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BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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“ADVANCE ALWAYS IN THE KINGDOM OF BÁHA'U'LLÁH”

DEAR FRIENDS,

As you already know, the Guardian sent us at the end of July the following cable:

“Magnificent spirit animating steadfast English believers notable accomplishments teaching field prompt me contribute two hundred pounds furtherance their historic teaching activities. Urge redouble efforts. Praying signal victories. Loving gratitude.”

And in reply to a cable from the N.S.A. expressing the heartfelt gratitude and deep devotion of all the believers, he answered:

“Delighted successful school. Appreciate spirit believers. Assure all continued prayers.”

These cables, together with the two letters quoted elsewhere in this Journal, constitute the wonderful and inspiring start which the Guardian has given to our winter's work. “They should . . . redouble their efforts, extend the range of their activities, re-dedicate themselves to their historic task.” That is the task which lies before us now, at this moment. The “promised day” has come and we can no longer delay. The Guardian, in a cable to America, spoke of “this crucial year.” Now is the time—and it is deeds, not mere words, which are needed. If we fail to rise now to the height of our sacred responsibility, the opportunity may never come again. We have been offered a privilege such as has never been before in the history of mankind. What if we should fail to accept it? And if we accept what is at the same

time a privilege and an immense responsibility, surely we can only do so by drawing nearer and nearer to the source of all Power, to the Author of the Divine Plan which we are charged to help bring to the world. Let us pray ever more often, let us read again and again the Holy Writings, and let us thereby have faith in the power and the willingness of Bahá'u'lláh to assist us, if we will only try to make ourselves pure channels through which the Divine Power can reach the world. If we seize every opportunity, exert all our strength in His service, His invisible hosts will stand beside us. Let us therefore turn to Him, let us have no will but His will, no ambition but to serve His Cause, for only so can we become worthy of the task to which we have been called.

“Advance always in the Kingdom of Bahá'u'lláh; occupy thy heart always by the mentioning of Bahá'u'lláh; take heed that only in your eyes is Bahá'u'lláh; in your heart is Bahá'u'lláh—in your inmost heart is Bahá'u'lláh! If you fall into trouble, say “Ya Bahá ul Abhá!” If anyone oppose you, say “Ya Bahá ul Abhá!” Even, while at your work mention “Ya Bahá ul Abhá!” Thou wilt be blamed for My sake; people will attribute to thee infidelity for My sake; thou wilt bear trouble for My sake. Be encouraged, and do not fear. It happened like this also in the time of Jesus Christ. Know the greatness of these days!”

LETTERS RECEIVED FROM THE GUARDIAN

June 20, 1942.

"... the Guardian wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Hill about the tragic and unexpected passing of their daughter. He also felt moved to cable them his condolences and the assurance of his prayers. This must have been for them a very grievous blow; but he feels sure the deep assurances concerning the future life, which have been given us by Bahá'u'lláh, have comforted and sustained them throughout.

"He was pleased to read the sympathetic letter you received from ex-President Benes, of Czechoslovakia, as well as that of Sir Ronald Storrs. Many men in high positions are aware now of the existence and aims of our Faith, but they do not yet reckon it to be a movement worthy of more profound interest on their part. As time goes by, however, we may rest assured their interest will grow.

"That is perhaps what is most glorious about our present activities all over the world, that we, a band not large in numbers, not possessing financial backing or the prestige of great names, should, in the name of our beloved Faith, be forging ahead at such a pace, and demonstrating to future and present generations that it is the God-given qualities of our religion that are raising it up and not the transient support of worldly fame and power. All that will come later, when it has been made clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that what raised aloft the banner of Bahá'u'lláh was the love, sacrifice, and devotion of His humble followers and the change that His teachings wrought in their hearts and lives.

"It is just such exemplary devotion and perseverance that the British Bahá'ís are showing at present, and their reward cannot but be great and lasting. The laying of the foundation is a slow process, but the most important one in the erection of any structure. The Guardian feels that your Assembly, as well as the friends in England, have every reason to feel proud of, and encouraged by the way the work is progressing there.

"He hopes that your Summer School this year will be even more successful than last year, in spite of being held in two parts. You may be sure he will pray for its success.

"He fully realises the difficulties you all are undergoing, enhanced by the war and its hardships, yet he sees, perhaps even more clearly than you yourselves can, that these very difficulties and the surmounting of them are deepening and strengthening the ties that bind you all to our beloved Faith, and enabling you to do a work which only future generations of your

countrymen will be able to properly appreciate and assess.

"Please convey to all the dear friends the assurance of his love and his prayers for their service in these days, and his high hopes for the future that awaits them in the days to come, when the Cause of God begins to emerge above the waves of the old order and shines forth in all its strength and beauty.

"Assuring you and all your fellow-members of his deep appreciation of your tireless work and his ardent prayers for your guidance and strength.

Yours, with Bahá'í love,
R. RABBANI."

DEARLY BELOVED CO-WORKERS,

"The steady progress and extension of Bahá'í activities in the British Isles is, no doubt, in direct consequence of the unswerving loyalty, the high courage, the incorruptible spirit and the exemplary devotion and steadfastness of the British believers, who have, amply and strikingly, demonstrated the quality of their faith and the soundness of their institutions in these days of unprecedented commotion, stress and peril. I feel proud of their record of service and of the evidences of their noble faith. The Beloved watches over them, and will continue to sustain, bless and guide them from the Abhá Kingdom. The concourse on high extols their achievements, and will reinforce their endeavours. They should, confidently, gratefully, joyously and unitedly redouble their efforts, extend the range of their activities, re-dedicate themselves to their historic task and anticipate a renewed outpouring of Bahá'u'lláh's promised blessings and favours.

Your true and grateful brother,
SHOCHI."

August 8th, 1942.

"... He has been gratified to hear of the successful Summer School sessions, news of the Buxton one having just recently reached him in your latest cable. He feels that you must all be very encouraged that this new way of holding them in different places, which circumstances made imperative, has proved so successful in the end. It presages the day when the friends in England will see the institutions of their Faith rising from various flourishing centres.

"Regarding Minute No. 507: The Guardian feels that it would be better for either the mothers of Bahá'í children—or some Committee your Assembly might delegate the task to—to choose excerpts from the Sacred Words to be used by the child, rather than just something made up. Of course, prayer can be purely spontaneous, but many of the sentences and

thoughts combined in Bahá'í writings of a devotional nature are easy to grasp, and the revealed Word is endowed with a power of its own.

"... He fully realizes the strain which those who are so actively bearing the weight of Bahá'í responsibility are subjected to in these days, when already, as private individuals, the events of the world are affecting their lives and drawing on their strength. It makes the quality of Bahá'í service so much finer, that it should entail on the part of all definite self-sacrifice.

"Though the friends may not be fully aware of it, their staunch perseverance in carrying out their Bahá'í activities in the face of war conditions is really in itself of historic importance. Convention, summer schools, meetings, all are not only demonstrating the calibre of their faith, but also evincing marked progress, all of which greatly cheers and delights the Guardian.

"He assures you, and your fellow-members of the National Spiritual Assembly, of his continued prayers on your behalf, that you may be guided, protected and sustained in your devoted services to the Faith.

With Bahá'í love and greetings,
R. RABBANI."

P.S.—Shoghi Effendi is deeply interested in the plans you are developing to aid and attract more young people to the Faith. He feels this is both praiseworthy and valuable method of teaching the Cause.

DEAR AND VALUED CO-WORKER,

"The work so splendidly initiated by the English believers, and so devotedly and energetically pursued and consolidated in these days of peril, uncertainty and turmoil, establishes beyond doubt their right to claim to be the true upholders and custodians of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. They have, ever since the outbreak of this world-wide conflict, abundantly demonstrated the high quality of their faith, the soundness of their institutions, the intensity of their devotion, and their capacity to defend and promote the interests of their beloved Cause. Impelled by admiration and gratitude for the work they have already accomplished, I have contributed a sum which I trust will enable them to extend the range of their teaching activities throughout the British Isles. May the Beloved graciously assist them to achieve, such victories in this field as shall truly befit the conclusion of the first century of the Bahá'í Era.

Your true and grateful brother,
SHOGHI."

Note.—Minute No. 507 refers to a resolution from Convention. See second page of the June number of the "Journal."

NORTHERN SUMMER SCHOOL

Over forty people were present at the Northern Summer School, held at Holmsleigh Schools, Buxton, from 1st—3rd August. There were several visitors, brought by some of the Bahá'ís present, and the success of the Summer School was well attested by the spirit of friendliness there, with which all the visitors were impressed. Many of the Bahá'í friends also commented on the success of the Summer School, placing it above any other they had attended. The atmosphere was greatly heightened by a cable from the Guardian, which arrived on the last day, and which announced his generous gift, besides inspiring all the friends to still greater efforts.

Unlike previous Summer Schools, devotional meetings were held at the start of each morning session, and these were attended by all those present. The talks and discussions were arranged to cover the spiritual development of man, the combination of the spiritual and the practical, and the working of the Plan through the medium of the Administration. The discussions were lively, the visitors joining in to the advantage of all. On August 1st, being a Nineteen-Day Feast, a very happy Unity Feast was held in the afternoon.

Rain somewhat interfered with the social activities, but this did not prevent everyone from enjoying themselves with various impromptu activities. A large number attended a fête held on the Saturday at the local hospital, open-air baths were visited, and community singing, dancing, tug-of-war, and other events took place in the school gym. The success of the Summer School was enhanced by the excellent way in which the catering was carried out.

We all came away with a feeling of fresh spiritual strength, to carry us on until the next Bahá'í gathering.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

In the autumn of last year, the National Spiritual Assembly launched a special appeal for help in paying for the new compilation of Bahá'í Scriptures, which was so urgently needed. The books have been received and are being widely used. A total sum of £340 was involved, of which £200 has now been paid. Of this about £132 has so far been raised in response to the appeal, and there is £140 still to be paid. Until this debt is completely settled, we cannot commence the publication of further books which are urgently needed.

SO PLEASE DON'T FORGET THE
PUBLISHING TRUST APPEAL.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE N.S.A.

The N.S.A. has with much regret accepted the resignation of Mr. F. P. Wilkinson, on account of his impending call-up. A by-election has been held and Mrs. I. Slade has been elected to the vacant place.

The next meeting of the N.S.A. will be held in London on November 21st and 22nd.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

A Committee has been formed to formulate a long-term policy for the publication of literature, both books and pamphlets. The members are: Mr. Balyuzi (secretary), Mrs. Coulson, Mr. J. Lee, Miss M. Parker, Mrs. L. Stevens and Mrs. Wilkinson, senr.

Any believers who have any ideas about literature which would be useful in teaching, etc., are invited to write to Mr. Balyuzi, at the London Centre.

OTHER COMMITTEES

Mr. P. Wilkinson has resigned from the National Publicity Committee and Mr. R. Coulson has been appointed in his place.

Mrs. M. Ward, of Torquay, has joined the National Teaching Committee.

The Publicity Committee has had printed and circulated to all newspapers in the country a statement about the Bahá'í Faith, its history, teachings, aims, etc., which they have been asked to file for reference.

In Memoriam

With the joyful tidings of light I hail thee: rejoice! To the court of holiness I summon thee; abide therein that thou mayest live in peace for evermore.

Mrs. Eliza P. Kenworthy of Leeds—30th August.

Freda, baby daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Nazar—29th September.

On 26th July—Major-General W. P. Hill, husband of Mrs. Hill of Amesbury, who was a devoted friend of the Bahá'í Cause.

In August—Captain Basil Hall, husband of Mary E. Hall, who was a friend of many of the Bahá'ís.

CONTACTS SECRETARY

The N.S.A. has appointed Mr. Norton as Contacts Secretary, to present the Cause on its behalf to people who seem, by their writings, speeches, etc., likely to be interested. He will therefore be glad to receive suggestions from any believers who find any such openings. It is not intended that Mr. Norton should encroach on the right of the believers to make any contacts they wish, but they are invited to hand over to him any possible contacts which they do not for any reason wish to deal with themselves. As many details as possible should be sent him. Mr. Norton will also write, when necessary, to people of the three categories reserved for contact by the N.S.A., i.e., those in prominent positions in political, government and ecclesiastical circles. His address is: 41, Cranbourne Road, Chellow Dene, Bradford.

FURTHER RESOLUTIONS of the N.S.A.

That the expression "isolated believer" is not a good one—it is likely to make believers living away from local communities feel lonely and cut off from membership of the greater community embracing the country, of which they are, in fact, a valuable part. They are, therefore, in future to be referred to as the "Pioneer Believers."

That some money, which was given by several non-Bahá'í friends at Summer School for charity, should be allotted to the Relief Fund.

That the Guardian's gift of £200 should be allocated as follows: £30 to the Publishing Trust for advertising and for the printing of a catalogue, £50 for immediate advertising of the Cause in various periodicals, and the remainder for general teaching purposes as required.

TEACHING OF CHILDREN

It is hoped very soon to start producing at regular intervals a small Bahá'í journal for children and for parents.

Meanwhile it has been suggested that many believers could help to prepare young people for the Faith by contacting any children in their neighbourhoods, organising parties, games, etc., and taking such opportunities to teach the Bahá'í standards of conduct, and where possible direct knowledge of the Cause as well.

Annual Teaching Conference.

The annual conference will be held in Manchester on January 16th and 17th, 1943. Further details will be given in the next Journal.

THE WORLD COMMUNITY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

We quote the following from the Haifa Bahá'í Newsletter:—

"We have received from Egypt most welcome news and we have no doubt that the Friends throughout the world will rejoice in hearing it. It is to the effect that the remains of the famous Bahá'í teacher, traveller, author and philosopher, Mirza Abu'l Fadá'il, have been transferred to the new Bahá'í cemetery in Cairo. Due to the tireless efforts of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Egypt and in the face of innumerable difficulties, this Bahá'í cemetery came into being. The Egyptian Government presented the land of the Cemetery to the National Spiritual Assembly. This new Bahá'í institution is the result of the recognition of the religious independence of the Bahá'í Community in Egypt and the separation of the Divine Cause from the old religions in that land. It is a prelude to the promulgation of the Cause of God in that country, will strengthen the foundation of Bahá'u'lláh's Faith in that region and become the Cause of spreading there the Divine Teachings and Precepts."

The body of Mrs. Lua Getsinger, one of the earliest American Bahá'ís, is also to be removed to the new cemetery.

At the request of the Guardian, the bodies of the two famous Bahá'í martyrs, known universally in the Bahá'í world as the "King of the Martyrs" and the "Beloved of the Martyrs," together with the body of Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler, the renowned American Bahá'í teacher, have been transferred to the new Bahá'í cemetery in Isfahan.

The ban placed by the Egyptian Government on the publication and sale of the Arabic translation of "The Dawnbreakers" has now been removed and free circulation of the book is permitted.

Successful Summer Schools were held by both the Australian and the New Zealand Bahá'ís in the early months of this year. Swiss Bahá'ís also held one, about which details have not yet been received.

Friends will be glad to hear that Dr. Ali of Rangoon, who was here for some time in 1939, has reached India safely from Burma.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE WORLD? and what are YOU going to do about it?

Bradford attempts to answer the question

Our plan to hold a discussion meeting was greatly encouraged by the appeal from the Guardian "to redouble your efforts."

The believers in Bradford, together with three interested friends, decided to get to work at once and stage a type of meeting which, we believe, has not been used before: To contact members of the Forces, and persuade a representative from each department (Army, R.A.F., Navy, A.T.S., W.A.A.F., W.R.E.N.S., Police and Civil Defence) to sit at a round table conference, each member to be allowed to speak for a period of five minutes; to be followed by a general summing-up by the Chairman, after which the meeting was to be thrown open to general discussion by the audience.

The general idea was formed as to our procedure; what we had to do next was to find the representatives—and what a job—as we found out much to our consternation, as every hour brought us nearer to the time of the "big night."

Perhaps it would be useful to relate our feelings of dismay and excitement in the quest for

these speakers, so that any other community wishing to try out the idea will find strength in the thought that the secret of building anything, whether public meetings or a Bahá'í Publishing Trust, is sheer dogged determination, enthusiasm, sacrifice and the knowledge that one is working for the betterment of humanity.

With these beliefs in our hearts, a small band of workers met one Saturday afternoon to plan our campaign. We feel we must admit that our first reaction was the thought that the work would be completed within three hours; however, we found that those three hours turned out to be three days. We decided that there was strength in numbers, and so all started off together.

Our first port of call was an R.A.F. billet and armed with notices of the meeting, we approached the occupants. Five minutes' conversation and we parted with a definite promise and the name of an interested representative. It certainly seemed that we were in for an easy time. But our next call—the Army—proved otherwise. We each in turn enthusiastically spoke on many subjects, to no avail; our party,

one by one, retired with their backs to the wall, certainly not with our tails between our legs, but just exhausted.

From that moment, we must admit that any person who had seen our faces, first when we started, and then after our second engagement, would have remarked that we were a party of young people who had suddenly been faced with the stark realities of life, and with set teeth, determined to surmount them.

We tramped up and down the city of Bradford, visiting various organisations—distributing our leaflets—talking to likely looking people, but obtained no positive results. It was then decided to make an orderly retreat to the home of one of our friends, to appease our apparent hunger, and to think out a new method of approach.

Again refreshed, we made our way to a local ball-room, our troop of workers separating and working in different areas of the dance hall. The female section was at a great disadvantage, owing to the convention of waiting to be approached, but the male members were certainly taxed to breaking point. The result was a definite promise for an A.T.S. sergeant to speak.

By the time we broke up, you can well imagine our various conflicting thoughts, the most striking being the apparent apathy amongst the younger generation and that, although we had only two promises, we each knew of at least one thing that was wrong with the world.

Throughout the next three days we worked independently and telephone wires hummed with various reports of success. Individually, we visited various canteens and rest centres, and slowly our list of speakers grew. Besides our practical work, we had a large notice outside the Bahá'í Centre, together with advertisements in the local paper.

On the afternoon preceding the evening meeting, messages came swiftly to our ears, messages bearing disappointment. Our sailor friend had decided that, owing to the fact that the meeting was not under the auspices of the Church of England, he would have to withdraw. The R.A.F. member apologetically wished to be excused, and so it went on—what contacts we had made slowly vanished into thin air.

Zero hour approached, and gradually our Centre began to fill with civilians, but the lack of uniforms in the audience greatly perturbed us, when in walked two A.T.S. corporals, attending as substitute for our A.T.S. sergeant contact, who was unable to be present owing to duties.

The meeting went with a swing. Mr. Norton, acting as the A.R.P. representative, gave an in-

spiring talk on the lack of balance in the minds of the people of the world, which was followed by an eloquent speech by Miss Parsons, of the A.T.S., on "True Education and Courtesy," which met with great approval.

At least seven people contributed illuminating ideas upon the subject, to be rounded off by a short talk on "The Bahá'í Faith and its Application to Present-Day Problems," by Philip Hainsworth, which was intensely appreciated.

Light refreshments were served, and we broke up with the encouraging thought that at least another forty people had been told of the Faith. And so we wish success to all who may be encouraged through this attempt to get down to it and do likewise.—Action Not Words.

—:—

"The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, worthy to bear His Name, can afford a moment's hesitation. That God-born Force, irresistible in its sweeping power, incalculable in its potency, unpredictable in its course, mysterious in its workings, and awe-inspiring in its manifestations. . . . is, under our very eyes, sundering on the one hand the age-old ties which for centuries have held together the fabric of civilized society, and is unloosing on the other, the bonds which still fetter the infant and as yet unemancipated Faith of Bahá'u'lláh."

(Shoghi Effendi, in "The Advent of Divine Justice.")

"The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation."

Bahá'u'lláh. The Reality of Man. P. 4.

"O Son of Being!

"Make mention of Me on my earth, that in My heaven I may remember thee, thus shall Mine eyes and thine be solaced."

Bahá'u'lláh. The Hidden words (No. 43). P. 14.

"Be unrestrained as the wind, while carrying the Message of Him Who hath caused the Dawn of Divine Guidance to break. Consider, how the wind, faithful to that which God hath ordained, bloweth upon all the regions of the earth, be they inhabited or desolate. Neither the sight of desolation, nor the evidences of prosperity, can either pain or please it. It bloweth in every direction, as bidden by its Creator."

Gleanings from Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. P. 339.