

Persia and the Regeneration of Islam

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The paper read was - been and are being converted. In European Turkey, and more notably in Asiatic Turkey, PERSIA AND THE REGENERATION OF votaries and propagandists of the new move - ISLAM. ments are increasing yearly. I conversed with some of these in Baghdad, and found them By Bernard Temple. zealous and sanguine. In Egypt, it appears, A Society which seeks, among other worthy Bahais are becoming numerous. Morocco, objects, "to increase the trade of the realm Algeria, Tunis and Tripoli, I am told, are not by extending the sphere of British commerce," being left unvisited. The northern provinces of may be presumed to have practical concern India provide a large potential harvest-field, with the possibilities of economic progress in where there are already many sowers, and I backward countries. But it is on a higher level met Bahais in Bombay, Karachi, Quetta, ground - though that is not a low ground - Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Delhi and that I venture to submit to this learned Society Lucknow - all proselytes from Islam. Outside certain of the results of my long travels in the Moslem world Bahai missionaries, quietly East. This Society is an outcome, and its purposeful and steadfast, are carrying the of the "Kitab-ul-Aqdas" multifarious work is an expression, of an order teachings (the Most of civilisation hitherto attained only by ad - Holy Book) into many unsuspected regions. vanced Western nations; and it is my present Converts have been won among the Sikhs of purpose to show that some Eastern nations Amritsar and the Brahmans of Benares, in have lately, under circumstances of romantic which cities I have met a few of them in interest, become possessed of a powerful friendly converse; among the Buddhist of impulse to ascend to the same superior plane. Ceylon, Burma and Siam; and among the Not every acorn grows into an oak. This Taoists of China and the Shintoists

of Japan.
is true of other things besides botany. It is Japan, indeed, is said to be
proving particu-
true of religious movements. Therefore the early response to the call.
Many Persian
world has generally been heedless of small Jews in Tehran have become Bahais, and I
beginnings. Sometimes the world has had have been privileged to
attend some of their
cause to regret its inattention. Europe, at the secret or semi-secret
assemblies. These Jewish
present time, is not showing itself regardful of Bahai settlements that in
Hamadan, in Persia, one
the rise of the new religious movement, called of the oldest Jewish settlements
in the world,
"Bahaiism," in Persia. Asia is by no means where the reputed tombs of Esther and
unmindful of the phenomenon. Is Europe-wise Mordecai are shown, at least a
third of the
in its indifference? Jewish community has
openly or secretly gone
Let us reflect, for a moment, upon the behavior of the new movement. No Christian
mis-
giving of Islam. When the Prophet took to his journey to the in
Jews any part of the world
preaching in the wilds of Arabia, to semi- can boast a triumph equal
to this. The Par-
barbarous tribes of idolatrous nomads, Con- sees of Bombay, who have preserved
their
Constantinople was the capital of Christendom. religious and racial integrity
for centuries by
Muhammad himself had to flee for his life from dint of an impenetrable
aloofness, are now, for
his own kith and kin at Mecca. Yet in less than the first time in their history,
beginning to show
than a hundred years the Saracenic Empire signs of doubting themselves since Bahai
extended from Lisbon in Portugal to Karachi influences reached them, and
many Parsees
in India; and to-day the Christian cathedral have
actually become Bahais, while others (I
of St. Sophia is a Muhammadan mosque. have been told by one of
their number) are
Europe's unconcern regarding Bahaiism is held back only by social
restraints. A more
Persia, and beyond, has not even the excuse intellectual form of Bahai
proselytism has
that the beginning is small. Already the expanded into Europe, and has been fruitful
in
number of Bahais in the world is stated to Russia, Germany, France, and

England. 1

exceed two million, though the founder of the found a large community of Bahais flourishing

Faith was still preaching when Mr. Gladstone in Baku. The number of Bahais in London

was preparing to hurl his last thunderbolts is appreciable :

smaller circle exist in Man-

at the House of Lords. Not less than one- chester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.

fifth of the population of Persia is estimated to The United States of America promise to

have embraced Bahaim. Nor are adherents become a great Western stronghold of recruited solely from the Shiah sect of Islam. Bahaim, and

many Americans have been at

Sunni Muhammadans in large numbers have the pains of mastering the Persian language

with the sole object of studying the Bahai to overlook the true mission of Persia's new

scriptures and commentaries in the original. prophet. According to this undoubtedly well-

I have had the privilege of many long and informed authority :-

earnest talks with one of these American con- Baha Ullah has known

how to transform Babism

verts- a gentleman of culture and scholarship - into a universal

which

religion, is presented as the

in his charming Persian home in Tehran, who, fulfilment and completion of all the ancient faiths.

though enjoying large private means, is de- The Jews await the

Messiah, the Christians the

voting laborious and even drudging year to return of Christ, the Muslims

the Mahdi, the Bud-

the cause, with that calm, settled enthusiasm of the Fifth Buddha, the Zoroastrians

Shah

which Bahai teachers commonly show. An Bahram,

the Hindu there- incarnation of Krishna,

- Baha

American lady has composed a Bahai hymn and the Atheists a better social organisation.

Ullah represents all these, and thus destroys the

in good literary Persian, which was shown to rivalries and the enmities of the different

me by a Persian Bahai when I was in Isfahan. reconciles

religions;

them in their primitive purity, and frees

Canada also is beginning to give friendly ear to them from the corruption

of dogmas and rites. For
to the new teaching, especially the cities of Bahá'ism has no clergy, no
religious ceremonial, no
Montreal, Quebec, and Toronto. Before going public prayers ; its only dogma
is belief in God and
further, perhaps I ought to state that I am not in His Manifestations
Moses,
^Zoroaster, Jesus, &c.,
a Bahai. (Baha Ullah).
Ritual holds no place in the religion,
which must be expressed in all the actions of life and
Significance of Bahá'ism. accomplished in neighbourly love.
Monogamy is
What then is Bahá'ism? There are still universally recommended. A
universal language, and
people in Europe who confuse Bahá'ism with the creation of tribunals
between nations, are to
Babism. That is not an unnatural mistake. suppress wars.
The Bab was the first and the lesser of two Bahá'is thus made out to
be a sort of
teachers, and his followers called themselves spiritual Volapuk or Esperanto
- a world
Babis, until the second and greater teacher, religion. This is the truth.
Every Bahai
Baha (or Baha Ullah) appeared, who super- would endorse it. The Bahai scriptures
would
sided the Bab, as the Bab himself had fore- confirm it. But I venture to
hold that it is
told. The relation between the two teachers not the whole truth. I would even suggest
is compared by Bahá'is with that between that it
obscures what, for practical purposes, is
John the Baptist and Jesus- the former pre- a greater truth. The
fact is that Bahá'ism, in
pared the way for the latter. To call the its essential character, as
I understand it, is
Bahá'is "Babis" is, therefore, like calling nota religion, but a
religious movement. If
Christians "Baptists." Babis, properly so- it were a religion
its chance of diffusion would
called- that is, followers of the Bab, who have probably be small. Like
Theosophy, it might
not become followers of Baha Ullah- number captive here and there a
few intellectual or
no more perhaps than a few hundred. Prac- romantic souls, become a
fashion in salons of
tically they are an extinct sect. philosophical unrest, and sink
softly into

Bahá'ism, then, is not Babism. What is it? oblivion. Thirteen hundred
 years have elapsed
 I shall not refer inquirers to Bahá'í literature, since the youngest of the
 world's great reli-
 gions which is now copious and - thank to the gion was born, and humanity
 seem to have
 splendid industry of that eminent Orientalist, crystallised into two main
 classes: one, too
 Professor E. G. Browne - accessible. As an warmly attached to
 the old creed to be turned
 Asiatic traveller I have learnt that a wide away from them; the other, too
 coldly in-
 difference may divide the theory of a religion different to be stirred by any
 new creed.
 from its practice. For my own part, I have Bahá'ism appears as the complement
 of reli-
 gion. It is, in very brief, the
 Protestantism
 " but of Islam. It comes to inaugurate the Re-
 condite pages of the Kitáb-ul-Aqdas,"
 have investigated it in the minds of men whose formation in Asia. Its
 spirit is anti-papal,
 profess and preach it tenets, especially in its anti-episcopal,
 anti-clerical. The Bab was
 native home. Learned European writers on the John Huss of Persia; Baha Ullah was
 the subject have not always appeared to show the Martin Luther. Therein, to my mind,
 ~an adequate appreciation of this distinction lies the force, the promise, I
 may say the
 •between dead doctrines and living impulses. historical momentousness,
 of Bahá'ism.
 Thus, even the most careful of the shorter Small Minds run lightly to extravagances
 of
 summaries of Bahá'í teaching, which appears eulogy and of denunciation. Let it
 appear
 in the French encyclopaedia of Larousse, seems that a noble and venerable
 institution has out-
 lived its uses, and there are men who will to the potentialities of
 any human movement-
 overwhelm it with vituperation. Of this sort, it is a limitation of
 present-day fact. You-
 as a rule, is the anti-clerical fury. There may have only to consider that the
 Muhammadan-
 naturally come a time in the development of a convert to
 Bahá'ism number more than two
 great religion when its priests, who are its million, and the
 non-Muhammadan converts

teachers, cease to be a help and even become only a few thousand, to
perceive the strength
a drag. It is confessedly so with teachers in of the statement. The Bahai
dream of a
other domains of knowledge. The graduate world-wide propaganda is
doubtless a proper,
who goes forth from his university to do and may even be a
reasonable object of
intellectual prodigies in the world might, if aspiration and endeavour. My
concern here
compelled to remain for life under collegiate is with what is
actually being accomplished.
tutelage, degenerate into a pedant. But to
say that a religion arriving at spiritual Historical Comparisons between
maturity maybe justified, in certain circum- Eukope and
Asia.
stances, in freeing itself from ecclesiastical If the Reformation
in Christendom be-
bonds is not to sanction vilification of all sacer-
brought into view for comparison - so far as
total institutions. Probably no religion has comparison can go-
with this new Reforma-
been, or could be, reared through the peril of tion in Islam, some remarkable
parallels will
unpopular in fancy, and the difficulties of appear. In earliest days,
several centuries
juvenescence, except by priests. It is only before the Reformation
dawned in Europe,
when priestly power outstays its office, or over- Christianity divided
itself into two great
steps, or corrupts it, that it incurs just blame. Churches, the Greek and the
Roman, which-
History, unfortunately, provides many examples never again commingled,
and to this day dwell
of clerical abuse: but history also glows with apart, the one ruled by its
Patriarchs, the
the renown of priestly works which have con- other by its Popes. Islam
similarly, in its-
tributed to the uplifting of mankind. young years, split up
into two great Churches,
Islam, like other religions, owes its growth the Sunni and the
Shiah, which never after-
and its greatness in large measure to its wards recombined, and
still remain mutually
priests. Unhappily, it also owes to them its antagonistic, the one
under its Caliphs, the
decay and its downfall. This is no irresponsibility under its Imams or their successors.

In
ble pronouncement ; it is the verdict of those both cases priestly
zealotry widened the gulf
who have, perhaps, the best right to be the and kept it open. One of the cherished
aims
judges- representative Muhammadans. I have of Bahaim is to
bring Sunnis and Shiah
moved about the Moslem world for fourteen together again in a
reformed faith of love.
years, and everywhere in my travels- in India, pretensions
Priestly to temporal power, in
in Persia, and in Arabia- earnest Muhamma- Christendom as in
Islam, brought Church and
dans (not Bahais) have urged upon me the State into frequent
conflict, and generally it
same strong conviction. This is far from was the people, distracted
between their civil'
implying that the whole of Islam has become duties and
their religious fears, who suffered
conscious of its degradation and of the cause. most.
Bahaim seek to reconcile the spiritual
Enlightenment is, as yet, limited almost entirely and temporal
authorities in Islam by showing
to the inconsiderable literate classes, and the that teach is a necessary
adjunct of the other
uninstructed millions still preserve much of the the Church performs
the religious functions of
old superstitious veneration for Mujtahids, the State; the State discharges
the civil obligations-
Mullahs, Syeds, Dervishes, Pirs, Imamzadehs, tions of the Church.
and other adorable people. But the new anti- Abuse of priestly
power, in Christendom as
clerical idea is surely spreading, and it seems in Islam, provoked
from time to time sporadic
to be the special mission of Bahaim to propa- outbreaks of what may be
called premature
gate it to the ends of the Moslem universe. Protestantism, and in
both religions these
Some of the most learned Persian Bahaists revolts were extirpated
by fire and slaughter.
whom I have submitted this view of Bahaim The massacre by Pope
Innocent III. of the
at Tehran conferences have acknowledged its heretical Albigenses in
Languedoc, whose
justness, and have objected only to the impli- offending was
that they anticipated Luther by
cation that the energies of the new teaching three centuries, could be

matched by more
are limited to the regeneration of Islam. This is a tale
from the history of
limitation is not of my making. I am the last early Islam.
to presume to set a bound of my own imagining. When we get down to later times, the-
parallelism grows closer. From the twelfth diffusion of
satirical epigrams and allegories,
century a change appeared in the universal directed against the heads of
the Church and
acceptance by the Christian nations of the against the monks. Last summer,
when I was
orthodox faith of Rome. In that age there in Isfahan, the bazaar was excited by
the
broke upon the Church a flood of heresy which secret circulation of a
lampoon representing
no persecution was able thoroughly to stem till Agha Nejeffi (one of
the most powerful Mujta-
it finally overspread half the surface of Europe. Hids in the Shiah clergy and
the supreme
Men openly began to think for themselves in religious head in
Central Persia) standing
religious to
matters, reject particular teachings crestfallen before the Throne of
Judgement,
of the Papacy, and to protest against the while Allah poured scorn and
wrath upon him»
despotism of the clergy. The Waldenses in Anti-clerical
pamphleteering of this sort is
Lombardy, Germany, Flanders, Spain, France, now common in many
Persian cities, though
and England, set up the Bible as their sole rule it is still timid and furtive. Christian
protests
of faith, and renounced entirely the arbitrary in 1508 were particularly
loud against the use
usages and traditions of ecclesiasticism. Like of the Latin tongue in the
services of the
the Albigenses, they suffered, but the fire of Church. The
religious reformers in Persia
rebellion was now too big to be extinguished, are now beginning to make
a corresponding
though for a time it could no more than grievance of the use
of Arabic in the mosques»
smoulder. John Huss in Bohemia, following But it was Martin Luther who gave co-
the teachings of Wycliffe in England, set him-herence, energy and permanence to
the
self to restore the purity and simplicity of scrip- scattered forces of

Christian Protestantism.
tural Christianity, and was excommunicated And- so far as the movement
yet extends-it
by the Pope. When, under a safe conduct, he is Baha Ullah who has
wrought the same
went to the Council of Constance to defend his wonder for Muhammadan
Protestantism.
opinions before the clergy of all the nations, he
Martin Luther began the campaign by assert-
was seized, ordered to recant, and, refusing, ing the rights of human reason. The
same
burnt to death. Similarly, in the twelfth was the first plank in Baha Ullah's
spiritual
of the Muhammadan era a change platform. Indeed Bahais deliberately
uses
century
appeared in the universal acceptance by the the weapon against itself
by insisting its
that
Moslem nations of the Orthodoxy of Mecca own teaching shall be
subjected by every
and of Kerbela. Similarly, there broke upon individual to
his private judgment. Luther's
the Mussulman Church a flood of heresy first collision with the Pope arose out of the
which no persecution was able thoroughly sale of " indulgences." The theory
of indul-
to stem. Similarly, the Bab, defying the gences in the Roman Catholic system,
it will
fanaticism of the Shiah hierarchy, shook by be remembered, was
that many saints and
his fiery eloquence the support of what may pious men had done more good works and
be called the Papacy of Islam, in seeking to born more suffering
than was required for the
restore the of Muham- remission of their sins :
the surplus consti-
simplicity Quranic
the
madanism ; and in like manner was excom- tuted a treasure for the Church, which
was authorised to distribute in exchange
municated. Thereafter, beguiled by perfidious Pope
pledges of safety, he delivered himself into the for pious gifts. In
the minds of the ignorant
hands of his enemies, believing that the would an indulgence became equal to a
licence for
be permitted to justify opinions in open sin. One of the most
pernicious religious
his

from the pretensions of
controversy, as no threat could move him abuses in Persia arises sell to
and,
the
to retract, he was some of the priests to people
during his imprisonment
executed. places in Heaven;
indeed there are priests
the incredible length of issuing
John Huss and the Bab, each in his turn, who go
were but the voices crying in the wilderness. tickets or passes
for Paradise in the manner
It was not until the sixteenth century that the office of a
theatre. I know of
wave of popular feeling against absolutism in one case, in the city of
Qum, where such a
the Roman Church broke all bounds. Erasmus ticket was declared
transferable. Baha Ullah
started a school of Free-thought. Free-thought attacked this scandal
and
fiercely, thereby
has to-day become widely among the threw down the gauntlet.
Luther next pro-
prevalent
intellectual classes in Persia, and was, indeed, ceeded to assail the authority
of the Pope and
one of the first phenomena to kindle the pro-. the doctrines of the Roman
Catholic Church in a
fire of Baha Ullah. The Christian succession of printed pamphlets
and sermons,
phetic
to read.
populaces in Europe were influenced by the which all
Europe showed itself eager
Baha Ullah wrote the " Kitab-ul-Aqdas," the forms of government,
with parliamentary con-
" Kitab-ul-Iqan," and the " Kitab-ul-Ahd," to cover law, justice, and finance. Can
any-
besides numerous letters or "tablets," all of one suppose it to be a
mere coincidence that
which are now being steadily disseminated in Persia and Turkey the
beginnings of reli-
through Asia. When Pope Leo X. resorted to religious reformation, as
represented by Bahaism,
to excommunication, Luther retorted by burn- have been followed
by the first steps in political

ing the Papal decree in public. Baha Ullah, reformation, and that the wafting of Bahai in similar circumstances, not less scornfully ideas to Egypt, India, Arabia, Morocco, and derided his excommunicators. Gradually in Algeria is being accompanied by new forms of European nobles and princes, as well as some Oriental unrest? Or can anyone believe that priests, began to support the Lutheran cause, the influence of this regenerative spirit will until its suppression by violence ceased to be carry no further than that? Let us cast but even thinkable. The followers of Baha Ullah one more glance at the Reformation in Europe already include members of the ruling family and reflect upon larger consequences. The its in Persia- Viziers, Parliamentary Deputies, religious and political changes that it inaugurate- Governors of Provinces, and several priests or rated were not its end: they were but the Mullahs; and although persecution in Persia means to a more splendid reformation. "Rich has not ceased, it is now obliged for the most indeed," says one of the soberest of our his- part to resort to quieter and subtler methods. torians," has been the harvest of that great One of my most influential Bahai friends was, period. The spirit of inquiry, once set free, before his conversion, an eminent Mujtahid or has changed and blessed the whole world. To Muhammadan prelate. Pope Adrian VI., in this we owe in modern literature some of the alarm, called to his aid the rulers of Austria, noblest creations of the human intellect. To France and Germany, and a last fierce cam- this are due the discoveries of science, which paign against the heresy was thus set going. The have made life longer, easier, brighter. Hence son and apostle of Baha Ullah, Abbas Effendi, have come in every land and the triumphs of truth has told how the Ulema (religious doctors) and genius over prejudice and power. This it constrained the Persian Government to take is which has created the greatest of modern active measures against the Reformer and to republics, and has filled the colonial world

order the pillage and massacre of his followers. with flourishing,
self-governing peoples; has
Luther translated the Bible into German, and revealed the secrets of
Central Africa and
thereby dealt ecclesiastical authority one of its blows; the isles of the great Pacific;
has diminished
heaviest blows. Baha Ullah has directed that no distance be by steam, and
destroyed it by
the Bible, the Quran, and his own scriptures; electricity; has struck off the
fetters of the
are to be translated into every language in the slave, and, last and best, has
made the nations
world. Luther, himself a monk, assailed the knowledge of each other, and in that knowledge
has
principle of monasticism by marrying a nun. prepared, and is preparing,
for the reign of
Baha Ullah adjures the priests of all religions to universal peace." A
Reformation on European
to renounce celibacy and to preach by their soil and a Reformation
on Asiatic soil will not
example, mingling in the life of the people.
necessarily produce identical harvests. But
This personal parallelism might be carried before anyone attempts to make light of the
further, but its significance must now be sufficient - potentialities of an
awakened Islam, let him
sufficiently apparent. History to-day is opening a recall the splendid proofs
of power which early
new page in Asia. Muhammadanism
gave to the world ere priestly
But the Reformation in Europe, as all know, abused, corrupted and debased it. "
The Arab
was not a mere revolt against Rome. The Conquerors," were read," at
first unlettered foes
essence of the movement is the vindication of art and science, soon began to
make a pro-
the principle, independent of time, place, or gross in culture as rapid as had
been that
circumstance, that man is, in his very nature,
of their arms. They acquired, and were zealous
destined to be free. From the religious free- in promoting elsewhere,
the civilisation of the
dom won by the anti-clerical upheaval of the Greek and Oriental world which they
had
sixteenth century came, in a large measure, subdued in Egypt, Asia Minor, and
Persia.
the political rights now enjoyed by the greatest Great cities were built, commerce and
manu-

and most enlightened peoples in the world. Factures flourished, and schools arose in all. Indeed, the outstanding civic fact of the last part of the Saracenic Empire. The result of three centuries is the firm establishment almost the efforts made as that the Saracens played throughout the Western world of constitutional a great and honourable part in the intellectual

history of the Middle Ages. Their quickness endured the greatest tortures for their Faith. Here we and their poetic sensibility were conspicuous find a record of heroic devotion, bravery, and self-in science and in literature in the darkest times sacrifice, which, as Professor E. G. Browne says, may of Europe, and their services were especially perhaps be paralleled in history, but cannot be valuable in connection with medical science surpassed.

and philosophy." So writes a calm and dis- The Bab had left behind him a beautiful hope as a legacy to his followers, namely, that "He whom God passionate Cambridge historian. When re- shall manifest " should arrive and complete what he generated Islam recovers its lost inheritance in had only imperfectly begun. For several the domain of civilisation and culture, who (the Bab) after the death of the Bab, which occurred in years shall set bound to its further achievements ? 1850, the movement seemed in a precarious condition.

It had a bad reputation with the Persian Government, it was looked down upon with contempt by some nearly all the Persians of wealth and position, its It may be useful hereto set forth briefly

and no account of the origin and rise of Bahais and followers could only meet together secretly, one dared to breathe the hated name of Babi; indeed, of the general nature of its teachings, as it seemed for a time as though the Mullahs had viewed from the Bahai standpoint. I am succeeded in crushing out the young Faith entirely. indebted to Mr. Sidney Sprague, a distinguished American Bahai, whom I had the " Promised One," to save the movement from extinc-

good fortune to meet in Persia, for the following, and to restore
the zeal and courage of the per-
ings summary of leading events:- persecuted Babis. They were
not to be disappointed in
In the year 1844, there appeared in Persia their hope, for, during
the early sixties, there arose
youth, Mirza Ali Muhammad by name, who called one whose grand personality,
wonderful powers of
himself the Bab, that is the "Door" or "Gate," utterance, and inspired
writings, proclaimed him to
through which men could arrive at the knowledge of being the "Manifestation"
for which the Babis were
Truth. The significance of this title in a Muhammadan waiting ; and
when, indeed, Baha Ullah publicly
danced in the country maybe appreciated when it is recalled that he
was the "Promised One," whose
that, according to Muhammadan belief, the door of coming the Bab
had foretold, the great majority of
knowledge was closed twelve centuries ago, when the Babis hailed him
with joy as their Lord and
Muhammadan Messiah, or Mahdi, disappeared from Redeemer.
amongst men, and will not be re-opened the Baha Ullah was born in 1817, and
came of a
till
Messiah come again. The Bab began his mission as wealthy
and noble family. As a young man, he
a "Door," by opening the people's minds to the real became a follower
of the Bab, though he had never
truths of their own religion. Like all great prophets, seen him. His prominence
as a teacher of the new
he did not come to destroy, but to fulfil. He did not fail to his imprisonment
in Tehran. For some
told his Muhammadan hearers that they had been de- time he was kept in chains,
until finally his wealth
luded all these years by a false prophet, but he did, was confiscated, and he
was exiled to the city of
however, ratethem soundly - as Jesus did the Scribes Baghdad, by arrangement
with the Sultan of Turkey.
- for their hypocrisy, and for their distortion of true While there, he
continued to teach the people, and
religion. He also explained to them the true meaning - his influence over
them became very great. During
ing of their prophecies and traditions that a Mahdi two years he withdrew
himself to the mountains, near
should come; foretelling the advent of Baha Ullah. Baghdad, and lived
apart from men, passing his time
The words of the Bab were naturally greeted with in prayer and meditation.

On his return, he publicly derision by the Muhammadan "Pharisees," and the proclaimed his mission, which was that of establishing Bahá to endure insult and persecution, culminating in peace and religious unity in the world. He in his imprisonment and death. He was shot, by called to men of every race and creed to assist order of the Persian Government, in a public square him in establishing the Kingdom of God and in Tabriz. the brotherhood of man upon the earth. The life of the young reformer was not sacrificed. Muhammadan Mullahs of Baghdad soon became in vain. During his lifetime, great numbers of earnest alarmed at having a man of such influence and men and women had allied themselves to his cause, power in their midst, and petitioned the Ottoman and had been diligent in spreading his teachings. Government to remove him. Baha Ullah was throughout Persia, so that soon the movement grew to accordingly summoned to Constantinople, and thence such an extent that the Persian Government and the banished to Adrianople. In Adrianople Baha Ullah Mullahs, or priests, became alarmed, seeing in it a wrote those famous letters (sent later from Acre) to serious menace to the supremacy of Islam, and the Kings of Europe and to the Pope, calling on lying that it must have some political as well as religious meaning. Orders were given to plunder and assist in establishing unity. The letters also persecuted the followers and of the Bab, during those tained prophetic utterances which were afterwards daik years many thousands gave up their lives, One such utterance, following upon a slight put upon Baha Ullah's mission, foretold the its progress in the Western world, all these things downfall of Napoleon III. at a time when this compelled at least interest. The young Persian Bab adventurer, after the famous coup d'état, held absolute gave to his followers certain forms and doc- power as Emperor of the French. Another such trines, and some rules drawn up in a book known utterance, following upon a gracious letter sent by as the "Bayan"; but at the same time he con-

Queen Victoria to Baha Ullah, foretold for Her finally proclaimed
 that he was but the herald of
 Majesty a phenomenally long and prosperous reign, one greater
 who should come after him, and he
 at a time when the monarchy in England could still tell his disciples to
 be in constant expectation of
 his said to be under the remains of a cloud. After a "Him whom God shall
 manifest." The Bab, indeed,
 few weeks in Adrianople, Baha Ullah was inaugurated a
 great reform, but his movement
 again banished to a still more inaccessible spot, the remained more or less
 Persian and Muhammadan,
 little fortress
 town of Acre, or Akka, on the coast of and one feels that it never
 could have become uni-
 Syria. Here, with his little band of followers, Baha Ullah remained
 for Baha Ullah, who came after
 Ullah passed some of the most terrible years of the Bab, to give to
 the movement its truly broad,
 • exile, for Acre could only be described as pestilential, catholic and universal
 spirit. In the "Book of Laws,"
 and it seems probable that Baha Ullah was sent there Baha Ullah tells his followers
 that the sword must for
 in the hope that fever would soon quietly rid the earth of it :
 in its place the "Word" must arise.
 would do him. Baha Ullah spent most of his time He proclaims
 universal peace, and calls upon the
 while in Acre teaching the new faith to those few nations to settle their
 differences by a board of arbiters.
 followers who could hold communication with him, tration. He pleads for a
 broad spirit of friendship
 in writing his instructions and admonitions to the and tolerance, to be
 shown to all the peoples of the
 World, in sending epistles, or "Tablets," to followers earth : "Ye
 are all the fruits of one tree," as he ex-
 in different parts, and in writing a book, known as presses it. He enjoins
 his followers to seek for a
 the Book of Laws. In 1892, after forty years of exile universal language. He
 says: "This is the means of
 and imprisonment, Baha Ullah's earthly ministry union, if ye knew
 it, and the greatest source of con-
 • came to an end. He left word to his disciples that cord and civilisation,
 did ye recognise it." He tells
 after his departure they should look to his eldest son, parents that they must
 educate their children, boy and
 Abbas Effendi, as their leader and teacher - the one girl like, giving
 them the best instruction they can

on whose shoulders his mantle should fall, the afford, and the poor must be educated by a board of exponent and promulgator of his teachings to the councillors to be elected in each city, for he considers world. that until ignorance be uprooted there can be no true Since 1892 Abbas Effendi, who thereafter as- progress. All must learn and practise some craft, summed the title of Abdul Baha (the Servant of God), trade, or profession, which, if practised conscientiously has been the leader of the Bahai movement, and under and diligently, will be considered as the highest act his guidance it has grown and expanded until its worship. There are no priests connected with this influence has become felt in all quarters of the globe. religion, and those who teach this Faith should not A striking example of this was witnessed by me when receive any pay, but support themselves by other I visited Acre in 1906, and met men there from India, means. The acquisition of hearts and sciences is Burma, Persia, Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Russia, recommended. Marriage is advised, and celibacy France, England and America, all assembled to listen and asceticism are condemned. Baha Ullah to the teaching of the Master (the name by which wishes his religion to be one of joy and glad- Abdul Baha is universally called). These men, belongness. He strongly condemns gambling, the use of opium, intemperance, and other vices, and found one table, breaking bread together, and greet- he lays down some interesting hygienic laws. A in each other as brothers. Can such a scene be lawfully given advocating kindness to animals, and paralleled in any other spot on earth? beasts of burden are not to be ill-treated or over-loaded. Both the Bab and Baha Ullah preached Teachings of Bahaism. the emancipation of women. Under this teaching, I am further indebted to Mr. Sidney Sprague woman assumes her rightful position as the equal of for the following of the principal man. In the following words, Baha Ullah tells summary his followers how the new religion should be taught teachings of Bahaism. It seems to me pre- to the world: "Beware lest make the Word of

ferable to give an authoritative Bahai exposition- God the cause of
 ye
 opposition and stumbling, or
 tion like this, rather than an exposition of my the source of hatred
 If have a
 own:-
 among you. ye
 word or an essence which another have not, say it
 The Bahai movement claims to be the Divine to him with the tongue of love and
 kindness. If
 instrument for bringing religious unity into the it be accepted
 and impressed, the end is attained;
 world. The long roll of its martyrs, the wonderful if not, leave him to
 himself, and pray for him, but
 lives of its founders, its regenerating influence in do not molest him."
 It will thus be seen that the
 Persia, the fact that people of nearly every race, message
 of the Bahai movement is one of peace to
 creed and sect have been attracted to it, and finally the world,
 and that the Bahais consider this "Mani-
 festation" as but another of divine truth energy. Yet they
 are not two suns. Nor has the
 outpouring
 < upon earth
 the ; that Bahais are lovers of the Light sun come down from
 its place in the heaven in order
 from whatever horizon it may appear, looking on to go into the mirror.
 To-day I smash this mirror.
 the different "Prophets," or founders of religion, as To-morrow I
 procure another mirror, and find the
 so many different lamp through which this Light sun in that too.
 The second mirror is not the same
 shone forth, and by which all the world has been as the first mirror.
 The sun in it is the same sun.
 illumined; therefore Bahaiism considers all religions Moses and Muhammad
 are not the same man. The
 to be divine, and possessing the essence of Truth Manifestation
 in them is the same Manifestation. It
 which has since become obscured by the super- maybe objected
 that the light that Moses shed and
 stitions and ceremonial practices added by man. In the light
 that Muhammad shed seem different. True.
 other words, the teaching of the Bahai Faith is that in mirrors
 of differently coloured glass the sun pre-
 ?the Logos, or Word, spoken of in the first chapters sent
 differently coloured appearances. But what is

of St. John, has manifested itself on this earth, in colour ? Colour is incomplete light. The seven stages, at various times and to various peoples ; prismatic rays, when all are present, give complete those in whom this Word has been fully manifested light. The seven prophetic dispensations,* when and are men known as the " Prophets " or all are present, give complete Truth. It is the mission perfected, " Manifestations of God," and through them we hear of Baháism to bring about such a combination. Will the voice of God speaking to humanity. The dis- it be contended that some or any of the Prophets tinctive claim of the Baháí Faith is that the eternal gave forth no light, not even coloured light ? Con- Word has manifested itself in our day, more power- sider this: Was there ever a prophet who did not fully than ever before, in the person of Bahá Ulláh. denounce 'perjury, theft, adultery and murder; who Besides the writings already mentioned, Bahá Ulláh, did not enjoin charity, morality, dutifulness and reverence while in prison, composed several books dealing hence? That is why Baháism contemns no religion, with metaphysical, philosophical and social pro- and reverences all religions. At the worst, even it blems. These books were written in Persian and the glass of some religions be smoked, it admits a Arabic, and but three or four of them have been certain quantity of light. There are some eyes, weak translated into Western tongues. Some of the best and watery, which cannot bear light at all unless it translations are in French, namely, " Le Livre de la come through smoked glass.

Certitude " (Kitab-ul-Iqan), " Les Paroles Cachées
 " "

• en Persian and Les Préceptes de Baháisme " trans- Esoteric Philosophy of Baháism.^
 lated by M. Hippolyte and Dreyfus, published by I have never met women, I have never read Ernest Leroux, Paris. The most important work of two books, whose accounts of Baháí teaching Bahá Ulláh, the " Kitab-ul-Aqdas " (Most Holy forme wholly agree. It would not be difficult Book), has not yet been fully translated. to present to you many different concepts of Mr. Sidney Sprague's description of Baháism Baháism, gathered in

my travel, each resting
 is characterised by calmness and simplicity. on seeming authority. This is,
 perhaps, only
 For greater picturesqueness of exposition one natural in the case of
 a religious movement
 must turn from the Westerner to the Easterner. which, setting
 out to emancipate the intellect,
 A Persian Bahai of high authority, formerly a turn-seach
 individual mind loose in a new
 Muhammadan doctor of divinity, favoured me world of
 vivid thought to reason out its own
 with the following graphic explanation of his
 faith by its own strength. The following half-
 new creed:- mystical,
 half-transcendental, play of ideas
 There is only one God. There is only one proceeds from a school of esoteric Bahaiism
 Truth. God is infinite. Truth is infinite. Man, in
 Persia, whose existence appears to be un-
 foeing finite, cannot know God; cannot know Truth. known to Europe:-
 Man knows something of God; something of Truth. Bahaiism teaches
 that man, in his "earliest spiritual
 This is because there has been a finite Manifestation weakness, has to
 support himself by props. These
 of God; a finite Revelation of Truth. The Mani' props are seven in number.
 They are indispensable
 of God is one. The Revelation
 festation of Truth is aid to
 man's spiritual growth. Without them man
 one. Moses was the Manifestation; so was Jesus,
 would faint and collapse. They put him upon his
 - so was Muhammad, so was Baha Ullah. ^ All feet, they enable
 him to walk, they give him strength,
 these are one. The Pentateuch was the Revela- confidence,
 courage, and hope. But still they are
 tion, so was the Gospel, so was the Quran, props, and as
 propsthey are to be used only to the
 so was the Kitab-ul-Aqdas. All these are end that they may ultimately
 be dispensed with.
 one. Is this hard to understand? Consider the Man's spiritual
 progress, in fact, consists in learning
 sun. The sun in the heaven is above my reach. to discard
 these props one by one, as a young
 Here in my hand is a mirror which contains the sun. *
 - Noah,
 To my senses there is no difference, in degree, according to
 one version Abraham, Moses,
 except David, Jesus, Muhammad, and Baha Ullah. According to

between the sun in the heaven and the sun in the another version -
Moses, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha,
mirror. Both sun give out light and heat and Jesus, Muhammad,
Baha Ullah.

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swimmer learn to discard floats, and to rely more. If not, what is
the meaning of that strangely re-
and more on his own God-given powers. The iterated verse
in the New Testament, "He that hath
rationale of the process is explained by Bahá'ism as ear to hear let him hear"?
And what is the meaning
follows:- of the Old Testament
Psalm, "Who shall ascend into
When man, after passing successively through the the hill
of the Lord, or who shall stand in His holy
mental stages of brutalism, heathenism, and pan^ place? He
who hath clean hands and a pure heart?"
theism, arrives at last at the conception of oneom- Can only Moses ever hope to
ascend the spiritual
niscient and omnipotent God, he cannot easily bear Sinai? Can
only Moses ever hope to have clean-
the greatness of the thought. He is appalled by the hands and a pure heart
? Bahá'ism remarks that when
majesty of the Deity. He is paralysed by his own God first
called to the child Samuel (I. Samuel III. 4)-
insignificance. He dares not approach his terrible and undiscerning
boy-rant to Eli and said, "Here I am,
Maker, though there is need to for
prayer bounty, for thou didst call me." Thus does man continually
love, and for light. To his help comes the first prop turn away his ear from
his God to his lawgiver. But Eli
- an intermediary- the Priest. The Priest, by sepa- answered, "I called
thee not. It shall be if He call
ration from the common people, by detachment from
thee that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord, for Thy
carnal engrossments, by purification of body and servant heareth."
Thus is the second prop discarded.
sanctification of mind, may venture on behalf of sinful. Therefore,
says the Bahá'í "Logos" in that same book
to kneel in before God's called "Hidden Words -
humanity supplication great
judgment-seat. Is this idea of priestly intercession "O Son of Spirit. The
best of all to Me is
wrong? asked Bahá'ism. Is it an evil thing that man justice. Cast it
not aside if thou desirest Me, and

should begin the spiritual ascent by confessing his neglect it
not, that thou mayest be faithful to Me,
own littleness and God's greatness ? By no means.
for by it thou wilt be strengthened and see all things
, But what is a priest ? A good and holy man. Espe- with thine own eyes,
and not with the eyes of men,
cially he is a man. Cannot then all men hope to and know them
by thine own knowledge and not by
become good and to make themselves holy ? When the knowledge
of any in the world. Meditate this-
man realises (as he is destined to realise) that he and how thou shouldst
be.

the priest are not two different orders of being, but "O Son of Man. The
Light has shone upon
two manifestations of the same order of being, the thee from the Horizon of
the Mount, and the
mission of the priest will be accomplished, and Spirit of Holiness
has breathed in the Sinai of thy
humanity will become a race of priests. Therefore, heart. Therefore
cleanseth thyself from obstacles and
says the Logos, through the mouth of Baha Ullah, imaginations, and
enter into this Mansion, that thou
as recorded in "Hidden Words " :- ,,

life and prepared

" O Son of Spirit. I have ordained mayest be fitted
for thee everlasting
for thee, from to meet me, where no death, no trouble and no
the Tree of Splendour, the holiest fruits. Why hast calamity can befall
thee."

thou laid them aside and been contented with those Man's third
need is for a Prophet. The
that are inferior ? Return, therefore, to that which law of God spiritual
there is wanting in man the
is best for thee in the Highest Horizon. being
given,

" O Son of Man. Let thy satisfaction to
spirit honour and obey it ; and a prophet arises
be in Me, whose divine fervour, and
and not in those who are inferior to Me, and seek not
illumination, eloquence
passion stir the lumbering hearts of the people. Birt
help from any beside Me, for none save Me will ever
what, asks Bahaism again, is a prophet ? What
satisfy thee. where

Daniel and Ezekiel ? What

" O Son of Spirit. My right to thee is Isaiah, Jeremiah,
great was the writer of the Book of Revelation ? They were

and cannot be denied. My bounty to thee is over- men. And has not God made all
 men of the same
 flowing and cannot be withheld. My love for thee is
 into them the same spirit ? When
 and cannot be repulsed. clay and breathed
 existing My light to thee is jealous disciples
 complained to Moses that some quite
 apparent and cannot be obscured."
 When man's first need has thus been satisfied - ordinary people
 in the Israelite camp were presuming
 spiritual to play the prophet, the great Hebrew
 leader ex-
 fied, and the prop discarded, a second spiritual need claimed, " Would to God
 ye were all prophets."
 asserts itself, the need for a Lawgiver. God, it is felt, And so goes the third
 Therefore
 has a will; that will expresses itself in laws; those
 prop. say the
 laws in " Hidden Words " :-
 are to be heard and obeyed. But just as man in his first " Logos
 self-abasement dares not speak to God except through O Son of Existence.
 My Lamphouart, and
 the mouth of a priest, so man dares not at first listen My Light is in thee; be
 enlightened by It, and seek
 to God except through the ears of a lawgiver. This not any beside
 Me, for I have created thee rich, and
 is the meaning of the book of Exodus which records bestowed My grace
 abundantly upon thee.
 (XX. 19) that the Children of Israel said to Moses at " O Son of
 Existence. By the hands of power
 the foot of Mount Sinai, u Speak thou with us and I made thee and by the fingers
 of strength I created
 we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we thee and deposited
 in thee the Essence of My Light;
 die." But what, asks Bahá'ism, is a lawgiver ? A therefore depend
 upon It and not upon anything else,
 man. A man who has fitted himself to receive the for My action
 is perfect and My command has effect.
 Word of God. Cannot all men so fit themselves?
 Doubt not this and have no uncertainty therein.
 " O Son of Man. Cheer thy heart with' delight, which
 every man must perform, not vicariously, but
 that thou mayest be fitted to meet Me, and become in his own person,
 ere he can enter into the Kingdom
 a mirror of My beauty." of Heaven. And thus
 the fifth prop is dispensed with.

Man's fourth spiritual need is for a Saviour. Man Therefore it is written
 in " Hidden Words -
 cannot view his own wickedness without dreading a " O Son of Man,
 Thou desirest gold, and We
 catastrophic penalty, he
 which, believes, not himself desire thy separation from it.
 Thou hast realised
 but only a specially appointed redeemer can avert. the riches of thyself
 therein, but I know that thy
 Oppressed by the vision of the wrath to come, man riches lie in purifying
 thyself from it.
 feel that he must throw himself into the arms of a " O
 Son of Man. Distribute My possessions among
 Saviour. Bahá'ism hesitates to disturb man's belief. My poor, that in
 heaven thou mayest receive front
 in this awful subject. "The fear of the Lord," says the boundless
 treasures of glory and from the stores
 the Old Testament, "is the beginning of wisdom." of eternal bliss.
 But by My Life, the sacrifice of the
 The beginning, yes, but not the end. What is a spirit is more
 glorious, couldst thou but see with My
 a Saviour ? asks Bahá'ism. A man, born of woman. eye.
 A man with power to save men. The true O Son of Man.
 For everything there is a sign.
 function of a Saviour is thus to save by example, The sign of love is patience
 through My ordeal and
 to save by pointing the way of salvation ; in other long-suffering
 for My sake.
 to demonstrate on the spiritual " O Son of Man. The sincere
 lover longs for
 words, plan what
 all the world accepts on the physical plane - that suffering as the
 rebel craves for forgiveness and the
 (rod help only those who help themselves. A sinner prays for mercy.
 Saviour is a lighthouse, not a lifeboat. Away then " O
 Son of Existence. Keep my command because
 with this fourth prop. Therefore says the Bahá'í of the love for Me,
 and deny thyself if thou lovest
 book of " Hidden Words " :- My pleasure.
 " O Son of Perception. " O
 Son of Spirit. If thou desirest Me, love not
 Myself. For thou art, there-
 fore enter therein that thou mayest be saved.
 thyself, and if thou seekest My pleasure, regard not
 " O Son of Man. Thou art My possession, and thine own, that thou mayest
 die in Me and I live in
 My possession will never be destroyed. Why art thee?"

thou afraid of thy destruction? Thou art My light, Man's sixth spiritual
 need is for a divine incarnation
 and My light will never be extinguished. Why?

Man seeks to know God, to see God. Man
 dreads thy extinction? Thou art My splendour, cannot of his own finite
 power set out to look for the
 and My splendour will never be veiled. Thou art infinite God. He
 must wait patiently and humbly
 My garment, and My garment will never be worn till God in his own chosen
 time be pleased to mani-
 out. Therefore dwell in thy love to Me, that thou feast Himself. Such a
 manifestation, accommodating
 mayest find Me in the Highest Horizon." itself to
 the human limits of sensory perception,
 Man's fifth spiritual need is for a sacrifice. materialises as an
 incarnation - spirit clothed with
 Whether the underlying idea be propitiation or ex-flesh-Divinity
 visible by its humanity - God in man.
 propitiation, there must be, it is thought, a great atonement. Here, then, for
 once, a man indeed becomes the
 instrument, to be consummated in the sacrifice of life. mirror of
 his Maker. But why only for once? asks
 Bahá'ism approaches this subject, as it approaches Bahá'ism. According
 to the book of Genesis all
 the preceding subjects, with reverence. But who, mankind was created
 in the image and after the like-
 asks Bahá'ism, is the victim of the sacrifice? A manness of God. All mankind
 is thus, in virtue of its
 of flesh and blood. The essence of the doctrine is divine
 similitude, something more than "human":
 not affected (for the present purpose) by the assertion it has some elements
 of the divine. And so the
 orthodox denial of the divinity of the being who is sacrificially greater incarnation
 appeals to all lesser incarnations,
 because in neither case is it from a being walking in the light. Or, as the Old
 Testament marvellously
 this earth of ours in the outward form of a man that puts it - "Be ye holy, for I
 am holy." In the
 the sacrifice is demanded. Shall man, in the long New Testament
 man is adjured to put off cor-
 ruption of his spiritual evolution, rise to the height of perfection and to put on
 incorruption; to put off
 of striving to embody in his own life the grand mortality
 and to put on immortality. What is cor-
 ruption of the Priest, the Lawgiver, the prophet
 but change, and what is mortality but
 Prophet and the Saviour, and then shrink from catastrophic change?

How shall a man put off
imitating the yet more sublime example of changefulness
and put on changelessness unless he
the Sacrifice? It is recorded that Jesus said:- attain to a perfection
from which no change can be
"Except a man be born again he cannot enter the betterment - unless
he become divine? An incarnation
Kingdom of Heaven." To be born again one must first, is
perfection descended upon and mani-
first
die, because birth is essentially the beginning of fested in one man to
show how all other men may
a new life. What is that which must die or be sacrificed to ascend
to and become manifestations of the
ficed? The old life of sin. There is, says Bahá'ism, like perfection.
The supreme purpose, in brief, is to
a still higher view. That which is merely human turns man's reverence
upon himself. Hereby he departs
in man must die, in order that that which is divine may be born.
Therefore declares the "Logos" in
in man may be born. This is the supreme sacrifice in "Hidden Words"
:-

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O Son of Spirit. I created thee sublime, but long; that Islamic
countries are stranded
thou hast degraded thyself. Therefore ascend to that centuries behind the
times; that the very
for which thou wast created. inertness of the
Muhammadan world in an
a O Son of Spirit. I have created thee rich. age of strenuous
progress proves its senility ;
Why dost thou make thyself poor? I made thee that, in
fact, Moslem culture stands to-day
mighty. Why dost thou degrade thyself? From where it stood
in the days of the
the Essence of Knowledge I manifested thee. Why exactly
"Arabian Nights." I shall not attempt here
seekest thou another beside Me? From the clay of
love I kneaded thee. Why searchest thou to controvert any of
those assumptions, because
thou for another? Turn thy sight unto thyself that thou mayest that would involve me in a
comprehensive
find Me standing within thee, powerful, mighty and survey of the
social, political, and economic

supreme. conditions of
 175,000,000 of the human race,
 " O Son of the Throne. is My spreading into three
 continents. I shall con-
 Thy hearing
 hearing ; hear thou with it. Thy sight is My sight ; tent myself
 with pointing out that even if all
 see thou with it, that thou mayest testify to Me in the assumptions be
 granted in substance, they
 thy in most soul, a supreme and that I may count in favour of
 Islamichopes rather
 holiness,
 than
 'testify to thee, in Myself a high position. against; because
 they indicate that the
 " O Son of Existence. Thy heart is My home ; career of Islam
 closely conforms with the
 purify it for My descent. Thy spirit is My outlook ; normal in
 history. Almost every great religion
 prepare it for My Manifestation. "
 has passed through a phase of stagnation.
 Man's seventh and last spiritual need is for a Almost
 is one
 heaven. The flesh has its dwelling-place of pain:
 thousand always the period of stagnation
 where shall the spirit abide in bliss? It will have years.
 For just a thousand years
 been understood from the present that the infant religion
 sleeps in the arms of its
 exposition Thereafter it is a child and
 predominant theme of Babi theology is that man priests.
 grown
 hasto be taught to look within for that which he has run alone. For a
 thousand years the priests
 all along been seeking without. Why should it not nurse Judaism. In
 1491 B.c. we have Moses
 beside with man's need for a Heaven ? asks Bahá'ism. declaring - " This
 shall be the priest's due
 In the scientific world it was not until educationalists from
 the people, from them that offer a sacri-
 realised that the heart of education is to draw out, not force, whether it be
 ox or sheep ; and they shall
 to put in, that the curricula of the schools were given to the priest the
 shoulder, and the two
 rationalised. Spiritual education, properly understood cheeks and the maw. The
 first-fruit also of
 is also a drawing out of that which is within. This thy corn, of thy wine, and

of thine oil, and the
is the meaning of that wonderful declaration in the New first of the fleece of
thy sheep, shalt thou give
Testament : " The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." him. For the Lord thy God
hath chosen him
Surrender, then theseventh and last prop. And out of all
in the
it therefore it is written in " Hidden Words " :-
thy tribes, to stand to minister
" O Son of Existence. name of the Lord, him
and his sons for ever."
Thy Paradise is My love,
and thy heaven is My nearness. Therefore enter - In 397 B.c. - that is,
one thousand years later
thou and tarry not. This is what was ordained for we
have the Hebrew prophet Malachi saying
'three in Our highest kingdom and supreme - " And now, O
ye priests, this commandment
4 to O Son of Spirit. The first majesty.
utterance is - Possess is for you ... Ye are departed out of the way;
a good, a pure and enlightened heart, that thou ye have caused many to
stumble at the law;
mayest possess a continual, eternal and immortal ye have corrupted
the covenant of Levi, saith
kingdom." the Lord of Hosts.
Therefore have I also
made you contemptible and base before all the
Future of Islam. as
ye have not kept My ways,
people, according
Time will not permit me on this occasion to but have been partial in the law."
For a
• enter any further into a philosophical study of thousand
years the priests nursed Brahmanism.
the teachings of Bahá'ism. It will be sufficient - According to authorities,
Vedic Brahmanism
entirely apparent, I think, that there has arisen established itself in
India about 1600 B.c. In
in Islam, thank to the freshness and fineness 550 B.c. - that is, one
thousand years later -
of Persian thought, a regenerative influence of Buddha arose to
overthrow Brahmanic ecclesia
almost incalculable energy. It only remains asceticism. For a thousand years the
priests
forme, in conclusion, to notice, very briefly, nursed Hellenic Paganism. The
siege of
the argument of those who think that Islam, in Troy, which appears to be about

the first
falling from its proudest state, has fallen like recorded fact of Greek history,
is generally
Lucifer, never to rise again. The argument, supposed to have occurred,
if it occurred at all,
as I understand it, is based upon the following about 1200 B.c. In 146 b.c.-
that is, one
.assumptions : that Islam has lain dormant too thousand years later-
Greece became a

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Roman province, and so lost the power to protagonist
of Pan-Islamism, who was very far from
work out her own independent destiny. For a being a
Bab, was undoubtedly one of those who had
thousand years the priests nursed Roman done most to
inaugurate the national movement.
foundation of Quite apart from the question as to the dispute
Paganism. The half-mythical between Subh-i-Ezel
and Baha as the suc-
Rome is supposed to date from 753 B.c. In
regards
cession, he had never succeeded in obtaining satisfac-
324 A.D.- that is, one thousand years later- answers to the
following questions: - (1) What
tory
was established as the State new does the Bahai doctrine
Christianity light
throw upon meta-
religion in Rome. For a thousand years the physical or spiritual
truth? (2) In what respect is the
priests nursed Christianity. In the fourth system of ethics
which it advocates superior to Chris-
century after Christ priestly authority first tianity
? (3) Can it be maintained that, in the applica-
asserted itself successfully in the Christian tion of those ethics,
the Bahais are materially more
Church. In the fifteenth century - that is, one consistent
than the Christians or the Moslems ?
thousand years later - John Huss started the
Reformation. With these historical M. Hippolyte
Dreyfus thought there was
parallels no as the Chairman seemed to imply,
in mind, let us now remark that for a thousand contradiction,
between the fact that Subh-i-Ezel had been in a

year the priests nursed Islam. The Saracenic and the
 with its dates from way appointed by the Bab as
 his successor,
 Empire, powerful hierarchy, fact that later on
 Baha Ullah claimed to be a mani-
 the eighth century, A.D. The spirit which festation
 of God, viz., the one foretold by the Bab
 'begat Babism and Bahaism began to himself, because
 the Bab only appointed his successor
 (manifest itself in Persia at the close of the in order to have an organisation
 ready to wait for
 • eighteenth century, that is, one thousand years the one whom God
 would manifest. Baha Ullah
 .later. I am far from propounding the " one was much more
 advanced than the Bab; his religion
 " one, while the Bab
 was merely a
 thousand years formula as a positive argu- was a universal
 ment. I am far from trying to read a new Shiah reformer, and
 that accounted for the difference
 meaning into the Psalmist's rhapsody, "A between
 them. The influence of the Bahais in the
 thousand years in Thy sight is but as yester- revolution could
 not be denied, a statement he
 I would this : the fact that was able to make because he
 was in Tehran
 day." only say
 when the Moham-
 Islam has slumbered for a thousand years at the time of the revolution,
 it finds no sufficient for the belief medan clergy took
 refuge in Qum. At that
 justification time were quite decided not to
 return to
 they
 that there can now be no awakening. For my Tehran unless the Shah himself
 came there and
 • own part, I believe that events are shaping in
 and dismissed all the European function-
 Asia which may end in re-constructing apologised
 the aries
 employed by the Government. It was decidedly
 whole fabric of present-day internationalism an anti-foreign
 movement. The Bahai thought it
 and may add a chapter to the world's history was a pity to have such a big movement
 degenerating
 as dramatic and as momentous as any that has into a sectarian

and clerical movement, and they
 .beenwritten. askedfora
 constitution
 therefore andeducation ; and
 infact,
 that, wastheprinciple ofBahaism.
 Prof.G. Hagopiansaidhe had thehonour of
 DISCUSSION. the of
 Jemal-ud-Din, about 1892,
 making acquaintance
 TheChairman (Professor Browne) saidthat,while when hewasa refugee
 from Persia, andwasinstru-
 •entertaining a very great affectionandadmiration for mental in enabling
 himto givea lecture at the
 theBabis,he wasnotprepared to admit eitherthat National Liberal
 Clubonthecondition ofhiscountry.
 fthey weretobeconsidered asmere reformers ofIslam, He wouldbedelighted
 tohearfrom anytravellers in
 orthatthey had exercised any great influence in bring- Persiawhether such
 a regeneration had yet taken
 ingabout thepresent national movement inPersia. He placeinthatcountry
 thatitwouldbepossible in the
 out
 .pointed that,in a sense, the ideals of the Bahais, futuretofind the
 same spirit animating the people of
 ivhichaimedat a universal religion anda universalthecountry as
 wasrecently evidenced in Londonby
 language, werein sharpcontrast to thoseof the theBritish
 peoplewhenKingEdward, thePeace-
 ^Nationalists,which aimed at the maintenance ofthe maker, .wascarried
 tohislastresting-place - thespirit
 integrityofPersiaandofthePersian characteristics.ofprogress andpeace.
 He also dissented fromthe author's viewthat
 Bahaismwas necessarily tolerant, and he con- Mr.W. A. Moore,in reply
 to thelastspeaker's
 tendedthat the Bab had assigned to him- question,thought
 the conduct of theTurkish Govern-
 than that which ment since the establishment of theConstitution in
 selfa moreimportant position
 that
 theBahaisweredisposed to ascribe to him. In Turkey was an
 absolutely conclusive proof they
 bisownview itwasunfair tosaythattheMohamme-desired both
 peaceandprogress, andalthough things
 to the national movement had not gone by any means so far or sowell
 inPersia,
 danshadnotcontributed

movement was a complete denial of fact. He was rather astonished at the use made by the author all through his paper of the words "priest" and "priesthood," which he did not believe were correct taking part in the movement. He thought Persia wordstoemploy inreference toIslam. He didnot would getthrough if,inherexternal sheled affairs, thinkthere wasanything sacerdotat allinthewhole a quietlife. He wasquitesurethatinthefuture she ofIslam. Withregard totheauthor's glorification wouldwinonlybytheprocess of moderation, for oftheBahais, he personallysupported theChairman's which the modern movement inthe East had such an contention, becauseduring theactualtroubles in extraordinary capacity. Persia, he happened to be in Tabriz, andtheword thathe always heardwasBabi,and thatwasthe TheChairmanentirely agreed withMr.Moore's stickthatwas used by the reactionists to beat ciiticism of the use of the word"priest"by theConstitutionalist party.The titleofthepaper theauthor.It was22years sincehewasin Persia, seemedto himto be misleading, becauseifIslam andtheword Bahaiswasthen hardly everusedatall, wasiegenerated inthewaytheauthor suggested, it theteimBabisbeing usedthroughout universally the ceasedto be Islamaltogether. Bahatism was not country. Withregard totolerance, hewasnotquite reallya religionatall,butmore orlessa philosophy. surewhether, ifBahaismsucceeded in capturing. It wasa product which camefrom theEast,andwas Persia, itwould beanymoretolerant thanIslamism. a kindofuniversal toleration. "When, forinstance,Personally, hewasvery much disinclined tothink that theauthor stated thattruth wasone,hewasutteringthere wasanyconsiderable number ofBabisorBahais oneof theimmortal platitudes oftheworldwhich amongtheTurks, because, so faras he knew, the

had been said in every age. It was a great truth of the Young Turkish movement which was always striking people afresh, but it did literary movement having its origin entirely in French not make a new religion to say that truth was one source, a large proportion of the Young Turks being; The analogy between the sun and the mirror which Free-Thinkers had been referred to had a very distinct Athanasian touch about it. It reminded him of the news- Mr. Bernard Temple, in reply to the question of paper which some years ago started a column whether Bahaism was the cause of the awakening on curios and antiquities, which was written by a man who was at present visible in Persia and other man who had come absolutely fresh to the subject, Islamic countries, said that in such big discussions and who was making discoveries every day that it was difficult to say what was the cause and what been made before, but the result was that he made the effect. He did not claim for Bahaism more than the subject much more interesting than an expert that it was perhaps the most conspicuous and remark- would have done. He could not help thinking that a better expression of the awakening which, undoubtedly, some of the philosophic truths that were put forward was taking place in the East, particularly in the as representing Bahaism were in much the same Islamic East. So far as he had made a comparison category. They were a product of modern mentality, between the Mohammedan religion and Bahaism, a process of thought which was going on all over the world he hoped he had made it clear that he was not a world. He did not agree with the author that the Bahai» nor an apologist for the Bahai religion or its Turkish movement was in any way an outcome of teaching; he merely wished, as a traveller, to give such a religion. He thought it was much more true some of his observations upon the course of the to say that the religion itself was a symptom rather than a movement in Persia and its meaning. Although than a cause. Such a movement of thought was taking place he had in many ways a great admiration for placenot only in Islam, but in Japan, and many of Bahaism, he was not prepared to rebut every the Young Turk leaders were distinctly free-thinkers. remark critical that could be addressed against it. The forward movement towards universal toleration Recent travellers in

Persians were agreed that the
and brotherhood took the form of a desire for most progressive
elements in that country were
international agreement and universal peace, and associated directly
or indirectly with the Bahai
was a sort of cosmopolitan movement. The movement. He
quite admitted it was inappropriate
Chairman had stated that if Persians were left to use the term "priest" in connection
with Islam,
alone he believed she would pull through. In but the difficulty he
experienced in that connection
one sense he was in complete agreement with the was that he made a
comparison between religions
remark. If Persians could be isolated, and the internal which had priests
and the Islamic religion, which
struggle took place as between the old and new maintained religious
functionaries for whose office
régime, which was practically between and good
evil, and status there was no equivalent in the English
there was not the slightest doubt which would multi-
language. When he used the term "priests" in re-
mately win; in fact, if she had been left alone from relation
to Islam he meant that there existed in Persia
the beginning there would have been no doubt and other
parts of the Mohammedan world men who
which would have won already. But to suppose claimed to have a
monopoly of knowledge regarding
that Persians had been, or was going to be, left the religion of
Mahomet, and the common people
absolutely to herself, seemed to him utterly to ignore were bound to have recourse
to those learned people

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for that knowledge, which was not obtainable other- which
it relates. Sir Eldon Gorst's narra-
interesting
wise. The Quran was in Arabic, a language that is framed very
much after the model of the Indian
which even to the Arabs was, in its Quranic Administration
Reports, with this important differ-
form, practically unknown; and the Quran and hence, that the latter
are seldom available until long
the literature encompassing it could only be com- after the expiry
of the year under review. Hence the
communicated to the ignorant people by a learned class, Indian reports,
through their belated appearance, lose

which was careful to preserve its monopoly of learning- much of their significance and interest. ing; and in that sense he spoke of the mullahs as The present report is dated 26th March last, priests, not wishing to institute any closer comparison and its very first comments deal with the comparison between the mullahs of the East and assassination of the late Prime Minister, about the priests of the West. He was glad it had a month previously, so it may be con- been pointed out that the movement in Turkey is considered quite up-to-date, and in this and other respects owes, practically, nothing to Bahá'ism. What he respects it may serve as an example which many others • had wished to convey in that connection was British official reports in various parts of the world that Bahá'ism had inspired the revolution would do well to emulate. On the subject of the in Turkey, though he was prepared to show it murder Mr. Roosevelt has recently spoken strongly to a gone a considerable way towards inspiring the and fearlessly : Sir Eldon Gorst's remarks are couched movement in Persia: he wished to show that there in much the same vein. He says of the assassin that was, not in Persia alone, but more or less throughout he was "one of those miserable creatures of feeble the Islamic world, a real spirit of progress which, so intellectual and disordered ideas, who are unconscious far as historical comparisons went, could only be dupes of the greater criminals, who preach violent likened to the spirit of the Reformation that existed methods which they themselves are afraid to carry in Europe. That spirit had various manifestations, into effect." Of the victim, Boutros Ghali Pasha, - one of the most marvellous of which was the who first entered the Ministry in 1893 as Minister of Bahá'í movement. Another remarkable manifestation - Finance, Sir Eldon remarks that "his death is an ation, if considered separately, was the political irreparable loss to Egypt, and that it will be long revolution in Persia and in Turkey, which had had before the Khedive and his country find a more the extraordinary effect of sweeping away the old- devoted, single-minded, and capable servant." «fashioned absolutism, the relic of centuries, and During 1909 the Press Law, which had been substituting in its place that for which people had revised in the early

part of the year, was applied with
 been striving in the West for countless years, viz., great, perhaps
 too great, moderation. Two papers
 constitutional government with Parliamentary insti- were warned and
 one was suppressed, the latter
 tutions. How much of the inspiration that had given having been already
 suspended under the ordinary
 ribe to those great movements
 political was due to some law by the native
 tribunals, and its editor sentenced
 particular source or man was a moot question. His to twelve months'
 imprisonment. Another editor
 : great object on the present occasion was to show from was sentenced to
 three months' imprisonment for
 • the point of view of a recent traveller how very effec- passing scurrilous
 libels on the late Boutros Pasha
 tive those various eruptive forces were, and how inti- and another
 high native official. These warnings,
 mately one must be connected with the other. The however, have not
 been enough to prevent the
 remark which had been made that Persia could best extreme Nationalist
 journals from attacking the
 make progress under the new régime by getting along authorities
 with virulence and contempt, and unless
 well with her neighbours, raised an enormous question. This attitude is
 definitely abandoned it will but come
 While that advice sounded ideal, he was sorry to have necessary, so Sir
 Eldon significantly remarks, to
 - to say that this feeling was, after twelve months' resi-
 apply the Press Law with great-er severity than here-
 dence in Persia, that it was almost as difficult for to fore.
 a country like Persia to get on well, at any rate with The cotton
 crop, in spite of a good Nile and favour-
 one of its neighbours, under present circumstances, able weather, has
 been much below the average of
 as for a lamb to get on with a wolf. recent years. High
 prices have to some extent com-
 pensated for the falling off of the yield, but, never-
 On the motion of the Chairman, a vote of the less, the result
 comes as a great disappointment
 thanks was accorded to Mr. Temple for his paper, to
 those who had hoped for some improvement of
 and the meeting terminated. the financial position
 since the crisis of 1907. The