

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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JULY 1950

'TREMENDOUS POTENTIALITIES'

A Letter from the Guardian

The Secretary of the N.S.A.
of the British Isles.

June 15, 1950

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your many communications dated August 20, 26; September 30; October 6, 7, 10, 26; November 7, 9, 14, 23, 25; December 8, 18, 22, 23 (two of this date), 24, all of 1949, and January 4, 20, 30; February 2, 22; March 1, 6, 18, 29 (two of this date); April 7, 18, 19 (two of this date), 24, 27; and May 2, 4, 8, 16 (three of this date) of 1950, have been received as well as their enclosures and other material, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He regrets very much the long delay in not only answering your Assembly's letters but those of other N.S.A.s as well. The past winter, owing to the fact that large excavations had to be carried out behind the Shrine in order to permit construction to continue, was a particularly busy gruelling one for him. On top of this, at the beginning of April, Mr. Maxwell became dangerously ill and the constant worry and preoccupation of us all with doctors, nurses, etc., forced the Guardian to put aside his letters entirely for the time being. Thanks to the mercy of God Mr. Maxwell is now recovering slowly; but the past months were very difficult ones for everyone.

To now take up the various matters referred to in your letters.

The Guardian does not feel that a quorum of delegates is necessary in any sense for the convention. Under unusual circumstances National bodies can be elected by mailed votes of all the delegates; the primary function of the delegates is to elect the N.S.A.. Suggestions from the Convention floor can be made by a majority of those present.

The Guardian is very pleased to see that Peter Esslemont is growing closer to the Faith. A friendly contact with him should always be maintained.

Regarding his cable concerning Hussein: he has been very surprised to note that the terms 'low-born Christian girl' and 'disgraceful alliance' should

arouse any question: it seems to him that the friends should realise it is not befitting for the Guardian's own brother, the grandchild of the Master, an Afán and Aghsán mentioned in the Will and Testament of the Master, and of whom so much was expected because of his relation to the Family of the Prophet, to marry an unknown girl, *according to goodness knows what rite*, who is not a believer at all. Surely every Bahá'í must realise that the terms low-born and Christian are definitions of a situation and in no way imply any condemnation of a person's birth or the religion they belong to as such. We have no snobbery and no religious prejudice in our Faith. But the members of the Master's family have contracted marriages which cannot be considered in any other light than disgraceful, in view of what 'Abdu'l-Bahá wished for them.

Recently the Court of first Instance, in Karkúk, Iráq, has accepted to register a Bahá'í marriage certificate. This is the first time in the East (except for the British Mandate authorities and the Israeli Government), that a Bahá'í marriage has been recognised as being legal. The Guardian feels that this can form a very important precedent for the other Oriental countries, and he suggests you inform the Egyptian N.S.A. of his view and urge them to press for due recognition in Egypt, using this precedent as a lever.

There is nothing in our teachings about Freud and his method. Psychiatric treatment in general is no doubt an important contribution to medicine, but we must believe it is still a growing rather than a perfected science. As Bahá'u'lláh has urged us to avail ourselves of the help of good physicians Bahá'ís are certainly not only free to turn to psychiatry for assistance but should, when available, do so. This does not mean psychiatrists are always wise or always right, it means we are free to avail ourselves of the best medicine has to offer us.

The Guardian thanks you and the friends for your eagerness to contribute to the cost of the Shrine through the special edition of *Prescription for Living*;

'TREMENDOUS POTENTIALITIES'

A Letter from the Guardian (Contd.)

also he thanks the friends at Convention for the copy they sent him.

I need not tell you how immensely relieved, proud and gratified the beloved Guardian was when he knew the British Community had achieved their Plan so successfully. During the last year he was often anxious as he shared with your Assembly and the National Teaching Committee the news of how acute the position was, and how great the obstacles still remaining to be overcome.

From the beginning, however, he felt confident that this dedicated and courageous Community could and would drive through to victory, and his joy was very great when it did. He firmly believes this will exert a great influence on the future of the Bahá'í Community there, and indirectly on the history of that country in the days to come. It is not possible, at close range, to understand the implications of what we do; but when we see things in historical perspective, we realise that what seemed small at the time was really a turning point in destiny.

The Guardian was delighted to receive the Welsh pamphlet, also the map you sent him. He is planning to have the map published in the next edition of *Bahá'í World*, and he placed the pamphlet in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh.

He approves of the Investment Scheme of the Publishing Trust, and he trusts that the members of the Community will respond and thus enable your Assembly to expand its publishing activities. He leaves the question of approaching Bahá'ís overseas, should the Trust be in need of further capital, to your Assembly's discretion.

The Guardian does not approve of your placing a condition upon recognition of local assemblies (mentioned in your letter of January 20); and he wishes in this connection to emphasise the fact that every possible care should be taken not to add to existing rules and regulations in the form of statements or otherwise. He has already advised the American and other National Assemblies to beware of adding more rules and regulations.

The death of Mrs. Hall, such a faithful and devoted servant of the Faith, is a great loss to the British Community. The Guardian appreciated receiving a copy of her Will, which mirrors her solicitude for the interests of the Cause in England. He trusts that a Bahá'í Ceremony could take place at the graveside, which certainly would have her own wish... (A confidential personal comment follows).

The Guardian approves your resolution to keep Mr. Ferraby as paid secretary of the Assembly. He deeply appreciates Mr. Ferraby's devoted services.

The Guardian wishes to assure you, one and all, of his prayers for the success of the new work your Assembly will be undertaking, and for the consolidation of all the recent goals achieved.

With Bahá'í love,

R. RABBANI

P.S. Also just received are a receipt for the Guardian's contribution, dated May 15th and your letter, with enclosure, of May 28th and May 24th. A photo of the Shrine will be mailed you very soon.

P.P.S. The Guardian will certainly pray for the progress and happiness of the soul of Mr. Manton. No doubt the selfless services his son has rendered the Cause of God, in an hour of great need, will be accepted and enable him to influence the state of his father through his own prayers.

Dear and Valued Co-workers,

On the occasion of the victorious consummation of the first historic Plan undertaken by the British Bahá'í Community, I feel moved to reaffirm my feelings of exultation, joy and gratitude for the superb triumph that marks such a great turning point in British Bahá'í history. No single event, in the course of its half-a-century existence, with the exception of the twice repeated visit of the Centre of the Covenant to the British Isles, has proved as significant and momentous as this unique collective achievement, which may, in a sense, be regarded as the first and long-awaited fruit of that intimate personal contact, established both in private and in public by 'Abdu'l-Bahá with its members as well as with various representatives of the country to which it belongs.

So magnificent an achievement has, no doubt, endowed the entire Community, now representative of the peoples of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, with tremendous potentialities, empowering it to launch on the first stage of its historic overseas mission, destined to bring that Community into closer and more concrete association with its sister Communities in North America and Egypt, for the purpose of promoting the Faith in the vast virgin territories where its banner is still unraised, and which constitute an integral part of the Territories of the British Crown beyond the confines of that Community's homeland.

To the races and tribes inhabiting these territories throughout the vast African continent 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when His life was in imminent danger, specifically referred in a Tablet, addressed by Him to the Cousin of the Báb and Chief Builder of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the Bahá'í world, in which He predicts, in moving terms, the awakening of the peoples of the Dark continent and the ultimate triumph of His Father's Faith among its backward peoples as well as among the great masses inhabiting China and India.

To the accomplishment of the initial stages of this colossal task, envisaged by our beloved Master, the Bahá'í Community of the British Isles, now greatly reinforced, resting on a far broader foundation, galvanised into action, qualified through its initial signal victory in its homeland — the base of its future operations overseas — is now summoned to direct its attention and bend its energies.

While, in the current years, which separate us from the celebration of the Centenary of the birth of

'TREMENDOUS POTENTIALITIES'

A Letter from the Guardian (Contd.)

Bahá'u'lláh's prophetic mission, close and sustained attention should be directed by the elected representatives, as well as the rank and file, of that Community towards the safeguarding of the prizes won throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles, and the consolidation of the newly-born institutions, the preliminary steps, constituting the prelude to this prodigious systematic labour and soul thrilling enterprise, destined to extend its ramifications, in the years that lie ahead, to the fringes and within the very heart of a vast continent, must be carefully and prayerfully taken.

Though the members of this Community are still restricted in number, though its resources are as yet meagre, though its recent victories are as yet unconsolidated, though it has hardly recuperated from its recent labours, undertaken during a period of great national exhaustion and severe austerity, the mere act of launching upon so glorious, so fateful an enterprise, will, of necessity, create at this propitious hour the receptivity which will enable a swiftly marching, stout-hearted virile Community, now standing on the threshold of its mission beyond the seas, to attract a fresh measure of celestial potency adequate to its growing needs and its ever-expanding responsibilities. The miracle its members have performed over so vast a territory, in so short a time, and under such adverse circumstances, cannot but augur well for the initial success of an enterprise infinitely more meritorious, of far greater promise, and endowed with vastly superior spiritual potentialities.

How great the honour, with which the Bahá'í

pioneers of the present generation of the subjects of the British Crown will be invested in the eyes of posterity within their island home and abroad! How great the debt of gratitude of those who will labour after them and garner the fruit of their present-day assiduous exertions to those whose privilege is to blaze the trail and break the soil in the virgin territories destined, as prophesied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to acclaim the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and establish the institutions of His embryonic World Order!

This Community, laden with the trophies of so recent and splendid a victory, and summoned to brace itself for another exertion, so fate-laden in its consequences, stands too near to the structure which its hands are now rearing to visualise the dimensions of its task, appraise its value, and appreciate its future glory. Alive to its inherent capacity, conscious of its high responsibilities, aware of the sacredness of its mission, emboldened by its recent exploits, trusting fully in that reinforcing Power that guided and sustained it unfailingly in the past, this Community can do no better than to gird up afresh its loins, turn its back upon the clamour of the age, its fears, confusion and strife, step resolutely forward on its chosen path, unshakeably confident that with every step it takes, should it remain undeflected in its purpose and undimmed in its vision, a fresh outpouring of Divine grace will reinforce and guide its march on the high-road of its destiny.

Your true brother,

SHOGHI

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

Following the recommendation of the delegates at Convention that the National Assembly 'investigate afresh the whole set-up, position, importance and future of the Publishing Trust' and 'attempt to organise it now on an enduring and firm basis,' the Assembly considered how best to establish the Trust on a permanent business foundation. To this end the new Committee has been directed to consider the following points:

1. The time has now come for the Trust to produce some books for sale through trade channels and the preparation of future production should be organised to this end.
2. In setting the price of each publication the possible sales to booksellers should be taken into account and if the likely demand from booksellers justifies it, the price set accordingly.
3. Ways and means of increasing sales.

Erratum

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

Page 269, Lines 2-3: Read 'in the days of Jesus' for 'in the days of Joseph.'

Memorandum of Association

Owing to a decision of the Court of Appeal which has the effect of changing the law regarding exemption of so-called charitable organisations from income tax, it has been necessary for slight changes to be made in the National Assembly's Memorandum of Association. At the same time, two points in the Articles of Association have been clarified.

The full text of the revised Memorandum and Articles will be printed in the book on Bahá'í procedure which is being issued shortly. A copy of the Special Resolution making the changes is being sent to Assemblies and individuals who now have a copy of the Memorandum and Articles. If you have a copy of these but have not yet received a copy of the Special Resolution, please let the Secretary of the National Assembly know.

Our Next Issue

No *Bahá'í Journal* will be issued during August, as Summer School both renders production difficult and causes contributions to the Journal to slacken. The next issue will appear at the beginning of September.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS AFRICA

The Africa Committee at its first meeting surveyed the African project as a whole, with special reference to the Guardian's cable to Convention and to a Tablet of the Master, printed below. The Committee believes this Tablet to indicate that the work in Africa will be in many ways different from any as yet done in the Bahá'í World and that pioneers there will be faced with special problems. The support of the whole Bahá'í Community will be needed for the successful execution of this project.

THE YEAR'S TASKS

The year of respite through which we are now passing should be of great benefit to the work in Africa, for it gives us a year in which to prepare. The Committee aims at completing plans which can be put into operation as soon as the Two Year Plan starts.

During this year, the territories will be chosen in which teaching is to start; languages for further translations will be selected and translations of Bahá'í literature into them procured; steps preliminary to their publication will be taken; contact with authorities and other useful bodies established; an estimate made of the total cost of the African project during the Two Year Plan; the opening phase of the Plan worked out in greater detail. These matters will be the concern, primarily, of the National Assembly and its Committees, but the whole British Bahá'í Community will be asked to help.

AFRICANS IN THIS COUNTRY

The Committee, following the discussion at Convention, believes that contacts with Africans in this country will be of great benefit to the teaching work in Africa. Natives of the territories chosen for our Two Year Plan will be able both to advise us of conditions there and introduce us to compatriots who reside in the territory. Africans from other territories, even if they cannot provide us with contacts in the chosen parts of Africa, can still tell us much that will help us to adopt a proper approach in our teaching work.

The Committee is anxious to receive full information from Local Assemblies of any promising African contacts made by their Community and points out that opportunities to make these are specially good in towns where there is a University. Will secretaries of Local Assemblies please note this request.

GUIDANCE AWAITED

It is the hope of the Committee to use available resources of the Bahá'í World for the work in Africa, and to this end the National Assembly has agreed to circulate other National Assemblies to ask for the benefit of their experience in teaching primitive peoples and for contacts in Africa.

Some of the most fundamental decisions can be taken only after guidance has been received from the Guardian. The chosen territories will need his approval and two have already been submitted to him by the National Assembly. When the territories have been selected, one language for each territory in addition to those in which we have translations will be chosen for the goal publication of the Two Year Plan.

These languages will be the ones best serving the teaching needs of the Plan.

We are still in the very early stages of the African project and there is much that will not be clear until later in the year. Future *Journal* articles will be published as plans crystallise and progress is made. Meanwhile the Committee hopes that this first report will demonstrate that the problems are being energetically tackled and that all can play a part in the great work that lies ahead.

PIONEERS

Not only the Committee, but the whole British Bahá'í Community will be getting acquainted with the plans, problems and needs of the African project as the year goes by. The Committee intends to keep the Community fully informed of developments as decisions are made, and from time to time will release information about the three territories chosen and recommend pertinent literature.

The greatest need this year will be for strong pioneers who will, when the Two Year Plan starts, form the centre of action. The aim is to have a number of these thoroughly prepared and ready to set out as soon as possible after the Plan begins. These pioneers will need several months in which to prepare themselves for their great task, obtain the necessary permits, and get themselves ready to go, and even begin studying one of the most widely used languages of the territory in which they are to settle. The Committee is ready now to receive offers from those wishing to pioneer and will select the first pioneers later in the year.

Taking into account the special conditions in Africa, it has been decided that the goal must be to establish nuclei at least as strong as a group of three pioneers specially suited to their task. Because of these conditions, the policy will be adopted of never leaving one pioneer isolated in a territory for a long period.

TABLET OF ABDU'L-BAHÁ

O thou maid-servant of God!

I have read thy letter which indicated thy straightforwardness in the love of God and thy desire in spreading this brilliant light among the offspring of the Africans. How good is the intention! And what an excellent aim this great aim is!

Indeed the hearts of the Africans are as a blank scroll of paper upon which thou canst write any phrase; but thou must have patience and a heart as firm as a mountain, owing to the innumerable hardships that may intervene, which could be endured only by one who surrenders to grievous calamities.

If thou art of the people of this field (race-course) let loose the reins and rely upon the Merciful, and He will indeed assist thee with the hosts of the unseen at all times. Use thy utmost power to affiliate the hearts and, with the whole of thy might, bring the scattered souls into union . . .

Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Vol. II, p. 310.

LET'S BE PRACTICAL!

(The following is the body of a paper prepared by Mr. Bertram Dewing and delivered at one of the sessions of the fourteenth Yerrinbool Summer School.)

On the grounds that it is being practical, errors in behaviour are often made by one believer to another. No matter how stoutly the claim to be impersonal might be, these errors remain what they are — back-biting, unkind criticism, hasty judgment due to anticipating insincere motives and not knowing the facts, personal prejudice and all the rest.

The very characteristic in a fellow believer that we do not like is the very one, quite likely, that enables him or her to do their best work. Would you have an American behave like an Oxford don, or an Englishman gesticulate like a Frenchman, or the Frenchman become staid like a Dutchman? They would all become ineffective.

And so it is with personality. The one who is slow to 'cotton on' to a point, thus holding things up in an assembly meeting, may be extra sound in judgment when given time, and have a highly retentive memory. The not-very-clever one may have an extra spiritualising influence on the rest of the community. The mercuric, illogical artistic type would be unable to produce works of art or think up ideas if he was as matter-of-fact as a stock broker, as some think he should be. The emotional type will frequently do valuable work that the dignified one will never attempt. These people can often work longer and faster than ordinary people. They are worth their weight in gold. They seem to live on their nerves and do not spare themselves.

The Bahá'í Faith teaches quite definitely — no criticism. So why criticise?

Remember,

1. Most Bahá'ís are doing their best and the one you are criticising probably is trying the hardest of all.

2. Could you do better or as much?

3. Criticism dries up the fountain of endeavour. Show love and suggest kindly — start off politely 'Don't you think . . .' or 'May I suggest . . .'

Rudeness belongs to the outside political world not within a Bahá'í gathering.

Most Bahá'ís — in fact I have yet to meet one who is not — are willing to learn, improve methods, or accept constructive criticism if approached in the right way.

4. And do not be in too big a hurry to change things. Remember committees and believers as individuals give great thought, perhaps over a period of years, to their work and many things are apparent to them that are not apparent to outsiders. Methods suit temperaments too, so be cautious or you might throw them off balance.

5. The worker **MUST** make mistakes.

6. Why are you not making some mistakes of your own? Get busy, do what the Guardian says that Bahá'ís in these parts must do — teach more — and then you will find the other fellow's mistakes

are not so important after all. You may not even notice them.

7. Time taken up with criticising means that much time wasted that could otherwise be used in constructive planning.

8. Criticism, like jealousy or suspicion, when practised repeatedly, becomes a definite mental disease. It grows with practice and the person afflicted with it — this very practical person, is in a most unhappy frame of mind and usually shows it. To begin with, no one likes the over-critical who see in every person and in every situation only the bad and the incorrect. Learn to watch your own mental reactions.

Yes! Let's be practical! And who are the practical people in the world? If the stoutest claimants are the ones, they are the politicians, the military leaders, and all who dispense with the teachings of the Prophets. Was Jesus a practical man by their standards?

Study the life of Muhammed and you will see how the Holy Prophet conceded when the practical ones said 'Stand firm,' and He stood firm when these same ones said: 'Be cautious!' His greatest successes invariably followed these episodes. After conceding every point at the signing of the Treaty of Uddabiyyah with the Meccans, He was faced with the unanimous revolt of his indignant followers who left Him to lead prayers alone. Later, when this same treaty resulted in vast numbers of new converts, they were forced to admit they were wrong.

And Bahá'u'lláh? Was He being practical when He left His most precious family in the care of His arch-enemy Subhi Azel and disappeared into the wilderness of Sulhimaníyyah? Nor was it very practical by material standards to reject the attractive offer of sanctuary by the Russian minister, thus choosing to remain with His persecuted followers.

To these and countless other episodes may be added those of a similar nature in the lives of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Yet the courses of action taken by them is proof of their spiritual station. The ones who follow guidance, these are the only really practical ones.

The fruit of consultation and collective thought is often just this type of guidance. Pause, therefore, before criticising administrative decisions because the collective wisdom is bound to be greater than the wisdom of one and who dare say: 'My wisdom is greater than theirs, I know better'?

And the facts? What makes you think the facts upon which you base your decision to criticise are complete?

Forgive the use of the second person, but this concerns the lifeblood of progress in the faith and the use of this pronoun makes emphasis easier. Absence of right to criticise does not mean absence of right to suggest, comment, or question. It is what is in the heart that counts with God. Let us concern ourselves with the broad vision and the rest will follow.

BAHÁ'Í SUMMER SCHOOL

29th July—12 August

AT COTTINGHAM, NEAR HULL

A Bahá'í Summer School is an experience never to be forgotten. It is not too late to send your booking now to —

The Registrar

Bahá'í Summer School

49 Sandbourne Ave.

London, S.W.19

COMMITTEE NEWS

As travel difficulties prevent a joint Irish-Scottish Regional Committee from meeting, two separate Regional Teaching Committees with more limited terms of reference have been appointed for Ireland and Scotland. The membership and terms of reference of these and other Committees appointed by the National Assembly will be published in the next issue of *Bahá'í Journal*.

Headed Paper for Committees

The National Assembly has had printed a small quantity of good quality headed notepaper bearing no address, which is available to National Committees for their important correspondence. The paper is not intended for day-to-day correspondence with members of the British Bahá'í Community, but for letters in which the prestige of the Faith is involved. The Committee should type in its name and the address to which it wishes correspondence sent.

Applications for the paper should be sent to the Secretary of the National Assembly, who will provide about 50 sheets at a time unless a larger or smaller quantity is particularly requested.

Committee Budgets

The National Assembly has decided that all National Committee budgets will date from June 21st of one year to June 20th of the following year. Will Committee secretaries please note.

Membership in the Bahá'í Community

From time to time it happens that a member of the Bahá'í Community is prevented for a long period from attending meetings or taking an active part in Bahá'í affairs. The Guardian has made clear what our attitude should be in such cases. So long as a person believes in the Bahá'í Faith and considers himself a Bahá'í, he remains a member of the Bahá'í Community, even though he attends no meetings at all. Membership of the Bahá'í Community is not dependent either on attendance at meetings or the amount of work a person does for the Cause.

WORDS OF THE BÁB

'Methinks I heard a Voice calling in my inmost being: "Do thou sacrifice the thing thou lovest most in the path of God, even as Husayn, peace be upon him, hath offered up his life for my sake?" And were I not regardful of this inevitable mystery, by Him, Who hath My being between His hands even if all the kings of the earth were to be leagued together they would be powerless to take from me a single letter, how much less can these servants who are worthy of no attention, and who verily are of the outcast . . . That all may know the degree of My patience, My resignation, and self-sacrifice in the path of God.'

Bahá'u'lláh comments on these verses:

'Could the Revealer of such utterance be regarded as walking any way but the way of God, and as having yearned for aught else except His good pleasure? In this very verse there lieth concealed a breath of detachment, which if it were to be breathed full upon the world, all beings would renounce their lives, and sacrifice their souls.'

'The Old Churches and the New World Faith'

News has been received from the United States that the Montana Bahá'í Community celebrated World Religion Day by inserting in their local paper a full-page advertisement consisting of a complete reprint of George Townshend's pamphlet 'The Old Churches and the New World Faith.' (World Religion Day is a day set aside by the American Bahá'í Community and some other national communities for the public proclamation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh as the divine Revelation for all mankind.)

'The Glad Tidings of Bahá'u'lláh'

George Townshend sends us the following extract from a letter from the Editor of the *Wisdom of the East* series, in which this compilation was published:

'John Murray's are very glad that you are pleased with the format of the book. They are equally pleased with the excellent sales which the book is achieving. So far we have sold 2,140 copies out of the 4,000 we printed. This is extremely fast selling for a book in the W.E. series, and easily outdistances all the other new ones we have just printed. We shall certainly be able to do another impression later.'

Change of Address

Blackpool Secretary: Dennis McArthur, 41 Sowley Ave., Blackpool S.S.

Sheffield Secretary: Miss I. Locke, 74 Norfolk Road, Sheffield 2.

Edinburgh Secretary: Miss V. Rate, c/o North British Hotel, Princes Street, Edinburgh.

CONSOLIDATION IN THE RESPITE YEAR

Convention called on the incoming National Assembly to consider the possibility of appointing two chief National Committees — CONSOLIDATION and AFRICA, and to regionalise the Assembly Development as well as Teaching work. With regard to consolidation, the following pattern was finally decided upon.

1. To have a strong CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE which would take over the outstanding work of both the National Teaching and Assembly Development Committees; maintain Assemblies; guide, support, and supervise 4 REGIONAL COMMITTEES, and organise a National Teaching Conference on January 6th, 1951.

2. To divide England and Wales into 4 Regions (North East; North West; South East; South West and Wales), and build up a capable Regional Committee in each. These Regional Committees would organise teaching; carry out Assembly Development work; maintain contact with, and encourage, Isolated Believers and students of the Faith not under the jurisdiction of a Local Assembly, and in general act as the first link between the Local Assemblies and the National Assembly.

3. To have 2 TEACHING COMMITTEES, one for Ireland, and one for Scotland. These would have a very similar relationship to the Consolidation Committee as the old Regional Teaching Committees had with the National Teaching Committee.

CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE

<i>N.E. Reg. Committee</i>	<i>N.W. Reg. Committee</i>	<i>S.E. Reg. Committee</i>	<i>S.W. & W. Reg. Committee</i>	<i>Irish T.C.</i>	<i>Scottish T.C.</i>
Bradford Leeds Newcastle Nottingham Sheffield	Blackburn Blackpool Liverpool Manchester Stockport	Bournemouth Brighton London Northampton Norwich	Birmingham Bristol Cardiff Oxford Torquay	Belfast Dublin	Edinburgh Glasgow
<i>Isolated Believers:</i>					
0	5	21	9	1	0
<i>Teachers:</i>					
20	19	25	18	6	11

The 4 Regional Committees and 2 T.C.s are under the development of, and are responsible to, the Consolidation Committee.

The LOCAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES in England and Wales can turn to their Regional Committees for assistance, support, advice and teachers, and will be sure of a close and intimate association. The resultant regional development will be of the greatest value in preparing the Community for its heavy task when the Two Year Plan is launched.

The REGIONAL COMMITTEES will be able to handle almost all the consolidation work in their area (maintenance of assemblies and pioneering being the exceptions), but they will turn, and report, to the Consolidation Committee for guidance, instruction, funds and action on inter-regional matters. It is hoped that the Regional Committees will be responsible for all their own planning even as far as handling their finances themselves, and to this end the Consolidation Committee is trying to make provision to give them each their own Budget. It is interesting to note that each Regional Committee will be co-ordinating the work of as many Assemblies as was the National Assembly for the first 3 years of the Six Year Plan.

The IRISH AND SCOTTISH TEACHING COMMITTEES will concentrate on the teaching needs of their respective countries and will stimulate as much joint community work as they can. For Assembly Development, however, the four Assemblies will turn directly to the Consolidation Committee.

The Consolidation Committee itself has an enormous job, as the following extracts from its first report to the National Assembly will show:

'... we recognise that:

- (a) The functions of this Committee are to settle pioneers, train Assemblies, train Regional Committees, and to ensure the organisation of the largest possible volume of local teaching.
- (b) The teaching work in all Bahá'í towns aims to consolidate and expand.
- (c) Pioneer projects should be settled wherever possible and 'consolidated.'
- (d) Local Assemblies should be developed as strong autonomous units in the Cause.
- (e) We should try to draw into the longer term work in Britain such people who will not be able to go to Africa—e.g. married couples with young families and heavy commitments, etc., so that the people who will be able to go will be readily available when the need arises.'

'We consider that . . . the . . . main function . . . called "Consolidation" involves:

- (1) Maintaining the impetus of teaching.
- (2) Fostering systematic and planned teaching by Local Assemblies.
- (3) Fostering love, unity and co-operation between the friends and between Assemblies.
- (4) Promoting the Bahá'í pattern of living, in the communities:
 - (a) Feasts, Assembly meetings, anniversaries, individual teaching effort, Bahá'í Fund.
 - (b) Study of the Teachings, daily prayer and meditation.
 - (c) Deepening in the Covenant.
- (5) Keeping the vision of the work on all the Bahá'í "fronts," and of the British Community as a part of the whole Bahá'í world.'

'We further believe that the work THIS YEAR is to maintain and develop Local Assemblies, and the end result of this work will be to establish the community as a whole on a basis firm enough to undertake the Two Year Plan.'

Further light can be shed on the work of the Committee by a study of the instructions given to it by the National Assembly. These advised the Committee that the emphasis this year should be on development through local teaching; that the maintenance of Assemblies should be done primarily by teaching and not by sending in temporary pioneers, as pioneers should be moved as little as possible; that all pioneers not working should be helped to find employment quickly, and that Local Assemblies should be encouraged to build up strong Bahá'í Funds. New towns are not likely to be opened up this year, and seminars, advertising, week-end schools, etc. on a national scale should be avoided.

Since Convention the Consolidation Committee has met twice, the 4 Regionals have got down to their work, and reports of excellent progress have already been received from them. Regional Teaching; Regional News Bulletins; Regional Week-end Conferences, consultation with Assemblies; and Financial help to Assemblies have all been embarked upon by these Regional Committees, and the Consolidation Committee plans to be available at Summer School to consult with the Regional Committee members and any of the believers who wish to ask questions on the work of consolidation. Always before the eyes of the Committee is the vision of 24 strong, healthy, expanding Assemblies, joyously devoting themselves to more and more teaching work, working at all times in the closest contact with their Regional Committees, and sharing in their Regions' activities, continuously sending forward their suggestions and recommendations for the good of the whole community, and ever increasing their financial support of the National Fund so that by the end of the 'respite year,' the British Bahá'í Community will be strong enough, and have sufficient resources, to embark at once on the Two Year Plan.

The Consolidation Committee is pledged to do all in its power to help in this tremendous task.

CONSOLIDATION COMMITTEE