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*Books by J. K. van Baalen*

THE CHAOS OF CULTS

THE GIST OF THE CULTS

OUR CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

COMFORT TO SPARE

IF THOU SHALT CONFESS

THE COMPENDIUM WITH OUTLINES

# THE CHAOS OF CULTS

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A STUDY IN PRESENT-DAY ISMS

BY

JAN KAREL VAN BAALEN

*Second Revised and Enlarged Edition*

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## PREFACE to the SECOND REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

Nothing is more characteristic of our times than their kaleidoscopic aspect. In politics as in economics, in international relations and in religious novelties, there is a ceaseless change that might well have staggered the imagination, not of the ancients alone, but of men and women of a fairly modern era.

Since the writer of this volume first took up the study of cults, new isms have appeared on the horizon of thought and of action, and some already have had their little day.

To keep up with all the religious oddities and monstrosities would take more spare time than the author has available for this hobby; and also, a mere reference to most of them would enlarge the present work far beyond all reason. Besides, such movements as *The Landone Foundation*, Winter Park, Florida, appear to center so largely around the founder (Brown Landone) and his successor (Clark Maxwell); while others, such as *Men of Goodwill* (11 West 42nd St., New York) show such clear resemblances to movements dealt with in the book (Theosophy), that it seems superfluous to devote separate chapters to them.

Moreover, the books and pamphlets dealing with pseudo-Christian cults are growing in number, and it is not necessary to repeat what many have said elsewhere.

That this book continues to appear in new editions is largely due to the zeal of the publishers and the courtesy of the readers; and since there is a demand, the author has deemed it his task to bring, as much as possible, existing chapters up to date.

For this he has had unexpected opportunity because during the first year of a temporary sojourn among our north-

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## BAHA'ISM

"There is a snag," wrote Dr. E. Stanley Jones, "in the statement of the Theosophists and the Baha'is that all religions are basically one and the same, and are equally good, therefore join the Theosophical Society or the Baha'is on that basis. If they are all the same, why another?" It would indeed seem superfluous. Yet Baha'is report "a much stronger response from the public during recent years than ever before." Perhaps Ferguson was right when he stated that "no cult bears a gospel better suited to the temper of our times than the Bahai."<sup>1</sup>

A movement which claims something over one million adherents "in nearly every country of the world" is worth studying. Dr. Atkins was right in observing that there is among all the cults "nothing more curious than that the old controversy as to the true successor of Mohammed the prophet should at last have issued in a universal religion with a temple of unity on the shores of Lake Michigan."

## History

Baha'ism is of Persian Mohammedan origin, tracing its beginning to the Mohammedan belief "that the last true successor of Mohammed who disappeared in the tenth century never died, but is still living in a mysterious city, surrounded by a band of faithful disciples and 'that at the end of time he will issue forth and fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with iniquity.'" This hidden successor is said to have revealed himself from time to time through those to whom he has made known his will, and

1. *The Confusion of Tongues*, p. 231.

who are known as *Babs* or *gates*, "the gate, that is, where, by communication was reopened between the hidden one and his faithful followers."

The last one of these Babs was a young Persian merchant, named Mirza 'Ali Muhammed who took the title of Bab in 1844 and who "had much the same relation to Baha'u'llah as John the Baptist had to Christ." The Bab's career was short-lived; he died a martyr's death at the hand of Persian Mohammedans at the age of thirty years, A.D. 1850. He had constantly pointed to a divine prophet who was shortly to succeed him. Before his death he sent his signet rings and writings to one of his friends and foremost supporters, one Mirza Husayn 'Ali, his senior by two years. The two had never met, and were not related. 'Ali at first continued the teachings of the Bab; but soon afterwards announced himself as the divine manifestation predicted by him. He is known as *Baha'-u'llah*, that is, *Glory of God*. The followers of the cult then changed their name from Babs to Bahais and proceeded to ascribe to Baha'u'llah divine honor and worship. Like the Bab, Baha'u'llah and his disciples suffered much from persecution and exile, which, of course, only proved once more that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."<sup>2</sup>

Baha'u'llah passed away in May, 1892, at the age of seventy-five, after forty years of hardship, imprisonment, and exile, in his villa of Behje near Akka (Palestine, "the Holy Land"). He was succeeded by his son Abbas Effendi, born in Teheran, Persia, May 23, 1844, "on the very day upon which the Bab made his declaration to the disciples in Shiraz." Abbas, who had shared his father's hardships as well as his greater ease in his declining years, is known

2. The matter is so stated in J. E. Esslemont, *Baha'u'llah and His Message*; also in S. G. Wilson, *Baha'ism and Its Claims*, p. 22. W. E. Miller, however, identifies Baha'u'llah with Baka, half-brother to Mirza Yahya, which latter reigned undisputed from 1852-1863, when Baha gained the ascendancy. In his earlier work Miller states that "the more the Baha'i doctrine spreads . . . the more the true history and nature of the original Babi Movement is obscured and distorted." *Baha'ism: Its Origin, History and Teachings*, p. 50.

among Bahais as 'Abdu'l-Baha, that is, *The Servant of God*. He became "the authoritative interpreter" of the teachings of "The Master," Baha'u'llah. He, too, has known adversities and persecutions, although not as severe or numerous as those of his predecessors in the Cause. In 1912 he visited the United States, where the first disciples were won in Chicago and where the Cause has since grown more rapidly than in any other country except Persia. 'Abdu'l-Baha died on November 28, 1921, aged seventy-seven years. The leadership of the movement, after some wranglings, fell to his eldest grandson, Shoghi Effendi, the head of a Committee of Nineteen, and known by the title of *Guardian of the Cause*.

### Teaching

Baha'ism is the unifying cult *par excellence*. "It has," in the words of Mrs. Chandler, "accepted all the religions of the world, found them fundamentally and essentially alike, and reveres equally as divine all nine of the prophets. So it may appeal equally to Hindus, Moslems, Christians, and Jews; it admits the divinity of the prophet or Messiah of each. It does not even claim any greater divinity for its own particular prophet, Baha'u'llah. It merely claims that the Great Beauty of Blessed Perfection, coming later, has brought the latest message from the Divine Source to the peoples of the world, and that the message doesn't differ fundamentally, or in essence, from the message of his predecessor, but is, one might say, brought up to date in dealing with certain specific matters that didn't concern the people whom Christ or Mohammed addressed."

In the words of another Baha'i writer, "Jesus could not speak of international problems; his people did not know of the existence of Japan." A new revelation for our modern day must therefore complete that brought by Jesus. When Jesus warned to "watch and pray" for the coming of the Lord He meant, "Receive Baha'u'llah." This prophet, therefore, referred to Jesus as "the Son of God," or "a

Manifestation of God," but claimed to be, himself, "a later Manifestation."

In accordance with these fundamental ideas, and to attain to their unifying ideal, Baha'is present the following "principles" for which they strive:

"The Oneness of God and Oneness of Religion;  
The Oneness of Mankind;  
Independent Search After Truth;  
All Prejudices must be Abandoned (to wit, religious, color, national, class, sexual, and personal prejudices);  
International Peace;  
International Auxiliary Language;  
Education for All;  
Equality for the Sexes;  
Abolition of Industrial Slavery (Abolition of Wealth and Poverty);  
Personal Holiness (Work in the Spirit of Service is Worship)."

Baha'ism claims that unity and brotherhood are the only important things and not doctrine. "Love" is the ever-recurring word in its literature. But its conception of love is neither correct, nor consistently carried out. In the first place Baha'ism itself proves that "love" without certain definite teachings is untenable. When in New York in 1912, 'Abdu'l-Baha was approached by two Baha'is who, arguing a point of Baha'i teaching, asked him to decide who was right. The answer of 'Abdu'l-Baha was: "Neither is right. To be a Baha'i there must never be any discord; all must agree. Unity is the aim." And yet this same system now insists "that nothing whatever should be given to the public by any individual among the friends, unless fully considered and approved by the Spiritual Assembly in his locality."<sup>3</sup> The implication is that it is not safe to let individuals air their views on Baha'i teaching except after official approval of their views. The *Star of the West* is the official organ of the movement in America. And, in the

3. Shoghi Effendi in a letter addressed from Haifa, March 12, 1922, to "Dear Fellow-Workers in the Cause of Baha'u'llah."

next place, if a member of the Baha'is leaves the movement because of changed views, he — or, generally *she*, for this is a ladies' cult like Christian Science — has good reason to hide as far as possible out of reach of the leaders of this loving cult. The last statement can, in the nature of the case, not be backed up by references; but the author vouches for its truth. There is no salvation for apostate Baha'is according to the system.

### The Wilmette Temple

One would think that the frightfully outlandish names in use among Baha'is tend to make the movement unpopular. The Baha'is, however, do not shrink from pointing to their great temple as *Mashriqu'l-Adhkar*.<sup>4</sup> And with this temple they conjure. It has cost more money and time to complete this temple than seems to have been originally expected, and the dream of building similar structures in every State of the Union has, for the time being at least, been abandoned.

The temple at Wilmette, near Chicago, embodies in visible form many of the ideals of the cult, and is its chief means of propaganda. In an illustrated pamphlet on "The Baha'i House of Worship, An Institution of the World Order of Baha'u'llah," Genevieve L. Coy informs us that, as musicians, artists, poets receive their inspiration from another realm, so the late Louis Bourgeois, architect of the Temple, "through all his years of labor was ever conscious that Baha'u'llah was the creator of this building to be erected to his glory. . . . When the man-made creeds are stripped away from all the religions we find nothing left but harmony. Today, however, religion is so entangled in the superstitions and hypotheses of men that it must needs be stated in a new form to be once again pure and undefiled. Likewise in architecture those fundamental structural lines which originated in the faith of all religions are the same,

4. Also spelled Mashrak - ul - Azkar, and meaning "The Dawning-place of Praises."

but so covered over are they with the decorations picturing creed upon creed and superstition upon superstition that we must needs lay them aside and create a new form or ornamentation. Into this new design, then, of the Temple, is woven, in symbolic form, the great Baha'i teaching of unity — the unity of all religions and of mankind. There are combinations of mathematical lines, symbolizing those of the universe, and in their intricate merging of circle into circle, of circle within circle, we visualize the merging of all the religions into one."

We shall not weary the reader with a detailed account of the cost (\$895,000 has been spent, and the end is not yet). "When the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkar* at Wilmette is completed it will include a hospital and dispensary, a school for orphan children, a hospice, and a college for higher scientific education. In these institutions the principle of the oneness of mankind will be put into concrete practice. Their services will be dispensed irrespective of color, race, or nationality." The scientific college, we are told, is included because "religion and science are the two wings upon which man's intelligence can soar into the heights, with which the human soul can progress."

There are nine entrances into the "nonagon Temple," each one representing one of Nine Great Religions, and all together leading into the inner sanctuary of Truth. From the headquarters of the "National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the U.S. and Canada" we are also informed that "when the interior decoration is completed, the central hall of the Wilmette Temple will be open for daily prayer and meditation and for meetings consisting only of reading from the words of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha."

The work on the great temple appears to proceed but slowly. In a letter dated February 21, 1942, Mr. Horace Halley, secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is, of Wilmette, Illinois, informs me thus: "Since the pamphlet by Genevieve L. Coy was published, the work of external decoration has been carried forward to a point very near completion. The enclosed photograph, taken

December 18, shows the progress on the main story, which is now nearly completed, except for two of the nine sides. We hope that this work can be done before the fall of 1942 and at the same time construct the circular steps which are to surround the building.

"When this construction work is finished, the exterior of the building will be complete, but the work of the interior is still to be done. We do not plan any immediate work on the interior, but assume that after a few years a definite scheme of interior decoration and arrangement will be undertaken."

Compare with this slow financial sacrifice for the movement's chief enterprise the remark of W. M. Miller: "It is startling to read in the census statistics as given by the Bahais of America that whereas the property of the Bahai Temple in Chicago is worth more than a million dollars, the amount given in 1936 by the members of the Cause to charity was only \$281. Even if this figure is incorrect, we wish that the Bahais would show their 'love' more in deed than in word, if they would win our confidence. How much more convincing a great medical mission in India or Tibet than a million-dollar Temple in Chicago, beautiful as the Mashriq-ul-Azkar may be!"

To this may be added that *The Baha'i Centenary, 1844-1944*, published in 1944 by the Baha'i Publishing Co., Wilmette, Illinois, states that the superstructure was finished in 1931 and the exterior ornamentation was completed between 1932-1943. From the same source we learn that four Baha'i schools have been established in the United States, some of which, judging from the photographs, are quite elaborate. Of the Temple this source states: "Records of daily visitors kept since July 1, 1932 show that the total number who went through the building with Baha'i guides up to October 1, 1943, was 164,360. To deal with this throng of inquirers a body of Temple guides has been rendering service, its members prepared by a special course of instructions based upon long experience with the types of question asked and the information desired."

The year 1953 marked a Holy Year for Baha'is, it being the one hundredth anniversary of the call of the founder Baha'u'llah, to his mission. Pioneers went as far north as Yellowknife, Alberta, Whitehorse, Baker Lake and Arctic Bay. This was the opening of a ten-year crusade by Ruhiiyyih Khanum, the former Mary Maxwell of Montreal, and the wife of Shoghi Effendi, the present guardian and international head of the faith. Baha'is consider it encouraging that during these one hundred years Baha'ism from its native land, Iran, has spread to 124 countries. "Its followers are of diversified cultures, races and nations. Its teachings are based upon the principles of the oneness of mankind, the unity of religions, and justice without principles."

### Appraisal

It is evident that a movement which so strongly stresses the unity of all religious forces in the world should be somewhat vague and general. There are not many points of Christian doctrine upon which the cult teaches. It rather ignores them one and all. Perhaps it is exactly here that we should start.

1. It should be clear that Baha'ism has some very fine points which, from the Christian standpoint, make it all the more dangerous *as a religion*. The last three words are underscored with a purpose. Who would not praise it in the Baha'is when they advocate world peace? Who has not grasped by this time the terribleness of a universal war fought with modern means of wholesale destruction, and in the interest of international investments of large capital? Who does not realize that modern warfare comes as close to hell as anything on earth can well come? Or, who does not realize that it is more than a noble gesture for a white man from the South (conceivably) to lay a sick negro child in the bed next to his own in the same ward, and tend to both with equal tenderness? For all that, there are great gifts of what Calvin called God's common grace. But all such nobility of character does not atone for sin. It

is not religion. Least of all is it a religion superior to Christianity.

2. With its plainly implied pantheism Baha'ism is one more example of what Dr. Abraham Kuyper called many years ago "the irresistible tendency of our age to change along every line the God-man into the Man-god." As pantheism, Baha'ism stands condemned from the standpoint of Christianity. Not man's reaching up to ever higher manifestations of the divine, but the transcendent God descending to man in divine revelation, is the way out of human ills.

3. Baha'ism has much in common with Theosophy. Both emphasize the idea that one more divine spokesman must add to Jesus' words. But, whereas Theosophists are looking for this man to appear since Krishnamurti stepped down from "the throne that was Christ's" Baha'is assert that this man has appeared in Baha'u'llah.

With Theosophists the Baha'is also agree that all religions are one. We remember Annie Besant's words, "Blended together they give the whiteness of truth, blended together they give a mighty chord of perfection." This is due, of course, to their common pantheism.

4. Baha'ism has much in common with Spiritism and Free Masonry.

Of Spiritism Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote, "To me it is religion — the very essence of it." He called it "the great unifying force, the one probable thing connected with every religion, Christian or non-Christian, forming the common solid basis upon which each raises if it must needs raise, that separate system which appeals to the varied types of mind." How greatly like Baha'ism that sounds!

The discussion of Free Masonry in a separate chapter has been omitted from this volume. It had been inserted in *Our Birthright and the Mess of Meat*.<sup>5</sup> The writer realizes

5. The first edition of the present work. An up-to-date appraisal of Lodgism may be found in *A Handbook of Organizations* by Theodore Graebner (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1948).

that Free Masonry is not a cult like the other isms here discussed. To a great many Free Masons the lodge is the badge of sociability, mutual helpfulness. They laugh at the idea that the Masonic lodge or the Independent Order of Odd Fellows should be considered a competitor, let alone a substitute, for the Christian religion.

Nevertheless, many leaders of the Masonic movement, the officially recommended literature of the movement, its signs and emblems which are all borrowed from oriental pagan religions, all these and other things show Free Masonry to be such that Dr. Torrey was right in saying, "A man can be a Christian and a Free Mason, but he cannot be an intelligent Christian and an intelligent Mason at the same time."

Without wanting to give offense, therefore, to Christian Masons we would ask of them to study such works as *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and its Kindred Sciences*, 1914; *Lexicon of Freemasonry*; *Masonic Ritualist*; all by Albert G. Mackey, M.D. 33. *Freemasonry and the Ancient Gods* by J. S. M. Ward, 1926; *New Odd-Fellows' Manual*, by Rev. A. B. Grosh, 1882. We would ask Freemasons to consider why there is a *Co-masonic Order* in the Theosophical Society. We would ask why the assertion that all religions are one, should be tolerated in Free Masonry, but condemned in Theosophy and Baha'ism. Said Baha'u'llah in his "Last Will and Testament":

"O ye people of the world! The religion of God is for the sake of love and union; make it not the cause of enmity and conflict . . . The hope is cherished that the people of Baha shall ever turn to the Blessed Word: LO: ALL ARE OF GOD:—"

Said the Supreme Council of the 33d Degree, F.A.A.M., Southern Jurisdiction of the U.S. in 1874, "Freemasonry is a worship, but one in which all civilized men can unite; for it does not undertake to explain or dogmatically to settle

those great mysteries that are above the feeble comprehension of our human intellect.”<sup>6</sup>

And Mackey wrote, “If Free Masonry were simply a Christian institution, the Jew and the Moslem, the Brahman and the Buddhist, could not conscientiously partake of its illumination. But its universality is its boast. In its language citizens of every nation may converse; at its altar men of all religions may kneel; to its creed disciples of every faith may subscribe.”<sup>7</sup>

5. Whereas Baha’is claim for their religion a later emphasis upon the same truth taught also, among others, by Christianity, we maintain that it is, at least in its manifestation in Christian lands, a sad imitation of the Christian religion. Baha’u’llah as final manifestation of God in the flesh we believe to be an imitation of the incarnation as seen in Jesus Christ; Baha’i “inspired tablets” we consider fake scriptures. Their “spiritual baptism,” “Holy Land,” “Beatitudes,” “Unity Feast” (for the Lord’s Supper), their imitation Pentecost (a surprising peace is said to fill the souls of those who repeat ninety-five times daily the words *Alla hu Abha*)— these would-be Christian touches, apparently calculated to catch Christians, do not increase our respect for Baha’ism.

Editorially, the *Christian Century* of September 25, 1946, informs us that the Baha’is have decided to begin to advertise their cause in a twofold manner: for the rank and file, through *Newsweek* and similar periodicals, while others will be reached through trade journals of the publishing and broadcasting industries. This is interesting, first, because we are now prepared to look for a more open method of propaganda by this cult that teaches the unity of any and all religions. Secondly, however, we get an interesting

6. *Morals and Dogmas of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasons*. Prepared for the Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the U. S. and published by its authority, New York, 1874, p. 526.

7. *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*. Subtitle: *Christianization of Freemasonry*. Two volumes. (New York and London: the Masonic History Co., 1914).

glimpse of the mentality of Modernism, when we see the editor of Chicago’s modernist journal of religion go so far in his vehement antagonism against “denominationalism” as to write: “The plan is all right. *The Baha’is have something to sell . . .* It is interesting, and may be helpfully suggestive to other religious bodies, to see how *this worthy group*, which had its origins among the Mohammendans of Persia about a century ago, makes use of the most modern techniques for making friends and influencing people.” (Italics mine).

### Baha’ism and Scripture

#### God

“Further than this [Baha’u’llah] man has no other point for concentration. He is God.”<sup>8</sup>

#### Sin

“The only difference between members of the human family is that of degree. Some are like children who are ignorant and must be educated until they arrive at maturity. Some are like the sick and must be treated with tenderness and care. None are bad or evil. We must not feel repelled by these poor children. We must treat them with great kindness, teaching the ignorant and tenderly nursing the sick.”

“Evil is imperfection. Sin is the state of man in the world of the baser nature, for in nature exist defects such as injustice, tyranny, hatred, hostility, strife: these are characteristics of the lower plane of nature. These are the sins of the world, the fruits of the tree from which Adam did eat. Through education we must free ourselves from these imperfections.”—’ABDU’L-BAHA.<sup>9</sup>

### Jesus the Only Name

“Christ was the Prophet of the Christians, Moses of the Jews — why should not the followers of each prophet rec-

8. *The Star of the West* (official organ of the movement in America), Feb. 7, 1914.

9. *The Wisdom of ’Abdu’l-Baha*, pp. 128, 155.

ognize and honor the other prophets also? If men could only learn the lesson of mutual tolerance, understanding, and brotherly love, the Unity of the world would soon be an established fact."—'ABDU'L-BAHA.<sup>10</sup>

"The revelation of Jesus was for His own dispensation—that of 'the Son.' Now it is no longer the point of guidance to the world. We are in total darkness if we are refusing the revelation of the present dispensation. Bahais must be severed from all and everything that is past—things both good and bad—everything. Now all is changed. All the teachings of the past are past. 'Abdu'l-Baha is now supplying all the world."—C. M. REMEY.<sup>11</sup>

### *Faith Versus Reason*

"There are two kinds of light. There is the visible light of the sun by whose aid we can discern the beauties of the world around us—without this we could see nothing.

"Nevertheless, though it is the function of this light to make things visible to us, it cannot give us the *power* to see them or to understand what their various charms may be, for this light has no intelligence, no consciousness. It is the light of the *intellect* which gives us knowledge and understanding, and without this light the physical eyes would be useless.

"This light of the intellect is the highest light that exists, for it is born of the *Light Divine*.

"The light of the intellect enables us to understand and realize all that exists, but it is only the Divine Light that can give us sight for the invisible things, and which enables us to see Truths that will only be visible to the world thousands of years hence."—'ABDU'L-BAHA.<sup>12</sup>

"We must not accept traditional dogmas that are contrary to reason, nor pretend to believe doctrines which we

10. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

11. *Star of the West*, Dec. 31, 1913.

12. *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

cannot understand. To do so is superstition and not true religion."—J. E. ESSLEMONT.<sup>13</sup>

### *Sufferings of Christ*

"Why did Christ Jesus suffer the fearful death on the Cross? Why did Mohammed bear persecutions? Why did the Bab make the supreme sacrifice and why did Baha'u'llah pass the years of his life in prison?

"Why should all this suffering have been, if not to prove the everlasting life of the Spirit?

"Christ suffered, He accepted all His trials because of the immortality of His spirit. If a man reflects he will understand the spiritual significance of the law of progress; how all moves from the inferior to the superior degree."—'ABDU'L-BAHA.<sup>14</sup>

We hold that Baha'ism stands condemned by the following statements of Scripture:

Matthew 24:24, 26: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect . . . If therefore they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the wilderness; go not forth: Behold, he is in the inner chambers; believe it not."

Colossians 1:19: "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in him should all the fulness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of his cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens."<sup>15</sup>

13. *Baha'u'llah and His Message*, p. 11.

14. *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

15. We have purposely presented Baha'ism as it reveals itself in its Western cloak. It will be noted that even this is, more or less openly, antichristian. And this is an adaptation of Persian Baha'ism for consumption in the West. A close student and adherent spoke of "Persian Baha'ism and not that American fantasy which bears its name." The original Baha'ism is far more hateful toward its opponents; it advocates bigamy rather than equality of sexes; its literature is replete with historical and religious falsehoods. For that matter, the statement that the Bab pointed to an early successor of his, is itself untrue, although now believed by Baha'ists both in the East and the West. In Persia the movement is now boosted with the legend that half America is Bahai. Cf. the well documented works by S. G. Wilson and W. Miller, previously cited.

### Pointers

1. Why is Baha'ism suited to our times?
2. What is the relation between Bab, Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha, Shoghi Effendi?
3. Can you mention some cardinal teachings of this system?
4. Is Baha'ism as tolerant as it pretends to be?
5. Why have Baha'is made but little financial sacrifice for their views?
6. What do you think of the stand of the Christian Reformed and other churches who maintain that lodge membership and church membership are inconsistent and incompatible?

## 8

### MORMONISM

We are taking quite a leap. We are leaving the isms which have been more or less directly influenced from the East. We are bidding farewell to the out-and-out pantheistic cults (although there are many more). And we are turning to isms of a simon-pure American make. Among these Mormonism, Seventh-Day Adventism, and Russellism are perhaps the most persistent propagandists; hence we intend to devote considerable attention to these three.

Mormonism is a marvelously composite faith. It has developed over a period of time, and as it went along it took over some of the most divergent elements from other sects and groups. They brewed, to speak with Mr. Ferguson, a synthetic religion in Utah.

#### A Charming People

There is an imposing story of Mormonism's accomplishments that makes not only good reading, but cannot fail to arouse admiration. It is the story of how, all before their first centennial, the Mormons have not only encircled the globe, with their missionaries donating a year or two of their youthful lives, but also of how the later Mormons have succeeded in blotting out the dark record of early Mormon antisocial doings in Illinois and Missouri. "These amazing Mormons" have indeed come near to approaching the ideal state. Their co-operatives in matters socio-religious have yielded astonishing fruit. In war or depression, no Mormon becomes a burden upon the state and no help from the national capital is accepted. By means of a strictly enforced sense of stewardship, which does not only involve

- Marden, Orison S., *Peace, Power, and Plenty; Every Man a King*; and numerous other books.  
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