

MÉMOIRES
SUR
L'ÉDUCATION MORALE

PRÉSENTÉS AU
DEUXIÈME CONGRÈS INTERNATIONAL
D'ÉDUCATION MORALE

à
LA HAYE
22—27 Août 1912

SOUS LE HAUT PATRONAGE DE
S. M. LA REINE MÈRE DES PAYS-BAS

PRÉSIDENT D'HONNEUR:
S. A. R. LE PRINCE HENRI DES PAYS-BAS
DUC DE MECKLENBOURG, ETC.

PUBLIÉ PAR LA SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRALE
M^{LE} ATTIE G. DYSERINCK
POUR LE COMITÉ EXÉCUTIF NÉERLANDAIS
(COMITE ORGANISATEUR)

LA HAYE
MARTINUS NIJHOFF
1912

PREMIÈRE DIVISION

B

*ZEDELIJKE OPVOEDING BESCHOUWD VAN SOCIAAL EN NATIONAAL
STANDPUNT ; VORMING VAN DEN WIL.*

*LES POINTS DE VUE SOCIAUX ET NATIONAUX ; LA FORMATION
DE LA VOLONTÉ.*

*MORALISCHE ERZIEHUNG VON SOCIALEM UND NATIONALEM
STANDPUNKT BETRACHTET ; DIE BILDUNG DES WILLENS.*

*MORAL EDUCATION CONSIDERED FROM SOCIAL AND NATIONAL
POINT OF VIEW ; FORMATION OF THE WILL.*

UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

BY ABDUL BAHÁ ÁBBAS

ALEXANDRIÉ

O respected gathering of the world of humanity!

Such noble intentions and excellent purposes as are shown by your Congress, should receive the world's greatest gratitude and pleasure; for you are tirelessly engaged in such efforts that are conducive to the peace and tranquility of humanity, because the promotion of comfort and happiness in the realm of creation depends upon the general upliftment and moral refinement of the human world.

The great objects of moral education are to inculcate a lofty ideal, to induce broadmindedness and noble efforts, and humanity may therefore be well appealed to in the interest of such a great work.

Consider! The predominating principle of life to day seems to be one that urges to self-interest or welfare -- to self-protection and selfish gratification -- to egoism and self-aggrandisement; such ideas in the majority of individuals lead ultimately to utmost degradation, misfortune and base thought.

When man has developed further in knowledge and his efforts become correspondingly nobler, then he will desire and seek for the higher good for his own household and their protection, since he will realize that the comfort and prosperity of his *home* assures his own

happiness; advancing still further in reflection and lofty aspirations he will ultimately strive to seek the welfare of his fellow-countrymen and the nation; yet notwithstanding these very efforts and ideals, beneficial to himself, his home and his countrymen, he may still prove injurious to another nation, for his utmost endeavours are to draw all possible benefits for himself and usually strive to particularise and monopolise for his household and nation the general prosperity of the world. He imagines that when other nations and neighbouring Powers are degraded, the greater will be the progress of his own country and people, until through supreme power and opulence he will dominate victoriously all other races.

But the godly man and heavenly personage is absolutely free from such bondages; the mobility of his thoughts and superior aims are above this: for the circle of his thoughts (ideas) becomes sufficiently broadened to realise that universal benefits are the foundation for individual happiness, while injuries to other nations and powers must be reckoned as affecting his own country, nation, household and himself. Therefore he sincerely exerts himself to draw happiness and benefit for the whole world and protects the welfare of others generally, seeking for the upliftment, enlightenment and prosperity of all. He knows no distinction, for he considers the world of humanity as one and the nations as individuals of one household! Nay more! He views the collective community of humanity as a single being and each nation as a bodily member thereof.

The loftiness of aim in man should become so developed that he may help and serve universal morality and be a means of glory to the human race. But to day the reverse is apparent; for the nations of the world are only considering their own aggrandizement while desiring the downfall of others; nay, even they strive to draw away to themselves the prosperities of others and injure them and they count this strife as winning immortality and declare such conditions as the natural basis of humanity, but this is a gross error; indeed there is no greater mistake than this.

Praise be to God! In some animals solidarity and mutual co-operation for life is frequently seen; when in the time of danger, each will try to surpass the others in help. One day as I was standing near the borders of a little stream. I noticed some grasshoppers that had not yet developed full wings. These insects wishing to pass from my side of the stream to the other in order to procure some food, threw themselves forward each one trying to emulate the other in flinging itself in the water, so that a bridge was formed, in order that the others might pass and this was accomplished; yet those who gave themselves as a bridge for the others finally perished!

Now consider how such solidarity makes for life as compared to the fighting for one self which generally destroys it! As long as insects have admirable instincts, how much more should man possess them, who is the noblest of created beings; especially when Divine Laws and Heavenly Teachings instruct man how to acquire the virtues. In the sight of God national distinctions, patriotic differences, family-fame and self-interest are abhorred and condemned.

The appearance of the Holy and the revelation of all Divine Books have been for the purpose of practising these principles and to be characterised with such virtues and perfections. All the sacred teachings can be summed up into this, that the lower conceptions of self-interest should be eliminated from the human mind, the general morality in the race reformed and exalted and enabling equality and solidarity universally established, to the extent that an individual will readily sacrifice his life for another. This is the divine foundation and the heavenly Law; but such a solid basis cannot be established except through a supreme Power, influencing the sentiments of humanity; no other force is capable of developing such characteristics except the Power and the Breaths of the Holy Spirit, which transforms man to such an extent that his morality becomes entirely changed and he is born again and baptised with the Fire of the Love of God — which means Love Universal and the Water of Eternal Life.

Ancient philosophers who sincerely strove to promote the refinement of morals, were chiefly capable of influencing themselves individually but not universally. Reflection the histories of the past and this truth will be clearly evident. Only by the Power of the Holy Spirit can the universal morality be improved and advanced, the world of humanity be enlightened, obtaining an ideal upliftment and receiving true education. Therefore the sincere well-wishers of the world should ceaselessly endeavour, that through their power of faith they may attract the confirmations of the Holy Spirit.

My hope is, that your honorable Congress and meeting of well intentioned minds for human progress may be compared to a mirror reflecting the rays of the Sun of Truth and be the cause of elevation and education of the universal morals!

Pray accept my high esteem and regard for this inestimable gathering.

(PRÉSENTÉ EN ANGLAIS).