

# BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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## FROM THE GUARDIAN

12th October, 1946.

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letters dated June 3rd and 26th, and July 20th and 25th, together with their enclosure, have been received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

Regarding the various points you raised:

Unless the Russian New Era is hopelessly bad, the Guardian advises it nevertheless be made use of, as it will be some time before the funds of the Cause can be used for a new edition. If the mistakes are mostly in the nature of mistranslations of certain important terms, it might be possible for you, in conjunction with Mrs. Lynch, to have printed or mimeographed a list of errata, and stick it in the book; in this way Russian speaking people will not be denied some literature on the Faith, however inadequate.

The attitude of the friends towards orientals should be one of *great* caution, according to the Master's own often-repeated and explicit instructions and warnings. Any believer in good standing would not leave his home community without a letter of credentials, and certainly no Persians, claiming to be Bahá'ís, but lacking credentials, should be accepted until the Persian N.S.A. has clarified their status. They can, naturally, attend public meetings, but should not be permitted to come to the 19-day Feasts; the friends may associate with them, but should be *very cautious*, bearing in mind that many orientals, who scorned or were even actively against the Cause while living in the East, now find it convenient to pass as believers or friends of the Faith in a Western country where they are strangers.

As regards your question about Bahá'í Procedure: the present statement can certainly be amplified to include the United Nations Organisation.

He feels that your Assembly should constantly, through its communications to the friends and its committees, and in every way possible, stir

the British Bahá'í Community to a sense of the great urgency of their pioneer activities; and the need for more pioneers. They now have a golden opportunity to arise and fulfil their own cherished plans before it is too late. In the future we may well look back upon these present days and see that in them lay our greatest chance to build for the future and to call people to the Faith while they were still deeply impressed with the tragedy and futility of war, and before they become too engulfed in post war problems, or too bitterly disillusioned by the trend of world affairs to even seek a solution. More believers must arise, and, putting their trust in Bahá'u'lláh, do their duty to the Faith they believe in and love so dearly. The youth in particular should be encouraged to enter this field of service, for the spread of the Cause is their only hope for a stable world in which to live and establish families of their own.

His loving prayers are with you all in your many services to the Cause of God, and he is greatly encouraged by the way the work is going forward in England.

With Bahá'í love,

R. RABBANI.

Dear and valued co-workers:

The evidence of intensified activity and of notable progress on the part of the English believers in recent months have rejoiced my heart and deepened my feelings of admiration and gratitude for the manner in which they are discharging, individually and collectively, their high responsibilities. I long to hear of the steady progress of their plan, and will continue to pray for the removal of every obstacle in their path. However considerable their recent achievements, they are still in the initial stage of their great unfolding mission, and are not even capable as yet of visualising the possibilities or of estimating the consequences of their present day labours. The consummation of their present task will mark the opening of a new era in the



development of their community, and will signalise the inauguration of a great epoch in the history of the Faith in their land—an epoch that must witness the universal recognition of their Cause and the proclamation of its truths, its claims and tenets, to the masses of their countrymen throughout the British Isles. The Plan they are now prosecuting will provide the machinery and establish the basic structure that will enable them to arouse the people among all sections of the population, and aid them, systematically and gradually, to recognise Bahá'u'lláh, and support the nascent institutions of this World Order. Now, it is their duty to lay an unassailable foundation for the great work that is to be undertaken in the future. There is no time to lose, theirs is a priceless opportunity and a great privilege. They must neither vacillate nor falter. They must determinedly persevere until their immediate and distant goals have been attained.

SHOGHI.

From its meeting on 10th November, the

## “A PRICELESS OPPORTUNITY.”

Beloved Friends,

The Guardian's message of October 12th was sent to you as soon as it was received, and it is printed in this issue of the Journal. “In the future,” says the Guardian, “we may well look back upon these present days and see that in them lay our greatest chance to build for the future and to call the people to the Faith while they were still deeply impressed with the tragedy and futility of war, and before they became too engulfed in post-war problems, or too bitterly disillusioned by the trend of world affairs to even seek a solution.” He also tells us to arise and do our duty “before it is too late” and that “the only hope for a stable world” is “the spread of the Cause.”

Now, dear friends, all this means that unless we, to whom God in His mercy has given the supreme bounty of recognising Him in His mighty Day, dedicate our whole being to His service, and arise unitedly, joyously and confidently to bring to our fellow men the healing powers of the Word of God, peril upon peril will beset the fortunes of mankind. It is this sense of urgency which today informs the efforts of the servants of God, over the entire globe. Will we, can we, conscious as we are of the plight of the world and the responsibilities we have towards our fellow-men, rest one minute idle in the task entrusted to our care? Will we, can we neglect to fall into pace with the onward march of the Cause of God throughout the world?

To every individual, to every group, to every people comes once the greatest opportunity of their lives. Should they grasp it with the whole intensity of their existence they would rise and triumph and attain higher planes, and should

National Assembly sent this cable:

“Assembly in session sends beloved Guardian heartfelt gratitude new impetus on-march Plan contained your recent message. Entire deliberations focussed implementation. Only eight believers required—complete this year's goal. Loving devotion.—National Assembly.”

To which the Guardian replied on 15th November:

“Overjoyed. Marvel magnificent success. Urge after attainment this year's goal concentration Ireland, Scotland, Wales. Longing formation nuclei these virgin territories. Ardently praying.—Shoghi.”

The Assembly cabled back on 17th November:

“Assembly express eternal gratitude inspiring message. Asks permission dedicate Teaching Conference to 25th anniversary Guardianship. Loving Devotion.”

And the Guardian answered on 21st November:

“Approve. Loving appreciation. Praying success.—Shoghi.”

they let it slip out of their hands, they sink and lose the battle of life.

Beloved friends, this is that supreme moment in the life of our Community. Let us make no mistake. If by Ridván 1950, that is three years and four months hence, the goals of the Six Year Plan are not fully and completely achieved, this community will become stagnant and ineffective for many many years to come.

Remember the words of the Báb addressed to the letters of the living, his chosen disciples: “Beware lest by turning back, He may change you for another people who shall not be your like, and who shall take you from the Kingdom of God.”

Our path is set, and the harvest that awaits us at its end is a prize of inestimable value. Our Beloved Guardian has repeatedly told us that no matter how toilsome the journey, and no matter how numerous and seemingly insurmountable the obstacles in the way, devoted and zealous service and sacrifices made willingly and gratefully will draw to our aid and succour the powers of the divine world. The Grace of Bahá'u'lláh is infinite, and His power is all-conquering. Should we do our part, that grace and that power would assuredly reach us.

When the American believers were engaged in their first Seven Year Plan, the Guardian speaking of the divine power ready and at hand to confirm and sustain their labours, made this dynamic challenge. “Let the doubter arise and himself verify the truth of these statements.” And were proof to be needed, the triumphant conclusion of the first Seven Year Plan in the Americas, provides abundant testimony.

Beloved friends, within the last twelve months



we have taken great strides forward. We have indeed come a long way, and the successful termination of the first stage of the Six Year Plan is in full sight. Witness the Guardian's words in his cable of last November: "Overjoyed. Marvel magnificent success . . . loving admiration." He, the Guardian of the Cause, gives us constantly of his love, help and attention.

But in spite of all the progress so far registered, the task ahead of us is still immense and breathtaking. It requires the services of every one of us to the last ounce of our energy. The door of opportunity is flung wide open before our face,

by the grace of Him who is the Author of our being. Let us march in and through and forward with courage, determination and certitude. Let us pioneer as never before. Let us generously support the Funds of the Cause as never before. Let us travel in the teaching field as never before. Let us work in the administrative agencies of the Cause as never before.

We stand or fall by the Six Year Plan. "They must neither vacillate or falter. They must determinedly persevere until their immediate and distant goals have been attained," says the Guardian of the Cause.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

### AN INVITATION TO CONSULT.

The foremost need of the Cause to-day is for pioneers. Elsewhere in this issue we have carefully presented the situation in the goal towns. The Committee is aware that many friends may wish to pioneer, who yet feel that they cannot do so because of the needs of their own Bahá'í communities, or because of pressing personal problems. In such cases, we earnestly invite the friends to consult with the Committee, for the Guardian has assured us that "Bahá'u'lláh has expressly laid down the law of consultation and never indicated that anything else superseded it." We are confident that many problems can be solved by this means, and the friends be assured that their services are being utilised in the best way for the Six Year Plan. The address of our Secretary is: Mrs. David Hofman, 10, Rotton Park Road, Birmingham, 16.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

### PIONEERS—PIONEERS—PIONEERS !

In the seven months since last Convention (this is written in early December), the British Bahá'ís have achieved, in the words of our beloved Guardian, a "magnificent success." The goals of this crucial year are within our grasp. Only seven Bahá'ís are needed to ensure the formation of the first five Spiritual Assemblies of the Six Year Plan.

By what means have we come so far? And by what means shall we attain both our "immediate and distant goals"? The answer is clear: through the mobilisation of all resources to focus them on the tasks which, one by one, must be attempted and won. If this is true, as we know it is, of a nation in war, how much greater is the necessity for a national community numbering only 183 adults and 9 youth—when setting out upon a project which calls for no less than the "universal recognition of their Cause and the proclamation of its truths, its claims and tenets, to the masses of their countrymen throughout the British Isles."

Dear friends, ours is a "heavenly army," guided and confirmed by a Divine power, but like any army its life and success are based upon three obvious factors: man-power, funds, and organisation. Let us look for a moment at its man-power. What is the situation in the goal towns?

Briefly, since the Annual Teaching Conference less than a year ago, the number of believers in

goal towns has been more than doubled. New declarations have added 12 voting Bahá'ís and 3 youth. There have been 10 pioneers (11 counting Bournemouth). By transfer and settlement 6 believers have been added. No previous year of the Plan, indeed, no year in the History of the Cause in Britain has produced equivalent results. The detailed story is reflected in this simple comparison of believers in the goal towns, as of January and December, 1946:

		JANUARY, 1946.		DECEMBER, 1946.	
GOAL TOWN.		ADULTS	YOUTH	ADULTS	YOUTH
1. Northampton	7	1	10	1	
2. Blackburn	4	1	6	1	
3. Nottingham	2	—	8	1	
4. Leeds	5	—	7	1	
5. Birmingham	2	—	8	—	
Sub-Total for					
Five Towns	20	2	39	4	
6. Liverpool	1	—	3	1	
7. St. Ives	2	—	2	—	
8. Bristol	1	—	3	—	
9. Blackpool	1	—	1	1	
10. Dublin	—	—	1	—	
11. Edinburgh	—	—	2	—	
Total for					
all Towns	25	2	51	6	

In human terms, what do these figures mean? How have we doubled the number of Bahá'ís in the goal towns and (by Convention, 1947) the number of Spiritual Assemblies in the British



Isles?

(1) By the audacity of 13 pioneers, 11 since last July, who have settled in 7 goal towns during the second and third year of the Plan. These are friends whom the Guardian's words have impelled to ignore the uncertainties of housing and employment, and to break old ties; who are finding in active service on the pioneer front a new security and a deep spiritual joy. They are the first volunteers whose number must be speedily multiplied. Among them are two believers from Canada and California, who have travelled as much as 6,000 miles to support the Six Year Plan. Such is the magnetic power of the Guardian's call, repeated anew and with great urgency: **"More believers must arise, and putting their trust in Bahá'u'lláh, do their duty to the Faith they believe in and love so dearly."**

(2) By the loyalty of 25 adult Bahá'ís and 2 youth, who at the time of last year's Teaching Conference were living in the goal towns chosen for the initial phase. These are the resident believers who are, above all, the backbone of our teaching effort. Every one of them counts as a pioneer or a new believer, for the loss of any one would mean that a replacement would be immediately necessary. These are the friends who have volunteered to work for the Faith at a pace and with a dedication exceeding that which many in established communities require of themselves. These are the friends who have not moved from their posts, who in some cases have rejected better opportunities and subordinated the claims of personal interest to the paramount claim of Bahá'u'lláh. The resident Bahá'ís, every one, are veterans on whom the entire national community depends for the ultimate success of the Six Year Plan.

(3) By the receptiveness of 15 students and inquirers, confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh to join in the struggle for the rebirth of mankind. Already they constitute almost a fourth of our strength in the goal towns. Quickened to life in a crucial hour, they are already serving with remarkable spirit and maturity. They are a promise for the future and a witness to the dynamic power of a Faith destined to regenerate the entire world.

Here then is the method which has brought us to the threshold of victory in the first five goal towns. A band of 57 Bahá'ís—adults and youth, pioneers, residents, and new believers—has been raised up to carry the brunt of this spiritual struggle. In the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: **"These souls are the armies of God and the conquerors of the East and the West . . . Each one is holding in his hand a trumpet, blowing the breath of life over all the regions."** They are the first ranks, whose numbers must increase more than three-fold to win the 19 goal towns of the Six Year Plan.

For it is a striking and sobering fact that, almost mid-way in the Plan, we have achieved as yet only 28% of our total task!

We would be truly overawed by this prospect, were it not for the experience of this crucial year, which has proved beyond doubt that the goals of the Plan are within our reach. The method in future is the same as in the past; we must maintain the same rate of pioneering, the same confirmation of new believers. That there is a direct relation between them is proved in these sentences written by Shoghi Effendi to an American pioneer: "It is interesting to note that no sooner had believers sacrificed themselves by moving . . . to make up the number for an Assembly than new souls became confirmed and the Cause made a leap forward there. Such things should be a lesson to the friends everywhere in sacrifice and co-operation, perseverance and faith."

This is the blessed hour in the history of the Cause. As we turn our thoughts to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Guardianship, we can see in vivid and irrefutable terms the evidence of Divine Guidance to mankind, the solidly-rising structure of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh around the world. Ours is a major sector in this battle for life. We fight in an army undefeated and undefeatable. Already the Guardian is leading us beyond our first objectives, fixing our eyes on virgin territories in Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

The need is for Pioneers—Pioneers—Pioneers! "There is no time to lose." Who will be the next to answer the Guardian's call?

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

### GOAL TOWNS.

At the beginning of this Bahá'í Year the Guardian gave the National Assembly permission to substitute another goal town for Cardiff, if that seemed desirable. The Assembly delayed coming to a final decision for some months in order to be sure of choosing the most suitable place. At their meeting in November it was decided to make Bristol the ninth goal town. The goal towns so far adopted are therefore:—Birmingham, Blackburn, Leeds, Northampton, Nottingham, Blackpool, Bristol, Liverpool and St. Ives. The first five are the goal towns for this year, and work is also going on in Dublin and Edinburgh towards the formation of the nuclei of which the Guardian is longing to hear.

STOP PRESS. At its meeting on December 22nd, the Assembly adopted Dublin, Edinburgh and Cardiff as additional goal towns in the Plan.

### BOURNEMOUTH.

In addition to the nineteen goals of the Six Year Plan, the Guardian has assigned us the task of consolidating the two communities of Bournemouth and Torquay. It has been found



necessary for Bournemouth to revert temporarily to Group status and therefore the re-establishment of this Spiritual Assembly has equal priority with the Six Year Plan.

#### **NORTHAMPTON CABLES THE GUARDIAN.**

In October the Northampton Group enrolled their ninth member and cabled the Guardian "Northampton Group joyfully reports requisite membership first new Assembly now accomplished. Earnestly beg prayers beloved Guardian confirmation increase membership. Devoted greetings."

To this the Guardian replied "Rejoice historic accomplishment. Consolidation imperative. Praying fervently success increase membership. Love Shoghi."

The stress which the Guardian places on consolidation and increase of membership is of the greatest importance.

Other Goal Towns please note!

#### **NEW BELIEVERS.**

We have now received registration cards from the following new believers, whom we welcome into the British Bahá'í community: Mrs. Betty Reed of Northampton; Mrs. Edna Armitage of Blackburn; Miss Joan Coulson (Youth) of Manchester; and Mrs. Henrietta Keery of Nottingham.

#### **VISITORS.**

We welcome joyfully Mrs. Prudence George and Miss Isobel Locke who have come from America to join in the work for our Six Year Plan. Both are British by birth. Mrs. George, who comes from Canada, will help Blackburn to establish their assembly this year and Miss Locke, who comes from California, is going to Scotland to assist in establishing a nucleus there. Miss Honor Kempton is also here on a short visit before taking up her duties as a pioneer on the European continent, and it is expected that most of the friends living in communities will have an opportunity to meet her. She, Mrs. George and Miss Locke all have the Guardian's approval of their visits.

Another recent visitor has been Mr. Rouhollah Rahmani, of Persia, who was in London for a few days on his way home from the United States. The visit of Miss Edna True, Chairman of the European Teaching Committee and member of the American National Assembly, is referred to elsewhere in this Journal.

#### **"O MY SERVANTS"**

The one true God is My witness! This most great, this fathomless and surging Ocean is near, astonishingly near, unto you. Behold it is closer to you than your life-vein! Swift as the twinkling of an eye ye can, if ye but wish it, reach and partake of this imperishable favour, this God-given grace, this incorruptible gift, this most potent and unspeakably glorious bounty."

(GLEANINGS).

#### **IMPORTANT NOTICE.**

We very much regret to announce that Mr. Norton has had to resign from the National Assembly owing to ill-health. His doctor has ordered him complete rest and has told Mrs. Norton that she must make herself free to look after him. She has therefore had to resign from the National Teaching Committee.

The new Chairman of the Teaching Committee is Mrs. Basil Hall. The new member of the National Assembly will be announced when a by-election has been held.

The Assembly considers Mr. Norton's illness a serious setback to the Six Year Plan and has asked the Guardian for his prayers, that both he and Mrs. Norton may soon be back in the field of service.

#### **WEDDING.**

Mrs. K. V. Brown was married to Sir William Hornell at the London Bahá'í Centre in August. We regret that this announcement was by an oversight omitted from the November Journal

#### **IN MEMORIAM.**

*"I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve?"*

Mr. G. H. Hainsworth of Bradford, October, 1946.

#### **EUROPEAN CONTACTS.**

The National Assembly had the pleasure, on November 17th, of consulting with Miss Edna True, Chairman of the European Teaching Committee of America, concerning plans for co-operation between the Committee and the Bahá'í Institutions of the British Isles in accordance with the Guardian's expressed wish. Arrangements were made for the interchange of information about contacts through the British National Assembly and the Geneva Office of the European Teaching Committee. Members of the Bahá'í Community are particularly asked not to put contacts directly in touch with the Committee or any of its pioneers, but to send the necessary information to the British National Assembly, as otherwise confusion may arise.

#### **BRAILLE BOOKS.**

The following books in Braille have been presented to us by the American Bahá'í Committee for the blind and have been placed in the National Lending library:

Bahá'í Faith pamphlet (American version) in Grade 1½;

Reality of Man in Grade 1½;

The Hidden Words in Grade 2.

We are expecting soon also

Kitab-i-Iqan in Grade 2.

Mr. and Mrs. Stone, of Bradford, are now transcribing the following books which will be added to the National lending library when ready:

Bahá'í Faith pamphlet (British version);

This Momentous Hour;

Bahá'í Teachings on Economics.



# THE FRAGRANCE OF LETTERS

By Ruhíyyih Khánum.

We are glad to take this opportunity of reproducing the following article by Ruhíyyih Khánum, which appeared in last January's issue of the Australian "Herald of the South." This number of "Bahá'í Journal" has been made specially large in order that the whole of the article may be included.

From all over the world letters stream into the Guardian's mail bag. Many of them set forth the problems in the life of some individual who no longer feels able to cope alone with his difficulties, sorrows or perplexities, and turns with a full heart to the Head of his Faith for help in his hour of need. But many others tell tales of victory, of unquenchable devotion to the Cause of God, of gladness and of gratitude. Some of the passages in these latter kind of letters are worthy indeed of being shared with others who toil in the Vineyard of God all over the world, and of serving to inspire their efforts and cheer their hearts. A few are gleaned from the swelling number of local News Letters and circulars which reach Haifa. All are naturally published with the knowledge of the Guardian.

From the islands of the Caribbean Sea; from the uplands of Central America; from Alaska, England, Australia, the letters pour in from every point of the compass—and have during all the war years—a rain of white sheets that bear witness to the greatness of faith and the vitalising effect a new World Religion is having on the minds and hearts of its followers. Some from scholars, some from humble souls scarce able to express the emotions that well up within them, their very handicap seeming to render infinitely more precious that which they do write—all filled with the same determination, the same love, and the same conviction.

A pioneer, writing from a South American Republic, where she had undergone grave hardships from the tropical climate and primitive conditions, and who was now so dangerously ill that it was questionable if she would reach the United States in time for a serious operation, wrote: "If by chance my body should be left in this land, my blood will still cry out the glad tidings of Bahá'u'lláh. May His will be done in all the lives!" The echo is the same that has rung down the centuries in the wake of every world religion. Deeds of religious heroism are not dead. They surged in Persia like a sea less than a hundred years ago; they surge on now in the West and the South, wherever the name of Bahá is raised.

"Tuluksak." Where is Tuluksak? Let the pioneer speak for herself: "Tuluksak is quite isolated in a way as the nearest post office is

twenty miles away, the nearest hospital and doctor are about eighty miles away in Bethel, and the nearest real cities are Anchorage and Fairbanks, 400 and 600 miles away respectively. We are dependent on passing travellers, by boat in summer and dogteam in winter, for mail, service, etc. . . . It is a wonderful experience to be here, and my hope is that I can further the teachings in this section . . . Tuluksak is a nice little village . . . of about eighty-five Eskimos, an old white trader, and myself. I have now been appointed (as school teacher) for the duration of the war.

"I have obtained a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and this is arousing great curiosity among the Eskimos. I think one reason is that He is dark like them, and another that His gaze follows you no matter what angle you view the picture from . . . The big problem is their lack of English . . . The Eskimo language is not written down, and is a very difficult one to learn, although I am trying to learn as much as I can. . . . I feel very close to these Eskimos and like them tremendously, and I believe that they like me . . . but I realise it will probably take a long time before they accept me . . . I think they are afraid of being made fun of, and being taken advantage of, because so many white traders in the past have taken advantage of them." She ends her letter with the simple words: "The Bahá'í faith means everything to me."

The Bahá'ís are not a quiescent group of people, they think about their Faith and keep abreast of it. It is no mere lip service which they render their religion, as is clearly shown by the observations of this believer: "After the Master's passing I seemed to feel a tendency among the Bahá'ís to emphasise the personal and the miraculous. The group seemed to be becoming ingrown and to take on the qualities of a minor cult. I found, when I returned from my wandering, that the boundaries had been widened astonishingly, and I was ashamed at my lack of faith. Great winds had swept through the Cause, freshening it. It had become an affair of world importance, rather than a mere aid to personal happiness. I, who have always hated organisation, have become enthusiastic about the Bahá'í Administration. To me it is the perfect instrument for the expression of the laws of Bahá-u'lláh . . . Moreover, it is the only way the people can be schooled for the Kingdom of God on earth. My experience as a member of the U—Spiritual Assembly has made me increasingly aware of the power of the Administration to cause individual and communal growth."



News from La Paz, Bolivia—a most difficult country for outsiders to live in as those not born to the extreme altitude often develop mountain sickness and find a prolonged stay at that height impossible. But the young Bahá'í woman pioneering there voices no complaint; on the contrary: "It has been a joy and a tremendous privilege to be here, and as time goes by I only feel a deeper love and a more urgent desire to be able, with the small but devoted group of Bahá'ís E— ushered into the Faith, to serve this country and to make to shine within it the Light of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, which it needs so very much . . . Oh, beloved Guardian, what a place for a Bahá'í group; what a place for the great life-giving principles of love and justice which the Cause not only embodies, but makes dynamic in every life which sincerely seeks this universal truth and consecrates its energies to it. . . .

"One becomes weary here with little or no exertion, and when night comes with possible leisure one is often too exhausted to do more than eat the late dinner and go to rest and sleep. Living constantly at an altitude of twelve thousand feet is like living on a mountain top. But how I love it—how I wish I could describe its blue, blue skies, its pure air, brilliant sunshine, and the majesty of the Cordillera of the Andes . . . With my whole heart and soul I am prepared to remain and share here the priceless gift of Bahá'u'lláh, which came to me seven years ago, and which is my life and the life of the world.

"Through this very small pioneer the Bolivian Bahá'ís send you their greetings of loyalty and devotion to the Cause they have accepted; and the writer adds her own immense joy in the serving of these friends, this land, these people, and lastly, and firstly, the inexpressible thankfulness to be able to give what one has to the life which is life indeed."

Such are some of the physical hardships being met by Bahá'ís with not only a spirit of courage but of joy. In other places they come up against the high prickly walls of intense racial prejudice. But these hindrances, too, are being overcome as excerpts from letters written from the Southern United States prove: "The South is still difficult territory, although I can see the traditional tendencies and prejudice becoming less strong. We had this fact demonstrated at the public lecture in Jackson (Mississippi). I invited an interested coloured girl . . . to attend the lecture, which was held in the ballroom of the hotel. Never before had a coloured person been admitted as a guest on this floor. She sat on the front row and in order to make her feel she was wanted, I introduced her to the two people who sat next to her. Their attitude was most friendly. Later, when the meeting was opened for questions, I called upon Miss P— (the coloured girl) to say a word. This talk she gave

was so sincere, and showed such a spiritual understanding, that everyone present was deeply touched. . . We all felt that she was the outstanding feature of the evening. These are the miracles which Bahá'u'lláh is performing in order to demonstrate His plan for the oneness of mankind." When we remember that Jim Crow laws prevail in Mississippi, that no negro may buy in a white store or restaurant, ride in the white part of the trams, enter a white cinema or hotel, except by the servants' entrance, one gets an idea of how great such a seemingly simple departure is in Southern customs!

Through such acts, however, we are being known, as witness the following incident reported in a radio speech by a Bahá'í teacher: "In a negro school in North Carolina, I found a young coloured dean who felt fearful of the frank and happy association he saw in Bahá'í community life. 'What are you going to do about the Ku Klux Klan? Had you better not compromise here a little in the South? Are you not afraid?'"

"A mutual friend answered for us, a distinguished coloured woman who had been in the audience: 'The speaker has no choice,' she said, 'the Bahá'í Faith represents sixty countries not one. It does not compromise on the Jewish question in Germany, nor despise the untouchables in India, nor in Britain bow the knee to class, nor take on the religious strife of the Holy Land. Our Klan is a small thing. A world Faith that is true to its claims does not belong to the speaker, nor to her race, nor even to her country: it belongs to the world.'

"The young man nodded. 'I see,' he said. 'It may be worth dying for.'"

From letters one gleams bright and lovely facets of the many-sided whole that goes to make up Bahá'í activity and thought. Here is an excerpt from a Regional Teaching Committee's bulletin (of which there are dozens now to meet the needs of the many believers and the work they undertake): "Senor Pecora Blue Mountain, our Bahá'í brother, a native Peruvian of Inca Indian origin, is making a goodwill tour for South America. He visits the Bahá'ís in the cities through which he passes, sharing that very valued quality of fellowship and love Bahá'ís know so well. We deeply appreciate the privilege of this contact. While in Birmingham (Alabama) it was arranged for him to give a piano concert of South American music over station WSGN . . . the first half of the programme consisted of the modern adaptation of ancient native music, while the latter half was given over to the hymns of the Incas, and his closing number was his own very beautiful 'Melodies in My Heart.' Another News Letter reports his visit with some of the Bahá'ís and their friends in another part of the country and comments: 'It was interesting to note a group of three white, three coloured, and an Indian



The news pulsates. Take these sentences, chosen at random from a Regional Bulletin: "You cannot know the thrill of teaching the Faith until it begins to reach the lives of others." "Teaching the Cause is a four-letter word that begins with W and ends with K—there is no problem this or any other assembly or group cannot overcome through one word—WORK." "The problem of teaching is the individual problem of your life." "Our weapons are spiritual weapons."

This programme preamble seemed to me one any Bahá'í centre could use to good effect anywhere in the world.

"THE WORLD YOU WILL LIVE IN—WHAT WILL IT BE? AND HOW WILL YOU ADJUST YOURSELF TO IT? What are some of our post-war problems? How are we to solve them? Should we leave them to chance or start solving them now? If so, how? And what kind of a plan will fit into the kind of a world we will live in after the war?"

That is one way of reaching the public. Here's another! "Mrs. Rena White (99 years of age), who lives at the Florence Home for the Aged, attended the Tom Breneman Breakfast at Hollywood Show, a coast-to-coast broadcast, from the Paramount Theatre to Omaha, for the Red Cross. Mr. Breneman, in interviewing Mrs. White as the oldest lady present, asked if she had any hobbies. She replied, 'Yes, the Bahá'í Revelation . . .'. She has received over 100 letters from persons who heard the broadcast."

And here is yet another, even more surprising: "Mr. Edgar, Master of Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut, while riding in a New York taxi, discussed Stevenson's views on happiness with the driver. The driver turned around, almost stopping the cab, and said: 'I can tell you about happiness. I am a Bahá'í,' and gave Mr. Edgar a copy of Bahá'í Principles. When Mr. Edgar returned to Hotchkiss, he told his class about the philosophical taxi driver and his Faith. After class, Alfred Raubitschek, 16-year old Bahá'í of West Englewood, informed Mr. Edgar that he would be happy to give him further information or lend him literature on hand in his room." It seems there was no escape for Mr. Edgar!

This news from the Geyserville Bahá'í Summer School in California is also most heartening in that it demonstrates so nicely the complete lack of class or racial prejudice that characterises Bahá'í activity: "Our great joy this year was the relationship established with the Mexican labourers who have, since the war, been permitted to come into the States for work on the ranches. . . . The Message was given, in two special meetings, by those who spoke Spanish . . . on the last night of the School over ninety . . . came, some of them from ranches over ten miles away. After Bahá'í talks, and after they had

sung some original folk songs for us, they asked that a record be made of their names and home addresses so Bahá'í literature could be sent them. And four asked for letters to the Mexico City Bahá'í Assembly, saying that they had become Bahá'ís at Geyserville."

From India comes a report of activities similar in spirit, that is, trying to reach the labourers with the Bahá'í Message: "This year the publicity given the Cause has been intense. Lectures have been delivered by different Bahá'í teachers in various parts of India . . . a microphone and two loud speakers have been purchased in order to lecture among the masses of mill labourers and largely attended meetings. This work has been begun among the mill labourers of Ahmedabad . . . half of which is comprised of mill labourers. It has eighty mills and so far lectures have been delivered by Mrs. Shirin Fozdar to the workers of a dozen mills. The labourers evince deep interest and beg for literature."

In the annual report of the work done in India during 1943-4, in other words, the year leading up to the Centenary, the writer makes it quite clear what to do if you want to succeed. He says: "Our pioneers formed no less than twenty-one Spiritual Assemblies between the 15th of April, 1943, and the 15th of April, 1944. This is certainly an unprecedented number in a country like India, where the greatest obstacles are its babel of languages and its diversity of religious ideas always at variance with one another . . . The process adopted by our pioneers was very simple. They left their home city and settled down in places where there were no Bahá'ís. Some of them went to places where there were Bahá'ís already and thus completing the number nine they formed assemblies."

Likewise from India comes this remarkably apt simile of the relationship between God, the Prophet, and Divine Revelation, published by a believer in the course of an article in defence of the Faith. "What, then, is the continuity of religion? God is the Author of the complete volume; each religion is a single chapter in the volume; each Prophet is the Pen used in writing that particular chapter in the volume; each chapter that follows develops the Plan further; the chapters have significance as long as they are read together; but, if they are taken out of the context, they lose the significance that the Author attached to them. For instance, some chapters outline the plan for developing the individual; and Bahá'u'lláh's Plan reveals the plan for cultivating and developing all the nations together, the whole of mankind as a single unit."

We Bahá'ís are not extraordinary people; in fact, there is nothing very distinguished about the members of the Faith at present except



WHAT they believe in and the effect it has had on their minds and lives. A few amongst us are gifted and brilliant, a few wealthy, a few prominent, but they are in the minority. The majority are just average people. But something about us is extraordinary, and that is what we do and how we do it. We are alive with an aliveness that challenges and surprises outsiders. Where do we get such big plans, such world-encompassing thoughts, such vision, so much enthusiasm and confidence? We get this vital flow by having "tuned in" on the right spiritual wave length for this epoch in human development. The better we make our connection, the more power we receive; that is what strikes one so forcibly in reading the letters and reports in the Guardian's mail bag. One sees demonstrated the workings of spiritual laws: the sick are so often healed; the weak arise and forget all about themselves in the joy of service; youth shows forth the wisdom of age, and age the boundless enthusiasm of youth. The pulse of the Cause can be felt here, and it beats strong and steady. The news flows in to the Guardian, the heart, and the steadying influence of his inspired vision and judgment flows out again to guide, strengthen and lead the followers of Bahá'u'lláh on their path of service to all mankind.

#### AS A VISITOR SAW US.

Mlle. Lucienne Migrette, a member of the Paris community, who attended the British Summer School, has written a report of her visit for the benefit of the French friends. We quote parts of this report below, as we feel that her remarks will interest the English Bahá'ís, especially those who attended the Summer School.

The first post-war Summer School has just been held at Cromford Court (Matlock Bath, Derbyshire) in beautiful surroundings. It lasted two weeks, during which we were able to see the Bahá'ís of the British Isles give of their best, both in the daily lectures and in private conversations and friendly intercourse. They spared neither their time, nor their affection, sacrificing evidently a large part of their rest and of their only annual holidays. They themselves consider that the present moment, now that wartime limitations on their activity have been removed, is the time to make a big effort. We may point out that all of them are not English; several come from America, Germany and even from the Near East. They are giving the same devoted service as if they were in their own country, and their English friends have welcomed them with the same affection as if they had been born in this country. One of the best examples of this is their choice of the chairman of their National Assembly, the honour having been conferred on a Persian Bahá'í.

Throughout the two weeks, the Bahá'í friends organising the Summer School were busy, arranging everything, anticipating everything; the meetings on many subjects, spiritual or administrative, the general consultations, the sale or lending of Bahá'í books, the dramatic presentations of memorable scenes in the history of the Bahá'í Faith or in the life of some of its martyrs, even the games, amusements and walks; not to mention the material arrangements for all the believers and friends staying in the house, which in itself was a difficult problem in these hard times.

Each day new Bahá'ís arrived from various parts of England and stayed as long as they could. At the same time there was a stream of non-Bahá'ís. Visitors who did not know them found it almost impossible at first to distinguish the Bahá'ís from the non-Bahá'ís, for the friends of God made no difference between them. It was a large brotherly group, everyone talking in a friendly way to everyone else, sitting together at table without any fixed order. It was only by careful observation whilst living amongst them that one came to distinguish the Bahá'ís who were giving the Message to the visitors who had come to receive it. . . .

The work was organised thus: Two meetings took place each morning on varying subjects, sometimes purely spiritual, sometimes philosophic, historical, or social, some of them specially to train those who intended to enter the teaching field, some of them for general free discussion on the questions put forward.

The afternoons, generally left free for walks or for recreation, were specially suitable for private conversation, for talks with sympathisers wishing to deepen their knowledge, for exchange of views amongst the believers, especially between the Bahá'ís of different nations for whom the Summer School is often the only opportunity for direct acquaintance.

The meals were another occasion for conversation in little groups. Finally, in the evenings, meetings of a different sort were held or a dramatic presentation was given of an episode in the history of the Cause, not forgetting too the social side.

Apart from the obvious interest and the rich diversity of all the subjects chosen for discussion at the meetings, a notable feature of them was the ease and the inspired simplicity of the various speakers, and, moreover, the organisation of the discussion meetings, orderly, friendly and in a free and harmonious atmosphere despite the differing opinions sometimes expressed. It was indeed an aspect of that teaching of the Master: it is thus that light is shed on all the aspects of a question and it is thus that the whole race progresses and not merely the chosen few.



**Conclusion.** If, in a country relatively small, a number also limited of servants of a Cause, which already impresses by its history, and by the greatness of its spirit, is capable of producing such fruit in so little time, what cannot one look forward to when all the believers of the whole world shall at length be united in a close unity of faith and of love to bring about that universal brotherly order, desired by mankind certainly, but, even more solemnly promised to those who build it at the behest of Bahá'u'lláh.

### NEW WORLD ORDER.

For some time now the National Assembly has been considering whether the work and money required to produce an issue of New World Order was really justified, and at its meeting on November 10th, it was finally decided to discontinue publication because of the shortage of manpower available for the prosecution of the Six Year Plan. The Assembly feels it is an effort that can be dispensed with temporarily in favour

of the larger issues confronting the community. They expect that later on it will be possible to start publication again.

In coming to this decision, the Assembly had in mind the Guardian's appeal that we should organise the work on a new basis, and they regard this step as part of the reorganisation needed.

### CONTACTING PRISONERS OF WAR.

Several cases have come to the attention of the Assembly recently of German prisoners of war who have asked for particulars of the faith and one case of a German Bahá'í, who is a prisoner of war in this country. Should any believer have reason to contact a German P.O.W. in connection with the Faith, he is asked to refer the case to the N.S.A. before attempting to make the contact. The N.S.A. will when necessary write to the commandant of the camp seeking permission for the contact to be made, explaining our connection in the case and mentioning the status of the Faith in Germany.

## THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

**AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.** "Recent articles attacking the Cause are a sign that its influence is sufficiently felt to be feared and a great compliment to the progress you are making in spreading the Message"—from the Guardian's letter of 25th March, 1946.

During the year 1942 there were 20 enrolments to a membership roll that stood at 169 members in May.

Copies of "God Passes By" with "Appreciations of the Bahá'í Faith" were sent to the Bishops and Archbishops of the Anglican Church in Australia, twelve of whom sent acknowledgments.

Prominent citizens of Melbourne were the object of a special fortnight's campaign by Miss Hilda Brooks and Miss Gretta Lamprill who sought interviews with 20 selected people of whom 12 were visited with widely varying response. Those visited included the Chief Commissioner of Police, a headmaster, several clergymen, an M.P., and a missionary.

**AUSTRIA.** At a recent 19-Day Feast in Vienna there were 9 present.

**BULGARIA.** No literature at all is available. Condensed information, in the form of compilations in notebook form written by Miss Jack, "is going round."

**FRANCE.** Paris friends were able to meet at the home of Miss Edith Sanderson throughout the period of occupation, in spite of the danger this involved. The community lost five members during the war. Mr. Kennedy's house was bombed in 1940 and a quantity of Bahá'í books and archives lost.

Lucienne Migette has at last realised a project cherished over six years, to instruct the grandson

of an old Armenian believer of Marseilles. Jacques was in Paris for nine days and went away "flaming like a torch." Her wartime contact of 1940 in the heart of France has borne fruit and four persons now make a nucleus at La-Chaise-Dieu.

**GERMANY.** The Bahá'í community at Hamburg was re-established after the Esslingen Summer School. With sixteen declared believers it is the first, and so far the only, community in the British Zone.

Nuremberg received the Bahá'í Message in mid-April from Mr. Jakob of Stuttgart. Four months later a flourishing assembly was functioning there, whose secretary reported the number of confirmed believers had reached fifty, in spite of the difficulty of organising public meetings because most of the buildings are in ruins.

**INDIA.** On 6th September the N.S.A. fixed as objective in the teaching field the doubling of their members during the current year; every Bahá'í to bring in at least one other soul to the Cause before Ridván. There are 18 full committees this year, of which the Education Committee is noteworthy for the fact that all six of its members are professors. Not content with the Summer School held at Karachi this year from 9th to 23rd October, there is to be a Winter School at Kolhapur from 16th to 30th January.

**PANAMA.** The Governor of the Province of Colon was chairman of a Bahá'í public meeting held there.

**SWITZERLAND.** The Geneva office of the European Teaching Committee has now opened with Mrs. Etty Graeffe in charge. Premises have been found after hard search and will be shared with the International Bahá'í Bureau.