



Joseph Jefferson : Sarah J. Farmer : Swami Abhedananda
(The Camp at Green Acre)

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS AT GREENACRE

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ON THE THIRD day of July, 1894, there gathered in the little town of Eliot, Maine, a group of men and women resolved to form a center where might be continued each summer the work so auspiciously begun at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893, when thinkers of the most opposite schools had freely expressed their views on religion, ethics, philosophy and sociology, and had amicably listened to the other side of each question. In the call for the Chicago Congresses their purposes had been stated as to "review the progress already achieved in the world, state the living problems now awaiting solution, and suggest the means of farther progress." Quoting this and reaffirming it as the purpose of the summer meetings at Eliot, the program of the first season promised "a series of lectures and courses on topics which shall quicken and energize the spiritual, mental and moral natures, and give the surest and serenest physical rest." It had been determined "to form a center at the Greenacre Inn where thinking men and women, reaching out to help their fellows through means tried and untried, might find an audience recognizing not alone revealed truth, but truth in the process of revelation. It was believed that for those of different faiths, different nationalities, different training, the points of contact might be found, the great underlying principles—the oneness of truth, the brotherhood of man; that to the individual this spot might mean the opening door to freedom, the tearing down of walls of prejudice and superstition."

The place selected for this work had been well chosen. At a beautiful spot on a tidal estuary (the so-called Piscataqua "river")

six miles from the sea, there had been built in 1890 the Greenacre Inn. Even in the beginning it was designed to accommodate people of the more cultured classes and persons with literary and artistic tastes. John Greenleaf Whittier had found there a pleasant refuge from the heats of the New England hinterland, declaring it to be "the pleasantest place I was ever in." Whittier had brought with him the authoress "Grace Greenwood" (Mrs. Lippincott) and his cousin, Mrs. Gertrude Cartland who, clad in her simple but dignified garb of a Quakeress, had charmed all present by her impressive recitals from the mystical writings of Madame Guyon. Looking from the windows of the Inn the guests had sometimes seen Miss Olea Bull gracefully dancing the Norwegian "Spring Dance." Sometimes too she played, and one of the enthusiastic beholders wrote: "You will hear grand music from her. She is the only daughter of Ole Bull who played the violin as no other person ever did. I do not think you ever saw such willowy grace as there is in that child's every movement. She is wonderfully made."

The Greenacre Inn was thus well known to the intellectuals of New England who gave an enthusiastic reception to the announcement of the new Greenacre idea, and flocked to Eliot to take part in the meetings. Mrs. Ole Bull gave the opening address of the first season, and Miss Sarah J. Farmer acted as secretary of the conferences. Among the speakers of that summer are to be noted the names of Edward Everett Hale, Swami Vivekananda, Lewis G. Janes, Ralph Waldo Trine, B. O. Flower of *The Arena*, Neal Dow and a host of others, fifty or sixty speakers in all being listed. The subjects discussed included Universal Religion, Prophets and Prophecy, The Theosophical Movement, The Religion of India, Is Spiritualism Worth While if True? The Relation of Religion to Art, Evolution and Life, The Possibilities of Woman, Motherhood, Mental Freedom, The Education of the Future, Immanuel Kant, Individualism and Socialism, and Economic Natural Law.

Among the celebrities visiting Greenacre in the next few years and contributing to the programs were William Lloyd Garrison, Walter H. Page, Clarence Darrow, Lilian Whiting, Alice B. Stockham, B. Fay Mills, Orison Swett Marden, Elbert Hubbard, George D. Herron, Bolton Hall, Percival Chubb, W. M. Salter, Alfred W. Martin, Judge W. C. Robinson (Dean of the Catholic University of America), Prof. Joseph Le Conte, J. H. Hyslop, Lester A. Ward, John Fiske, C. H. A. Bjerregaard of the New York Astor Library,

W. T. Harris (U. S. Commissioner of Education), Carroll D. Wright (U. S. Commissioner of Labor) and Annie Besant. Theodore T. Wright, Secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund, lectured on Recent Explorations confirming and interpreting the Bible. John Burroughs gave a Talk on Nature. J. T. Trowbridge, Edwin Markham and Sam E. Foss gave readings from their works, W. D. Howells came and read his *Traveller from Altruria*, and the famous actor Joseph Jefferson (who became a charter member of the Green Acre Fellowship when this was formed in 1902) regaled the Greenacreites every summer under the pines with informal talks on the drama. Some practical talks on art were given by painters and sculptors not unknown to fame (e.g. Arthur W. Dow of Ipswich and F. Edwin Elwell of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art) and musical instruction was available for those who cared to take it. A number of musicians and singers of the first rank likewise found their way to Eliot and freely gave their aid in enlivening the Greenacre proceedings with song and music. Geraldine Farrar was at Greenacre as a girl, and even then a great future was predicted for the youthful singer. The story is told that on one occasion, when she consented to entertain Greenacre with her singing, she uttered a very long drawn out note, and just as she was about to terminate it the whistle of a distant locomotive prolonged the sound for some five minutes. Whereupon the waggish Joseph Jefferson said in a loud aside that brought down the house: "My! What a voice that girl has!"¹

Noteworthy was the Evolution Conference of 1895 organized by Lewis G. Janes. The proceedings were opened with an address by Dr. E. D. Cope of the University of Pennsylvania on Present Problems of Organic Evolution, and in the second meeting there was read a paper on Social Evolution and Social Duty contributed by

¹ A variorum version substitutes for the name of Geraldine Farrar that of another Greenacre songbird, Estelle Harris, who, like Miss Farrar, was a pupil of the Greenacreite prima donna, Emma Cecelia Thursby. A pretty little story *The Lifting Up of Liza Ann*, written by a Greenacreite, Lida A. Churchill, tells how the "Lady in Gray" (Sarah Farmer) persuaded a shy young waitress of Greenacre Inn to sing at one of the meetings, with the result that she was taken up as a protegee by wealthy listeners and ultimately blossomed out into a famous singer. It has often been supposed that Geraldine Farrar was here referred to: a supposition which always aroused great indignation in Miss Farrar, as her relation to the Inn was never other than that of a paying guest. In the story the Inn is designated as "The House on the Bluff," the "brother Paul of the Tents" mentioned being Mr. H. C. Douglass who had charge of Sunrise Camp—one of the many Greenacreites who gladly toiled day after day without any compensation whatsoever.

Herbert Spencer to this Greenacre conference, though originally prepared in view of being read at the Chicago Congress of Religions of 1893. Two sessions of the conference were held daily. Papers were read on such subjects as Social Ideals tested by Evolutionary Principles, Natural Selection and Crime, and The Evolution of the God-Idea, the conference being finally closed with two addresses by John Fiske. This conference led in the following season to the organization of the School of Comparative Religion which, under the supervision of Dr. Janes, functioned each summer at Greenacre from 1893 on, the meetings being usually held in the open air under the pines. Thoroughly in sympathy with the Religious Parliament idea, Dr. Janes was exceptionally well fitted to put on a scientific and systematic basis the work in this line which had hitherto been carried on at Greenacre in a somewhat desultory way. One of the early contributors to *The Open Court*, he was prominent in the Ethical Culture movement and in the Free Religious Association, and had been President of the Brooklyn Ethical Association for eleven years. Remarkable for the breadth of his intellectual and religious sympathies, he knew how to insure a cordial welcome to the representative of every shade of opinion, and to make each speaker feel that the atmosphere of his audience was receptive and sympathetic. Dr. Janes brought to Greenacre, among others, the Vedantist Swamis Saradananda and Abhedananda, the Buddhist Anagarika H. Dharmapala, the Jain Virchand R. Gandhi, Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, and, above all, Prof. Nathaniel Schmidt of Cornell University, who for many years was the chief standby of the scholarly and scientific element of the Greenacreites. Dr. Carus came to Greenacre for a short time in August 1897 and lectured on Religion in Science and Philosophy. The report of the conferences notes that he "was greeted with great cordiality and found here many friends who read and appreciate his writings." He also "had a few conferences informally in which he discussed the problem of the Ego and the philosophy of Lao-tze." Dr. Carus was hailed at Greenacre as "the representative of sober criticism and exact science" and although "he did not countenance the various aberrations of occultism" in vogue among the more erratic and emotional of the Greenacreites, it is recorded that his "criticism is not offensive; he confines himself to a sober exposition of his own views, and when he is requested to speak his word on the various mystic ten-

dencies he makes an occasional fling at others, but he does it with humor and is never sarcastic."

The Greenacre movement grew apace, and soon the Inn proved inadequate to lodge the attendants at the meetings who overflowed into the near-by farm houses. An array of sixty or seventy tents—Sunrise Camp—grew up on the banks of the Piscataqua, and people of prominence did not disdain their primitive accommodations. "The soil is very porous" wrote E. P. Powell in *The Christian Register*, "and absorbs water very speedily. You will lie in the tents laughing at storms and never catching cold. One reason, I imagine, is that we have something else to think of, for colds have a certain dependence on spiritual and intellectual conditions. In the Inn you will see the Whittier Table; and if you are a lecturer, you will be permitted to sit in his chair." Near the Inn was erected a modest auditorium tent, holding three hundred people, but this proved too small, and it was soon necessary to provide another with double the capacity. Usually the program for the day began at 9 A. M. with unsectarian devotional exercises in the large tent, following which, in fair weather, the Greenacreites trooped off to the beautiful Lysekloster Pines (so named from the Norwegian home of Ole Bull) where they seated themselves on the soft carpet of pine needles and, drinking in the fragrance of the piney forest, listened to the morning lectures. Only on rainy days was a tent used for these morning meetings, but in the afternoon lectures were commonly given in the large tent, its sides being left wide open so that one could gaze across the river at the New Hampshire countryside and see in the distance the foothills of the White Mountains. The tent served in the evenings, sometimes for lectures, sometimes for musical or dramatic entertainments. The latter purposes however were better served by the "Eirenion" (Abode of Peace), a large wooden structure erected not far from the Inn in 1897. In 1896 the gratuitous services of an enthusiastic printer were enlisted, and there was published at Eliot, in the interests of the conferences, a weekly newspaper, *The Greenacre Voice*, this effort persevering for several seasons.

Side by side with the conferences on religion other activities went on. It is narrated that on one record-breaking day sixteen different meetings were held, the first being a Vedantist devotional exercise at 6 A. M. which was an addition to, not a substitute for the usual service at 9, and that a certain lady, trying to take in all

that Greenacre had to offer on that occasion, lamented because she had been able to attend only nine! There were educational conferences, more evolution conferences, nature conferences and sociological conferences. Classes for teaching the New Thought practices were held by Horatio Dresser and his assistant, Miss Ellen M. Dyer, when weather permitted in the open air, these and the classes of Miss Mary H. Burnham's School of Music being the only functions at which payment of a fee was required of those taking part. "We all wander around as fancy leads us" said a lady "and if we see a group of people anywhere, just drop in. And the freedom and informality is a large part of the charm of Greenacre life." Each year a Peace Conference was held under the Greenacre flag which floated on a tall pole near the river, a white silken banner on which was inscribed in green letters the single word "Peace." In later years when factional quarrels were rife among the Greenacreites, some cynic suggested that this be described as "The flag we fight under," and there is told the story that once, when two ladies at a meeting in the Eirenion were so angry with each other as to all but come to blows, the custodian of the standard, Mr. Douglass, hastened to lower the Peace Flag as a sign that peace no longer reigned at Greenacre.

Once a year was celebrated Emerson Day in honor of the great Transcendentalist. The meetings were held in the Pines and presided over by Frank B. Sanborn, the last resident member of the Concord School of Philosophy and the friend and companion of Emerson and Thoreau. A favorite spot for this celebration was in front of a gigantic boulder known as The Mystic Rock (also called the Druid Stone) which sometimes served as a platform for the speakers of the day. One who was accustomed to be present described the occasion as follows: "We sit under the trees and listen to the tender intimate touches from Emerson's life and experiences. Then Charles Malloy gives a series of Emerson readings, with lines and interlines of interpretation, the wealth of a lifetime of study." There were group walks through the woods, made more profitable by talks on the birds and other forms of wild life which could be seen at times, for Eliot, though legally a town, only two short hours' ride from Boston and but three miles from the city of Portsmouth, is really a slice of the country, there being no large aggregation of houses but rather a scattering of homesteads, some quite small but others covering many acres, interspersed with tracts

of woodland several miles deep. In these woods could be found the camps of one or two Greenacreites who preferred the seclusion they afforded, notably Dharmapala, the Buddhist monk, and Ralph Waldo Trine, familiarly known as "Judge Trine" on account of the judicial serenity of his countenance. It was in a willow-woven hut by the side of the Mystic Rock that Mr. Trine wrote his famous work: *In Tune with the Infinite*, and it is said that more than once when engaged in its composition he was interrupted by a curious cow who poked her head in the open doorway. Sometimes the early morning "Kneippers" would wind up their exercises with a call on Mr. Trine who, when not preoccupied with literary work, always gave them a hearty welcome and served them coffee, reputed to be the best in Greenacre.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that the majority of Greenacreites had any intention of keeping their noses to the grindstone and acquiring new knowledge by a severe course of mental discipline. The magnet that drew summer visitors to Eliot was the life that could be led there, the possibility seen, by people with tastes above that of the common herd, of mingling with their own kind. One could go to a lecture and, if not inclined to listen too attentively, gaze dreamily at the blue sky just showing through the green branches or look out on the broad expanse of the Piscataqua and become oblivious to everything else. After a lecture the Greenacreites would stroll through the woods and along the country lanes, and no introduction was necessary for the commencement of a conversation. This conversation might not go very deeply into the questions discussed at the conferences, but would be very much above the level of the conversation of the card party or the talk at the conventional dinner table. Social distinctions and the possession of a fortune or the lack of one played no part in the fellowship of the Greenacreites; the only thing that mattered was behaving decently and being interesting to talk with. Men and women of wealth were by no means unknown in the colony, but coming, as they almost invariably did, from a long line of more or less wealthy forbears, they never thought of flaunting their prosperity in the eyes of the less fortunate Greenacreites, but donned their old clothes and enjoyed the simple life like the rest. The *nouveau riche* were conspicuous by their absence, and women who at home had their full staffs of servants could here be seen clad in calico, picking blackberries along the country lanes to take back to their landladies as

part of the evening repast. Greenacre was thus as different from the ordinary summer resort as day is from night, and even people who were not inclined to do much high thinking found to their taste the simple living, coupled with refinement and culture that was in vogue in Eliot.

We must not exaggerate the influence of the lecturers and conferences on the Greenacreites, and there is no doubt that the intellectual atmosphere of the place was far more potent than any formal course of instruction could be in spreading the spirit of the Parliament of Religions. No religious or philosophical or sociological sect was dominant, and a Greenacreite had necessarily to throw off the sectarian attitude and listen with respectful attention to doctrines which he could not possibly bring himself to accept. The customs and scruples of the religionists from foreign lands were courteously respected even when they seemed very far fetched to Occidental minds. To do this was sometimes far from easy. It is recorded that one lady invited the Jain, Gandhi, to a dinner which she had taken care to make vegetarian, hoping thus to suit his tastes. But "he would eat nothing save ice cream, and if he had known there were eggs in it he would not have eaten that. He taboos all vegetables grown under ground."

A Good Greenacreite would not even hesitate to take part in the ceremonies of alien faiths. One night the Buddhist monk, Dharmapala, who had astonished the natives of Eliot by going about clad in bright orange colored robes and equally gaudy yellow shoes, organized a pilgrimage to the Pines in which all Greenacre took part, to celebrate the festival of the Full Moon. The Greenacreites gathered at nightfall, arrayed in white, each person carrying a bunch of flowers and a lighted candle-lantern. Headed by Dharmapala, who chanted in sing-song tones as he walked, the picturesque procession wended its way to the Pines where the posies were used to build an altar of flowers under a magnificent tree which had been named The Bodhi Pine in memory of the Tree of Wisdom under which tradition says the Gautama Buddha sat. By its side Dharmapala seated himself on the ground, crosslegged, in Buddha posture, while the Greenacreites, kept en rapport by a circlet of yellow cord which each held by one hand, grouped themselves around him endeavoring to adjust themselves to the same uncomfortable position. For several hours each gazed at his own candle on which he concentrated all his thoughts, and some of the pilgrims who had

taken the matter so seriously as to follow Dharmapala's injunction to prepare for the occasion by a fast beginning at daybreak, and had let nothing but a few drops of water pass their lips all that day, were rewarded by imagining they saw the ghostly forms which they had been told might be made manifest to them. With a fine Catholicism the same men and women who participated in this Buddhist ceremony would lend their aid to the worship of the setting sun by the Parsee, Jehangier D. Cola, and stand by his side in respectful silence as he made obeisance to the glowing orb. Equal zest was shown in going through the ceremonies of the Midsummer Nature Worship, inaugurated by Mr. Bjerregaard. Such proceedings, though they made Greenacre more interesting to people of broad mentality, were quite incomprehensible to the good Congregationalists of Eliot, who began to show some aversion to the "pagan" summer visitors. The feelings of the towns' folk were also aroused by the practices of some Greenacreites who took mud baths, and walked about on the shores of the Piscataqua in garbs that at the beaches of to-day would be deemed ultra-modest bathing costumes. "Kneipping" was another trial to the natives. Those were the days in which Father Kneipp gained a brief celebrity by advocating running barefooted in the dewy grass as the royal road to health, and the Eliot people often saw the summer visitors engaging in these unseemly antics as they were deemed. A contemporary account of Greenacre throws a vivid light on the attitude of Eliot people in 1897. " 'This world is an amazin' queer place,' was confided to me by one of the farmers' wives" wrote Laura S. McAdoo, " 'and Greenacre is the queerest part of it. Why have you seen those droves of people that run through the fields in a kind of dogtrot early in the morning. They call that Kneipping, and they go to see the sun rise too! I'm sure I don't think that sunrise is such a sight, and I've seen it almost every day of my life. And they actually go worshipping the sun, and say heathen prayers when it goes down. I don't know what the world's coming to, when we have these foreigners over here dressed up in outlandish clothes preaching all sorts of strange doctrines, after we've been trying to convert them for hundreds of years. It's ridiculous! Why my little girl saw this new eastern man that wears purple and orange and I almost had to laugh at the young one. She said: Oh mamma! Here comes another devil! It must be Mr. Dharmapala's brother. Just look at that now' she continued, going to the window as the

expounder of Parseeism passed by attired in the national costume of his race. 'What's he after now? I believe they dress so just to look queer.'" Doubtless the little Eliot girl who called the foreigners in queer costumes "devils" had shuddered at the tales she heard in church* of the heathen Chinese who call Americans and Europeans "foreign devils," but we may be quite sure that neither she nor her mother had any inkling of how near culturally they were to the ignorant Chinese they so despised.

In the boom year of 1897 everything seemed rosy at Greenacre. Visitors flocked from all parts of the country to attend the conferences and take part in the life they had heard was so enjoyable. The lectures at times drew audiences of over eight hundred people, who, not finding seats inside the tent where the meetings were being held, stood around outside listening to the proceedings. Funds flowed in freely and were used (rather recklessly, as it turned out) in putting up the Eirenion, erecting three cottages to shelter the more distinguished summer visitors (the Whittier, Hildegard and Duon cottages) and enlarging and improving the kitchen and dining room of the Inn—in lieu of paying the long over-due rent on the latter. Thinking that a prosperous future was assured to Greenacre, several of the town's people built annexes to their homesteads to house future flocks of summer visitors, and during the next two years had no difficulty in filling them. To the superficial view all was well with Greenacre. But the institution was booked for a decline, as it had no satisfactory financial basis. Admission to all the lectures and conferences was absolutely free, and although it was suggested that those who attended should make voluntary contributions according to their means, the response was never sufficient for the needs of Greenacre. The only other resource was the money received at the Inn and at Sunrise Camp, that paid by the summer visitors for board in other places in no way benefitting Greenacre. And as the capacity of the Inn was so limited—it having only thirty-five rooms—and as the prices charged at it and in the tents were exceedingly moderate, the profits in any event could not be large. Moreover the possible profits were reduced by the fact that the lecturers at Greenacre received as compensation, besides their traveling expenses, free board at the Inn for a more or less lengthy stay, and the excessive number of lecturers and other non-paying guests made the situation very difficult. Notwithstanding various substantial gifts that were made to Greenacre the

financial situation became so bad that in 1900 the work was all but dropped. The School of Comparative Religion was suspended, and the only lecturers made use of that season were persons who had come to Eliot at their own expense and were paying the full charge for board at the Inn or elsewhere. The facts however were kept in the shade by calling this a "Sabbatical Year," the leading spirit in the Greenacre work, Miss Sarah Farmer, passing the summer abroad as the guest of a friend, Miss Maria Wilson, a fervent devotee of the Bahai religion: the first Greenacreites to succumb to the fascinations of that offshoot of Mohammedanism.

In the spring of 1901 Miss Farmer gave no inkling of any intention of continuing the Greenacre work, and at the solicitation of those desirous of seeing it go on, including the lessee of the Greenacre Inn and the various persons in Eliot who eked out their budget by taking in summer boarders, Dr. Janes decided to take up anew the work of the School of Comparative Religion and conduct it on a sounder financial basis, charging a small fee to those who should attend the lectures. In previous years voluntary contributions had been made by those taking the course and others, amounting in 1899, the peak year of the school when 214 persons enrolled, to \$375. It had been customary to divide the sum remaining, after paying incidental expenses, among the workers of the school, but in 1899, after defraying the travelling expenses of the workers, the balance was turned over to Greenacre, the lecturers at the school willingly foregoing that year even the meagre cash compensation that had been usual. Dr. Janes, under the new plan, set a fixed registration fee of two dollars, with an additional charge, if lecturers were attended for more than one week, of five dollars for the course, or fifty cents for each single lecture. On account of the summer visitors that it was known the reopened school would bring to Eliot, the Innkeeper and the boarding house proprietors expressed their willingness to be responsible for the board of Dr. Janes' modest staff of lecturers.

On hearing of the new departure Miss Farmer rose up in arms and resuming her activity managed to gather together enough money to carry on a Greenacre program during the season of 1901. She sponsored a course of lectures similar to those of Dr. Janes, conflicting with these as to time, and there were thus two rival Schools of Comparative Religion at Eliot that season. The only ostensible reasons Miss Farmer had for opposing Dr. Janes instead of co-

operating with him were his "abandonment of the voluntary principle" (i. e. his requiring a minimum fee to be paid by all attendants at his course) and his "attempting to cut one of the branches of Greenacre from its parent stem" (in other words his daring to continue the work of the School of Comparative Religion without asking her permission and refusing to submit to her authority as paramount). Sarah Farmer, in fact, claimed proprietary rights in the Greenacre movement, and assumed that if she chose to abandon it no one else had any right to carry it forward. Now it is true that to her had first come the idea of using the Greenacre Inn as a center for lectures and conferences, and to her persuasive powers were due the consent of the proprietors of the Inn to try this experiment: an experiment conducted on so grandiose a scale as to spell disaster to the owners of the Inn who had not received a single cent in rental during the five years (1894-1898) in which Miss Farmer had control of the property. To her initiative also were due most of the arrangements for the lectures and conferences, and besides contributing money of her own to the work, she had induced a number of well-wishers to the cause to contribute liberally towards its support. She ought however have recognized that her fellow laborers had likewise given time and money freely, and that they could not be expected to stand idle and see the movement fall to the ground merely because Miss Farmer seemed unwilling or unable to go on with it. Many of the original Greenacreites, heavy contributors to the movement, took the part of Dr. Janes, notably Mrs. Bull, whose contribution of one thousand dollars had made possible the purchase of the Lysekloster Pines.² Mrs. Ole Bull, nee Sara Chapman Thorp, had been prominent in the movement from the very beginning. She was accustomed to move in the literary and artistic world, as was her family, her brother, Mr. Joseph G. Thorp, Jr., having married a daughter of Longfellow. She had undoubtedly rendered great service in getting Greenacre in touch

² The tract included a farm house, farm land and pine wood land. Adjacent was another pine woods (used by but not owned by Greenacre) known as the Cathedral Pines, and about a quarter of a mile south of the latter stood The Mystic Rock. Among the Lysekloster Pines were four magnificent trees distinguished as the Bodhi Pine, the Swami Pine, the Prophets' Pine and the Persian Pine. The last of these was surrounded by an array of stones to the number of nine, which is one of the numbers held sacred in the Persian religion known as Bahaism. There were also three pine trees dedicated respectively to Whittier, Thoreau and Emerson. After the Bahais gained control of Greenacre they replenished their treasury by cutting down the southern half of the pines and selling them for lumber: an act of vandalism, as the old Greenacreites deemed it, which aroused much indignation.

with people of prominence besides aiding with her counsels the erratic and culturally somewhat undeveloped Miss Farmer. It was Mrs. Bull who, in the winter season at Boston, had sponsored and largely financed a work very similar to that of the Greenacre summer school: the "Cambridge Conferences" directed by Dr. Janes and held in the house of Mrs. Bull who intended these conferences to be "in some degree a memorial to her mother, Mrs. Thorp, a woman of unusual benevolence and energy." Mrs. Bull strove in vain to heal the breach between Miss Farmer and Dr. Janes. The latter carried his plans for a summer school at Eliot in 1901 to successful fruition, but died in September of the same year, and Miss Farmer, perhaps somewhat chastened by this temporary rivalry, continued to reign at Greenacre.

In the years subsequent to 1900 Miss Farmer managed to secure enough "free will offerings" to keep up the work, though Greenacre always lived from hand to mouth, the close of each season showing a deficit which had to be made up by fresh solicitation for funds. Andrew Carnegie, at one time, offered a yearly subvention of \$250 with the stipulation that \$750 more must be guaranteed, and a reasonably business-like accounting be given of subscriptions received and money paid out, but these conditions were never satisfactorily met. Mrs. Bull however continued to contribute liberally to Greenacre, and other heavy contributors were Edwin Ginn, the Boston publisher, Mr. and Mrs. George D. Ayers of "Ayers' Cherry Pectoral" fame, Frank Jones, the wealthy Portsmouth brewer, and Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, the mother of the originator of yellow journalism. It was the last who provided the funds for purchase of the Inn property in 1902, title to which was put in the name of James C. Hooe of Washington, a life interest in the property being assured to Miss Farmer who henceforth had free use of the Inn subject to payment of taxes and insurance. Mrs. Hearst had shown some interest in the Bahai movement, but in arranging to have the Inn subserve the work at Greenacre, made no effort to change the latter into a sectarian institution. The like holds of Helen E. Cole who, on her death in 1906 left a substantial bequest to the Green Acre Fellowship. As to the other contributors mentioned above, none of them showed any particular sympathy for the Bahai cause.

During her trip abroad Miss Farmer had visited Acre, where she met Abdul Baha, the leader of the religious body known as Bahais, and on her return she announced herself a convert to this

Persian cult. Whether or not her new-found faith had any influence in making Miss Farmer oppose the work of Dr. Janes is a moot question. But there can hardly be any doubt that she had found him too liberal, or, perhaps it would be better to say, too scientific and scholarly. Her own naïve idea of the study of comparative religions is shown by the statement that appeared in her program of 1903: "The Monsalvat School for the Comparative Study of Religion will be held in Lysekloster Pines at 10:30 A. M. except Saturday. Fillmore Moore, M. D., the Director will *lecture on dietetics* (!!!!) and will be assisted by"—the subjects discussed by the lecturers whose names followed including psychology, education, literature and biography! It is doubtful whether the Religious Parliament idea, in its full implication, ever had any real appeal for Miss Farmer, who is on record as having declared that the Chicago Congresses had played no part in making her conceive the project of summer courses and conferences at Greenacre. She, in fact, sometimes spoke of the purpose of Greenacre as the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. And thus is not precisely the same as the promotion of the Religious Parliament movement, for every religious bigot will avow his adhesion to the former while refusing to accept the latter as a step in that direction. It is probable indeed that the reference to the Chicago Congresses in the original Greenacre program was by no means due to Sarah Farmer but was the thought of some more liberal promoter of the project—very possibly Mrs. Bull. It is worthy of note that the memory of this gifted lady is still kept green in Eliot, the cottage she once owned and occupied adjacent to the Inn being invariably called The Ole Bull Cottage, though since her day it has had many other occupants.

Though we deprive Sarah Jane Farmer of the halo with which the imagination of her more ardent admirers invested her, there can be no doubt that taken all in all she was a very remarkable woman. Through her father, Moses Farmer, an electrical inventor of some note, she was descended from Lord William Russell executed in London for treason under Charles II, being thus a distant relative of the present-day Bertrand Russell. The greater part of her life drifted by uneventfully, and it was only after the death of her father in 1893 who bequeathed her a modest inheritance of a few thousand dollars and the homestead of "Bittersweet" that she blossomed forth as the founder of Greenacre. She found-

ed this at an age, forty-seven, when most women are contented to lie placidly on the shelf, and it became famous almost over-night, being soon renowned among the intellectuals, from coast to coast, from Canada to California.³ Her personality was most charming, and the smile with which she silenced her critics and bent the will of others to her own is still talked of. She "smiled as the angels must smile" wrote Miss Churchill. Those who called upon her were regaled with the smile—"a cup of tea and a welcome" being her motto as hostess—and none went away feeling dissatisfied. She had a marvellous faculty for obtaining gratuitous labor for the cause of Greenacre, her smile and words of praise being adjudged sufficient recompense. She was equally proficient in persuading people to open their purses to contribute to a worthy cause, and boasted that she had "once raised \$2,000 for a struggling little French church in twenty minutes time, and the audience was not a wealthy one."

Sarah Farmer, while not precisely beautiful, was a tall woman of graceful presence and slender proportions. "Her face with its habitual expression of introspective interest was the face of a dreamer." An enthusiastic admirer, Kate Pitkin, writing in 1899 in *The New Orleans Times-Democrat*, tells us that "her light slender hair is drawn back from her fine brow into an unobtrusive knot on her neck. Her complexion is suggestive of exquisite cleanliness and her eyes of inward purity and upward devotion." In the morning she usually appeared in a soft gray woolen gown which followed the curves of her body in unbroken lines. About her throat she wore a white lace scarf crossed on the bosom with an Egyptian pin. "Her afternoon gowns are of crepe, of dull silks or satiny cashmere, gray always, of the pale silver shade, and whenever she appears with a bonnet, which is rare at Greenacre, it is small and close, and covered with a silvery nun's veiling which hangs to her waist behind."

³ It is recorded that in 1895 forty people came from Chicago to attend the Greenacre Conferences in a special railroad car, chartered for the occasion, and that quite a number of attendants came from Minnesota, both this second season and the first (that of 1894). During the 1897 season between one and two thousand persons desirous of attending the conferences had to be turned away when they sought accommodations at Eliot. Some took up quarters in Portsmouth, but had difficulty in securing passage each day on the steam launch which ran up the river to Greenacre pier, and was often crowded to the gun-wales leaving disappointed at the wharf scores of would-be visitors to the conferences of the day.

Dr. Carus wrote:⁴ "I knew Miss Farmer personally and stayed at Greenacre once. It was an interesting atmosphere, and it was her spirit that gave all the attractions to it. It was really a home of many cranks, and I will not deny that her judgment was not very well grounded or sufficient to keeping cranks out, but it was interesting to outsiders even to listen to a crank. As you say, everybody was welcome and a brotherly spirit obtained everywhere . . . Her sympathetic character . . . was friendly to all kinds of thought and welcomed every sincere faith." "I met Miss Farmer for the first time at the house of Judge Waterman in Chicago. Mrs. Waterman had died recently and Miss Farmer met on her visit to Chicago Mr. Bonney as well as myself and she expressed to Mr. Bonney her desire to produce a continued institution which should serve the spirit of the Religions Parliament, and it was in this sense that she invited me to deliver some lectures out in Greenacre. I have the impression that Miss Farmer was a lovely spirit of deep religious convictions, but not very definite or clear in her aims. She was willing to accept from Mr. Bonney what he proposed to her, and while I was in Greenacre she tried her best to serve the spirit of the Religious Parliament in universal brotherhood as well as in service in spreading light and scientific insight on religious questions."

A certain proportion of the Greenacreites followed Miss Farmer into the Bahai fold (some of them developing a fanaticism which she never exhibited) but this was very far from being the case with all even of those who willingly accepted her as leader in the work at Eliot. Nor did Miss Farmer ever make any attempt to have this Persian religion preached at Greenacre to the exclusion of other religious doctrines. In the beginning she contented herself with giving the Bahai teachings a prominent place on her program and writing Greenacre in two words "Green Acre" that it might be reminiscent of the Acre in Syria. She announced in her program of 1903 that "the Green Acre Conferences were established in 1894 on the banks of the Piscataqua in Maine, with the express purpose of bringing together all who were looking earnestly towards the new Day which seemed to be breaking over the entire world and were ready to serve and be served. The motive was to find the Truth, the Reality, underlying all religious forms in order to promote the unity necessary for the ushering in of the coming Day of God.

⁴ In letters to me dated July 9 and July 28, 1915.

Believing that the Revelation of the Baha Ullah of Persia is the announcement of this great Day—the beginning of the Golden Age foretold by all seers, sung by poets—and finding that it provides a platform on which the Jew, the Christian (both Catholic and Protestant), the Mohammedan, as well as the members of all other great religious bodies can stand together in love and harmony, each holding to the form which best nourishes his individual life, an opportunity will be given to all who desire to study its Message.” Evidently what is here alleged to have been the original purpose of the Greenacre Conferences is very different from that set forth in the program of 1894 cited above. Miss Farmer however took care to add: “As in previous years there will be no sectarianism at Green Acre. The effort will be to inspire and strengthen each to follow his highest light in order that by degrees he may know Truth for himself from the invisible guiding of the Eternal Spirit.” In the 1904 program it was stated that “For ten years Green Acre has stood with open doors calling to the people of all nations to come together in peace and unity to prepare for the approaching glad New Day. Now that it has been shown that what was held in vision through faith has become fact through the great Revelation of the Baha Ullah, the time seems to be at hand to lay special emphasis upon the command: Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, and upon the joys and blessings of servitude.” And in that year Myron H. Phelps, accepted from his ultra-eulogistic *Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi* as a staunch Bahai, replaced Dr. Moore (who was not of that category) as Director of the School of Comparative Religion. In 1905 the program stated that “For four years Green Acre has proclaimed from the printed page of its program that, at least in the mind of its founder, what is known to the world as Bahaimism is not a new ‘ism’ to stand side by side with and rival former religious systems, but that it is the completion and fulfillment of all that has preceded it. Whatever of truth is found in the great religious systems of the world, is found in Bahaimism, elucidated and explained so fully in detail that the ‘abundant life’ revealed centuries ago now becomes a joyful reality. Each year, however, this message seems less and less understood by those into whose life the realization of this fullness had previously come, and it seems that placing this system on the same forum with the other in the Monsalvat School is in danger of bringing confusion to the mind instead of the desired peace. For this reason she

who has carried in her heart for twelve years or more the thought of unity and concord among the sons of God, has decided to return to the original forum under the Persian Pine, that this great Revelation may be studied and interpreted in a place apart by itself, thus relieving other Green Acre workers from embarrassment and the necessity of explanation."

It is clear that what this amounted to was that the proponents of the new cult had in the beginning supposed that when set forth side by side with the teachings of other faiths everyone who gave ear would at once recognize the superiority of the Bahai revelation to all others.* But they had now come to realize their mistake and to perceive that with a fair field and no favor the Persian cult would not be accepted as all-sufficient by more than a small percentage of those who heard it advocated. The prevalent attitude, in fact, was that of listening sympathetically to the preachings of all faiths and taking from each whatever the individual listener thought valuable: it was the tolerant pagan attitude of the old Greenacre and not the intolerant bigotry of Mohammedanism. Although the favored position of Bahatism was further accentuated by having the Bahai advocates continue to preach at the School of Comparative Religion (in addition to carrying on sectarian meetings under the Persian Pine) this measure failed of its purpose: the Greenacreites did not abandon the School of Comparative Religion held under the Prophets' Pine and flock to the Persian Pine to hear the one true and genuine revelation. And to-day while the stately Bodhi Pine and Swami Pine and Prophets' Pine still proudly lift their branches towards heaven and continue to flourish in their original healthy vigor, the Persian Pine, which the sacred array of nine encircling stones has failed to protect, is dying, rotting away at the very heart: an interesting bit of symbolism for those who believe in portents.

Militant though the Bahais were at Greenacre they did not for some years succeed in getting full control of the place. Sarah Farmer (though her name and alleged wishes were made use of) took no part in the final battle, having long ere this been adjudged insane and immured behind the walls of a lunatic asylum. She had undoubtedly inherited a predisposition to mental trouble from her mother, Hannah Shapleigh Farmer, who had delusions of grandeur, imagining that Jesus spoke to her "in a voice as distinct as if he had been visible by my bedside" to quote her own words, the

purpose for which the Lord had thought it necessary to address himself directly to Mrs. Farmer having been to prevent the proposed demolition of the disused Old South Meeting House in Boston: something the mother of Sarah Farmer declared herself determined to resist, in accordance with the command of the Lord, even "if the path he has marked out for me leads to a martyr's stake or the noose of a gallows." Sarah Farmer likewise had sometimes intimated that "she was very chummy with God" to use the indignant expression of the spirited Mrs. Rena Haskell, a lady who resented Miss Farmer's dominant attitude at the time of the conflict with Dr. Janes. Miss Farmer had, in fact, stated that her Greenacre plans were divinely inspired, and had asserted that "the promise connected with the Greenacre work when it was put into my hands was that it should reach to the uttermost ends of the earth." "I hold myself," she said, "accountable not to individuals, but to God who gave me the work in charge."

In reply to a criticism from Dr. Janes she wrote: "The methods of Greenacre which you condemn as 'dishonest' or 'unethical' are the methods in vogue in most of the charitable organizations of this city (i. e., New York, where she was then visiting), with the exception that we do not have paid services. Very few charitable organizations are so liberally endowed that they have no room for faith, but all the same they go forward and engage expensive quarters, and agree to pay salaries as high sometimes as three thousand dollars or more to those who carry them forward. They do this through faith in God, and if any year their expenses exceed the receipts they make a statement and ask that the deficit be made good. . . . I have back of me the eternal promises of God which are as sure as the Bank of England to the soul who puts an unwavering trust in them. For the future you need have no fear." This attitude did not please the owners of Greenacre Inn who would have preferred payment of the rent due them. An Eliot woman (Mrs. M. Parry Tobey) whose aged husband had contributed all his spare cash towards the building of the Inn and was subsequently compelled to mortgage his farm to pay his share of the taxes and the interest of the floating debt on the Inn property (being in

⁵ An illustration of the methods Dr. Janes objected to is afforded by the following incident. In 1899 a new auditorium tent was purchased on credit. The debt coming due, funds for the specific purpose of paying it, were solicited from the Greenacrites. The required sum was raised and turned over to Miss Farmer who, instead of applying it to extinguish the debt, used it for an entirely different purpose.

dire financial straits in consequence) greatly resented Miss Farmer's complaint that "we by our worldly thoughts and claiming our own that we might be just to our children and our grocer" were interfering with Sarah Farmer's divinely inspired plans, and said to her: "Do you call it God, when you are getting yourself all in debt? Oh no! God's ways are not debt."

Even after she became a convert to Bahaimism the best and staunchest friends of Miss Farmer were men and women quite outside the Bahai fold, and these have always contended that she never consented to handing Greenacre over to this sect. Indeed we may be quite sure that she realized what so doing would entail: the alienation of her most valued supporters and the complete wrecking of the original Greenacre. Just how soon pressure was brought to bear upon Miss Farmer to induce her to consent to putting complete control of the place into Bahai hands cannot be ascertained. But as early as 1908 the necessity of such a change was urged by Abdul Baha in a letter that has only recently come to light. Writing on July 19 of that year to "The Attracted Servant of God, Sarah J. Farmer" he commanded her to turn Greenacre into a sectarian institution. Said he: "Hear the voice of God and behold the effulgence of Truth. Oh thou beloved Maid Servant of God, exert thyself with all heart and soul that Green Acre become the arena for the action of the Beloved of Baha (His People) and that its administration pass into the hands of the friends. If such become the case, good results will ensue; otherwise all endeavors will come to naught. Devise thou a plan that that place become the Lamp of the Light of the Cause of God, and that the old sects and beliefs, like unto spurious decayed and unproductive trees, produce no influence there, that the time of those assembled be not uselessly spent. Should the Friends of God get Greenacre and make that place the center for the diffusion of the fragrance of God and establish meetings for teaching the Truth unquestionably good results will be manifest."

It is reported that Miss Farmer spent the night after receiving this message wringing her hands and sobbing, crying out again and again: "I cannot do it! I cannot do it! How can I destroy the work of all these years!" And some of her friends have thought that the primary cause of the loss of her reason was the strain and anguish she thus underwent when called upon by him whom she deemed the representative of God upon earth to an action she could not possibly bring herself to carry out. It was in fact, in 1909 that

she first showed signs of great mental stress, and the opening of the Greenacre season of 1910 found her in a lunatic asylum, suffering from recurrent attacks of violent mania alternating with lucid intervals on the one hand and a state of depression, not free from insane delusions, on the other.

The control over the Green Acre Fellowship which the Bahai members desired to obtain was gained after Miss Farmer became insane. Prominent in their opposition to the Bahais in this struggle were Dr. Fillmore Moore (Miss Farmer's life long friend) and such representative old Greenacreites as Prof. Schmidt of Cornell University, Frank B. Sanborn, ex-Governor Waller of Connecticut and May Wright Sewall. These last four (with Horatio Dresser, whose attitude was somewhat equivocal⁶) were all that remained of the long array of celebrities that had once adorned Greenacre. One by one, men and women of standing had dropped off, driven away by the sectarianism that every year became more and more rampant, and this scanty remnant was all that was left, no person known to fame being found on the Bahai side in the battle. An account of the Bahai cult and the story of the capture of the Fellowship will be found in two articles by the present writer: *The Persian Rival to Jesus and His American Disciples* (*Open Court*, August, 1915) and *The Precursor, the Prophet and the Pope, Contributions to the History of the Bahai Movement* (*Open Court*, Oct. and Nov., 1916). Roughly speaking the Bahai religion bears to Mohammedanism much the same relation that Mohammedanism does to Christianity and Christianity to Judaism. The Christians contend that the teachings of Moses, though truly divine in their day, have been superseded by those of Christ. The Mohammedans, going a step further, hold that Christ's teachings were in turn superseded by those of Mohammed. And the Bahais cap the climax by asserting that the teachings of Moses, those of Mohammed and those of Christ (to say nothing of the prophetic utterances of Zoroaster, etc.) though each very good in its own time, must in this Dispensation alike make way for those of the very latest Prophet of God, Huseyn Ali surnamed Baha Ullah,

⁶ While on the Board of Trustees of the Green Acre Fellowship he acted more or less in unison with the Bahai members, but when re-elected on the Bahai ticket in 1913 refused to serve. The office of trustee was likewise declined on that occasion by Dr. J. L. M. Willis, one of the builders of Greenacre Inn, a man of real culture, President of the Eliot Historical Society and family physician of Miss Farmer. The other builders of the Inn were Martin Parry Tobey, Francis Keefe (foster brother of Miss Farmer) and George Everett Hammond.

a Persian who was born in 1817 and died in 1892. And thus, as Mr. Wilson well says in *The Open Court* of January 1930 (p. 27) the Bahais while proclaiming the ideals of world unity, by putting forward a new revelation and a new saviour, "have merely set up further barriers to that unity." Indeed there is a noteworthy lack of unity among the Bahais themselves. For on the death of Baha Ullah one section accepted the doctrine put forward by the son of the prophet, Abbas Effendi, surnamed Abdul Baha, who succeeded his father on the Bahai throne, that he alone was authorized to interpret the utterances of his father, the prophet, and was absolutely infallible, while another faction, led by Mohammed Ali, the brother of Abbas, repudiated this Papist doctrine and took the Protestant ground of the right of private interpretation of the Bahai Scriptures. Bahatism, while not very strong numerically in the Occident, gets considerable newspaper publicity, and the world was informed a year or two ago that Helen Kellar, the blind and deaf prodigy, and Queen Marie of Roumania had both accepted the Bahai faith, though in each case it later transpired that the report was incorrect. A resident in Palestine, Rosamund Dale Owen (Mrs. Laurence Oliphant) has in *My Perilous Life in Palestine* (1929—p. 239) recorded the impression made upon her by what the American Bahais call "The Holy Family" at Haifa. "In all the years the family of Baha Ullah have lived in their home they have not had, the last I knew of them, the energy to build a well or cistern such as is possessed by every smallest German cottage, nor the enterprise to make a decent road to the house. None of the sons of Baha Ullah have done any practical wage-earning work. In short the Bahais are Orientals."

My articles attracted considerable attention and brought forth various protests from Bahai sympathizers. One of those who took the field against me was Mr. James F. Morton Jr. At that time, disclaiming all sympathy with supernaturalism, Mr. Morton posed as an Agnostic and contributed regularly to the New York *Truth Seeker*, a freethought and agnostic periodical where he poured the vials of his scorn on his more superstitious fellow citizens. My intimation then that in all probability Mr. Morton would ere long become a convert to Bahatism has been completely justified. He is now a full-fledged Bahai and has been honored by a special, "Tablet" from his Pope, Abdul Baha dictating to him the course of action to pursue regarding certain Esperanto congress. Mr. Morton to-day

speaks of the "blasphemy" of "the professed Agnostics and Atheists" whose "resistant intellects" he hopes may ultimately be penetrated. And at a Bahai Unity feast in 1929 Mr. Morton spoke on The Oneness of Science and Religion, "giving many illustrations of how these two erstwhile enemies are now close friends and walking hand in hand towards a common goal, this being due to the advent of Baha Ullah and the advance of his teachings and principles"!

It may be noted that neither Mr. Morton nor anyone else who protested against my articles made any attempt to deal with the specific facts I brought to light. One serious accusation that history has to bring against the Bahais is the murder of the Azalites: the adherents of Subh-i-Azal, the half-brother of the Bahai prophet Baha Ullah by the followers of the latter. In a book published in 1917, *O Christians Why Do Ye Believe not on Christ?*, whose purpose is stated as "to prove to the whole world the infallibility of Beha Ullah and that the attacks and accusations of H. H. Wilson, D. D., and those of H. H. Jessup, D. D., and Robert P. Richardson, against Him and His teachings are not true" the author, I. G. Kheiralla, who was the first apostle of the Bahai faith in America, makes the following remarkable comment on the matter: "Now to settle this question of religious assassination . . . allow me to give the whole world the following satisfactory elucidation which will meet the approval of every reasonable and learned man: Beha Ullah (glory be to Him) acknowledged that his followers assassinated the Azalists, and every True Bahai should do the same. On my part it gives me great delight to acknowledge it, and greater satisfaction that it happened. Because the happening of this event is a decisive proof that Christ was a Manifestation of God and that which he foretold was literally fulfilled, otherwise the authenticity of his Revelations would be questioned. The war in heaven which Christ prophesied was on earth where the Father manifested Himself. This prophecy was fulfilled by the defeat of Satan (Azal) and his angels by Michael (Beha Ullah) and his angels"—the prophecy which Mr. Kheiralla here attributes to Christ being the words of *The Revelation of John*, 13:7-10.

Dr. Carus found much that was interesting in the history of the Bahai movement and himself published an article upon the beginnings of this new cult. (*Open Court*, V. 18, p. 411ff. *A New Religion, Babism*.) He remarked (in a letter to me, Sept. 20, 1915) that "the interest of Behaism lies in the fact that here we have to

deal with a religion that has originated under our very eyes in historical times" and which has "certain resemblances to Christianity, as for instance the appearance of the Bab before Baha Ullah is quite similar to the appearance of John the Baptist before Jesus."⁷ Another marked similarity is in the separation of various heretics from the orthodox Bahai body and the institution of a doctrine of Papal infallibility. A heretic who takes the Protestant position is stigmatized by the orthodox Bahais as a Nakaz or Nakazi (plural Nakazeen or Nakazis.) Mr. Kheiralla became numbered among the Nakazeen because he followed Mohammed Ali, the brother of Abdul Baha, instead of accepting the latter as Pope after the death of his father, Baha Ullah. A further parallel to Christianity is afforded by the fact that just as there are Mandaeans who recognize the "precursor," John the Baptist, but not Christ, there are Azalites who recognize the Bab, alleged precursor of Baha Ullah, but refuse to accept the latter. The thesis, undoubtedly historically correct, that the legitimate successor to the Bab was not Baha Ullah but his half-brother, Subh-i-Azal, is upheld in this country by Mr. August J. Stenstrand of Chicago, who accepts Subh-i-Azal as his prophet.

Mrs. Albert Kirchner of Chicago, supposed to belong to the orthodox faction, was another who raised protest against me (in *The Open Court* of Nov. 1915) claiming I had erred in what I said of the Bahai view of the relative "stations" of Jesus and Baha Ullah. Yet only two years later, upon the very point of the stations to be ascribed to Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha, Mrs. Kirchner was found guilty of "false teaching" by a Bahai investigating committee. Of the *Report of the Bahai Committee of Investigation* in this case there were issued "a limited number of copies for private circulation only," one of which I now hold in my hand. It is a curious document dealing with the accusations against Mrs. Kirchner of "violation" of the faith by false teaching, disobedience and the sending out of "seditious letters." It records an *ex parte* condemnation, not a true trial, for the accused was not given a hearing, and the investigators took care to exclude from their deliberations all who might have any sympathy for Mrs. Kirchner and her friends

⁷ And in neither case did the so-called precursor really sanction the recognition of the alleged prophet (respectively Jesus and Baha Ullah) as the Great Teacher who was to come. See my *Jesus and John the Baptist*, (*Open Court*, Oct. 1929) and my Bahai articles cited above.

of the "Bahai Reading Room" of Chicago. The report (p. 3) specifically states that "In the course of their investigation the committee had found an antagonistic and hostile spirit among those who were violating the Covenant of God, and it was deemed necessary to protect this meeting from such intrusion." Consequently the utmost harmony prevailed, and Mrs. Kirchner on Dec. 9, 1917, was unanimously adjudged guilty of all the charges brought against her.

Mrs. Kirchner, according to the report of the committee, had held meetings in her house at which "the stations of Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha are explained in terms that are not in accordance with the words and teachings of Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha" and had mingled with the pure Bahai teachings those of Mr. W. W. Harmon, thus making "a human interpretation of the Creative Word of which Abdul Baha is the only divinely appointed interpreter." Violation of the Covenant of God by which Pope Abbas was made infallible interpreter of the divine words of Baha Ullah is a grievous sin in Bahai eyes, Abdul Baha having stated that "were it not for the protecting power of the Covenant to guard the impregnable fort of the Cause of God, there would arise among the Bahais, in a day, a thousand different sects, as was the case in former ages, but in this Blessed Dispensation, for the sake of the permanency of the Cause of God, and the avoidance of dissention amongst the people of God the Blessed Beauty . . . has through the Supreme Pen written the Covenant and Testament. He has appointed a Center, the Expounder of the Book, and the Annuler of disputes. Whatever is written or said by Him (i.e. by Abdul Baha himself) is conformable to the truth and under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. He is infallible." "Not one soul has the right to say one word on his own account, to explain anything or to elucidate the texts of the Book whether in public or in private."

These words of the Bahai Pope are cited from the secret report, where there are carefully gathered together all the utterances of Abdul Baha dealing with "violation," the second of the quotations just given having been part of Abdul Baha's address to the San Francisco Bahai Assembly in 1912. Other pronouncements of Abdul Baha cited in the report are equally definite. Among them are the following: Abdul Baha declared that Baha Ullah "has appointed the One who should be looked upon as authority by all. He

has shown the Interpreter of the Book. He has closed the doors of outside interpretation." The Prophet, says Abdul Baha, has required that all the faithful "must obey the Center of the Covenant (Abdul Baha) and must not deviate one hair's breadth from obedience to him." "Firmness in the Covenant means obedience, so that no one may say 'This is my opinion,' nay rather he must obey that which proceeds from the pen and tongue of the Covenant." "No one should say 'My thought is this,' 'My opinion is this,'" "Beware, if anyone should say anything out of his own thoughts, or should create a new thing out of himself." "Praise be to God, Baha Ullah left nothing unsaid, he explained everything. He left no room for anything further to be said." "Briefly every statement and word which is not based on the divine (Bahai) texts is not truth. No one must listen to it. No one must interfere (sic) with it. This is the irrefutable command." "All that is contrary to the teachings of Baha Ullah is wrong, and you must never accept it . . . If an angel should manifestly come down from heaven and if a word contrary to the Teaching of Baha Ullah would proceed from his lips, it would be wrong and you should not heed it." It is worthy of note that among the names given by this secret report, of Bahais who stood sponsors for it, is that of A. B. McDaniel, the present head of The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada, and that this same Mr. McDaniel is quoted in *The Literary Digest* of Nov. 22, 1930, as putting forth (for public consumption) the statement that Abdul Baha, besides advocating various other liberal principles, "laid special stress upon the independent search for truth"!!!

The admonition of Baha Ullah to "associate with all religions with joy and fragrance" which the Bahais are so fond of quoting in their public utterances as evidence of the liberal attitude of their Prophet, did not, says the infallible interpreter of the Prophet's words, apply to heretics. "By this is meant the humankind, not the wicked" and "Baha Ullah has even called down the vengeance of God upon any one who violates the Center of the Covenant" said Abdul Baha as quoted in the secret report, which also ascribes to him the admonition "As soon as they (the Bahais) see a trace of violation of the Covenant they must hold aloof from the violators." Since heretics are not even admitted to be among "the humankind," it is not surprising that Mrs. Kirchner should have incurred a rep-

rimand some years before when she associated with a certain Dr. Nutt alleged to have been a Nakaz, going together with him into the business of keeping a curio store. Mrs. Kirchner had however (according to the report) later repented and obediently ceased to have anything further to do with the heretic. In consequence she received a commendatory Tablet from Pope Abbas in Oct. 1912, and was once more allowed to mingle with the True Believers. In the heresy case of 1917 the commendations of this Tablet were cited in Mrs. Kirchner's favor, but the committee remarked that "The history of violation shows that many souls who have received Tablets and have had wonderful stations have afterwards fallen and become Violators . . . If the fact that one has been favored with a Tablet at some time, taken alone, makes a clear record, some of the worst Violators can claim perfection. Mirza Assad Ullah⁸, Dr. Fareed, and Sprague each and all received Tablets which are recorded. Sprague once received a Tablet commencing 'O thou who art firm in the Covenant!' There can be no doubt of his firmness and sincerity at the time this Holy Word was revealed, but where is he today? Where are his associates? Where is Judas Iscariot once chief among the disciples?" Rather harsh language to use towards Mr. Sprague, an unsullied idealist if ever there was one, who gave himself whole-heartedly to the Bahai movement for a number of years and merely withdrew quietly when he found himself no longer able to obey the dictatorial commands of Pope Abbas. Mr. Sprague, as I can personally testify, has never a harsh word to say against those who treated him so scurvily. The Bahais attached sufficient importance to the heresy hunt which resulted in the decision that "a serious state of violation" existed in Chicago and in the condemnation of Mrs. Kirchner to devote considerable time to the task and to expend money sufficient for mimeographing a fifty-one page report, specifically endorsed by certain Bahais who took the lead in the battle for the control of Greenacre. The report reminds one of the old days of Christianity when dogmatism

⁸ An account of the episode of Mirza Assad Ullah of Nur and Dr. Fareed will be found in *The Precursor, the Prophet and the Pope*, p. 636. Mr. Sydney Sprague is an American who married the sister of Dr. Fareed (and daughter of Assad Ullah) and took leave of the Bahai cause when his father-in-law and brother-in-law were excommunicated. Feeling that their lives would not be safe among the fanatical Oriental Bahais, the three families, instead of returning to the East, went from England to California. Here Assad Ullah died at Glendale in Sept., 1930. Dr. Fareed is still (I believe) a practicing physician at that place, while Mr. Sprague is a resident of Los Angeles.

was rampant and heretic baiting the favorite delight of Churchmen. A good natured debate as to the precise position in the divine scheme of one's favorite prophet is as justifiable for intellectual recreation as the playing of a game of bridge, but to hound a fellow believer as a heretic for having a different opinion in this respect is far from being in accord with the professions of religious liberalism of which the Bahai propagandists are so profuse. And it is to be noted that, though the Bahais are no more exempt from misconduct than any other people, there seems to be no case on record where an American Bahai has been investigated, much less ostracised for his or her immorality.

In the years immediately following 1913 while the Bahais controlled the Green Acre Fellowship they did not control the person of Miss Farmer, who held title to much of the Greenacre property and remained under the care of a physician not particularly friendly to the Bahai cause. The anti-Bahais at Greenacre continued to hope that ultimately she would regain her health sufficiently to take Greenacre affairs again in her own hands or failing this, would make a will bequeathing the property away from the sectarian Fellowship. It is hardly within my province to discuss the removal of Miss Farmer on the night of Aug. 3, 1916 from the sanitarium of Dr. Edward S. Cowles in Portsmouth—the so-called "Kidnaping of Miss Farmer." Accounts of this will be found in the issues for August of that year of *The Boston Post*, *The Boston Herald* and *The Springfield Republican*: in the last discussed at some length in Frank B. Sanborn's *Weekly Boston Letters*." One published story is that after admission to the sanitarium had been gained by means of a search warrant, Miss Farmer was seized in her bed, wrapped up in blankets, and carried out of New Hampshire, across the Piscataqua into the state of Maine where she was under the jurisdiction of a certain guardian appointed by the Maine courts but not recognized in New Hampshire. Another account is that Miss Farmer was waiting fully dressed and was eager to leave the sanitarium. Whether she really desired to go or to stay is a moot question, and a woman in her condition may have vacillated in her feelings as to this. Previously those who desired her removal from the sanitarium had brought her case before the New Hampshire probate court, asking to have a guardian appointed for her in the state of New Hampshire. This request was refused after the

judge of that court had interviewed Miss Farmer in one of her periods of rationality, on which occasion she professed herself satisfied with her life in the sanitarium and desirous of remaining there. It is again a moot question whether she was better cared for in the sanitarium or at her homestead of "Bittersweet" where she died, three months after her conveyance thereto. She had often expressed extreme repugnance to again taking up her residence in that house, and Dr. Cowles had stated as his opinion that if she were not given treatment equivalent to that of his sanitarium she would die within six months. It is understood that after her removal she was treated by a local general practitioner—and was guarded, night and day, by a deputy sheriff and two special constables. The prime mover in the matter of taking Miss Farmer out of the sanitarium was (according to *The Bahai Magazine*, V. 20, p. 23) the late William H. Randall, the Boston Bahai leader, the actual execution of the scheme being entrusted to Urban J. Ledoux, sometimes known as "Mr. Zero." It was also largely through Mr. Randall that funds were raised by which, after the death of Miss Farmer, Greenacre Inn was purchased (for the Bahai faction) from the Hooe estate.

Sarah Farmer died without recovering her reason on Nov. 23, 1916, having been born July 22, 1847. She lies buried in the family graveyard not a stone's throw from where I am writing these lines—which it may interest old Greenacreites to know is at "Bittersweet," the former home at Eliot of Miss Farmer. On a granite boulder near by the Bahais have fastened a metal tablet with the inscription "Allah O'Abha! Sara J. Farmer. Rahebah," the latter being the new Bahai name given her by Abdul Baha. Dates of her birth and death follow: both given incorrectly. The correct dates are however given on another tablet, likewise affixed to a boulder and furnished by her family this year (1930). The Greenacre property title to which stood in Miss Farmer's name comprised the Lysekloster Pines, the Eirenion, the three cottages and a tract of land on Sunset Hill which Miss Farmer had christened "Monsalvat" and on which she had dreamed of establishing a great university to be conducted on the Greenacre principle of gratuitous services rendered by the professorial staff and free tuition. Her will made long before, provided that after her death all this should pass to the Fellowship. The latter (of course under Bahai con-

trol) retained ownership for a few years, but title to all the Fellowship property has now been legally (?) transferred to the Bahai organization governing that Persian sect on this continent: "The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahais of the United States and Canada." This is what is legally known as a Trust and has as stated purpose "to administer the affairs of the Cause of Baha Ullah for the benefit of the Bahais of the United States and Canada." The Green Acre Fellowship was a Corporation having quite a different purpose, namely "to bring about better conditions of living by the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to the development of a higher and richer life for humanity, by means of conferences of an art, educational, scientific, musical, charitable, social, ethical, religious and other character."

The National Spiritual Assembly takes its orders from the Pope of the sect who resides at Haifa near Acre. During his lifetime the office was held by Abbas Effendi (Abdul Baha), who after the British occupation of Palestine, became Sir Abdul Baha, Knight of the British Empire, his followers boasting with a curious elation of the bestowal of this distinction, by the King of England, upon him whom they regarded as the representative of God upon earth. Abdul Baha died in 1921, and by his will bequeathed his spiritual authority to his grandson, Shoghi (or Shoughi) Effendi to whom all truly orthodox Bahais yield unquestioned obedience. The infallibility of Pope Abbas is evidently deemed to have continued with Pope Shoghi, for *The Bahai Magazine* of June 1930 tells us that the appointment by Abdul Baha's will of Shoghi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause "means that the Teachings revealed by Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha will be protected, that is, never become subject to human interpretation." Shoghi Effendi had had an Occidental education, having been a student at Balliol College, Oxford when, at the age of twenty-five he was called to the Papal throne.⁹ His assumption of this has however resulted in a new heretical movement whose sponsor, Mrs. Ruth White, in her book: *The Bahai Religion and Its Enemy the Bahai Organization* (1929) and its appendix *Abdul Baha's Alleged Will is Fraudulent* (1930) claims

⁹ Another grandson of Abdul Baha, Ruhi (or Rouhi) Afnan Effendi, was at Greenacre during the season of 1927. Very modest and unassuming, he gave the impression of a man of considerable culture and high intellectual powers. He, like his cousin, has had an Occidental education, having graduated from the American College at Beirut and then spent two years as a student at University College, London.

that "in the seven years that have elapsed since the passing of Abdul Baha . . . the Bahai Religion has been diverted from its original intent and strangled more completely by organization than Christianity was diverted and strangled in the first three hundred years of its inception" and that "the Bahai Religion has, in the hands of Shoghi Effendi and the leaders of the Bahai organization become a more pharisaical cult than any in existence." Mrs. White, pointing out that Abdul Baha had specifically stated that in the Bahai movement "there will never be any paid ministers, no appointed clergy, no bishops, no cardinals, no popes, no ceremonies" and had said that "after him the power of the Bahai cause was to vest in what would be known as Houses of Justice" declines to acknowledge the authority of Shoghi as Guardian of the Bahai Cause. The **alleged holograph will of Abdul Baha** appointing his grandson to this office is not, in her opinion, authentic, and she cites in support of this view the decision of "one of the best and most honored handwriting experts in England" who at her request examined photographs of the document. In New York, besides the Nakazeen followers of Mohammed Ali, there are or were three factions among the Bahais, one of which, headed by Mary Hanford Ford considers Shoghi Effendi "merely as business manager or errand boy" for the Bahais: to use Mrs. Ford's own words as quoted by Mrs. White. A second faction is headed by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, and includes the "New History" group which has held Sunday meetings under the auspices of Mrs. Lewis Stuyvesant Chandler in the Oak Room of the Hotel Ritz Carlton. The third and most orthodox of the three is that of the New York City Bahai Assembly. Of late more or less successful efforts have been made to heal the breach between the three factions. Mrs. White however remains aloof, and senses divine retribution in the fact that all of the men who have served Pope Shoghi as secretary have already come to grief, either dying prematurely or completely losing their health. She asserts that "most of the activities of the leaders of the Bahai organization are characterized by the inquisitorial methods of the dark ages" and denounces as "hypocrisy and false statements" the Bahai claim that a characteristic of Bahai administration "is the entire absence of anything approaching the institution of a salaried professional clergy." Mrs. White shows that this issue is side-stepped by the simple device of calling the Bahai preachers by the name of "teach-

ers" and (while disclaiming any desire to reproach him personally) she instances Mr. Vail, a former Unitarian clergyman, now a Bahai "teacher," who "still calls himself the Reverend Albert Vail and receives a regular salary and devotes his entire time to preaching." Mrs. White states that "during 1926 when I visited the Bahai Assemblies in all the large cities . . . I heard much talk about universal peace and the brotherhood of man. But *talk* about these principles is worse than ineffectual when people act in a narrow sectarian way as the Bahais were and are doing."

In Pope Shoghi's recent pronouncements to the American Bahais he has been especially concerned with the question of social intercourse between whites and blacks in America, and has told his white followers here that it is not enough to give cold greetings at the Bahai meetings to their negro fellow believers. It is, he says, their duty "to cultivate close and intimate social relations" with their black co-religionaries, and to admit them to the family circle and to association with the children of the whites. In accordance with this the faithful look forward hopefully to a time "when in America there will be neither blacks nor whites, but everyone will be of a rich chocolate color"—to quote the words of an enthusiastic young lady, though neither she nor any other of the Bahai young people have as yet shown any inclination to unite themselves with husbands and wives of other races. Notwithstanding the acceptance of the dictum of Pope Shoghi, gaining converts to the cause still proves uphill work among blacks as well as among whites. Better days are however expected when the Bahais succeed in finishing the magnificent and costly Temple they are endeavoring to build at Wilmette near Chicago, an edifice which they firmly believe will draw untold myriads of new converts into the fold, "attracting themers irresistibly as a magnet attracts iron."

The aim of the present Green Acre is avowedly the study of the sacred Bahai writings of them alone.¹⁰ In these—in the pronouncements of Baha Ullah and Abdul Baha—all wisdom is expected to be found, and there is no thought of turning to anything else for guidance. Activities in other fields are designed merely as bait to attract to Greenacre prospective converts to the Bahai faith. The Religious Parliament idea: that of agreeing to disagree and of ad-

¹⁰ According to *The Bahai Magazine*, V. 20, p. 67, the primary object of Green Acre is now "to teach by word and deed the essential principles of the Reality upon which the Bahai Movement is founded."

mitting that one can and ought to learn from his opponents—that he ought to listen attentively to the latter with as sympathetic an attitude as possible—has been completely shelved. The bond which unites the new Greenacreites is not a common broadmindedness and appreciation of the blessings of diversity of thought, but the bearing the brand of a particular sectarian herd. If the Bahais come across a person who will assent to all the teachings usually put forward as those of the Bahai faith and who leads a life that may be deemed as in accord with them the zealots are far from being satisfied. Instead of being content to bestow their blessings upon such persons and passing on to spread elsewhere the message of the new revelation, the propagandists concentrate all their efforts on “prospects” of this description, and will pursue them day after day, week after week, year after year, endeavoring to get them to accept the Bahai tag. With the Bahais, as with other sectarians, the divine message is forgotten, and all that is kept in mind is the personality of the messenger and the name which distinguishes his followers.

Sometimes religious leaders outside the Bahai fold who have heard of the old Greenacre and are unaware of the change come to Eliot, hoping to find a forum where their own message can be expounded, but they are doomed to go away disappointed. In the old days the Vedantist Swamis were regarded by the Greenacre Bahais as their most dangerous rivals, and it is said that on one occasion a delegation of True Believers went to Pope Abbas to ask how they should deal with the Swami problem. He listened attentively, and then said with an air of finality: “Close the door, but close it gently.” This was ultimately done, and Greenacre knew the picturesque Swamis no more.

As to Bahai ceremonials a veil is kept over the more picturesque features. On the Greenacre grounds an iron rod marks the spot where Abdul Baha once stood and blessed Greenacre. It is said that the stauncher of the Bahais sometimes on passing strike this rod nine times with an iron bar, uttering each time “The Most Great Name,” but the performance of this ceremony does not usually take place when any of the profane are at hand. Another interesting though somewhat gruesome ceremony is said to have taken place upon the death of a Bahai lady whose body was taken to the Pines where, while it reposed in state, a ring was placed on the

dead finger to symbolize that in death the departed was wedded to God. With the living, union with the Bahai faith is sometimes very prettily symbolized by throwing confetti upon the new convert. On one occasion this was done to a young lady who had never accepted the Bahai tag though having expressed her sympathy with the ostensible principles of the Bahai movement. Determined to perform the marriage ceremony of this lady to the Bahai faith—although she herself knew nothing of the union and had described herself to the present writer as an Agnostic—her Bahai friends gave a tea in her honor at the end of her stay at Greenacre and duly besprinkled her with confetti, she being quite unaware of the deep religious significance of what was taking place.

The simplicity of life which characterized the old Greenacre is now completely gone; the informal walks and talks and festivities are no longer known. Lectures and conferences in the open air have been abandoned, and part of the Pines have been cut down. The Eirenon, by mischance, burned to the ground in 1924, and as the carrying of insurance had been neglected, it was not replaced, Greenacre functions being transferred to the Fellowship House, a new building erected some distance away from the scene of the old Greenacre activity with the funds of the Cole bequest. Soon after the Bahais gained control of the Fellowship the dictum went forth that "No poor people are wanted at Green Acre"—an attitude precisely the antithesis of that of Miss Farmer, who invariably gave as cordial a welcome to the poor as to the rich. The new management however failed to attract any considerable number of wealthy persons, those of this description now to be found at Green Acre being far fewer than in the old days. On the other hand it must be admitted that some success has been attained in introducing at the new Green Acre the ideals of the *nouveau riche*.

Though the old Greenacre is no more, to those who knew and loved it there still lingers a glamour around the place where once it flourished. A few of us even find the charms of Eliot and the memories attached to it sufficient to make enjoyable the passing there of several months of each year. When we travel through other parts of the country we are frequently given an unexpected and hearty greeting from one of the old Greenacreites, for these are scattered through the land, north, east, south and west, and there seems to be something particularly strong and lasting to a

tie of friendship formed at Greenacre in the old days. At such a meeting there is always expressed the wish that a new Greenacre might arise, conducted on the same broad lines as the old. Nothing of that nature seems to be in existence at the present day. There are indeed in certain cities, in the winter season, meetings at which various religious faiths are expounded by their advocates on one and the same platform, conducted under the able leadership of Charles Frederick Weller and Kedar Nath Das Gupta. These head what is known as The Threefold Movement: The Fellowship of Faiths, The League of Neighbors and The Union of East and West, designed to promote respectively spiritual, human and cultural unity. The meetings in any one city however come only after long periods of inactivity. Moreover the personal contact afforded by summer sessions in the country is entirely absent. On the Island of Nantucket there functions during July and August in "The Tavern on the Moors," the Siasconset Summer School under the direction of Frederic C. Howe, formerly U. S. Commissioner of Immigration at New York. The lecturers are of high calibre, those of last season including H. Addington Bruce, Dr. Robert Wernaer and two editors of *The New Republic*: Bruce Bliven and Robert M. Lovett. The well known actress Miss Blanche Yurka (who in days past charmed the Greenacreites by her contributions to their entertainments) was likewise scheduled to give a series of readings and dramatic recitals. The chief interest here however is sociological, though attention is occasionally given to other subjects. The attendance at the lectures numbers from fifty to seventy-five, an admission charge being made. While the group gathering at Siasconset seems to be composed of people well worth while, it is improbable that there could be much expansion or that an institution with the broad outlook of the old Greenacre could ever arise on Nantucket. The atmosphere there is that of the highly conventional summer resort, the few persons of intellectual tastes who visit the island being overshadowed and influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the thousand and one other visitors whose sole interests lie in golf, yachting and dancing. Nor are the material surroundings inspiring since they consist chiefly of villas of wealthy non-intellectuals on the fringe of wide expanses of hot bare sands and flat desolate moors void of trees and of animal life, all that is to be seen on these being golf links and the signs of realtors.

The founding again of a summer Parliament of Religions would undoubtedly supply a much needed want: that of a place where persons of liberal views could have the opportunity of meeting those of like cast of mind. It is not enough merely to attend as individuals, lectures of progressive tendencies and then to go away again to be submerged in the mass of the conventionally minded multitude. The stimulus that comes from association with one's progressive fellow citizens and the possibility of effective work that comes from cooperation is essential to the development of any liberal movement. The obscurantists and the reactionaries have their rallying grounds; the devotees of sport, the frivolous and the fashionable, have meeting places galore, and the radicals (so-called) have their centers and communities. But those who adhere to a sane progressive liberalism are to-day isolated and often do not even know how to obtain a contact with one another. Such contact would be afforded by a place where summer conferences were held on the various phases of intellectual activity: religion, philosophy, sociology, etc. Music, art and the drama, powerful agents in stimulating and uplifting, if properly used, ought also be cultivated. An exhibition of various works of art, executed by promising amateurs of the colony could be held, and plays could be produced at a very moderate expense by utilizing amateur talent, use being made of the new productions of playwrights who have not yet "arrived" but show ability and promise, the history of the old Greenacre indicating that there would be no lack of really gifted musicians, artists, players and playwrights.

In the new Greenacre instead of stress being laid upon "unity" (so dear to the Bahais and other sectarians) what would be given appreciation would be the virtue of differences of opinion and the advantage of there being practiced diversity of modes of living. In consequence there would be cultivated the art of amicably disagreeing and of receiving criticism good naturedly as well as giving it without animosity. The custom of the Catholic Church of having an "Advocate of the Devil" take part in canonization proceedings might well be imitated at the conferences. Each speaker would then be confronted with a criticism of his own views, sincere and amicable, but none the less thorough and searching. This feature was unfortunately lacking at the old Greenacre, Miss Farmer having banned everything savoring of controversy. The function of

each speaker, she contended, was solely to present his or her own ideals, and comparison of the different views and ideals set forth was to be made only in "the heart of the listener." This immunity from sane and sober criticism made cranks of all description thrive at Greenacre (as Dr. Carus noted) and was one factor which contributed to its downfall. Had Greenacre cultivated the scientific spirit of calm and judicious examination of everything set forth on its platform the cranks would not have flourished and the "Seekers" would have been repelled instead of having been attracted. A seeker after a new creed, a person who after liberation from the bonds of the old dogmatism is uneasy until he has shackled himself anew to a cult and again entered into spiritual bondage, is simply a natural born slave in search of a master, and such a person is no asset to a liberal movement.

It would not be difficult to inaugurate a new Greenacre provided suitable backing were obtained, and if properly conducted the yearly expenditure would not be great. Making it pay its own way could indeed hardly be expected, but there are other recompenses for work than material gain. The desire to feel that one is doing something really worth while has made many men and women of wealth engage in activities which are by no means commercial and are carried on at a financial loss. To some person of that type the founding of a summer Parliament of Religions might be well worthy of consideration. The annual cost would be less than many men spend on yachting or hunting, less than many women spend on needless additions to their wardrobes. Sarah Farmer undoubtedly got far more from life by carrying on Greenacre than could have accrued to her by acting as a society butterfly or by conducting a profitable business venture. Through Greenacre she came in contact with the best minds her day and country afforded. Looking over the letters and programs of the old days one gets the impression that everyone in America worth while was invited to take part in the Greenacre conferences and that nearly all who were invited accepted. The contacts and social position Miss Farmer thus established could not possibly have been attained by her in any other way. Yet the expenditures made by her in the early years, in addition to the receipts, amounted only to about \$1500 annually—to which ought to be added the unpaid rental for the Inn. At the close of each season a special appeal was made to meet this \$1500 deficit, and a more or

less satisfactory response was always obtained. Many enthusiastic Greenacreites contributed liberally towards the expenses of the conferences, and these contributions would have been far larger and would probably have provided a permanent endowment for carrying on Greenacre had Miss Farmer conducted the institution in a more business-like manner. But again and again she refused "to organize Greenacre," and her methods of handling it made Greenacre appear so unstable that one might well have hesitated at putting any really substantial sum of money in her hands. It was only with reluctance that she consented to the formation of The Green Acre Fellowship in 1902 and even then she avoided turning over to that body the Greenacre property which had been held in her name and could at any moment have been disposed of in accordance with a passing whim. Had Sarah Farmer shown better judgment Greenacre might still be functioning on its original lines. And those who felt the stirring appeal of the old Greenacre movement stand firm in the conviction that the time is ripe for a renaissance; for the institution of a new summer Parliament of Religions.¹¹

¹¹ In justice to my Bahai friends I must state that I have in no instance here made use of any information gleaned from their private conversation. For documents and data concerning Greenacre in its earlier years I am especially indebted to Mr. Frederick L. Bangs of Eliot, without whose aid this article could never have been written. Among other friends who have kindly put at my disposal recollections and records of the past are Mrs. E. Bernice Hayes, Mrs. Grace Emerson Gutterson, Mrs. Abbie Jackson and Mrs. Norah Onthank. Valuable information has been obtained from various unpublished letters of Miss Farmer, Dr. Janes and the clever and witty Mrs. Rena Haskell (Mrs. Edmund Mayhew Haskell) of Medford, Mass. The last ought for posterity's sake have kept a diary recording the chronicles of Greenacre. While the contemporary literature concerning Miss Farmer and Greenacre was quite voluminous no life of Sarah Farmer has been published and no comprehensive account of the rise and fall of Greenacre has hitherto appeared in print.