

WORLD ORDER

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FIFTEEN CENTS

The Bahá'í Cause Today

Marzieh Gail

A FEW months ago (October, 1940) an article called "The Bahai (sic) Cause Today" by William McElwee Miller, appeared in *The Moslem World*. That it was not intended as an ordinary report is shown by this: a reprint was made and copies sent to a number of Bahá'ís, and doubtless to many other persons, throughout the country. Why the reprint was made and gratuitously circulated, and who supplied the mailing list, I do not know.

As for *The Moslem World*, it describes itself as "A Christian quarterly review of current events, literature and thought among Moḥammedans." Its editor is among other things a missionary, an ordained minister, and the author of such books as "Islam—A Challenge to Faith," and "Moḥammed or Christ." Of ten associate editors, five bear the title of "Reverend," a sixth having the degree of D.D.

The author of this article, himself a missionary, explains at the outset why he has written it. He says, "There are a number of centers in America where Bahais (sic) have been conducting meetings and working for their cause for a number of years, and it sometimes happens that people who come in touch with them wish to know more about the movement." (A most encouraging remark, incidentally.) After recommending a study of our literature he says that the editors of *The Moslem World* have requested the writing of this article "to meet the need of those who wish to consider the movement from a different point of view."

INACCURATE HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Under the circumstances, I should think one would hardly need to read the article to find out what this "different point of view" might be—surely anyone of average intelligence would know it beforehand. With no surprise, then, we find that the historical summary of our Faith as supplied by Mr. Miller repeats all the old misinformation as if it were Gospel truth. Such a figure as Azal is cordially espoused. (It is interesting, the popularity which that pitifully weak, warped man enjoys with those who seek to deny our Faith. How they like to insinuate that Bahá'u'lláh was opposed to Azal and attempted his life, whereas through all those years Bahá'u'lláh showed him nothing but kindness; and this was continued by the Family of Bahá'u'lláh; in 1924 I met Azal's granddaughter, well cared-for as a guest in the Master's Household. For an eye-witness account of Azal, and of his behavior in Baghdád, the reader is referred to Lady Blomfield's *The Chosen Highway*. Even when Bahá'u'lláh went away into the wilderness for two years, and Azal was left entirely alone and free to seize any station he wished, he could do nothing but cower behind locked doors. Even in the Book of Aqdas, Bahá'u'lláh offers to forgive him, forgive the man who had worked only in darkness, whose methods were poison and treachery and safe hiding-places.) Mr. Miller complains that Azal is "ignored" in modern Bahá'í histories. Well, there is not much to say about him.

Mr. Miller also says, without giving his source, that Dr. Cormick and "other doctors also" were of the opinion that the mind of the Báb was "unbalanced." We must remember that the Báb, a lone Prisoner who had been bastinadoed, told Dr. Cormick that in time all people would obey Him and em-

brace His teaching. I am sure the Dr. Cormicks of Jesus' time would have expressed a similar opinion, when they heard the poor Carpenter speak of Himself as King of the Jews. Those who wish to judge for themselves of the Báb's mind have only to refer to His writings—writings to the translation of which such a scholar as A. L. M. Nicolas devoted much of his life.

I would suggest, for the benefit of those seekers for whom Mr. Miller says he has written this article, that they should be careful of terminological pitfalls along the way. After five or ten such expressions as "propaganda" for "teaching"; "busily engaged in" for "engaged in"; "secretly preparing to advance the claim" for "had not yet declared Himself"; "totalitarian" for "united"—the reader will be influenced in the direction the writer intends without even knowing it.

Mr. Miller fires off his cannon very quietly, as the Persians say. He gives it as a Bahá'í teaching that Bahá'u'lláh "will found a Church-State which will become dominant in the world, and this will be done, not by the sword, . . . but by peaceful means." This is most misleading. For there is no such thing as a Bahá'í church, and the concept of state as we have known it heretofore does not express the World State of the Future, the World Federation; what Victor Hugo referred to as the "United States of the World" and H. G. Wells as a "comprehensive collectivization of human affairs." We stand for the unity of the entire human race. There is no precedent for what we represent. Attempted labels from the past are mere anachronisms.

I shall not dwell here on Mr. Miller's summary of the Book of Aqdas, a summary obviously meant to be ridiculous. I have studied the beautiful original of this Most Holy Book, in Tíhrán, with the well-known scholar Jináb-i-Fáḍil-i-

Mázindarání, and therefore do not understand what Mr. Miller means when he says that it is "almost as unintelligible in Írán as it is in America." Mr. Miller ought perhaps to brush up on his Arabic.

Many excerpts from the Aqdas are already translated into English and available in the *Gleanings*. That the entire volume has not yet been introduced in the West is due to the fact that other Bahá'í works are an essential preliminary to its study; these are being supplied in rapid succession, and through the Guardian's unremitting labor. They include such titles as the *Íqán*, *The Dawn-Breakers*, the *Gleanings*, the *Prayers and Meditations*; such writings as *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh* and *The Advent of Divine Justice*.

DENIAL OF THE MANIFESTATION

Mr. Miller then makes the interesting statement that Bahá'u'lláh owed much to the "reading of books and newspapers published in Syria." This, of course, is the old attempt of man to explain away the Prophet. Whatever wonderful publications may have been available in that remote country in the 60's and 70's, the reading of books and newspapers never produced a Prophet of God; you cannot acquire from books and newspapers what they do not contain: the innate power that characterizes the Manifestation. Mr. Miller also says "there is little in his teachings that is original. . . ." I am glad that Mr. Miller goes so true to form; he satisfies perfectly my sense of history; for this remark is invariably made of the new Prophet by followers of previous ones. For two thousand years the Jews have been saying it of Jesus; see the idea as currently expressed by Ludwig Lewisohn (*The Island Within*, 1928, p. 119) when he refers to "the ethical or purely spiritual aspects of the teachings of Jesus, who said

nothing of this kind which had not previously been said by sage and prophet and duly embodied as law or Jewish aspiration in some sacred book or accepted tradition." For thirteen hundred years the Christians have been saying that Muḥammad collected bits of Jewish and Christian lore and so fabricated a religion—whereas anyone can gather bits of religion together, but that does not make him a Prophet, the animator of millions of men. Just as anyone can collect poems into an anthology, but that does not make him a poet.

Mr. Miller's remarks on 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who only yesterday was still on earth with us, Whom thousands now living carry always in their hearts, I find especially difficult to forgive: "Abdul-Baha, who had been appointed by his father the leader of the movement, began to make claims for himself, which to many Bahais seemed blasphemous . . . he so associated himself with his father that he led the Bahais to give him the same honor which they gave the Manifestation. . . ." To mention only one man, my father was privileged to be with the Master in the prison city for almost a year and half. To mention only one man among thousands, my father can indignantly refute such a statement as this. The reader is referred to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's emphatic teachings on this subject, and to His name—"Servant of Bahá."

Mr. Miller is obviously much annoyed that the Master sent someone to America to teach the Faith. He puts it in this way: "Not content with having the allegiance of the Bahais of the East, Abdul-Baha in 1893 sent a missionary . . . to America. . . ." This is an odd comment from one who was himself for twenty years a missionary in a foreign land.

On page 10 of the reprint Mr. Miller uses, unannounced, a long quotation from himself. Wondering who his quoted authority was, I realized that the passage was vaguely familiar;

I then remembered and checked its source—another of Mr. Miller's own writings. A good way, this, to make one writer sound like several. The purport of the section on page 10 is that in the Bahá'í plan, world unity, according to Mr. Miller, "is to be achieved by complete submission on the part of all men to the word and will of . . . one man."

Well, the relationship of Bahá'ís to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and to-day to the Guardian, is not submission as Mr. Miller intends it. It is love. It is a spiritual bond involving no compulsion. It could not be established by force. It is like the concentration of members of a symphony orchestra on the conductor of the symphony; it grows out of our insistent desire for unity and our knowledge that without a focal point of concentration there can be no unity.

The passage from the Master's Will: "To none is given the right to put forth his own opinion or express his particular convictions. All must seek guidance and turn unto the Center of the Cause and the House of Justice," means simply this: no member of the orchestra can desert the pattern of the music. This passage does not refer to scientific research, philosophical exploration, creative activity; it simply expresses the plan of Bahá'u'lláh for world unity: the concentration of the hearts of His followers on an established and designated Point.

Mr. Miller next proceeds to wonder when our Faith will get out of its infancy and "grow up." Christianity was some three hundred years becoming established, and the Bahá'í Cause synchronizes with a much greater change in human affairs than took place then. A wise observer would certainly take no stock in a World Cause which reached maturity, developed all its potentialities, in less than a hundred years. Incidentally, Tertullian (died ca. 230 A. D.) said in his time of Christianity, "We were only born yesterday. . . ."

As to Mr. Miller's statistical figures on our Faith, quoted from the United States Census of Religious Bodies (1936): whatever their accuracy, our Faith has grown so much since 1936, with the development in Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Southern California, to mention only some areas—and to say nothing of its increasing spread throughout this hemisphere by Bahá'í settlers and travelers from Alaska to Argentina—that the membership and distribution as quoted are no longer representative. Nevertheless our membership in the United States is admittedly small, and this is one of the strongest proofs of our spiritual confirmation: that a few thousand people should have built the great House of Worship, established four summer schools, brought out books which authorities throughout the nation consider of the first rank, won the respectful attention of educators and government officials, and carried their Faith as far away as India and Australia and Japan. And this has been accomplished with Bahá'í funds only, since money is not accepted by us from non-Bahá'ís. Speaking of numbers, it must be remembered that one cannot become a Bahá'í by birth—the means by which most church memberships are recruited; that our teachings conflict with some of the public's most cherished prejudices and desires; that every Bahá'í is the result of a long selective process imposed by the very nature of the Faith.

THE ONLY SAVIOUR

As for the figure quoted for charity gifts, this is of course inaccurate, since many keep no record of what they give. Nevertheless it is obvious that the Bahá'í gives first to his own Faith; for we believe that once the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are established in the world, the present ugly system of producing poverty and then nursing it along, will be no more.

Mr. Miller then proceeds to write favorably of our literature and tells where it may be purchased. He especially praises a very fine presentation of the Bahá'í Teachings, Stanwood Cobb's "Security for a Failing World." He agrees with us that the world is unable to save itself, but adds that at this point the Bahá'ís "part company with followers of Christ." Because, he says, the Christian believes that "Christ is the only Saviour of the world," and that "Christ's spiritual presence everywhere is better for the Church today than would be His physical presence in Palestine or in America." As a distinguished namesake of Mr. Miller once said, when he urgently announced to the Christians of his time the Return of Christ on or about the year 1844, "To my astonishment I found very few who listened with any interest. . . ." Those people, too, were not anxious for the physical presence of Jesus. Apparently Mr. Miller does not believe in such Christian doctrines as the Word made Flesh—the physical presence of the Manifestation—and His establishment of the Kingdom of God "on earth as it is in heaven."

On page 18 we find Mr. Miller misusing a statement of Stanwood Cobb's, regarding the "practice of collective turning to the Divine Ruler of the universe for guidance"; Mr. Cobb is speaking of Almighty God, whereas Mr. Miller comments: "The Bahais feel the need of a Divine Ruler who sits on Caesar's throne, and that ruler they believe to be Shoghi Effendi." On page 25 he says again, "The Bahai dream is of a totalitarian world order, in which the successor of Baha'ullah rules supreme." This strange "totalitarian order" exists only in Mr. Miller's mind, as any one may discover for himself by referring to our books. Not for a moment would free, twentieth-century adults labor away the best years of their lives to further such a fantastic, such an impossible and

indeed such an undesirable aim. For Bahá'u'lláh teaches that the human race is achieving maturity, that its centuries of subjugation and irresponsibility are forever vanished, that the burden of the conduct of human affairs is now to be borne by all human beings through their representatives, functioning in world institutions and chosen indirectly by universal suffrage.

“The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Bahá'u'lláh, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. . . . This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. . . . A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised. . . . A world metropolis will act as the nerve center of a world civilization. . . . A world language will either be invented or chosen from the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate . . . under-

standing. . . . In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop . . . such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving.” (Shoghi Effendi, *The Unfoldment of World Civilization*.)

As for the institution of the Guardianship, although writing on it at length, Mr. Miller seems to have accorded it only the most cursory attention. The Guardian of the Faith is its Interpreter. That is, he is the ultimate authority, the final court of appeal as to the meaning of a Bahá'í teaching; if there were no such authorized, ultimate authority, the teachings themselves would cease to have available meaning; they could no longer be used as a basis for legislation; for they would have one meaning for this man, another for that man, until hundreds and thousands of schools would spring up, a hodge-podge of hostile institutions would attack one another, and instead of world order we would have a world devastation, brought about by perverted religious zeal acting on a world scale, that could exterminate the human race.

Mr. Miller has also failed to understand that in the Bahá'í plan the Guardian does not legislate “except in his capacity as member of the Universal of Justice.” “. . . he can never . . . assume the right of exclusive legislation. He cannot override the decision of the majority of his fellow-members, but is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's revealed utterances. He interprets what has been specifically revealed. . . . He is debarred from laying down independently the constitution that must govern the organized activities of his fellow-members, and from exercising his influence in a manner

that would encroach upon the liberty of those whose sacred right is to elect the body of his collaborators.” (Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*.) Moreover it is the international elected representatives who have, in this plan, “the exclusive right of legislating on matters not expressly revealed in the Bahá'í writings.” (Shoghi Effendi, *ibid.*)

This last should also alter Mr. Miller's assumption that in our view the world is to be ruled for a thousand years by the laws of the Book of Aqdas and no others. Furthermore, this world institution, the Universal House of Justice, can abrogate “according to the exigencies of the time, its own enactments, as well as those of a preceding House of Justice.” (Shoghi Effendi, *ibid.*)

We Bahá'ís are not working to establish a new political set-up; we are simply carrying out the administrative plan of Bahá'u'lláh as to the conduct of our Faith. We believe that following this present war there will appear “The Lesser Peace,” which will mark the final abandonment of war—a hitherto valued human practice. But “The Most Great Peace,” the world commonwealth of the future, will not come until after we who are now living will have passed; our present generations will not see it. It will be a gradual development, this peace on peace of the future. The Universal House of Justice may be elected within a relatively short time; Bahá'ís now living may be elected to serve on it. But, like our other administrative institutions, it will be a non-political body, its aim the administration of the affairs of the Cause. It is our belief that gradually, for its excellence, the Bahá'í plan for coordinating human affairs will be voluntarily adopted by one country after another, and put to the service of all mankind.

As to the following statement of Mr. Miller: “If Shoghi Effendi claims to be divine, as did Bahá'u'lláh, he might be

justified in requiring such submission, and in that case, he would be a new Manifestation. But if he is man, and not God, how can he rightly demand absolute obedience and submission from other men?" Leaving aside the fact that the Guardian demands no obedience—that 'Abdu'l-Bahá required of all His followers obedience to Shoghi Effendi, just as Bahá'u'lláh required of them all, obedience to 'Abdu'l-Bahá—we will answer Mr. Miller with Shoghi Effendi's own words, in *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*: "The Guardian of the Faith must not under any circumstances . . . be exalted to the rank that will make him a co-sharer with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the unique position which the Center of the Covenant occupies—much less to the station exclusively ordained for the Manifestation of God. So grave a departure from the established tenets of our Faith is nothing short of open blasphemy."

Following precedent, Mr. Miller attempts to make out that our early history had its "full share of internal as well as external strife." What he refers to are schemings, not within, but against our Faith, by those who had abandoned it. And what happens to those who desert the Cause, after once claiming allegiance? This, that they do not take with them that power to unite human beings, that dynamic power which lies only within the Faith and which characterizes every religion in its days of vigor. The humblest Bahá'í has time and again entered a city and, using the power of Bahá'u'lláh, established there a united community of human beings; of persons hitherto hostile to one another because of racial, religious, or class differences. The one who has left the Cause is unable to do this; not Azal, not Muḥammad-'Alí, not any other of their kind has been able to create a group of united human beings. That a few persons have on occasion left the Faith is undeniable; this Cause is a living organism—it has its waste products.

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Mr. Miller goes on to say that a Christian accepting Bahá'u'lláh "must give up his allegiance to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord." Leaving names aside, I would ask every Christian where he would place his allegiance on the occasion of the return of Christ; would he add the new loyalty, the new allegiance, to the glorious, returned Saviour, or would he reject the returned Manifestation and maintain only his allegiance to the Christ of 2,000 years ago? Mr. Miller would not be troubled by this question because he apparently does not believe in the return of Christ; but those Christians who do believe in it, will listen to Bahá'u'lláh's teachings that the Spirit has returned again, in the new Name.

Mr. Miller also maintains, in his own words, that Bahá'u'lláh "has not brought peace on earth any more than Christ did." He asks where is the Most Great Peace. He has only to remember that Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá foretold terrible chaos which would precede the establishment of world peace. Here is the chaos, not yet at climax; and well before the end of this century, we await the peace.

Some of the other comments made by Mr. Miller seemed to me amusing and deserve to be passed on. For example this one, given as proof that our Faith is not "adequate to meet the world's need"; "Bahá'ism Fails to Take Sin Seriously." No doubt Mr. Miller has read neither the *Gleanings* nor *Prayers and Meditations* nor the *Hidden Words*. I will admit that there is in our Faith no class of persons paid to use sin as a weapon against us once a week; I will add that we do not believe in the theory of original sin. Nevertheless every Bahá'í is conscious of his human sinfulness, is constant in prayer and keeps the yearly fast, and begs forgiveness at all times.

Mr. Miller has only to refer to our writings to learn this; for instance, to the daily prayer in *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 322: "O God, my God! My back is bowed with the burden of my sins, and my heedlessness hath destroyed me. Whenever I ponder my evil doings and Thy benevolence, my heart melteth within me. . . . By Thy Beauty . . . I blush to lift up my face to Thee . . ."

He then says that our Cause "fails to provide a Saviour" and asks, "What would a Bahá'í preacher say in a downtown mission?" I will suggest that he read what 'Abdu'l-Bahá *did* say in the Bowery Mission, and also to what He did—pressed money into the hand of each man. Mr. Miller forgets that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was knighted by the British Government for His services to the Palestine poor.

Incidentally, Mr. Miller's economics seem to be on the old-fashioned side, because he speaks of poor people as "slaves of sin." These are his words: "So far as I know, Bahá'ís have never opened a Mission for the down-and-outs, and the reason is clear—they have no Saviour to offer to the slaves of sin." (Once the economic order is properly adjusted, these slums will vanish, Mr. Miller. But no singing of hymns on street corners and passing out of tracts will make the slightest change in them now.) As for the Saviour, the Saviour is the Manifestation of God.

Mr. Miller also complains that our Faith "Keeps Men in Bondage to the Law," saying further that "the Christian keeps God's laws, not in order to save himself, but because he has been saved!" No Bahá'í knows whether he has been saved or not; for we believe that our salvation depends on the operation of the Will of God; our works are as nothing unless they prove acceptable to Him. Nevertheless we are required to demonstrate our belief in God by obedience to His commands;

lawlessness, anarchy, would defeat our purpose, which is to establish world order.

Mr. Miller also maintains that our Faith "Lacks the Power to Produce Fruit." He admits that there is some fruit on our tree, but says it has been "artificially attached to the Bahá'í branches." "To speak clearly, I find that the best things in Bahá'ism are taken directly from Christianity, or are brought into the new faith by Christian converts." This, of course, is exactly what, *mutatis mutandis*, Jews, Buddhists, etc., say of Christianity. Were the statement true, no one would become a Bahá'í.

He wonders why we do not go to Central Africa or Tibet (a Freudian wish, perhaps) forgetting that like the early disciples of Jesus, we must go first to the centers of population, then to the remote districts. (Paul went to Athens, to Corinth, to Rome.) He apparently does not know that Bahá'ís have already gone to such faraway places as Cochin-China, Ethiopia and Tahiti, and that the second century of the Bahá'í era will see us penetrating the darkest corners of the earth. He also wishes that the Bahá'ís had built a "medical mission in India or Tibet" rather than the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*, forgetting that there are thousands of hospitals in the world, but no building where Negro and white, Muslim and Jew, Buddhist and Christian, can kneel together as one people before one God. Certainly it is the Kingdom of God which must be sought first; the worship of God which must be provided for first. Mr. Miller also forgets that the House of Worship is the heart of a great cultural institution, which will include not only hospitals, but colleges, laboratories, homes for the aged, and the like.

Mr. Miller also says that we Bahá'ís are not allowed freely to investigate truth. He speaks of "books" which "disappeared from Persia," the implication being that we destroyed them.

Incidentally, although Mr. Miller generously uses "books" in the plural, he gives only one title, the *Nuqtatu'l-Káf*. Well, the reason we do not use that book is that it is valueless as history, and not because it sets forth the claims of Azal; proof of which is this, that we use and list in our bibliographies the *Tárikh-i-Jadíd*, which sets forth the claims of Azal. Indeed, the edition available to me bears his photograph as frontispiece. Does Mr. Miller really believe the Bahá'ís could have hidden any facts in the case? Mr. Miller's constantly-quoted authority, E. G. Browne, spent a long visit with Azal. If Azal had had any evidence to support any claims, he would surely have given it to Browne, who would then have spread it broadcast.

Bahá'u'lláh is His own proof. The Manifestation of God needs no document. Just as a Shakespeare, a Beethoven, needs no testimonial . . . Even if Jesus had never existed, no one would follow Iscariot.

THE LIGHT OF UNFADING GLORY

Another charge, the last one Mr. Miller makes here, is that our Faith "Dishonors Jesus Christ." He adds ". . . Bahá'ísm has attempted to push Him off the throne of the universe, and to put in His place in succession three others, all of whom, it is said, are greater than He." Mr. Miller has apparently not studied the Bahá'í teaching of the oneness of the Prophets: that all are mirrors facing the one sun—the unknowable God. That none is essentially greater than another, because the sun is not greater than the sun; that the circumstances of their world mission vary, but that they are all one. "These Tabernacles of Holiness, these Primal Mirrors which reflect the light of unfading glory, are but expressions of Him Who is the Invisible of the Invisibles . . ." (*Gleanings*, p. 47)

"That Bahá'u'lláh should, notwithstanding the overwhelming intensity of His Revelation, be regarded as essentially one of these Manifestations of God, never to be identified with that invisible Reality, the Essence of Divinity itself, is one of the major beliefs of our Faith . . ." (Shoghi Effendi, *The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh*)

Mr. Miller continues: "The Christian cannot for a moment tolerate this disloyalty . . ." But what greater disloyalty could the Christian show to Christ than to reject the Spirit of Truth, Whose coming the Christ so clearly foretold:—

"Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh . . . Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come . . . when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak . . ."

(This certainly does not sound like that vague suffusion of feeling which Mr. Miller seems to understand by the Return of Christ.)

If Bahá'u'lláh is what He proclaims, His Cause will establish the millennium. If on the other hand our Faith is not true, it will pass and die and be forgotten. "Verily, falsehood is a thing that vanisheth" (Qur'án, 17:83). If human beings desire this Faith, they will adopt it in increasing numbers until it embraces the whole world. If they do not desire it, they will reject it, since they are free to choose. As you say yourself, we can use no compulsion in our teaching; unlike Islam and Christianity, our Faith can never be spread by force. We simply tell others that Bahá'u'lláh has come; we simply show them His writings; and as a result more and more people are becoming Bahá'ís, our Faith has circled the globe, we already have international, national and local institutions, two great Houses of Worship,

and a wealth of books in many languages. People have been urgently longing for this renewal of faith in the world, and that is why they are accepting it.

I shall close by reminding you of Bahá'u'lláh's promise of ultimate victory: "When the victory arriveth, every man shall profess himself as believer and shall hasten to the shelter of God's faith. Happy are they who in the days of world-encompassing trials have stood fast in the Cause and refused to swerve from its truth." (*Gleanings*, p. 319)

And by way of postscript, I shall add that attacks on the Faith of God are among those things that perish. Who today remembers Celsus, who said of the early Christians that they were like quacks who warn men against the doctor; and of their Lord that He was the son of a soldier named Panthera, and His teachings were garbled quotations from Greek literature, and His miracles tricks learned in Egypt. Who remembers?

I often wonder why, Mr. Miller, if you and those like you really believe we are unimportant, you spend so much time trying to prove it.

We should also bear in mind that the distinguishing character of the Bahá'í Revelation does not solely consist in the completeness and unquestionable validity of the Dispensation which the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have established. Its excellence lies also in the fact that those elements which in past Dispensations have, without the least authority from their Founders, been a source of corruption and of incalculable harm to the Faith of God, have been strictly excluded by the clear text of Bahá'u'lláh's writings.—*Shoghi Effendi*.