

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
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No. 23

JUNE 1940

A FOUR YEAR TEACHING PLAN

RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENTION TO THE INCOMING N.S.A. :—

That the whole Bahá'í community should engage in a four year plan of Teaching, with the object of having nineteen local Spiritual Assemblies established by Rizwan 1944.

AT its first meeting the new National Spiritual Assembly adopted this recommendation, and it is now the chief aim and object of all our work. We have undertaken a great task, seemingly out of all proportion to our present strength. But the National Spiritual Assembly, bearing in mind the spirit of the Convention, is convinced that the time is ripe, and that with the unfailing assistance of Bahá'u'lláh, this plan will be carried out in full. We remember the Guardian's mandate of two years ago :—"Subordinate all activities teaching objective." Every believer must play a part, every community must do its share. The National Spiritual Assembly has pledged itself to launch this plan with all the means at its disposal, to pursue it unremittingly, and, relying upon God, not to waver in the face of difficulties. We are promoting the Cause of God and therefore cannot fail. Let every believer join in this task, "and be assured of ultimate victory." The Guardian's latest message to us, contains a promise which has not been given to us before. "May the Almighty bless, sustain and protect the English believers, who in these days of unprecedented turmoil, stress and

danger, are holding aloft so courageously the banner of the Faith, and who will, in the days to come, contribute, through His grace and power, a notable share to its establishment and recognition in the west. Your true and grateful brother, Shoghi."

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Chairman :	Mr. Arthur Norton.
Vice-Chairman :	Mr. Hasan Balyuzi.
Secretary :	Mr. David Hofman.
Asst. Secretary :	Miss Marguerite Wellby.
Treasurer :	Mr. Arthur Norton.
	Mrs. Langdon-Davies.
	Mrs. Brown.
	Mr. Sugar.
	Miss Grace Challis.
	Mr. Asgarzadeh.

Please note that the treasurer is now Mr. Arthur Norton. His address is :—

41, Cranbourne Road,
Chellow Dene,
Bradford, Yorks.

All subscriptions should now be sent to him.

CONVENTION

The Annual Convention was held in London during the week-end of May 11th, 12th, and 13th. The Guardian has since pointed out that it should be held during the period of Rizwan, that is at any time between April 21st and May 2nd. It was hoped by holding it during the Whit week-end, to ensure a maximum attendance.

The outstanding characteristic of this year's Convention, was the frank and free spirit of the delegates in examining the affairs of the Cause, and of their ready support of the suggested Four Year Plan. Sixteen delegates were present for part of the time, including the election, and eighteen votes were cast. Two of these were made by telegram. The result of the election is announced on the front page. There was a tie between Miss Cansdale and Mr. Asgarzadeh, but upon the extra vote being cast, Mr. Asgarzadeh was elected.

The Convention sent the following cable to the Guardian :—

"Convention inspired your guidance determines fervently, steadfastly, increase efforts, begs divine confirmation."

His reply was :—

"Greatly admire deeply thankful undaunted courage inflexible resolution English believers represented Convention intensify efforts extend activities notwithstanding gravity hour praying ardently protection success. Shoghi Rabbani."

The recommendations made to the incoming N.S.A. are dealt with in another part of this Journal. The National Spiritual Assembly has met, and has considered all of them.

On Saturday evening the friends gathered for dinner in a restaurant near to the London Centre, and afterwards a very enjoyable sing-song was held in the Centre. Convention continued in session throughout Sunday, and Monday morning. The loss of rest of those taking part was more than outweighed by a sense of new life and vigour, of something being accomplished, of having embarked on an enterprise which will call for our fullest effort, our greatest sacrifice, and our complete dedication.

ANNUAL REPORT

April, 1939—April, 1940

The year through which we have just passed must stand as a permanent witness to the mysterious working of the almighty power of the Manifestation of God in His Day. His Creative Word, consciously recognised by a numerically insigni-

ficant community, instils into it a vigour and unity which enables it to forge ahead in the midst of chaos, to consolidate its painfully wrought institutions and extend the range of its major activities in the heart of a society which has been engulfed in the most destructive war of history. Such a catastrophe, overwhelming mankind, and now directly affecting our own nation, cannot but have an effect on the individual and collective life of the Bahá'í community. But it is this very impact of disintegration in the world around us which discloses the source of our strength. For while the circumstances of our life have been disrupted, the Cause which we serve and the vision which we hold has become stronger in our hearts and has evoked an expression of community effort greater than any we have made previously.

The preparation, encouragement, and guidance which the Guardian has bestowed upon us, both in his general letters and in messages to the National Spiritual Assembly, becomes more significant as the forces of the age move swiftly to a climax. In "The Unfoldment of World Civilisation" he drew attention to the two processes of disintegration and construction operating side by side throughout the world. The constructive process, he showed to be directly associated with the rise and consolidation of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. In the light of this analysis of the Age of Transition it is not insignificant that the Incorporation Certificate of the National Spiritual Assembly was received one month before the outbreak of war. For two years prior to this we had, as our Annual Reports mention, been striving to achieve an organic life in the national community which would enable us to go forward as one body in our great task of Teaching. That this has, in some measure, been achieved is proved by the spirit of the Summer School and Teaching Conference, as well as by the extension of teaching work to new centres. It is only on the basis of such spiritual achievements that we can ever think to play a part in the re-shaping of human society, or try to comprehend the generous praise and thrilling promises which the Guardian has recently showered upon us. "I wish to re-affirm my deep sense of gratitude and admiration for the splendid manner in which the English believers are discharging their duties and responsibilities in these days of increasing peril, anxiety and stress. Their tenacity, courage, faith and noble exertions will as a magnet attract the undoubted and promised blessings of Bahá'u'lláh. They have, at a time when the basis of ordered society itself is rocking and trembling, laid an unassailable foundation for the Administrative Order of their Faith. Upon this basis the rising generation will erect a noble structure that will

excite the admiration of their fellow-countrymen. My prayers for them will continually be offered at the holy Shrines." Such a message is the greatest challenge and bounty to us, for no one dare accept it unless it be true in intention, but when it is accepted its promise will be assured.

Let us not, however, present a picture which would exaggerate the size of our achievements or our effectiveness. We can as yet make no claim to influence consciously, the spiritual or moral life of our nation. Far from it. We are a small community just beginning to achieve the necessary unity for effective action; we are still in a state of preparation and purification for our greater task. We have yet to win to our cause people of capacity and influence, and the Name of Bahá'u'lláh is as yet unproclaimed to our fellow-countrymen. Certain weaknesses in ourselves must be overcome before we can successfully accomplish this task. Chief among these weaknesses is an insufficient support of the Bahá'í Fund, an inadequate knowledge and understanding of the administrative processes of the Faith, and a too casual response to measures initiated by the National Spiritual Assembly.

First and foremost of our activities has been Teaching. At the last Convention it was recommended that we should concentrate on five cities with a view to establishing communities there whenever possible. The National Spiritual Assembly adopted this plan but only two of the cities mentioned by the delegates, Leeds and Bournemouth, were included in the list. Other places, Nottingham and Brighton, presented better opportunities through the presence of resident believers, so these were included. One city, Newcastle, where there are no Bahá'ís at all, has been given special attention.

In Leeds the Bradford Spiritual Assembly has continued teaching work throughout the year, and there is every prospect of success here. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wilkinson have made their home there, bringing the number of resident believers up to four. Meetings have been held, and the Military Tribunal there granted the application of a Bahá'í for exemption from combatant service, which resulted in some publicity.

Three believers have moved to Bournemouth and the Group there now numbers ten. The Feasts and anniversaries are observed and it is hoped to have a Centre as the chief aid to a teaching campaign.

In Nottingham excellent work has been done through the efforts of the resident believer, Esther Richardson. She has arranged meetings with the

Esperantists and the Theosophists which have been addressed by visiting teachers, and has gathered together a number of her friends and aroused their keen interest. It is expected that a few of them will come to Summer School.

Work in Brighton is hampered by the small amount of time at the disposal of the resident believers, Mr. and Mrs. Lee. A member of the London community lived there for a few weeks, but a planned and sustained campaign is needed.

New ground has been broken in Newcastle and much interest aroused. A teacher spent five weeks there before Christmas, and three months after Christmas. Many clubs and societies were addressed, and a series of public lectures given from the platform of the Theosophical Society. Contacts were made in the University, a number of study meetings were held, a good deal of literature has been purchased by interested inquirers and it is hoped that some of them will come to Summer School. The last report of the work there states:—"The situation now requires steady and continual work. About two hundred people have heard of the Faith directly, and a regular study meeting is required."

The local communities have maintained fireside and other teaching meetings. A series of regular study meetings was held in Altrincham during the summer by the Manchester Spiritual Assembly, and a successful meeting was arranged with the Rover Scout Crew by Miss Ada Williams, when the interest of about twenty young men was aroused. The first extension work of the Torquay Spiritual Assembly was in Exeter, when Mrs. Stevens addressed the Psychology Club.

We have begun to teach as a community, co-ordinating local effort and using national resources, but there is great scope for more individual effort. Two years ago the Guardian cabled us to "subordinate all activities (to) teaching objective." In our community effort we have attempted to do this, but this command, voiced by Bahá'u'lláh, the Master, and now by the Guardian, surely applies to our personal lives as well.

Minute 47 of the National Spiritual Assembly's meeting on December 30th reads as follows:—"The whole teaching campaign was reviewed. It was suggested that the plan adopted at the Convention of concentrating on five centres, tended to make the growth of a Bahá'í community artificial and hasty. It was suggested that a longer plan—such as achieving 19 Spiritual Assemblies by 1944, would not only increase the scope of the National campaign, but prevent undue pressure

from being exerted on new communities, which would develop far more strongly and healthily by a slower and more natural process of unfoldment. The meeting expressed agreement with this plan, but decided to refer it to Convention for general discussion."

Incorporation

This task was nearly complete at last Convention, and it only remains to record that our Certificate was obtained on August 5th. Legal records are maintained at the London centre, and our first annual return has been made to the Registrar of Companies, and to the Income Tax authorities.

The National Spiritual Assembly, by virtue of its Loan Account, was chief creditor of a business owned by one of the Bahá'ís. It was able to use its influence to prevent the business being forced into bankruptcy, and to make an arrangement which it is hoped will eventually benefit both the debtor and the creditors.

The Bradford Spiritual Assembly, upon presentation of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, was granted exemption from the payment of rates on its Centre. This same document has been of use to the Publishing Trust when entering business contracts, for which guarantees would otherwise have been required.

Military Service

Following the Guardian's instructions and upholding the principles of the Faith, Bahá'í young men who have been conscripted have applied for exemption from combatant service, at the same time stating their unqualified readiness to serve in any non-combatant capacity which the Government may indicate. In order to make this application, it is necessary to register as a conscientious objector, a term which does not accurately describe the Bahá'í attitude. So far one young man has appeared before a tribunal. His application was granted and the local newspapers printed accounts of a new Faith.

Three Bahá'ís are already serving in the forces, a number are awaiting their tribunals, and a few are in reserved occupations. A great many members of the community are serving the country in one or other form of National Service such as A.R.P., ambulance driving, etc.

Publicity

The chief effect of the War has been, so far, to bring to a stop our plans for publicity. At the last Convention it was recommended that the N.S.A. should examine the possibilities of wide publicity,

such as buying time on the wireless. Plans had been made for a Bahá'í stand at the *Sunday Times* Book Fair last autumn, and negotiations were in progress for obtaining a model of the Temple from the American National Spiritual Assembly. The latter was not available and the Book Fair was cancelled because of the war. At the same time the commercial broadcasting stations closed down, so that no publicity was possible in that direction.

The Torquay Spiritual Assembly paid for a brief notice about the Faith in a local paper, and report that their regular meetings are advertised. Meetings have also been advertised in Bradford and Newcastle with good results.

The Faith was represented at the Southport Convention of Religions, when a good deal of interest was aroused. Several of those present have subsequently come to meetings in other parts of the country.

A number of books have been sent to the agency for distributing books among the services.

Mr. Townshend's book, "The Heart of the Gospel," was very favourably reviewed in the Irish papers, and has had a good reception there.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

The establishment of the Publishing Trust has proven to be a sound and invaluable undertaking. It must surely be included in "the unassailable foundation" of which the Guardian speaks. With the incorporation of the N.S.A., the three original Trustees resigned their office, and the N.S.A. became Trustee. The chief work this year has been the following publications:—

A new edition of "Bahá'u'lláh and The New Era," Dr. Esslemont's standard work on the Faith. With the permission of Mrs. Esslemont a few alterations and some slight additions were made. It is now available at half a crown.

"The Heart of the Gospel." A brilliant and scholarly work by the author of "The Promise of All Ages."

A Bahá'í Prayer Book, published in a complete and abridged form. The abridged copy has been found very acceptable by non-Bahá'ís.

"The Bahá'í Faith." Five thousand more copies of the penny pamphlet, which every Bahá'í needs frequently.

"New World Order." A reproduction, with a few alterations, of the December number of the N.S.A.'s periodical "New World Order." Three thousand copies, for sale at a penny.

In addition the publication of Lady Blomfield's book, "The Chosen Highway," is well advanced and copies should be available by the end of June. Advanced notices have been printed and circulated.

The war presented a grave problem to the Publishing Trust, for restrictions were imposed on the sending of money abroad for non-essential supplies, and in America goods could not be shipped to belligerent countries without cash payment. The standard works of Bahá'u'lláh and the Guardian are printed in America and we were unable to obtain them. Lady Blomfield, even after her passing, was the means of solving this problem. The American friends ordered a thousand copies of her book, thereby establishing a credit for us, so we have been able to place a large order with the American Publishing Committee, sufficient to meet our needs for some time to come. The friends should realise that the Publishing Trust, to continue its service, will need more money than receipts from books. In order to make literature available at a price within everyone's reach, large stocks have to be carried, and this inevitably ties up liquid capital. Generous donations have been made during the year, but larger sums are needed if we are to have the standard works of the Faith available to the believers and the public. At present it would be possible to publish the Kitáb-i-Iqán at a sale price of five shillings if the necessary capital, £75, were subscribed.

The capital fund of the Publishing Trust has increased by cash donations already mentioned, and by the gift of a large stock of "Paris Talks" from Lady Blomfield, and of "The Drama of The Kingdom," by Mrs. Basil Hall. In addition the Trust has been given all rights in "The Chosen Highway" and copyright in the "Paris Talks." Mrs. Basil Hall has provided for full rights in "Paris Talks" to revert to the Publishing Trust after her death.

The National Spiritual Assembly wishes to thank Miss Clayton and Mr. Louis Rosenfield for their capable and devoted service in the dispatching and accounting work.

In order to distribute the stock of the Trust to a certain extent, local Spiritual Assemblies have been sent large supplies of standard literature such as Dr. Esslemont's book, penny pamphlets, etc. An insurance policy in the amount of £500 has been taken out on a large part of the stock.

Summer School

This has now become an established feature of our national activity. Continuing the progress of the first three years, the fourth Summer School

was more ambitious, better attended, and marked by an even greater vitality than the earlier ones. For the first time the National Spiritual Assembly took the risk of guaranteeing a minimum attendance during the bank holiday week-end. Its confidence in the support of the friends was justified by an attendance greatly in excess of the number guaranteed. The radiance and unity pervading the Summer School were in direct contrast to the turmoil and darkness of the outside world, which at that time was within four weeks of war. The morning lectures presented the Bahá'í reading of history, surveyed modern problems and explained Bahá'u'lláh's solutions. In the evening experts in various arts, the dance, drama, music, pottery, spoke on their own subjects and all declared the need for a new creative impulse which must somehow be linked with social conditions.

Arrangements are complete for the fifth Summer School which will be held at Cawston House, Rugby, in the very centre of England. It remains to be seen what effect the war will have on this basic institution of Bahá'í life.

Teaching Conference

Pursuing the plan of previous years, to maintain three annual rallying points for the national community, the midwinter Teaching Conference was held in Manchester. (The other points are Summer School and Convention). There was a slight decline in attendance, but all local communities were represented and two isolated believers from Birmingham were especially welcome. The report of the Conference reads:—"It was generally felt that the Conference itself was better than in previous years. There seemed to be more weight in the discussions, and a more real sense of something actually being accomplished. Specific matters were discussed and there was no time for generalities." Two speakers examined the teaching resources of the community, one from the point of view of individual effort and one from the viewpoint of collective action. One session was devoted to the Bahá'í Fund, and one to discussion between the National Spiritual Assembly and the community.

Recent messages from the Guardian were read, calling for "still greater tenacity, fidelity, vigour and devotion." A cable was sent to him saying, "Teaching Conference resolves achieve high standard devotion teaching campaign called for your recent messages. Deepest love English friends." His reply was, "Welcome noble resolve prosecute energetically teaching campaign praying ardently signal success."

"New World Order"

The outbreak of war and the consequent rising price of paper made it necessary to change the National Spiritual Assembly's periodical from an eight page magazine to a four page leaflet. With this change came a change in price and policy. The price was reduced to a penny and the paper was made into a definite teaching organ, using a great deal of quotation from the Writings and setting forth directly the Bahá'í principles. This change was welcomed on all sides, and especially from Bahá'ís, who now have new teaching material every month.

New World Order is an expense to the National Spiritual Assembly, and would be so even if every copy were sold, but it is felt that the expenditure is justified by the value of the paper to the teaching work. Local Spiritual Assemblies have been allotted a specific number, which they are asked to buy every month, and this helps to reimburse the National Fund. It is felt that much greater use could be made of the paper by individual Bahá'ís; if everyone would buy two or three copies a month and give them away to non-Bahá'í friends or strangers, the teachings would be spread more effectively.

A few complete sets of volume 1 have been preserved and may be purchased.

In Memoriam

Lady Blomfield passed away on December 31st, the Feast of Honour. In the first shock of her parting, we could only think of the actual fact. Now we begin to realise something of the tremendous loss which we have sustained. Summer School, the Rizwan Feast, the Presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in England, were all associated in our minds with her. She it was who told us of the Master, who showed us what it meant to follow the True Exemplar. A bulwark in need, a friend in trouble, a companion in happiness, may her spirit be ever with us and assist us to manifest those qualities of kindness, consideration, and graciousness of which she was the embodiment.

The news of her passing reached the friends during the Teaching Conference, and was sent on to the Guardian in the cable already mentioned. His reply was:—"Profoundly grieve passing dearly beloved outstanding co-worker Sitarih Khánum. Memory her glorious services imperishable. Advise English community hold befitting memorial gatherings. Assure relatives my heartfelt sympathy and loving fervent prayers."

Accordingly memorial meetings were held in all communities. The funeral took place in Hampstead, and out of consideration to some of Sitarih

Khanum's relatives the service was Church of England. Two members of the National Spiritual Assembly read from the Prayers and Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh, and a number of the friends gathered round the grave afterwards.

Archives

The National Archives, which had been properly arranged and classified, were greatly augmented by a number of original Tablets and other objects which were left by Lady Blomfield. There are two copies of the "Paris Talks" signed by the Master, a samovar which He had given to Lady Blomfield, some signed photographs, and a few other things. The National Spiritual Assembly has placed all these precious objects in a lined box, and they are now in the vault of a bank in the west of England.

Bahá'í World

The Guardian has appointed Mr. David Hofman to the editorial staff of Bahá'í World, as representative for the British Isles.

Registration

At the beginning of the year the National Spiritual Assembly commenced to register all declared believers. The friends have been very slow in responding to this plan, which is of importance to the welfare of the community. Believers are asked to send a photograph and details of name and address, which are then entered on a special card printed for the purpose. One copy, stamped with the seal of the N.S.A. is returned to the believer, and a duplicate is retained in the National files. Believers travelling abroad, one to Iran and one to America, have found this invaluable as a Bahá'í passport. Lately two communities have been imposed upon by a person claiming to be a Bahá'í, a thing which would not happen if all believers were registered. But the most important reason, for registration, as explained in the Journal, is to protect the Faith against unauthorised representation, and to enable the National Spiritual Assembly to accept responsibility for the community.

Finance

The treasurer's report will give detailed accounts, but the outstanding feature is the large excess of expenditure over income. During the twelve months this has amounted to about £115. Some £70 has been needed for Incorporation but the balance has been used for current expense. This matter must receive the immediate attention of the believers if the teaching work is to continue.

* * * * *

Our own progress is inevitably bound up with the world body of the Faith, and although we do not, as yet, play any great part in the international activities, we are an organ of that body and receive from it as well as give to it.

An event of "capital institutional significance," described by the Guardian in a general letter which has been circulated among the friends, calls for our deep attention and an earnest effort to understand its significance. This event is none other than the permanent interment of the remains of the Purest Branch, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's younger brother, and of Ásiyih Khanum, His Mother, on Mount Carmel in the neighbourhood of the shrine of the Greatest Holy Leaf. The news was received by cable from the Guardian:—"Remains Purest Branch and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Mother permanently laid (to) rest (in) close neighbourhood (of the) shrine (of the) Greatest Holy Leaf. Hearts rejoicing. Shoghi Rabbani."

In his letter he writes:—"For it must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasised, that the conjunction of the resting place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot which, under the wings of the Báb's overshadowing sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkar which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh and anticipated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and which are to function in consonance with the principles that govern the twin institutions of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice."

This letter was mimeographed under the title "The Heart of the Entire Planet" and a copy sent to each believer. An effort to understand this letter thoroughly, will increase everyone's understanding of the Faith itself.

An attack made on the Cause in America had repercussions in this country and a statement from the National Spiritual Assembly was circulated to each community for the information of the friends.

A word should now be said about the conditions in our own community. One of the most hopeful and encouraging signs is the renewal of vigour in London. The Spiritual Assembly had given much thought and prayer to the enervated condition which undoubtedly existed for some time. The

outbreak of war brought immediate problems and disclosed still further the lack of unified action. Many believers were evacuated and the community was forced to take some action to maintain itself. It is in the solution of this problem that the unfailing, creative, "society building power of the Faith," has been again demonstrated. For the London Spiritual Assembly realised that the problem was a spiritual one, and would not be resolved by administrative action. It therefore called upon the community for a re-examination of its spiritual life, for concentration upon the primary virtues and for a prayerful attitude in daily life. The result is the appearance of a new life in the community, a more serious and purposeful spirit, and a truly encouraging activity among the youth.

The new communities of Bradford and Torquay have each developed in their own way. They have both settled into the administrative pattern of Bahá'u'lláh's Administrative Order, and both have extended the range of their teaching activities. It is interesting to note that both communities have advertised in the local press.

The Summer School and Teaching Conference gave undoubted evidence of a still growing unity, a process which is fostered by the single purpose of teaching. Concentration on this purpose, with all its implications of spiritual effort, reliance on God, purity of life and radiant faith, will take us far on that course which the Guardian has mapped out for us, and will ensure the ultimate victory. His most recent message contains, for the first time, a statement to the effect that this community has a definite part to play in the re-shaping of human society through the establishment of the Faith of God in the West. "May the Almighty bless, sustain and protect the English believers, who in these days of unprecedented turmoil, stress and danger are holding aloft so courageously the banner of the Faith, and who will, in the days to come, contribute, through His grace and power, a notable share to its establishment and recognition in the west. Your true and grateful brother, Shoghi."

Humanity has now entered that final armageddon, "which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake." Let us turn to Bahá'u'lláh, and with unshakeable faith in His all-embracing sovereignty pray to be the instruments through which "shall the Divine Standard be unfurled, and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody."

Faithfully in His Service,

National Spiritual Assembly,

By DAVID HOFMAN, *Secretary*.

April 17th, 1939—April 25th, 1940

The accounts were audited and certified by Mr. Louis Rosenfield.

Transfer from Deposit, £100.—It was necessary, during the course of the year, to draw on our reserve to this extent. The cost of Incorporation, £71 13s. 1d., was paid from this sum, but even so there has been more money going out, than coming in.

Secretarial, £35 6s. 6d.—During several months of the year the National Secretary was giving his full time to the N.S.A. and was permitted to draw on the national fund for living expenses. There are also some small items for stenographic services.

The expense for printing was incurred in mimeographing the Guardian's letter about the transfer of the remains of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's brother and mother to Mount Carmel, and in sending out the "Report of Activities" in January.

The balance carried forward is £15 12s. 9d. less than the balance brought forward at the beginning of the year, and this with the £100 transferred from reserve, means that altogether during the year there has been an excess of expenditure over income of £115 12s. 9d.

1. That a general reduction in the selling price of literature be considered. See Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

2. That before further publishing was undertaken, consideration be given to the existing stocks of books and the needs of the Teaching campaign. Accepted.

3. That local Spiritual Assemblies be advised to issue from time to time explanatory lists of available literature, giving prices and the particular use of each book or pamphlet. Accepted.

4. That a National Fund be opened in support of Summer School and that local Spiritual Assemblies collect and forward contributions to it. See Summer School.

5. That the Summer School Fund pay fees for believers unable to do so themselves. See Summer School.

6. That a copy of the Companies Act be obtained and kept in the N.S.A. office for reference. Accepted.

7. That a time limit be fixed at the end of which believers who have not registered shall be deprived of the voting right, until such time as they have done so. See Registration.

8. That appropriate lantern slides be procured as aids to publicity and teaching. The N.S.A. resolved to inquire about the film of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and to ask the Guardian about photographs of the Shrines and those printed in "The Dawn-breakers."

9. That Summer School lectures be advertised in the local press. Accepted.

10. That the whole Bahá'í community should engage in a four year plan of teaching with the object of having nineteen Spiritual Assemblies established by Rizwan 1944. See front page.

11. That believers whose circumstances permit, should be encouraged to take up residence in towns where there is no Bahá'í group. Accepted.

12. That local communities extend their activities to neighbouring places. Accepted.

13. That a National Teaching Committee be formed to foster and advise upon the teaching efforts of isolated believers. See The Four Year Plan.

14. That teachers should be interchanged between communities. See The Four Year Plan.

15. That local Spiritual Assemblies begin at once to train the friends to be teachers. Accepted.

16. That in order to assist the National Fund, a charge should be made for Bahá'í Journal. See Bahá'í Journal.

LOYALTY TO THE COUNTRY

The friends are again reminded of the emphatic command of Bahá'u'lláh to behave with the utmost truthfulness and loyalty to the government of the land. In Bahá'í Journal No. 22, the following minute of the N.S.A. was printed:—"It was resolved that every declared Bahá'í under the jurisdiction of the National Spiritual Assembly should be required to be very strict in their obedience to the principle of the Faith which makes it a moral obligation upon its adherents to be loyal to the government of the country. They should refrain from all action which might hamper the work of the government or be in the least prejudicial to the interests of the state."

The friends should constantly bear in mind the Guardian's injunction not to become entangled in the conflicting passions of the day, nor to engage in political argument. The government require us to be guarded in our speech, an advice which we can welcome since it gives us an added opportunity to speak of spiritual matters and the affairs of the Kingdom.

EMERGENCY MEASURES

The following plans have been made for the preservation of the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly, in case five or more of its members are incapacitated:—

(a) The names and addresses of delegates to be published in the Journal.

(b) A complete list of the names and addresses of all believers in the British Isles to be kept by each local Spiritual Assembly.

(c) In the event of there not being five members of the N.S.A. alive or capable, the remaining members should summon the delegates, in whatever manner seems best, to elect a new National Spiritual Assembly.

The delegates, while not empowered to administer the affairs of the Cause, have the duty of electing new people to fill vacancies in the membership of the N.S.A. They would have to elect a new N.S.A. if necessary.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Plans are now complete and the programme has been approved. The location of Summer School this year, is the most beautiful we have yet had, and it is sincerely hoped that all the friends will make a great effort to attend. The programme has been designed with a view to educating the believers as well as enquirers, and special attention is paid to the Administrative Order. Programmes will be circulated shortly.

Miss Wellby is secretary of Summer School, and Miss Cansdale treasurer. A special account has been opened in the name "Bahá'í Summer School," and all those who can are asked to contribute to the fund for providing scholarships. Many of the friends cannot afford to attend, and the Summer School Fund has been instituted for the purpose of helping those who cannot afford to pay for themselves.

NEW WORLD ORDER

The N.S.A. will continue publication of this paper. Friends are urged to send in articles about a thousand or fifteen hundred words in length. This is an excellent way for young Bahá'ís to

develop their powers of expression. All articles will be considered, and the editor will not make alterations without the consent of the writers.

Mr. Miller and Mr. Balyuzi have been appointed to receive and acknowledge subscriptions. Mr. Hofman has been re-appointed editor.

BAHÁ'Í PUBLISHING TRUST

The following officers have been appointed :—

Manager : Mr. David Hofman.

Treasurer : Mr. Louis Rosenfield.

Stock and Dispatch Clerk : Miss Marjorie Clayton.

The Convention recommended that a general reduction be made in the selling price of literature, and the N.S.A. has acted as follows :—

"The Hidden Words," blue cloth edition, reduced from 1s. 6d. to 6d.

Further consideration will be given to this proposal at a later meeting.

REGISTRATION

This matter was discussed at length during Convention and a recommendation was made that a time limit be fixed, at the end of which, believers who have not registered shall be deprived of the voting right, until such time as they have done so.

In considering this proposal, the N.S.A. felt that the importance of registration should once again be explained to the friends. At present only half the community have registered. In these troubled times, many unauthorised people will claim Bahá'í membership from varying motives, some undoubtedly in an attempt to damage the good name of the Faith. The N.S.A., as an incorporated body, cannot accept responsibility for the community, unless it has a proper check on membership. The proposal of the delegates has therefore been adopted, and the date fixed is August 13th. After that date, believers will not be recognised by the N.S.A., as having the voting right, until they have filled in the registration card.

It must be strongly emphasised that this action is not disciplinary. The N.S.A. is not seeking to impose an unwelcome measure on the friends, but solely to fulfil its duty of guarding the Cause and protecting the community. Unless we can claim that all Bahá'ís are registered with the N.S.A., we cannot deny that people who claim to be Bahá'ís, and who may have done the most blameworthy acts, are members of our community. Therefore the friends are urged to complete this necessary measure. Register at once if you have not already done so.

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

The delegates made the following recommendation to the incoming N.S.A. "That in order to assist the National Fund, a charge should be made for Bahá'í Journal."

The N.S.A. accepted this proposal and has made the following decision. Number 23 (this number) should be sold at 3d. and subsequent numbers at 2d. Isolated believers should receive them free of charge, though they may pay for them if they wish.

BAHÁ'Í ELECTIONS

The following instruction has been received from the Guardian :—"Concerning the question you have asked as to whether in elections for Spiritual Assemblies the electors should cast exactly nine votes, or may cast less than this number. Inasmuch as Spiritual Assembly membership, according to the principles of Bahá'í Administration, has been limited for the present to nine members, it follows that no electoral vote can be effective unless it is cast for exactly that number. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of every Bahá'í elector to cast nine votes, neither more nor less, except under special circumstances, so as to insure that the results of the elections for the Spiritual Assembly will be effective and on as wide a basis of representation as possible." Letter to the N.S.A., March 27th, 1940.

THE CHOSEN HIGHWAY

Copies of Lady Blomfield's book will be available at the end of June. There are two prices, 5s. for the paper cover, and 7s. 6d. for the cloth. Every believer is urged to buy a copy, to study it, and to use it for teaching. Supplies will be sent to local Spiritual Assemblies, but isolated believers should apply to the Bahá'í Publishing Trust.

NEWS

Ralph Naylor is back from Norway, safe and sound.

Molly Brown, in company with the Vic-Wells Ballet Company, was evacuated safely from The Hague.

The Torquay Spiritual Assembly have to look for a new Centre as their premises have been requisitioned.

We welcome most heartily a new believer in Nottingham, Mrs. Lacey, 15, Church Drive, Cotmanhay, Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

THE FOUR YEAR PLAN

A recommendation from the Convention to the N.S.A. reads as follows:—"That a National Teaching Committee be formed to foster and advise upon, the teaching efforts of isolated believers."

The National Spiritual Assembly considered this matter and, in taking action, has enlarged upon the original recommendation. A National Teaching Committee has been appointed with the following duties:—To press forward, by all means in their power, the Four Year Plan of teaching.

To arrange for teachers and speakers to visit those towns where work is already started:—Nottingham, Brighton, etc.

To arrange for interchange of teachers between communities.

To encourage continually isolated believers and local communities in their teaching efforts.

To maintain contact with all enquirers who have no personal contact with any of the friends.

To keep records of all teaching activities, names and addresses and any useful information for teachers.

The relationship of the National Teaching Committee to local Spiritual Assemblies has been defined. Within the area of its own jurisdiction, the Spiritual Assembly has full control over all Bahá'í activities, but it should co-operate with the National Teaching Committee, and submit to it periodical reports of its teaching activities. The Committee should encourage and give help to local communities.

Since the chief work of the Committee is organising, it was felt that it would work more efficiently if all its members could consult frequently. The following friends, all of whom live in, or near London, were appointed:—

Miss Baxter, chairman.

Miss Marjorie Clayton.

Mr. Balyuzi.

Mrs. Brown.

Miss Bonney.

Teaching

Since Convention the national secretary has been to Torquay, where he spoke at the public meeting in the Centre one evening. There were several students and enquirers present. The secretary is now in Newcastle where he reports a steady interest. He spoke to about twenty members of the Psychology Club on June 4th, and is speaking from the platform of the Theosophical Society on June 9th. A study meeting has been arranged for June 11th in the Liberal Club, to which

many people are being invited. A number from the Psychology Club left their names and addresses, and asked to be advised of this later meeting. The secretary will stop over in Nottingham on his way back, where Esther Richardson is maintaining the interest aroused there.

DEAR FRIENDS,

At this point of darkness in the story of mankind, we, the community of the Most Great Name, are pledged to a greater task than any we have yet undertaken. Our success will add to the "wondrous tales" of the eternal Cause of God. Read the Tablet of the Master to the Bahá'ís of Britain, on the opposite page, treasure it in your hearts, and remembering that "God will assist all those who arise to serve Him," begin to teach His Cause. Remember, too, the needs of the Fund and let the support you give it be the measure of your faith.

PRAYER FOR TEACHING

O God! O God! Thou seest my weakness, lowliness and humility before Thy creatures; nevertheless I have trusted in Thee and have arisen in the promotion of Thy teachings among Thy strong servants, relying on Thy power and might!

O Lord! I am a broken-winged bird and desire to soar in Thy limitless space. How is it possible for me to do this save through Thy confirmation and assistance.

O Lord, have pity on my weakness and strengthen me with Thy power.

O Lord, have pity on my impotence and assist me with Thy might and majesty.

O Lord! Should the breath of the Holy Spirit confirm the weakest of creatures, he would attain to the highest station of greatness and would possess anything he desireth. Indeed, Thou hast assisted Thy servants and the most insignificant of those who lived upon the earth; but through Thy sanction and potency they took precedence over the most glorious of Thy people and the most noble of mankind. Whereas formerly they were as moths, they became as royal falcons, and whereas before they were as bubbles they became seas. Through Thy bestowal, Thy mercy and Thy most great favour they became stars shining in the horizon of guidance, birds singing in the rose garden of immortality, lions roaring in the forest of knowledge and wisdom, and whales swimming in the ocean of life.

Verily, Thou art the Clement, the Powerful, the Mighty, and the Most Merciful of the Merciful!

'Abdu'l-Bahá.

TABLET FROM 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ TO THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF BRITAIN

O ye Sons and Daughters of the Kingdom !

Your letter, which was written by heavenly inspiration, has arrived. Its contents are full of interest, and its message expresses the feelings of radiant hearts. Verily, the Bahá'ís of London are steadfast believers and faithful in service.

They shall not slacken with years, nor shall their light grow dim.

For they are Bahá'ís. They are children of Heaven. They are of God. Surely they will be the means of uplifting God's word and of fostering the oneness of the world of humanity.

They will proclaim the equality of man and spread the Divine Teachings.

It is easy to accept the Kingdom of God ; to endure therein with steadfastness is difficult, for temptations are great and strong.

The English have always been resolute, not swerving in the face of difficulties. Having taken up a cause, they are not ready, for trivial reasons, either to leave it or to lose heart and enthusiasm.

Verily, in all their undertakings they show firmness.

O my friends, though you dwell in the West, praise be to God, you have heard the Divine Call from the East, and like unto Moses and the burning bush, you have become aglow with the fire, lighted in the " Tree of Asia " (Rev. 22 : 2).

You have found the Right Path. You have become as shining lamps, and have entered into the Kingdom of God.

Now in thanksgiving for this bounty, you have arisen to offer prayers for blessings to fall upon all mankind : that, by the light of the Star of the Kingdom of Abhá, the eyes of all may be opened and their hearts, like unto mirrors, reflect the splendour of the Sun of Truth.

This is my hope—that the breath of the Holy Spirit may so inspire your hearts, that your tongues may begin to reveal the mysteries and to expound the truth and the meaning of the Holy Books.

May the Bahá'ís, by the Divine Teachings, become physicians to heal the long-standing infirmities of the world, to restore sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead, and to awaken those that sleep.

Be assured that the blessings of the Holy Spirit will descend upon you, and that the hosts of the Kingdom of Abhá will come to your succour.

Upon you be the glory of the Most Glorious !

Signed : 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ 'ABBÁS.

*Written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Ramleh, Egypt,
on the 9th May, 1911.*

Translated into English by Y. Dáwúd.