

**Sir 'Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas**

DIED 28TH NOVEMBER, 1921.

The death of 'Abbás Efendi, better known since he succeeded his father, Bahá'u'lláh, thirty years ago as 'Abdu'l-Bahá, deprives Persia of one of the most notable of her children and the East of a remarkable personality, who has probably exercised a greater influence not only in the Orient but in the Occident than any Asiatic thinker and teacher of recent times. The best account of him in English is that published in 1903 by G. P. Putnam's Sons under the title of the *Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi*, compiled by Myron H. Phelps chiefly from information supplied by Bahiyya Khánam. She states that her brother's birth almost coincided with the "Manifestation" of Mírzá 'Alí Muḥammad the Báb (24th May, 1844), and that she was his junior by three years. Both dates are put three years earlier by another reputable authority,<sup>1</sup> but in any case both brother and sister were mere children when, after the great persecution of the Bábís in 1852, their father Bahá'u'lláh and his family were exiled from Persia, first to Baghdád (1852-63), then to Adrianople (1863-8), and lastly to 'Akká (St. Jean d'Acre) in Syria, where Bahá'u'lláh died on 28th May, 1892, and which his son 'Abdu'l-Bahá was only permitted to leave at will after the Turkish Revolution in 1908. Subsequently to that date he undertook several extensive journeys in Europe and America, visiting London and Paris in 1911, America in 1912, Budapest in 1913, and Paris, Stuttgart, Vienna, and Budapest in the early summer of 1914. In all these countries he had followers, but chiefly in America, where an active propaganda had been carried on since 1893 with very considerable success, resulting in the formation of important Bahá'í centres in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and other cities. One of the most notable practical results of the Bahá'í ethical teaching in the United States has been, according to the recent testimony

<sup>1</sup> See E. G. Browne's *Materials for the Study of the Bábí Religion* (Cambridge, 1918), pp. 320-1.

of an impartial and qualified observer, the establishment in Bahá'í circles in New York of a real fraternity between black and white, and an unprecedented lifting of the "colour bar", described by the said observer as "almost miraculous".

Ample materials exist even in English for the study of the remarkable personality who has now passed from our midst and of the doctrines he taught; and especially authoritative are the works of M. Hippolyte Dreyfus and his wife (formerly Miss Laura Clifford Barney), who combine intimacy and sympathy with their hero with sound knowledge and wide experience. In their works and in that of Mr. Myron H. Phelps must be sought those particulars which it is impossible to include in this brief obituary notice.

E. G. B.

### **Robert Watson Frazer, LL.B.**

The world of Indian studies is poorer by the death of Mr. Frazer, a man of very wide reading and interests, acute intuitions and refined literary taste. He had been connected with the Society in several ways, both personally as member (1886-1918), member of Council from time to time, and secretary, and also through his marriage with Miss Hughes (1917), whose long service as secretary is so appreciatively remembered. His studies were concerned mainly with the Dravidian languages, especially the Telugu and Tamil, in which he was lecturer at University College, London, during over thirty years (1885-1916), and at the School of Oriental Studies from 1917 to 1919. He had also a good knowledge of the Sanskrit literature, especially in the sphere of philosophic and religious ideas, and he was intimately acquainted with Indian life. Of his publications the ablest and most interesting was no doubt the last, *Indian Thought, Past and Present* (1915), a work of ripe reflection and wide knowledge. His *Literary History of India* (1898) was stimulating, and, in illustrating the Dravidian literatures in connexion with the Sanskrit, original. *Silent Gods and Sun-steeped Lands*