

# The Outlook

Vol. 68

June 22, 1901

No. 8

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**The Outlook** is a Weekly Newspaper and an Illustrated Monthly Magazine in one. It is published every Saturday—fifty-two issues a year. The first issue in each month is an Illustrated Magazine Number, containing about twice as many pages as the regular weekly issue, and many pictures.

**Price.**—The subscription price is Three Dollars a year, payable in advance. Ten cents a copy.

**Postage is Prepaid** by the publishers for all subscriptions in the United States, Hawaiian Islands, Philippine Islands, Guam, Porto Rico, Tutuila Samoa, Canada, and Mexico. For all other countries in the Postal Union add \$1.56 for postage.

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287 Fourth Avenue, New York

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that directs us in ways we know not of. The destiny of no individual is determined by himself; the destiny of no nation is determined by the aggregate of the human wills that make up the nation. "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." We live in history as we live upon this globe. Travel north or south, east or west; plant corn or wheat or cotton; live in Europe or America—however we travel, whatever we do, wherever we live, we are going round with incredible speed in the world's orbit, whether we will or whether we will not. Our wills have absolutely nothing to do with it. We can understand what changes of day and night, summer and winter, the revolutions of the globe bring, and adapt our actions to them, but those changes we cannot modify. So

we are a part of the great movements of history; we do not make them; they are made by a power greater than our own; we may call it manifest destiny, or Providence, or God—call it what we will, it exists. It is for us to understand, to interpret, and to conform our lives to its commands. Christ rebuked the Pharisees because they did not discern the signs of the times; it is our duty to study the signs of the times, and understand what the Lord God Almighty means by human history, that we may work with him and not against him, and not think we are setting the world back in its orbit because we are traveling in the opposite direction to that in which the world is going. This is our general duty; to what specific duties it leads us as a Nation I shall consider in the next article.

## The Babites

By Henry Harris Jessup, D.D.

**I**N the summer of 1897 an aged Persian Sheikh came to the American Press in Beirut, bringing a large sheet of pasteboard on which he wished a map to be mounted. On one side it was glazed with black varnish, and had inscribed on it in elegant Persian script in gold letters the Arabic words "Ya Beha el Abha," "O Glory of the most Glorious," the Babite motto. Our clerk, perceiving this, asked the Sheikh for the card, and said he would mount the map on a new and better one.

That Beha motto now hangs in my study. The old Sheikh said, in explanation of his scheme of mounting a map on the face of this beautiful motto, "I have had this hanging on the wall of my room and prayed to it for twelve years, and found it to be vanity and worthless. I now prefer to read the Bible."

Ever since the first Babite reform movement in Persia in 1845, the Christian world has hoped that some of its liberal tenets might lead the Persian people to Christianity. But thus far the hope has not been realized. Those who read the Bible seem to prefer to find an occult inner double meaning in the simplest language, and construct for themselves a

kind of mystic religious philosophy in which the Persians delight.

According to the best authorities, Babism arose as follows:

Mirza Ali Mohammed appeared in Shiraz in 1845, a pupil of Sheikh Ahmed Zein ed Din, who taught a mixture of Sufism, mystic philosophy, and Moslem Shiite law, and said that the absent Mahdi, now in a spiritual world called Jabalka and Jabersa, would soon appear, and that he was the Bab or Door of the Mahdi. He then made up a system composed of Moslem, Nusairiyeh, Jewish, and heathen doctrines; and then claimed to be Bab ed Dîn, and afterwards the Nukta or Center and Creator of truth, and then that he was Deity personified; then that he was the prophet Mohammed, and produced a new book called the Beyân, which is the Babite Bible, in twenty thousand verses, Arabic and Persian. Complaint was made of its bad grammar and that this is a sign of imperfection. He explained the ungrammatical Arabic by the fact that the words and letters rebelled and sinned in a previous world, then transmigrated to this world, and, as a punishment for sin in a previous existence, were put under grammatical rules; but he in mercy forgave all

sinner, even to the letters of the alphabet, and released them, and now they can go as they please!

He was followed by tens of thousands. In 1849 he was killed, with multitudes of his followers. Among his followers was a beautiful and eloquent woman named Selma, who divorced her husband and followed Ali Mohammed the Bab, who styled her Kurret el Ain (light or refreshment to the eye). Ali Mohammed raised an army to fight the Persian troops, but was caught and strangled.

Before Ali Mohammed's death he said his successor would be a young disciple named Yahya. This Mirza Yahya succeeded him, taking the title of "Subh Azel"—morning of eternity.

The Bab made the month nineteen days, answering to the nineteen members of the sacred hierarchy of which the Bab is the chief.

Subh Azel was the fourth in the hierarchy, and on the death of the Bab Ali Mohammed, and the two others above him on the list, he became chief of the sect by regular promotion. Upon the outbreak of persecution against them, Subh Azel and his older brother Mirza Hassein Ali, who was styled Beha Allah, fled to Baghdad and remained from 1853 to 1864, then to Adrianople. Beha had persuaded Subh Azel to retire and conceal himself from human gaze, saying to the people that he was present but invisible. Beha then claimed the succession, and two hostile parties arose, Azelites and Behaites. They were both then exiled (1864) to Adrianople, where plots and poisoning among the two parties, and anonymous letters sent to the Sultan charging each other with political conspiracies, led the Sultan to exile (in 1866) Subh Azel to Famagusta in Cyprus, and Beha Allah to Acre. Four of the Azelites were sent with Beha, and their leader claimed that Beha was instrumental in having all of them assassinated in Acre.

Subh Azel died before 1880, and Beha in 1892.

Beha left three sons—Abbas Effendi, now sixty; Mohammed Ali, now forty-five; and Bedea, now aged thirty-five. Mohammed Ali claims that the father Beha appointed him spiritual head and Abbas secular head, but Abbas has usurped both. They are now divided, the two younger

brothers being in a bitter lawsuit with Abbas, who has all the prestige of holding the funds, and the reputation among his followers of being a reincarnation of Christ.

To understand Babism, we should remember the sources from which it was derived. Jemal ed Din, the Afghani, says that its author borrowed from Hinduism, Pantheism, Sufism, and the doctrines of the Nusairiyeh. The Nusairiyeh of northern Syria believe in one God, self-existent and eternal. This God manifested himself seven times in human form, from Abel to Ali, son of Abi Talib, which last manifestation was the most perfect.

At each of these manifestations the Deity made use of two other persons, the first created out of the light of his essence and by himself, and the second created by the first.

The Deity is called the Maana—the meaning or reality of all things; the second, the Ism—name or veil, because by it the Maana conceals its glory, while, by it, it reveals itself to men. The third, the Bab—Door, because through it is the entrance to the knowledge of the two former.

The following table shows the seven trinities of the Nusairiyeh:

Maana.	Ism.	Bab.
1. Abel	Adam	Gabriel
2. Seth	Noah	Yayeel
3. Joseph	Jacob	Ham ibn Cush
4. Joshua	Moses	Daw
5. Asaph	Solomon	Abdullah ibn Simaan
6. Simon (Cephas)	Jesus	Rozabah
7. Ali	Mohammed	Salman el Farisee

After Ali, the Deity manifested himself in the Imams, in some of them totally and in others partially, but Ali is the eternal Maana, the divine essence, and the three are an inseparable trinity. Now add to this the mystic teaching of the Mohammedan system of Sufism or Tusowwof.

Pure Sufism teaches that only God exists. He is in all things and all things are in him. All visible and invisible things are an emanation from him and are not really distinct from him. Religions are matters of indifference. There is no difference between good and evil, for all is reduced to Unity, and God is the real author of the acts of men. Man is not free in his action. By death the soul returns to the bosom of Divinity, and the great object of life is absorption into the divine nature.

Bear in mind also the doctrine of the Persian or Shiah Moslems, that Ali was the first legitimate Imam, or Caliph of Mohammed, and that he existed before Adam, and that the twelfth Imam, Mohammed Abdal Kasim, was the Mahdi, and that he is now concealed in some secret place and will appear again on earth. Add to this the highly imaginative and mystic character of the Persian mind, its fondness for poetry and religious extravagance, and you have a preparation for the appearance of a man who had the intellect, strong will, and abhorrence of sham to make him a leader among his fellows.

Abbas Effendi, the oldest son of Beha, is now living in Haifa, with about seventy or eighty of his Persian followers, who are called Behaites. Nothing is heard of Subh Azel or his followers.

Some years since, Dr. Ibrahim Kheirulla, an educated Syrian of great mental acumen, conceived the idea of introducing Beha-Babism into the United States. He declared Beha to be the Messiah returned to earth and Abbas to be his reincarnation. He visited Abbas, and from time to time, as his accredited agent and promoter, has brought his disciples, chiefly American women, to visit Abbas, and some of them at least have bowed down and worshiped him as the Messiah.

A cousin of Dr. Kheirulla who is clerk of the American Press in Beirut has given me the following statement :

"The Doctor, after the death of his first wife in Egypt in 1882, married first a Coptic widow in El Fayûm, whom he abandoned, and then married a Greek girl whom he also abandoned, and who was still living in 1897 in Cairo. He was at the World's Parliament in Chicago, and tried to promote several mechanical inventions, as a rubber boot, envelopes, buttons, etc. At one time he was worth three thousand pounds. He then obtained the degree of Doctor, and taught mental philosophy. He then helped a Greek priest, Jebara, in publishing a book on the unity of Islam and Christianity, which fell flat and had no influence on the public mind. He then opened a medical clinic to cure nervous diseases by the laying on of hands and reading from Psalm xxix., 7, the words, 'The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire,' etc., etc. Then he

went to Chicago and tried trade, and then teaching, and preaching, and pretty much everything else. He is a smart talker, full of plausible argument, and can make white appear black. Of late he has had little to do with religion. It can be said to his credit that, after receiving aid in the Beirut College, he paid back the money advanced to him."

Up to last summer he had the confidence of Abbas Effendi and represented him in the United States. The "Egyptian Gazette" of November, 1900, states that Dr. Kheirulla on his last visit to Haifa differed with Abbas, claiming that Beha Allah only was the true divinity, and Abbas is simply a teacher. Dr. and Mrs. Goetzinger, on the other hand, maintain that Abbas must be worshiped with divine homage, as he is the true Christ. Some of the American Babites now follow Dr. Kheirulla and some Dr. Goetzinger, but the latter has the official credentials, and thus the house is divided against itself.

In Baghdad in 1860 the Babite house was divided into Behaites and Azelites. In Haifa it is divided between Abbas Effendi and his two brothers Mohammed and Bedea. In America it is between Dr. Kheirulla and Dr. Goetzinger.

The "Egyptian Gazette" states that Dr. Goetzinger expected two hundred pilgrims from America to visit and worship Abbas during the present season.

On a recent visit to Haifa I called on Abbas Effendi and had a half-hour's conversation with him. My companion was Chaplain Wells, of Tennessee, recently from the Philippines, who had met at Port Saïd an American lady on her way to Haifa to visit Abbas Effendi. We met her at the hotel and had a four hours' conversation with her. She seemed fascinated or hypnotized by the Effendi. She had been converted four years ago under Mr. Moody's preaching in New York, attended the Brick Church for a time, and in some way heard of Abbas Effendi as being an eminently holy man. Said she: "I feel in his presence, as I did in Mr. Moody's presence, that he is a very holy man and brings me nearer to God than any other person." She said that she was his guest, and that every morning he expounds the New Testament in Arabic. "His two daughters, who know English, take notes and then translate

them to me." We asked her if there were not scores of godly, learned ministers in America who could explain the New Testament in English without needing an interpreter. She said yes, but seemed to have a hazy idea that there was something different in Abbas. While we were conversing in the hotel parlor a tall man passed the door, clad in a long robe, and she whispered to us, "There goes that bad man Bedea Effendi, brother of Abbas, who wants to kill him. He is a spy."

I went out and addressed the man in Arabic, and he told me he was a younger brother of Abbas, and he had a room at this hotel. I sent word by this good lady to Abbas Effendi, and he appointed nine o'clock the next morning for an interview. Chaplain Wells went with me. The Effendi has two houses in Haifa, one for his family, in which the American lady pilgrims are entertained, and one down town, where he receives only men. Here his Persian followers meet him. They bow in worship when they meet him on the street or when they hear his voice. On Friday he prays with the Moslems in the mosque, as he is still reputed a good Mohammedan of the Shi'ite sect.

We entered a large reception-room, at one end of which was a long divan covered, as usual in Syria, with a white cloth. In a moment he came in and saluted us cordially with the usual Arabic compliments, and then sat down on the end of the divan next to the wall and invited us to sit next to him.

Beha Allah, the father of Abbas, used to wear a veil in the street and live secluded from the gaze of men, living in an atmosphere of mystery which greatly impressed his devout Persian followers. But Abbas Effendi, on succeeding his father, threw off this reserve, and is a man among men. He has been in Beirut often, and has a reputation of being a great scholar in Persian, Turkish, and Arabic, writing with equal ease and eloquence in all. He visits his friends in Haifa, and is a man of great affability and courtesy—traits which characterize many of the Mohammedan and Druze Sheikhs and Effendis whom I know in Beirut, Sidon, Damascus, and Mount Lebanon. After another round of salutations, I introduced myself and Chaplain Wells, and told him that, although a resident of Syria for forty-

five years, I had never visited Haifa before, and, having heard and read much of his father and himself, I was glad to meet him.

He asked my profession. I told him I was an American missionary, and was connected with the American Press and Publishing House in Beirut.

"Yes," said he, "I know your Press and your books. I have been in Beirut, and knew Dr. van Dyke, who was a most genial, learned, and eloquent man, and I highly esteemed him."

I said his greatest work was the translation of the Bible into Arabic.

He at once rejoined: "Very true. It is the best translation from the original made into any Eastern language. It is far superior to the Turkish and the Persian versions. The Persian especially is very defective. Nothing is more difficult than to translate the Bible from its original tongues. The translator must fully understand the genius of both languages and grasp the inner spiritual meaning. For instance, Jesus the Christ said, 'I am the bread which came down from heaven.' Now, he did not mean that he was literally bread, but bread signifies grace and blessing; *i.e.*, I came down from heaven as grace and blessing to men's souls. But if you translate that into Persian literally, as bread, it would not be understood. The same difficulty exists," he continued, "in translating the Koran into another language."

I said that I quite agreed with him, as the English translations of the Koran are in a great part dry and vapid, but that there is a difference between translating a text and explaining it. A translator must be faithful to the text itself.

He then said that hundreds had tried to translate the Koran from Arabic into Persian, including the great Zamakhshari, and all had utterly failed.

I remarked that it was a great comfort that the Bible was so well translated into Arabic, and had been so widely distributed, and that since 1865, when Dr. van Dyke completed the translation of the whole Bible, our Press had issued more than six hundred thousand copies, and this year would issue from thirty thousand to fifty thousand copies.

I then remarked that the Mohammedans object to our use of the term "Son

of God," and asked him if he regarded Christ as the Son of God.

He said: "Yes, I do; I believe in the Trinity. But the Trinity is a doctrine above human comprehension, and yet it can be understood."

He then asked me: "Did Christ understand the Trine personality of the Deity, *i.e.*, the Trinity?"

I said, "Most certainly."

"Then," said he, "it is understandable, yet *we* cannot understand it."

I replied, "There are many things in nature which we believe and yet cannot understand." I told him the story of the old man who overheard a young man exclaim to a crowd of his companions, "I will never believe what I cannot understand." The old man said to him, "Do you see those animals in the field—the cattle eating grass, and it turns into hair on their backs; sheep eating the same grass, and it turns into wool; and swine eating it, and it becomes bristles on their backs; do you believe this?" The youth said, "Yes." "Do you understand it?" "No." "Then," said the old man, "never say you will not believe what you do not understand."

The Effendi remarked: "Yes, that is like a similar remark made once by a Persian to the famous Zamakhshari, 'I cannot understand this doctrine of God's Unity and Eternity, and I will not believe it.' Zamakhshari replied, 'Do you understand the watery secretions of your own body?' 'No.' 'But you believe they exist? Then say no more you will not believe what you do not understand.'"

I then explained to the Effendi our view of salvation by faith in Christ; that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life, and that, being justified by faith, we have peace with God; that Christ has paid the ransom, and now God can be just, and yet the justifier of them who believe. "And does your excellency believe this?" He replied promptly, "Yes." "And do you accept the Christ as your Saviour?" He said, "Yes." "And do you believe that Jesus the Christ will come again and judge the world?" He said, "Yes."

I then drew a little nearer to him and said: "My dear friend, I am more than sixty-eight years of age, and you are almost as old, and soon we shall stand together

before the judgment seat of Christ. Now I want to ask you a very plain question. I have seen in an American paper [the "Literary Digest"] a statement that an American woman, evidently of sincere character, had stated that she came to Haifa and visited you, and that when she entered your room she felt that she was in the very presence of the Son of God, the Christ, and that she held out her arms, crying, 'My Lord, my Lord,' and rushed to you, kneeling at your blessed feet, sobbing like a child. Now, I could not believe this, and thought it a newspaper invention. I wish to ask you whether this is true. Can it be right for the creature to accept the worship due only to the Creator?"

He smiled and seemed somewhat disturbed, and said, "What is this sudden change of subject? Where were we?—discussing on the high themes of the Trinity and redemption and divine mysteries, and now you suddenly open an entirely different subject. This is entirely different; let us keep to theological themes."

I replied: "It is a change of subject, but I am seriously anxious to know whether that statement is true."

He then said very calmly, "I am only the poorest and humblest of servants."

I saw that he was not disposed to answer such a point-blank question and seemed much embarrassed, and glanced towards an attendant or disciple, a young Persian, who sat in a chair facing us.

So I took up another question. I said: "The Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. Now, the Mohammedans claim that Mohammed is the Paraclete. We claim and believe that He is the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity."

"Yes," said he, "I know that you believe that. That is your doctrine; but that is a very profound subject and very important."

I saw from his manner that he was getting weary of talking, and told him who my companion was—the Rev. Captain Wells, a United States chaplain from the Philippines, who was a strong temperance advocate, and had made a report to President McKinley urging the prohibition of the use of liquor in the United States army. He expressed his approval of the total abstinence principle and his gratifi-

cation that there is a temperance reading-room in Beirut.

I then alluded to the "Episode of the Bab," written by Professor E. G. Browne, of Cambridge, and asked him if he knew Professor Browne and his book? He replied: "Professor Browne has not comprehended our views. He heard us and then heard our enemies [the Subh Azelites], and wrote down the views of all. How can he get the truth? Now, supposing that a man wanted to learn about the Jews, and you are, we will suppose, an anti-Semite. He asks you about the Jews and writes down your views. Then he asks a Rabbi and takes down his views, and prints both. How can he get at the real truth? So with Professor Browne. He sees us through the eyes of our enemies."

I then invited the Effendi to let me know when he came to Beirut, that I might call on him. He replied: "When I come to Beirut, I shall do myself the honor of calling upon you."

And then we took our leave, with the usual profuse Arabic salutations.

Now, what can one say in brief of such a man? Whether intentionally on his part or not, he is now acting what seems to be a double part—a Moslem in the mosque, a Christ, or at least a Christian mystic, at his own house. He prays with the Moslems, "There is no God but God," and expounds the Gospels as an incarnation of the Son of God. His dislike of Professor Browne comes from the fact that Professor Browne visited Subh el Azel in Cyprus and obtained from him documents which reflect seriously upon Beha Allah, and charge him with assassination and other crimes.

His declarations of belief in the Trinity and redemption through the Christ must

be interpreted in the light of Sufist pantheism and of his belief in a succession of incarnations, of which his followers regard him as the last and greatest.

It is difficult to regard without indignation the Babite proselytism now being carried on in the United States. One American woman who passed through Beirut recently, *en route* for the Abbas Effendi shrine, stated that she was at first an agnostic and found that a failure; then she tried Theosophy, and found that too thin; then she tried Christian Science and obtained a diploma authorizing her to heal the sick and raise the dead, and found that a sham, and now was on her way to see what Abbas Effendi had to offer!

Surely that woman has found out what it is to feed on ashes.

At the military barracks in Beirut is a tower clock with an eastern face keeping eastern time, in which it is always twelve o'clock at sunset, and a western face keeping European time. Abbas Effendi seems to the people of Syria to have these two faces—the eastern for the Moslems and the Turkish Government by which he is kept in exile from Persia; and the western for the pilgrims who come from New York and Chicago.

On Mount Carmel are certain round stones, geodes of flint, hollow and lined with crystals of quartz. The people call them Elijah's watermelons. They look smooth and round and melon-like on the outside, but inside are nothing but crystals, which would tax the digestion of a tougher man than even the stalwart Tishbite. These pilgrims are attracted by the rumor of spiritual fruits in Haifa just under the Carmel of Elijah, but they may find to their sorrow that there is no more true nourishment in them than in Elijah's watermelons.

## The Master Builder

By Ernest Neal Lyon

The lowliest work he perfecteth,  
Transforming, by his care,  
The humble hut of Nazareth  
To many mansions fair.

More wondrous still! Of earthly clay,  
Misshapen, marred by sin,  
He buildeth temples, day by day,  
That he may work therein.

Shall Selfishness deny him sway,  
Or Folly bar the door?  
Dear Master, make our hearts, we pray,  
Thy dwelling evermore!