

O respected personage! I have read your work, The Gospel...

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Original English



— 79 —

O respected personage! I have read your work, *The Gospel of Wealth*,^[^1] and noted therein truly apposite and sound recommendations for easing the lot of humankind. {.dropcap id="k8" type="par" language="en"} [1]: An article from Andrew Carnegie's book *The Gospel of Wealth* was published in England in the *Pall Mall Budget* and called *The Gospel of Wealth*, cf. Andrew Carnegie's *Autobiography* 255n

To state the matter briefly, the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh advocate voluntary sharing, and this is a greater thing than the equalization of wealth. For equalization must be imposed from without, while sharing is a matter of free choice.

Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth honor upon humankind.

I have seen the good effects of your own philanthropy in America, in various universities, peace gatherings, and associations for the promotion of learning, as I travelled from city to city. Wherefore do I pray on your behalf that you shall ever be encompassed by the bounties and blessings of heaven, and shall perform many philanthropic deeds in East and West. Thus may you gleam as a lighted taper in the Kingdom of God, may attain honor and everlasting life, and shine out as a bright star on the horizon of eternity.



ORIGINAL



AUDIO