

Munee BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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SO GLORIOUS A VISION

'A spark of the fire of Thy love is enough to set ablaze a whole world.' — Bahá'u'lláh.

'The Guardian is very anxious to know how the work is going in the British Isles.' How can we answer this question in the Beloved Guardian's last letter to the British Bahá'í Community? 'He feels that the African campaign has been launched in a way far exceeding his hopes . . .' Would that our report on the progress of the Two Year Plan at home could be blessed with such praise! ' . . . the goals, so hard won and at such cost of sacrifice at home, must not be lost.' Ten Assemblies are below numbers and four of the towns in the virgin territories are in grave danger. How can the steady work of consolidation, the goal in all twenty-four towns in the British Isles, go forward until all towns have Assemblies of nine active believers? Until this first essential is established we cannot forge ahead with the thrilling tasks of building firm bases from which to send pioneers to Africa, to take the message to the masses, and to gain recognition of the Faith by those in authority.

The Guardian 'urges all the friends to not allow the dazzling prospect overseas to take their attention away from the steady work of consolidation still required at home!' How many of us are actively engaged in the African project? All of us pray for the work, many contribute funds, some write letters to cheer and encourage the pioneers and others make African contacts in Britain; but of the administrators, pioneers and would-be pioneers not more than thirty-six friends are directly involved. What of the remaining 364 Bahá'ís? 'The work abroad rests on the foundation layed so well and so painfully at home, if one suffers, so will the other.' Here, then, is the answer to all who wonder how they can help the Africa Plan — help with the work of consolidation at home!

'Time is running short.' The need in all towns is for active teaching, and in some a burning need for pioneers. Glasgow, Cardiff, Bristol and Brighton call for us 'to rise to still greater heights of consecrated devotion' in order to safeguard these precious prizes.

As always, the Beloved Guardian lights the way — 'the zeal kindled in the hearts of administrators, pioneers, teachers and supporters, jointly contributing to the success of this meritorious enterprise, must burn ever more brightly and be reflected in still more remarkable exploits.' . . . 'Then, and only then, will it (the Community) be qualified to embark upon yet

another crusade, whose scope will transcend the limits of the vast African Continent . . .'

This vision of the magnitude of future crusades and of the bounties that will be bestowed upon us together with the Guardian's faith that it lies in our power to achieve this high destiny provides the force that 'will melt every obstacle.'

'So glorious a vision unfolded before the eyes of the British followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, cannot but galvanise them into action, at once swift, resolute and unrelaxing, and fire their souls with a spirit so consuming as to melt every obstacle that may intervene between them and the achievement of their present goal.'

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

International Funds

Arthur Norton reports that up to October 29th a total of £880 14s. od. had been received for the Shrine of the Báb Fund, of which £726 6s. 3d. came from individuals and £154 7s. 9d. from Assemblies. For the International Bahá'í Fund, £138 3s. od. had been received, of which £100 came from the National Assembly, £6 8s. od. from other Assemblies, and £31 15s. od. from individuals.

FOR MEDITATION

A God! Assist me with the hosts of the Supreme Concourse, and make me firm and steadfast in the Covenant and Testament. I am weak in the Covenant and Testament, confer upon me strength. I am poor, bestow upon me wealth from the treasury of the Kingdom. I am ignorant, open before my face the doors of knowledge. I am dead, breathe into me the breath of life. I am dumb, grant me an eloquent tongue, so that with a fluent expression I may raise the Call of Thy Kingdom and guide all to firmness in Thy Covenant. Thou art the Generous, the Giver, and the mighty.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE YEAR NINE

(This article was written on behalf of the National Assembly by Professor Zeine and was sent from Beyrouth.)

In May, 1951, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles published 'A Report' entitled *The Progress of the Faith*. The Report contained the translation of an extract from our Beloved Guardian's Letter to the Friends in Persia on the occasion of Nawruz 108, in which the Guardian spoke of the 100th anniversary of 'the year 9.' A few words of explanation may help the Friends to get a better understanding of the history and significance of that year.

The Báb had foretold that nine years after his own Revelation, which was in 1844, the Mission of Bahá'u'lláh would be born. In 1853, soon after the attempt on the life of Nasiri'd-Dín Shah, Bahá'u'lláh was arrested by orders of the Shah himself and imprisoned in a subterranean dungeon in Tihiran, known as Siyáh-Chál. The great Bahá'í historian Nabil writes in *The Dawn-Breakers*: 'The darkness, the filth and the character of the prisoners, combined to make of that pestilential dungeon the most abominable place to which human beings could be condemned. His feet were placed in stocks, and around His neck were fastened the Qara-Guhar chains, infamous throughout Persia for their galling weight.' It was in this prison, 'in the year 9' of the Bábí Dispensation that the 'Great Spirit' revealed itself to Bahá'u'lláh.

The 'impact of the onrushing force of the Divine Summons upon His entire being'—to use the words of our Beloved Guardian—has been described graphically by Bahá'u'lláh Himself in the following words: 'During the days I lay in prison in Tihiran, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitately itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.'

Thus was born 'a Revelation' which, writes our Beloved Guardian in *God Passes By*, 'hailed as the promise and crowning glory of past ages and centuries, as the consummation of all the Dispensations within the Adamic Cycle, inaugurating an era of at least a thousand years' duration, and a cycle destined to last no less than five thousand centuries, signalling the end of the Prophetic Era and the beginning of the Era of Fulfillment, unsurpassed alike in the duration of its Author's ministry and the fecundity and splendor of His mission.'

'Great indeed is this Day!' wrote Bahá'u'lláh Himself. 'The allusions made to it in all the sacred Scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day.'

The anniversary of 'the year 9' will consequently fall in 1953 and not many months separate us from that auspicious occasion. Friends! the element of *Time* in all our Bahá'í activities at present is of utmost

importance. Time is running short. Our Beloved Guardian in his aforementioned letter to the believers in Persia, alludes to the interval which separates us from 1953 as 'the few remaining months which are passing with utmost speed,' and in his Message to the Fourth European Teaching Conference which was held last September in Holland, he cabled: 'Interval separating us (from the) inauguration (of) yet another stage (in the) unfoldment (of the) Divine Plan (is) swiftly diminishing.'

The year 1953 will witness tremendous and epoch-making landmarks in the emergence of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. These landmarks will probably include the completion of the Sepulchre of the Báb on Mt. Carmel, the inauguration of the Bahá'í Temple at Wilmette, the successful termination of the second Seven Year Plan on the European Continent and the holding of the first Africa Conference. The Bahá'í world is facing between now and 1953 its greatest and severest challenge since the end of its Heroic Age. To meet such a challenge and achieve their goal, the believers throughout the world should have—to quote once more from our Beloved Guardian's Message to the Fourth European Teaching Conference—'a clearer vision (of the) strenuous tasks ahead, deeper awareness of their significance, a firmer resolve (toward) their prosecution (and a) greater dedication (to) their purpose.'

But if the task is colossal and the challenge inescapable, the goal is immeasurably glorious and the leadership of our Beloved Guardian infinitely inspiring and soul-stirring. To-day, the love of our Beloved Guardian is flowing towards the friends throughout the world. It is a mighty, majestic and pure love pouring out from a Divine Source: it is Bahá'u'lláh's own love for His followers—'the chosen recipients and the privileged trustees' of His Faith. Single-handed and with indefatigable energy, our Beloved Guardian is shouldering and guiding the greatest and the most splendid Plan for the reconstruction of the entire world: the establishment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. At this most momentous and most glorious phase in the unfoldment of this Divine Plan, we must make sure that our love flows also towards our Beloved Guardian continuously and uninterruptedly in joyful obedience to his commands and cheerful execution of his wishes, with unswerving vigour, undaunted courage and utmost self-sacrifice.

The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá ends with the following deeply moving and inspiring words:

'O how I long to see the loved ones taking upon themselves the responsibilities of the Cause! Now is the time to proclaim the Kingdom of Bahá! Now is the hour of love and union! . . . The mystic nightingale is warbling for them all; will they not listen? The bird of paradise is singing; will they not heed? The angel of Abha is calling them; will they not hearken? The herald of the Covenant is pleading; will they not obey? . . . Ah me, I am waiting, waiting . . . Will they not gladden my heart? Will they not satisfy my yearning? Will they not manifest my wish? Will

(Continued at foot of page 5)

FROM THE GUARDIAN

A letter from the Guardian dated October 16th, 1951, to the Secretary of the N.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters dated March 26th (two); April 4th (three), 11th, 17th, 8th, 7th and 24th; May 1st, 4th, 12th and 24th; June 1st, 4th, 19th (two), 12th, 23rd and 27th; July 4th, 6th, 21st (two), 25th and 31st; August 8th, 9th and 15th; September 15th, 18th and 19th; have all been received, as well as their enclosures, and the photographs sent and material under separate cover, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

It will no doubt make you happy to hear that the Guardian has really had a little rest this summer, much needed after the tremendous strain of last year's worries and burdens. He can now turn to his important N.S.A. letters somewhat refreshed.

To take up certain matters raised in your letters:

There are two Funds, that of the Shrine of the Báb and the International Fund; but at present it is more important for the friends to concentrate on completing the work in progress on the Shrine, which, thanks to the response of the believers from all over the world, is going forward uninterruptedly, in spite of the very difficult situation in the Holy Land which makes all kinds of building work frightfully complicated.

The Guardian would very much like to receive five copies of every publication brought out in England for the Bahá'í libraries in Haifa and at Bahjí and in Acre. He thanks you for the diaries you sent . . . (Two personal items omitted.)

For your information the Guardian does not want any believers to migrate at present to this country. It will not meet with his approval under any circumstances. The local problems, with a small group of Covenant-Breakers more or less active in stirring up trouble; the efforts, at present successful, which he is making to establish the most cordial relations with the Government; the upbuilding of the international institutions of the Faith; the consolidation of the International Bahá'í Council — all require that no complications arise and no further strain be added to the burden of work at the World Center of the Faith.

Now we come to the part of your activities nearest to his heart at present — Africa Campaign. By all means any translation at present into Somali should be given up, as the advice of experts prove it both unnecessary and very expensive.

The Guardian feels that, in view of the fact that funds for sending out pioneers are limited, and that a good number of pioneers are available, it is better to choose those most qualified and not, for the time being at least, accept every offer, however devoted the spirit behind it.

He fully appreciates the fact that Somaliland is going to be somewhat difficult. In view of its peculiar status your Assembly should bear in mind the possibility of sending there a British subject, if this should prove feasible, and pending a time when the Persians can go there or make arrangements for someone to represent them.

The Guardian considers that your Assembly is the

consultative body for all African territories, and that the other National Assemblies should keep in close touch with you. This does not mean, however, that the initiative for the places allotted to them by the Guardian does not lie in their own hands. Likewise, the planning of the African Conference should be handled by you, in close co-operation with the other N.S.A.s. He does not feel it is feasible for the other N.S.A.s to pool their finances for the African work and put it in your Fund.

The unfortunate crisis in Persia may hold up, for a time, their services in Africa, and he hopes you will do all you can to offset this most unfortunate setback to their work. The Persian believers, have, for over a hundred years, borne the brunt of persecution and are still doing so, being the unhappy victims of their country and their race. They merit the ardent sympathy of their fellow Bahá'ís the world over.

The Guardian is very anxious to know how the work is going in the British Isles: he feels that the Africa Campaign has been launched in a way far exceeding his hopes, is being visibly blessed from on High, and, with the same amount of perseverance shown so far, is assured of great and speedy victories. But the goals, so hard won and at such cost of sacrifice at home, must not be lost. He urges all the friends to not allow the dazzling prospect overseas to take their attention away from the steady work of consolidation still required at home! The work abroad rests on the foundation layed so well and so painfully at home, if one suffers, so will the other.

The British Bahá'ís have distinguished themselves in recent years to a degree which has given them great prominence in the entire Bahá'í World and inspired others to follow their example. They cannot and must not lose this hard-won prominence, but, on the contrary, must demonstrate that it was not a spurt of speed but the evidence of deep and hardy roots bearing their first fruits, after years of quiet growth.

He remembers all the members of your Assembly in his prayers, and prays that the community of believers you serve so devotedly may go on rising to ever greater heights and shoulder all their tasks with increasing vigour, faith and devotion.

P.S. Regarding the forthcoming Centenary celebrations: the Guardian feels both national and local celebrations should be held very much as were those of the 1944 Centenary, but on a larger scale, with more publicity, if possible.

RUHIYYAH RABBANI

Dear and valued co-workers,

The auspicious launching of the first teaching crusade undertaken by the British Bahá'í Community beyond the borders of its homeland marks yet another stage in the evolution of the Bahá'í Administrative Order in the British Isles, and signals the opening of an epoch of the utmost significance in the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. Though the operation of the Plan is of short duration, yet it constitutes a prelude to a series of successive campaigns which a firmly knit, vigorously functioning, clear visioned intensively alive national community is destined to

initiate, direct and control from its newly consolidated administrative headquarters in the heart of the British Isles, not only throughout the Dependencies of the British Crown within the African Continent, but eventually in the widely scattered territories of an Empire whose ramifications extend into every continent of the globe.

A little over half a century ago, this Community, now invested with a mandate of the utmost significance both at home and overseas, was called into being in the course of the opening years of the third and last epoch of the Heroic Age of the Faith. A decade later, the Appointed Centre of a Covenant, through the creative and potent energies of which so important a member of a steadily rising world community was conceived and nurtured, chose to infuse, through the impact of His personality in the course of a twice repeated visit to the heart and centre of that Empire, a measure of His own mysterious power, which, as He Himself prophesied, was destined to unfold its potentialities in the course of a later age. On the morrow of His passing the earliest evidences of the unfailing promise He had made, revealed themselves through the first stirrings of an Administrative Order—the Child of the Covenant, the Shield of that Community, and the divinely appointed Agency for the execution of the mandate with which that Community was to be invested in the second epoch of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. A little over two decades later, that Community, armed and equipped with the mighty, divinely conceived agencies of a laboriously erected, unassailably established Administrative Order, embarked upon a six year enterprise that culminated in the erection of the institutions of that Order in the very heart and capital cities of its island home—the essential pre-requisite for the inauguration of yet another stage in its unfoldment. On the morrow of the triumphant termination of the first collective enterprise launched by that Community in British Bahá'í history, its jubilant members, braced themselves, during a one-year interval, for the initial onslaught, which they were preparing to launch, unitedly and determinedly, far beyond the shores of their homeland, amid alien, widely diversified, politically restless, economically backward, spiritually famished tribes and peoples, and in the course of one of the most critical periods in human history. On the morrow of the centenary of the martyrdom of the Prophet Herald of its Faith, this same Community had already formulated its plans, initiated its programme of publications in various African languages, despatched its first pioneer to the heart of that Continent, forged the necessary links with its allied sister communities participating in various enterprises in that same continent, and established its first essential contact with divers government agencies capable of giving their advice and assistance in the prosecution of its historic and arduous task.

This Community, so young in experience, so richly endowed by the love and care of a departed all-powerful Master, so firmly entrenched in the stronghold of its Administrative Order, already so rich in prizes won in the course of the first collective enterprise undertaken in its history, so promising in the vigour, the zeal and devotion which it is now displaying, is faced,

at the present hour, with a grave, a sacred and inescapable responsibility—a responsibility that will increase as the brief eighteen-month interval separating it from the termination of its two-year Plan speeds to a close.

Upon the discharge of this weighty responsibility now resting upon it must depend the inauguration of yet another Plan, of longer duration, of greater scope, of a still more challenging character, and of greater consequence in the effect it must have on that Community's destiny.

Time is running short. The present hour in the fortunes of mankind is critical. The Centenary of the birth of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is fast approaching. The British Bahá'í Community must gird up its loins, redouble its exertions, undertake further sacrifices, demonstrate greater solidarity and rise to still greater heights of consecrated devotion.

The flow of pioneers to the African Continent must be noticeably accelerated. The provision of Bahá'í literature in all the selected African languages must be speeded up. The ties binding the Community with its co-operating sister communities must be steadily reinforced. The prizes already garnered as a result of the operation of the Six Year Plan in England, Wales, Scotland, Eire and Northern Ireland, must at all costs be safeguarded. The preparations for the forthcoming first African Teaching Conference must be carefully planned and meticulously carried out. Above all, the zeal kindled in the hearts of administrators, pioneers, teachers and supporters, jointly contributing to the success of this meritorious enterprise must burn ever more brightly and be reflected in still more remarkable exploits.

Then, and only then, will this Community be enabled to contribute its share of tribute to the memory of the Founder of its Faith, on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of His prophetic mission, in as befitting a manner as the share it already contributed, through the consummation of the first historic Plan, to the world-wide celebrations which commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the founding of its Faith. Then, and only then, will it be qualified to embark upon yet another crusade, whose scope will transcend the limits of the vast African Continent and the culmination of which might well coincide with the Most Great Jubilee that will commemorate the centenary of the formal assumption by Bahá'u'lláh of His prophetic office—a jubilee envisaged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Tablets, and prophesied more than two thousand years ago by Daniel in His Book.

So glorious a vision, now unfolded before the eyes of the British followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, cannot but galvanise them into action, at once swift, resolute and unrelaxing, and fire their souls with a spirit so consuming as to melt every obstacle that may intervene between them and the achievement of their present goal.

May they, one and all, prove themselves in the crucial months immediately ahead, worthy of the blessings vouchsafed to them in the past, and of the high destiny which it lies in their power to achieve in the future.

SHOGHI

Supplementary letter from the Guardian, dated November 11th, 1951.

DEAR BAHÁ'Í BROTHER,

As I just recently sent you a long letter on behalf of the beloved Guardian to which he appended at some length, he wishes you to consider this reply to your letters of October 17th (three in number) as a postscript to the other.

As regards the questions you raised:

The ideal thing would be to have at least one Bahá'í from every territory in Africa attend the African Conference. This is the goal to be worked for, and attained if possible, as it will greatly stimulate the work and especially the inexperienced and isolated believers.

The solar calendar should, by all means, be adhered to in Africa.

He feels that your Assembly is responsible for the time being for the work in territories not under the charge of other N.S.A.s (Tunis, Sudan and Ethiopia are under Egyptian care.)

You are not directly responsible for any work done in territories which have been allotted to other N.S.A.s. But you should correspond with them, and give them any help and advice you can, both the N.S.A.s and their African Committees. In the case of Eric Manton, though he will be under Persia's jurisdiction you can keep him informed of your work, so as to cheer him up.

He is very pleased over the way the work is progressing, and sends you all his loving greetings.

Yours in the service of the Faith,

RUHIYYAH RABBANI

P.S.—He thanks you for the Quarterly Report enclosed. He reads with great interest everything related to the African work.

Cables

On October 28th the Guardian cabled:

'Assure Stephens loving fervent prayers accompanying her.'

This was in reply to a cable from the National Assembly dated October 23rd:

'Happy report Ethel Stephens flew Gold Coast 22nd with visitor's visa.'

On November 23rd the Guardian cabled:

'Conference should be held Uganda.'

This was in reply to two cables from the National Assembly, one dated October 15th:

'Grateful cabled advice concerning location Africa Conference. Approved report containing sub-committee recommendation already mailed.'

The other was dated November 19th:

'Have you received report recommending Africa Conference be held North African Hazira. If undesirable shall we investigate Uganda.'

(Continued from page 2)

they not fulfil my heart's desire? Will they not give ear to my call?

'I am waiting, I am patiently waiting.'

Friends! Time is running short. How long are we going to keep 'Abdu'l-Bahá waiting?

CONSOLIDATION COLUMN

'NOTHING ELSE WILL BE USEFUL TO-DAY'

'All the meetings must be for teaching the Cause and spreading the message, and suffering the souls to enter into the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh. Look at me. All my thoughts are centred around the proclamation of the Kingdom.'

'I have a lamp in my hand searching through the lands and seas to find souls who can become heralds of the Cause. Day and night I am engaged in this work. Any other deliberations in the meetings are futile and fruitless. Convey the message! Attract the hearts! Sow the seeds! Teach the Cause to those who do not know.'

'I enter all meetings, all churches, so that the Cause may be spread. When the most important work is before our sight, we must let go the important one.'

'If the meetings or Spiritual Assembly has any other occupation, the time is spent in futility. All the deliberations, all consultation, all the talks and addresses must revolve around one focal centre and that is: *Teach the Cause! Teach! Teach! Convey the message! Awaken the soul!*

'Now is the time of laying the foundation. Now we must gather brick, stone, wood, iron and other building materials! This is not the time of decoration. We must strive day and night and think and work. What can I say that may become effective? What can I do that may bring results? What can I write that may bring forth fruits?

'Nothing else will be useful to-day. The interests of such a glorious Cause will not advance without undivided attention. While we are carrying this load we cannot carry any other load!' 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

TRUE DISTINCTION

'I desire distinction for you. The Bahá'ís must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend upon wealth—that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction; that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humanity; for unity and accord; for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world; for faithfulness and sincerity; for justice and fidelity; for firmness and steadfastness; for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world; for love toward every human being; for unity and accord with all people; for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you.' 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ
(Contributed by Consolidation Committee.)

Article on the Faith

The new magazine *Speaking of Women* contains in its first issue an article about the Faith by Mrs. Annie Romer. It also features a quotation from a talk by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

THE AFRICAN SCENE

(The first issue of *Africa News* published in Africa was dated 15th November, 1951. A Committee in Dar es Salaam is to produce it monthly under the direction of the British Africa Committee. We print below extracts from the first number.)

Gold Coast

'Mrs. Stevens has achieved a double victory by being the first American Bahá'í to reach Africa and the first Bahá'í to open the Gold Coast, the third territory under the Two-Year Plan. She asks for the prayers of the friends to help her overcome the difficulties that she may meet.'

Dar es Salaam

'You will be pleased to know that the Dar es Salaam group is pursuing a scheme whereby every member of its group is having an effective and successful contact with the Africans through attending their social gatherings. Much fruitful contacts were made. Several members of the group have offered their services to teach the Africans sewing, languages, etc. Darakhshandeh Nakhjwani has already started conducting classes on sewing for some African ladies. One of their contacts is very near to declaring himself a Bahá'í.'

'Two courses, of eleven sessions each, on the fundamentals of the Faith and the history are being conducted by the group. They are happy to report some real progress.'

'Commemorations and meetings are held and in addition the group has purely devotional meetings where prayers for the plan and the international development of the Cause are read and chanted.'

Mr. M. Thomas, who was an active member of the Dar es Salaam group, has been transferred to Makindani.

Kampala

'Members of our group have made it a habit now to get up early at dawn every morning for joint prayers and chanting of Bahá'í verses. As we are still in the hotel, from fear of inconveniencing others we leave the hotel, and as we have no house, no place to go to, we simply climb in our car up this or that hill of this beautiful township.'

'August 22nd should be considered as the key date to the teaching activities in Uganda, when three African adults got together in the Resident's Lounge of the Imperial Hotel of Kampala, and where, together with Philip and Ali, Uganda had its first Bahá'í fire-side meeting. The first two, after a following meeting, had to go to Port Fortal and Entebbe, where they are actually residing, but the third became the nucleus of future Bahá'í African contacts. The circle of interested contacts gradually grew in Kampala. It has now arrived to about twelve Africans; this number includes two ladies as well. Every morning from 7.30 to 8.30 at the house of one of the better of our contacts, we have a short class at which very gradually and slowly the Bahá'í history, teachings and proofs are being given by Ali. Of these twelve contacts only four of them attend and show more deeper interest. Three times a week we have an afternoon fireside at the home of the same African who is offering his house in

the mornings. In this meeting the ladies also join.

'To extend the circle of our contacts, members of our group have become members in two local societies who have no race discrimination and have general welfare and educational purposes.'

Philip Hainsworth's job as Sanitary Overseer took him for a time to Masaka and he is now in Jinja.

Ted Cardell

Ted left England on 7th October to reinforce Kenya, stopping on the way in Rome, Cairo and Khartoum. The following extracts are from a description of his journey:

'Queueing up at the Customs shed in Cairo, I was met with great love by six or seven Bahá'ís who had recognised my ring stone. The journey to Cairo is twenty to twenty-five miles, but it seemed like five miles sitting in a crowded taxi with all those Bahá'ís and gently gliding through the balmy night. Nabil and I visited the Pyramids and I was, to say the least, deeply impressed by these gigantic edifices. We had a very memorable trip through Cairo before we returned to the Hazirah where I met with a committee of the N.S.A. and the L.S.A. There was much discussion and messages of love sent to the English Bahá'ís and those I was to meet in Africa.'

'I arrived at Khartoum Aerodrome in the early morning and was informed by phone that the friends awaited me at the Grand Hotel in town. At the Grand Hotel Mr. and Mrs. Hamamsi and Mr. Hassan el Said met me with much pleasure and took me to Hamamsi's house in North Khartoum. There I met with about fifteen Bahá'ís, four speak English. All were entranced to meet an English Bahá'í. I showed them some photographs of other Bahá'í communities which they devoured eagerly. They said that my visit was the biggest event in three years.'

AFRICA COMMITTEE

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

Advertisement

GLEANINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

We are in this age most fortunate in having a selection of the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh chosen by the Guardian himself, the representative of Bahá'u'lláh upon earth. Each of these 165 excerpts is like a draught of the wine of reunion from which the weary may gain new strength; a flame of the fire of love endowed with power to give new life; a sparkling gem reflecting the light of divine knowledge to all with eyes to see. No Bahá'í can afford to be without *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*. If you possess only one book, let this be it.

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LOCAL ASSEMBLY NEWS

(Northern and Scottish Regions)

BLACKBURN.—Recent highlights are the declaration of James Crockett of Preston, the arrival of John Smith from Norwich on his first pioneering project, the welcome return of Geraldine Cooper from the States and the unexpected appearance of Habib Tahqiqi here on a training course.

Past teaching help by Alma and Hugh was deeply appreciated and a visit by dear Alfred Sugar is eagerly anticipated. Friends and contacts have supported meetings in Manchester, Liverpool and Blackpool thus endeavouring to share their good fortune and strengthen the bonds that unite us.

BLACKPOOL.—Six new contacts came to a public meeting at which Pauline Senior spoke. Visits by Bob Cheek, Ernest Gregory and Mrs. Billam have been appreciated. A teaching method found successful in Sheffield, on the subject of fulfilment of prophecy, is to be used as a follow-up to public meetings now being planned.

BRADFORD.—Meetings have been held every Thursday evening, Dick Backwell has addressed several of the meetings. A public meeting was held on Sunday, 18th November, when Joe Jameson spoke on 'The Human Situation.' Bradford is determined to regain the strength it had before so many of the friends moved away to aid the Cause in other towns.

LEEDS.—Minou Sabetian gave a masterly talk at a public meeting held in the Metropole Hotel. He spoke of the Bahá'í principles, particularly the economic and social principles. Twelve non-Bahá'ís attended. This meeting was followed a week later by showing the Shrine of the Báb films. Further follow-up is being done by the holding of firesides by friends who give personal invitation to contacts.

LIVERPOOL.—The friends continue a programme of well-organised public and informal meetings as well as maintaining attendance at Feasts and Bahá'í Anniversaries. Despite inclement weather forty-nine people, twenty-two of whom had never attended a Bahá'í meeting, attended a meeting at the Adelphi Hotel when Dick Backwell magnificently dealt with the theme 'The Earth One Country.' Attendance was by invitation only and the guests represented the Oxford Group, U.N.A., various denominations and the teaching and medical fields. Louis Ross-Enfield continued the theme at a follow-up fireside.

Erratum (October Journal)—'goal for consolidation' should read 'a community of 15-20' and not '15-20 new believers.' The friends write that they are 'a happy and busy community, but not that good!'

NEWCASTLE.—Dick Backwell's talk at a fireside to a group of close contacts was exceedingly fruitful as well as a World Unity Feast, organised by the Youth Committee, which was attended by many young members from different associations and societies, including seven African guests from the University of Durham. A talk by Marcel Michaeloff and a well arranged social evening created a very happy atmosphere.

SHEFFIELD.—The friends are happy to report two declarations. The new Centre is proving most useful as a focal point for individual and collective activity. Thanks go to those friends who supplied furnishings

to make a warm and cheerful room. Mrs. Florence Billam marked the occasion of her birthday by providing a birthday feast at the Centre and an enjoyable evening was spent by all. A cordial invitation is extended to any friend who is able to visit the friends.

EDINBURGH.—The friends most reluctantly bade farewell to their secretary, Vera Rate, on 2nd November, who, after nineteen months of steadfast and unforgettable service, had to return to Northampton.

Iraj Ayman addressed the Practical Psychology Club on 14th November—subject, 'The New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.' Attendance, twice normal, was about eighty. Lively discussion followed, many asking for literature and accepting invitations to Bahá'í meetings.

Bahá'í literature sold during October and November exceeds £3.

GLASGOW.—Weekly study classes for adults and children continue.

Mrs. G. Alley, a Bahá'í from Santa Monica, California, frequently joins the friends in their activities.

The friends welcomed four of the Edinburgh Community to a Unity Feast to celebrate the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh.

BAHÁ'Í WORLD

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.—A regional Youth Committee for New Zealand has been established under the jurisdiction of the N.S.A. to work in collaboration with the National Youth Committee of Australia. Youth activities make headlines and Bahá'í youth have broadcast over the national and a commercial station.

IRAN.—Seventeen teaching centres, exclusively directed by youth, were maintained throughout the year. Three hundred and twenty-five non-Bahá'ís attended, of whom ten are now registered believers. Over one hundred weekly youth meetings are held in Tehran.

GERMANY.—Public meetings in Berlin attracted many people. Daily gatherings of friends at homes of believers following the meetings and subsequent letters and personal calls indicate that seeds sown are beginning to stir. *God Passes By* in German — *Gott Geht Vorüber* — is going to press.

CANADA.—The British Columbia Teaching Committee prepared a fine programme for thirty-three Bahá'ís who attended a two-day conference. Visiting speakers were Helen and Charles Bishop of Portland and Mark Tobey of Seattle. Eleven more pioneers have settled in goal cities.

EGYPT.—A Press campaign publicising Bahá'í principles has resulted in requests for information and literature from different sections of the community.

INDIA AND PAKISTAN.—At the instance of the Bahá'í United Nations Committee delegates participated in a Regional Conference for non-Governmental organisations in South East Asia under the aegis of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations.

TURKEY.—Five delegates represented the Bahá'ís at a United Nations Regional Conference held in Istanbul. Wide publicity in the Press was given to the Faith; all U.N. Conference news items mentioned the Faith. This drew forth an editorial comment that such a small minority should play such a leading part in conference work.

Our dear friends in Persia

We have received from Persia a copy of a cable sent by the Guardian to the National Assembly there, dated October 19th.

'Long-suffering, grievously afflicted, self-sacrificing, much loved Community tenderly remembered. Supplicating increasing fervour Divine protection, removal disabilities, early fulfilment, unspeakably glorious destiny.'

The National Assembly asks the British Community also to pray that our brothers in Persia may be protected, that the disabilities under which they suffer may be removed, and that they may move on swiftly to the glorious destiny prophesied for Persia by the Blessed Beauty.

THE GREATEST NAME

The Greatest Name is the name of Bahá'u'lláh. Normally the words 'Alláh-u-Abhá,' meaning 'God the All-Glorious' are used, but the symbol of the Greatest Name consists of the invocation 'Ya-Bahá'u'l-Abhá,' meaning 'O Thou Glory of Glories.' This symbol is most sacred.

Mishkin-Qalam, a famous calligraphist who was amongst the friends exiled with Bahá'u'lláh to 'Akká, arranged the Persian characters in this beautiful design by instruction of the Blessed Beauty. Bahá'ís should regard it with the utmost reverence. The beloved Guardian has told us not to use it even on the covers of Bahá'í books. The Greatest Name may be hung on the wall of a Bahá'í Centre or a believer's home, so that it may constantly remind us of Bahá'u'lláh — the Glory of God.

Photographs

Although Ted Cardell is now pioneering in Kenya, it is still possible to obtain copies of the many photographs he took at Bahá'í gatherings in this country. He has appointed as his agent Mrs. Muriel Hayter, 4 Derby Road, Bournemouth, to whom anyone wishing copies should write.

National Service for the Blind Committee

The National Service for the Blind Committee would welcome suggestions from the friends in connection with the work of taking the Bahá'í message to the blind people in the British Isles. The Committee is anxious to make this aspect of our national teaching work a sound contribution to consolidation on the home front, and one of its first concerns is to build up a good library of braille Bahá'í literature. Any friends who have volumes from the braille library are asked to return them to the Committee immediately so that they can be checked and catalogued.

Any blind Bahá'í who wishes to borrow Bahá'í braille literature is most welcome to do so, and the Committee would also be glad to supply braille literature to blind contacts.

Please send suggestions and enquiries (and return braille books) to: The Secretary, National Service for the Blind Committee, 6A East Park Parade, Northampton.

School Attendance

The National Assembly has received a letter from the Ministry of Education indicating that under the Education Act of 1944 'any child who is not a boarder at the school at which he is a registered pupil shall not be deemed to have failed to attend regularly at the school by reason of his absence therefrom on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parents belong.'

This means that children of Bahá'í parents may be kept back from school without penalty on the following anniversaries:

Naw-Rúz	March 21st
Ridván	April 21st, 29th, May 2nd
Declaration of the Báb	May 22nd
Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh	May 29th
Martyrdom of the Báb	July 9th
Birth of the Báb	October 20th
Birth of Bahá'u'lláh	November 12th

Should any difficulty be experienced over this, parents are asked to let the National Assembly know, preferably through their Local Assembly, so that the National Assembly may take the matter up with the Local Education Authority.

N.S.A. By-Election—October 1951

Forty-two votes were cast out of a possible fifty-three, the four delegates who had left the country not being sent voting papers, as they were no longer members of the British Bahá'í Community.

Two votes were accepted by telephone, and one, after consultation with the Chairman of the National Assembly, which had neither 'Ballot' nor the sender's name on the envelope, but which was on the form sent to delegates only.

Votes were cast as follows:

Alma Gregory	...	9
Arthur Norton	...	8
Kathleen Hornell	...	4
Rustom Sabit	...	4
John Mitchell	...	3

Habib Hazari, Hugh McKinley, Louis Ross-Enfield, Mehdi Samandari, 2 each

Iraj Ayman, Gladys Backwell, Ernest Gregory, Muriel Matthews, Eruch Munsiff, John Shortland, 1 each

Additions to the Community

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

Herbert Conder, Sheffield
Ethel McConkey, Sheffield
Anne Thomas (Youth), Oxford
James Crockett, Blackburn
Gholamhossein Hakim (from France), London
Monavia Hakim (from France), London
Nurullah Sabit (from Iran), Loughborough
Mahmoud Ramzi (from Iran), London
Mehri Ramzi (from Iran), London
Parviz Etamad-Teherani (Youth from Iran), Aylesbury
Yahuda Sitarih (Youth from Iran), London