

# BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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## CABLE FROM THE GUARDIAN

The Guardian cabled the American National Assembly on 3rd June, 1955:

'Announce National Assemblies (that) Majdiddin, (the) most redoubtable adversary 'Abdu'l-Bahá, denounced by Him (as the) incarnation (of) Satan; (who) played predominant part kindling hostility 'Abdu'l-Hamíd (and) Jamál Pasha; (who was the) chief instigator (of) Covenant-breaking and) archbreaker of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant; who above sixty years laboured (with) fiendish ingenuity (and) guile (to) undermine its foundations, miserably perished struck (with) paralysis

affecting limbs (and) tongue. Dispensation Providence prolonged span infamous life (to a) hundred years, enabling him witness extinction (his) cherished hopes, disintegration (with) dramatic rapidity infernal crew he unceasingly incited (and) zealously directed, triumphant progress (and) glorious termination 'Abdu'l-Bahá's thirty-year ministry, as well as evidences (of the) rise (and) establishment (in all) continents globe (of the) Administrative Order, child divinely-appointed Covenant (and) harbinger world-encircling Order.'

## THE STORY OF THE BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

The British Bahá'í Publishing Trust was founded in 1937 with the warm approval of the Guardian, who wrote through his secretary:

'The occasion calls for a tremendous amount of sacrifice, of perseverance and united labour on the part of the friends, and for the self-same devotion that characterised the nation-wide efforts of the American believers for the building of their beloved Temple at Wilmette . . . Their triumph will assuredly draw upon them the blessings and confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh, and may prove to be the signal for fresh conquests and unprecedented developments in the Cause throughout the British Isles.'

From the time of its foundation the Publishing Trust seemed blessed. Its initial capital of a mere £30, supplied by the National Assembly, was increased by donations from home and overseas to £900 in 1942 and reached £2,100 in 1945 after the Guardian had contributed generously for its expansion. It now stands at £2,900, excluding loans, having increased further through small but regular annual profits. The value of the stock in 1939 was only £160, and only £1,058 in 1946, but now is valued at £6,350. Turnover was £71 in 1939, £491 in 1946 and averaged £1,784 in the last three years.

The Trust sells books to Bahá'ís in every continent, about two-thirds of the literature sold being exported. It is gradually building up a stock of well-designed books for sale at a reasonable price, from which the need of British and overseas Bahá'ís for Bahá'í litera-

ture can each year be more adequately filled. Should a cataclysm interrupt publication of Bahá'í literature in Britain for a time, existing stocks, which have deliberately been allowed to grow large, will be sufficient to supply essential literature for some years.

Certain principles of action can be seen to have greatly assisted the growth of the Publishing Trust. Its accounts are entirely separated from those of the National Assembly, and it is run as an ordinary business, except that it aims at making no more than a token profit. If the National Assembly requires a piece of literature to be sold at an uneconomic price to help the teaching work, a sufficient part of the cost is borne directly by the National Assembly to reduce the cost to the Publishing Trust to an economic level. This principle enables the Trust to invite and accept loans from believers on which it pays a reasonably good rate of interest, and nearly £4,000 has been borrowed in this way. Without these loans, the amount of literature published would have been very much less than it is.

The affairs of the Publishing Trust are somewhat technical, and consequently the National Assembly leaves the running of the Trust largely to the appointed Committee, although it makes suggestions from time to time and all important decisions have to be approved by the National Assembly.

The National Assembly was not incorporated when the Trust was formed in 1937, so three Trustees were appointed, ensuring the publishing organisation a recognised legal status. After the incorporation of the National Assembly, trustees were no longer needed,

and the Trust Deed was cancelled, but the name was retained for convenience. From the beginning the Trust has had a Manager and a Treasurer, although for a few years the offices were combined; they are responsible to the Publishing Trust Committee. Originally the stock was held in London, but during the war it was dispersed, and since 1947 has been held in Manchester, where one of the friends has provided free warehouse accommodation.

From the time the Publishing Trust was founded, various energetic attempts were made to sell Bahá'í books through booksellers, but none of these were successful, and the Committee has concluded that only when there is a visible demand for Bahá'í books will booksellers be willing to stock them. Consequently, sales mostly pass through Bahá'í channels and are likely to do so for some time to come. On this assumption, prices can be set lower than would be possible if extensive sales through booksellers, involving the granting of big discounts, were expected.

There seems no reason to doubt that the British Bahá'í Publishing Trust will continue to grow. The Guardian has been sufficiently satisfied with it to advise other National Assemblies to adopt its principles for their own publishing organisation and to use the name 'Bahá'í Publishing Trust'. It is to be hoped that the British Bahá'í Publishing Trust will continue to develop in a way the Guardian will approve; if it does that nothing can hinder its growth.

## NEWS REPORT

(The purpose of these news reports is to share with one and all the evidences of progress. Knights of Bahá'u'lláh in the islands around Britain and Europe, Spiritual Assemblies, groups, and individual believers throughout the British Isles are all warmly invited to send their good news to be shared with the friends.)

**THE NORTH SEA.**—Since Convention, Marcel Mihaeloff has visited the Faroes, Shetlands, and Orkneys, and brought untold joy to the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh in these islands. He has shared with them recordings from Teaching Conference and Convention, and in the Faroes took a recording of a fireside held in the Faroese tongue. Micky's friendly spirit has helped those attracted to the Faith, and he has aided the wider distribution of Bahá'í books.

Ian Semple has also visited the Shetlands and Orkneys this summer. As Brigitte Hasselblatt was on sick leave, they were able to have hours of study and consultation, as well as outings with friends. Ian was delighted to find that Charles Dunning is warmly accepted in wide circles, and both visitors have reported how their hearts were moved by the evident light of the Faith which shines from our pioneers.

The latest event was an impromptu Summer School held in the Shetlands when Vera Rate, Una Coward, and Phyllis Lewis all arrived in Lerwick and joined with Brigitte on the last week-end of July. 'The friends

present have been blessed with inspiration and infused with fresh vigour. It has been an enriching experience to meet the people of the island, and the bond of fellowship and love has been strengthened.'

Perhaps Eskil Ljungberg speaks for all the pioneers in these far outposts when he writes: 'I am glad to be able to tell you that the very air is not so heavy as it was, I mean the spiritual; there is a sign that the seed has taken root . . .'

**CYPRUS.**—Jeanne Kranen, sending her 'greetings, good wishes and love', wrote in June: 'Here we are doing very well. Ten in Nicosia, three in Famagusta and myself out alone on the rocks near the mountains . . . This week I have an invitation to a Turkish family. The gentleman is so eager to hear more . . . He does not know where I get (as he calls them) those beautiful, correct and just principles . . .'

The friends in Nicosia have formed a Group with Hugh McKinley as chairman and Shamsi McKinley as secretary. Their numbers have been reinforced by the Mobine family and Mr. and Mrs. Hashimi; and a new Bahá'í, son of an Armenian priest who instructed his son to search for the Truth, was welcomed on 20th April. Abbas Vekil, after many months of trying uncertainty, is now firmly settled.

**PIVOTAL CENTRES.**—The *Belfast* Assembly has sent an annual report which reflects the spirit and vigour of its activities. 'The year has shown great evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit. The seed of the Faith is germinating in Northern Ireland. Its roots are spreading beneath the surface of the earth, and in God's own time the green shoots will be seen sprouting. These shoots will be declarations of souls in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.' All those privileged to visit Belfast last year—Dr. Grossman, Mrs. Moffett, Marion Hoffman, Dan Jordan twice, and Adib Taherzadeh—have seen this inspiring progress. Firesides in Belfast, Crawfordsburn, and Greenisland; a weekly Bahá'í meeting; exemplary keeping of all Feasts and Holy Days; public meetings; all have contributed to the preservation of the Assembly by its own efforts. At Naw-Rúz and Riḍván the Assembly welcomed three new believers and saw its work crowned by a public meeting attended by sixty.

The *Cardiff* Assembly is also tackling its work with energy. All the friends are active and hopeful. Many new contacts are being made. A series of four public meetings in the Temple of Peace has begun, the first attracting in mid-summer heat seven non-Bahá'ís. The Prayer for All Nations is being read in Welsh and English for these meetings, and the Assembly is working on plans to spread the Welsh pamphlet. Close co-operation with U.N.A. is maintained. The news from Cardiff should grow better as the year goes on!

**FROM OTHER ASSEMBLIES.**—A new sign of progress is the success in obtaining publicity in the provinces. Articles and letters about the persecutions in Persia

were published in Bradford, Brighton, Blackpool, Norwich, Oxford, Sheffield, and Torquay; and Blackburn, Belfast, Cardiff, and Torquay have placed other items.

*Liverpool*, whose pioneers have done so much to preserve goals in Glasgow and Cardiff, and which achieved its incorporation at Ridván, has embarked on active work in Chester. In May the friends distributed 1,000 leaflets through letterboxes. 'A trifle footsore and wind-swept', they then held a discussion meeting, to which four contacts came. Other meetings are planned. A public meeting in Liverpool, addressed by Louis Ross-Enfield, attracted nearly thirty, and was followed by a naming Feast for Liverpool's first Bahá'í baby, son of Mr. and Mrs. Brereton.

*Manchester* Assembly sponsored a joint picnic near Blackburn in June, attended by twenty-six Bahá'ís, counting children, from Manchester, Blackburn, Liverpool, and Bradford. Despite unkind weather, the friends had a delightful day, and returned in force to a public meeting in Blackburn where Louis Ross-Enfield spoke. Other Assemblies might well find in Manchester's encouragement to a small community, combining 'outdoor activities with teaching', an example to imitate.

The new Bahá'í Society, organised at Manchester University as one of the Students' Societies, has sponsored Bahá'í speakers, including Dr. Grossmann, Joe Lee, and Louis Ross-Enfield. 'Miss Doktoroglu, who has been the moving spirit behind this Group, has done some Trojan work and is beginning to reap the reward of her labours.'

NOTE.—Please send news for this article to Mrs. Isobel Slade, Whitehall, Wraybury, Bucks. The Committee can only report what it receives!

## BAHÁ'Í DIVORCE IN ENGLAND

The National Assembly has found it necessary to consider how to apply Bahá'í teachings about divorce in England, where the law makes it impossible fully to obey them.

Bahá'í divorce should be granted only after the husband and wife have lived apart for a year and efforts have been made to reconcile them (see Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era, pp. 191-2). However, separation by mutual agreement in British law would be reckoned as collusion, nullifying any legal grounds for divorce which previously existed.

When the Guardian was consulted about this dilemma, he replied through his secretary: 'The Bahá'ís in England . . . will . . . have to follow British law, and in conjunction with this as far as possible uphold the Bahá'í law of divorce as well. The way the details of this are to be worked out is left entirely to the discretion of your National Assembly.'

The Assembly has recorded that all possible efforts should be exerted to reconcile the parties before any petition for divorce is filed. As such efforts might in-

validate existing grounds for divorce, it will try to consider separately each case brought to its notice in accordance with the particular conditions of the case. A Bahá'í divorce will be granted one year after the National Assembly has agreed to discontinue its efforts at reconciliation, provided that by the end of the year a civil divorce has been made absolute.

For some time to come, it is possible that procedure for Bahá'í divorce in this country may change from time to time until it can conform completely to Bahá'í law. Local Assemblies are asked to note the procedure described above and to report to the National Assembly as soon as any question of divorce arises.

*From an unpublished Tablet of the Master, dated 7th October, 1907:*

Although divorce is allowable, yet it is hated and blameable by God. Divorce is allowable, and can take place under such circumstances as these which are here mentioned: That is, if there is nothing else to be done in the matter, if both sides hate one another, and if they are in perpetual troubles. Now if such is the case with you both, perform the divorce. But after being divorced, you ought to wait for one year until it becomes firm, and if during this year of separation, love will again be produced, it is very desirable. Upon you both be Bahá'u'lláh!

Supposing the divorce will take place: your spiritual love and union ought to be increased and you must become brother and sister.

## REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL (continued)

The International Council has endeavoured assiduously to develop closer relationships between the World Centre of the Faith and the Israel Authorities. Contacts are maintained with Departments of the Government as well as the City Authorities in Haifa and Acre, and many Cabinet Officials. They are beginning to understand the importance of our World Centre being in Israel. A number of the high officers of the State have visited the Shrines and Gardens. These visits were climaxed by the official visit of His Excellency the President of the State of Israel, Mr. Izhak Ben Zvi and Mrs. Ben Zvi to the Guardian, who accompanied them to the Shrine of the Báb and later called on them in Jerusalem. This is the first time in Bahá'í history that the Head of an independent State has visited either the Head of the Faith or a Bahá'í Sacred Property. As a result of this exchange of visits, a cordial relationship now exists between the Guardian and the President; each year the President sends the Guardian greetings on the occasion of the Bahá'í New Year. His greetings received for Naw-Rúz 1955, were released officially and broadcast over the Israel radio as a news item, as well as carried fully in the Press. The Guardian himself sends a personal message every year to the President on Israel's Independence Day.

Newspapers and magazines are liberal in their publicity concerning the Faith. Reports of current

Bahá'í activities, articles concerning the expansion of our International Endowments, and pictures of the Gardens and the Holy Places are published; an Israel motion picture company, unsolicited, made a fifteen minute film of the Shrine of the Báb and Gardens; pamphlets issued by tour companies refer to the Shrine and Gardens; a book published last year by the City of Haifa called *The Carmelite*, devotes a whole chapter to the Bahá'í Faith and its institutions on Mt. Carmel.

A number of lectures in various parts of the State have been delivered. On October 15th, 1952, the significant date of the opening of the Holy Year, the first public address on the Faith to be given in the City of Acre was delivered. The meeting was originally intended as an address to the Quakers, but inasmuch as considerable interest was aroused, it was thrown open to all, and advertised widely. It was most impressive that on this opening day of the Holy Year, within 300 metres of the Most Great Prison, a public address with questions and answers should be given concerning the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and His world mission. Talks have also been given before the Rotary Clubs in such historic cities as Beersheba, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Haifa, Nathanya and Naharia.

One of the most wonderful aspects of life at the International Centre is to partake, with the pilgrims, of the tremendous stimulus poured out by the Guardian to the friends during their visit here, and to aid in entertaining and serving them.

Bahá'ís have come from the Pacific area to make the pilgrimage: Australia, New Zealand, Sarawak, Hong Kong and Japan. Pilgrims who visited here have either been on their way, or been stimulated by the Guardian to leave for the following places in that area: Indo-China, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Formosa. Friends have also left, after visiting the Holy Places here, for Mentawai and Karikal in, and bordering on, the Indian Ocean. From Asia and Arabia, believers have been received by the Guardian from India, Pakistan, Persia and Turkey. Also many Bahá'ís from Europe have arrived from Germany, Austria, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Holland, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Switzerland, Finland, Monaco and the Lofoten Islands. From the Mediterranean Islands they have either come from or proceeded to: Sicily, Malta and Cyprus. The Guardian is particularly pleased with the present status of Cyprus as it has Bahá'ís representative of the following races: Irish, Dutch, Persian, Iraqi, Greek, Armenian and American! He continually cites it as an exemplary type of growth. From the United States many Bahá'ís have arrived, representing Northern, Southern, Central, Eastern and Western States. A number of Canadian believers have also made the pilgrimage as well as friends from Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Honduras, and

the far-off pioneer from Margarita Island. From here, some of these pilgrims have later proceeded to the Dutch West Indies and the Windward Islands. The greatest amount of activity, however, has centred around Africa: Believers have been received from South Africa, Liberia, Tanganyika, Kenya, Uganda, Swaziland, Lorengo Marques, Bechuanaland, Southern Rhodesia, Canary Islands, French Morocco, Tunis, Algeria and the Sudan. As a direct result of the inspiration received from the Guardian, pilgrims have pioneered in Africa to the following places: Johannesburg, Aden Protectorate, Madeira, Madagascar, South West Africa, Zululand, French Cameroons, Morocco International Zone; others have gone on to the Gold Coast, Ethiopia, Tanganyika, S. Rhodesia, etc. We estimate at least 60 countries—many important pioneer goals—have been connected directly, through pilgrimages made here, with the dynamic flow of energy which our beloved Guardian releases and which is the very life-blood of our glorious Ten Year Plan.

Faithfully yours in El Bahá,  
INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL  
MASON REMEX  
*President*  
LEROY IOAS  
*Secretary General*

### Additions to the Community

Since the last list was published in *Bahá'í Journal*, registration cards have been received from the following:

Owen Chaplin, Manchester  
Frank Senior, Manchester  
Richard Lancaster, Blackpool  
Olive Long, Portsmouth  
Mary Ford, Leeds  
Julius Thomas, Liverpool  
Anthony Potter, Brighton  
Lois Gregory (Youth), Bristol  
Constance Lancaster, Blackpool  
Ellen Rogers, Newmarket  
Shirley Rogers, Newmarket  
Bahram Omid, London  
Betty Barnden, Brighton  
Barbara Baer, Brighton  
Doris Crosby, Nottingham  
William Wilcox, Liverpool  
Walter Abdulah, Liverpool  
Marjorie Hogg, Belfast  
Shoghiéh Avarigan (from Iran), London  
Farhang Rameshni (from Iran), London  
Phoebe Jay, Leeds  
Bahyeh Saedi (from Iran), London