



the guards, became ill. One attendant was left to the multitude — Abbas Effendi, the youthful son of Baha' O'llah. And yet there was recovery, and after a time the prisoners were allowed the range of the valley from Acca to Haifa, nine miles away.

It was during the period of most rigid seclusion that Baha' O'llah sent forth his famous "Letters" to Queen Victoria, the Pope at Rome, the President of the United States, and the other potentates of the day, and made predictions concerning Louie Napoleon, the Khedive of Egypt, and others, which were remarkably verified in due course. Exiled and a prisoner, he taught and wrote for many years. In 1890 he was visited by Professor Browne, Lecturer in Persian, Cambridge University, who thus narrated: "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 almost 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."

Before passing away in 1892 Baha' O'llah commanded the believers to turn their faces toward his son, Abbas Effendi, Abdul Baha, as the centre of the covenant of light, love, and peace which he had founded, and the Servant of God in the new revelation. Abdul Baha was born at the very hour of May 23, 1844, when the Bab made his first announcement. He has ever been eminently noble and eminently beloved. He was only nine when he accompanied his father into exile, and from that time onward he has manifested such qualities in every kind of hardship that he has always been named "The Master." Professor Browne wrote of him in 1890: "One more eloquent of speech, more ready of argument, more apt of illustration, more intimately acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, the Christians, and the Mohammedan, could scarcely be found even among the ready, eloquent, and subtle race to which it belongs. These qualities, combined with a bearing at once majestic and genial, made me cease to wonder at the influence and esteem which he enjoyed even beyond the circle of his father's followers. About the greatness of the man and his power no one who had seen him could entertain a doubt."

Full 40 years did Abdul Baha fulfil the Acca imprisonment; then, on the downfall of the late Sultan, he was released. Yet he lingered in the Holy Land, only nine miles from Mount Carmel, only 20 miles from Nazareth, because of the need for him there. At last he assented to the wishes of the Western millions, who gladly name themselves Bahais, and for two years past he has been travelling continuously in Europe and in the United States of America. As an Orientalist he travels in his own garb and with his own suite, expressing himself in Persian or Arabic, and interpreted by Mirza Ahmed Sohrab. Love and veneration attend him wherever he goes; it is everywhere seen that he is a great master, delivering a great message.

Abdul Baha was introduced to a New York audience by the Rev. Percy Grant, rector of Church of the Ascension, in these words: — “It is to be our privilege to listen to a new and great herald of goodwill. He comes with a plan of construction and reconstruction, and bears a message of peace and love to all mankind. Abdul Baha is a master of the things of the Spirit. ... Modern life is to him only a fabric. He comes from that part of the world where men meditate, where contemplation was born. He teaches the fundamental unity of all religions ... he comes to tell us that knowledge and more knowledge will bring about a realisation of peace and unity.” One quotation from the address that was then delivered may here be given: — “Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. It is self-evident that unity and the ‘Most Great Peace’ cannot be accomplished through material means. It cannot be established through political power, for the political interests of nations are various, and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. It cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial difference and patriotic prejudices prevents the realisation of this unity and agreement. Therefore it is established that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of the holy manifestations of God, is impossible except through the power spiritual. Other powers are too weak, and are incapable of accomplishing this.”

In January and in February last Abdul Baha was entertained by the Esperantists of Edinburgh and Paris respectively, and from his addresses on three occasions a few sentences may be taken: — “Every movement which promotes unity and harmony in the world is good, and everything which creates discord and discontent is bad. This is a century of illumination, surpassing all others in its inventions, its discoveries, and its vast and varied undertakings. But the greatest achievement of the age in conferring profit and pleasure on mankind is the creation of an auxiliary language for all. Oneness of language creates oneness of heart; it engenders peace and harmony; it sweeps away all misunderstanding among peoples; it gives to the human intellect a broader conception, a more commanding point of view. ... Now let us thank the Lord because the Esperanto language use been created. We have commanded all the Bahais in the Orient to study this language, and ere long it will spread all over the East. I pray you, Esperantists and non-Esperantists, to work with zeal for the spread of this language, for it will hasten the coming of the millennial day foretold by prophets and seers. ... Everyone of us must study this language and make every effort to spread it, so that each day it may receive a wider recognition, be accepted by all nations and governments of the world, and become part of the curriculum in all public schools. ”

In Paris, likewise, Abdul Baha addressed an audience of professors, clergy, and theological students. Pasteur Monnier thus welcomed him: “We are very happy to find amongst us a person who has come on the part of God, bringing to us a divine message.” Abdul Baha responded: “He who is endowed with the power of hearing shall hear the mysteries of God from all things, and all creation will convey to him the divine message. By permission, some searching questions were

propounded, each one being fully and clearly answered. To the last of those questions, "Is your aim to found a new religion?" it was replied: "Our aim is to free the foundations of the religion of God from dogmas, for the Sun of Reality is prevented from shining forth by black impenetrable clouds. ..."

Afterwards a professor said: "I desire to express the deepest gratitude and pleasure of all who have listened to you. ... Our aim, also, is the establishment of universal peace and brotherhood." Abdul Baha: "Praise be to God that our aims and hopes are one; but we must strive to make this purpose realised."

In a San Francisco synagogue Abdul Baha addressed nearly 2000 Israelites in words which may be thus summarised: "Christ changed only that part of the Mosaic religion which had become out of date and impracticable. The Christians say that Moses was the prophet of God; then you may just say from your heart that Christ is the Word of God, and all these differences will end."

Right across the continents of Europe and America he has urged conciliation and reconciliation. In Clifton, England, he defined some of the principles declared by Baha O'llah. (1) Independent investigations of truth. Reality is steeped in dogmas and doctrines. If each investigate for himself, he will find that reality is one; does not admit of multiplicity; is not divisible. (2) The unity of the race. We are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch. All the nations, peoples, and tongues are the branches, leaves, blossoms, and fruits of this great tree of humanity. All are equal in this one family of God save whosoever is more kind, more compassionate — he is nearer to God. (3) There must be peace between the fatherlands; peace between the religions. Man is the edifice of God. War destroys the divine edifice. In this period of evolution the world of humanity is in danger. (4) Religion must conform to science and reason. Science and religion are realities, and if that form of religion to which we adhere be a reality it must needs accord with the fundamental reality of all things. (5) Prejudice must be banished. Religious, racial, political, and patriotic prejudice are the destroyers of human society. (6) The male and female of the human kingdom are equal before God. Woman must have the same opportunities as man for the attainment of learning, and for exercising the fullest privileges of life. (7) Each member of the body politic must be protected. Work for all. (8) There must be established the parliament of man, or court of last appeals for international questions. (9) All children must be educated, and each child must be taught a profession or trade. Work done in the spirit of service is worship. (10) In schools, two languages must be taught: the mother tongue and the international auxiliary language. (11) The eleventh principle of Baha O'llah is the power of the Holy Spirit, by which alone spiritual development is achieved. No matter how the material World may progress, no matter how splendidly it may adorn itself, it can be nothing but a lifeless body unless the soul is within.

The Baha's of America have purchased land in Chicago for the erection of a temple. Other preparations are being made, and it is fervently hoped that Abdul Baha may again come from Palestine: that the master may lay the cornerstone of

the foundation: may endow with his benediction the first Bahia temple of the Occident.

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