a gardener.

Now, suppose that little worm should say: I have understanding and feeling, but the gardener has not. How can this little worm, which is so far from the gardener, possibly have an idea or conception of him? How much could it know of the perfections or qualities of the gardener, so that it might be able to judge whether or not he has such and such perfections, such as consciousness, will, etc.?

The beings in this existent world are created in different conditions. There is the mineral condition, or degree, the vegetable condition, or degree, the animal condition, or degree, and the human degree.

Every higher degree comprehends or includes the lower, but the lower degree does not comprehend the higher. For example, man comprehends the kingdoms below him, but the mineral does not comprehend the three higher kingdoms.

Whatever progress the mineral kingdom may make, it can never reach a condition of knowing the power of growth, and in the same way whatever progress the vegetable kingdom may make, it can never imagine the condition of the animal kingdom, and the animal cannot imagine the human reality.

Though all of them are creations, the difference in degree prevents the lower from comprehending the higher.

As this is so, how can man, the phenomenal being, understand God? How can the creation understand the Creator? How can the art imagine the artist?

Man cannot understand the Reality of Divinity, or know whether He has consciousness or not.

The consciousness of God is not the consciousness which we know of. As unconsciousness is an imperfection, we say that Reality has a consciousness. We say so because we want to deny the imperfections ascribed to God. But the consciousness of God if different from the conciousness of man. Man's consciousness is a qualtiy of phenomenal beings, but the consciousness of God is the quality of an Eternal Reality. Therefore we cannot compare one with the other.

The Consciousness of God is sanctified and purified from the consciousness of man.

As it is with the spirit of the vegetable kingdom, which cannot understand the spirit of the animal kingdom, or comprehend the sense-perception of the animal kingdom (as an instance, it is impossible for an orange to comprehend the power of sight or to understand the power of hearing or the power

of taste) so it is with man, the created being, in his relation to God, the uncreated Reality. It is impossible for him to understand the power of God.

That Reality which is the Essence of God can not be conceived of by any understanding, therefore God has created a Manifestor, and in Him is reflected that Sanctified Reality.

The Manifestations are points, or sources of assistance for all people, and they are the Educators of men. They are like mirrors, and the Reality, the Essence, is like the sun. For instance, the Sun has been reflected by the Mirror of Christ and appears in it with Its Rays and Heat.

Though the Mirror is a phenomenal reality it is the place of the Sun, or the recipient of the Sun, so, therefore, Christ said, 'The Father is in Me,' meaning, the Sun has reflected upon this mirror. If The Mirror will say the Sun is in Me,—this is right, is truth. But He does not mean that the Sun has come down from Its sanctified height and is dwelling in Him.

In short, we say, that man is incapable of understanding the Essence of God and His qualities. Why? Because that Essence is the Highest Sanctity and man is phenomenal.

—*Daily Lessons Received at Acca,*
Pages 32-3-4-5.

How can man be content to lead only an animal existence when God has made him so high a creature? All creation is made subject to the laws of Nature, but man has been able to conquer these laws. The sun, in spite of its power and glory, is

bound by the laws of Nature, and cannot change its course by so much as a hair's breath. The great and mighty ocean is powerless to change the ebb and flow of its tides—nothing can stand against Nature's laws but man!

But to man God has given such wonderful power, that he can guide, control, and overcome Nature.

The natural law for man is to walk on the earth, but he makes ships and flies in the air! He is created to live on dry land, but he rides on the sea and even travels under it!

He has learned to control the power of electricity, and he takes it at his will and imprisons it in a lamp! The human voice is made to speak across short distances, but man's power is such that he has made instruments and can speak from East to West! All these examples show you how man can govern Nature, and how, as it were, he wrests a sword from the hand of Nature and uses it against herself. Seeing that man has been created master of Nature, how foolish it is of him to become her slave! What ignorance and stupidity it is to worship and adore Nature, when God in His goodness has made us masters thereof. God's power is visible to all, yet men shut their eyes and see it not.

REINCARNATION IS IMPOSSIBLE

. . . reincarnation, which is the repeated appearance of the same spirit with its former essence and condition in this same world of appearance, is impossible and unrealizable. As the repetition of the same appearance is impossible and interdicted for each of the material beings, so for spiritual beings

also, a return to the same condition, whether in the arc of descent or in the arc of ascent, is interdicted and impossible, for the material corresponds to the spiritual.

* * *

Moreover, this material world has not such value or such excellence that man, after having escaped from this cage, will desire a second time to fall into this snare. No, through the Eternal Bounty the worth and true ability of man becomes apparent and visible by traversing the degrees of existence, and not by returning. When the shell is once opened, it will be apparent and evident whether it contains a pearl or worthless matter. When once the plant has grown it will bring forth either thorns or flowers; there is no need for it to grow up again. Besides advancing and moving in the worlds in a direct line according to the natural law, is the cause of existence; and a movement contrary to the system and law of nature is the cause of non-existence. The return of the soul after death is contrary to the natural movement, and opposed to the divine system.

Therefore, by returning, it is absolutely impossible to obtain existence; it is as if man, after being freed from the womb, should return to it a second time. Consider what a puerile imagination this is which is implied by the belief in reincarnation and transmigration . . . the spirit is an incorporeal being, and does not enter and come forth, but is only connected with the body, as the sun is with the mirror.

* * *

. . . In the Divine Scriptures and Holy Books 'return' is spoken of, but the ignorant have not un-

derstood the meaning, and those who believed in reincarnation have made conjectures on the subject. For what the divine Prophets meant by 'return' is not the return of the essence, but that of the qualities; it is not the return of the Manifestation, but that of the perfections . . .

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 320-323

PANTHEISM

Know that the subject of Pantheism is ancient . . .

Briefly, the believers in pantheism think that that Real Existence can be compared to the sea, and that beings are like the waves of the sea. These waves, which signify the beings, are innumerable forms of that Real Existence; therefore the Holy Reality is the Sea of pre-existence and the innumerable forms of the creatures are the waves which appear.

. . . the Sufis say: 'The reality of the things is the manifestation of the Real Unity'. But the Prophets say 'it emanates from the Real Unity'. and great is the difference between manifestation and emanation. The appearance in manifestation means that a single thing appears in infinite forms. For example, *the seed, which is a single thing possessing the* vegetative perfections, which it manifests in infinite forms, resolving itself into branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits: this is called appearance in manifestation; whereas in the appearance through emanation this Real Unity remains and continues in the exaltation of Its sanctity, but the existence of creatures emanates from It, and is not manifested by It. It can be compared to the sun from which *emanates the light which pours forth on all the*

the creatures; but the sun remains in the exaltation of its sancity: it does not descend, and it does not resolve itself into luminous forms: . . .

. . . Observe that the reality of man, who is the most noble of creatures, does not descend to the reality of the animal, that the essence of the animal, which is endowed with the powers of sensation, does not abase itself to the degree of the vegetable and that the reality of the vegetable, which is the power of growth, does not descend to the reality of the mineral.

Briefly, the superior reality does not descend nor abase itself to the inferior states; then how could it be that the Universal Reality of God, which is freed from all descriptions and qualifications, notwithstanding Its absolute sanctity and purity, should resolve Itself into the forms of the realities of the creatures, which are the source of imperfections? This is a pure imagination which one cannot conceive

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 327-33-34.

EVOLUTION OF MAN

. . . in the vertebral column of man there is an indication which amounts to a proof that, like other animals, he once had a tail. At one time that member was useful, but when man developed it was no longer of use, and therefore gradually disappeared . .

* * *

. . . man, from the beginning of the embryonic period till he reaches the degree of maturity, goes *through different forms and appearances. His aspect*, his form, his appearance, and color change;

he passes from one form to another, and from one appearance to another. Nevertheless, from the beginning of the embryonic period he is of the species of man; that is to say, an embryo of a man and not of an animal; but this is not at first apparent, but later it becomes visible and evident. For example, let us suppose that man once resembled the animal, and that now he has progressed and changed; supposing this to be true, it is still not a proof of the change of species; no, as before mentioned, it is merely like the change and alteration of the embryo of man until it reaches the degree of reason and perfection. We will state it more clearly: let us suppose that there was a time when man walked on his hands and feet or had a tail; this change and alteration is like that of the foetus in the womb of the mother; although it changes in all ways; and grows and develops until it reaches the perfect form, from the beginning it is a special species . . .

. . . as man in the womb of the mother passes from form to form, from shape to shape, changes and develops, and is still tne human species from the beginning of the embryonic period — in the same way man, from the beginning of his existence in the matrix of the world, is also a distinct species, that is, man, and has gradually evolved from one form to another. Therefore this change of appearance, this evolution of members, this development and growth, even though we admit the reality of growth and progress,* does not prevent the species from being original. Man from the beginning was in this perfect form and composition, and possessed capaci-

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* i.e., if we admit, for example, that man had formerly been a quadruped, or had a tail.

ty and aptitude for acquiring material and spiritual perfections, and was the manifestation of these words, 'We will make man in Our image and likeness.' He has only become more pleasing, more beautiful, and more graceful. Civilization has brought him out of his wild state, just as the wild fruits which are cultivated by a gardener become finer, sweeter, and acquire more freshness and delicacy.

The Gardeners of the world of humanity are the Prophets of God.

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 223-24-5-6.

* * *

Thou hast questioned concerning ordeals and difficulties and catastrophies: "Are these from God or the result of man's (own) evil deeds?"

Know thou that ordeals are of two kinds: One kind is for trial (to test the soul), and the other is punishment for actions. ("As a man soweth so shall he also reap.") That which is for testing is educational and developmental and that which is the punishment of deeds is severe retribution.

The father and the teacher sometimes humor the children and then again discipline them. This discipline is for educational purposes and is indeed to give them true happiness; it is absolute kindess and true providence. Although in appearance it is wrath yet in reality it is kindness. Although outwardly it is an ordeal yet inwardly it is purifying water.

Verily, in both cases we must supplicate and implore and commune to the didvine Threshold in order to be patient in ordeals.

—*Divine Art of Living*, page 122.

Question: Who was Jesus?

Answer: Jesus was a Manifestation of God. Everything of Him pertained to God. To know Him was to know God. To love Him was to love God. To obey Him was to obey God. He was the source of all Divine qualities. In this mirror the Light of the Sun of Reality was reflected to the world. Through this Mirror the Energy of God was transmitted to the world. The whole disk of the Sun of Reality was reflected in Him to the world.

(Extracts from notes taken at Haifa, Palesstine, by Mr. Mountford Mills, during 1920.)

. . . As the divine bounties are endless, so human perfections are endless . . . But for every being there is a point which is cannot overpass; . . .

* * *

. . . the reality of the spirit of Peter, however far it may progress, will not reach to the condition of the Reality of Christ; it progressed only in its own environment.

Look at this mineral: however far it may evolve, it only evolves in its own condition; you cannot bring the crystal to a state where it can attain to sight; this is impossible. So the moon which is in the heavens, however far it might evolve, could never become a luminous sun; but in its own condition it has apogee and perigee. However far the disciples might progress, they could never become Christ. It is true that coal could become a diamond, but both are in the mineral condition and their component elements are the same.

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 267, 270-1

BAHAI CAUSE IS A SPIRITUAL DEMOCRACY

. . . There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not 'appointed' anyone to perform any special service, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is pure spiritual democracy and not theocracy . . .

The Bahai Movement is not an organization. You can never organize the Bahai Cause. The Bahai Movement is the Spirit of this Age. It is the Essence of all the highest ideals of this century. The Bahai Cause is an inclusive movement; the teachings of all the religions and societies are found here; the Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Zoroastrians, Theosophists, Freemasons, Spiritualists, etc., find their highest aims in this Cause. Even the Socialists and Philosophers find their theories fully developed in this Movement.

***The Solution of the Jewish Question.*—Talk by Abdul Baha, given in part, at Temple Emmanu-El, San Francisco, October 12, 1912.**

The greatest bestowal of God in the world of humanity is religion; . . .

How shall we determine whether religion has been the cause of human advancement or retrogrssion?

We will first consider the founders of religion—the prophets . . .

Among the great prophets was His Holiness Abraham who being an iconoclast and a herald of the oneness of God, was banished from his native land. He founded a family upon which the blessing of God descended! . . . Even today the descendents of his household and lineage are found throughout the world.

There is another and more significant aspect to this religious impulse and impetus. The children of Israel were in bondage and captivity in the land of Egypt four hundred years. They were in an extreme state of degradation and slavery under the tyranny and oppression of the Egyptians. While they were in the condition of abject poverty, in the lowest degree of abasement, ignorance and servility His Holiness Moses suddenly appeared among them. Although he was but a shepherd, such majesty, grandeur and efficiency became manifest in him through the power of religion, that his influence continues to this day . . . This unique personage, single and alone rescued the children of Israel from bondage through the power of religious training and discipline. He led them to the Holy Land and founded there a great civilization which has become permanent and renowned and under which these people attained the highest degree of honor and glory . . .

* * *

. . . The dogmas and blind imitations which gradually obscured the reality of the religion of God proved to be Israel's destructive influences causing the expulsion of these chosen people from the Holy Land of their Covenant and promise.

* * *

. . . The exigencies of the time of Moses justified cutting off a man's hand for theft but such a penalty is not allowable now. Time changes conditions, and laws change to suit conditions. We must remember that these changing laws are not the essentials; they are the accidentals of religion. The essential ordinances established by a manifestation of God are

spiritual; they concern moralities, the ethical development of man and faith in God . . . Therefore the fundamental basis of the revealed religion of God is immutable, unchanging throughout the centuries, not subject to the varying conditions of the human world.

Christ ratified and proclaimed the foundation of the law of Moses. Mohammed and all the prophets have revoiced that same foundation of reality. Therefore the purposes and accomplishments of the divine messengers have been one and the same . . .

Today the Christians are believers in Moses, accept him as a prophet of God and praise him most highly. The Mohamedans are likewise believers in Moses, accept the validity of his prophethood, at the same time believing in Christ. Could it be said that the acceptance of Moses by the Christians and Mohammedans has been harmful and detrimental to those people? On the contrary it has been beneficial to them, proving that they have been fair-minded and just. What harm could result to the Jewish people then if they in return should accept His Holiness Christ and acknowledge the validity of the prophethood of His Holiness Mohammed? By this acceptance and praise-worthy attitude the enmity and hatred which have afflicted mankind so many centuries would be dispelled, fanaticism and bloodshed pass away and the world be blessed by unity and agreement. Christians and Mohammedans believe and admit that Moses was the interlocutor of God. Why do you not say that Christ was the Word of God? Why do you not speak these few words that will do away with all this difficulty? Then there will be no more hatred and fanaticism, no more

warfare and bloodshed in the Land of Promise. *Then there will be peace among you forever.*

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace.*
Vol. II. Pages 355-6-7-8-360-2-3

* * *

The following is also part of a talk on this subject delivered at the Eighth Street Temple, Jewish Synagogue, Washington, D.C., November 8, 1912:

. . . And now is the time for the Jews to declare that Christ was the Word of God and then this enmity between two great religions will pass away. For two thousand years this enmity and religious prejudice have continued. Blood has been shed, ordeals have been suffered. These few words will remedy the difficulty and unite two great religions. What harm could follow this,—that just as the Christians glorify and praise the name of Moses, likewise the Jews should commemorate the name of Christ, declare him to be the Word of God and consider him as one of the chosen messengers of God?

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace,*
Vol. II. Page 404

* * *

Also the following is part of an address given in Washington, D.C., November 9, 1912:

When you glorify and honor the memory of Christ, rest assured that the Christians will take your hands in real fellowship. All difficulty, hesitancy and retraint will vanish. Consider the troubles and persecutions heaped upon you in Russia for your fanaticism of unbelief. And you must not think that this is ended.

This humiliation will continue forever. The time

may come when in Europe itself they will rise against the Jews. But your declaration that Christ was the Word of God will end all such trouble. My advice is that in order to become honorable, protected and secure among the nations of the world, in order that the Christians may love and safeguard the Israelitish people, you should be willing to announce your belief in Christ the Word of God . . .

—*The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,
Vol. II. Page 409

MIRACLES

The Holy Manifestations are the sources of miracles and the originators of wonderful signs. For them any difficult and impracticable thing is possible and easy. For through a supernatural power wonders appear from them, and by this power, which is beyond nature, they influence the world of nature. From all the Manifestations marvelous things have appeared.

But in the Holy Books an especial terminology is employed; and for the Manifestations these miracles and wonderful signs have no importance; they do not even wish to mention them . . .

* * *

But in the day of the Manifestation the people with insight see that all the conditions of the Manifestation are miracles, for they are superior to all ohers, and this alone is an absolute miracle. Recollect that Christ, solitary and alone, without a helper or protector, without armies and legions, and under the greatest oppression, uplifted the standard of God before all the people of the world, and withstood them, and finally conquered all, although out-

wardly he was crucified. Now this is a veritable miracle which can never be denied. There is no need of any other proof of the truth of Christ.

The outward miracles have no importance for the people of Reality. If a blind man receive sight, for example, he will finally again become sightless, for he will die, and be deprived of all his senses and powers. Therefore causing the blind man to see is comparatively of little importance, for the faculty of sight will at last disappear. If the body of a dead person be resuscitated of what use is it since the body will die again? But it is important to give perception and eternal life, that is, the spiritual and divine life For his physical life is not immortal, and its existence is equivalent to non-existence. So it is that Christ said to one of his disciples: 'Let the dead bury their dead'; for 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.'

Observe: those who in appearance were physically alive, Christ considered dead; for life is the eternal life, and existence is the real existence. Wherever in the Holy Books they speak of raising the dead, the meaning is that the dead were blessed by eternal life; . . .

The meaning is not that the Manifestations are unable to perform miracles, for they have all power. But for them inner sight, spiritual healing, and eternal life are the valuable and important things . .

As this inner sight, hearing, life, and healing are eternal, they are of importance . . .

—*Some Answered Questions*, pages 115-16-17-18.

THE END.

INDEX

Abdul Baha, a prisoner forty years 7
Knighting of 74
Passed from this world 1921 148
What he says on various subjects:
Adam and Eve, meaning of 178, 179
Bahai Cause a spiritual democracy 249
Bahai Spirit undogmatic super-racial 206
Bolshevism, nations should extinguish fire of 18, 19
Capital and labor, solution of 226
Cause of God, faith in gives us power 151
Celestial souls in every religion 103
Centralization, none in future governments 18
Confucianism and Buddhism praised 110
Creation is the expression of motion 12
Distinction of the spirit 19, 207
Divine civilization and material civilization 222
Dreams truthful and untruthful 31
Druses 71
Earth bound souls 31
Education, material, human and spiritual 222
Economic contentment impossible without faith 223
Events foretold in advance 141
Evolution of man 245, 246
Faith, prayer and healing 232
Followers of Inner Light 130, 1, 2, 3
Food of the future 237-8
Freedom not a matter of place 169
Good actions without knowledge of God cannot bring everlasting success 100
Grief and sorrow, value of 162, 3
Guidance in dreams 31
Intercessory prayer 32, 236
Intuition of Holy Spirit 207
Jewish question, solution of 249, 250, 251, 252, 253
Jesus, his station 248
Kinship of spirit 140
Life after death, no separation 234-236, 237
Longevity, true 238
Manifestations of God million years ago 36
Mediators necessary, Moses, Jesus Mohammed, Buddha 181
Men are children 68
Miracles 253, 254
Naturalists, reply to 239, 240, 241
Nature, man must transcend 241
Open sight 125
Ordeals, two kinds 247
Organization, Bahai Cause cannot be organized 249
Pantheism 244

INDEX

Paradise of Bible 121, 122
Peace, international 225
Peter can never become Christ 248
Prayer, through it everything revealed 31, 39
Prejudice must be abandoned 103
Prophecy 190, 191
Psychic forces 165
Real meeting, spiritual 127, 128
Reincarnation 242, 243, 244
Renewal of everything 138, 139
Renunciation 168
Resurrection of Christ, meaning of 149, 150
Science and religion 230
Science, spiritual and material 9, 10
Sin of Adam relative 155
Socialism not a panacea 11
Spirit free from sense life 32
Strength increased through prayer 53
Sympathetic nerve 234
Tablets 10, 4, 57, 105, 115, 116
Talk to Oriental pilgrims 127
Tests, meaning of 62
Trained by Baha-o-llah 64
United States government 175
Unity, concentrate our thoughts on 231
Vegetarianism 84, 85
War and rapine 228
Woman, station of 225
Acca, visit Most Great Prison 76, 7
Ahimsa of Buddhists 198
Aladdin's Lamp, symbol 24
Allegories of Bible treated as facts 49, 178, 179
Allenby, General 70
His troops saved Abdul and family from crucification 149
Anti-God propaganda 193
Bab, commemorating anniversary of his mission, martyred at Tabriz
precursor of Baha-o-llah 9, 10
Tomb of, meetings held there 86, 87
Bahai Cause, fourteen basic teachings of 207
A spiritual democracy 197, 249
Baha-o-llah, *what he says on various subjects:*
Fate and predestination 89, 90
Hidden Words 209, 211
Infernal instrument 191
Mystery of sleep and dreams, Seven Valleys 73
One word and seventy meanings 120
Palace of Peace, oneness of mankind 213
Tablet of Ahmad 219