

BAHAISM AND RELIGIOUS DECEPTION

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A CHARACTERISTIC of the Bahai leaders is *dishonesty in dealing with their religious history*. This sometimes takes the form of the suppression and concealment of documents, sometimes of the omission or perversion of essential facts or their presentation in such a way as to falsify history. In the writing of political history and in scheming for the triumph of a political party, we may expect crookedness in dealing with facts, but in the propagating of a new religion designed to supersede Christianity and Islam, and purporting to be an improvement on them, we do not expect to find dishonesty and misrepresentation. Yet this is exactly what we find, namely, "a readiness to ignore or suppress facts, writings or views (undoubted historical), which they regard as useless or hurtful to their aims."*

When Mirza Husain Ali (Boha Ullah) started out as a "Manifestation," it was necessary to get rid of certain facts and beliefs held by Babis. He must reduce the Bab from his position as the Point of Divinity—the Lord of a new Dispensation, as well as supplant and supersede the Bab's successor, Subh-i-Azal.† Thoroughly to accomplish this object (after the Babis leaders had been put out of the way), the history was rewritten. While claiming that the Bab gave testimony to Baha and taking to themselves the glory of Babi heroism and martyrdoms, the Bahais relegated the Beyan and other "revelations" of the Bab, not yet a score of years old, to dust-covered oblivion.‡ Subh-i-Azal avers that they wilfully destroyed them. He writes §that thirty or more bound

* Prof. Browne's Introduction to Phelps' "Life of Abbas Effendi," p. xxi.

† "New History," p. 426. ‡ Idem, p. xxvii.

§ "Traveller's Narrative" (Episode of the Bab), p. 342-3.

books of the Bab were given in trust by him to his relatives (Baha and his family) as trustees. "They carried off the trust," and "making strenuous efforts, got into their hands such of the books of the Point as were obtainable, with the idea of destroying them and rendering their own works attractive." Prof. Browne* informs us that it was very difficult to obtain a Babi book from Persian Bahais and next to impossible to get a glimpse of one at Acca, where the Bahais had them concealed. The "holy, divine books" were shelved from motives of policy.

A primitive Babi work of first importance was the "History," by Mirza Jani. This was an original narrative of events, at first hand, prepared in sincerity by one who shortly suffered martyrdom for the cause (1852). But its facts did not suit the Bahais. So it was superseded, first by the "New History†" (1880), and secondly by the "Traveller's Narrative" (1886). Both these histories purport to be written by European travellers. We might excuse their being anonymous, to avoid possible persecution, but to make pretence that the authors are travellers who have come from afar ostensibly to investigate, and into whose mouths are put praises of the religion, is but part of the insincerity noticeable in other things.‡ Mirza Jani's "History" passed out of sight, and it was only because a copy had been deposited by Count Gobineau in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris that it has reached our hands.§

* Browne's "A Year Among the Persians," p. 530. "If, instead of talking in this violent and unreasonable manner, you would produce the Beyan, of which ever since I came to Persia I have been vainly endeavouring to obtain a copy."

† Its authors were Mirza Hussain of Hamadan, M. Abul Fazl, and Manakji.

‡ Numerous magazine articles, and even the "Life of Abbas Effendi" have been written by Bahais, as if they were outsiders making observations.

§ In his Introduction (pp. xxxii.-v.) to Mirza Jani, which he has had printed in Persian, Prof. Browne says, "But for Count Gobineau it would have perished utterly. This fact is very instructive, that so important a work could be successfully suppressed," and "that the adherents of a religion could connive at such an act of suppression and falsification of evidence." "This fact is established by the clearest evidence."

Of the "New History" little need be said, except that it perverted the history and "carefully omitted every fact, doctrine and expression,"* not in accord with the policy of Baha.

Let us examine somewhat in detail how Abbas Abdul Baha treats facts in his "Traveller's Narrative." He is undoubtedly the principal author of this work.† The Persian Bahai, who sent Prof. Browne the lithographed (Bombay) copy of it, wrote, "It contains the observations of His Holiness, the Lord, Mystery of God (May my personality be his sacrifice)." Prof. Browne was also presented with a copy of it at Acca, which he published in Persian with an English translation. Of it he says,‡ "It was written to discredit the perfectly legitimate claims and to disparage the blameless character of his less successful rival" (Azal). "There is good ground for suspecting a *deliberate misstatement*§ of facts and dates." He specifies|| various points in which Abbas Effendi perverted the facts. Undoubtedly one of the aims of Abbas was to eliminate Azal. The latter had been regularly appointed by the Bab as his successor, ¶ but he refused to make way for Baha. The Bahais tried to get rid of the question by suppressing all mention of him, even of his name, and "of all documents tending to prove the position which he undoubtedly held."** They

* "New History," p. xxix.

† Idem, xiv., xxxi. ‡ Idem, xiv.

§ "Encyclopedia Britannica" article, Babism.

|| "Traveller's Narrative," p. xlv. It (1) belittles the Bab and glorifies Baha—making the former simply a forerunner; (2) belittles the sufferings and deeds of Babis, passing over remarkable events almost unnoticed and magnifies inferior deeds of Bahais; (3) debases Azal, disregards his position as successor, disparages and scorns him as lacking in courage and wisdom; (4) tries to curry the favour of the Shah of Persia and excuses his persecutions, putting the blame on Mullahs and Viziers, deprecating the resistance and wars of the early Babis.

¶ Count Gobineau (p. 277) says, "There was some little hesitation about the successor of the Bab, but finally he was recognized as divinely designated, a young man of sixteen, named M. Yahya (Azal). The election was recognised by all the Babis."

** "Mirza Jani," p. xxxii.

would have consigned him to oblivion.* The "New History" makes but one doubtful reference to Azal.† Prof. Browne says, "Abbas Effendi,‡ in order to curtail the duration and extent of Subh-i-Azal's authority and to give colour to their assertion that it was but temporary and nominal, *deliberately and purposely antedated* the Manifestation of Baha." And he continues to the present to misrepresent the facts. In "Answered Questions,"§ Baha is presented as the chief influence in Persia immediately after the Bab. Other Bahai writers repeat this error.||

2. Another practice of the founders of Bahaism is *falsifying and changing the documents and texts of their Sacred Writings*, namely, those of the Bab and Baha, according to the exigency of circumstances. Subh-i-Azal made the accusation "that the Bahais had tampered with the Bab's writings to give colour to their own

* "Mirza Jani," p. xxxv., Prof. Browne says, "When I was in Persia in 1887-8, the Babis (Bahais) whom I met *feigned* complete ignorance of the very name and existence of Subh-i-Azal."

† P. 64, note.

‡ "Abbas Effendi *suppressed* all incidents and expressions not in accordance with later Bahai sentiment." "Of this I am certain that the more the Bahai doctrine spreads, especially outside of Persia, the more the true history is obscured and distorted."—Prof. Browne in his introduction to *Mirza Jani*, p. xxxvi.

§ Pp. 36-38.

|| One need not be surprised at this falsifying of claims and historical facts, for it is the testimony of the Bahai historian himself ("New History," p. 5) that "the principal vice of the Persians is falsehood—so universal and customary and so familiar that truthfulness is entirely abandoned and ignored." "In matters relating to religion the Mullahs have shown themselves to be ready liars and shameless forgers." The degree of reliability of this History may be judged from the following sentence, "When the people of Italy had proved the extent of the Pope's hypocrisy, guile and deceit, they so effectually deposed him and his children and his grandchildren that naught remained of him but the appearance." Referring to 1870-1. Since writing this article, I have received a pamphlet by August J. Stenstrand, of Chicago, called "Third Call to Behaists." He writes (p. 27), "The Babi history as well as their sacred scriptures prove that a terrible corruption, changing and transposing of its meanings, has been going on in the hands of the Behaists." Again (p. 28), "We have plenty of proofs that there has been continual corruption, interpolation, changing, transposing and stealing away the sacred scriptures of the Babi religion in the hands of the Bahais."

doctrines and views.”* I pass this by, to notice how they have tampered with their own “Revelations.” For example, take Baha’s “Epistle to the Shah of Persia.” Its original text was published by Baron Rosen.† It is embodied by Abbas Effendi in the “Traveller’s Narrative.”‡ The two do not agree. “Very considerable alterations and suppressions were made in the text by the author of ‘Traveller’s Narrative.’”§ “The text has evidently been toned down to suit a wider audience and to avoid giving offence to non-believers.”||

There is also another “Epistle to the Shah” which is contained in the Surat-ul-Maluk. Its tone is strikingly different. The first is a careful diplomatic document which acknowledged the faults of the Babis, pleads pardon for the past and for religious toleration. It is monotheistic, representing Baha as a humble suffering servant, with no pretence to Divinity. The other “adopts a tone of fierce recrimination towards the Shah, and upbraids him for the Bab’s death, saying, ‘Would you had slain him as men slay one another, but ye slew him in such a way as the eyes of men have not seen the like thereof and heaven wept over him, and by God, the eye of existence hath not beheld the like of you; you slay the son of your prophet and then are of those who are joyful.’” He excuses the attempt on the life of the Shah, and threatens vengeance¶ on him. These two Epistles to the Shah have been a puzzle to the critics. This threatening, fierce letter seems so contrary to the policy of Baha. An adequate and not improbable ex-

* Cf., “Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,” 1892, p. 447.

† “The Alwah-i-Salatin,” in Collections Scientifiques, St. Petersburg, 1877.

‡ “Traveller’s Narrative,” pp. 108-164.

§ “Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,” 1892, p. 313.

|| Idem, p. 286.

¶ “Star of the West,” September 27th, 1913, pp. 9, 10, “If thou dost not obey God, the foundations of thy government shall be razed, and thou shalt become evanescent—become as nothing. If no attention is paid to this book, thou shalt become non-existent.”

planation* would be that one letter was prepared for the perusal of his Majesty and the other for the Bahais, to impress them with the boldness of their prophet.

Another example of this is seen in the suppression† of part of the Lawh-i-Basharat (Glad Tidings). Its fifteenth section commands Constitutional Government. When the Tablet was sent to Russia, this section was suppressed by Bahais. The Tablet was published in its mutilated form by Baron Rosen. Expediency, which rules Bahai practice, required that an incomplete "Divine Revelation" should reach Russia.

Playing fast and loose with the "Revelations" prevailed still more at the time of the bitter quarrel and schism on the death of Baha. Though Baha's Tablets are regarded as "Holy Books" in the highest sense, yet the Bahais commit the grave offence of changing them so as to misrepresent facts. Mirza Mohammed Ali and Badi Ullah, younger sons of Baha, in refuting the claim of Abbas Effendi to be Baha's successor, say, "Has Abbas dared to change the texts uttered by Baha Ullah? Most certainly, Yes. We have in our possession *many* texts of Baha Ullah which have been changed‡ by Abbas Effendi." Further, "he and his party have stolen the first paragraph of a sacred Tablet and have perverted its meaning, with deception."

Khadim-Ullah,§ the life-long amanuensis of Baha,

* The same explanation will account for the opposite narratives of the trial of Baha before the Turkish Court at Acca. Mr. Laurence Oliphant reports that the Court put the question to Baha, "Will you tell the Court who and what you are?" "I will begin," he replied, "by telling you who I am not. I am not a camel-driver (alluding to Mohammed), nor am I a carpenter."

† "New History," p. xxv.

‡ "Facts for Behaists," p. 27. We mention a few of the important ones. (1) The so-called Tablet of Beirut, which confirmed the claim of Abbas, and was said to be transcribed by Khadim Ullah. The latter declared it to be a forgery by Abbas Effendi. (2) Abbas omitted the middle part of the "Tablet of Command" to make it certify his claims. A complete copy in Baha's own handwriting showed the subterfuge. (3) He combined parts of two different Tablets, called it the "Treasure Tablet," and claimed that it certified his succession. The two tablets were produced and proved the falsity of the claim.

§ "Facts for Behaists," p. 55. Afterwards Badi Ullah, who had

asserts that Abbas actually rejected a "Sacred Tablet," written in the handwriting of Baha Ullah. Other Tablets are repudiated. For in "Hidden Words"* Baha Ullah refers to the "Fifth Tablet of Paradise" and the "Ruby Tablet." Abbas Effendi warns against accepting any such tablets if they should be brought to light. What other reason for this can we imagine than fear that their contents would be against his claim. Enough has been said to show the truth of the charge that the Bahais deal dishonestly with the documents of their alleged revelation.

A peculiar instance of forgery occurs in the writings of Baha Ullah. In his Epistle to the Shah Baha quotes certain verses as from the "Hidden Book of Fatima." This book, the Shiahs believe, was revealed by Gabriel to Fatima, the daughter of Mohammed, disappeared with the twelfth Imam, and will be brought back by the Mehdi at his coming. Prof. Browne† wrote to Acca making inquiry about this "Book of Fatima" and the quotations from it. The authoritative reply which he received was, "That naught is known of such a book but the name, but Baha Ullah mentioned it in this manner to make known the appearance of the Kaim" (Mehdi). In other words, Baha was making a false pretence of quoting from the "Book of Fatima," as if he, as Mehdi, had brought it with him.

3. Bahais make *false representation of facts in political history*. The "Traveller's Narrative" perverts the truth for "political opportunism."‡ Contrary to the contemporary historian, Mirza Jani, and the European chroniclers, the Shah is represented as ig-

accused the party of Abbas of making additions to the writings, with a purpose changed sides in the quarrel and accused Mehmet Ali of the same things—"interpolating," "erasing," "transposing," "replacing," "clipping and joining fragments," of the Tablets of Baha Ullah, besides issuing "a false writing in his name." Mehmet Ali is also accused of "carrying away by way of the window" two trunks full of the "blessed writings." See "Epistle to the Bahai World," by Mirza Badi Ullah, pp. 3, 5, 12-17.

* "Hidden Words," numbers 20, 37, 48.

† "Traveller's Narrative," p. 123.

‡ "New History," p. vii.

norant and innocent of and averse to the repressive measures taken by his government against the Babis. Let me give specific proofs of this.

At the first trial of the Bab, at Tabriz, according to Mirza Jani,* Nasr-ud-Din, then Crown Prince, whom he dubs "bastard," treated the Bab disrespectfully by rolling a globe towards him and taunting him with ignorance of it and by ordering him to be bastinadoed. The "Traveller's Narrative,"† per contra, says, "The heavenly-cradled Crown Prince pronounced no sentence with regard to the Bab, but the Mullahs ordered a bastinado." The former history states that the Prime Minister consulted, about the execution of the Bab, with the Shah,‡ who gave him full authority to act in the matter,§ and that he then communicated with Prince Haurza Mirza, Governor of Azerbaijan, who proceeded to make plans for it. Abbas' Narrative¶ states that the Minister, without the Royal command and without his cognizance and entirely on his own authority, issued commands to put the Bab to death"; "that Prince Haurza utterly refused to have part in the trial and execution." Gobineau|| confirms the original account, and states that Prince Haurza "took a leading part in the condemnation of the Bab." It is certain that contemporary Babis¶¶ held the Shah responsible for their persecution and were bitter against him. Mirza Jani records the death of Mohammed Shah, by saying that "he went to hell"; the "New History" affirms "that he passed to the mansions of Paradise." Nasr-ud-Din

* Idem, p. 353.

† "Traveller's Narrative," p. 20.

‡ "New History," p. 292.

§ "Traveller's Narrative," pp. 40, 41. Abul Fazl also is apologetic for the Shah, and says ("Bahai Proofs," p. 38), "Without seeking permission from the Shah, the Minister issued the order for his death."

|| "Traveller's Narrative," p. 259.

¶¶ In "New History," p. xvii., Prof. Browne says, "The Babis made no profession of loyalty, nor did they attempt to exonerate the Shah from the responsibility of the persecutions. They entertained for the Kagar rulers a hatred equal to that for the Mullahs, which Mirza Jani is at no pains to disguise. To the Shahs, such terms as tyrant, scoundrel, unrightful king, are freely applied. The battle cry, 'Ya Nasr-ud-Din Shah,' is described as 'a foul watchword.'"

was no puppet king, he was fully cognizant of the affairs of state. Regarding the imprisonment of Baha, the "Traveller's Narrative"* says, "His Majesty, moved by his own kindly spirit, ordered investigation and the release of Baha Ullah." He had just ordered the execution of twenty-eight Babis, with horrid cruelties, after the attempt on his life. Regarding the torture and execution of Badi, who bore the Epistle to the Shah, it says: † "It was contrary to the desire of the Shah, and he manifested regret for it." This and much in that Epistle is written with the idea of conciliating the Shah and obtaining toleration. It is a sensible attitude, did they not maintain it with so much misrepresentation and hypocrisy. The real spirit of Bahais towards Nasr-ud-Din is seen in Baha's Surat-ul-Muluk, and is one of "fierce recrimination." Confirmation of this comes from conversations with Bahais.

Another misrepresentation of history, which is universal among Bahais, is in belittling the plot to assassinate Nasr-ud-Din Shah in 1852. Abbas Effendi says, ‡ "It was done by a certain Babi, by sheer madness, one other person being his accomplice." His sister, Bahiah Khanum, says, § It was "by a young Babi who had lost his reason," Kheiralla, || "by a weak-minded, insane believer." Similarly all their writers propagate a tradition that one irresponsible man made the attempt. It is permitted to doubt the Shiah historian, who gives a circumstantial account of how twelve Babis, including one high leader, laid the plot. But Count Gobineau ¶ is entitled to credence when he says that there were a number of Babis in the plot and three took part in the attempt. A nephew of one of the accomplices told Prof. Browne** that there were seven in the plot and three of them went out to commit the act. Why will not Bahai writers give the facts straight ?

Another misrepresentation fostered by them is that

* "Traveller's Narrative," p. 52. † Idem, pp. 104-6.

‡ "Traveller's Narrative," pp. 49, 50. § Phelps, p. 13.

|| "Beha Ullah," p. 411. ¶ "Traveller's Narrative," p. 53.

** "Traveller's Narrative," p. 323.

of calling the Babi martyrs Bahais. Thus Abdul Baha says,* “When they brought Kurrat-ul-Ayn the terrible news of the martyrdom of the Bahais, she did not waver.” Again he says,† “Thousands of His (*i.e.*, Baha Ullah’s) followers have given their lives, and while under the sword shedding their blood they have proclaimed, ‘Ya Baha-ul-Abha.’” He said‡ in Dr. Cadman’s Church, “The King of Persia killed 20,000 Bahais.” Again,§ “In all parts of Persia his enemies rose against Baha Ullah, imprisoning and killing *his* converts, razing thousands of dwellings.” These are gross misstatements. In Kurrat-ul-Ayn’s time there were no Bahais, only Babis. No such efforts as those described were ever made to crush Bahaism. The thousands who gave their lives were Babis. Perhaps someone remarks, “What’s the difference?” Foreign writers may not know the difference, and an American audience certainly does not. But Abdul Baha, from whom I have quoted, makes a great difference. It arouses one’s indignation to read Bahai literature, in which they claim credit for all that is noble in Babi annals, such as the martyrdoms, and yet they disparage and deny the Babis.

Read Abul Fazl’s “Bahai Proofs.” He said|| to Prince Naibus-Sultaneh, “The unseemly actions of the Babis cannot be denied nor excused, but to arrest Bahais for them is oppression, for these unfortunates have *no connection with the Babis*, who took up arms, *nor are they of the same religion or creed.*” In another place he writes¶ repudiating the wars and disorders of the Babis, and affirming that they were guilty of many censurable actions, such as taking men’s property and pillaging the dead, and engaging in conflict and bloodshed. If then the Bahais repudiate them, they must not appropriate their glory, for the old Babis, with all their faults, were at least heroic. Bahaism has, on the contrary, the spirit of *tagiya*.

I pass on to consider Abdul Baha’s representations

* “Star of the West,” October 16th, 1913, p. 210.

† *Idem*, July 13th, 1913, p. 118. ‡ *Idem*, September 18th, 1912.

§ “Some Answered Questions,” p. 37.

|| Page 77, 78. ¶ Page 63.

regarding Sultan Abdul Hamid. I present two quotations from Tablets addressed to American believers. The first says,* “Here one witnesses the fairness and impartiality of H.I. Majesty the Padeshah of the Ottomans, who has dealt with the utmost justice and equity. In reality to-day, in the Asiatic world, the Padeshah of the Ottoman Empire and the Shah of Persia, Muzaffar-ud-Din, are peerless and have no equals. These two kings have treated us with mildness—both are just. Therefore, pray ye and beseech for their confirmation in the threshold of the Almighty, especially for Abdul Hamid, who has dealt at all times in justice with these exiled ones.” Abdul Hamid—a peerless, just one! Surely this would have remained among the *hidden things* had not one “Servant of God” (Abd-ul-Baha) revealed it to us about that other “Servant of God” (Abd-ul-Hamid). This “revelation” is dated 1906. After Abdul Hamid was deposed, Abdul Baha speaks† of “his oppression and tyranny,” for the Sultan sent “an oppressive, august commission, that with all kinds of wiles, simulations, slander and fabrication of false stories, they might fasten guilt upon Abdul Baha. But soon fetters and manacles were placed around the *unblessed* neck of Abdul Hamid.” Did the “Infallible Pen” err in the former character sketch? No, but Abdul Baha’s oppression‡ of his brothers, in retaining their patrimony, resulted in a bitter quarrel and complaints, followed by an investigating Commission and Abdul Baha’s imprisonment. On this account the whitewash scaled off Abdul Hamid.

Another form of misstatement is their habitual way of speaking of the imprisonment of Baha and Abdul-Baha. Abdul Baha says of Baha,§ “His blessed days

* “Tablets of Abdul Baha,” Vol. i., p. 46.

† “Star of the West,” May 17th, 1911, p. 6.

‡ Mrs. Templeton (previously Mrs. Laurence Oliphant) in “Facts for Behaists,” tells of the unrighteousness of Abbas Effendi (Abdul Baha) in keeping from his brothers and step-mothers the pension money of the Turkish Government and the revenue of Baha’s villages, and of his ostentatious charity in giving away part of these funds by distributing coins to a mixed crowd of beggars every Friday.

§ “Star of the West,” May 17th, 1913, p. 74.

ended in the cruel prison and *dark dungeon.*" "He passed his days in the Most Great Prison."* Abdul Baha continually speaks of himself in such words as the following, "Forty years I was a prisoner; I was young when I was put in prison, and my hair was white when the prison doors opened."† "After all these long years of prison life." "My body can endure anything; my body has endured forty years of imprisonment."‡ Now, what are the facts?

In Phelps' Life, Bahiah Khanum§ says, "We were imprisoned in the barracks at Acca two years (1868-70)." Then|| "we were given a comfortable house¶ with three rooms and a court." After nine years of such restriction Baha Ullah moved to a beautiful garden outside the city and built there a Palace, called Bahja. He had the freedom of the surrounding country, visited Mount Carmel, and later spent a part of each year at Haifa.** Baha Ullah died in this Palace, not in a *dungeon.*††

* "Tablets of Abdul Baha," Vol. i., p. 44.

† "Star of the West," Idem, p. 67. ‡ Idem, September 8th, 1912, p. 5.

§ Phelps, p. 66. || Idem, p. 70.

¶ This house was purchased by an American Bahai lady, that it might remain in Bahai hands.

** "Bahai Proofs," by Abul Fazl, p. 66. Remy, p. 23.

†† "Mrs. Grundy, p. 73 ff., "Ten Days," etc., speaks of the Palace of joy as a very large white mansion. Prof. Browne was received here (1890). He was conducted through a spacious hall, paved with a mosaic of marble, into a great antechamber, and entered through a lifted curtain into a large Audience Room.

Of the Garden of Baha, Sprague ("A Year in India," etc., p. 1) says, "It is a veritable garden of Eden, with luxuriant foliage and every fruit. Baha Ullah used to sit under the large spreading tree and teach his disciples." "Mrs. Grundy" says, "The Rigwan is filled with palm trees, oranges, lemons and wonderful flowers. A river, the Nahr Naaman, runs through it, in two streams, on which ducks and other fowls swim. On an island is an arbour under two large mulberry trees. A fountain plays in the midst. Under the arbor is a chair where Baha used to sit. No one sits in it any more. (Mrs. Grundy knelt at the foot of the chair). The garden has a cottage, where Baha spent his summers." A Palace and a luxurious summer place were Baha's "Most Great Prison" during most of his years at Acca. Compare Laurence Oliphant's "Haifa," etc., p. 103, for a fine description of his "pleasure ground." How unfounded are such statements as Bernard Temple's ("Star of the West," p. 39, April 28th, 1914). "All this while the founders were behind prison walls."

As to Abbas Effendi, during the first brief period only he was restricted to the barracks. He was even temporarily put in chains in the dungeon* when accused of participation in the assassination of the Azalis. After that, for a period of *thirty years*, "he was permitted to go about at his pleasure, beyond the walls of Acca."† He built a fine residence‡ at Haifa, which I have seen. He journeyed to Tiberias and as far as Beirut. Only after his quarrel with his brothers and on their accusation was he ordered back to Acca, and even then he had the freedom of the city (1905).§ Such are the facts about Abbas Effendi, whom Canon Wilberforce introduced in his Church as "for forty years a *prisoner for the cause of brotherhood and love.*" In truth it was the quarrelling of the brothers, Azal and Baha, that led to the banishment from Adrianople to Acca, the murder of Azalis by Bahais increased its severity, the bitter hatred of the younger generation against each other brought back the restraint.

4. Another immoral practice of Bahais is *tagiya* or *Ketman*, religious dissimulation. This is taught and practised by Shiah Moslems,|| and it is continued with all its offensiveness against good morals by Bahais. In it concealment, denial or misrepresentation by word or act is allowed for self-protection or for the good of the faith. It was formally permitted by Baha Ullah. In accordance with this practice Abdul Baha and his followers at Acca keep the Fast of Ramazan¶ in addition to the Bahai Fast at Noruz. Dr. H. H. Jessup** wrote, "He is now acting what seems to be a double part—a Moslem

* Phelps. p. 75. † Idem, p. 80.

‡ Dr. H. H. Jessup, who visited him in 1900, writes (*New York Outlook*, 1902), "Abbas Effendi has two houses in Haifa, one for his family, in which he entertains the American lady pilgrims, and one down town where his Persian followers meet him."

§ Abbas Effendi in Acca at this time visited Mr. Remey ("Bahai Movement," p. 108). He received American pilgrims. Mrs. Goodall ("Daily Lessons," p. 6) speaks of "His bountifully spread table," the laughter and good cheer, and (p. 13) remarks, "One would never realise he was visiting a Turkish prison."

¶ Dr. Shedd says, "Concealment of religious faith is a common practice in Persia, and it is approved and recommended by Bahais."

|| Phelps, p. 101. ** *New York Outlook*.

in the Mosque, and a Christ in his own house. He prays with the Moslems, 'there is no God but God,' and expounds the Gospels as the incarnate Son of God." Mirza Abul Fazl, a Bahai missionary, lately died in Egypt. At his public funeral* the Moslem *taziah*, with reading of the Koran, was held, though he was a strenuous worker for the abrogation of Islam. Most Bahais in Persia live in habitual *tagiya*. Fear of persecution is some palliation for this, but it is a great defect. Very far from the truth is the statement of Lord Curzon† that "No Babi (or Bahai) has ever recanted under pressure." Mr. Nicolas,‡ the French Consul at Tabriz, shows from the Bab's own writings that he himself denied his Manifestation at his examination at Shiraz and signed a recantation. At the execution§ of the Bab in Tabriz (1850) two of his intimate disciples denied the faith. The explanation of the fact is remarkable and instructive. They were enjoined to do so by the Bab in order that they might convey certain documents to a safe place. In other words, they were to lie for the faith, by divine injunction. In another notable instance,|| seven Babis stood firm and were executed at Teheran, while thirty recanted, being told by their leader to judge whether they were justified by family ties, etc., in renouncing the faith. "They determined to adopt a course of concealment, *tagiya*." Some years ago a Bahai was called before the Governor of Tabriz and questioned, "Are you a Bahai?" "I am a Mussulman." "Will you curse Baha?" "It is written in the Koran not to curse, I am not a Bahai." By payment of a *peshkesk* this answer was made acceptable. And no offence was recognised in conscience, for Baha had said, "If your heart is right with me, nothing matters." It were scarcely necessary to note that some Babis and Bahais have denied their faith, except to correct the mistake of travellers, but the fact that denial is permitted and approved is important. For *tagiya* is

* "Star of the West," March 2nd, 1914. † Phelps, p. xxxi.

‡ "Le Béyan Persan" (Paris), Introduction xvi.-xxiv., by A. L. M. Nicolas, who has made a special study of Babism and published much.

§ "New History," p. 252. || "Traveller's Narrative," p. 252.

a deeply-rooted seed which bears evil fruits in their characters and conduct.

Even their propaganda is carried on in the same deceitful spirit. The Bahai conceals from the one he approaches his status and beliefs, insinuates himself into his confidence, suits the substance of his message to the preconceptions and prejudices of his hearer and leads him on, perhaps omitting to mention the real essentials of Bahaism.* One of their methods is to worm themselves into the employ of Christian Missions and clandestinely carry on their propaganda while they undermine the work of the Mission. Perhaps the Mission wishes a language teacher or a mirza. A Bahai presents himself. He talks well. In the course of conversation the missionary inquires his religious views. He appears liberal minded. Direct inquiry is made, "Are you a Bahai?" He replies, "No, *I am not*, but I am tired of Islam; I am a truth-seeker." The missionary employs him. After a time, maybe, he professes to be a Christian, and is baptised. Such were a certain Mirza Hasan and a Mirza Husain, who deceived the Swedish Mission and received salaries as Christian evangelists, but had been and continued to be Bahais and propagandists. I have heard that in a certain Station (not American) Bahais, without revealing their faith, accepted positions as cook, language-teacher, financial agent, etc., and so surrounded the new Mission that it was a Bahai more than a Christian establishment. Dr. Shedd† tells of an assistant he had with him in school work—a Persian, with whom he discussed religious topics freely. For years the man disavowed belief in Bahaism, but finally threw off the mask and became an active propagandist. After his dismissal he instigated the Persian pupils, whom he had previously secretly beguiled, and they complained to the Persian Government that "they, as good (?) Moham-

* S. M. Jordon, of Teheran, says ("The Mohammedan World," Cairo, p. 130), "We are honestly open in our methods, while they are the reverse." Dr. Shedd says, "Christian Mission work is openly Christian, that of Persian Bahais is professedly Mohammedan." "Bahaism, as offered to a Jew, a Christian or a Mohammedan varies greatly."

† "Missionary Review," 1911, October.

medans, were offended by having to study the Christian Scriptures." Great is *tagiya* !

What else can we expect, since Abdul Baha instructs his disciples in pretence. A certain Madame Canavarró,* staying at Acca, expressed her desire to assist in spreading Baháism among the Buddhists, and spoke of the difficulty of introducing it as a new religion. Abdul Baha replied, "At first teach it as truths of their own religion, afterwards tell them of me." She replied that she herself was imbued with the spirit of Buddhism. He answered, "What you call yourself is of no consequence." To a certain American lady who was afraid her friends would be repelled by the idea of a new religion, Abdul Baha advised, "Remain in the church and teach Baháism as the true teaching of Christ."

A striking instance of this religious dissimulation is seen in Hamadán.† There about two-and-a-half per cent. of the Jews have accepted Baha as the Messiah. But many of these continue in the outward forms and associations of the Jews.‡ Others professed to be Christians, and were protected as such by the Shah's government. After a decade or two it became evident that they were hypocrites, cloaking their Baháism under the Christian name.

This Oriental dissimulation takes on a different phase in Western Baháism. The principle of the latter is stated thus, "Adhere to any religious faith with which you are associated."§ "No religious relation|| should

* Phelps, p. 154.

† Miss A. Montgomery, in "Woman's Work," 1913, p. 270, says of these Baháis, "This sect of Moslems, thirty years ago, were afraid to appear to be what they really were, they exercised the privilege of falsehood their deceitful faith grants them, and called themselves Christians."

‡ A European Jew reports as follows (1914), "The Jewish Baháis in Hamadán are few in number (exactly fifty-nine besides children). They have not yet broken with Judaism. They go to the Synagogue and follow outwardly our religious practices. They deny *in public* that they are Baháis from fear of the Mussulmans, who detest the new religion. But the continual attacks of the Baháis against the Jews will exasperate our co-religionists, who will cast them out finally. At present the practical result is hatred and disdain, and bitter dissensions between fathers and sons, sisters and brothers, husband and wife."

§ Phelps, p. 96. The Report of the Baháis to the United States

be severed, but these relations should become as avenues for giving forth the message of the Bahai faith." This idea is delusive ; it is self-deception, ignorance, or worse. No Christian can give allegiance to Baha as incarnate God and accept, as he then must, Islam,* Babism and Bahatism as successively true, and as higher revelations abrogating Christianity, and still be loyal to Christ. Bahatism is not a philosophy like Tolstoism, nor a theory of economics like the "single tax" ; it is a religion as much as Mormonism is.

A plain example of Bahai *tagiya* is in connection with the organisation known as the "Persian-American Educational Society." This was organised at Washington, D.C., under the patronage of Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, Persian Chargé d' Affaires. Its organising body, committee to draft its constitution, its executive, are Bahais, yet its circular sets forth seventeen purposes for its existence without naming the propagation of Bahatism as one of them. It appealed for funds on general philanthropic and educational grounds, never mentioning its religious motive. It introduced the names of President Taft, Secretary Root, and other prominent men in such a way as to lead the public to understand that the movement had their intelligent endorsement. To its real purpose, viz. : aiding existing and establishing new Bahai schools in Persia and the Orient, † I am making no objection. It is the *concealment* of this purpose which is objectionable when contributions are asked from the general public. It claims to be

Census Board says, "One may be a Bahai and still retain active membership in another religious body."

‖ Remey's, "The Bahai Movement," p. 97.

* Bahatism says, "Christians who do not believe in the Koran have not believed Christ."

† The name of the Society has been changed to the "Orient Occident Unity," and a commercial department added. Its contributions are acknowledged, and its work reported through the "Star of the West" as Bahai work. An American, who imported a machine flour-mill to Persia, under its auspices, told the Consul that the object of his coming was not the mill but propagating Bahatism. In the "Jam-i-Jamsied," Calcutta, March 28th, 1914, Dr. E. C. Gatsinger boasts to the Parsees, "The American Bahais have established schools in Persia, and have sent American teachers to those schools."

unsectarian, because its schools take in pupils of all sects and religions. So do the schools of Christian Missions, but they are none the less Christian schools, and the "Orient-Occident" schools are distinctively Bahai. They *disclaim proselytizing*. The claim is simply false. Bahai schools are hot beds of proselytizing, and must be so by their nature. Their law* says, "Schools must first train the children in the principles of the religion." Dreyfus† adds, "There is no fear of a prescription, emanating from such authority, ever being disregarded." The Bahai school in Teheran worked under cover for some years. Remy says,‡ "This institution is not generally known as a Bahai School. However, it is in the hands of the Bahais. From the directors down through the teachers and students, the majority were of our faith." Similarly in Bombay,§ the Bahai teacher concealed his faith. "The Zoroastrian parents of his pupils suspected him of Bahaism and so took their children out."

But to find the supreme example of Bahai *tagiya* we have to go to the fountain head. Abdul Baha himself, oblivious to its moral obliquity, lays bare the fact in his "Traveller's Narrative."¶ We have seen that Sabh-i-Azal, the half-brother of Baha Ullah, was appointed by the Bab as his successor. According to Abdul Baha, this appointment was a dishonest subterfuge on the part of Baha, arranged by him through secret correspondence with the Bab, in order that Baha might be relieved of danger and persecution and be protected from interference. So "out of regard for certain considerations and as a matter of expediency, Azal's name was made notorious on the tongues of friends and foes even to jeopardising his life, while Baha remained safe and secure, and no one fathomed the matter." Abul Fazl¶¶ states the position of the "Traveller's Narrative" as

* "Words of Paradise," p. 53. † "The Universal Religion," p. 139.

‡ "Observations of a Bahai Traveller," 1908, p. 77.

§ Sprague's, "A Year in India," p. 16. ¶ Pp. 62, 63, 95, 96.

¶¶ "Bahai Proofs," p. 52. See also Browne's "Mirza Jani's History," pp. xxxiii.-vi.

follows, "The Bab and Baha Ullah, after consulting together, made Azal *appear* as the Bab's successor. In this manner they preserved Baha Ullah from interference." This account shows the low ideas of honour and truthfulness in the minds of Baha and Abdul Baha. And although their explanation is not true (but an invention of their *tagiya—corrupted* minds), it shows to what straits* they were put to explain away the succession of Azal, the legitimacy of which Azal still, in his ripe old age, maintains. Abdul Baha published to the world Baha's deceitfulness, but in vain!

Of a piece with this was the action of Baha's trusted agent, Maskin Kalam, in Cyprus. This Bahai was sent by the Turkish Government with Azal. "He set up a coffee-house at the port where travellers must arrive, and when he saw a Persian land he would invite him in, give him tea or coffee and a pipe, and gradually worm out of him the business that had brought him there. If his object were to see Subh-i-Azal, off went Muskin Kalam† to the authorities, and the pilgrim soon found himself packed out of the Island." This account is given by a faithful Bahai. Afterwards Maskin Kalam retired to Acca and spent his old age as an honoured guest of Baha.

* The Bahais are impaled on the other horn of the dilemma also, for, as Prof. Browne says ("Mirza Jani," p. xxxiii.), "The difficulty lies in the fact that Subh-i-Azal consistently refused to recognise Baha's claim, so that the Bahai is driven to make the assumption that the Bab, who is acknowledged to be divinely inspired and gifted with divine knowledge and prescience, deliberately chose to succeed him one who was destined to be the 'Point of darkness,' or chief opponent, of 'Him whom God should manifest.'"

† "A Year Among the Persians," p. 517.