

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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"Persevere and Never Feel Disheartened".

This is the message which the N.S.A has recently received from the Guardian. A letter, praising the work done in England, especially that in connection with the Congress of the World Fellowship of Faiths, and urging us on to greater effort and achievement, concludes with a paragraph in Shoghi Effendi's own hand in which he says:—"My prayers will be offered on your behalf. The work in which you are so devotedly engaged is near and dear to my heart. Persevere and never feel disheartened".

Dear Friends: we quote the following paragraph from the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. "O ye the faithful loved ones of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. It is incumbent upon you to take the greatest care of Shoghi Effendi, the twig that hath branched from the fruit given forth by the two hallowed and Divine Lote-Trees, that no dust of despondency and sorrow may stain his radiant nature, that day by day he may wax greater in happiness, in joy and spirituality, and may grow to become even as a fruitful tree."

Can we not best carry out this last mandate of our beloved Master by striving continually for the eventual triumph of that work which is so "near and dear" to the Guardian's heart?

Official Contacts

In order to clarify the ruling which was published in the September number of Bahá'í Journal, which debarred individual believers from communicating with "persons of eminence in political or governmental circles" the N.S.A wishes to advise the friends that it had reference to dignitaries of State and Church, members of parliament and leaders of political organizations. Where the believer has a personal friend who comes within this category there is obviously no reason why the Teachings should not be presented. The object of the N.S.A in making this ruling is to prevent individual Bahá'ís from sending pamphlets

or other literature to eminent people with whom they are not acquainted. The N.S.A. is fully aware of the widespread sympathy with many of the Bahá'í principles which exists among the leaders of English life, and frequently makes official contacts. The believers are asked to co-operate with the N.S.A. in this important work by making sure that all such contacts are made through the proper administrative channel.

Summer School Committee

The N.S.A. has appointed the following Committee to make arrangements for a Summer School in 1937.

Chairman	Mr. Tobey	Mr. Lee
Secretary	Mr. Balyuzi	Miss Lucy Hall
Asst. Sec.	Miss Wellby	Mr. Hofman
Treasurer	Mrs Brown	

The full report of the 1936 Summer School Committee reveals the following details which have not yet been communicated to the friends. Messages of greeting were received from friends in England and abroad and from the German Bahá'í Summer School. The following telegram was sent to the Guardian. "Joyously beginning summer school. Thirty registrants. Supplicate guidance. Devotion". After the expenses of the School had all been paid an amount of £1.18.10 was left. This has since been increased to £2 and placed in charge of the Summer School Committee for use in connection with next year's School.

Orders have been received for the compilation of lectures given at Summer School. For information refer to the September number of the Bahá'í Journal. The friends are urged to place their orders as soon as possible.

Reviewing Committee

A Committee has been appointed to advise the N.S.A. on the merits and accuracy of literary work which presents any or part of the Teachings. Books, essays, compilations etc. which are accepted by the N.S.A. will be included in the list of approved literature and will be brought to the notice of the friends. Believers are reminded that material which presents any phase of the Teachings to the public should, in order to be considered authentic, receive the approval of the N.S.A. before being published. The Committee is as follows:-

Secretary, Mrs Slade, Mallard's Court, Stokenchurch,
Bucks.

Mr. Balyuzi. Mr. Sugar.

Literature

The N.S.A is glad to advise the friends that plans are being considered for the publication of material which will be helpful in making new contacts and interesting new people.

Library

The price of Miss Pinchon's book, "The Coming of the Glory" has been reduced to sixpence. The friends are urged to take advantage of this offer as this is a very useful book to give to people who have just heard about the Faith and would like to know more. Send your orders to Mr Walter Wilkins, Bahá'í Centre, 46 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1.

News

The London Spiritual Assembly reports that its new address is 46 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. The Centre is open every afternoon from 2.30 to 6 p.m. and fireside meetings are held every Sunday evening from five o'clock onwards. The London Youth Group has two evening meetings a month and reports an enthusiastic and growing attendance. Fireside meetings are held in private homes five evenings a week.

The Manchester Spiritual Assembly is conducting regular meetings and Nineteen Day Feasts. The visit of two young ladies from Sheffield who have become interested in the Faith was a happy occasion and led to an evening meeting in Sheffield being attended by four of the Manchester friends, one of whom addressed the meeting. Mr. Mark Tobey's visit was greatly appreciated by the friends, and while there he visited the believers in Bradford and Blackburn and spoke to their study groups.

Letters have come from many parts of the world acknowledging our communications and congratulating us upon holding our first Summer School. The following is an extract from a letter received from the Bahá'ís of Persia. "The unveiling of the women has brought great changes for good. The women are striving to progress and take every opportunity to improve themselves. They are now permitted and encouraged to enter the University classes which is a great step forward. The Bahá'í group do so enjoy the benefit and pleasure of men and women meetings"... "We are all keeping a firm hold on to the "Hem of His Robe" and patiently waiting for better days of freedom".

The Spiritual Assembly of Haifa reports that the Guardian is in good health.

The Bahá'í Fund

"That you may reinforce this Teaching Campaign--so vitally needed in these days--and conduct, properly and efficiently, the rest of your manifold activities, spiritual as well as humanitarian, it is urgently necessary to establish the Central Fund, which if generously supported and upheld by individual friends and local Assemblies, will soon enable you to execute your plans with promptness and vigour". (Shoghi Effendi).

There are before us this winter, golden opportunities for Teaching work. Must we lose them through lack of funds?

Bahá'í AdministrationThe Nineteen Day Feast

This important occasion has been described by Shoghi Effendi as the foundation of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. It is the source from which the spiritual life of the community is regularly renewed. By attending the Nineteen Day Feast the believer integrates himself, not only with the local community, but with the entire world organism of the Most Great Name. Through this Feast the mysterious regenerative power of the Holy Word is diffused into every heart and the unity of the Bahá'í world is affirmed as a dynamic force. Bahá'u'lláh's principle of Oneness is realised and the Bahá'í community transcends all barriers of race and sect which break up human society.

The Feast has a threefold function and is conducted in three stages. The first part is devoted to the reading of passages from Bahá'í Sacred Writings and is the 'spiritual feast'. The second part is the recognised and proper occasion for consultation between the believers and between the community and the local Spiritual Assembly. The third part is the material feast and provides an opportunity for a social gathering of the friends in the atmosphere engendered by the spiritual meeting.

Only members of the Bahá'í community may attend the Nineteen Day Feasts, though if a non-Bahá'í is found to be present the courtesy and hospitality exemplified by the Master should be shown. All believers are expected to attend regularly, only sickness or absence from the city being a good reason for not attending. Bahá'ís are expected to adjust their affairs so that they can attend the Feast.

The Spiritual Assembly is responsible for the holding of the Feasts and may, when the Bahá'í calendar cannot be observed, arrange a date as near as possible to the correct one. Isolated believers are encouraged to observe the Feasts by spending a certain time in reading from the Sacred Word, studying the Administration and meditating.