

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
BM/BAHAI, LONDON, W.C.1

No. 101

Bahá'í Year 109

NOVEMBER 1952

THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY AND THE TEN YEAR CRUSADE

'And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then, and only then, will the Divine Standard be unfurled and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody.'

In his stupendous cable of 8th October the Guardian has outlined for us the wonderful development to be expected in the world Bahá'í Community in the next ten years. By the time the Bahá'í World Congress is held in Baghdad in 1963, there will be no country without a Bahá'í in it; over 250 countries will have been opened to the Faith. Forty-eight National Assemblies will have been established and Bahá'í literature will have been translated into more than 180 languages. The World Centre will have been greatly strengthened, the International Bahá'í Council will have progressed on its way to becoming the Universal House of Justice, and the Institution of Hands of the Cause will be unfolding its hidden mysteries.

We shall shortly be entering upon a new phase in the history of the Faith, shadows of which may perhaps be dimly discerned in the rapid growth of the Uganda Bahá'í Community. The Guardian tells us 'the course of the Great Crusade has been charted by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's infallible pen,' and that the signal has been given by Bahá'u'lláh Himself, Who is its 'Supreme Commander.' He appeals 'to all, without distinction of race, nation, class, colour, age or sex . . . to rededicate themselves, collectively and individually, to the task that lies ahead of them.' The way may be dark, and long, and arduous; there will be tests from within and without; there may even, the Guardian has told the American believers, be temporary separation from the 'heart and nerve-centre' of the Faith in Haifa; but the Guardian adjures us by the blood of the martyrs 'by the supreme, the glorious sacrifice of the Prophet-Herald of our Faith and by the tribulation which its Founder Himself willingly underwent, so that His cause might live . . . to resolve never to flinch, never to hesitate, never to relax, until each and every objective in the Plans . . . has been fully consummated.'

The way to future success must be prepared by renewed present efforts. Bahá'ís everywhere must press forward to complete their present Plans as a befitting tribute to the 'unexampled heroism' of the Dawn-Breakers and a crown to the festivities commemorating the Centenary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission. In

the 'critical, fleeting months ahead one final supreme effort' must be made to ensure the success of all National Teaching Plans. The Holy Year offers us all an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to His Cause.

The Guardian has stressed over and over again the great importance of the brief time yet separating us from the day when the limbs of mankind will quake and 'the Divine Standard be unfurled and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody.' For those privileged to help spread the Cause of God in this period, no effort and no sacrifice can be too great. 'When the victory arriveth, every man shall profess himself a believer and shall hasten to the shelter of God's Faith. Happy are they who in the days of world-encompassing trials have stood fast in the Cause and refused to swerve from its truth.'

To the British Bahá'í Community, the Guardian has promised 'a preponderating role, in conjunction with the American Bahá'í Community . . . and seconded by its sister Communities in the British Dominions in both Hemispheres, in awakening the peoples, races and nations comprising the British Commonwealth and Empire to the redemptive Message of Bahá'u'lláh, and in establishing on an unassailable foundation the structural basis of His World Order.' He bids us 'contemplate the grandeur of this future task, dwell on its sacred character, and meditate on the wide range of its problems, possibilities, perils and glories.' But while we do this we must also act to achieve an adequate base for future operations. 'There is no time to lose. The issues at stake call for immediate action, demand unrelaxing vigilance, undivided attention, and a consecration unexampled in the annals of the Faith in the British Isles.'

The tasks to be completed before we can enter the glorious future the Guardian has promised are many and varied. At all costs Assemblies must be maintained, but several have again been weakened. Pioneers and money are needed to maintain them and in order that teaching may be continued without interruption. All can help fulfil 'the urgent requirements of their no less important and vital mission at

home' by teaching, pioneering and contributing to the Fund.

Other tasks include expanding the centre in Nairobi, the most European of African cities, and it is still not too late for pioneers to settle there. Preparations must be made for the Kampala and Stockholm Inter-Continental Conferences, to which all British Bahá'ís are invited. The isolated centres in the British Isles must not be allowed to decrease in number.

The Guardian's recent messages show us how rapidly the Cause will progress in the coming years. To ensure a full contribution from the British Isles it is vital that the months remaining before the start of the Crusade be used to good purpose. During the last year the Cause has progressed by giant strides, and the speed may be expected to increase. The British Bahá'í Community has still some distance to go before it can claim adequately to have completed the tasks set it by our beloved Guardian. Only by hard and unremitting effort can we answer the prayer expressed in his cable of 15th October, that the 'British Community may

arise befittingly discharge great tasks ahead.' The plan has been given, the call has gone out, 'invisible battalions mustered, rank upon rank' are ready to 'pour reinforcements from on high.' Let us one and all resolve to arise unitedly to ensure the success of our present Two-Year Plan, and thus make possible the events to follow which 'will constitute, not only a milestone of the utmost significance in the history of the Faith in the British Isles, but will also be hailed by posterity as a landmark of peculiar significance in British history.'

'O ye beloved of God! Repose not yourselves on your couches, nay, bestir yourselves as soon as ye recognise your Lord, the Creator, and hear of the things which have befallen Him; and hasten to His Assistance. Unloose your tongues and proclaim unceasingly His Cause. This shall be better for you than all the treasures of the past and of the future, if ye be of them that comprehend this truth.'

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

LAUNCHING THE WORLD-EMBRACING SPIRITUAL CRUSADE

We print the following stupendous cable, dated 8th October, 1952, from the Guardian to the Bahá'í World through the American National Assembly.

Hail, feelings humble thankfulness, unbounded joy, opening Holy Year commemorating centenary rise Orb Bahá'u'lláh's most sublime Revelation marking consummation six thousand year cycle ushered in Adam, glorified all past Prophets, sealed blood Author Bábi Dispensation. Evoke (on this) auspicious occasion glorious memory, acclaim immortal exploits, Dawn-Breakers Apostolic Age Bahá'í Dispensation cradle Faith, mighty feats champion builders its rising World Order Western Hemisphere, as well as multitude valorous achievements past, present generations their brethren European, Asiatic, African, Australian continents, whose combined accomplishments during one hundred nine years its existence contributed survival God's struggling Faith, reinforcement its infant strength, safeguarding unity its supporters, preservation integrity its teachings, enrichment lives its followers, rise institutions its Administrative Order, fashioning agencies for systematic diffusion its light, broadening, consolidation its foundations. Moved express confident hope, as centenary celebrations now commencing attain climax during approaching Ridván period, plans formulated valiant World Bahá'í Community five continents, may each, all, through their victorious consummation, add distinct fresh lustre world-wide festivities constituting collective tribute paid followers Most Great Name (to the) memory august Founder their Faith, in honor centenary birth His Mission, eternal glory His embryonic, majestically unfolding World Order.

Feel hour propitious proclaim entire Bahá'í world projected launching, occasion convocation approaching Intercontinental Conferences four continents globe,

fate-laden, soul-stirring, decade-long, world-embracing spiritual crusade involving simultaneous initiation twelve national Ten Year Plans, concerted participation all National Spiritual Assemblies Bahá'í world, aiming immediate extension Bahá'u'lláh's spiritual dominion as well as eventual establishment structure His Administrative Order (in) all remaining Sovereign States, Principal Dependencies — comprising Principalities, Sultanates, Emirates, Shaykhdoms, Protectorates, Trust Territories, Crown Colonies scattered surface entire planet. Entire body avowed supporters Bahá'u'lláh's all-conquering Faith now summoned achieve (in a) single decade feats eclipsing totality achievements which (in the) course eleven preceding decades illuminated annals Bahá'í pioneering.

Fourfold objectives forthcoming Crusade, marking third (and) last phase initial epoch evolution 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, destined culminate world-wide festivities commemorating fast-approaching Most Great Jubilee. First, development institutions World Center Faith Holy Land. Second, consolidation, through carefully devised measures, home front (of the) twelve territories destined serve administrative bases operations twelve National Plans. Third, consolidation all territories already opened Faith. Fourth, opening remaining chief virgin territories planet through specific allotments each National Assembly functioning Bahá'í World.

Projected historic, spiritual venture, at once arduous, audacious, challenging, unprecedented scope, character (in the) entire field Bahá'í history, soon to be set motion, involves adoption preliminary measures construction Bahá'u'lláh's Sepulchre Holy Land.

Doubling number countries within pale Faith through planting its banner remaining Sovereign States planet, as well as remaining virgin Territories mentioned 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets Divine Plan, involving opening forty-one countries Asiatic, thirty-three African, thirty European, twenty-seven American continents.

Over twofold increase number languages into which Bahá'í literature translated, printed or (in) process translation — forty Asia, thirty-one Africa, ten each Europe, America, to be allocated American, British, Indian, Australian Bahá'í communities, including for most part those into which Gospels already translated.

Doubling number Mashriqu'l-Adhkar through initiation construction one Asiatic, other European continent. Acquisition site future Mashriqu'l-Adhkar Mount Carmel. Purchase land eleven future Temples, three American, three African, two Asiatic, two European, one Australian continents. Erection first dependency Mashriqu'l-Adhkar Wilmette.

Development functions institution Hands Cause. Establishment Bahá'í Court Holy Land, preliminary emergence Universal House Justice. Codification laws, ordinances Kitab-i-Aqdas, Mother Book Bahá'í Revelation. Establishment six national Bahá'í Courts chief cities Islamic East, Teheran, Cairo, Baghdad, New Delhi, Karachi, Kabul.

Extension international Bahá'í endowments Holy Land — plain 'Akka, slopes Mount Carmel. Construction international Bahá'í Archives neighbourhood Báb's Sepulchre. Construction tomb wife Báb Shiraz. Identification resting places father Bahá'u'lláh, mother, cousin Báb, reburial Bahá'í cemetery vicinity Most Great House. Acquisition garden Ridvan — Baghdad, site Siyah-Chal — Teheran, martyrdom Báb — Tabriz, His incarceration — Chihrig.

More than quadruple number National Spiritual Assemblies — twenty-one American, thirteen European, ten Asiatic, three African, one Australian continents. Multiply sevenfold national Haziratu'l-Quds (by) their establishment capital cities chief Sovereign States, chief cities principal Dependencies planet, twenty-one America, fifteen Europe, nine Asia, three Africa, one New Zealand. Framing national Bahá'í constitutions, establishment national Bahá'í endowments same capitals and cities (of) same States, Dependencies. More than quintuple number incorporated National Assemblies, twenty-one America, thirteen Europe, twelve Asia, three Africa, one Australasia.

Establishment six national Bahá'í Publishing Trusts, two America, two Asia, one Africa, one Europe. Participation women Persia membership national, local assemblies. Establishment seven Israel branches National Spiritual Assemblies, two Europe, two Asia, one each America, Africa, Australia. Establishment national Bahá'í printing press Teheran.

Reinforcement ties binding Bahá'í World Community United Nations. Inclusion, circumstances permitting, eleven Republics comprised within Union Soviet Socialist Republics and two European Soviet-controlled States within orbit Administrative Order Faith.

Convocation World Bahá'í Congress vicinity Garden Ridvan, Baghdad, third holiest city Bahá'í world, occasion world-wide celebrations Most Great Jubilee, commemorating Centenary Ascension Bahá'u'lláh Throne His Sovereignty.

Current Bahá'í history must henceforth, as second decade second Bahá'í Century opens, move rapidly, majestically as never moved before since inception Faith over century ago. Earthly symbols Bahá'u'lláh's

unearthly Sovereignty must needs, ere decade separating two memorable Jubilees draws close, be raised as far north as Franklin beyond Arctic Circle, as far south as Falkland Islands, marking southern extremity western hemisphere; amidst remote, lonely, inhospitable islands archipelagos South Pacific, Indian, Atlantic Oceans, mountain fastnesses Tibet, jungles Africa, deserts Arabia, steppes Russia, Indian Reservations North America, wastelands Siberia, Mongolia; amongst Eskimos (of) Greenland, Alaska, Negroes (of) Africa, Buddhist strongholds heart Asia, Lapps (of) Finland, Polynesians (of the) South Sea Islands, Negritos (of the) Archipelagos South Pacific Ocean.

Broad outlines world-encircling Plan divinely revealed. Its course charted 'Abdu'l-Bahá's infallible pen. Its shining goals set. Requisite administrative machinery created. Signal given by Author Plan, (its) Supreme Commander. Lord Hosts, King of Kings (has) pledged unfailing aid every crusader battling (for) His Cause. Invisible battalions mustered, rank upon rank, ready pour reinforcements from on high. Bahá'u'lláh's army light standing threshold Holy Year. Let them, as they enter it, vow (with) one voice, one heart, one soul, never (to) turn back (in the) entire course fateful decade ahead until each, every one will have contributed share (to) laying on world-wide scale an unassailable administrative foundation for Bahá'u'lláh's Christ-promised Kingdom on Earth, swelling thereby chorus universal jubilation wherein earth, heaven, will join as prophesied (by) Daniel, echoed (by) 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'on that day will (the) faithful rejoice with exceeding gladness.'

Call upon fifteen Hands (from) five continents, by virtue their supreme function as chosen instruments propagation Faith, inaugurate historic mission through appointment, during Ridvan 1954, five auxiliary boards, one each continent, nine members each, who will, as their adjuncts or deputies, and working conjunction various National Assemblies functioning each continent, assist, through periodic systematic visits Bahá'í centers, efficient, prompt execution twelve projected National Plans.

Moreover request communities observing Bahá'í Holy Days, solar calendar, celebrate befitting solemnity approaching anniversary Bahá'u'lláh's Birthday, falling middle two month period during which, a hundred years ago, Author Faith received first intimation His glorious Mission. Advise American Bahá'í Community commemorate (by) special gathering Temple, Wilmette, urge attendance as many believers possible, invite Hands Cause United States, Canada, participate as my representatives.

A Cable to the British Believers

On 13th October the British National Assembly cabled the Guardian:

'Assembly sends loving greetings from session held month inaugurating Holy Year. Hearts yearn fulfil trust beloved Centre Cause God.'

The Guardian replied on 15th October:

'Profoundly appreciate message. Ardently praying British Community may arise befittingly discharge great tasks ahead.'

AFRICA

The history of the Faith in *Uganda* is continuing its exciting course. Less than fifteen months ago the first five pioneers arrived there (August 2nd, 1951). By Ridván 1952 there was a local assembly ready to form in Kampala; by the end of May there were twelve believers there. In October in the whole of Uganda there were 100 believers. Kampala itself has twenty-four members, besides four released to form a new group in Jinja, fifty miles away, but the main development is taking place in the Teso and Mbale districts in the east of Uganda. This is the home country of one of the African believers in Kampala, Enoch Olinga, who went there for his annual vacation with his wife. Their teaching efforts, whilst there, roused such enthusiasm and met with such amazing results that up to now seventy-two Africans have been accepted in that area, and included in them are Enoch Olinga's father, his cousin, now a powerful and competent teacher of the Faith, and his brother's wife, the first Teso woman to accept.

If Enoch Olinga lit the fire, Ali Nakhjavani, one of the original five pioneers, has fanned it into bright flames during a stay of several weeks, during which he taught, held deepening classes and evaluated the declarations which had poured in already. These declarations have been made both in English and in African languages (mostly Luganda and Teso), and some of the new believers, being unable to write, have had their declarations written for them and have confirmed their acceptance with their thumb-print. They have come from Roman Catholic, Protestant and pagan backgrounds, and at least nine tribes are represented amongst them—Ganda, Gishu, Gwere, Kabarasi, Kakamega, Luo, Soga, Teso, Toro. Their love and enthusiasm for the Faith is tremendous and some of them are already showing a remarkably deep understanding. One thing which has greatly impressed them all has been the practical demonstration of the Bahá'í lack of race prejudice. Ali Nakhjavani during his stay in this area has been living with the Africans and sleeping in their houses; this, they claim, has not been done before, by non-Africans, even by missionaries, and the Africans have been surprised and delighted.

One of the believers in Kobwin, in the Teso district, who is the father of Enoch Olinga, has offered his house, the usual round African hut, to be used as a Hazira until a special one can be built, and the British Africa Committee has received a very moving letter from the new community in this village, where it seems there will very likely be a new local assembly next Ridván.

The new situation has called for a new attitude and new machinery to deal with it and the British Africa Committee has appointed a Uganda Teaching Committee, consisting of four pioneers and two Africans, to handle all teaching in Uganda outside Kampala, including the acceptance of declarations, and has approved their appointing district teaching committees to handle local matters. Two of these district committees have been appointed, consisting entirely of newly declared African believers. The constitution of proper groups will have to wait a while, since there

are few villages or concentrations of population, except the village of Kobwin and the town of Mbale; people live scattered over the countryside and are liable to move suddenly, so that convenient focal points are not yet clear.

The total figures at the moment are: Kampala 24 members, Jinja 4, Mbale 8, Teso 67.

AFRICA COMMITTEE

FROM THE GUARDIAN

'My Last Appeal . . . One Final Supreme Effort . . .'

Recall feelings profound emotion, as mid-August approaches, distressing circumstances attending dastardly act which, one hundred years ago, precipitated chain calamitous events unparalleled scope, severity, annals Faith Bahá'u'lláh, constituting next to martyrdom its Herald darkest bloodiest, most tragic episode Heroic Age Bahá'í Dispensation. Invite members all communities Bahá'í World, standing threshold Holy Year, call mind manifold tribulations afflicting God's infant Faith immediately preceding, accompanying, following imprisonment Author Bahá'í Revelation (in) Siyah-Chal, Teheran, sombre scene birth His glorious Mission. Urge them remember multitude barbarous acts in which king, government, people, ecclesiastics, participated; ponder ferocious character persecutions; meditate vastness their range as well as far-reaching consequences. Request them dwell particularly seeming helplessness God's struggling Faith, direct special attention ordeals undergone Bahá'u'lláh, its sole surviving pillar, subsequent birth His Mission, His ultimate banishment, culminating His incarceration Holy Land, fulfilment age-long prophecies.

Address to them, as well their national representatives, my last appeal here commencement forthcoming Centenary Celebrations, exert course critical fleeting months ahead one final supreme effort ensure complete, total success all plans formulated by National Assemblies every continent globe, culminating Ridván period, falling middle, marking central features celebrations Holy Year.

Supplicating God's bountiful blessings each, every national enterprise, triumphant consummation of which will be regarded posterity befitting tribute paid by their participants immortal memory unexampled heroism dawn-breakers Apostolic Age Dispensation Bahá'u'lláh, will crown festivities commemorating centenary birth His Mission, will constitute worthy prelude launching global spiritual crusade destined culminate one hundredth anniversary formal assumption Author Bahá'í Revelation His Prophetic Office, diffuse radiance His Faith face entire planet.

August 5th, 1952

[It is regretted that space did not permit the insertion of the foregoing cable in the September/October issue.—ED.]

STATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Final Section

Mighty and resounding as are these claims and proclamations of Bahá'u'lláh, dazzling to the spiritual eye, overwhelming to the devout imagination, aspiring even to the designation of His being as God Himself; yet nevertheless they are not as excellent as those by which Bahá'u'lláh is known 'among the Concourse on High': so He states in His Tablet to Czar Alexander II. They are (like all descriptions of the divine in earth-language) merely relative, they are scaled down to the weak capacity of a creature in this created world. Each of them is a vital and cardinal truth which we must penetrate if we are to understand the world in which we now live, the Age into which by God's grace we have been born, the duties and the unprecedented opportunities which have been laid upon us. Our part—and it is no easy one—is to respond to the Most High in His measuring His Revelation down to us by measuring our capacity up to the level where we can meet and grasp His descending truth. One of the most practical ways of doing this in the present case is to hold the High Prophet of the Age firmly in mind as the Source of Light and then contrast the illumination He has shed and is now shedding on the world with the gloom and darkness which prevailed before. What can be the spiritual power that will produce so many kinds of enlightenment over so wide an earth in so short a time? How does that power operate on human souls, which so obediently respond to it yet have not the least idea whence these illuminating rays proceed? How does the Prophet lay out His course of action on human society, prophesy the changes and developments in human knowledge or conditions which He will bring about and the new direction in which the souls of men will turn, and then without visible means of any kind cause by His will those developments to appear on the stage of history?

Ponder over the changes Bahá'u'lláh has effected throughout the world without any overt interference with the free will of men or nations and then try to imagine what manner of ascendancy and dominion He holds and what is the Hidden mystery of His Station. It has been often said of Jesus Christ that His teachings have done more to uplift human character and advance civilisation than all the work of all the philosophers and the legislators of the race put together. Yet how much greater have been the changes produced in the world in the last hundred years than any to be found in the first century of the Christian Era? 'Abdu'l-Bahá used to point out in His American addresses that at such a pace were the arts and sciences, industry and invention, the laws, the political and ethical systems, the ideas, methods, customs and institutions and the whole apparatus of civilisation being renovated and transformed throughout the entire globe that the whole of the previous progress of humanity from the time of Adam would not equal that made in the last hundred years. Since He spoke this in 1912, developments have not slackened. They have been even more revolutionary and spectacular. And all of them continue as before to be such as will either directly promote or else will clear the way for

the creative purpose of Bahá'u'lláh in building the world anew. His Teachings have become the law of life. Obedience to them is the condition of man's survival on the planet. For years past the Community of the Greatest Name, instructed by the Bahá'í Scriptures and by the writings of the Guardian, has had the unprecedented and awe-inspiring experience of walking forward and sadly beholding in the full light of the Divine Dawn the frustration and suffering of a rebellious world that refused the path of peace and unity laid out by Bahá'u'lláh and insisted on finding its own way to well-being and blindly followed its own blind leaders who led it round and about in a vortex of growing discord and gathering dangers. How better can we measure the true station of Bahá'u'lláh than by contemplating His will in action and tracing the directive influence of His design in the actual events of our own time? What else do these lonely masterpieces of the Guardian in which with epic force and inspired lucidity he sets forth the true history of these decades—masterpieces such as *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* or *The Promised Day is Come*—what else do they reveal but the exaltation of Bahá'u'lláh, the transcendent sovereignty and unimaginable might of His all-pervading and all-conquering will, and the utter impotence of that proud, vain, cruel world of kings and priests that ranged itself against Him and sought to bury the Glory of God in the darkest dungeons of Tíhrán! Where man has failed to advance is in religion; and failing in this which is the channel of light and peace he has brought upon himself storms of hate and destruction which nothing can abate, maladies of heart and soul which nothing can cure or alleviate—save only the Word of God itself. Bahá'u'lláh in the *Book of Certitude*, with a lucidity which nothing can becloud, with a divine acumen which penetrates to the inmost core of things, in language which pours forth with the vigour and the speed of a mountain torrent, has exposed once and for ever the deep hidden cause of the prejudice, the dissensions, the strife that now and down all the ages in all the world-faiths have obfuscated and misled mankind, delayed human progress and rendered largely nugatory the blessing showered by Providence on a stiffnecked and unresponsive race. Here He lays bare Error to its roots, reveals truths that humanity was never able in earlier times to bear and at last opens a broad highway to the reconciliation of all the World-Faiths, all the Communions, all the sects. The Truth makes us one. Whether it be to-morrow or the day after, mankind in its entirety will surely join the ever growing body of believers and travelling the highway of revealed truth will find at long last unity and perpetual peace. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts has achieved this! 'What,' we pause to reflect, 'can be the exaltation of Him whose function it is to lift by His own sole might the whole human race from the lowest depths of unbelief into which it has ever sunk to heights of corporate vision and happiness such as it has never desired or dreamed of!'

A kingdom of heaven on earth more wonderful,

more glorious than ever poets feigned or churches were able to conceive has already been revealed in the sacred writings of the Bahá'ís. Its centre is in the heart of faithful man, its circumference is marked by the dimensions of the planet. The foundations of this kingdom have been laid in the lives of believers. Amid the tumult and the convulsions that have shaken human society through many years the work of constructing this complex, delicate and exquisite building has been proceeding. Already its shape is beginning to emerge, rising in its beauty above the decay and the dissolution of a civilisation that perishes because it cannot express the true glories of this modern age nor give scope to the happiness which is the birthright of the coming race of men.

Signs such as these of Bahá'u'lláh's victorious power may well outreach the range of our minds and go beyond our imaginings. Then let us pass on from the thought of His words and deeds in their splendour to the contemplation of Himself. In the *Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh*, collected and translated by the Guardian, He has vouchsafed to us a self-expression such as we possess of no earlier Prophet and such as could be written by no other Pen than His own. Here as we dwell with His sacred utterance and try to plumb its meanings we begin to perceive what He means this earth of ours one distant day to become, what He plans the Kingdom of God in its inwardness and spiritual exaltation to be like; we begin to understand or to realise how little capacity we have to understand the nature of His love for mankind, the completeness of His self-sacrifice, the strength, the constancy, the indomitable power and endurance that were His, the acuteness of His sufferings and His readiness and even eagerness to suffer more and yet more in order that He may be the better able to help and sublimely mankind.

With awe and shame and grief we read this story of a divine love wronged and outraged and reflect that all this sublimity of heroism and beneficence was but an infinitesimal glimmer of the light and the glory that really belonged to Bahá'u'lláh. Falling back from the contemplation of the glory of the All-Glorious, we wonder what the latent potentialities of MAN can be that the Holy One will make such a sacrifice for him. We ask with the Psalmist, 'what is man that Thou art mindful of him?' and with a warmer love we cry in the familiar words of a Great Prayer:

'Who am I that I should dare to stand at the gate of the city of Thy nearness or set my face towards the lights that are shining from the heaven of Thy will? By Thy might! my trespasses have kept me back from drawing nigh unto Thee; and my sins have held me far from the court of Thy holiness. I implore Thee by the signs of Thy Kingdom and the mysteries of Thy Dominion to do with Thy loved ones as becometh Thy bounty, O Lord of all being, and is worthy of Thy grace, O King of the Seen and the Unseen.'

GEORGE TOWNSEND

CHILD EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In considering the question of allowing their children to participate in scripture classes at school, Bahá'í parents are urged to avoid any move which might cause suffering to a sensitive child, by segregating

him. This also might give the child a false sense of superiority in seeming different from others. It is felt that as long as parents fulfil their all-important duty of giving their children home instruction in Bahá'í teaching, and provided that there is no religious intolerance or extremism in the school system, the average scripture lessons will do no harm. It is suggested that Bahá'í parents wherever possible choose schools where there is religious tolerance, and avoid schools of definite dogma, namely, R.C. and C. of E. schools, etc. The most important thing is for parents to help children understand all religions from the Bahá'í viewpoint, and encourage association with 'joy and fragrance.'

A Cherished Memory

An impression of the Shrine Garden written by a non-Bahá'í, given to a Bahá'í travelling on the *Mauritania*, September, 1951.

Looking back to the troublesome days of 1944/48 in Haifa, one place stands out in my memory as a gem of peace, the Bahá'í Shrine Garden on the slopes of Mt. Carmel.

My frequent walks from the German colony at the foot of Mt. Carmel took me up through 'The Persian Garden' as we called it, to the top of Mt. Carmel. Climbing up through the garden I often paused 'to feel' the peace of this beautiful spot, and to look back across the blue Bay of Haifa to Acre on the far side of the bay and to Mt. Hermon in the distance, mantled with snow from September till May.

One felt the peace of this garden when all about was strife. The gardeners at work seemed to attend their flowers in an atmosphere removed from turmoil. In due seasons the flowers shed their glory, Bougainvillea, roses, jasmin, pansies as blue as the skies, tangerines of gold, the scarlet of poinsettias contrasting with the white marble of the Shrine.

Often in the fading light of evening the Guardian could be seen walking through the German colony accompanied by a few young disciples, who walked in reverence a few paces behind—listening to, one imagined, the doctrine being expounded—they seemed oblivious to the world around them.

The Shrine at Acre in a lovely garden was equally peaceful and well tended.

The 'Persian Garden' in Haifa is a cherished memory.

COVENANT-BREAKER

The German National Assembly has warned us that a Covenant-Breaker named Hermann Zimmer from Waiblingen, near Stuttgart, is in England and is known to have tried to get addresses of Bahá'ís here. Friends should have nothing to do with Mr. Zimmer, and if they hear news of him, or are approached by him, they are asked to notify the National Assembly at once. If approached, they should neither meet nor correspond with him.

Love

Know ye the value of these passing days and vanishing nights. Strive to attain a station of absolute love one toward another. By the absence of love enmity increases. By the exercise of love, love strengthens and enmities dwindle away.

'ABDU'L-BAHA

WE HAVE COVENANTED

The great failure to respond to Bahá'u'lláh's call, the Call of God, let loose forces which have now run their course and reached their fruition after a respite of 100 years. All worldly systems and institutions are breaking up before our very eyes. Man sinks into apathy and disillusion.

We know that in multitudes of families, from earliest childhood to infirm old age, no chance is provided to develop, in response to the light of the spiritual Sun of Truth, those qualities which are latent in every human soul, that the human race is stunted and warped and darkened with tragedy and despair, that Man's soul is choked with the dire weeds of cruelty, jealousy, envy, ignorance, pride, viciousness, that we just dare not look closely, the cumulative misery is too horrible. We know that there are vast areas of the globe where the healing message has not yet been proclaimed, that even in our own land the wretchedness of man has no antidote in family after family, city after city, county after county. We know that statesmen, economists, moral teachers, international organisers cannot succeed. We know, as nobody else knows, that this is the time of the great oppression of which Jesus Christ spoke when 'mankind knows not whither to turn for guidance.' We know that the next ten years, if man is to survive at all, must see him triumph and finally defeat those negative evil forces—ignorance, injustice, prejudice, sectarianism, partisanship, war—which have been taken for granted for thousands of years, and that in the mortal struggle they will put forth their greatest effort to destroy man, body and soul. We know Bahá'u'lláh's universal Cause, His Divine Programme which alone offers a redemptive refuge. We know that we are each a party to the Covenant of God Whose Centre to-day is our beloved Guardian, and that we have covenanted 'to live and act in accordance with the divine exhortations, commands and lordly teachings' and that 'teaching the Cause is the head-cornerstone of the foundation itself.'

If we do not honour our obligation and meet the challenge, who else will do so?

'O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny . . . Ye are . . . the soft flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men . . .

Speed ye forth from the horizon of power, in the name of your Lord, the Unconstrained, and announce unto His servants, with wisdom and eloquence, the tidings of this Cause . . . Beware lest anything withhold you from observing the things prescribed unto you by the Pen of Glory . . .

We have made you to be the hands of our Cause. Render ye victorious this Wronged One . . . He, verily, will aid everyone that aideth Him, and will remember everyone that remembereth Him.

An act, however infinitesimal, is, when viewed in the mirror of the Knowledge of God, mightier than a mountain. Every drop proffered in His path is as a sea in that mirror.

Great is the blessedness of him who . . . hath

arisen to aid the Cause of Him who is the King of Names. Such a man is as the eye to the body of mankind.

One single breath exhaled in the love of God and for His service is written down by the Pen of Glory as a princely deed.

Unloose your tongues and proclaim unceasingly His Cause.'

BAHÁ'U'LLAH

What does 'teaching the Cause' mean to us in practice? Does it not mean: prayers, exemplary conduct, sacrifice, and effort, persistent effort and effort again?

(1) Building a spiritual reservoir within through prayer, reinforcing our conviction in the efficacy of the Bahá'í Message, purging and galvanising our hearts as we draw near to Bahá'u'lláh and so sincerely enabling Bahá'u'lláh to do the work.

(2) Setting forth each day with the intention in the forefront of our minds to find some new soul to tell the Cause to, and passing our efforts in review each evening so as to do better next day.

(3) Turning the torch of our hearts in every direction to find the receptive soul, remembering that the sensitive soul these days may often, for reasons of self-defence, wear a mask of apparent stiffness and reserve.

(4) Speaking to each such contact 'from his standpoint' not our own.

(5) Creating the opportunity and making the time available for further fuller friendship until the relationship is firm and deep.

(6) Giving a fireside (our own or elsewhere) or public meeting a chance to water the tender seedling we have sown.

(7) Watching the moment to do a kindly loving deed for our new-found friend.

(8) Studying to know the Teachings, the background and history of our Faith, at least sufficiently to make it new in our minds each time we meet our contacts.

(9) Taking our share in such collective teaching work in our community as consultation may develop and allot either directly or through helping on the spot or indirectly through prayer and donation.

'Every soul that ariseth to-day to guide others in the path of safety and infuse into them the spirit of Life, the Holy Spirit will inspire that soul with evidences, proofs and facts, and the light will shine upon it from the Kingdom of God.

If you desire with all your heart friendship with every man on earth, your thought, spiritual and positive, will spread; it will become the desire of others, growing stronger and stronger, until it reaches the minds of all men.

Do not be content with showing friendship in words alone; let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path.

When a man ariseth to expound the arguments of God . . . and advanceth consummate proofs concerning the appearance of the great Kingdom, the intense love will become manifest in his heart. This

love causeth the development of the spirit by the grace of the beneficent Lord.

By the exercise of love, love increases.

The unseen divine essence encompasseth those who deliver the Message. And if the work of delivering the Message be neglected the assistance shall be entirely cut off.' 'ABDU'L-BAHA

If we dwell on ourselves and our weaknesses, it but wastes time and frustrates effort. If we indulge ourselves in the fashionable time-consuming ways, then we are but sponges, passively soaking up experience, we are depriving others whom we could be helping and ourselves too of the spiritual growth and capacity which radiant activity brings with it. How often has it happened when we have refrained from seeing that film, attending that football match, reading that book or listening to that wireless programme that ideas of usefulness and service, of friendly recollection and helpful encouragement, have come to mind which would otherwise have gone by default either for lack of time or because we would just not have thought them up?

Never before has time been so precious to conserve and use for our own focal purpose, perhaps never again will such a crisis confront humanity in a way to call for total efforts. Dare we face posterity, dare we face the Abhá Kingdom, dare we even face our own better selves unless we can confidently say that we are day by day growing more deeply conscious of our responsibilities and making more effective efforts to dispense the Water of Life, to supply the salve to the running sore, to mitigate the sufferings and relieve the strains of despairing mankind, to teach the Cause and deliver the Message of which we alone are aware?

We know what is good for people, we know what is good for ourselves, we have all the time there is—little enough, perhaps only a few remaining months. Let us, each one, not look to another to begin.

'Mount your steeds, O heroes of God!'

CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

Advertisement

PORTALS TO FREEDOM

by HOWARD COLBY IVES

(Published by George Ronald)

A man who sought long and ardently for spiritual happiness tells how 'Abdu'l-Bahá restored lost faith to him and placed his feet firmly on the path of glory. In doing so, he gives a glowing first-hand account of episodes witnessed and experienced during the Master's visit to the United States. Every Bahá'í should read this gripping story with so many memorable passages. Those mildly interested in the Faith may have their interest deepened by this book.

Paper bound, 256 pages - Price 3s. 6d.

Cloth bound - - - - Price 7s. 6d.

Convention Resolution No. 7

One of the recommendations of the delegates to Convention was that the National Assembly try to establish closer contact with the Local Spiritual Assemblies. It was suggested that one of the methods might be for a member or members of the N.S.A. to visit, from time to time, local communities as official representatives of the National body.

The N.S.A., having carefully considered the recommendation, has come to the conclusion that means for a closer relationship already lie to hand and all that is needed is to make the fullest possible use of them. With regard to personal representation, however, it is regretted that Assembly members are already so involved in administrative work, both for the National Assembly and in service on committees that they have little time to travel for other purposes.

There can be no doubt that closer contact with the N.S.A. can be established and maintained by:

- (1) Careful study of the communications sent to Local Assemblies.
- (2) A realisation that the national committees are specialised arms of the N.S.A. and contact with them is, in a sense, contact with the N.S.A.
- (3) Attendance by as many members of Local Assemblies and communities as possible at Teaching Conference, Convention and N.S.A. sessions at Summer School.
- (4) Bahá'ís in local communities praying for the deliberations of the N.S.A. whilst it is in session.
- (5) Regular contributions to the National Fund which undoubtedly forms a spiritual as well as material link between the Local and National Assemblies.

Extract from a letter from the Guardian through his Secretary to John Ferraby, dated 20th November, 1946:

'The Master unceasingly emphasised the importance of unity among the friends, and, if anything, it is of even greater importance in this present chaotic state of the world than it was in His days. The people are longing for an example—proof that harmony and love can actually exist in a Community—and it is one of the primary duties of the Bahá'ís to demonstrate these great principles in their relations with each other.'

National Assembly Meetings

The following meetings of the National Assembly have been arranged in addition to those already announced:

23rd–25th January, 6th–8th March, 10th–12th April.

National Assembly members are also keeping free Sunday, 2nd March, in case an extra one day meeting should become necessary.

U.N.E.S.C.O. BOOK COUPONS

The Bahá'í Publishing Trust has sent Secretaries of Local Assemblies a printed leaflet describing the U.N.E.S.C.O. Book Coupon scheme through which books may be bought from certain countries overseas including the United States. Anybody who wants to buy books from the United States is advised to obtain particulars from their local Secretary.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY of the BAHAI'S of the BRITISH ISLES

49 Sandbourne Avenue,
London, S.W.19.

9th December, 1952.

To all members of the British Baha'i Community

Dear Friend,

"One final supreme effort"

In recent messages to the Baha'i world our beloved Guardian has called all believers to "exert one final supreme effort" "to clear the decks for action" so that all can play a full and befitting part in the crucial ten year global crusade which is so soon to begin.

The National Assembly consulted how this could be achieved in the British Isles and decided that success or failure will depend on the spirit engendered at Teaching Conference. The Assembly determined on the following plan which will call for your wholehearted support if it is to succeed.

The plan is based upon three successive Nineteen Day Feasts and on Teaching Conference -

Feast of Masa'il (December 12th) Call to Teaching Conference to all believers.

Feast of Sharaf (December 31st) All communities consult on the needs of the Two Year Plan in the British Isles and prime those who expect to attend Teaching Conference with their views and ideas.

Teaching Conference (January 10/11th) In Sheffield. All who can should be there to consult.

Feast of Sultan (January 19th) Attendants at Teaching Conference report back to their communities who make recommendations for a practical, systematic teaching programme, both individual and collective, in their own locality covering all the remaining weeks till Ridwan, and for such other practical help in the shape of pioneers or other material aid that can be offered to nearby or less fortunate communities.

The Consolidation Committee will supply an up to date News Release after Teaching Conference giving the most recent report of the needs of the Plan. Your Regional Teaching Committee will await eagerly all requests for teaching help and will co-ordinate the supply.

The National Assembly believes that by this plan both Local Assemblies and isolated centres can attain such a pitch of consecrated teaching activity that by the time of our National Jubilee celebrations we shall be enabled to tender an offering at the Holy Threshold that shall be worthy of the commendation of our beloved Guardian and in some measure match the astounding achievements of those who labour in the continent of Africa.

With loving greetings,

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

TEACHING CONFERENCE.

January 10th./11th., 1953.

Teaching Conference will be held this year in the Leopold Suite the Grand Hotel, Leopold Street, Sheffield, 1. The Conference will commence at 2.0 p.m. Saturday and end at 4.30 p.m. on Sunday.

The Sheffield Assembly has the option on a number of rooms at the following Hotels:-

The County Hotel, Howard Street, Sheffield 1.
30 single rooms at 14/- bed and breakfast.

The Harley Commercial Hotel, 334 Glossop Road.
Sheffield 10.
30 rooms (some double) @ 14/6, bed & breakfast.

The Albany Hotel, Fargate, Sheffield 1.
24 single rooms @ 17/6, 5 twin bedded rooms
4 double rooms @ 30/- bed and breakfast.

If you wish accommodation booked for you please advise Mr. Ernest Gregory, 51, Herries Drive, Sheffield 5, on the form below, not later than December 29th, as the hotels will not hold rooms longer and there will then be a possibility of accommodation being available only in the suburbs of Sheffield.

Mr. Ernest Gregory,
51 Herries Drive,
Sheffield 5.

Telephone : Sheffield 36327.

Please reserve for me a single/^{*}Double room at the
Hotel for Friday/^{*}Saturday/^{*}Sunday nights.

Name

Address

.....

*Please cross out details which do not apply to you.

THE SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF LONDON

Bahá'í Centre,
103, Earls Court Road,
W.8.

December 16th, 1952

Dear Friends,

Next Sunday, December 21st, at 7.30 p.m.,
Mr. Eruch Munsiff will speak to us about his pilgrimage to the Holy Land and his meetings with our beloved Guardian. He will show us pictures of the Holy Land, and give all present, gifts from the sacred shrines.

It will be a very happy and inspiring occasion..

With loving greetings,

In His Fellowship,

London Spiritual Assembly.