

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
158a, OLD BROMPTON ROAD, LONDON, S.W.5.

No 65.

Bahá'í Year 104

February, 1948.

THE INITIAL PHASE

Beloved Friends,

At Ridvan this year, the initial Phase of the Six Year Plan will have been completed, and the British Bahá'í Community will be firmly established on no fewer than fourteen Assemblies, a number almost three times that with which it started on the Plan and which it had, even until two years later, not yet increased. Many times our beloved Guardian, taking a world view of the development and organic growth of our community, and writing to us, as if looking back upon our achievements from a viewpoint several years into the future, and challenging us to make good his words, has underlined the momentous nature of the task and the commensurate importance of the achievement, calling it "a mighty, collective, historic undertaking," and speaking of "the portentous shadow of future events." But in what exactly does the significance of this achievement lie?

That it is integrally bound up with that of the Six Year Plan as a whole is certain, since the success of the whole depends on the success of the stages, each in turn releasing ever greater capacity for entry on the next. The significance of the whole Plan cannot yet be seen in perspective, indeed it will be dependent on the unfoldment of the pattern which must yet be realised by our own efforts. Nevertheless, some assessment can be attempted, though the full "unimaginably glorious blessings" of the future remain undisclosed.

The significance would seem to have four aspects, related to the individual believers, the whole community, the nation, and the world, but capable of outline with decreasing precision in that order.

For individuals, and more particularly Youth, the Plan has quite clear cut importance, for in the spread of the Cause lies their "greatest chance to build for the future," "their only hope for a stable world in which to live and establish families," "a golden opportunity to arise and fulfil their own cherished plans before it is too late," before the generality of their fellow-

countrymen become "too disillusioned to even seek a solution." For them, as they labour with increasing vigour, will the contrast grow sharper between a restless, visionless, faithless world sunk in blind materialism and their own qualities of clear, steady vision, of vital belief, of incorruptible character, of tempered resolve, of matchless purpose, and unsurpassed range of accomplishments, qualities which will constitute a more and more powerful magnet and haven of refuge.

For the British Bahá'í Community, there seems to be a fourfold significance. After well-nigh fifty years, "a certain lethargy" has been overcome in the face of difficulties of many different kinds—strain from the war, fewness of members, obstacles both personal and collective—until at the end of the Plan an inactive believer, already a contradiction in terms, will be as extinct as the dodo. The chief instruments will have been forged, and a new epoch entered upon, for "the still greater tasks of . . ." the establishment of an administrative nucleus in every county "the essential prelude to the effective proclamation of the Faith to the masses and its subsequent full recognition by all sections and classes". Simultaneously, the capacity will have been released for teaching campaigns beyond the shores of this country in distant territories and parts of the far-flung British Empire. Finally, as earnest of standing in the world community, the number of delegates will be doubled, and later trebled, thereby reinforcing the degree to which the British community will sustain the International House of Justice.

In regard to the nation, the significance is harder to indicate, but is none the less momentous. "Multitudes hunger for the bread of life," which is the love of God, and Bahá'ís are in this day the sole source of guidance to the Kingdom of God in which that love is to be fully found. As the leaven that leaveneth the lump, they have a most vital part to play in the land whose fortunes are inextricably interwoven with their own. Bahá'u'lláh praised Queen Victoria particularly for two things—for the constitutional

government by representation, and for the sense of justice which had liberated slaves. The continuity of praiseworthy qualities, of whatever kind, depends on the establishment of the Cause of God, and upon its success therefore rests the outcome or maintenance of such imponderables as attitude to work, constitutional stability, a firm, respected legal system, even the development of a healthy economic mode of activity. In society itself, the result of the steady organic increase of the Faith in this land must be to reduce the duration of suffering that it must undergo, to allay its hardships, and to enable the healing remedies with which the Bahá'í community is endowed, of reintegration of family life, of organic, harmonious unity, of moral obedience to the law, of recognition of the spiritual reality of man, to take ever greater effect.

Finally, for the world as a whole, the fulfilment of the Plan would seem to have three main

foreseeable effects, apart from the dispersal of some part of the thick veil, "the eyelid of greed," or skin of materialism which now overshadows it. It must hasten the possibility of erection of the International House of Justice, the culminating dome of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, which, with the Guardianship as crown, constitutes "the last refuge of a tottering civilisation," and prepare the underpinning with a sound and healthy pillar of more than quadruple size. Then dependencies, which would inevitably be far behind in the queue for attention by others, will be nurtured by their proper parents and themselves in due time ushered in to take their place in the final efflorescence of the new order. To the world garden will thus be added many new fragrant flowers belonging to the component races of these dependencies, as cultivated by the peoples of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, themselves assured of cultural maturity by the success of the Initial Phase of the Six Year Plan.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

FROM THE GUARDIAN

The Assembly cabled 8th December:

Assembly turns loving hearts divinely appointed Guardian confident protection supreme Covenant Bahá'u'lláh during troubled times.

The Guardian replied 10th December:

Deeply touched Assembly's solicitude all safe heartfelt appreciation.

The Assembly cabled 5th January:

Assembly depending Teaching Conference evoke energy complete Initial Phase Plan begs prayers confirmation. Dunning settled Cardiff devoted love.

The Guardian replied 7th January:

Fervently praying signal success Teaching Conference urge concentrated unrelaxing effort ensure glorious termination Initial Phase historic Plan. Delighted settlement Cardiff deepest love.

Cable from the Guardian dated 20th January, 1948:—

Cheered heartened magnificent success Teaching Conference stop Greatly welcome valuable assistance extended distinguished teacher Dorothy Baker stop Initial phase plan drawing triumphant close stop Signal services rendered sound blessed firmly knit wide awake British Bahá'í community evoking admiration sister communities east west setting stirring example rising generation conferring inestimable blessings posterity meriting applause concourse on high augmenting my debt gratitude stop Praying ardently success newly launched

co-ordinated teaching plan supplicating richest blessings newly arisen pioneers deepest love.

SHOGHI.

This was in reply to a cable sent from the Teaching Conference on the 18th January, as follows:—

Teaching Conference Birmingham fully representative all communities groups British Isles reaching most consistent spiritual heights vibrant with desire service sacrifice attainment goals initial phase sends ardent devotion gratitude most dearly loved Guardian stop Entire assemblage moved depths radiant contributions cherished friend Dorothy Baker Stop Largest number believers any Conference seriously enthusiastically launch far-reaching co-ordinated teaching plan stop 5 Pioneer offers demonstrate ever deepening inner-consciousness sacred requirements plan stop Humbly beseech prayers blessings best beloved.

Letters to the National Youth Committee.

In this issue of the Journal we are publishing the complete series of letters received from the Guardian by the National Youth Committee prior to the letter published in the December Bahá'í Journal. Some of these are addressed to the secretary of the Committee and some to the whole Committee.

4th June, 1946.

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter dated May 16th and written on behalf of the National Youth Committee, was received, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He is very happy to see that the Bahá'í Youth of the British Isles are now organised and working with enthusiasm for the spread of the Faith there. He feels that they have a great and important role to play during the next few years in fulfilling the objectives of the Six Year Plan.

Young people being, for the most part, freer than the older believers, are in a position to arise as pioneers and move to new towns as settlers. A great number of the pioneers in America, who left their native cities and often their native land, in order to fulfil the Seven Year Plan, were young people—some of them so young that the Spiritual Assemblies they helped to establish, they were themselves not yet old enough to be elected to!

The Guardian has enjoyed very much meeting Captain Philip Hainsworth, who had the unique privilege of being in Haifa for over a month, and he feels sure that upon his return to England he will lend great impetus to both the Youth and teaching work.

He heartily approves of your Youth Bulletin project and urges you to place special emphasis on articles that are of pertinent interest to young people, such as those dealing with the economic, social and moral aspects of society.

Assuring you, and all the members of your Committee of his loving prayers for the success of your labours.

Yours in the Faith,

R. RABBANI.

May the Beloved bless your meritorious endeavour, guide every step you take in the path of service, aid you to extend the range of your activities, and enable you to promote, by every means in your power, and in a most effective manner, the vital interests of a Plan with which the immediate destinies of the Members of the English Bahá'í Community, both young and old are so inextricably interwoven.

Your true Brother,

SHOGHI.

26th December, 1946.

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter of September 19th was received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf, and to congratulate you and the other members of your Committee on the excellent first issue of your Bahá'í Youth Bulletin.

This is an important undertaking, and must be established as a firm innovation on the part of the British Bahá'í Community. He hopes it will gradually become the means of interesting and attracting many new souls to the Faith.

In fact, the Youth work everywhere in the Bahá'í World is dear to his heart, and he attaches great importance to it. The young people, who will eventually grow up to shoulder all the work of the Cause, are really its hope, and should be one of the most active factors in its propagation. Through their courageous adherence to the high moral and ethical standards set out by Bahá'u'lláh, and through gaining a mastery of his many, diversified, and profound teachings, they can shape, to a great extent, the development and aid in the rapid expansion of their beloved Faith in the various countries in which they labour. They should be made to realise their responsibility is heavy and their privilege very precious.

He wishes to assure you and all the other members of the National Youth Committee of his most loving prayers for your progress, and for the success of the work you have so enthusiastically and devotedly undertaken.

With warm Bahá'í love,

R. RABBANI.

May the Beloved bless abundantly the work which your Committee has so nobly initiated, remove all obstacles from your path, aid you to realise every hope you cherish, and carry out every plan you conceive, for the furtherance of the interests of our Beloved Faith and of its God-given Institutions.

Your true Brother,

SHOGHI.

7th April, 1947.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letters dated August 10th (from the Secretary) and December 19th and March 18th (from the Business Manager of the Editorial Committee) were received, and as our beloved Guardian is greatly overburdened by his steadily expanding correspondence, he has instructed me to answer these communications all in one.

He was very pleased to receive copies of your "Youth Bulletin," which he thinks is starting out in the right direction; he would like to receive this publication regularly.

The work you are doing is very important, and the British Bahá'í Youth should feel very encouraged to see the way some of their members have arisen and gone forth to pioneer. He hopes others will follow this example in order to ensure the success of the Six Year Plan.

You may be sure his loving prayers are offered for you all in the Holy Shrines.

With Bahá'í greetings,

R. RABBANI.



The First Northampton Spiritual Assembly, established Ridvan 1947.

May the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh sustain, bless and guide you in your notable, meritorious and deeply appreciated activities, aid you to extend the range of your services, and lend a great impetus to the progress of the plan which the English believers are so devotedly and assiduously prosecuting.

Your true and grateful Brother,
SHOGHI.

28th June, 1947.

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your letter, with enclosures, to our beloved Guardian, on behalf of the National Youth Committee and dated February 26th, was received, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf. He did not reply sooner because he is so very busy and overworked, and feels sure you understand the reason for the delay.

The services which the Bahá'í young people are rendering the Cause, not only in England but in Scotland and Eire, please him greatly, as the Youth are the ones who perforce, in the near future, will find themselves carrying on the administrative and teaching work of the Faith, and the sooner they prepare themselves for this heavy responsibility through actual experience in the pioneer field, the better.

He is delighted to see the steady progress of your activities and the way your Bulletin is progressing, and he assures you all of his loving prayers for the success of all your undertakings.

With warmest greetings,

R. RABBANI.

May the Beloved bless continually your meritorious efforts, guide and sustain you in your activities, and aid you to fulfil your heart's desire in the service of His glorious Faith.

Your True Brother,
SHOGHI.

"Vie ye with each other in the service of God and of His Cause."

Between November 1st and January 1st the following Assemblies have contributed to the National Fund:—

Birmingham
Blackburn
Bradford
London
Nottingham
Torquay

CO-ORDINATED TEACHING

With the launching of the Co-ordinated Teaching Plan, a new phase has opened in the teaching of the Faith in these islands, and the foundation has been laid for the gradual realisation of full participation by every believer in the teaching effort. The news of this great development must rejoice the hearts of all the friends, and will certainly carry us nearer maturity than anything since the Six Year Plan itself.

The Plan foreshadows the establishment of regional teaching, inasmuch as at present the country is regarded as six areas. These areas, or regions are as follows:—

Scotland	...Edinburgh.
North	...Blackburn, Blackpool, Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester.
Midlands	...Birmingham, Northampton, Nottingham.
South East	...Bournemouth, London. Norwich.
South-West	...Bristol, Cardiff, Torquay, & Wales ... St. Ives.
Eire	...Dublin, Belfast.

The Co-ordinated Teaching Plan has two aims:

1. To promote a greater nation-wide circulation of teachers to participate in special meetings, for which the receiving community will make special plans and give of its best to make the occasion more than routine. These meetings will include Public Meetings, Symposiums, Semi-

nars, Brains Trusts, Exhibitions, and that valuable new Teaching medium—Dramatic Scripts.

- 2.—To provide a constant interchange of teachers from one community to another on a regional basis, bringing new faces and new life to the communities, and giving experience and confidence to new teachers.

Even in this first stage, before Convention, 34 teachers will circulate to take part in 56 public meetings, 24 firesides and 8 special projects (Seminars, Exhibitions) in 18 towns. More than 50 teachers are available but the regional demand is not yet great enough to use them all.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said "All created things have their degree or stage of maturity." An organism reaches maturity when all its component parts function harmoniously together, to produce that for which the organism was created. The British Bahá'í community has been raised up to carry the message of Bahá'u'lláh to their fellow-countrymen and to proclaim it to the peoples and races of a far flung empire. It will only fulfil its destiny when it too reaches that stage of maturity, and when the whole force of the community can be directed at any point or to any task.

Dear Friends, this Co-ordinated Teaching Plan, if fully supported, may well develop into that powerful instrument with which we can, at the appointed time, fulfil the enormous task envisioned for us by the Guardian.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

TEACHING CONFERENCE, 1948.

The growth of any living thing is a wonder to behold, for with each stage in its development new qualities are made manifest, new forms appear, and a new life surges through each component part of the whole organism. When that living thing is a body of people, the wonder of it all is turned to awe and reverence for the mighty hand of the Creator, Whose outflowing spirit it is that fills with new life, and remoulds the characters of, those puny individuals who form it.

It is with this awe, and reverence, and new life, that we, whose inestimable privilege it was to attend Teaching Conference, returned to our respective homes, strong in the determination to re-dedicate our lives to His Beloved Cause.

This miracle of association, of less than thirty hours duration, brought back to our minds those poignant words of the immortal Nabil, "wholly oblivious of this contingent world, completely immersed in the realms of the spirit, forgetful of the necessity for food, sleep and drink, they would suddenly discover that night had become

day, and that the sun was approaching its zenith . . ." Yes, something approaching that experience was the blessing vouchsafed to us. Even the words of the cable to the Guardian, ". . . reaching most consistent spiritual heights, vibrant with desire service sacrifice . . . entire assemblage moved depths . . ." could merely convey a fraction of the intensity of love and harmony and devotion to the Cause, which was felt at this gathering.

Yet, though heads were in the clouds of spiritual fervour, the feet remained to tread the practical path of sound constructive consultation on the various problems facing the Conference.

It might be true to say, that the very high note struck at the Public Meeting on the Friday evening, when the Birmingham community welcomed Dorothy Baker as their guest speaker, really released in their city a spirit through which the success of the Conference was assured. The audience of eighty-five was unanimous in its appreciation of this radiant visitor who so endeared herself to them, that only with great

reluctance could they be persuaded, an hour after the meeting had terminated, to catch their last buses. Not for one moment during the ensuing week-end was this high note lost. Indeed, during the following morning's informal session, when the recordings of the Centenary Programme in the Temple were played, it soared to a pitch of almost unbearable sublimity. It seemed as though His Holiness the Bab Himself was there, showering His loving blessings upon this Conference to make possible the release of those powers which alone can ensure the success of the Plan so linked with His Own previous Ministry.

The theme of the Teaching Conference was "This Momentous Undertaking" and whilst almost forty of the friends had arrived before the end of this Saturday morning period, the Conference proper was opened at 2 p.m. with an initial attendance of fifty-eight, which increased to sixty-five before the session ended. A total of 85 people attended during the week-end.

The messages and greetings from absent friends and the introducing of every Group and Community in the British Isles, provided the first thrilling half-hour, and this was followed at 2.30 p.m. with the presentation by the National Teaching Committee of the new Co-ordinated Teaching Plan.

After an introductory statement by a member of the Committee on the need for, and the birth of, this Plan, illustrated by a map of the British Isles, which clearly defined the regional grouping for the immediate future, it was offered to the Conference for consultation.

It was at this juncture that the first evidences of the new growth in the community became apparent. The Plan was seized upon, questioned, and so thoroughly examined, that every aspect of its present form, its cost, its comprehensiveness, and its future possibilities, were clearly seen by the entire assemblage. Finally, not only was the Plan accepted and welcomed, but eloquent testimony was paid to its conception and the future teaching possibilities it offered, and this session closed for the evening meal with the feeling that real progress had been made.

The N.S.A. had the remainder of the evening, and opened with a devotional period, attended by eighty Bahá'ís and guests. The readings were designed to bring before the Conference the necessity of "Teaching by Example." After brief testimony to their aptness and the fineness of their presentation, Mrs. Baker spoke with a moving fervour of the need and meaning of the Law of God in His Kingdom, and spoke of the Most Holy Book. This gift to our community

of a vision of the strength, the safety and the law to be found in the Aqdas, and its unswerving, uncompromising justice, drew from those present that yearning to mould their lives upon its pattern, which clearly indicated the new phase now being entered.

It was, however, on Sunday morning, during the session devoted to Pioneering, that for most of the participants the highest note was reached. Here it was that the focussing of our thoughts upon the four Goal Towns of this year were directed in a dramatic and impressive way. The "platform" was taken by the four Goal Towns themselves. Two residents and ten pioneers seated at the head of the Conference, called to the Community for its assistance, placing before it their problems and needs on the one hand, and speaking of the joy, happiness and blessings which are the treasures of the pioneer, on the other. This period, opened by a statement comparing the needs this year with those of last year, presented the Conference with some amazing facts, which on analysis show that 12½% of the British community has arisen to pioneer in this Initial Phase of our Six Year Plan! That is *one* in every eight of the believers you meet in these islands is one of those devoted souls who have "taken up their beds and walked"!! The devotion, the absolute dedication to the Cause, and the straightforward simplicity of the appeal of these wonderful pioneers and residents from Bristol, Cardiff, Dublin and Edinburgh, made a lasting impression on the assembled believers, and there was little wonder that five more offers for pioneering were received during the afternoon.

The grand finale to all this was a brief contribution by Mrs. Dorothy Baker, who once again spoke straight to the point and called for complete, unreserved and unconditioned loyalty to our beloved Guardian, to become his champions and his workers, and follow in the footsteps of our spiritual ancestors who had given up their lives for Bahá'u'lláh. The final reading of the Bab's Farewell address and the following prayer, read so exquisitely after such an experience, brought to a close this part of the Conference, in a silence which could only be broken with sacrilege.

It was then with a feeling of "fullness" that we returned to the Assembly Development Committee's session after lunch, just as though our little containers were filled to overflowing and we could take no more; that anything else must of necessity be in the nature of an anticlimax. But more was still to come. On a quieter, but none the less exciting note, each of the ten Assemblies' representatives reported on their activities, and it was evident that in spite

of the many setbacks, the smallness of numbers and the acute problems facing them all, real progress had been made. Contacts with many different societies and movements had been established, outside platforms taken, civic recognition accorded, new teaching methods tried, youth committees founded, and in one case, so keen were the youth contacts, that instead of allowing the Bahá'í Centre to be closed because of the active members attending Teaching Conference, a meeting was to be held by the non-Bahá'ís with a talk and selected readings by one of themselves!!

So full and interesting were these reports and the brief consultation which followed, that more time had to be used than was allotted.

The final Devotional Meeting maintained the high note throughout, the cable to the Guardian was drafted and approved, and the Conference closed with all participants showing the greatest reluctance to leave. Every single one of them was conscious of the new growth which they had witnessed, and of the new life surging within them, and were humbly thankful for the blessings showered upon them by being granted the privilege of attending so momentous a Conference.

Additions to the Community.

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

Mrs. CarsonBournemouth
Charles DunningManchester
Richard FitzpatrickNottingham
Thomas ParryLiverpool
Isobel RobisonManchester

FOR MEDITATION.

Such is Thy greatness that wert Thou to concentrate the eyes of all men in the eye of one of Thy Servants, and to compress all their hearts within his heart, and wert Thou to enable him to behold within himself all the things Thou hast created through Thy power and fashioned through Thy might, and were he to ponder, throughout eternity, over the realms of Thy creation and the range of Thy handiwork, he would unfailingly discover that there is no created thing but is overshadowed by Thine all-conquering power, and is vitalized through Thine all-embracing sovereignty.

Lauded be Thy name; O Thou Who art my God and throbbest within my heart! Thou art well aware and dost witness that whatsoever shameth them that are dear to Thee must shame also Him Who is the Manifestation of Thyself and the Day-Spring of Thy Revelation. Nay,

(Continued at foot of next column).

SEVEN-YEAR COVENANTS.

Friends have asked regarding the suitability of this form of gift for Bahá'í funds. After enquiry there seems no reason why subscriptions to the National Bahá'í Fund should not be made in this way by any believer who is liable to payment of income tax.

To explain the system briefly, a believer signs an agreement to pay a regular sum out of his taxed income for seven years, or the duration of his lifetime, whichever is the shorter period. Each year on receipt of his payment the N.S.A. can claim back from the Income Tax authorities the amount of Income Tax paid on his donation, thus receiving a considerably larger sum than the contributor nominally gives.

Believers wishing to use this form of donation are reminded that by doing so they enter into a legal obligation to pay the amount for the whole period and should they fail to complete the payments, the tax authorities would probably claim a refund of any tax which they had repaid in respect of that covenant.

A proper form of agreement must be drawn up and signed for each covenant entered into and any friends proposing to enter into such an agreement are asked to communicate with the National Treasurer so that a suitable form of agreement may be arranged.

NATIONAL TREASURER.

(Continued from preceding column).

He is put to greater shame than they when they are led to confess the good things which have escaped them in Thy days.

I render Thee thanks that Thou hast made known unto me such servants as have utterly abolished, by the power of Thy might and Thy sovereignty, the idols of their corrupt desires, and were not kept back by the things which are possessed by Thy creatures from turning in the direction of Thy grace. These have so vehemently rent the veils asunder that the dwellers of the cities of Self have wept, and fear and trembling seized the people of envy, and wickedness who, adorning their heads and their bodies with the emblems of knowledge, have proudly rejected Thee and turned away from Thy beauty.

IN MEMORIAM.

Johnny Marshall of Birmingham and Edinburgh.
"With the joyful tidings of light I hail thee."

LOCAL ASSEMBLY NEWS

It is proposed to include in each number of the Journal a section headed "Local Assembly News." Articles for this section will be requested from individual Assemblies. If any Assembly, however, has news or comments it would like published in the Journal, the Journal Committee will always be ready to consider suitable spontaneous contributions.

How Assembly Status was achieved— NOTTINGHAM.

Nottingham's Bahá'í history started in 1938, when a Persian Bahá'í told a Nottingham lady of the Faith, who interested Mrs. Lacey at Ilkeston, 10 miles away. She accepted the Faith, June, 1940. Then Mr. and Mrs. Nazar, from Manchester, came to reside 10 miles the other side of Nottingham. They spread the Message and contacted Mrs. Lacey.

In 1942, the N.S.A. advertised the Faith in the provinces. Nottingham responded more than elsewhere; one enquirer is now Bahá'í. A series of Public Meetings with visiting speakers was held, and one believer first heard of the Faith thus. The N.S.A. sent Mrs. Brown and Dorothy Cansdale, of London, to visit the friends and to encourage teaching. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Lacey arranged Public Meetings, publicity and a shop display at Ilkeston. Much interest was taken, but follow-up work was lacking.

At Convention, 1944, the Six Year Plan was born.

In October, 1945, Mrs. Brown came to Nottingham to pioneer. Whilst finding a room for meetings—a great difficulty—she gave the message to a number of fellow hotel visitors, and placed "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era" in the City library. She gathered the Friends together for Nineteen Day Feasts and Anniversaries, in spite of long distances and winter conditions. A series of weekly Public Meetings was held in Ilkeston in December and January. Ernest Lacey, Youth, then declared, but the Nazars left for London. In February, Mr. Lacey became Bahá'í. About then, Mr. Sabri from Cairo came to study at Loughborough, 15 miles away. He attended the gatherings. A room was found for meetings, and on February 17th, 1946, regular fortnightly Public Meetings started. All contacts through advertisements and Public Meetings in 1942/3 were invited: three came, of whom Mr. Maxfield declared in May, and Mrs. Keery, in October. Both attended Summer School. The N.S.A. had already chosen Nottingham as a Goal Town—a great honour,—and the Guardian approved!

The Summer of 1946 was difficult; the meeting-room proved unsatisfactory. Meetings were held at the home of Mrs. Brown for a while, then a second room proved too noisy, but all went to Summer School and felt strengthened. Then

Mrs. Brown married Sir William Hornwell, and meetings were held in their home, until November, when the present room was found.

Two more pioneers, Philip Hainsworth and Richard Backwell, arrived in the autumn. Winter 1946/7 was very severe, but a regular weekly Fireside and Study Group was carried on at the home of Mrs. Keery, as well as all the other activities.

Highlights in development have been visits from pioneers, travellers and settlers from overseas. Each left a mark in Nottingham, for souls have drawn nearer because of their visits.

In January, 1947, John Henshaw declared—the third Nottingham resident. The goal was attained. The news was joyfully communicated by cable to the Guardian and the following reply was received:—

"Delighted urge maintain status consolidate fervent prayers."

An amplifying letter, subsequently sent, elicited an invaluable reply, dated April 6th, 1947:—

Dear Bahá'í friends,

Your letter, dated February 16th, was received and read by our beloved Guardian with great joy, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

The news of your Group having reached Assembly status was a source of deep satisfaction to him, and demonstrates what the friends can do, once they put their shoulders to the wheel.

You have every reason to feel proud of your achievement, and he hopes you will, through your correspondence and contacts with your fellow-believers, encourage them to follow your example and forge ahead, in spite of every obstacle, with determination, confident that once we do our part, God is never failing in His.

He hopes your numbers will steadily increase, and that many young people will be attracted to the Faith, as the part they have to play is very great, and, also, their need of the Faith very great.

You may be sure his loving prayers will be offered for you, and for the success of your labours, in the Holy Shrines.

With Bahá'í love,

R. RABBANI.

May the Beloved bless your efforts in the service of our beloved Faith, aid you to deepen your knowledge of the essentials of His World Order, to increase your members, to fulfil every desire you cherish for its promotion and consolidation.

Your true Brother,
SHOGHI.

Contribution to the Six Year Plan— MANCHESTER.

Up to date, Manchester has rejoiced in the fact that eight pioneers under the Six Year Plan have sprung from this community.

Claire Gung, who was one of the early venturers, went to Northampton, endured the trials that face most pioneers and was blessed and guided as all pioneers are who "arise to serve Him;"

Frank Leetch, who offered from his sick-bed in hospital to pioneer and was encouraged by his Bahá'í wife, making two further believers in Blackburn during the first crucial phase of the Plan;

Doris Gould who, venturing into the stronghold of Irish Catholicism, did excellent work in helping to establish the Dublin community;

Fred Stahler, who travelled to Cardiff and has become one of the indefatigables of that community;

Peter Robinson, who declared himself in Manchester and soon after answered the call for pioneers and is now helping to consolidate the Bristol community;

Charles Dunning, who made the momentous offer to surrender one of his eyes for the benefit of a stranger in hospital who had lost both in an accident, volunteered without hesitation to pioneer in a virgin territory soon after declaring himself a Bahá'í. He is going to Belfast via

Cardiff and will leave many precious memories with the Manchester community;

Mrs. Jones, who went on a limited pioneering project to Blackburn in time of great need.

Manchester has also sent travelling teachers to speak in goal towns. Alfred Sugar, Sam Husdan and Louis Ross-Enfield have spoken in Leeds, Blackburn and Liverpool, where Mary Coulson, her daughter Joan, John Craven and Florence Bladon, have all performed yeoman service. The latter is also a member of the National Youth Committee, while John Craven is our Pioneer Secretary and maintains contact with the pioneers we have sent out. It is hoped that an increasing panel of travelling teachers will be available from Manchester under the Co-ordinated Teaching Plan for the British Isles. Extended teaching work has been performed regularly by Alfred Sugar at a weekly fireside discussion circle of great value. It has been the means of teaching the Faith to interested people in and around Altrincham.

Manchester is also the home of the Bahá'í Publishing Trust, where Reg. Coulson, Robert Yool, Albert Joseph and Betty Yool are busily occupied in feeding new communities with the wholesome food of Bahá'í literature. The publication and distribution of regular news bulletins by Manchester has also helped to consolidate this community, enliven others, improve our relationship with contacts and explain the needs of the Six Year Plan.

Manchester, as an old community, sends greetings and blessings to her sons and daughters who are bearing the Bahá'í standard in different parts of the British Isles, and salutes all workers who are contributing to the onward march of our Beloved Cause. Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá.

BAHÁ'Í WORLD

BELGIUM. Brussels has its first declared believer, Mrs. Lea Nys, and Doris Lohse has arrived to serve there as additional pioneer.

DENMARK. Nancy Gates is latest pioneer to Copenhagen.

EGYPT AND SUDAN. At Convention last year the four chief recommendations for the N.S.A. were:—

- (1) To prepare a Bahá'í booklet in Arabic in simple clear effective language so as to appeal to the oriental reader with an Arab-Moslem background.

- (2) To continue making every effort to prevail on the non-Bahá'í wife of the late 'Abdu'l Jalil Bey Said, Hand of the Cause, to agree to the transfer of his remains from the Moslem cemetery, where he is now buried, to the Bahá'í cemetery.

- (3) To confer with one of the best legal authorities on the ways and means of making a new approach to the Egyptian Government to reconsider the restrictive laws and exclusive decrees passed against the Egyptian believers in the last few years.

- (4) To consider specific ways of eventually buying the lands surrounding the Haziratu'l-Quds.

HOLLAND. Hans Slim is the new believer reported from Holland and Valerie Nichols the new additional pioneer in Amsterdam replacing John Carre who has been transferred elsewhere.

INDIA, PAKISTAN AND BURMA. Further news of the effect of the disturbances of the past six months reveal a grievous tale of troubles.

- (1) Two Bahá'ís lost their lives.
- (2) The former headquarters in Old Delhi, which had been turned over to the Publishing Committee, was attacked by a mob. The furniture, fittings and books, which included the bulk of the stock of published books and the National Library, were ransacked. The place was also illegally occupied by some refugees.
- (3) Another place in Old Delhi, temporarily rented for use during transfer of National headquarters to the capital, was also plundered of all contents save the stock of books. Fortunately most of the effects had been moved in time.
- (4) The local Haziratu'l-Quds at Kariafghanan recently built, was unlawfully occupied. The friends being in danger of their lives had to abandon their homes.
- (5) A business premise at Delhi, donated as an offering to the National Hazira Fund, was looted and illegally occupied.
- (6) Bangalore L.S.A. lost by plundering some of their stock of literature.
- (7) At Quetta the mob fired the printing press where the copies of the Pushtoo version of New Era had been given for binding and 800 copies were burnt.
- (8) The Jodhpur and Kariafghanan Assemblies are no more owing to the dispersion of the friends in both places.
- (9) Some of the Delhi friends have been denuded of almost all their worldly possessions.

In all this sea of distress two things of contrasting news are reported. The original Tablets and Epistles had been safely deposited, and the necessary preliminary funds for the purchase of the National Headquarters have been accumulated.

ITALY. With the declaration of Sr. Tomaso Tricorri there are now three native believers in Rome and a group of seven in that city. A new translation of the "New Era" has just come out of press.

JAPAN. Fujita has started a Bahá'í Centre at Yanai. It is reported that Agnes Alexander's library of Bahá'í books in Tokyo is intact. The

house where it was stored when she left Japan for Palestine in 1937 is the only one not bombed in that district. The library contains books published from the earliest days and is said to be in good condition.

LUXEMBURG. David Ned Blackmer is the group's newest additional pioneer.

NORWAY. By October there were five in the Oslo group, including Mildred Clark, new pioneer from U.S.A. and Elsa Hornemann, a native Norwegian, who became a Bahá'í in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

PERSIA. The house of the Imám-i-Jum'ih in Isfahan where the Báb stayed for 40 days during his sojourn in Isfahan (see "Dawn-breakers," pp 199-201, for photographs and references) has come into Bahá'í possession through purchase. The house is recognised as one of the finest in all Persia as to construction, interior decoration and ornamentation. The friends in Persia have also embarked on a Four Year Plan specially designed to promote the progress of the Bahá'í women in that country. Its four main purposes are to increase the number of women teachers, to eliminate illiteracy, to

advance the knowledge of health and hygiene, and to ensure attention to education of Bahá'í girls.

POLAND. Two new Polish believers, Professor Wolski of Warsaw, and Professor Wieslaw Jezierski of Krakow, both first heard of the Cause from the Geneva teaching bulletin in Esperanto, "Bahaaaj Informoj."

SPAIN. There are now nine native declared believers in Madrid, as reported by Virginia Orbison.

SWEDEN. Since the declaration at the end of July of the first native believer there have been six others, thus bringing the number to ten in Stockholm. Henry Jarvis is itinerant pioneer there and their latest pioneer is Miss Amelia Bowman.

SWITZERLAND. A most successful first Swiss Summer School was held on the last week-end of September at Heerbrugg, a little village above Rheineck overlooking the Rhine valley. There were nineteen at the Feast of Mashíyyat to conclude it. Two new pioneers, Mrs. Anna Kunz and Mildred Elmer, have raised the Berne Group to five.

U.S.A. Recent numbers of the Chicago Bahá'í News have told of two specially notable matters. Twelve Omaha Indians simultaneously expressed their wish to become Bahá'ís. Mr. Charles Mason Remey has been commissioned by the Guardian to draw plans for the Bahá'í House of Worship to be built on Mt. Carmel.