

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Ms Stevens

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FROM THE GUARDIAN

On December 18th the National Assembly cabled:
'Joyfully report acceptance two African believers Kampala.'

The Guardian replied on December 19th:

'Delighted. Assure them fervent prayers, hearty welcome Bahá'í fold.'

The following cable was received from the Guardian by the American National Assembly on December 14th, 1951:

'With feeling profound concern, grief, indignation, am compelled disclose Bahá'í world recent developments Holy Land, furnishing further incontestable proof relationship established old, new Covenant-Breakers, demonstrating increasing boldness, marked tragic decline character, spiritual condition, grandchildren 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Their shameful attitude, conduct, receiving approbation their elders. Evidences multiplying, attesting Ruhi's increasing rebelliousness, efforts exerted my eldest sister pave way fourth alliance members family Siyyid 'Ali involving marriage his grand-daughter with Ruha's son, personal contact recently established my own treacherous despicable brother Riaz with Majdiddin, redoubtable enemy Faith, former henchman Muhammad 'Alí, archbreaker Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant. Convey information all National Assemblies.'

On Covenant Breakers

'Therefore, to avoid these people will be the nearest path by which to attain the divine good pleasure; because their breath is infectious, like unto poison.'

'Endeavour to your utmost to protect yourselves, because Satan appears in different robes and appeals to everyone according to each person's own way, until he becomes like unto him — then he will leave him alone.'

'Among the people are those who have broken the Covenant, and among them are those who have followed what was ordained by the All-Knower, the All-Wise. My affliction is not from My imprisonment and persecution, or from what comes to Me from

My rebellious servants — but from the actions of those who attribute themselves to this persecuted One and commit among the people that which is degrading to the honour of God. Verily, they are of the seditious.'

'The Supreme Concourse will pray for the one who is adorned with the garment of faithfulness between heaven and earth; but he who breaks the Covenant is cursed by heaven and earth.'—Bahá'u'lláh.

'And now, one of the greatest and most fundamental principles of the Cause of God is to shun and avoid entirely the Covenant-Breakers, for they will utterly destroy the Cause of God, exterminate His Law and render of no account all efforts exerted in the past.'—'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Two Momentous Messages from the Guardian (Cables sent to the United States)

December 24th, 1951

Recall feelings profound thankfulness, joy, chain recent historic events heralding long anticipated rise, establishment, World Administrative Center Faith Bahá'u'lláh Holy Land, regarded third, most momentous, epoch-making development since inception Formative Age morrow 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Ascension. Quarter century constituting opening epoch this age, signalled successively by erection, consolidation over period no less sixteen years, local, national institutions Bahá'í Administrative Order five continents globe, conformity provisions Will Center Covenant and initiation first Seven Year Plan American Bahá'í Community, marking inauguration first epoch execution 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan unavoidably held abeyance over two decades pending creation divinely-appointed administrative agencies designed by its Author for its effective prosecution. Opening years second epoch Formative Age now witnessing long last commencement third vast, majestic, fate-laden process following two above mentioned developments, destined through gradual emergence manifold institutions World Center Faith crown administrative structure Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Order. Gigantic process now set motion opening decade second Bahá'í Century

synchronising with, deriving notable impetus through, birth sovereign State Holy Land, greatly accelerated through series swiftly succeeding events originated World Center Faith.

First, inauguration most holy worldwide enterprise, unprecedented annals Faith—construction heart Mount Carmel superstructure Báb's Sepulchre. *Second*, creation International Bahá'í Council precincts Holy Shrine, forerunner International House Justice—supreme legislative organ nascent, divinely conceived, world-encircling, Bahá'í Administrative Order. *Third*, acquisition, restoration, embellishment, historic sites associated incarceration Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, recognition their sacred character, exemption taxes newly formed State, accessibility appreciative general public. *Fourth*, initiation formal negotiations central, municipal authorities same State, twofold purpose preserve posterity immediate directly threatened neighbourhood Most Holy Tomb Founder Faith outskirts 'Akka, acquire extensive, sorely needed properties vicinity Báb's Sepulchre, destined serve site future edifices envisaged 'Abdu'l-Bahá (to) house auxiliary agencies revolving twin institutions Guardianship, House Justice. *Fifth*, preparation design future Mashriqu'l-Adhkar Mount Carmel, outstanding indispensable feature unfoldment rising World Administrative Order. *Sixth*, forthcoming convocation four conferences, embracing eleven National Assemblies all continents globe, marking inauguration beyond limits World Centre Faith intercontinental stage Bahá'í activity, precursor final step summoning assemblage representative communities all sovereign States, chief dependencies, islands, entire planet. Hour now ripe take long, inevitably deferred step, conformity provisions 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Testament, conjunction with six above mentioned steps, through appointment first contingent Hands Cause God, twelve in number, equally allocated Holy Land, Asiatic, American, European continents. Initial step now taken regard preparatory full development institution provided 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will, paralleled preliminary measure formation International Council destined culminate emergence Universal House Justice. Nascent institution forging fresh links binding rising World Center Faith to consolidating World Community followers Most Great Name, paving way adoption supplementary measures calculated reinforce foundations structure Bahá'í Administrative Order.

Nominated Hands comprise: Holy Land, Sutherland Maxwell, Mason Remey, Amelia Collins, President, Vice-President International Bahá'í Council; cradle Faith, Valiullah Varqa, Tarazullah Samandari, Ali Akbar Furutan; American continent, Horace Holley, Dorothy Baker, Leroy Ioas; European continent, George Townshend, Herman Grossmann, Ugo Giachery. Nine elevated rank Hands three continents outside Holy Land advised remain present posts, continue discharge vital administrative, teaching duties, pending assignment specific functions as need arises. Urge all nine attend as my representatives all four forthcoming intercontinental conferences, as well as discharge whatever responsibilities incumbent upon them at that time as elected representatives national Bahá'í communities. Communicate text announcement all National Assemblies.

December 26th

Announce all National Assemblies restrictions pilgrimages being gradually removed. Owing prevailing conditions maximum duration nine days. Permission necessary as few at a time are now permitted.

Excerpts from the Will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

'The Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the guardian of the Cause of God cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him.'

'The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number, nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished (secret ballot).

O friends! The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the guardian of the Cause of God. All must be under his shadow and obey his command. Should any within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause of God disobey, and seek division, the wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in the true Faith of God.

The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words.

This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the guardian of the Cause of God. He must continually urge them to strive and endeavour to the utmost of their ability to diffuse the sweet savours of God, and to guide all the peoples of the world for it is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined.'

Teaching Conference Cables

On January 8th, 1952, the Guardian cabled:

'Assure attendants Teaching Conference deepest loving appreciation assurance loyalty. Appeal fervently arise determinedly stimulate pioneer activity, safeguard hardwon prizes, consolidate home front, reinforce agencies administrative base on which success African campaign, inauguration future Plans embracing British territories other continents, ultimately depend. Supplicating abundant blessing.'

This was in reply to the cable sent from Teaching Conference:

'Seventy-five friends gathered Teaching Conference, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, atmosphere spiritual upliftment. Tremendous joy elevation Hands

Cause, 17 pioneers required goal towns, 9 arisen. Supplicating prayers speedy achievement consolidation, deepening devotion, unity prosecution 2 Year Plan. Deeply distressed grief caused beloved Guardian assurance utmost loyalty, deepest love.'

Our Guardian's cable to Teaching Conference indicates that the British Bahá'í Community has developed the capacity and ability to arise to hitherto unrealised heights of spirituality, understanding, action and glorious achievement. The N.S.A. has given careful study to the cable and we share with the friends our understanding of its import.

There is, in outline, a natural sequence of steps yet each can and must go on simultaneously during the 'swiftly diminishing' period of time left to us. Upon this depends the success of our present 'African campaign' and the 'inauguration future plans embracing British territories other continents . . .' The 'hardwon prizes' must be safeguarded by pioneers (where needed) and intensified teaching with a view to confirming close contacts. This is an obvious and most important part of 'consolidation (on) the home front.' The 'base' we understand to be the Administrative Order in Britain, and 'agencies' the Local Assemblies and the national structure of the N.S.A. and its committees. 'Reinforcement' is not only a process growing out of consolidation and an increase of numbers in each community, but it can be done *now* by making ourselves more qualified to serve on our Assemblies and committees; by deepening our appreciation, understanding and knowledge of the administration.

The whole cable emphasises this need to be more conscious of the importance of the Administrative Order and for each one of us individually, and our Institutions collectively, to grow more capable and skilful in practising its processes.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

Advertisement

THE PROMISE OF ALL AGES

By George Townshend

(Published by George Ronald)

Written by a Hand of the Cause, this presentation of the Faith offers a challenge to all Christians. It sets out the principle of progressive revelation, relates this to the mission of Jesus, and tells with unsurpassed lucidity the story of the Bahá'í Faith. Although intended for those with a Christian background, the book is so well written that many outside the Christian pale will be led by it to recognise God's Message for this age.

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THE YEAR NINE

(Below is an excerpt from a letter from the Guardian to the American National Assembly dated 23rd November.)

Regarding your question about the Centenary, the Guardian wishes you to share the following information with the Persian and other National Assemblies: the 'Year Nine' is an abbreviation of 1269 A.H. This term has been used by the Báb in His Writings, foreshadowing the birth of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh. The friends should refer, in *God Passes By*, to the passage mentioning the year Nine in order to appreciate its significance as well as the great importance attached to it by the Báb. In that same book the Guardian has explained that the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh was progressive; it commenced with the first intimation He received, of His Prophetic Mission while in the Síyáh-Chál of Tíhrán. The beginning of the year Nine occurred about two months after His imprisonment in that dungeon. We do not know the exact time He received this first intimation, nor have either the Báb, or Bahá'u'lláh, made mention of any specific date in this connection. We therefore regard the entire year Nine as a Holy Year, and the emphasis should be placed, in accordance with the Báb's Writings, on the entire year which started in October, 1852. This means our Centenary Year of Celebration will be from October, 1952, to October, 1953. All celebrations must be held within these two dates. As the Ridván period is associated with Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation it should be regarded as the most important time of that year and therefore the most suitable period for the celebrations.

The second stage in that progressive Revelation was when Bahá'u'lláh declared His Mission to His companions in Baghdád; this is considered the most momentous stage in that Revelation, hence it is called the 'Most Great Jubilee,' the One Hundredth Anniversary of which will be celebrated in Ridván 1963 and will constitute the Most Great Jubilee, the third of its kind, the first jubilee having been the Centenary of the Báb's Declaration; and the second one we will be celebrating all over the world in 1952-1953.

The third and last stage in Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation was when He proclaimed His Mission to the rulers and religious leaders of the world in Adrianople. The first was an intimation, the second a declaration and the third a proclamation—the intimation was from God to Him, which He kept a secret within His own spirit, the declaration was to His faithful companions, and the proclamation was to the entire body of the religious and political leaders of mankind.

The celebrations of this second Jubilee must be conducted along the same lines as those of the first; wide publicity must be given to it through the press and over the radio. The conventions to be held in that year in both East and West, must be made the special occasion for these celebrations, inasmuch as they are associated with the Ridván period commemorating Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration.

Public meetings should be carefully organised in conjunction with these conventions, and distinguished persons, friendly to our aims, should be invited to participate as speakers on these occasions.

A special feature of this Jubilee Year will be the convocation of four Inter-Continental Bahá'í teaching conferences whose two-fold purpose will be to celebrate the Centenary of the Birth of the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh, and to consider ways and means of promoting His Cause in all the Continents of the globe, particularly in those few remaining sovereign states of the world and chief dependencies and territories into which the Light of the Faith has not yet penetrated.

These Bahá'í Inter-Continental Conferences will pave the way for the formulation of Plans in which various National Assemblies will jointly collaborate, extending over a period of no more than one decade, and whose culmination will coincide with the Celebration of the Most Great Jubilee in 1963, and with the termination of the First Epoch of the Unfoldment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, which was inaugurated in 1937 with the initiation of the First Seven Year Plan of the American Bahá'í Community.

Pilgrimages to Haifa

Dr. Lotfullah Hakim writes us that all who make the pilgrimage to Haifa from the British Isles *must* obtain a visa before they start, not only to enter Israel, but also to leave it at the end of nine days. Exit permits are extremely difficult to get after arrival in Israel. It should be noted that it is impossible to go from Israel to Egypt, Lebanon, Syria or Iraq; to fly direct to Tihiran or to Istanbul is permitted. Pilgrims should arrange their travelling as well as their entry and exit visa before leaving London, so that they may have nothing to worry about during their nine days' stay in Haifa.

THE FAST

'The beginning of all things is the knowledge of God, and the end of all things is strict observance of whatsoever hath been sent down from the empyrean of the Divine Will that pervadeth all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth'—Bahá'u'lláh.

The Fast was ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and should be observed by all believers over the age of fifteen, except travellers, the sick, infirm and women with child. It takes place during the last month of the Bahá'í year, 'Ula' (Loftiness) March 2nd to March 20th inclusive. During these days no food or drink or stimulant should be taken between the hours of sunrise and sunset. It is a time of prayer and spiritual renewal.

If all the friends would observe the Fast and dedicate this period to praying for the Two Year Plan, there is no doubt that it would be blessed with wonderful results.

FOR MEDITATION

'The potentialities inherent in the station of man, the full measure of his destiny on earth, the innate excellence of his reality, must all be manifested in this promised Day of God.'

'Know thou that all men have been created in the nature made by God, the Guardian, the Self-Subsisting. Unto each one hath been prescribed a

pre-ordained measure, as decreed in God's mighty and guarded Tablets. All that which ye potentially possess can, however, be manifested only as a result of your own volition. Your own acts testify to this truth.'

'The ordinances of God have been sent down from the heaven of His most august Revelation. All must diligently observe them. Man's supreme distinction, his real advancement, his final victory, have always depended, and will continue to depend, upon them. Whoso keepeth the commandments of God shall attain everlasting felicity.'

A twofold obligation resteth upon him who hath recognised the Day Spring of the Unity of God, and acknowledged the truth of Him Who is the Manifestation of His oneness. The first is steadfastness in His love, such steadfastness that neither the clamour of the enemy nor the claims of the idle pretender can deter him from cleaving unto Him Who is the Eternal Truth, a steadfastness that taketh no account of them whatever. The second is strict observance of the laws He hath prescribed—laws which He hath always ordained, and will continue to ordain, unto men, and through which the truth may be distinguished and separated from falsehood.'

'He hath chosen out of the whole world the hearts of His servants, and made them each a seat for the revelation of His glory. Wherefore, sanctify them from every defilement, that the things for which they were created may be engraven upon them. This indeed is a token of God's bountiful favour.'

Beautify your tongues, O people, with truthfulness, and adorn your souls with the ornament of honesty.'

'Strive, O people, that your eyes may be directed towards the mercy of God, that your hearts may be attuned to His wondrous remembrance, that your souls may rest confidently upon His grace and bounty, that your feet may tread the path of His good pleasure. Such are the counsels which I bequeath unto you. Would that ye might follow My counsels.'

'There can be no doubt whatever that if for one moment the tide of His mercy and grace were to be withheld from the world, it would completely perish. For this reason, from the beginning that hath no beginning the portals of Divine mercy have been flung open to the face of all created things, and the clouds of Truth will continue to the end that hath no end to rain on the soil of human capacity, reality and personality their favours and bounties. Such hath been God's method continued from everlasting to everlasting.'

'By the sorrows which afflict the beauty of the All-Glorious! Such is the station ordained for the true believer that if to an extent smaller than a needle's eye the glory of that station were to be unveiled to mankind, every beholder would be consumed away in his longing to attain it. For this reason it hath been decreed that in this earthly life the full measure of the glory of his own station should remain concealed from the eyes of such a believer. If the veil be lifted and the full glory of the station of those who have turned wholly towards God, and in their love for Him renounced the world, be made manifest, the entire creation would be dumbfounded.'

NEWS OF AFRICA

The most interesting news of Africa is that in accordance with the Guardian's wishes, the African Teaching Conference is to be held sometime in the first quarter of 1953 at Kampala, Uganda, E. Africa, some miles north of Lake Victoria. The exact date is not yet settled.

There is a Conference Committee in England and Uganda working on the preparations. The members of the English Committee are: Dorothy Ferraby, Sec.; David Hofman, Marion Hofman and Constance Langdon-Davies. At present the members of the Uganda part of the Committee are Philip Hainsworth and Ali Nakjwani.

We have had first hand information about the climate, health, etc., from Marguerite Preston, who has given vividness and reality to our preparations. Marguerite Preston's visit to England with her eldest son, Adrian, has been of great interest; she has been able to give us news and information and she will take back to Africa our impressions and ideas.

A delegation of three members of the African committee: Henry Backwell, David Hofman and John Ferraby, have been received by high officials of the Colonial Office and had a very satisfactory interview about our relations with Government authorities.

There are at present eight Bahá'ís in Tanganyika, seven in Uganda, two in Kenya and one on the Gold Coast; one in Liberia and two on the way to Northern Rhodesia.

There are Persian and British, one Egyptian and one German pioneers in Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya and in transit to N. Rhodesia. Also the first two American pioneers, Mr. Stephens and Mr. Foster are now in the Gold Coast and Liberia. All the pioneers already out there have found jobs.

Somaliland, Nyasaland, Madagascar, Zanzibar and Eritrea have not yet pioneers.

Clare Gung has been on a visit to the Bahá'ís in Dar-es-Salaam; she has been in Africa now for more than a year.

Ted Cardell has a job as photographer to a group of newspapers whose headquarters are in Nairobi.

A letter has been received from Eric Manton, Port Said, dated 9th January, in which he says: 'No landing, short stop only,' and one from Terry Manton: 'Please give my love to the Bahá'ís. It has been a pleasant voyage up to now.'

The translation of a pamphlet into various African languages is going ahead quickly with sub-committees of two taking turns at going through the manuscript with the translator. So far only three languages have been printed: Swahili, Chinyanja and Hausa.

Pioneer Address List for Africa

This address list is published at the request of the friends at Teaching Conference, Birmingham, January, 1952, in the hope that many will write to our pioneers and groups in Africa.

Dar-es-Salaam Bahá'í Group, c/o Jalal Nakhjawani, Secretary, P.O. Box 1312, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika, B.E.A.; also Mr. and Mrs. Jalal Nakhjawani and Farhang Naimi, Esq.

Mr. and Mrs. Hassan Sabri, P.O. Box 1668, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika, B.E.A.

Miss Claire Gung, The Lushoto School, Lushoto, Tanganyika, B.E.A.

Kampala Bahá'í Group, Pioneering Private Bag, Kampala, Uganda, B.E.A.; also Mr. and Mrs. Ali Nakhjawani and Mr. and Mrs. Moussa Banani.

Captain Philip Hainsworth, c/o Health Office, Jinja, Uganda, B.E.A.

Ted Cardell, Esq., c/o Barclay's Bank, Nairobi, Kenya Colony, B.E.A.

Mrs. Marguerite Preston, Kapkimolwa, Sotik, Kenya Colony, B.E.A.

Eric Manton, Esq., c/o Barclay's Bank, Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia.

Mrs. Ethel R. Stephens, Kumasi College of Technology, Kumasi, Gold Coast, B.W.A.

William Foster, c/o American Consul, Liberia, West Africa.

AFRICA COMMITTEE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following extract, from the Canadian *Bahá'í News*, of a letter to the editor from a local editor gives a useful slant on public relations for the individual.

'The publisher of any weekly newspaper of a reasonable size is for ever in search of material. He has to resort, to a much greater degree than he would like, to so-called fillers, material which has practically no reader-appeal. He must share his advertising equally with "type," so if he cannot get news, which is as rare as diamonds, he will be satisfied with the next best. Rather than use "fillers" or syndicated material, he would love to receive "Letters to the Editor."

Bahá'ís, to obtain the desired results through this medium, must observe certain strict rules in this matter and practice caution as well. First of all, they should try to write their letter on the local level. Do not make it a Bahá'í platform, do not "plug" the Faith. One such mistake and you may spoil your chances with that paper for ever. Search the paper for some matter that can be agreed or disagreed with. Always reply referring to another letter or editorial previously published in that paper. Or refer to some local happening with which the paper and its readers are fairly familiar. Do not splash the name "Bahá'í" all over your letter. Make it factual. Do not, at any cost, give the impression that you are trying to obtain free publicity or, for that matter, any publicity.

A "Letter to the Editor" under a local signature or published under a nom-de-plume referring to something local and factual is one of the most welcome sights to most editors. In his desperation for news and more life to his columns, the editor will even write to himself, publish his letter under a nom-de-plume, then reply to it under another nom-de-plume.'

'BECOME THE DIVINE MAGNETS'

'O ye the sincere loved ones of the Abhá Beauty!

In these days the Cause of God, the world over, is fast growing in power and, day by day, is spreading further and further to the utmost bounds of the earth. Its enemies, therefore, from all the kindreds and peoples of the world, are growing aggressive, malevolent, envious and bitterly hostile. It is incumbent upon the loved ones of God to exercise the greatest care and prudence in all things, whether great or small, to take counsel together and unitedly resist the onslaught of the stirrers of strife and the movers of mischief. They must endeavour to consort in a friendly spirit with every one, must follow moderation in their conduct, must have respect and consideration one for another and show loving kindness and tender regard to all the peoples of the world. They must be patient and long-suffering, that they may grow to become the divine magnets of the 'Abhá Kingdom and acquire the dynamic power of the Hosts of the Realm on High.

'The fleeting hours of man's life on earth are swiftly passing by and the little that still remains shall come to an end, but that which endureth and lasteth for evermore is the fruit that man reapeth from his servitude at the Divine Threshold. Behold the truth of this saying, how abundant and glorious are the proofs thereof in the world of being!

'The glory of glories rest upon the people of Bahá!—Abdu'l-Bahá.

The Verses of God

'Chant (or recite) the Words of God every morning and evening. The one who neglects this has not been faithful to the Covenant of God and His agreement, and he who turns away from it to-day is of those who have turned away from God. Fear God, O my people! Let not too much reading (of the Sacred Word) and actions by day or night make you proud. To chant but one verse with joy and gladness is better for you than reading all the Revelations of the Omnipotent God with carelessness. Chant the Tablets of God in such measure that ye be not overtaken with fatigue and depression. Burden not the soul so as to cause exhaustion and languor, but rather refresh it that thus it may soar on the wings of Revelation to the Dawning-place of proofs. This brings you nearer to God, were ye of those who understand.'

Bahá'u'lláh
Kitábí-Aqdás

'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. Whoso reciteth, in the privacy of his chamber, the verses revealed by God, the scattering angels of the Almighty shalt scatter abroad the fragrance of the Words uttered by his mouth, and shall cause the heart of every righteous man to throb. Though he may, at first, remain unaware of its effect, yet the virtue of the grace vouchsafed unto him must sooner or later exercise its influence upon his soul. Thus have the mysteries of the Revelation of God been decreed by virtue of the Will of Him Who is the Source of power and wisdom.'

BAHA'U'LLAH

'A sign of God'

Many years ago, a new believer in Eastern Europe was eagerly listening to the explanation of the institution of Guardianship. When he heard that the Guardian was 'a sign of God' in this world, he stood up and joyfully exclaimed: 'I render thanks to God for that sign!'

Are we not all becoming ever more aware of the inestimable bounty of God in giving us the precious gift of our Guardian? How dispersed would be our efforts, how ineffectual all our striving, without his inspired guidance, without his unshakable authority! But with him guiding us, with his unerring vision and infallible judgment tracing the pattern for us—all can help in the great crusade, 'no matter how inadequate the instrument.' Let us continually ask Bahá'u'lláh for more faith. Let us turn to 'Abdu'l-Bahá with the supplication:

'O, gracious Master, overlook our weaknesses and failings, and make us worthier and braver servants of Thine.'

'No one else can do this work'

'He cannot urge upon you all sufficiently, and through you the American believers, the importance of Bahá'is realising that direct, concentrated and efficiently carried out Bahá'í work is not only their supreme duty but the best way they can serve the interests of humanity and hasten the day when at least the Lesser Peace will become a reality. We must always bear in mind that Bahá'u'lláh's Order is the sovereign remedy, and all other measures, inaugurated by the United Nations or various governments, are in the nature of palliatives, however sound and progressive they may be. We must concentrate on perfecting our characters as individual Bahá'is and on maturing our still embryonic, and as yet imperfectly understood World Order; on spreading the Message, according to the provision of the Divine Plan; and on building a tightly-knit, world-wide Bahá'í community. We are relatively few in numbers, and have such a precious, unique and responsible task to carry out, we must concentrate our full forces upon it.'

(The Guardian to the U.S. through his secretary.)

'He feels that, although your desire to partake actively of the dangers and miseries afflicting so many millions of people to-day, is natural, and a noble impulse, there can be no comparison between the value of Bahá'í work and any other form of service to humanity.

'If the Bahá'is could evaluate their work properly they would see that, whereas other forms of relief work are superficial in character, alleviating the sufferings and ills of men for a short time at best, the work they are doing is to lay the foundation of a new spiritual Order in the world founded on the Word of God, operating according to the laws He has laid down for this age. No one else can do this work except those who have fully realised the meaning of the Message of Bahá'u'lláh, whereas almost any courageous, sincere person can engage in relief work, etc.

'The believers are building a refuge for mankind. This is their supreme, sacred task, and they should devote every moment they can to this task.'

(The Guardian to an American believer, through his secretary.)
(Compiled by the Consolidation Committee.)

LOCAL ASSEMBLY NEWS

(Northern and Scottish Regions)

BLACKBURN.—A newly elected teaching committee is actively engaged in organising regular weekly meetings. Interchange of speakers with the Blackpool friends is much appreciated.

BLACKPOOL.—The friends continue to develop their teaching resources and regularly discuss ways and means of attracting and maintaining the interest of contacts. Their sustained teaching programme consists of a series of public meetings, firesides and informal social evenings, the latter at the homes of the friends who are all engaged in active follow-up between meetings.

Visiting speakers, Prudence George, Bob Cheek and Joe Lee were much appreciated.

Visits are made by the friends to the meetings of other organisations, in particular to the meetings of the Radiant Truth Society, following invitation by contacts.

LEEDS.—We are pleased to report that, following an accident at his work place, Walter Baines has recovered and is now able to carry on with his work as newly appointed Secretary and Treasurer of the Assembly. Walter is also Vice-Chairman.

Louis Ross-Enfield addressed a successful public meeting held at the Great Northern Hotel. The theme of his talk was 'The Loom of Reality.' Further public meetings are planned to give the friends opportunity to invite contacts to firesides in their homes.

MANCHESTER.—The Assembly is happy to report a declaration, Miss Betty Belevitch, who is now their Social Secretary and Youth Secretary. Through her efforts many local youth organisations have been contacted in order to form a discussion group at the Centre.

The Community welcomes Mr. and Mrs. Khamsie of Teheran, who will be resident in Manchester for approximately twelve months. Mr. Malah Zadeh and Mr. Arjomand have also visited the friends.

During January, Dr. Ali, of Pakistan, met the friends. A welcome visitor from Australia is Mr. Tony Giordano, who has interested the friends by his stories and experiences of Bahá'í Communities in various parts of the world. He will be in Manchester for a few months.

Mr. and Mrs. Habibi have set aside one evening each month to receive contacts and spend a social evening in their home. Eighteen contacts and friends attended their first 'at home.'

One feature of regular meetings is the holding of a 'Quiz' evening, preceded by a short devotional programme. Questions are invited from the audience. At a recent 'Quiz' evening the panel of speakers were Mr. Joe Lee, Mrs. Pauline Senior and Mr. Alfred Sugar.

The Assembly has been requested by the Manchester Civic Authorities to provide a report on the Festival Exhibition, which was held at the Centre, for inclusion in a book to be published.

NEWCASTLE.—An intensive series of week-end public meetings and firesides is under way. Visiting speakers have been Dick Backwell and Margaret Shanks.

The departure of Pat, Margaret Carey and children to Australia is imminent. They will be missed by the

friends here. Pat at present is engaged in completing work upon a 'visual' aid which will indicate by a lighting series the development of the Faith from its inception to the present day.

The Youth Committee are exceedingly active and are planning to repeat their recent success in the holding of a Unity Feast. Invitations are again to be sent to several organisations who have received literature on the Faith, and also to the Africa Society of King's College, University of Durham.

SHEFFIELD.—Teaching plans of the Community are forging steadily ahead. Twice-weekly meetings are held and the individual friends are preparing themselves for speaking at firesides and other meetings. Regular meetings of the L.S.A. makes possible effective consultation on all teaching matters.

EDINBURGH.—Dick Backwell addressed a public meeting and spoke on the theme 'A Pattern for Future Society.' Among contacts present was Mr. Sigmund Vogel, who heard of the Faith from Dr. Lotfullah Hakim in Haifa.

The eightieth birthday of John Muirhead was a very happy occasion. A celebration was arranged by the friends and three contacts attended.

The friends participated in the Christmas celebrations of the British Council Colonial Residents and made contact with several African students.

The Community are pleased to welcome Annetta Berg from Oslo who learned of the Faith in Edinburgh over a year ago and who has returned to assist in Edinburgh.

Receptions were arranged for visiting Bahá'ís, Mrs. Okama (Newcastle) and Habib Hazari (London).

Literature sold since November exceeds £3.

The Community has established permanent exchange of announcements and invitations with the Edinburgh Practical Psychology Club and the Society of Friends.

GLASGOW.—The friends have maintained frequent and joyous association with the Edinburgh friends.

The Community have welcomed two pioneers, Brigitte Hasselblatt, who came direct from Teaching Conference and Prudence George who arrived a week later.

Several of the believers meet daily for prayer, and regular meetings of the L.S.A. are now held.

BAHÁ'Í WORLD

CANADA.—'Need a spiritual tonic? Do you know a friend who does?'—these are slogans for invitation to holiday during the winter at the Bahá'í School, Beaulac, P.Q. A special speaker, group discussions and just plain fun are part of every day's activities. There's also French-Canadian cooking! However, the special gift Beaulac offers is warm friendship of a group who practice the Bahá'í way of life.

UNITED STATES.—During 1951 the Temple Trustees devoted much time to the question of landscaping plans. After considering plans and estimates from a number of architects, Mr. Hilbert Dahl has been engaged as landscape architect. His design has been

approved by the Guardian and actual work will begin on the grounds early this year.

NEW ZEALAND.—The advent of a Newsletter, the *New Zealand Pioneer Bahá'í's Monthly*, marks a new epoch in Regional Teaching Committee activity, it being the first of its kind to appear in this part of the Bahá'í world.

JAPAN.—The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís in Tokyo has appointed committees for teaching, publicity, feasts and archives.

HOLLAND.—An excellent article appeared in a Leyden University paper. It was written by a university student after hearing a talk given by Isobel Locke at the Hague.

In Amsterdam the *Vizier* magazine appeared in every news stand with a temple picture on the front page and an inside article with more pictures. The article interested many people who knew nothing about the Faith.

ITALY. Dagmar Dole, American pioneer, has arrived in Naples from Copenhagen. The promotion of the Faith in Naples develops steadily: Marion Little reports from Florence a busy programme of teaching. The visit to Rome of Mrs. Amelia Collins and Mr. Mason Remey, on their way to Haifa, was a precious experience for the whole community.

GERMANY. In order to achieve their Five Year Plan an appeal for pioneers has gone out from the N.S.A. to the whole German Bahá'í Community. Since last autumn a series of interesting Youth gatherings and Teaching Conferences have taken place. It has been found that the most fruitful study conferences are those where periods of succinct addresses and discussions are carefully balanced.

The N.S.A. have approved a plan presented by an L.S.A. by which Assemblies, as well as individual believers, have begun to build up funds for attendance at forthcoming Summer Schools in 1952 and will each try to bring a contact or a new Bahá'í as their guest to the Summer Schools.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

Keep free the Ridván weekend for a conference in Nottingham. Further details later.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Talk of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

A talk of 'Abdu'l-Bahá concerning the relation between the Persians and the British has been printed as a leaflet and is available at 1d.

Changes of Address

Bournemouth Secretary: Mrs. Olga Mills, Stone Lane, Wimborne, Dorset.

Edinburgh Secretary: Please address letters Edinburgh L.S.A., c/o J. C. Muirhead, 12 Hay Road, Craigmillar, Edinburgh.

EDITORIAL REQUEST

News from Communities, notices, announcements and articles from the several Committees in order to be included in an early issue of the Journal must be received by the Editor no later than the 19th day of the month preceding the month of issue. Adherence to this schedule will greatly facilitate early issue of the Journal and obviate difficulties of insertion at proof stage. However, notices, etc., for urgent insertion will always receive consideration when received and inserted if space permits.

Local Assemblies please note that there is space in the Journal for news.

Deficit Loan Committee

About one third of the target amount has been received and further substantial help promised at Teaching Conference. There is still room for the smaller interest-free loans, so very few of these having been received yet. A rush of nines and nineteens would be gladly dealt with as these loans are practically free of all expense to the Assembly, and some thirty or forty of them would settle this particular problem for us all.

Received to date	...	...	£549
Promised	...	...	400

£949

We would now like:

19 at £9	...	...	£171
19 at £19	...	...	361

532

£1,481

ERNEST GREGORY

Shrine and International Funds

£952 18s. 5d. has so far been received for the Shrine Fund, of which £186 17s. 2d. is from Assemblies and £766 1s. 3d. from individuals. £164 has been received for the International Fund, of which £130 5s. is from Assemblies (£117 7s. from the National Assembly) and £33 15s. from individuals.

National Fund

Cheques for contribution to the National Fund should be made payable to *The N.S.A. of the Bahá'ís*.

Correction

In the December issue of *Bahá'í Journal* in the item headed 'School Attendance,' the date of the Declaration of the Báb is given as May 22nd. This should of course be May 23rd, which is the day of the anniversary and starts at sunset on the evening of May 22nd.