

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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REPORT OF TEACHING CONFERENCE

The National Spiritual Assembly regrets that the number of the Journal containing the full details of the Conference in Manchester, was not printed in time to be circulated. There was however, a good attendance and it is felt that the week-end was successful and will bear good fruit in the days to come.

A full report of the Teaching Conference will be mimeographed and a copy sent to every believer. Many suggestions were made for consideration by the N.S.A. The following one received the unanimous approval of the meeting and has been adopted by the National Assembly. "To establish three rallying points during the year for all the believers; Convention in Spring; Summer School in Summer, and a midwinter Teaching Conference." It is hoped to make these, three regular occasions in the life of the Faith, and the N.S.A.

has pledged itself to give each one its full support and to do everything possible to encourage the friends to attend.

The association of the believers with each other during this Conference, all bent on promoting the best interests of the Faith, provided stimulation and spiritual re-inforcement to everyone. The discussions were vital and showed the determination of the friends to carry on with the task which we have undertaken in calling ourselves Bahá'ís.

A public meeting was held on Saturday evening, when four speakers presented the Teachings. Discussion followed and then the visitors and believers joined together in a social evening.

The Summer School Committee met and made the following arrangements. The date of Summer School to be the

SUMMER SCHOOL—July—August, 1938

last week of July and the first two weeks of August. The place should be nearer London than in previous years in order to make arrangements for the whole school to attend the Bahá'í session of the International Esperanto Congress.

The National Spiritual Assembly met twice during the week-end; once before, and once after the Conference.

Our thanks are due to the Manchester Spiritual Assembly for their trouble in making all the arrangements and for their warm welcome. The N.S.A. also wishes to express its thanks to Mrs. Routh, who is on a visit from Australia, and has helped us in our teaching work in London and at the Conference where she was one of the speakers at the public meeting.

LETTER FROM THE N.S.A.

Beloved Friends: We feel it our duty to place before you once again, the nature and demands of the work which we, as the community of the Greatest Name, are called upon to do. We know that the climax of the present tumult is perilously close. We must also know that upon our devotion, our steadfastness and degree of self-sacrifice, depends in some measure, the severity of the ordeal towards which humanity is moving. There is no refuge save God, and we who claim to recognise His Manifestation in this day must be the means of drawing our fellows nearer to Him. These are the words of the Báb to the Letters of the Living: "Such must be the purity of your character and the degree of your renunciation, that the people of the earth may through you recognise and be drawn closer to the

heavenly Father who is the Source of purity and grace." Teaching is our most important obligation, and this can only be done by first preparing ourselves, not only in knowledge but in the use of the power of the Holy Spirit which we are told will help us, if we arise to serve God. Meditation and prayer and constant study of the Teachings is the necessary background to the discharge of our responsibilities. "Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My Words." This is the source of our power, our energy and effectiveness.

The following message has been received from the Guardian. "Every effort should now be exerted by the N.S.A. to carry on the teaching work through every means possible, and every believer should be made to realise that he has an added responsibility to shoulder in this matter."

Following the Teaching Conference, the N.S.A. considered ways and means of teaching the Faith in the British Isles, and wishes to make the following report.

Calling oneself a Bahá'í is to undertake the greatest responsibility possible. It must be undertaken with extreme humility but with unshakeable confidence in the power of Bahá'u'lláh to accomplish His purpose through us. Where a Spiritual Assembly is established, the community must not be regarded as an organisation for mutual benefit, such as a club, and teaching must not have the savour of inducing others to join. The Bahá'í community is an association of people, imbued with the spirit of service, ready and willing to sacrifice. Contributions to the fund

should not be made with a view to any return save the promotion of the Faith. Teaching is a process of unfolding a soul, of assisting to develop those signs of God, which Bahá'u'lláh assures us are deposited in every man. As the spiritual qualities of the seeker unfold so is he led to recognise the Source of his life, the Divine Manifestation.

The N.S.A. recommends that the believers should meet once a week to study the sacred Writings. In London and Manchester this can be arranged by the Spiritual Assemblies, either in the Centres, or wherever they may decide. The compilation of the Master's addresses in America, known as 'The Promulgation of Universal Peace' is recommended both for study of the Word and for guidance on the way to teach. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ways are seen in these addresses.

The Spiritual Assemblies are urged to arrange more meetings to which the believers can ask their friends. These should be informal, part of the time given to teaching and part to social enjoyment. The isolated believers especially can undertake this sort of activity.

The N.S.A. is considering sending Bahá'í visitors to the isolated believers, with a view to promoting their sense of unity in the Faith and of assisting them with their teaching work. Mrs. Langdon-Davies has volunteered to do some of this work.

N.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The delegates have elected Mrs. Langdon-Davies to the N.S.A., to fill the place left vacant by Mrs. Slade's retirement.

YOUTH CONFERENCE

The London Youth Group is holding a conference over the week-end of January 23rd, 1938, at Sowberry Court, near Reading. For full particulars apply to Miss Dorothy Cansdale, at the London Centre.

The National Youth Committee of the N.S.A. of America, which is in charge of international youth activity, has sent out a letter calling the Bahá'í Youth groups throughout the world to promote the third annual international Bahá'í Youth Symposium on Sunday, February 27th, 1938.

PUBLISHING FUND

The Publishing Fund now stands at £231 19s. 8d.

The declaration of Trust will shortly be made, the following believers acting as Trustees for the Fund:

Mrs. K. V. Brown
Mr. Albert Joseph
Mr. Arthur Norton

A contribution has been gratefully received from the N.S.A. of Australia and New Zealand.

NATIONAL FUND

An examination of the books discloses that the National Fund is mainly supported by profit on the sale of literature. This is an unhealthy condition and leaves the N.S.A. hampered in its efforts to promote the teaching work. Greater sacrifice is required from us all if we are to be the instruments of the Holy Spirit.

DINNER FOR MR. GRANT

On Monday, 13th of December, Mr. W. J. Grant, editor of the *Rangoon Times*, was the guest of the London Spiritual Assembly at dinner in the Linden Restaurant. Many believers and friends attended. It was a most enjoyable occasion and Mr. Grant urged us to continue our work as he felt we were going in the right direction. He is staying in England for some time and has sent someone to Rangoon to take his place with instructions to continue the publicity of the Teachings which he himself began.

NEW PRAYER BOOK

The N.S.A. has begun work on the compilation of a prayer book which it is hoped will be of service to all the believers. It is intended to publish it at a price within the reach of everyone.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S LAST WORDS TO THE WESTERN WORLD

“I say unto you that anyone who will rise up in the Cause of God at this time shall be filled with the spirit of

God, and that He will send His hosts from heaven to help you, and that nothing shall be impossible to you if you have faith. And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a Covenant between you and me; that ye have faith; that your faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move, that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end; even should ye hear that your Lord has been crucified, be not shaken in your faith; for I am with you always, whether living or dead; I am with you to the end. As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the standard—this is the standard—this is the standard.

“I am waiting, waiting to hear the glad news that the believers are the embodiments of sincerity and loyalty, the incarnation of love and amity and the manifestation of unity and concord.”

“Will they not rejoice my heart?
Will they not satisfy my yearnings?
Will they not heed my pleadings?
Will they not fulfil my hopes? Will
they not answer my call?”

“I am waiting, I am patiently waiting.”