

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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"Ensure total victory now within reach . . ."

SHOGHI EFFENDI

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MARCH 1950

THE GUARDIAN ENTREATS

'Assure pioneers heartfelt appreciation, convey congratulations Stockport Newcastle, praying solution difficulties Centre London. Entreat entire Community seize firmly prize (at their) fingertips, crown (with) everlasting glory mightiest task undertaken British followers Baha'u'llah.'

The above cable dated February 25th was in reply to one sent by the National Assembly after its last meeting, which read:

'Eleven pioneers settled since last meeting, one declaration Belfast accepted, Newcastle Stockport recognised as Assemblies. London temporarily without Bahá'í Centre, beg prayers finding suitable premises, loving devotion.'

72nd PIONEER IN HIS 84th YEAR!!!

Sam Scott, the 72nd pioneer in the Plan, and the 31st to move this year, is now in his 84th year. Immediately Mr. Scott received the copy of the cable sent by the Guardian to the Teaching Conference, he offered himself to the National Teaching Committee.

We are now happy to share the news that he is moving to Norwich as a pioneer, to live with one of the believers there.

He wrote: 'So long as I get with a decent family I could be quite happy anywhere. I am sure I can leave that in your hands . . . I am praying daily for the success of the Plan. Victory will assuredly attend our efforts if we are faithful . . .'

The move from isolation in a Nursing Home in North Yorkshire, to Norwich, by this devoted believer, who was born about the time Bahá'u'lláh was making His public proclamation to the Kings from Adrianople, is truly 'Pioneer,' for he has surely 'taken up his bed and walked.' Norwich, and indeed the whole British Community, is blessed by his effort.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

Convention this year will be held at the Bonnington Hotel, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1, on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, April 29th to May 1st.

Please send room bookings to Dorothy Ferraby, 49 Sandbourne Avenue, London, S.W.19, before April 8th. Accommodation cannot be guaranteed to anyone applying after that date, as all hotels will be full of people who have come to London to see the Association Football Cup Final.

ABOUT CONVENTION

Convention this year is of unique significance in the annals of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles. It will mark the end of a terrific struggle against many unexpected obstacles to complete the first planned campaign we have undertaken. It will be a time for looking forward rather than backward.

Our position has to be strengthened and improved. We may pause, perhaps, before we go on again, but it is vital that this Convention should be a vigorous and constructive one, looking forward to fresh tasks, and greater victories.

The field of discussion will be wider than formerly, for there will not be the urgent requirements of a predetermined plan to restrict it. A properly conducted and fully prepared Convention should therefore have abundant fruitful results. Both these qualities depend largely upon the believers themselves.

Both delegates and non-delegates should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the procedure to wholeheartedly co-operate, and the delegates should have been thoroughly prepared by consultation with their local communities, so that they can collectively express the spirit and ideas of the whole of the British Bahá'ís. It adds greatly to the interest of those who can only sit and listen if they can be conscious that the whole of the thought of the National Community is being reviewed.

One or more sessions in every local community should be held especially to give their delegate or delegates an opportunity to become acquainted with everyone's views and to find the majority of opinions. The delegates should bring up at Convention any subject that has been requested by a majority of their home community, and present it fairly, but they are obliged to give their own views, and vote entirely according to their own opinions. Any matter discussed at a local consultation may be brought up whether approved by a majority or not. Moreover, at Convention itself any non-delegate may request a delegate to put to the Convention a question or viewpoint, and the delegate may do so, or pass it on to another delegate whom he thinks more suitable to present it.

If this procedure is followed actively, there will be no feeling of frustration among the listeners at the sessions. The large number of delegates who now attend Convention makes it less advisable than before to relax the regulation which confines speaking to the delegates and the out-going and incoming N.S.A.'s. The Guardian has said that this rule should not be departed from. If this has been done in the past, the cause can possibly be found in imperfect prior local consultation.

Delegates will be sent instructions about procedure in more detail, but it is well that all attending Convention should know sufficient to understand what happens.

An agenda will be drawn up by the National Spiritual Assembly giving the subjects they propose to be discussed, and this will be presented to the delegates for acceptance or alteration, as they think fit. The National Spiritual Assembly will thankfully welcome suggestions from anyone, whether delegate or not, of subjects for discussion, so that the agenda can fully represent the problems the community is concerned with. Suggestions should reach the National Secretary not later than April 14th, for the agenda to be compiled and circulated to the delegates a week before Convention. Below are some points of procedure that should be studied by all.

THE FUNCTIONS OF CONVENTION

Convention has two basic functions. One of these, the discussion of current Bahá'í affairs, has been the subject of the first part of this article. The other is to elect the National Spiritual Assembly for the ensuing year. It is hardly necessary to say that not only is the voting by secret ballot, but it must be carried on in a spirit of prayer and meditation, and any attempt to influence a delegate's decision is absolutely against all Bahá'í principle.

DISCUSSION

Those allowed to take part in the Convention discussion are: (a) the delegates; (b) the members of the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly; (c) the members of the new Assembly after it is elected.

REPORTS

The outgoing N.S.A. will render reports of its own activities and those of the National Committees. As in

previous years, these will be duplicated and distributed to all believers; while supplementary reports to bring matters fully up to date will be read at the Convention.

LIMITS OF DELEGATES' POWERS

Except for electing a member to the National Spiritual Assembly if a vacancy should occur during the year, the functions of the delegates are strictly confined to the duration of the Convention sessions. All decisions made by the Convention are recommendations only. The new National Assembly is bound to consider these thoroughly, but the Convention can in no wise impose its will on the Assembly, nor in any way legislate. In short, the purpose of Convention is to discover and present to the new N.S.A. a comprehensive view of the mind of the community, and the National Spiritual Assembly is bound to give its earnest consideration to all recommendations that have the approval of a majority of the delegates.

Therefore, friends, ponder earnestly on the affairs of the community, so far as you are acquainted with them, and take an active and constructive part in the local consultation with your delegate or delegates. Then, whether you can attend Convention; whether you can speak there or only listen, you will have contributed to make the sessions virile and the results constructive.

DIRECTORY

The National registrar wishes to remind the friends that a card index containing the addresses of all believers in this country is kept in the National secretary's office. Believers wanting a couple of individual addresses may apply direct to the registrar, but if anyone wishes to have a general list, he should apply through his Local Spiritual Assembly. Local Assemblies are asked in the case of such a request to make sure that there is an adequate reason, before passing the request on, as to type a long list is a big job and should only be done to meet a real need.

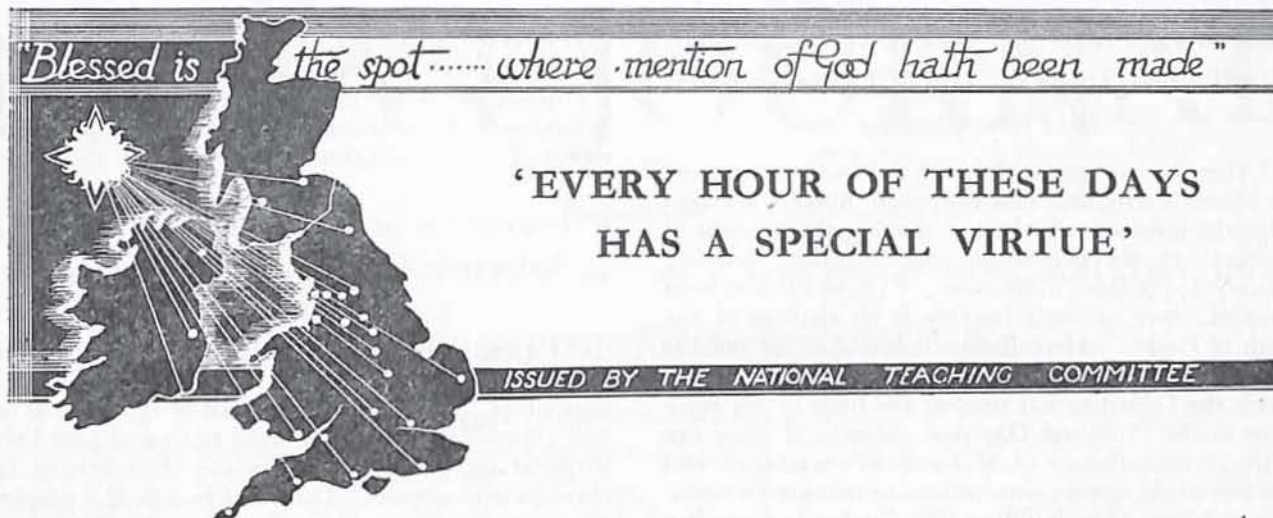
The registrar also asks the co-operation of Local Assemblies and isolated believers in keeping the card index up to date. Will secretaries of Local Assemblies please notify any change of address in their community, and will isolated believers please send their new address if they move.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Premises have been booked for this year at Thwaite Hall, Cottingham, near Hull, and the Summer School will be held there from July 29th to August 12th. Thwaite Hall is a residential hall of Hull University College. It is a large building containing many single rooms and standing in its own large grounds. Cottingham village is on the outskirts of Hull, about mid-way between that city and Beverley.

Prices will be: £4 12s. 6d. per person per week, £2 7s. 6d. for children up to the age of 12.

Printed brochures will be distributed as soon as possible.



Thou hast endowed every hour of these days with a special virtue, inscrutable to all except Thee, Whose knowledge embraceth all created things. Thou hast, also, assigned unto every soul a portion of this virtue in accordance with the Tablet of Thy decree and the Scriptures of Thine irrevocable judgment. Every leaf of these Books and Scriptures Thou hast, moreover, allotted to each one of the peoples and kindreds of the earth.

Thus Bahá'u'lláh tells us of the moment of these days of fasting (*Prayers and Meditations*, p. 143). How true they are to us handful of souls in these islands during this particular Fast. How sober are our thoughts as the minutes fly past with seemingly increasing rapidity, every one of them lost for ever.

In the moments of reflection, the thought striking many minds is, according to report, 'Will I be able to say, when my time is come, "yes, I did everything I could in those last days"?'

It is a sober thought, it is a sober picture which your Teaching Committee has to share with you. We can, at this stage, just report facts, offer ourselves to do all we can to support every effort, and unite in prayer for confirmation.

At the time of writing, with 40 days to go, there are 34 vacancies in the goal towns and weak Assemblies; on two sectors of the front serious reverses have been sustained, hence the increased need. In order to keep the Community fully alive to all that happens, a weekly statement of facts will be sent to all the friends.

Since the last Journal article, there is much to report. The following pioneers have moved:

January 1950

Habibi, H., Manchester to Stockport
Isenthal, V., London to Brighton
Johnston, V., Liverpool to Newcastle
Norton, A., Bradford to Sheffield
Norton, M., Bradford to Sheffield
Shakib, M., Birmingham to Newcastle
Young, J., Manchester to Stockport

February 1950

Coward, U., Northampton to Sheffield
Farnsworth, S., Blackburn to Blackpool
Gregory, A. C., Northampton to Liverpool
Marshall, G., Birmingham to Belfast
Mills, O., St. Ives to Brighton
Sinclair, A., London to Edinburgh

March 1950

Keery, B., Nottingham to Belfast
Samandari, Dr., Persia to Belfast

You will see that, in pursuance of the 'Thin Red Line' policy, this movement, though generally beneficial, has severely weakened some of the home communities.

The declaration of John McGinley, and the settlement of the pioneers, in Belfast, which has greatly helped the work there; the arrival of our dear brother, Hassan Sabri, for a five months' stay, which has been a real encouragement; the teaching campaigns recently conducted in Bradford, Cardiff and Brighton, now being pursued vigorously in Belfast, Blackpool, Blackburn, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Sheffield, and about to be launched in Liverpool, Newcastle, and Stockport; the holding of the first Week-end School for Contacts, which is to be on April 1st/2nd, at Manchester College, Oxford; the 10,000 postcards displaying the Principles which have been posted in such towns as Cardiff, Sheffield, Blackpool, Blackburn, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Belfast; the posters which have been used in Nottingham, Brighton, Cardiff and Sheffield—all these signs of intense activity everywhere, added to which should be the large amount of individual effort, combine to reach a new high level of Bahá'í work.

Yet is it enough? What more can be done?

Last-minute suggestions, offers, help of any kind are eagerly sought and will be thoroughly examined by your N.T.C., which is now meeting four or five days per week.

We beg your prayers that all the work being planned, and efforts exerted, may be confirmed with success.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM THE GUARDIAN TO Dr. LOTFULLAH HAKIM

dated July 25th, 1949

'There are no quotations from the Quran to support the Master's statement that European thinkers acknowledge the influence of Islam in shaping the thought of Europe. In the *Gleanings*, page 95 (third printing January 1943) Bahá'u'lláh says: "Of old it has been revealed: love of one's country is an element of the Faith of God!" Here Bahá'u'lláh is quoting not the Quran but an Islamic tradition, and it is this statement which the Guardian has used as the basis of his argument in the *Promised Day* that nationhood grow out of the direct influence of Muhammad's teachings, and was one of the great contributions to mankind's evolution of Islam. The building up of *nations* came after Muhammad, and was a step forward in the direction of a unified world which the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh has provided for.'

'As regards to the questions you asked me to put to the Guardian about the Aqdas and the House of Justice elections: As most of the laws of the Aqdas cannot at present be enforced anywhere he has not deemed it necessary or wise to translate and promulgate them. You can orally translate them for any of the believers anxious to know exactly what they are. The National Assemblies (or Houses of Justice) will

elect *directly* the International House of Justice, but just what form this election will take must be decided in the future when the proper time comes. Neither the Master nor the Guardian have made any pronouncements about the punishments stipulated in the Aqdas.'

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM RUHIYYIH KHANUM TO Dr. LOTFULLAH HAKIM

dated July 22nd, 1949

'I quite agree with you that the friends everywhere need much more Bahá'í love in their relationship with each other. Without this the spirit of the Faith is only half alive. Your warm and kind heart and your knowledge of the deeper teachings can do much to help them in this respect.' The Bahá'ís, like the people of the world to-day, are too prone to talking too much about beautiful ideas and not showing the reality of them in their daily contacts. This is one reason why they do not convert more people to the Faith.'

'The work on the Shrine — now beginning to rise visibly at the corners — and the spread of the Faith which brings many communications from new places, and many problems too, keeps us all busy as never before, especially the Guardian. But to see the course going ahead so fast fills our hearts with gratitude and the work involved seems a small contribution to make to such a Holy Cause.'

NATIONAL FUND

PLEDGES

The pledge scheme has been a fine success on the whole, as the latest figures testify:

<i>Paid in pledges in 9½ months</i>	<i>Balance remaining</i>	<i>Total pledges</i>
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Local Assemblies:		
222 6 0	153 4 0	375 10 0
Individual:		
499 14 10	182 19 2	682 14 0
<u>£722 0 10</u>	<u>£336 3 2</u>	<u>£1058 4 0</u>

Position as at mid-February.

CABLE FROM GUARDIAN TO N.T.C.

'PRAYING FERVENTLY SUCCESS FORTHCOMING WEEK-END SCHOOL. DEEPLY APPRECIATE UNCEASING EFFORTS. RENEW THROUGH YOU IMPASSIONED PLEA ENTIRE COMMUNITY EXERT FLEETING FATEFUL DAYS AHEAD CONCERTED STRENUOUS UNRELAXING EFFORTS ENSURE NEEDED NUMBER PIONEERS FILL REMAINING GAPS IN NOBLY CONCEIVED, LABORIOUSLY PROSECUTED, HISTORICALLY UNIQUE, SPIRITUALLY MOMENTOUS PLAN.'

SHOGHI.'

EXTRA. N.T.C. has asked N.S.A. advise Guardian arrangements made complete Plan by Rizwan entreat prayers confirm.

STOP PRESS

Rezvanieh Eghrari has arrived from Persia to help the Plan. Twenty-four years of age, this is her first trip away from Tihiran.

John Robarts, Chairman of the Canadian N.S.A., is making a flying visit, with the full sanction of his colleagues, to give us two weeks' teaching help.

Situations Vacant

Applications are invited for about twenty positions of special service in the Cause of God. The posts are open to Bahá'ís only, who must be 21 years of age on or before April 21st, 1950. No salary is offered but successful applicants will earn undying fame on the pioneer roll of honour, and their names will be advised to the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. They may well affect the destiny of their country. Apply to National Teaching Committee, Oxford 5244.