

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL



SHRINE OF THE BÁB ON MOUNT CARMEL

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THE PRAYER FOR THE GUARDIAN

I cherish the hope that the Beloved may bestow upon Shoghi Effendi all the strength and vigour that will enable him to pursue over a long and unbroken period of strenuous labour the supreme task of achieving, in collaboration with the friends in every land, the speedy triumph of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

FOR MEDITATION

O ye the faithful, loved ones of 'Abdu'l-Bahá! It is incumbent upon you to take the greatest care of Shoghi Effendi, the twig that hath branched from and the fruit given forth by the two hallowed and Divine Lote-Trees, that no dust of despondency and sorrow may strain his radiant nature, that day by day he may wax greater in happiness, in joy and spirituality, and may grow to become even as a fruitful tree.

For he is, after 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the guardian of the Cause of God; the Afnán, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause and the beloved of the Lord must obey him and turn unto him. He that obeyeth him not, hath not obeyed God; he that turneth away from him, hath turned away from God, and he that denieth him, hath denied the True One. Beware lest anyone falsely interpret these words, and like unto them that have broken the Covenant after the day of Ascension (of Bahá'u'lláh) advance a pretext, raise the standard of revolt, wax stubborn and open wide the door of false interpretation. 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 Centre of the Cause and the House of Justice. And he that turneth unto whatsoever else is indeed in grievous error.

The Glory of Glories rest upon you!

—From the Will and Testament of 'Abdul'-Bahá.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW AND BRILLIANT PHASE

THE GUARDIAN'S LETTER

The part of the letter below that is in the Guardian's own handwriting is one of the most important he has ever written to the British Bahá'í Community. It carries further the theme introduced in a letter he wrote us in 1948, announces we are on the verge of a new and brilliant phase of the unfoldment of our Mission in foreign fields, tells us the spiritual and practical requirements of preparation for this Mission, and outlines a process that must before the end of the Ten Year Crusade yield such a harvest as will astonish the entire Bahá'í world. There is no doubt that careful study of this letter can lead every British Bahá'í to the path that will ensure a worthy response to the tremendous challenge this colossal and sacred responsibility entails. Because of its great importance, the part in the Guardian's own handwriting is given before that written on his behalf by Ruhiyyih Khanum.

Haifa, Israel

August 30th, 1957

Dear and Valued Co-workers:

The year that has just elapsed, following upon the swift and spectacular success achieved by the firmly grounded, the progressive and alert British Bahá'í Community in the heart of the African Continent—a success attested by the triumphant emergence of the Regional Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Central and East Africa—has witnessed a progress throughout the length and breadth of the Home Front, as well as in the northern islands in the neighbourhood of the British Isles, which, though not spectacular, nevertheless testifies to the earnestness, the devotion and the exemplary tenacity with which the members of this community are conducting, in all its aspects, the noble Mission entrusted to their care, and are grappling with the manifold problems involved in its prosecution.

This present and crucial year must be signalled in the annals of British Bahá'í history by a substantial measure of internal administrative consolidation and a noticeable expansion in the all-important teaching field, which will enable the members of this community, now standing on the threshold of a new and brilliant phase in the unfoldment of their Mission in foreign fields, to reinforce and broaden the base of their future operations beyond the confines of their native land.

The splendid work achieved, in such a short space of time, in a field so distant, and amongst a race so alien in its background, outlook and customs, must, if the significance of that Mission is to be properly assessed, be regarded as only a prelude to the series of future campaigns which the privileged members of the British Bahá'í Community, residing and firmly rooted in the heart of a far-flung Commonwealth and Empire, will, if faithful to such a Mission, launch, in the years ahead, in the islands of the North Sea and of the Mediterranean, as well as in the remote territories situated in the Pacific area—campaigns which, in their range and significance, must throw into shade the feats performed in the African Continent.

To be enabled to rise to this occasion, to ensure the energetic, the systematic and uninterrupted conduct of so vast and diversified an enterprise, amidst people and races fully as promising, and even more remotely situated, and presenting them with a challenge more severe than any which has faced them in the past, the small band of the ardent, the high minded, and resolute follower of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, charged by Destiny and by virtue of the enviable position they occupy, with so glorious a responsibility for the future awakening of the great masses, living under the shadow of, or whose governments are directly associated with, the British Crown, must needs in the years immediately ahead, acquire greater coherence, increase more rapidly in numbers, definitely emerge from obscurity, plumb greater depths of consecration, enrich its store of administrative experience, become definitely self-supporting, and associate itself more closely, through the body of its elected representatives and its future Hands, with the National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies on the European mainland and in all the other continents of the globe, and particularly with the Hands already appointed in both the Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

The sooner these prime requisites, so essential for a further unfoldment of the mighty potentialities inherent in so splendid a Mission, are fulfilled, the sooner will the call be raised for the opening of a new chapter in the history of British Bahá'í achievements overseas.

The rapid multiplication of isolated centres, groups and local assemblies, particularly in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and Eire; the incorporation of firmly grounded local spiritual assemblies; a greater measure of publicity; a wider dissemination of Bahá'í literature; a quick and substantial rehabilitation of the vitally important National Fund; a firmer grasp of the essential verities of the Faith; a more profound study of its history and a deeper understanding of the genesis, the significance, the workings, and the present status and achievements of its embryonic World Order and of the Covenant to which it owes its birth and vitality—these remain the rock bottom requirements which alone can guarantee the opening and hasten the advent, of that blissful era which every British Bahá'í heart so eagerly anticipates, and the glories of which can, at present, be but dimly discerned.

Now, of a certainty, is not the time for the members of this gallant band, so thinly spread over the length and breadth of its island home, and reaching out, so laboriously yet so determinedly to the inhospitable islands fringing its northern and western coasts, to dwell, however tentatively, on the nature of the tantalising task awaiting them in the not too distant future, or to seek to probe into its mysterious, divinely guided operation. Theirs is the duty to plod on, however tedious the nature of the work demanding their immediate attention, however formidable the obstacles involved in its proper execution, however prolonged the effort which its success necessitates, until the signs of its ultimate consummation heralding the launching of what is

sure to be the most spectacular phase of their Mission, are clearly discerned.

A responsibility, at once colossal and highly challenging, races not only the body or the elected representatives of this Community, but each and every one of its members. As the world spiritual crusade, to the successful prosecution of which the British followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh have, singly and collectively, so markedly contributed, approaches its mid-point, the evidences of this indispensable quickening of the tempo of Bahá'í activity all over the British Isles and the islands situated in their neighbourhood and far beyond their confines, must become more manifest and rapidly multiply. The admiration and esteem in which a community, relatively small in numbers, strictly limited in resources, yet capable of such solid and enduring achievements, is held by its sister and daughter communities in every continent of the globe, far from declining must be further enhanced. The historic process originated as far back as the year which witnessed the formation of the Six-Year Plan on the occasion of the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb in Shiraz, which gathered momentum, as a result of the inauguration of the Two-Year Plan which followed the Centenary of the Báb's Martyrdom in Tabriz, which received a tremendous impetus, in consequence of the launching of the Ten-Year Crusade, commemorating the centenary celebrations of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission in Tíhran—such a process must, as the centenary celebrations designed to commemorate the Declaration of that same Mission in Baghdad approaches, be so markedly accelerated, and yield such a harvest, as will astonish the entire Bahá'í world, and give the signal for the inauguration, by those who have so spontaneously set this process in motion, more than a decade ago, of a blissful era designed to carry the chief builders of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Order, throughout the unnumbered, the diversified and widely scattered Dependencies of the British Crown, to still greater heights of achievements in the service and for the glory of His Faith.

May they, as they forge ahead along the high road leading to ultimate, total and complete victory, receive as their daily sustenance, a still fuller measure of the abounding grace, promised to the believers of an earlier generation by the Centre of the Covenant, the Author of the Divine Plan, Himself, on the occasion of His twice-repeated visit to their shores, and which has been unfailingly vouchsafed to themselves, in the course of over three decades, since the birth of the Formative Age of the Faith and the rise of its Administrative Order in their homeland.

SHOGHI

LETTER SIGNED BY RUHIYYIH KHANUM

Mr. John Ferraby, Secretary,
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the
British Isles

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your communications with their enclosures and

material sent under separate cover have all arrived safely, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf and to acknowledge receipt of your letters dated: July 24th, 27th and 31st, August 24th, 27th and 30th, September 7th, 26th, 27th and 28th, October 5th, 13th (signed by all members), and 15th, November 5th (signed by Dorothy Ferraby), and 28th (three), and December 14th, 18th, 27th and 28th, 1956, and January 8th, 16th, 20th (one undated), and 22nd, February 4th, 6th, 8th, 11th, 19th, 21st, 23rd and 27th, March 7th, 8th, 13th and 18th (two), April 5th, 9th (two) and 18th (two), May 6th, 9th, 21st (two), June 3rd, 11th, 14th, 19th and 25th, July 12th, 16th (two), 19th, 21st, 26th, and August 2nd and 5th, signed by Ernest Gregory.

As a number of questions raised in your letters have been answered by cable or through the National Assembly Secretary, I will not go into those again here.

He was interested to see the Tablets which Dr. Moayad located in Cambridge, and appreciated having copies of them.

It has been a great pleasure to have had so many members of the British Bahá'í Community here last winter and spring as pilgrims.

He is immensely proud of the work which has been accomplished during the last year, of the remarkable spirit of dedication which animates the entire Community, and which invariably produces, at an hour of crisis, a strong and healthy reaction on the part of the Community to rush reinforcements to its weak Assemblies, when they are in danger of dissolution.

He realises that the enforcement of the general rule that an Assembly must function within civic limits has caused considerable havoc in Britain, as well as other countries. However, it enables the friends, through splitting up into smaller Communities, to have before their eyes the appetising prospect of forming yet another Spiritual Assembly, all on their own, so to speak. It gives more believers the opportunity to serve on these Administrative Bodies, challenges the teaching activities of them all, and stimulates them to fresh efforts in the hope of early victory.

The news of the success of your Convention this year; the fact that the Community was able to manoeuvre its finances into a position of equilibrium, a position, incidentally, which it should make every effort to maintain; the large number of friends who attended the beautiful memorial meeting held for the dear Hand of the Cause, George Townshend, also pleased and encouraged our beloved Guardian.

He was pleased to hear from Rhodesia of the incorporation of the Salisbury Assembly, which seems to be in the nature of a foundation for the future incorporation of all Spiritual Assemblies throughout the Rhodesias. This is yet another valuable service which your Assembly has been instrumental in rendering the Faith in Africa.

He thanks your Assembly for the coloured photographs of the Haziratu'l-Quds and also for the film of the Summer School which you sent him. He was very

pleased also to receive copies of the Irish pamphlets, and hopes the Gaelic translation will soon be out.

As regards your question about printing in books the approval of the National Assembly, he thinks that, if in certain circumstances this seems inadvisable, there is no objection to omitting it. The approval of the National Body should be sought for all Bahá'í publications, so as to protect the Faith from unofficially disseminating information which may in some respects be false or inaccurate. Once this has been done, it is not so essential for the fact to appear in the book, if it will mitigate the effects of the book and decrease its sales. . . .

The death of the Hand of the Cause, George Townshend, is a great loss to the British Community as it not only deprives them of their most distinguished member, their unique Hand, but also of a most inspiring and faithful co-worker and a distinguished Bahá'í author. His latest book has been read with great interest by the Guardian, and he hopes your Assembly is ensuring its wide distribution to various religious leaders in Britain. If opposition to the Faith can be aroused through this book, it will be the greatest service that dear George Townshend has ever rendered. It was always his hope that, through his pen, sparks would fly and begin the conflagration in whose light the Faith would shine forth in all its splendour. Let us hope that this last service of his will indeed prove to be the vital spark setting off this process of opposition which will inevitably lead to a wide recognition and acceptance of the Faith.

The Guardian hopes that during the present year the home Assemblies will not only be maintained and groups prepared for assembly status next Ridvan, but that it will be possible to reinforce the work in the islands off the shores of the British Isles. The sooner a nucleus of local people is established in these goal places the sooner will the pioneers be able to move on to new fields and to lend their assistance to the teaching work either on the Home Front or in the Pacific area.

Please assure the dear pioneers that he greatly admires their steadfastness of purpose, their self-sacrifice and their exemplary spirit, and that he particularly prays for them in the holy Shrines.

As regards the future work in the Pacific: It is entirely premature at this time for your Assembly to think about the work there. The Home Front and the work in the neighbouring islands around Great Britain, as well as those allotted under the Ten-Year Plan to your Assembly in the Mediterranean, must receive the concentrated attention of your Body, its Committees and the believers. When the time comes to become active in the Pacific area, you may be sure he will let you know! . . .

He feels that the urgent need now is to get out *Some Answered Questions*, which is one of the most important books for a proper study of the Faith. When this has been printed, the next publication of the Master's Works can be considered. . . .

As to your question about the words used in the marriage ceremony: the two versions mean practically

the same thing, and either may be used.* . . .

He assures you one and all of his loving prayers for your success in all you do for the Faith.

With warmest Bahá'í greetings,

R. RABBANI

*The two versions are: 'We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God', and 'Verily we are content with the Will of God'.

A CABLE FROM THE GUARDIAN

The American National Assembly transmitted to us on 9th September, 1957, the following cable from the Guardian announcing the implementation of the expropriation order ejecting the Covenant-breakers from the precincts of the Most Holy Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, which the Guardian announced in his cable of June 3rd.

'Announce Hands, all National Assemblies, following (the) loss (of an) appeal (to) Supreme Court, (the) Government expropriation order (has been) implemented, resulting (in) complete evacuation remnant Covenant-breakers, (the) transfer all belongings precincts most Holy Shrine (and the) purification after six long decades (of the) Haram-i-Aqdas (from) every trace (of) their contamination. Measures (are) under way (to) effect transfer title deeds evacuated properties (to the) triumphant Bahá'í Community.'

Note. The Haram-i-Aqdas means the area round the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. Covenant-breakers still lived in houses in this area until now expropriated by the Government of Israel. This will no doubt enable the Guardian to extend the beautiful gardens round the Shrine and take other measures.

Beloved Friends,

The Cause is in motion; the Cause is alive! We can feel it growing, changing, gathering strength for the new phase which is soon to brighten all horizons. We are, throughout the Bahá'í world, on the threshold of 'very great things'. Who did not feel this as the year 114 opened with a Convention compared in our Guardian's message to the Conference of Badasht?

Then came an event which must bring joy in all His heavenly Kingdom, the import of which, and its symbolic meaning, we do not begin to guess—the cleansing after more than sixty years of the sacred Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh from the presence and atmosphere of the Covenant-Breakers. Almost simultaneously the 'august institution' of the Hands of the Cause entered a new phase in its evolution, charged with the protection of this swiftly-moving yet infant Faith of God.

Still meditating these wondrous events, we of the British Bahá'í Community suddenly found our lives seized, our vision freshened, our energies renewed by a most remarkable letter from the beloved Guardian, the one quoted in this Journal, which arrived in the midst of our Teaching Conference at Summer School. At the same time came an unexpected and generous gift of money to support the new work.

Following swiftly on the enthralling vista opened by this message, came the moving experience, shared by British believers, of 'the birthday of Europe'. At the

European Conference in Bex-les-Bains, Switzerland, under the guidance of the Hands of the Cause, the six European National and Regional Spiritual Assemblies and France met in such unity of spirit and harmony of aim and plan as to make all present realise that Europe has indeed entered a new way of life under the shadow of Bahá'u'lláh.

And now comes the precious gift of our own two Hands of the Cause—a gift, if we but know it, of the very spirit of our Guardian, rays of his sun to shine directly and intimately into all our affairs, and to bless them with an influx of power streaming from the Day-spring of Divine Guidance.

These are but a few of the marvellous events of this year of prophecy which have touched us most closely here in Britain, and which carry us to 'the threshold of a new and brilliant phase' in our Mission, even as the whole Bahá'í world enters a vast new phase in its evolution.

Beloved Friends, we ourselves know that we live in the midst of a 'bankrupt society, now hovering on the brink of self-destruction'. Like the Dawn-Breakers we feel ourselves 'charged by Destiny', and our hearts are lifted to meet our Guardian's appeal for 'a dedication reminiscent of the pledges' of our brothers and sisters of the Heroic Age.

God has provided for us most bountifully. He has filled all our needs. He has awakened and given new life to our hearts. What now shall be the quality of our deeds, in love and thanksgiving and hope, as we hasten toward this glorious future?

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

THE VISIT TO THE ISLANDS OF THE EUROPEAN HAND OF THE CAUSE

It was in May of this year that National Spiritual Assembly first learned that the Guardian had asked Dr. Herman Grossman, our revered European Hand of the Cause, to visit the Isles surrounding Northern Britain, and that visits to Scotland and Ireland might also be planned. From then on his tour became the concern of the European Asian Teaching Committee, and the National Teaching Committee who arranged the itinerary.

To read the itinerary is to be immediately stirred as in imagination we follow Dr. Grossman—from London to Scotland—from Shetlands to Faroes—sailing up the majestic and beautiful Kyle of Lochalsh. Stirred as we realise the wide-flung empire of our Faith, and the lonely, arduous, and delicate duties of our beloved Knights of Bahá'u'lláh, in the various and particular difficulties which they encounter daily in their task of teaching in the Islands. To them the visit of the Hand of the Cause must have been an inspiration indeed—an inspiration which must keep us in constant remembrance of the need to support the Knights with our earnest prayers. Dr. Grossman sailed from Aberdeen on July 18th at sunset, and arrived in Lerwick early the following morning. There he was met by Bridgitte Hasselblatt, the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Shet-

lands, and they breakfasted together before he sailed on at 9 o'clock for the Faroes, where he spent four days with Eskil Lyungberg, the Knight of these lonely and barren islands. Dr. Grossman has given us his impressions of the islands and their peoples. The Faroes, he says, are granite islands, whose people have the same hard, bright quality. Their outlook is limited and they are slow to take up new ways. From the Faroes he came back to the Shetlands, to a people who, once they lose their innate shyness are warm, friendly, and responsive. After five happy days in the Shetlands with the two believers, he left Lerwick in the evening of Sunday, July 28th and sailed into Kirkwall at dawn. Here Dr. Grossman could stay on board for breakfast, and Charles Dunning, our Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Orkneys was asked not to come to greet him until 9 a.m.! One was conscious of a wise committee somewhere making sure of a little extra rest and quiet for Dr. Grossman—how little there must have been in all these days of travelling, counselling, uplifting. Dr. Grossman stayed with Charles Dunning in Kirkwall until August 1st. He found the people of the Orkneys hard and unyielding, and Charles' post very difficult—but three or four loyal friends seemed open to the Faith. From Kirkwall Dr. Grossman flew to Inverness for his trip to the Hebrides. He went by train to the Kyle of Lochalsh, and there joined the boat in the early afternoon, and, sailing up to Stornaway, he arrived in the early evening. Here it was his joy to meet Geraldine Craney, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh for the Hebrides. In these islands he found the older people many years behind the times, both socially and culturally. The islanders live a hard life, in bitter weather most of the year. Their chief concern is a battle for material existence, and progress is likely to be very slow. From the Hebrides Dr. Grossman embarked on Sunday evening, August 4th, to sail back to the mainland, and he arrived in Glasgow the same day. By August 7th he was in Northern Ireland for an historic occasion—the first Northern Ireland Summer School. There he spent three days giving the Friends much loving support by his presence—of which you will read in the report from the School. He carried a happy radiance into the sessions, and with his departure a light was turned out. One young Bahá'í in speaking about his visit to the school said 'Wherever he was a group would gather round him immediately. He did not talk a great deal, he listened to us, and then presently he would quietly join in'. As we read about this journey of Dr. Grossman even those of us who have not had the privilege of meeting him become conscious of a loving and influential spirit among us. As one pioneer has testified, 'The presence of our revered Hand shed a new light on the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá'. We realised that our love for the Cause and for humanity is measured by the extent to which we love, obey, and turn to the Guardian. In Dr. Grossman's loving presence these thoughts become clear'. How happy and fortunate are the Bahá'ís who could share together the joy of meeting him and listening to his words.

SHETLAND SUMMER SCHOOL

We came to the Island by boat and plane, those of us who were fortunate enough to get to the first Shetland Summer School. Three and a half years after the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh made the same journey. The mists were the same, the treeless hills, the grey walls, and any impression one may have formed as the boat nosed its way up the sound, or the plane banked sharply over Sumburgh Head, of a people who promised to be solitary and cold, was quickly dispelled. On the quay a cheery wave from a genial taxi driver who had come to collect the first arrivals gave us our first glimpse of the character of the Shetland Islander. Love is the criterion of all things and the shy warmth of the people soon developed into open comradeship and hospitality.

The school was scheduled to open with a Unity Feast on the Saturday evening, but there was still much work to be done when the advance party arrived on the Friday morning, as Bridgitte had only just finished night duty. The room set aside for us at the Hayfield Hotel had to be laid out. With loving devotion we turned a bare room into a welcoming centre dedicated to the Remembrance of Bahá'u'lláh. Programmes were distributed and invitations compiled and sent out for the following week. Saturday dawned bright and clear, and as we put the last finishing touches to our arrangements and bought fruit and cakes for the Unity Feast in the evening, we little guessed that our school would depart so far from the programme planned—the theme being 'I loved thy creation, hence I created thee'. None of the believers assembling in Lerwick visualised the extent to which they were to be tested in order to reach the purity and detachment of the Shetland people.

The whirling mists enveloped the Island in a veil of isolation, and the drone of the plane returning to Aberdeen with two of our party on board, unable to land through poor visibility, proved our first disappointment. So only four of the Friends gathered at the Unity Feast. The non-arrival of four believers scheduled to speak on a panel the following morning, caused our first rearrangement. In spite of this, the few present spoke on the theme of the school, without encouragement from any visitors, and yet feeling the first stirrings of the detachment demanded by the coming tests and difficulties.

The excursion to Jarlshof organised for Sunday afternoon passed the Airport—would God grant a break in the mist to allow the plane to fly in. A Divine Hand lifted the fog for a short while only and it seemed fitting that we should be reunited on the site of one of the oldest and most perfect Iron Age settlements. Given added strength by the increase in our numbers we joyfully returned to Lerwick and met for the first time the only Shetland Bahá'í. Though we were to meet Lilian only twice, due to her approaching confinement she was unable to fully attend the school, we were struck by her gentle manner and radiant love.

Monday morning was devoted to studying the Guardian's message to Convention. The inspiration derived

from this world embracing vision lifted our hearts and animated our prayers and we lived for, and dreamed of, the day to follow, when we hoped that Lerwick would respond to the call of 'Christ and Bahá'u'lláh', at the Public Meeting.

Whilst some of our party were entertained by the officers of a visiting Swedish training schooner on board ship, during the afternoon, others remained at our centre in case enquirers should call, and one of the party went to meet the Auxiliary Board Member who's airport bus arrived at 4 p.m.

In the evening, with the uplifting strains of Fauré's Requiem softly playing in the background and the prayers and readings chosen by the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh to this blessed outpost, the Friends united in the wonderful garden of God's love. The spiritual fragrance and nearness of the Blessed Perfection stilled our weeping hearts and blinded our earthly eyes.

This stream of love and unity flowed onward through our consultation the following morning on the 'Home Front teaching'. The joy in our hearts was pictured in the beauty of Vementry, the birthplace of the first Shetland Bahá'í; a whitewashed house, green slopes, distant cliffs and a friendly shore, making the scene of our afternoon expedition. Though grieved at the departure on our return of our only Scottish Bahá'í we joyously gathered flowers, books, and photographs to decorate the Court Room of the Town Hall for the evening meeting.

The Friends already know of our humbling experience. Shattered by the lack of response, numb with the shock of the complete withdrawal from the Divine Message we were indeed 'disheartened disciples'. One by one we read out in the silent room the words of Bahá'u'lláh and slowly our hearts were rekindled with the flame of His love. We had been on the hills before, from our fall to the bottom of the chasm He lifted us to the summit of a mountain from which we could survey the desolate hearts of the people of Shetland. Still in the same room, but now such a different room, we consulted and made our plans which we prayed would bring 'the speedy triumph of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh'.

The whole school now took on a new light and abandoning our original programme we embarked upon the measures passed during that memorable evening. The results of those actions still cannot be gauged. As one soul we prayerfully applied ourselves to our allotted tasks, until our departure. As the time for our boat sailing drew near, many blessings were heaped upon us culminating in the heartwarming send-off from our dear Knight surrounded by old and new friends on the quayside.

As the distance increased between boat and quay and the cries of farewell were drowned by the screaming of the gulls we carried in our hearts the words of our beloved Guardian in his cable to the school—'Supplicating abundant blessings. deepest love, Shoghi'.

JAMES ROBERTSON

JEANETTE BATTRICK

PAUL ADAMS

BAHÁ'Í SUMMER SCHOOL IN IRELAND

August 7th-14th, 1957

The first Northern Ireland Summer School opened on August 7th, 1957, at Mourne Grange, Kilkeel, where the 'Mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea'. In all sixty people attended including three non-Bahá'ís. The loving presenec of the Hand of the Cause, Doctor Grossman, for the first three days, established a wonderful spirit which was to last throughout the School and seemed to be felt by all. Each morning, prayers in the charming little School Chapel set the atmosphere for



Northern Ireland

the day's activities. The theme of the main lectures on 'The Power of the Covenant' was introduced by Doctor Grossman and successively unfolded by Adib Taherzadeh, Betty Reed, John Fozdar and Marion Hofman. Every day there was a special children's class. Paul Adams, at short notice, nobly filled the gap for a speaker for one of the evening sessions. There was a special talk from Doctor Grossman about the Guardian's message, defining the new functions of the Hands, and also a brief account of his recent tour of the islands, mentioning the peculiar characteristics of each in their likely response to the Faith. Somehow time was found for an extra lecture by Marion on the Ten Year Crusade and also some impressions of her visit to Iceland. Another extra item was a devotional service commemorating Ireland's Hand of the Cause, George Townshend, which included the reading of an appreciation of his father's life by Brian Townshend which is to be published in *Bahá'í World*.

Entertainment highlights were a splendid concert

devised and presented by the children (with some kindly guidance from Dorothy Wigington) at which £2. 5s. was collected for the National Fund, a fancy dress parade and a most hilarious Brainless Trust in which a distinguished panel 'Dame' Dorothy Wigington, 'Professor' Robert Callaway, 'Lady' Betty Reed and 'Farmer' Paul Adams handled all questions with masterly incompetence. One afternoon an intrepid party of about thirty conquered a 'towering' local Everest (1,000 ft.). On another a rather larger party went by coach to Tollymore Park and were much impressed by its scenic beauty.

The thoughts of any large Bahá'í gathering inevitably turn towards Haifa, the source of its inspiration, and these found expression in the following cable:

'Beloved Guardian fifty Bahá'í friends first N. Ireland Summer School nine nationalities including native Irish, Scottish, Welsh, blessed attendance Hand Cause Doctor Grossman send deepest love beg prayers success historic event.'

On the final day this cable came in reply from Haifa:

'Delighted historic gathering assure fervent prayers unprecedented expansion activities.'

SHOGHI

In this momentous year, all over the world, vibrant new growth has appeared, strongly rooted, divinely nourished, invincible. The Guardian has warned us that the gales of envy and hatred will rage



At Derby Hall, Liverpool. Dr. Grossman on left.

against it from every quarter, and that leaves and twigs and even branches may succumb to its fury. But nothing can halt the dynamic advance of the Cause of God. From this first Irish Summer School, each humble

believer, fortified by an increased understanding of the unique power and protection of the Covenant, spiritually reinforced by the message from the beloved Guardian, by the encouragement of the dear Hand of the Cause, Doctor Grossman and by the warm fellowship of the assembled friends, has surely come away re-dedicated and determined to become a more eager and effective instrument of the mighty Hand of Bahá'u'lláh.

‘SCALE NOBLER HEIGHTS’

From the Conference held during the middle weekend of Summer School, the following cable was sent by the friends there to the beloved Guardian:

‘100 friends special Conference Summer School uplifted your historic message desire express immediately most beloved Guardian gratitude, astonishment, assurance firm determination carry out duties, pursue destined unexplored path under your guidance. Friends deeply moved confidence reposed by beloved Guardian fervently, humbly pray confirmations enable us rise his high expectations. Supplicate continued prayers Sign God behalf his devoted servants, pledge renewed dedication Faith God, unswerving loyalty His Covenant.’

The Guardian’s simple reply picks out the heart of this message and shows us where we succeeded and where further effort is necessary:

Let us all resolve here and now to scale the nobler heights of service to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh that alone can prepare us for victory.

IMPRESSIONS OF SUMMER SCHOOL, 1957

In this country every summer school has its particular character. Partly because they are held in so many and such varied surroundings. Derby Hall, Liverpool—a very new hostel for university students—where our Summer School is just over, was excellent for the purpose in many ways. It was a complete change from the conditions in North Wales where we gathered for the two previous Schools.

To me, personally, there was no beginning and no end, as I was able to be there for one week only in the middle period of the two weeks, a new experience. We



The Haziratu'l Quds of The Bahá'ís of the British Isles in London

Haifa, 14th September, 1957

‘Welcome determination assembled friends Summer School. Praying fervently friends attain goals, scale nobler heights path service Cause Bahá'u'lláh.’

received a wonderful welcome from the Friends already there, making us feel at home immediately. After our long journey we appreciated the thoughtfulness of the Summer School Committee in allotting us most comfortable accommodation.

I felt even more at home when, within the first hour my predecessor had passed to me the very familiar charge of the Book Stall. This is a section of Summer School activities I enjoy. This year it proved especially rewarding by unexpectedly large sales, and the always thrilling experience of a NEW BOOK, John Ferraby’s *All Things Made New*, which sold out.

The weather was typically British. A very welcome fire in the huge Common Room was appreciated by all. The finest day fortunately coincided with the coach trip to Chester via the Wirral. A picnic lunch, followed by an afternoon in that unique old city made a very enjoyable expedition. Chester is a goal town and I'm sure many of us said a prayer for the successful founding of an Assembly in that interesting centre.

Saturday evening was given up to recreation—dancing—for which some dressed up—and judging by the merriment, all the younger members thoroughly enjoyed a very active evening while we older ones looked on and enjoyed watching them.

What more lasting memories did we bring away from this Summer School? The last of three lectures entitled 'The Unfolding of the Message', by Betty Reid made me greatly regret missing the previous ones. A series of three lectures by John Ferraby entitled 'The Nature of Man', aroused great interest and gave rise to many questions, only curtailed each morning by the arrival of morning coffee.

A special programme for a Teaching Conference had been arranged for the week-end by the N.T.C. By then our members had increased to about 100. Most opportunely a long and inspiring letter arrived from the Beloved Guardian on Saturday. Enthusiasm increased more and more as this was read out on Sunday morning—as ever, his letter brought advice for progressive methods of procedure, spiritual uplift and encouragement—more and more encouragement to us all in our varied branches of effort for the advancement of the Faith.

Sunday was an inspiring day throughout—devoted to 'Home Front Teaching' and 'Island Pioneering' during the morning. Firesides and proved methods of teaching. During the afternoon a panel of speakers helped us all with talks about the 'New Phase Developments' for bringing awareness of the Faith to the Christian World. A devotional closed the special programme and I am sure we all arose feeling that this day alone made this Summer School outstanding.

On Sunday evening a crowded Public Meeting at the Adelphi Hotel was organised by the Liverpool Spiritual Assembly. This meeting was one of a series held in various towns by David Hoffman to introduce knowledge of the Faith by means of using George Townshend's last book *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh*, so invaluable an introduction for the Christian world. How happy 'Abdu'l-Bahá would be—knowing Bahá'ís were remembering he had blessed the Adelphi with his presence and laid the foundations for such a meeting there.

Before finishing this somewhat rambling account I must add the happy memory of all the kindly help and thoughtfulness of the Liverpool Friends, with advice about places of interest we visitors should see in Liverpool and surroundings. Finally a Unity Feast with the Liverpool Friends on Monday evening brought us most regretfully to the end of our week. We left on Tuesday morning looking forward to the next National gather-

ing. As with all the previous Summer Schools I have been to—this one indicated the value of these Schools. Not only did we learn more and more and consult about new and old teaching methods—and acquire a greater awareness of the immensity of the purpose of all our Bahá'í activities—we gain so much from the spirit of fellowship engendered by all looking towards one focal point. Progress—how could it be otherwise? Does not the Guardian continually emphasise their value and advocate their use?

Au revoir until next year's Summer School.

GLADYS BACKWELL

PRAYER

O my God! Give me knowledge, faith and love. O Beloved! Adorn my head with the crown of Thy providence, my heart with the light of knowing Thee, my tongue with the utterance of Thy Greatest Name, and let my ear hearken to Thy holy Word.

Thou art the Holy One Who was, is and ever shall be glorified, and Whose commands shall ever be obeyed.

O God! Help me to be just. Lift me above the ocean of superstition and vain imaginings, and grant me a penetrating sight, so that I may realise Thy oneness and Thy truth in all the kingdoms.

PROMOTING SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

'Whoso ariseth among you to teach the Cause of His Lord, let him, before all else, teach his own self'. These words of Bahá'u'lláh mean more than that Bahá'ís should study. 'Whosoever ariseth to discharge this duty', says Bahá'u'lláh, 'must needs, ere he proclaimeth His Message, adorn himself with the ornament of an upright and praiseworthy character.' He 'must needs detach himself from all earthly things, and regard, at all times, the triumph of Our Faith as his supreme objective'. 'If he be kindled with the fire of His love', promises Bahá'u'lláh, 'if he forgoeth all created things, the words he uttereth shall set on fire them that hear him'.

Teaching the Cause of God is a great privilege granted to the Bahá'ís in this age—a privilege and an obligation. 'God', says Bahá'u'lláh, 'hath prescribed unto everyone the duty of teaching His Cause'. To everyone who fulfils this spiritual duty, an outstanding spiritual reward is promised. 'Of all the gifts of God', proclaims 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His most holy Will, 'the greatest is the gift of Teaching. It draweth unto us the grace of God and is our first obligation. Of such a gift how can we deprive ourselves?'

These clear statements from the Holy Writings demonstrate that every Bahá'í should prepare himself for teaching the Cause of God by promoting his own soiritual development. 'The triumph of Our Faith' is the supreme objective that supersedes the goals of intellectual achievement or spiritual superiority other

seekers sometimes strive for. To this end, and to this end only, Bahá'ís try to make themselves ever more perfect instruments for the diffusion of the divine fragrances, for the flow of the spirit of the Faith out into the body of the world. Every teacher who brings a new believer to the Faith has the responsibility of setting the new believer on this path.

The Holy Writings and the writings of the Guardian abound in guidance on spiritual development. Although only a few items can be discussed here, and these but briefly, anyone may amplify the points for himself by looking through items listed under suitable headings in the index of a book such as *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* or *The Bahá'í Revelation*.

When this is done, it is advisable to pause to ponder a passage after reading it, for in pondering—meditating—on such passages, understanding of their significance comes. Pondering does not mean trying to wrench hidden secrets from the words by hard thinking; it means relaxing and allowing their spiritual potency to do its work. For Bahá'u'lláh has clearly stated: 'Every man of insight will, in this day, readily admit that the counsels which the Pen of this wronged One hath revealed constitute the supreme animating power for the advancement of the world and the exaltation of its peoples'. The words of Holy Writings do indeed contain hidden secrets, secrets that God will reveal at His own time to the hearts of all who truly desire spiritual knowledge; but we must court this knowledge as a grace from God, not try to create it for ourselves. The first step is reading the Holy Writings 'that the sweetness of thy melody may kindle thine own soul, and attract the hearts of all men'. Though a man 'may, at first, remain unaware of its effect, yet the virtue of the grace vouchsafed unto him must needs sooner or later exercise its influence upon his soul'.

No less important is prayer. Pilgrims report the Guardian to have said that the people of the West do not pray and meditate enough. If we do not use as we should the many wonderful prayers Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá have showered upon us, we are in a sense betraying them.

Prayer is communion with God. In prayer we empty our hearts of ourselves and draw down upon us and upon all mankind the grace of God. There are many kinds of prayer—supplication, in which we humble ourselves before God and ask him to endow us from His mercy with those gifts we do not deserve and but for His bounty could never attain; praise, in which we proclaim to ourselves and to others the perfection of the Divine Attributes and the unapproachable Sovereignty of God; meditation, in which a wordless prayer goes out from our heart linking us with the Source of our being and drawing to us the indescribable beauty of the Love of God. Through prayer and meditation, the Divine Bounty is caused to flow. It is said of the purest souls that their every action is a prayer.

Then there are the bounties that accrue from righteous deeds. 'The essence of faith', Bahá'u'lláh says, 'is fewness of words and abundance of deeds'. 'One righte-

ous act', He exclaims, 'is endowed with a potency that can so elevate the dust as to cause it to pass beyond the heaven of heavens'. Only through righteous acts can we develop all that is potential within us. Intentions that are not turned into deeds achieve nothing. 'All that which ye potentially possess', admonishes Bahá'u'lláh, 'can be manifested only as a result of your own volition. Your own acts testify to this truth. 'The prince of all acts is service, especially selfless service to the Cause of God, which attracts the love of God to him who serves. No one can himself estimate the effect upon his soul of his service to Bahá'u'lláh.

Some acts have particular significance, and of these the most significant are acts performed in obedience to the laws of Bahá'u'lláh. He has endowed His laws with a special potency, as a result of which obedience to them unleashes forces beyond the comprehension of men. The laws of prayer and fasting are no mere empty ordinances; compliance with them heals the soul and causes it to progress. Attendance at 19-Day Feasts earns spiritual sustenance, because Bahá'u'lláh has so ordained it. Stressing the importance of obedience to His laws, He says: 'From My laws the sweet smelling savour of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks'.

All these acts, and all spiritual development, need effort. Only man's own effort, the exercise of his own free will, can so cleanse the mirror of his heart that it reflects truly the Divine radiation that pours endlessly upon it. This effort is the effort of sacrifice. He must sacrifice his own desires for the desires of God; he must become detached from all earthly things, from all evils of self and passion; in the end, he must forgo his own will by making it wholly subservient to the Will of God. Then he will be granted that greatest of bounties, the bounty of giving up his soul to God; the Knowledge and Love of God will fill every limb and member of his body. All veils and wrappings will be burnt away, and he will enter the Presence of God. Perhaps, if he perseveres in his efforts, dedicating himself wholly to God, he will eventually behold the kingdom inhabited by the armies of God, who are 'the conquerors of the East and West'. 'Should one of them', says 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Tablets of the Divine Plan, 'turn his face toward some direction and summon the people to the Kingdom of God, all the ideal forces and lordly confirmations will rush to his support and reinforcement. He will behold all the doors open and all the strong fortifications and impregnable castles razed to the ground. Singly and alone he will attack the armies of the world, defeat the right and left wings of the hosts of all the countries, break through the lines of the legions of all the nations and carry his attack to the very centre of the powers of the earth'.

Such are the fruits of sacrifice. Like all worth-while goals, it seems beyond the achievement of most of us; but no one can foretell to what heights complete dedication to Bahá'u'lláh will raise his soul. What we achieve, we achieve by the grace of God, not by virtue of our

own capacity, and whether we achieve much or little, no sacrifice in the path of God is wasted. If we detach ourselves from all created things, obey the commands of Bahá'u'lláh, consecrate our souls to His love, and dedicate our lives to His service, perhaps a beam of His limitless grace will envelop us, endowing us with spiritual power beyond our understanding. Then we shall become broad channels for the diffusion of the Divine fragrances, 'eyes to the blind', 'a guiding light to the feet of the erring', 'a breath of life to the body of mankind'; then we shall 'be kindled with the fire of His love' and become true Bahá'ís. Let us therefore exert ourselves, gratefully and with joyful hearts, to reach this goal, bearing ever in mind the clear guidance of Bahá'u'lláh: 'O Son of Man! Humble thyself before Me, that I may graciously visit thee. Arise for the triumph of My Cause, that while yet on earth thou mayest obtain the victory'.

JOHN FERRABY

OUR UNIVERSAL FAITH

Bahá'í News (United States)

With the Guardian's approval, the National Spiritual Assembly has instituted an important new annual event to be observed with public meetings and publicity by local Assemblies and groups throughout the United States. This event, comparable in importance with World Religion Day, will be known as Race Amity Day and observed on the second Sunday of June beginning this year. Race Amity Day is sponsored by Bahá'ís, not merely Bahá'í participation in an event sponsored by another organisation. Its purpose is to celebrate the Bahá'í teaching of the Oneness of Mankind, the distinguishing feature of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

France. The National Endowment.

From *Bahá'í News*, June 1957.

Exciting news for all Bahá'ís is the accomplishment of one of the French goals of the Ten-Year Crusade. On March 2nd, 1957, a beautiful tract of wooded land was purchased to serve as the Bahá'í National Endowment for France. It is located in Normandy, in the Department of Orne, about six kilometers from the town of Le Theil sur Huisne.

From *Bahá'í Bulletin of North-East Asia*.

In Tokyo Anthon J. Seto took his spiritual flight to his eternal home in the Abha Kingdom. Mr. Seto is believed to have been the first Chinese-born Bahá'í in America. The Guardian in a letter to friends in Japan said: 'As attendant and secretary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá for well nigh two years after the termination of the Great War I recall so vividly the radiant joy that transfigured his face whenever I opened before him your supplications as well as those of Miss Agnes Alexander. What promise he gave us all regarding the future of the

Cause in that land at the close of almost every supplication I read to him, let me state, straight away, the most emphatic, the most inspiring of all. These are his words, that keep ringing in my ears: 'Japan will turn ablaze! Japan is endowed with the most remarkable capacity for the spread of the Cause of God.'

In the *Bahá'í News* of the U.S.A. issue of May 1957 was the announcement of the passing of George Townsend, Hand of the Cause, and the appointment of Miss Agnes Alexander to that exalted station.

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITIES

BIRMINGHAM. Despite illness among the friends our Centre has been crowded this month. We have set ourselves several goals. Bahá'í books in twelve libraries, and visits by well-known people. New posters exhibited on the two main line stations, and quotations inserted every two weeks in the local newspaper are already bringing response. A Bahá'í devotional has been arranged and advertised for October. We have several additions to the community. Robert Calloway from Oxford, Ruhangis Gegereh, Mehnoosh Mohtadi, and Parvaneh Kaleghi. They are all very welcome.

BLACKPOOL. We have been greatly helped by a visit from two Pilgrims, Betty Reid and Charles Dunning. From them we had two distinct aspects of Haifa, both left us with the same longing to go there ourselves. A visit from Micky Mihaeloff was, as always, a happy occasion. Prudence George spent several days making personal contacts and addressing firesides. Hassan Sabri spent an all too short visit, but he gave us all deep pleasure and satisfaction. The meeting for David Hoffman gave us an opportunity for much publicity. A hundred printed leaflets were left at the door of the hall with the words 'please take one'—only a few were left. It was the best publicity Blackpool has had. A film show was given in the home of one of the friends by a non-Bahá'í who has visited many countries, this was a most enjoyable evening. We are planning more social activity in the future. One of our members has been most successful in selling home-made articles for the National Fund. We expect visits from a member of the National Spiritual Assembly to talk to us on this important part of our Faith, and we can report success from our first effort. Our meetings are well attended.

BOURNEMOUTH. This Assembly reports an interesting talk given by Owen Battrock of Reading which was most inspiring, a report was printed in the local press. Most of the Bahá'ís congregate at the home of Elsie Cranmer who holds weekly firesides and open house. Elsie has had eleven articles either on or about the Faith published in several magazines. Bournemouth is happy to welcome back Eileen Beale who has been spending some time on the Home Front, and is now preparing her home for Bahá'í activity.

CALCOT (near Reading). Weekly firesides are held here. As yet no local contacts. On October 5th we were joined by Prudence George, Portsmouth, and Jeanette and Owen Battrick from Reading. We had four young, eager enquirers from a Children's Theatre Co., visiting Reading. Prudence led the discussion, and the questions fired at us were interesting and diverse—from Agnostic, Roman Catholic, Church of England, and philosophical viewpoints! Afterwards the visitors expressed themselves delighted and interested, and eager to hear more.

EDINBURGH. '...going from strength to strength' we have more attendance at public meetings, our weekly study classes and personal teaching have increased. We have been greatly helped by a visit from our revered Hand of the Cause Dr. Grossman. Our Assembly is in good spirits and we pray the Guardian's wish will be fulfilled.

ECCLES. The report from this young, and lively Assembly would take all our space if printed in full, so very regretfully we must cut. The newly acquired tape recorder has been a great teacher, and has provided a great deal on many occasions. It was purchased by the Friends with weekly donations, which were never missed, and has enabled the members to visit, and give comfort and joy to old people in Council houses. The lovely slides of Haifa, together with music, and Bahá'í prayers were much appreciated, and were instrumental in opening up new channels. The Civic Welfare authorities of Salford sent a letter expressing their gratitude and inviting Mrs. Chaplin to attend an executive meeting to arrange plans for future assistance in this good cause.

The Friends have since been able to branch out causing Eccles to be a hive of activity. Attendance at local societies has proved fruitful. The Secretary of the Assembly wishes to remind all Communities of the great service the visual aids can be in expanding the teaching effort. The Assembly will be happy to lend records and tapes. An active publicity committee can work wonders, we have proved it by results.

LIVERPOOL. To read a report of a public meeting with more than a hundred present makes one feel that the 'Golden Age' is just around the corner, and that Liverpool is going to lead the way to the outstanding achievements the Guardian has told us is in store for us. The meeting held in the Adelphi Hotel, associated with the visit of the Master, surpassed all our expectations. David Hoffman, speaking on Christ and Bahá'u'lláh made a great impression on the audience, who later made a big demand for Bahá'í literature. The advertisements have attracted many, some who heard of the Faith en route for New Zealand, later searched in vain for news, and found it on their return. We have enjoyed Aldy Roberts who shared his experiences in Africa with us, and we wish him every success on his return, this time to Ghana, where he will find much work to do for the Cause. We had an outstanding evening in August, when we held a symposium to which we

invited teachers from the Malayan College—Hindu and Moslem—to speak to us. Here is an extract from their letter of thanks. 'I was thrilled and overawed by the oneness of all the religious bodies gathered there. It was very impressive and heartening. I hope the faith spreads far and wide to break away prejudice, colour bar, creed, and suchlike and make mankind one'. They are returning to Malaya having qualified as teachers—one Hindu said, 'Malaya is ready for this faith—we must learn more about it'. Liverpool feels proud and at the same time humble because of these great opportunities given us to work in His service.

LEICESTER. The barge-home of those valiant pioneers Ian and Pat Sinclair has proved of great value to publicise the Faith in Leicester. A full page of pictures of the interior and exterior of their cosy home, situated on the banks of the River Soar, appeared in the local paper. The reporter who paid them a visit was not only delighted with their home, but interested in its name 'Ridvan'—Paradise. The Sinclairs told him they hoped to use the barge on their pilgrimage to Haifa.

MANCHESTER. The beloved Guardian's vital message 'to be self-supporting' has been our inspiration and strength. It has enabled us to use 'Ways and means' to increase the funds. A daily effort by the believers with excellent results. The visit of David Hoffman was so successful that a 'follow up' study class was started and has been well attended. All present take part in the reading and discussion. We are happy to report two new declarations, and two Persian friends added to our community.

NORWICH. Here is another Assembly all out for teaching the Faith with the help of the tape recorder, and we are very excited about the results we hope to achieve by this modern way of teaching the Faith. There seems to be very little spare time for the Norwich Bahá'ís, every evening except Saturday is occupied by firesides, public meetings, and the regular Sunday night gathering.

PORTSMOUTH. This young Assembly is gradually gaining strength through unity, which we feel has developed since we turned to the beloved Guardian for prayerful guidance. There is more response and action at Bahá'í gatherings, we have set a high goal and hope to achieve it. Weekly public meetings have been ably assisted with help from Reading and London Bahá'ís. The short visit of three Bahá'í Youth gave stimulation to our own Youth who are now becoming consolidated. The adoption of Malta as our island is warmly appreciated by Olga Mills, it's valiant pioneer. We have distributed George Townshend's book *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh* to several Ministers and received one reply in strong opposition. The public libraries have displayed a large poster in the central and branch libraries. The recent week-end school was a great success, a lively and stimulating occasion. Our grateful thanks go to the fine help from our team of visiting speakers, Jeanette and Owen Battrick of Reading, John Wade of London. Olive Long has proved the miraculous power of Bahá'u'lláh

by attending every Bahá'í gathering despite her sufferings from arthritis, and she is gradually getting relief from pain. The latest message from Shoghi Effendi makes us all feel very aware of our destiny.

READING. The Reading Bahá'í Centre was officially opened on September 24th, 1957. In an atmosphere that seemed blessed by the presence of the Master Himself, the friends from Reading and suburbs read passages from the Sacred Scriptures that rekindled the flame of consecration within their breasts and renewed their determination to labour with fresh zeal for the attainment of their objectives—the doubling of their number and the incorporation of their Assembly.

TORQUAY. We are gaining ground by holding monthly meetings with outside speakers, Ministers and speakers on various subjects which are in keeping with the Bahá'í tenets. Our own meetings held weekly, are conducted by the local believers. The two week-end schools were so helpful to this community that it is our earnest wish that another can be arranged this year.

SHEFFIELD. An intensive drive is being planned for the autumn, and we are hoping for much success. A special tribute is given to one of the believers, Ethel McCorcy who has recently passed to the Abha Kingdom. Ethel, who suffered a great deal, never failed to give kindness and sympathy and a loving welcome to a somewhat lonely pioneer.

THE WEDDING OF TWO READING BELIEVERS

The wedding of Ray Newman and Mary Sabit on September 7th was the first Bahá'í wedding in Reading. The simplicity of the ceremony, the beauty of the Sacred Readings, the spirit of warm hospitality, and the spirituality that prevailed affected all. Many non-Bahá'ís from among the sixty guests present remarked that it was one of the most impressive weddings they had witnessed.

Of the two local weekly papers who reported the wedding, the *Reading Mercury* gave an introduction to the Faith itself, as well as a favourable account of the marriage ceremony.

A special tribute is due to Beryl de Gruchy and Frances Bateman for their loving and strenuous labours which produced the spirit so powerfully affecting to all, and to Mr. and Mrs. Battick whose kind permission to use their restaurant 'The High' made possible so successful a function.

RUSTUM SABIT.

Glory be unto Thee, O my God! Verily this Thy servant and this Thy maid-servant have gathered under the shadow of Thy mercy and they are united through Thy favour and generosity. O Lord, confirm them in Thy servitude and assist them in Thy Service.

—From the Marriage Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

BOOK REVIEW

All Things made New, by John Ferraby
(published by Geo. Allen & Unwin)

A book which sets out to circumscribe the Bahá'í Faith has an almost impossible target—nevertheless *All Things made New* has the distinction of being both readable and authoritative. The quotations in which the book abounds, are chosen most judiciously, but the Author successfully avoids the old trap of breaking the sequence when he needs a quotation. In fact this book succeeds to a remarkable extent in making what must be a studious subject seem profoundly interesting and remarkably alive.

For non-Bahá'ís it provides a wealth of informative material, mainly from the pens of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá or the Guardian, and it is collated under headed sections of general or particular importance. This makes *All Things made New* a superlative reference book for a tabulated, systematic, penetrating view of the Bahá'í Faith. For Bahá'ís the merits of the book are obvious. It provides a much needed source of pointed quotation, the Bahá'í Scriptures are so vast in their scope that particular study has been difficult to say the least, here is a real need amply covered.

There is also a concise history of the Faith, which will be welcomed by those Bahá'ís who have not the time to tackle *Nabil's Narrative* and finally the varied aspects of the Bahá'í life are discussed and related to present day conditions. These qualities make the book a valuable addition to one's own library as well as an authoritative asset to the teaching work.

Whether too much has been attempted in too small a space is left to the reader's judgment by the author but personally I would recommend most highly *All Things Made New* as a much needed modernisation of *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*.

PAUL ADAMS, *Reading*

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh

A collection of the prayers and meditations of Bahá'u'lláh, selected and translated by the Guardian. Many are too long for inclusion in a pocket prayer book, and many can be found only in 'Prayers and Meditations'. No better source of readings with which to praise God exists. In reading the meditations, the soul is drawn nearer to God by the latent force of these holy words. The prayers also are full of praise, and supplications for many specific occasions are to be found in this book. It is the true source-book of Bahá'í devotion. *Cloth, 12s. 6d.*

Intone, O my servant, the verses of God that have been received by thee, as intoned by them who have drawn nigh unto Him, that the sweetness of thy melody may kindle thine own soul, and attract the hearts of all men.

—From 'Gleanings from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh.'

PRAYERS FOR UNITY

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants and reveal to them Thy great purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy law. Help them, O God, in their endeavour, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God, leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Thy knowledge and cheer their hearts by Thy love. Verily, thou art their Helper and their Lord.

O our God! We beg of Thee by the King of Names, and Maker of heaven and earth, by the rustling of the leaves of the Tree of Life, and by Thine utterances, through which the realities of things are drawn unto us, to grant that unity in the love of God may be speedily established throughout the world; that Thou wilt guide us always and unmistakably to whatever Thou wouldst have us to do, and that we may ever be strong and fully prepared to render instant, exact and complete obedience.

Prayers revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.

WORLD RELIGION DAY

With the decision of the National Spiritual Assembly to call for a nation-wide celebration of World Religion Day on Sunday, January 19th, some mention might be welcome of the facts surrounding the celebration.

World Religion Day is entirely Bahá'í sponsored and was first celebrated nine years ago. It is interesting that this, our first, should be the ninth in the world.

Its purpose is to proclaim the fundamental oneness of religion. There is no one recognised form of celebration, which can be an ambitious public celebration in one town down to a small private meeting in a private house.

The National Spiritual Assembly has approved the holding of a reception in the Hazerat'u'l quada on the preceeding Wednesday to a selected list of important guests.

This is one of the most wonderful opportunities of proclaiming the Bahá'í Faith to the public.

This, the first celebration in England, needs to be planned with enthusiasm so as not to miss an opportunity.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Teaching Conference will be held in Leeds during the week-end of January 11th and 12th, 1958.

ADDRESSES

National Secretary: John Ferraby, 27 Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7.

National Treasurer: Ernest Gregory, 51 Herries Drive, Sheffield 5.

N.T.C. Secretary: Ian Semple, c/o Mrs. Crombie, 4 Melgund Terrace, Edinburgh 7.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust Orders: Reg. Coulson, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 32 Deansgate, Manchester 2.

ADDITIONS TO THE COMMUNITY

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

Kian Hakimi (from Iran)	London
Peter Vuyiya (from Kenya)	Cambridge
James Farley	Bristol
Misagiyyih Tahmasebi (from Iran)	Newcastle
Joyce Lee (Youth)	Southwick
Peter Kabisa (from Uganda)	Bristol
Anthony McCarthy (Youth)	Belfast
Sheila McCarthy	Belfast
John Fozdar (from Indonesia)	Cardiff
Anneliese Haug (from Germany)	Cambridge
Dolly Aftabi (Youth from India)	Edinburgh
Homai Aftabi (from India)	Edinburgh
Margarete Frener	
(Youth from Germany)	Oxford
Ilona Rodgers (Youth)	Wyford
Toluvieh Lamei (from Iran)	Newcastle
Shahla Haqjoo (from Iran)	Manchester
Ronald Bates	Manchester
Lilian McKay	Lerwick
Irandoht Ghobad (from Turkey)	Blackburn
Shidan Kouchikzadeh (Youth)	Bournemouth
Roohangiz Yeganeh	
(Youth from Iran)	Birmingham
William Glass	Bangor
Peter Prior	St. Annes-on-Sea
Bahador Haqjoo (from Iran)	Manchester
Sallie True	
(Youth from Canary Isles)	Oxford
Morris Cooper (from Tanganyika)	London