

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
1, VICTORIA STREET, LONDON. S.W.1

No. 52

BAHÁ'Í YEAR 102

AUGUST, 1945

"LET GOD BE ALL-SUFFICIENT FOR THEE"

This world is, at present, indeed a wonderful place. Never before has man been in the midst of such stirring events, been faced with such fateful issues, been given the chance to make such important choices regarding the future life and organisation of the world in which he lives. People in increasing numbers are conscious of this—they want to make a good choice, to make a better world, but with this desire there is, too, a feeling of frustration, sometimes even of hopelessness. "How is it to be done, how can we combat, how conquer the difficulties which seem so great and so discouraging?"

We Bahá'ís may find these conflicting feelings reflected in ourselves and in our communities. We must be sensitive to the trends and influences abroad in the world, we must know them intimately, but we should, nevertheless, at the same time have sufficient spiritual strength not to be overpowered by them, because we have the knowledge to assess them at their real value. We know the spiritual forces, indispensable in the evolution of the world, which engender them; we know their purpose and are given in Bahá'u'lláh's writings clear glimpses of the results they are to bring about. Bahá'u'lláh tells us "Grieve not at the things ye witness in this day," and again "Let not the things of this world sadden you." Whilst seeing the world and its conflicting influences with clear eyes, we must therefore not take the short view and allow ourselves to be affected by them. We must realise how essential this struggle is in the development of the world and how little the various immediate aspects of it matter in themselves. For Bahá'u'lláh has warned us clearly that such things will happen and what will be the outcome, and that is what we have to focus on.

Therefore the prevailing feeling of conflict and frustration must not enter into or hamper our work of teaching the Cause, of spreading far and wide the knowledge and the under-

standing which Bahá'u'lláh gives. We must be full of hope and courage, relying on His promises to help all those who serve Him. He tells us too "Be not grieved if thou performest it thyself alone," and truly the Bahá'í community as a whole, just as much as individuals, may be considered as very small and alone when viewed in relation to the total population of the world. But we must not be grieved nor discouraged at that, for He goes on "Let God be all-sufficient for thee." Therein lies the heart of the whole matter, for the strength of the Cause lies precisely in this divine foundation, in complete reliance on God. Looked at in the light of this truth, the Cause is not alone but is the strongest thing in this world, and if we, as individuals and as communities, let ourselves become infused with the strength which is inherent in the Cause, for the purpose of serving it, then all the things of the world will have no effect at all upon us. We shall instead influence the world in the direction in which it really wants to go, though, uninformed of the true spiritual meaning of its difficulties, it cannot yet see the way.

"Be not grieved if thou performest it thyself alone. Let God be all-sufficient for thee. Commune intimately with His Spirit, and be thou of the thankful. Proclaim the Cause of thy Lord unto all who are in the heavens and on the earth. Should any man respond to thy call, lay bare before him the pearls of the wisdom of the Lord, thy God, which His Spirit hath sent down unto thee, and be thou of them that truly believe. And should any one reject thy offer, turn thou away from him, and put thy trust and confidence in the Lord, thy God, the Lord of all worlds.

"By the righteousness of God! Whoso openeth his lips in this Day, and making mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration, shall descend upon him from the

heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on high, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light. Thus hath it been fore-ordained in the realm of God's Revelation, by the behest of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful."

—(Gleaning from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh)

Secretaries of Local Communities.

Bournemouth: Miss D. Dewhirst, 167, Tuckton Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth.

Bradford: Mrs. M. Burgess Norton, 41, Cranbourne Road, Chellow Dene, Bradford.

London: Miss M. Wellby, address at London Centre.

Manchester: Miss A. Williams, 294, Barton Road, Stretford, Manchester.

Torquay: Mrs. L. Stevens, Three Hills, Hampton Avenue, Babbacombe, Torquay.

Northampton Group: Miss J. Howes, 30, Sandiland Road, Headlands, Northampton.

Blackburn Group: Mrs. G. Cooper, Feniscowles Old Hall, Pleasington, Nr. Blackburn.

National Contacts and Public Relations Committee

A committee consisting of Mr. H. M. Balyuzi, Mrs. D. Ferraby and Mrs. I. Slade, has been appointed to plan and supervise contacts with societies and also with prominent individuals whose ideas are sympathetic to the Bahá'í principles. The local assemblies have also been asked each to appoint a representative to work with this committee in co-ordinating local contacts work.

New Committee.

It has been suggested that the time has now come to consider proclaiming the Cause in such places of public speaking as Hyde Park. A committee has therefore been appointed, consisting of Mrs. Basil Hall, Mr. J. Ferraby and Miss M. Wellby. They will go into the question of the rules governing such public speaking and the best ways of holding such meetings, and when that has been done, they will organise meetings.

Additions to Committees.

Miss A. E. Baxter of Orpington, Mrs. E. P. Cranmer of Bournemouth, Miss J. Howes of Northampton and Miss J. Young of Manchester have been appointed to the National Teaching Committee. Miss B. Coulson has joined the Youth Committee.

BAHA'I PUBLISHING TRUST.

New Publications.

"The Bahá'í Faith." A new general pamphlet is now ready, to replace the green one which is sold out. The new pamphlet is also called "The

Bahá'í Faith" but covers rather more aspects of the Teachings than the previous one. Price 1d.

"The Message of Bahá'u'lláh." This is based on the booklet by J. E. Esslemont, "Bahá'u'lláh and His Message," but is revised to suit current needs. It is intended for enquirers who want more than a pamphlet but less than a book. Price 6d.

Pronunciation Card. This card contains a guide to the pronunciation of Persian and Arabic words when the Oxford method of spelling is used. This method of spelling is now always used in Bahá'í books by instruction of the Guardian. It will not always be found, however, in the older Bahá'í books nor is it always used by writers who are not Bahá'í. The cards are designed to make it easy to transfer them from one book to another. Price 1½d.

"The Promised Day is Come." A very few copies of the Indian edition of this book are available. Except for "God Passes By," this is the most recent of the Guardian's writings. Price 2/6d.

The 1946 Diary will not be ready this year until October, but it is hoped all the friends will order in advance, both for themselves and for any stationers they can persuade to buy some. Orders for Bahá'ís and their friends will be filled first and the remainder divided amongst the orders received for stationers, but it is hoped to fill all orders. Diaries cannot be guaranteed if orders are not received before October 1st. The price is 1s. 10d., but stationers may have them for 1s. 4d., providing they order at least a dozen copies.

New Believers.

We are pleased to welcome Miss B. York and Miss U. Coward of Northampton, Mr. W. Peplow of Wellingborough, Mrs. A. Farnsworth of Blackburn and Miss C. Teal of Bradford.

Prayer for the Six-Year Plan.

It has been suggested that nineteen believers, or more if possible, should volunteer to join together in spirit at a given time each day and recite a specified prayer for the Six-Year Plan. This is recommended to the friends for their consideration, for surely a number praying together will have a more powerful effect. Any who would like to volunteer are asked to get in touch with Mrs. E. Lacey, 15, Church Drive, Cotmanhay, Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

The response to the Six-Year Plan questionnaire has not been very great, but out of those who have answered, a large proportion have

expressed their willingness to correspond with one or more pioneers. As there are not yet any Six-Year Plan pioneers, it is suggested that some of these friends might like to correspond with each other. Such correspondence has a great value in helping to integrate and unify the community. Will anyone wishing to undertake such correspondence, please send in their name to the secretary of the N.S.A., stating whether they wish to correspond with a member of a local community or with somebody living away from other Bahá'ís.

Estimate of Expenditure.

As suggested by Convention, the N.S.A. has drawn up an estimate of expenditure for this year, which is as follows:

New World Order	£45
Bahá'í Journal	35
Rent, etc.	112
N.S.A. and Committee travelling ...	45
Various Administrative Expenses ...	45
Publicity	150
Teaching	50
Changing of Articles of Association	50
TOTAL	£532

Income for 1945 (excluding special funds) £132

Some of the estimates, publicity and teaching for example, are mere guesses, and the N.S.A. does not intend to force its plans to fit these estimated expenditures. No allowance is made for special expenses which are to be expected in connection with the Six-Year Plan. Some of the special expenses which may arise are:—helping pioneers to settle down in a new town; paying fares and general moving expenses; helping them until they get a job or in other ways; assisting Groups or new Assemblies to open a Bahá'í Centre; supplying teaching literature; or such other expenses as seem desirable.

To cover these expenses it will be necessary to draw on the Guardian's gifts and the donations to the Six-Year Plan Fund, which are not included in the figures for last year's income quoted above. It is hoped that the expenses under this head will increase considerably during the year, for this would be a sign that we were really making progress with the Plan.

NEWS.

We recently had a visit from Mr. Mani Mehta of Bombay, a member of the Indian N.S.A. He was in London for some weeks and visited the Centre there a number of times and also helped several times at fireside meetings. He also visited Manchester and saw some of the friends there. He made a number of contacts for the Faith whilst he was here.

Norman Smith of the U.S. Army made another tour during a recent leave. He spoke at

successful meetings in Blackburn and Blackpool, then went on to Scotland, where in Aberdeen he visited Mr. Peter Esslemont, brother of Dr. J. E. Esslemont, author of "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era." He also visited Glasgow and Edinburgh and made some contacts in the latter city.

Philip Hainsworth of Bradford, who is in the R.A.M.C., has gone to Nairobi, East Africa, where he expects to stay for some time. On his journey out he was able to visit the friends in Cairo and in Suez. He says the Egyptian believers are working with great enthusiasm, in spite of many difficulties. He also made a number of contacts for the Faith on the boat.

Mr. Robert Yool of Manchester, has returned home after several years' duty with the Army in the Middle East. During his stay there he was able to visit the Guardian and the Shrines on Mount Carmel, and for part of the time he was stationed in Baghdad and saw a lot of the friends there.

The London Assembly held a public meeting on Saturday, July 21st, in conjunction with two other societies, the International Friendship League and the Service Nation Movement. A public hall was booked and the subject of the meeting was "National Pride and International Prejudice." The chief speaker was to have been Prof. Norman Bentwich, but at the last moment he could not come and was replaced by Mr. Roy Walker. He was followed by representatives of the three organisations sponsoring the meeting, who each gave their views on the subject. Afterwards there was open discussion. About eighty people were present.

Mrs. Basil Hall spoke for the Bahá'í Faith.

Marguerite Wellby was married at the London Centre on Saturday, August 25th, to Mr. Terence Preston. They are to live in Kenya, E. Africa.

The engagement is announced of David Hofman to Marion Holley of California. The marriage will take place in England during October.

Mr. and Mrs. Balyuzi have a son, Felix Hanford Jraj, born June 5th.

The World Community of Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'ís all over the world will grieve at the news of the death of Siyyid Mustafa Roumie, who had worked for the Faith for so many years in Burma and was responsible, amongst other things, for teaching the Cause to the people in the Bahá'í village at Kunjangoon. Little news is available yet, but it appears that he was cut off in Burma by the war and was killed by some local inhabitants. In a cable to the Indian N.S.A. the Guardian says of him that the "long record of his superb services in teaching and

administrative fields shed lustre on both heroic and formative ages Bahá'í Dispensation. His magnificent achievements fully entitle him join ranks Hands Cause Bahá'u'lláh. His resting place should be regarded foremost shrine Burmese believers." He goes on to advise holding memorial meetings throughout India and the building of a suitable tomb.

We regret to report the sudden passing of Mr. Ali Muhammad Nabili, who was chairman of the Indian N.S.A. last year. Being of Persian nationality, when he could not get his visa renewed, he was obliged to return to Iran and he died in Kirmán soon after arrival. We send sympathy to both the Indian and Persian communities.

The Indian Bahá'ís have taken the first steps towards founding a Bahá'í school for children. As a beginning they have opened a hostel at Panchgani, in the hills 63 miles from Poona, where Bahá'í children will be given character training on Bahá'í lines, whilst attending non-Bahá'í schools for their education. Two Bahá'í ladies are in charge.

The friends in Persia are still subject to much difficulty, but they are, nevertheless, very actively engaged in teaching the Cause. They have many teachers travelling about the country and many families have moved to new districts in order to spread the Faith. Many meetings have been held to explain the Faith to enquirers; for instance, more than 2,500 such meetings have been held in Tihiran alone in the past four years.

There have been several attacks on the Faith recently in books and magazines published in Australia. The Australian N.S.A. has taken suitable steps to deal with them.

Hobart community, Tasmania, have held their first summer school.

The last Bahá'í Newsletter received from Haifa gives a lot of news of events in Egypt: The successful holding of the Centenary celebrations in the new Haziratu'l-Quds had an encouraging and greatly stimulating effect on the Egyptian believers, causing them to make new plans and rise to greater heights of service. The result was the formation of three new local assemblies by April of this year, at Suez, Tanta and Suhaj, making seven in all. Egyptian Bahá'í families have also gone both to Abyssinia and to the Sudan. They have established a public Bahá'í lending library in Cairo to meet the great interest which is being shown in the Faith since the Centenary. There was, in fact, in Cairo an uninterrupted stream of callers coming to enquire about the Faith. They came every day and often every night, and represented various classes, sects and religious denominations, com-

ing from different parts of the city. They came singly and in large groups.

All this has, however, been achieved only under great difficulty and even persecution, a number of individual Bahá'ís, as well as Bahá'í institutions, being attacked. In Tanta, in April and May, 1944, libellous pamphlets were printed and distributed or exhibited in public places, warning the public against the believers and instigating it to violence against them. In Al-Mahalat 'ul Kubra a band of fanatics, encouraged by one of their religious leaders, attacked the little group of local Bahá'ís. In Al-'Arish the one believer was brought into court and his marriage compulsorily annulled because his wife had originally been Moslem, in spite of her statement in court that she now considered herself a Bahá'í. In Cairo, too, there was a demonstration against the Faith after the Centenary celebrations, led by irresponsible crowds and groups of students, under the influence of various religious bodies. On the night of August 31st, 1944, a great mob attacked the Haziratu'l-Quds, smashed the electric lights outside the building and broke the arm of the Bahá'í guardian in charge of the building. At the same time the magazine 'Al-Nazir published a series of articles full of calumnies against the believers and the Faith. All these attacks the believers have borne with great patience and courage, not allowing anything to deflect them from their duties and activities.

The Haifa Newsletter also reports the passing in Haifa of Ali Ashgar Qasvini, who was for nearly twenty-five years the caretaker of the Master's House and was known to most of the pilgrims who have visited Haifa.

Philip Hainsworth spent some time in Egypt on his way to East Africa. He visited the friends in Suez and spent some days leave in Cairo, where he stayed in the Haziratu'l-Quds. He sent a graphic description of this building, which we hope to print in the next issue of the Journal—space prevents it this time. He was able not only to attend a number of meetings in Cairo, but also visited a good many of the believers and was entertained in their homes. He reports, too, that while he was there, the news came that some Persian Bahá'ís, sent there by the Guardian, had formed a spiritual assembly in Mecca. These must surely be the bravest pioneers of all, for they must be in grave danger of losing their lives through fanatics in this city, the very centre of Islam.

A recent letter from Mlle Migette in Lyons reports, that although the community there has been broken up, three firm believers still remain, and that there are the same number left in Hyeres.