

# Adventures in Biographical Research: John and William Cormick by Vincent Flannery

## Abstract

*Dr William Cormick, as far as is known, was the only person from a European background to have personally met with the Báb. This paper attempts to bring together details of his life from various sources.*

## Setting Out

On the borders of County Kilkenny and Tipperary in south-east Ireland, at the ancient Ahenny monastery, in the north and south of the site, stand two ringed High Crosses, symbols of that great age of the island's history when Irishmen travelled far and wide. The crosses are considered to be the first of their kind, dating to the Ninth Century. Although uniquely Irish, their visual references draw from other cultures: elaborately carved geometric strapwork ornament thought to have originated in Coptic Ethiopia as well as figurative ornament in scenes that include the Garden of Eden, which recent convincing research suggests to have been located in north-west Iran and specifically in Tabríz.<sup>1</sup> A special feature of the North Cross is its unusual large conical capstone.

A curious local tale tells of a third, West Cross, which is said to have been transported eastwards. As the story goes, it never reached its destination as the ship sank early on in its voyage from Waterford harbour. It is said this happened some 200 years ago. Perhaps to be dismissed as just a local story, it is interesting none the less to note that in 1800, a local man named John Cormick (of Cussane, Tullaghought, County Kilkenny, a few miles from Ahenny) did indeed go East, specifically to Madras, India as a surgeon to Sir John Malcolm's expedition to Persia and then via Bushire to Tabríz in 1810. We do not have a date for the birth of John Cormick, but we do know that he studied medicine in London. At that time it would not have been uncommon for a man of twenty to have completed his education, as will be seen from accounts of the life of his son, William.

It was my luck in June 2000 to come across a reference to John Cormick in an index for *The Old Kilkenny Review*, published by the Kilkenny Archaeological Society in 1996, by simply entering a search on the Internet using the terms 'Cormick, Tabríz;' I was

luckier still to obtain the last copy for sale and excited to find therein a photograph of William Cormick. In the

*Review*, the author's name, Mr John Landy, and his Galway address were listed. Later, in some nervousness, I telephoned him, stating my interest and conscious of the value of any information he may or not wish to share. I need not have worried; the Australian accent on the phone communicated warmth and an immediate invitation to visit. I went to see him two hours later and was treated with informal and polite friendliness by his wife and himself. At the time I arrived we sat together to watch the end of a television programme about a refugee to Ireland, a black artist and her work. With such interests, I knew then that



I was in the right place.

The home was filled with Mrs Landy's charming paintings and many books, and in a back room, used as a study where he spends much of his retirement hours, Mr Landy kindly began to share with me the fruits of his own research. Being a distant relative of John and William Cormick, he explained that his great grandfather (also John Landy) was a first cousin of William's, and that members of his own branch of the family had moved to Australia, whence he himself had returned to retire in Ireland. The Cormick family came originally from County Kilkenny, where they held land and property at Cussane, Tullaghought in the south-west of that county, near Ahenny and Carrick-on-Suir in County Tipperary. (The Landy family name comes from the Norman *de la Launde*.) Six Landy brothers had leases from the Ormonde estate. Ten sisters and three brothers emigrated to Australia in the 1800s. Mr Landy had heard from a Cormick relative that there were members of the family who had been in Persia. Although little attention was paid to this by others in the family, his father's aunt, Bessie Cormick, encouraged him. He

therefore decided to do some research and managed to trace photographs of both William and his Armenian wife, Tamar, and had corresponded extensively with authors of books and British record offices. Authors included Anthony Parsons, Ann K. S. Lambton, Moojan Momen and Denis Wright.

He encouraged me greatly and generously shared all of his information, including his copy of William's photograph, which I consequently scanned and edited. He told me that the photograph was 'amongst the effects of a late cousin of William's.' The photograph of Tamar, William's wife, he told me had been mislaid. With his directions and encouragement, I travelled to Tullaghought and took photographs of what I saw.

The remains of the Cormick home-place are still to be seen near Tullaghought. A visit there banished ideas of a grand residence, expected perhaps with some knowledge of the distinguished histories of some of the family. Accessed from the road by a lane-way bordered by dry limestone walls, one approaches a square pillared gateway, the entrance to a central courtyard with long outbuildings arranged around. Enough does remain, however, to imagine the place as it once was, with fine country stonework and some ancient shrubbery. Specific directions had been given by a neighbour who lived in a smaller, but similarly structured holding. The original Cormick dwelling house no longer stands, although its position is clearly seen by its remains. Tall oaks stand in the surrounding hedged fields, perhaps once witnesses to the lives of generations of this family with their remarkable story. I left in another direction through stubble fields and by a lane-way dotted with fallen crab apples in the sunset of one atmospheric All Souls' Eve. In timeless countryside and in the absence of the signs and intrusions of the Twenty-First Century, it wasn't difficult to imagine what it might have been like for a young man to be leaving his home, seemingly forever. Did William wonder about where his steps might be leading him and about the destiny awaiting him that would be talked and written about two hundred years later and beyond?

### **John Cormick**

At exactly what age John Cormick left Ireland we don't at present know. We do know, however, that he was to study in England and

qualify as a doctor at the Royal College of Surgeons in London in 1800. That a young Irish Catholic from a farming background should find himself so well-placed for a future career may appear at first surprising, but it seems that, from my talks with Mr Landy, the family was well established with their Protestant neighbours. In the area there was notable co-operation and even adoption of Irish culture by the English ascendancy, some perhaps Catholic and well-established in the area since Norman times. Also, other notable Irish families from the region had managed to maintain their Catholicism, perhaps because they served in British Government agencies and forces, including the Sheil and Ryan families of Waterford and Tipperary.

And so John Cormick went, after qualifying in London, to Madras, India, first as an Assistant Surgeon in 1800 and then as a Surgeon in 1807 with a British expeditionary force. He left India on 10 January 1810 with the ship *Psyche* to Bushire, with Major General John Malcolm on his second mission to Persia, and from there to Tabríz, where he was subsequently employed by the East India Company and attached to the army and household of the Crown Prince 'Abbás Mírzá,<sup>2</sup> who was a relatively enlightened member of the Shah's family, progressive in his thinking. John was married to an Armenian Christian woman in 1812. Henry Martyn, a Protestant minister, officiated. The name earliest associated with Protestant missions in Persia is that of Henry Martyn, who came from India to Shíráz in 1811.<sup>3</sup> Later the Russians objected to the British influence and when British connections to the court were severed in 1815, John remained in Tabríz. In 1820 a son, William, was born.

John found increasing favour with the Crown Prince, who encouraged Western medicine, and he was appointed his chief physician. He held this position alongside John McNeill after 1821 and became wealthy. (McNeill was appointed British envoy to the Shah in August 1836, and later Justin Sheil of Bellevue, Waterford in 1842.) Although considered by some to be a British spy, reporting regularly to the British representative at the Shah's court in Tehran, he nevertheless was dedicated as a doctor and companion to 'Abbás Mírzá, and to his profession. He had a treatise on smallpox translated into Persian in one of the first books printed in Persia.<sup>4</sup> He was twice decorated with the Order of

the Lion and the Sun, necessitating permission from King George IV of England, second class in August 1825 and first class in 1828. Armenians living in the border areas of north-western Persia suffered greatly, and due to concerned British intervention, a treaty was arranged for their well-being. The Armenian population in the region was placed under the care of John Cormick in 1830. When Cormick accompanied 'Abbás Mírzá to Khurasan in 1833, he contracted typhus and died in Mayamey. His body was buried in the Armenian cemetery in Tabríz, where there are now eleven Cormick graves.

### **William Cormick**

John's son, William, was to follow in his father's footsteps in a number of ways. William was born in Tabríz in 1820, eight years after his parents had married. We know he had at least one sibling, a brother.<sup>5</sup> At the age of ten he was 'sent by his father to study medicine'<sup>6</sup> in England. We have no details of where he was educated, the one reference to study medicine being highly unlikely at that age. So, did he travel further to attend school in Ireland? Were there relatives in London? At a later date, an address is given for him in London at 217 Albany Street, Regents Park. When he was 13, while so far away from his home, William's father died in Persia. One wonders how his mother would have fared in Tabríz in the years after her husband's death. British responsibility for the protection of Armenians lapsed after 1833 after John's death, and resumed only temporarily in 1838 when there was again a rupture in English-Persian relationships, after which the role that doctors could play 'as a medium of confidential intercourse between the Mission and the Shah' was lost in favour of the French. In this context, it is interesting to see that later the Persians complained that Justin Sheil, also of County Kilkenny and envoy to the Shah since 1842, had made the Mission 'a sanctuary ... a refuge for discontented persons.'

Wherever William had his secondary education, the next record is of his having qualified at age 20 in July 1840 at University College London (MRCS) 1841 (LSA) and later (MD) at St Andrew's (1841). He practised medicine in London and Paris and returned to Persia in 1844 and was appointed second physician to the British Mission in Tehran. One writer states that William was summoned

back by the Shah. In 1846, like his father before him, he was 'seconded as physician to the family of 'Abbás Mírzá, and later to the crown prince Názer-al-Dín Mírzá. When Názer-al-Dín Mírzá was appointed Governor of Azerbaijan, William accompanied him to Tabríz as his personal physician on 15 March 1847. At this time, to William, his future career must have seemed assured, being not yet thirty years of age, well-placed with the British agencies, doctor to the future Shah. He had also returned to his family and place of birth. But changes were to come.

### **Dr William Cormick and the Báb**

By the year 1848, momentous events were unfolding in Europe, in Persia and in the very heart of human existence, the import of which could not then have been outwardly perceived by William, although he was better placed than most to be aware at least of the surface appearance of events. Neither could he realise that he would be chosen, invited even, to a series of encounters that would assure the perpetuation of his name through future centuries. Hints there were, some of which he must have been aware of. On 1 and 19 November 1845, *The Times* of London published the first-known printed references to a new religious movement in Persia, concerning the arrest and torture of four of its followers, including one Quddús, which had taken place in Shíráz the previous June.

At the very time William was moving from Tehran to Tabríz, in March 1847, a Prisoner, the Founder of this new movement was, under the Shah's instructions, being escorted from Shíráz to meet him in Tehran. The Prisoner, the Báb, had so convinced His captor, Manuchír Khan, Governor-General of Isfáhán, of the truth of His mission being the fulfilment of prophecies of Islám, that the governor was moved to offer to Him all of his vast possessions in order to also convince the Shah. The Báb had declined this offer. Fearful of the effect the Báb would have on the Shah, the Prime Minister diverted the route of the Prisoner towards the prison-fortress of Máh-Kú, skirting Tehran and on towards Tabríz, where He arrived in May or June, just weeks after Cormick's own return there. What news might have spread throughout Tabríz about this Prisoner, whose guards and their chief had become so enthralled by Him that they implored His blessings and begged His forgiveness and pardon, as they handed Him over to the officials

of Názer-al-Dín Mírzá, to be imprisoned for 40 days in the citadel of Tabríz, called the Ark?

A tumultuous concourse of people had gathered to witness His entry into the city ... desirous of ascertaining the veracity of the wild reports that were current about Him ... the acclamations of the multitude resounded on every side ... Such was the clamour that a crier was ordered to warn the population of the danger that awaited those who ventured to seek His presence.<sup>7</sup>

How could Dr Cormick not have heard this and been aware of the Báb's presence nearby, even if restrictions were such that only two people were subsequently allowed to visit Him?

Indeed, change was in the air, and not just in Persia. Throughout Europe, revolution after revolution was shaking established governments to the extent that the following year, 1848, became known as 'the Year of Revolutions.' In Ireland, since 1845, famine was ravaging the land through death and emigration. Although on the periphery of Europe, the *zeitgeist* could not be resisted even there. Only a few miles from William's father's birthplace, in Carrick-on-Suir, County Waterford in the last week of July 1848, crowds were gathering:

... a torrent of human beings, rushing through lanes and narrow streets, whirling in dizzy circles and tossing up its dark waves ... wild half-stifled, passionate, frantic, prayers of hope, ... scornful exulting defiance of death. It was the revolution, if we had accepted it.<sup>8</sup>

This same week in Tabríz, crowds, too, were gathering again - one year since the Báb had been taken to be imprisoned in a more remote outpost:

The tales of the signs and wonders which the Báb's unnumbered admirers had witnessed were soon transmitted from mouth to mouth, and gave rise to a wave of unprecedented enthusiasm which spread with bewildering rapidity over the entire country.<sup>9</sup>

Tabríz, in particular, was in the throes of this 'wildcat excitement':

The news of the impending arrival of the Báb had inflamed the imagination of its inhabitants and had kindled the fiercest animosity in the hearts of the ecclesiastical leaders of Adhirbayjan ... Such was the fervour of popular enthusiasm which that news had evoked that the authorities decided to house the Báb in a place outside the gates of the city. Only those whom He desired to meet were allowed the privilege of approaching Him ... <sup>10</sup>

The Báb had returned to Tabríz. A tribunal was gathered for a trial, of which the Báb took control, embarrassed the clergy, and made a formal declaration of His mission. Presiding was the young Crown Prince and alongside him, his tutor. In the course of the trial, seemingly, reluctance on the part of a number of the participants to endorse a death sentence caused Dr Cormick and two Persian physicians to be called to carry out an examination on the Prisoner to certify as to His state of mind. Years later, Dr Cormick's memories of the event were to be gathered and compiled.<sup>11</sup>

You ask me for some particulars of my interview with the founder of the sect known as Bábís. Nothing of any importance transpired in this interview, as the Báb was aware of my having been sent with two other Persian doctors to see whether he was of sane mind or merely a madman, to decide the question whether to put him to death or not. With this knowledge he was loth to answer any questions put to him. To all enquiries he merely regarded us with a mild look, chanting in a low melodious voice some hymns, I suppose. Two other *Sayyids*, his intimate friends, were also present, who subsequently were put to death with him, besides a couple of government officials. He only once deigned to answer me, on my saying that I was not a Musulmán [Muslim] and was willing to know something about his religion, as I might perhaps be inclined to adopt it. He regarded me very intently on my saying this, and replied that he had no doubt of all Europeans coming over to his

religion. Our report to the Sháh at that time was of a nature to spare his life. He was put to death some time after by the order of the Amír-i-Nizám Mírzá Taqí Khán.

On our report he merely got the bastinado, in which operation a *farrásh*, whether intentionally or not, struck him across the face with the stick destined for his feet, which produced a great wound and swelling of the face.

On being asked whether a Persian surgeon should be brought to treat him, he expressed a desire that I should be sent for, and I accordingly treated him for a few days, but in the interviews consequent on this I could never get him to have a confidential chat with me, as some Government people were always present, he being a prisoner.

He was very thankful for my attentions to him. He was a very mild and delicate-looking man, rather small in stature and very fair for a Persian, with a melodious soft voice, which struck me much. Being a *Sayyid*, he was dressed in the habits of that sect, as were also his two companions. In fact his whole look and deportment went far to dispose one in his favour. Of his doctrine I heard nothing from his own lips, although the idea was that there existed in his religion a certain approach to Christianity. He was seen by some Armenian carpenters, who were sent to make some repairs in his prison, reading the Bible, and he took no pains to conceal it, but on the contrary told them of it. Most assuredly the Musulmán fanaticism does not exist in his religion, as applied to Christians, nor is there that restraint of females that now exists.

It is very interesting to study carefully this unique record, for it goes some way in revealing the effect that this meeting had on Dr Cormick, and something of his own character. For example, it opens with the words, 'nothing of importance transpired,' yet we also have strong expressions such as 'with a melodious soft voice, which struck me much' and 'In fact his whole look and deportment went far to dispose one in his favour.' Did Cormick really believe the Báb was not sane? Despite his report (note 'at that time'), there is nothing to be seen here that would have us

accept that the doctor really believed this. Unless there was a prior arrangement to have this result, then we could conclude that the doctors themselves wished to save the Báb. Other aspects are also interesting, especially the fact that the Báb requested that William should attend Him, which he did, and on a number of occasions. We have seen above 'Only those whom he desired to meet were allowed the privilege of approaching Him.' What are we to make of this? The Báb was far beyond requiring favours of anyone, as is obvious from declined offers to escape or save his own life. We see also Dr Cormick's desire to have a confidential conversation with the Báb, this after the need for a psychological assessment had passed. The attention to religious aspects in the record is also interesting and it appears, if we regard his opening question about considering adopting the new faith as a means to have the Báb respond at that stage, William was keen to find out more and was apparently impressed by what he heard. He gives us some details: lack of fanaticism (a very interesting judgement, considering the official report), toleration of other religions, and the freedom of women. In this respect, perhaps, news was current in Tabríz that just a few weeks earlier, sometime in the first two weeks of July, the leading female follower of the new faith, the beautiful poet, Táhirih, had removed her veil, dramatically announcing the birth of a new Divine cycle, the break with Islam and also symbolically declared the emancipation of women. (It is interesting to note that thousands of miles away, on 20 July in North America at Seneca Falls, a formal declaration of the rights of women was also heard.<sup>12</sup>) The information that the Báb was wounded in the face, as well as being bastinadoed, does not seem to be recorded elsewhere. It should be noted that some of the information is not first-hand, some of it being reported by 'Armenian carpenters.'

Was William present as the Báb revealed His sacred Scripture? His account is that he heard the Báb chanting. In Lady Sheil's later brief account of the Báb, attributed as information to her from Dr Cormick, he also witnessed how the Báb 'wrote rapidly and well.' Only one other Westerner, Mochenin, a Russian student, is recorded as having been present to observe, from a distance, as the Báb taught His doctrine to a huge crowd who listened to 'the new *Qur'án*' at Chihríq.<sup>13</sup>

William's life was to take a different course than what he may have expected, and at the hands of one who was to be instrumental in making fateful decisions regarding the life of the Báb. Just two months after Dr Cormick's meeting with the Báb, in September 1848, Muhammad Shah died. On his death and the 17-year-old Crown Prince's accession to the throne, William went with him to Tehran. Mírzá Taqi Khan, the Prime Minister, opposed this, not wanting to be dependent on either Britain or Russia, and so Dr Cormick was replaced by a French physician, Dr Cloquet. William returned to Tabríz, his life in public service seemingly ended. At 28 years of age, he opened an apothecary shop, practised medicine, and was later to serve as a physician to the late 'Abbás Mírzá's family and become wealthy. Two years later, in May 1850, Tabríz was yet again in upheaval:

That day witnessed a tremendous commotion in the city of Tabríz. The great convulsion associated in the ideas of its inhabitants with the day of judgement seemed at last to have come upon them. Never had that city experienced a turmoil so fierce on the day the Báb was led to that place which was to be the scene of His martyrdom.<sup>14</sup>

Mírzá Taqih Khan, the Prime Minister, was shaken by events that had involved the astoundingly successful self-defence of a few of his Prisoner's followers against the might of his armed forces. Alarmed at the rapidly increasing emergence of more and more adherents to the new faith all over Persia, despite strong advice to the contrary, he demanded the immediate execution of the Báb. Forty of the Christian Armenian soldiers of Tabríz were appointed to guard Him. The subsequent execution of the Báb was accompanied by such disturbing events as to affect even the physical atmosphere of that city. An Armenian regiment under Sam Khan, assigned to carry out the deed, dramatically, and despite risk to their own lives, had refused to proceed. One wonders on the reports coming to William, and their effect on him, considering his personal encounter with the Báb, just a short time previously. How much might he have actually witnessed?

There were a number of Irish people in Tabríz at some stage in these momentous years: Sir Justin Sheil of Waterford, his wife

Lady Mary (*née* Woulfe) and their three children, who had with them three Irish servants (recorded as having worshipped at an Armenian service), a young man, Art McMurrough Kavanagh, of Borris House, Carlow, who later became an MP, with his older brother, Charles, and their tutor, Rev. David Wood. Of these eleven people, there is no clear record of their having actually met William, but it would be surprising had they not.

Not long afterwards, Burgess reports, in 1851, that William is married to Tamar, an Armenian, 'one of the most beautiful girls in the country,' in fact, a sister of Edward Burgess's own wife, Anna. He has an income of £1,000 per annum and is thinking of going to London for the Great Exhibition in 1853. He says that William wants to pursue medical study - 'his passion' - for one or two years in London, even though this would reduce his income to £200 per annum. Burgess, of a famous British merchant family, had long lived in Tabríz, but had become virtually trapped in Persia, deciding to honour his older brother Charles's debts to the government rather than leave. Having finally obtained permission to visit England in 1855, he sadly died en route. He was survived by his wife and daughter, Fanny, who at least once visited England, staying with Edward's father in London. With such close family ties with William, their history is worth considering.

In August 1857 there were unsuccessful attempts by the deputy-governor to dispossess William of his property in Tabríz. This does not seem particularly aimed against him, but was consistent with levels of injustice that prevailed at the time. In the summer of 1861, he was in Salma in the company of a friend. Just past forty, he was very near Chihríq where the Báb had, only a few years previously, been imprisoned. Concerning the nature of creative inspiration, the Báb had looked towards Salma from His mountain-prison in Máh-Kú and had quoted Hafiz:

He gazed towards the west and, as He saw the Araxes winding its course far away below Him, turned to Mullá Husayn and said: 'That is the river, and this is the bank thereof, of which the poet Hafiz has thus written: 'O zephyr, shouldst thou pass by the banks of the Araxes, implant a kiss on the earth of that valley and make fragrant thy breath. Hail, a thousand times hail, to thee, O abode of Salma! How

dear is the voice of thy camel-drivers, how sweet the jingling of thy bells!' Continuing His remarks, the Báb said: 'It is the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit that causes words such as these to stream from the tongue of poets, the significance of which they themselves are oftentimes unable to apprehend.' The Báb subsequently quoted this well-known tradition: 'Treasures lie hidden beneath the throne of God; the key to those treasures is the tongue of poets.'<sup>15</sup>

Now in his private life, William was not to forget his interview with the Báb. W.A. Shedd, from a family of American missionaries, writing to *The Moslem World* in August 1914, says:

I found the following memorandum among the papers of my father, the Rev. J. H. Shedd D.D. The record was made sometime between 1860 and 1870, perhaps in 1861, when Dr Cormick spent the summer or part of it in Salma, where my father was then stationed, and, they saw a good deal of each other. Dr Cormick was an English physician, who for a number of years lived in Tabríz, having there a large medical practice and being much esteemed. The events referred to took place in Tabríz some time before the execution of the Báb in July, 1850, probably at the time of his first examination in Tabríz. Probably no other European had an interview with the Báb and certainly no other record of such an interview is extant.<sup>16</sup>

This account of the origin of Dr Cormick's descriptions of the event is a little confusing. On 1 March 1911, Dr Shedd had previously written to Edward Granville Browne. Heading the interview account, Prof. Browne writes that they are 'Dr Cormick's accounts of his personal impressions of Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad the Báb, extracted from letters written by him to the Rev. Benjamin Labaree, dd.' So, did Dr Cormick give the account directly to John Shedd or to him through Rev. Labaree? Whatever the case, compassion in this circle towards the Báb is revealed by W. Shedd writing about the 'period of his imprisonment and suffering.'<sup>17</sup> Esteem for Dr Cormick is shown too by the description of 'a cultivated and impartial Western mind.'<sup>18</sup>

In October 1875, like his father, William receives the Order of the Lion and the Sun. On 19 October 1876 he becomes a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and continues to promote Western medicine. His photograph must have been taken around this time; it shows two decorations, but we have records of only one.<sup>19</sup>

On 30 December 1877, almost 57 years of age, William Cormick died. He was the last to be buried in the Armenian Cemetery in Tabríz, where there are eleven other Cormick graves, including those of his father and brother. Of his children, there is but one account: of a son who was in Iran until the last decades of the Nineteenth Century and who returned to England.<sup>20</sup>

At present there are no available records of contact between any English members of the family and the Australian and Irish relatives for these later years. Mr Landy provides an invaluable link in this most interesting history. Once on a visit to his home, I brought the postage stamp and the Haifa Municipality brochure of the gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Báb on Mount Carmel. Mr Landy appeared pleasantly surprised as he examined them and my impression was that he realised then more clearly the importance of his family's history.

### **Endnotes**

1. About David Rohl's Eden discoveries:

<http://www.biblicalheritage.org/Archaeology/eden.htm>

2. In the early Nineteenth Century, 'Abbás Mírzá had stood among the ruins of the Iranian army on the Russian front. Suffering the disgrace of his country, he saw in retreating soldiers and captured armaments Qajar Iran's backwardness and impotence. When he returned from war, he began to agitate within the court for reform of the monarchy and the nation. Tragically dying before his father, 'Abbás Mírzá left his vision to the few enlightened minds within the palace.

<http://bahai-library.org/excerpts/mackey.html>

3. Martyn was in Shíráz only about ten months but toiling amid heat and dust in weakness of body and with many enemies about him, he completed his Persian translation of the Psalms, begun in India. A few months later he died alone at Tokat in Turkey on his way home.

4. Fath 'Alí Shah's Crown Prince and Governor of Tabríz, 'Abbás Mírzá, is a quintessential example of this trend towards the espousal of European preventive health practices. Having been cured of a venereal complaint, the Prince embraced the recommendations of his English physician, Dr James Campbell, and agreed to have his family vaccinated against smallpox. Furthermore, he requested the permanent appointment of a British physician to his service and undertook the sponsorship of Mírzá Bába Afshar's medical studies in London and Oxford in 1818.

It was 'Abbás Mírzá's recognition of the significant life-saving value of the smallpox vaccination, together with his quest to preserve the health of his *Nizam i Jadid* [new army], that led to the first steps in spreading the knowledge of the Jennerian method of vaccination among Iranian physicians.

Accordingly, Dr John Cormick, who had succeeded Dr Jukes as 'Abbás Mírzá's personal physician, composed a treatise on vaccination at the Crown Prince's request so as to promote this practice. The tract, entitled *Risalah i abi-lah-kubi*, was translated by Mohammad 'Ibn-i 'Abd al-Sabur, and when published in 1829 was among the first works to be printed in the newly established printing press in Tabríz.

5. Comprehensive summary of life of William: Moojan Momen, <http://www.iranica.com/articlenavigation/index.html>.

6. Burgess *Letters from Persia* p. 112.

7. Shoghi Effendi *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabíl's Narrative of the early Days of the Bahá'í Revelation* p. 239.

8. Quote from Thomas Francis Meagher of The Young Ireland Movement in , Cecil Woodham-Smith *The Great Hunger* (London, 1962) p. 351.

9. Shoghi Effendi *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabíl's Narrative* p. 313.

10. *Ibid.* p. 312.

11. Dr Cormick's accounts of his personal impressions of Mírzá 'Alí Muhammad the Báb, extracted from letters written by him to the Rev. Benjamin Labaree, dd.

12. On 20 July 1848, the Seneca Falls Convention convened for a second day. On the previous day, convention organizer Elizabeth Cady Stanton had read the 'Declaration of Sentiments and Grievances.' In the process of reviewing a list of attached

resolutions, a group united across the boundaries of gender and race to demand women's right to vote in the United States.

13. Momen, Moojan *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions* p. 75.

14. Shoghi Effendi *The Dawn-Breakers: Nabíl's Narrative* p. 507.

15. *Ibid.* p. 358.

16. An interesting document on the Báb in *The Moslem World* (28 August 1914).

17. A plaque, currently being restored at Princeton Seminary, recalls William Shedd (Class of 1892), who died of disease in 1918 in Persia while leading a company of Armenian Christians escaping persecution. He was hastily buried under rocks while his wife prayed the Lord's Prayer as the group continued its flight.

18. Extract: *Materials for the Study of the Bábí religion* p. 260.

The last two documents, which are in English, were kindly communicated to me by Mr W.A. Shedd, who wrote concerning them as follows in a letter dated March 1, 1911:

Dear Professor Browne,

In going over papers of my father, I found something which I think may be of value from a historical point of view. I have no books here, nor are any accessible here, to be certain whether this bit of testimony (or rather these two bits) have been used or not. I think probably not, and I am sure that I can do nothing better than send them to you, with the wish that you may use them as you think best. Of the authenticity of the papers there can be no doubt.

Yours very truly,

W. A. Shedd.

The first of these two documents is very valuable as giving the personal impression produced by the Báb, during the period of His imprisonment and suffering, on a cultivated and impartial Western mind. Very few Western Christians can have had the opportunity of seeing, still less of conversing with, the Báb, and I do not know of any other who has recorded his impressions.

19. Of course, this might raise doubts as to whether the photograph may have been of John. Photography would not have

been available in 1833, the first photograph in Iran is from 1842. Perhaps he wore one decoration which had belonged to his father. Also, Mr Landy assures me it is of William. On photography in Persia:

[http://www.kargah.com/history\\_of\\_iranian\\_photography/early/index.php?other](http://www.kargah.com/history_of_iranian_photography/early/index.php?other)

20. Letter: Moojan Momen to John Landy, Nov. 1984.