

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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November, 1959

Do you know in what Day you are living? Do you realise in what Dispensation you are alive? Have you not heard in the Holy Scriptures at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a Day which is the Sun of all the past Days? This is the Day in which the Lord of Hosts has come down from the heaven on the clouds of glory! This is the Day in which the inhabitants of all the world shall enter under the shelter of the Word of God.



This is the Day whose real sovereign is His Highness the Almighty. This is the Day when the East and the West shall embrace each other like unto two lovers. This is the Day in which nations and governments will enter into an eternal bond of amity and conciliation. This century is the fulfilment of the Promised Century.

This Day is the dawn of the appearances of the traces of the glorious visions of the past prophets and sages.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ

The Gateway to Baha'u'lla's Tomb in Barji

ADDITIONS TO THE COMMUNITY

We are publishing in three sections the list of declarations received since the last list was published in *Bahá'í Journal* for November 1957.

The National Spiritual Assembly has received registration cards from the following:

Rosie Alexander	Didsbury
Zarin Munajjim (from Iran)	London
Parvaneh Ghazuizi (youth from Iran)	Brighton
Malcolm Lee	Leeds
Eric Kent	Caerphilly
John Kadoko	Loughborough
Violet Fawcett	Birmingham
Joyce Jones	Reading
Afaghieh Seiedi (from Iran)	Nottingham
Husayn Naji (from Iran)	Chertsey
Margaret Coady	Motherwell
Jamshid Kouchezkadeh (from Iran)	Dublin
John Morphew	Ware
Minou Davachi (from Iran)	London
Anayat Yazdani (from Pakistan)	Glasgow
Dorothy Telling (from Australia)	Epsom
Amy Tuson	Thornton
Sefatollah Buyuk-Aghaie (from Iran)	Cambridge
Shahrokh Azari (from Iran)	Bexley Heath
Mariam Nahilzadeh (from Iran)	London
Manijeh Ettihadieh (from Iran)	Southwick
Albert Bennett	Bournemouth
Bizhan Vahdat (from Iran)	Birmingham
Dorothy Barnett	Reading
Esmail Siahpoosh (from Iran)	Brighton
Farideh Siahpoosh (from Iran)	Brighton
Parviz Mottahed (youth from Iran)	Manchester
Amir-Farhang Imany (from Iran)	Brighton
Gladia Barron	Brighton
Jazbiyih Farzar (from Iran)	Bournemouth
Vajdieh Naji (from Iran)	London
Rebecca Ocaya (from Uganda)	Brighton
Margaret Higdon	London
Peter Hardwick	London
Abdol Madani (from Iran)	Cambridge
Pamela Tingle	Eccles
Elizabeth Albrow	London
Carmen Carletti	Nottingham
Margaret Bourke	Christchurch
Margaret Robinson	Swannington
Gwendolyn Thompson	Edinburgh
Elizabeth Laidlaw	Edinburgh
Aghdas Javid (from Iran)	Edinburgh
Mirza Javid (from Iran)	Edinburgh
Evelyn Rouse	London
Houtan Moshginnafas (from Iran)	London
Mundegar Kaikobad (from India)	London
R. E. Oxley-Jones (from Trinidad)	London
Janet Coppen (from United States)	Cambridge
Trevor Jones	London
Ann Jones	London
Frank Rumball	South Moulton
Margaret Earnshaw	Leeds
Ilse Becker	Edinburgh
Richard Lovell	Reading
Nessie Smythe	Crawfordsburn
Parvaneh Khaleghi (from Iran)	Warwick
James Mitchell	Manchester

Geoffrey Bridle

Nazeer Doomun

Shirin Irani (from Iran)

Eileen Kent

Sirus Zargarpur (from Iran)

Amiri Ghobad (youth from Iran)

Alice Smith

Wokingham R.D.

London

London

Northampton

London

Shoreham-by-Sea

Cheadle

SUMMER SCHOOL, 1959, IN HARLECH

The first morning sessions began with a series of talks by our Hand of the Cause, John Ferraby, and were followed by an intensive study course on 'Some Answered Questions', by which time we were ready to troop down the hill for lunch. In fact the morning sessions were very well attended, and Mr. Ali Nakhjavani was a fine organiser of this group activity. During other morning sessions the early days of the Faith were brought before our eyes by the talks given by Lady Hornell and Adib Taherzadeh, and made real by so many moving accounts of heroism and devotion to the Faith. Marion Hofman's talk on the journeys of Abdu'l-Bahá, gave us intimate pictures of the Master's contact with the American friends, and of His power of attraction and superhuman strength in carrying out the journeys to the West—journeys which few of us could undertake in normal health. We also saw the film of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and later heard a most moving tablet, read to us by Ian Semple, in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá commemorated the passing of the first British believer, Thomas Breakwell, who longed to suffer in the path of Bahá'u'lláh.

Our first impressions of Harlech and the College were of hills and walking, lovely views, nearness to the sea, overhanging fuchsias, steep hills, and more steps. Gradually we got used to the country as from cottages and caravans, tents, boarding houses and dormitories we all converged on the main building for lectures and meetings. This scattering may have seemed a disadvantage, but we were fortunate with the weather. After the first few days of dullness, Harlech emerged into sunshine which stayed with us to the end of the Summer School.

This was indeed a working holiday, in more ways than one. But how one enjoyed the work—even the washing up and tea making in the morning break—when all the friends are together! In any case has there ever been a Summer School when every minute is not packed with something to do? This one seemed no exception. From the Unity Feast on the first Saturday evening, until the one held on the last day, we were kept busy.

We were told of pioneer journeys across Africa and modern heroism in the face of difficulties. These journeys made by pioneers under extreme hardship made us feel that our own troubles for the Faith are but slight in comparison. We were kept enthralled by stories from East and West.

Since we are all urged to teach, public speaking is of great importance, and a course was arranged for us during the second week. It was taken outside on the terrace, where speaking was more than usually difficult as we were alternately lulled to sleep by the sun or interrupted by the passing trains, but judging by the attendance at this course, there are many budding orators in our community.

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH TAKES ROOT IN PONTYPRIDD

This was the heading of the wonderful article which appeared in the *Pontypridd Observer* on the day of my arrival there. It set in motion our 12-day teaching campaign. Three public meetings and two well-attended firesides attracted a total aggregate attendance of a hundred people, more than half of whom were contacts.

The spirit at these meetings was wonderful. Topics such as: 'How is Bahá'u'lláh the return of Christ?', 'Why this is the Last Day?', 'What is Salvation?', 'Why "progressive revelation" is not foreign to the teachings of the Bible', were discussed over and over again. The contacts were serious-minded thirsty souls, who were mostly steadfast church-goers, but who felt the spiritual gaps, the limitations and inconsistencies of their churches and chapels.

Our beloved Faith can spread in Wales as 'news' (as it is spreading now in Africa, and as the Gospel was spread in its early Christian centuries), instead of spreading merely as a set of noble teachings, which is

more or less the method of its propagation in our larger cities.

Although there are but four Bahá'ís in Pontypridd, they are now, with some degree of confidence planning to establish their first Local Assemblies next Ridván. If they do so, it would be remarkable, as they would have achieved their goal without the help of an outside resident pioneer. The valiant Bahá'í group in Pontypridd is not satisfied with its local activities, but has already started its extension teaching work in four neighbouring centres.

The determined and virile Bahá'í group of Pontypridd needs the spiritual support of all the Bahá'ís in Britain who can afford to give it.

I firmly believe their future in the Faith is infinitely glorious, and as testified by our Beloved Guardian, have a special contribution to make to the work in the British Isles. They will also demonstrate, as Bahá'u'lláh pointed out that the 'country' is the home of the 'spirit', but the 'town' is the home of the 'body'.

ALI NAKJAVANI

UN DUW, UN FFYDD, UN TEULU.

[ONE GOD, ONE FAITH, ONE FAMILY]

The Welsh inscription on the Railway Poster in Pontypridd.



Members of the Pontypridd Bahá'í Group and some visiting friends.

Comment

We can appreciate the tremendous joy which the visit of Ali Nakjavani must have been to the friends in Pontypridd, and how they will be sustained by his advice and help during the coming months and years of the Crusade. Travelling in a car loaned by a Bahá'í, Ali worked unceasingly, and his plan of teaching is an inspiration—the silence after his talks, the music, before the questioning, the time for meditation. Those of us who have the opportunity to study his notes on the Bible Prophecies should do so: living as we do in a *Christian* country—we beg our fellow countrymen to forgive the italics, but to the naked eye the fact is often non-apparent. Yet, there are many, many people striving to live by Christian teachings, therefore, to know thoroughly the prophecies of the Old and the New Testament, regarding the Return of Christ is surely vital to all Bahá'í teachers—to aspire to *know* the Bible, as we aspire to know the writings of Bahá'u'lláh is demanded of us, if we are to reach the hearts of Christians. The Beloved Guardian told us of the vital importance of George Townsend's book *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh*—have we used it enough? Does it not link with the teaching of Ali Nakjavani? Should we not study his notes? and re-study George Townsend's book in our teacher-training?

It is thrilling indeed to know how much has been done in Wales in the very short time since the first

Welsh Bahá'í declared in Pontypridd. Something to inspire us all, as Africa has inspired us, with the simplicity, and grandeur of their acceptance of the Faith. Memories of Wales creep in—the walks above Pontypridd in the gold of an autumn afternoon, looking down the blackened seams of the valleys into the villages, the journeys up through the winding streets to the schools, where music and poetry abound in the tiniest, and where in the larger schools the stringed instruments in the cloakroom are as prolific as macintoshes! where the sound of orchestral rehearsal seeped through the walls, and doors, the clubs, where, after we had worked, we listened, and watched, the boys and girls, standing or leaning on desk, or coffee-bar, singing in the earnest, devoted manner of the young, with the full-throated ease of the Welsh—to whom singing seems to come as naturally as talking. How easily we can picture the depth of silence at Ali's meetings after he had spoken, out of which the voices would arise, singing the old hymns with a new fervour. And those who arose declaring their belief in Bahá'u'lláh—or, spoke of their feelings on hearing of the Faith, remind us of all we have heard or read of the early days of our Beloved Cause—and the fire that inflamed the believers—do we not need to be reminded of that Fire? the fire of the love for Bahá'u'lláh the fire that ignites the spirit, strikes sparks from dead wood, burns away the dross of material existence, and burns steadily in the heart of all those who truly turn to Him! [Ed.]

WHAT IS THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH?

These two letters on the Faith have appeared in recent months in a National Newspaper:

32 Porchester Terrace,
London, W.2

Dear Sir,

13 August, 1959

In answer to your request for an expression of opinion about Bahá'ism, I would mention that I came in touch with the Bahá'ís during the years 1920-25 when I held the post of High Commissioner for Palestine under the British Mandate. The head of the Community was then resident in Haifa, and I went to visit him there. On his death some time later I attended officially the funeral ceremony at Haifa as a tribute of respect.

I certainly regarded Bahá'ism as a separate religion, distinct from both Islam and Christianity, although including some doctrines similar to theirs. The Bahá'í were generally regarded as a valuable element in the population, intelligent, orderly, well educated, and above all trustworthy. In Government service and in commercial employment they were much esteemed as being free from corruptibility, the besetting vice of Middle Eastern countries. Their religious creed, with which I made myself acquainted, included ethical precepts of a very high order. All religious persecution is detestable, but especially if it were directed against a community which, as in the case of the Bahá'í, abstains

from partisan politics, is well-behaved, courteous to others, and commands the respect and goodwill of its neighbours.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

SAMUEL

45 Pembroke Sq.,
London, W.8,
England.

Dear Dr. Kunter,

12 Aug., 1959

I was much interested in your letter of the 30th July, asking me whether, in my opinion, Bahá'ism is a religion, and, if not, what it is.

My opinion is that (i) Bahá'ism is undoubtedly a religion, (ii) Bahá'ism is an independent religion, on a par with Islam, Christianity, and the other recognised world religions. Bahá'ism is not a sect of some other religion; it is a separate religion, and it has the same status as the other recognised religions.

This opinion is based both on study and on personal acquaintance with Bahá'ís.

Yours sincerely,

ARNOLD TOYNBEE

To Avakat,
Professor Dr. Nurullah Kunter,
Istanbul.

BOOK REVIEW

Reprinted from the *Norwich Newsletter*:

A Guide to the Administrative Orders of Bahá'u'lláh, by H. M. Balyuzi. Price 9d. Bahá'u'lláh's words, 'Think not that we have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, we have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power', might well have been quoted at the head of this booklet. For though superficially it is a collection of items baldly stated, a careful study of it would show to any enquirer that this is a scheme that serves perfectly the needs of man in his

social relations, making the spiritual ideals of Bahá'u'lláh effective in the material world.

The well chosen quotations from the Founders of the Faith and from Shoghi Effendi makes clear that the Administrative Order is not 'a mere code of laws.' The booklet is very useful at a certain stage in an enquirer's development, but is also convenient as a simple book of reference although there is little in it that a Bahá'í should not know by heart.

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

LEICESTER

First Bahá'í Wedding in Leicester

Another milestone was passed in the growth of the Leicester Community, which was one of the goal towns of the ten year crusade, by celebration at the Centre, 126 New Walk, of the first Bahá'í wedding to take place there.

Miss Shuqiyyih (Oarvaneh) Avaregan who came to this country in May 1955, to train as a nurse, and pioneered to Leicester in March 1957, was married to Dr. Rahamatu'llah Kashif, a medical graduate of Teheran University, also a Bahá'í, who is taking a post-graduate course at Guy's Hospital, London. The bride and groom selected prayers numbers 100, and 72, and Marriage Prayers numbers 3 and 4 to be read at the ceremony which was conducted by John Long, Chairman of the Local Assembly. One of the Persian friends chanted another prayer to conclude the proceedings. Before the ceremony commenced a tape recording of 'O Perfect Love', sung by Miss Gwen Prince, the non-Bahá'í sister of Mary Prince, the local Treasurer, was played to the assembling friends, as was afterwards, 'God be in my head', also sung by Gwen.

The Centre was packed by some 60 friends which included Bahá'ís from Birmingham, Loughborough, Cheadle, Northampton, Nottingham, Peterborough, London, Swannington, and Mountsorrel, about a third of those present were non-Bahá'ís. The reception which followed was a most happy occasion.

The two local papers had been notified in advance of the event, each sent a representative, and a photographer, and both papers carried excellent reports of the occasion the following day, one of them adding an inset giving some of the principles of the Bahá'í Faith as well, both included photographs.

Parvaneh and her husband are now trying to settle in Epsom, which has just been selected by the London Assembly for an extension teaching project.

REPORT OF THE LIVERPOOL BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

We have just completed a series of twelve talks on the Faith given by each of us in turn at our Wednesday evening meetings. These have been interesting and fairly well attended. Their value for us as Bahá'ís, quite apart from their instruction value for outsiders,

is tremendous, because having to give a talk on a specific subject forces one to study it properly in order to understand it and to be able to answer questions. We are now planning another course to see us through the winter.

We are pledged to help both Southport and Chester and a few of our members go over regularly in these two places.

We hold a public meeting with an 'outside' speaker on the last Sunday afternoon of every month. At the end of September John Long gave us an inspiring talk on 'The Divine Teachings'. At the end of October Gitta Chaplin is coming along with the display prepared by the Audio-Visual Aids Committee and the recording of the first Bahá'í broadcast in British Guiana, in which Dick and Vida Backwell take part.

Abbas and Shomais Afnan have now left us to go to Dublin. We are grateful for their valuable assistance and their generous hospitality, and wish them God-speed in their new venture. Aldy Robarts is now permanently settled in this country and is soon to work, as well as reside, in Liverpool. Molly Hughes has also returned to us after 4½ years in Glasgow. We are delighted to welcome these old friends back into the Community. It is gratifying that all those who have left us in the past twelve months have been replaced, but we realise that it is not enough merely to maintain the status quo. We hope to be able to report new declarations before very long.

REPORT FROM LONDON SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

We have experienced two memorable occasions in London during the past month with the visit of Miss Agnes Alexander, Hand of the Cause from Japan; and Mr. William Sears, Hand of the Cause from the United States, both en route for the October meeting in Bahji of all Hands of the Cause of God.

Miss Alexander addressed a special meeting in the Hazira on September 19th where many friends from all over Britain gathered to hear her stories of the early days of the Faith in Paris and Italy, of the Tablets she received from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and her experiences in trying to get to Japan during the First World War, and the growth of the Faith in that country since. It was difficult for us to realise that this wonderful lady, brimming with happiness and joy, was eighty-six years

of age, and was on a world encircling tour from Tokyo, via Honolulu, California, Wilmette, London, Paris, Germany (where she was to visit all the communities in the north and south—as requested by Beloved Guardian in 1937, when she was last in Europe!) and then proceed eventually to Haifa for the wonderful gathering in Bahji. We were indeed honoured and privileged to have her with us.

On September 27th Mr. William Sears revitalised us with an upsurging of spiritual power in one of the most dynamic talks we have ever listened to. We were in fact transported by the power of his love and spirit into the heart of the Holy Land, enabled to inhale the 'sweet fragrances that keep one awake at night'; to visualise the beauty of the Báb's Shrine—'Queen of Carmel, crowned in gold, robed in white and encircled with green'—as the Guardian had once said; made aware of the great 'heart' at the World Centre where the life-blood of this World Faith is pumped and which sustains our life. He asked that we should anchor our thoughts in the Holy Land and direct all our love towards it, and never forget the Hands in our prayers. 'It is only the unification of a tremendous bond of love that can bring about the Christ-promised Kingdom of God on earth' he said. 'This is what it means to go to Epsom!—we are not raising up local assemblies—we are raising the Kingdom of God on earth!' No one has the power to do it except the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. We must go out and get the goals of the Crusade and not be deflected from it—this is the task that lies ahead and the most essential part of our whole life. He explained that in the early days of the Faith, everything which has since been accomplished was thought to be 'impossible', but if you divide that word into two parts it becomes 'I'm possible'—it is only the 'I' in it which makes it impossible. You have to carry the love of God to the world—this is the most wonderful gift to humanity. 'The Crusade will be won by allowing Bahá'u'lláh to do it—pray to Him to show you the way', he said. In the words of Beloved Guardian 'UNDOUBTEDLY, MYSTERIOUSLY and SURPRISINGLY, whoever arises, Bahá'u'lláh will Himself help him'.

PORTSMOUTH

Portsmouth is bubbling over with new life. We feel more strongly than ever the need to follow the advice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá—'Deeds Not Words'—how strange it is that the election propagandists are using the same phrase in their campaign, what better phrase could they have chosen? Even though they are not aware of its spiritual source it should surely be an inspiration for the future.

Portsmouth friends are beginning to make, and to use recordings in their teaching. Trevor Brown made a tape of the Prayers and Readings at our last 19-day Feast, these were chosen from the Kitab-i-iqan with special reference to Christ, the tape should prove a powerful adjunct when teaching Christians of the Faith. A student from Iraq took part in an interesting discussion during a recent fireside held in Trevor's home, and this was also recorded.

The 'People to People' week sponsored by the International Friendship League afforded a splendid

opportunity for Bahá'ís to help publicise the Faith.

The Mayor of Portsmouth presided at a meeting held during the week in the Town Hall, we hope to publish later a full report of the part played in 'People to People' week by the Bahá'ís who were present at this meeting.

The Townswomen's Guild has booked Mrs. Mun-siff to give her delightful lecture, and costume display in January, they have also invited Saheil Bushnir to be a guest speaker.

Prudence George's home continues to be a centre for the children in Cosham, where they have learned to look upon 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a friend—through the children people in the area have become aware of the Faith. Prue gave a talk at the Bognor Theosophist Group recently to a large, and interesting gathering. Cherry Viveash is responsible for this opportunity and bravely disposes of literature in that area.

Alice and Tom Cunningham from Blackpool were recent visitors to Portsmouth, and attended meetings.

Olive Long, who is still in hospital in Bath, reports that she has had several visitors from Bristol, who brought loving Bahá'í greetings to Olive, who is full of cheer and hope, and continues to spread the message to both nurses and fellow sufferers.

READING

We report that in spite of a wave of illness, accident, and mis-adventure, Reading is striving to teach, hold firesides, etc. Two new Bahá'ís have just moved into the area, John and Valerie Morley.* Rustum and Banoo Sabit are now in Oxfordshire—Rustum has recovered, in part, from the accident to his knee, and has begun work again this week. Iran Moussazadeh pioneers to Carlisle on November 1st—without settled news about work, or anywhere to live—but as she said 'Bahá'u'lláh will look after me'. This brings our Community to eight, we strive to regain our full Assembly status, and to assist our Goal Town, Twyford. A week-end School (shared by Reading and Twyford) is scheduled for November 28th-29th. We will publish our proposed programme later.

TWYFORD

We have had no report from Twyford—but they strike us as working like moles in the ground, and as the mole suddenly throws up a cast, so, no doubt, a molehill, the size of a small mountain, will soon be thrown up in the Twyford area!

PONTYPRIDD

Ali visited Pontypridd for 12 days, 8th-19th August. A number of firesides were held and three public meetings, two in Rhydyfelin, and one in Beddan. New contacts were made, and a great interest aroused. His visit was preceded by a four-column article in the local press, headed 'The Bahá'í Faith takes root in Pontypridd'. Ali held an intensive training course to help us teach the Faith. His approach was, to show proof of Christian prophecy in relation to Christ and Bahá'u'lláh. References were given so that everyone could check them for themselves.

*This pioneer move has been assisted by all friends, enough to make it a Community move indeed, for which the pioneers are deeply grateful.

At our fireside on Friday, August 14th we were listening to an address by Ali when the door bell rang. It was a gentleman who, having read the newspaper article, wanted to hear more of the Faith. Imagine the thrill when, at the close of the address he told us 'This is what I have been looking for'. Most of the Pontypridd group returned from Summer School on August 31st. September 1st saw our fifth declaration since January; Mrs. Nancy Tomlinson gives us our first complete Bahá'í family in Pontypridd.

BOURNEMOUTH

Stuart Sweet and Margaret Higden were married at the Hazira in London on October 10th. We wish them every happiness.

NORWICH

In response to a message from the National Spiritual Assembly Norwich are determined to go all out with our efforts to establish regular firesides, for experience has taught us that this kind of personal effort is the only real way of securing new Bahá'ís.

The Local Spiritual Assembly has decided to continue putting small quotations in the Personal Column of the *Eastern Evening News*.

Owing to the fact that Olive Stockley has been confined to her bed all her life she has never been able to attend 19 Day Feasts. Norwich has decided to send her our programmes of readings so that she can be with us in spirit—sharing our prayers as she recited the words of Bahá'u'lláh with us.

NEWMARKET

Elaine Rogers still holds her regular firesides, and encourages her close contacts in every way she can.

OUR UNIVERSAL FAITH

From the April number of *Herald of the South* published by Bahá'ís in Australia. *Letter Box*. (This letter is written by a Pioneer in Africa.) We publish it in part.

I truly don't know where to start! To me it is a great miracle; I doubt if there is any other continent, where the Bahá'í Faith has spread so rapidly as it has done in Africa.

At Ridván, 1951, there were in Africa, only three Bahá'ís from different parts of the world—Persia, India, and Great Britain. Plans were made and actions taken, to get more pioneers over. Believe me, 'God does assist all those who arise to serve Him'. By Ridván, 1952, nine more pioneers had arrived in East Africa, and settled, even though it is most difficult to get a permit, especially for Persians. Assemblies were formed, one in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika and one in Kampala, Uganda. A Bahá'í Centre was bought in Kampala and a Hand of the Cause was appointed for the whole of Africa—the revered Mr. Musa Banani. In February, 1953, we had the first Conference in Kampala, which was a great success and help to the teaching work here, I could hardly believe my eyes, after

having been for two years isolated in Tanganyika, to see over a hundred Africans attending the Conference, and over a hundred Bahá'ís from many parts of the world, and the revered Hands of the Cause. At the end of the Conference we had over 30 pioneers for Africa. By Ridván, 1953, we formed three more Assemblies and a new country, Kenya, was opened to the Faith, and an Assembly formed there in Nairobi.

The 10-year plan in 1953 set the work really going in Africa. The race was on, as to who could get in time to a virgin territory! I was at that time in Nairobi, Kenya. We had 18 Bahá'ís there and 14 volunteered to go pioneering. There is a wonderful spirit of serving and teaching the Cause amongst the African friends.

It is certainly a great pleasure to teach in Africa, especially to go to the villages, to sit with them in a mud hut, or under a shady tree and watch their eager faces, and answer their questions, and they are all so hospitable. One cannot describe that joy! Most of them cannot understand English, or read or write. They are great Bible students. We take one or two Africans with us, who understand their particular language. The language is, of course, a great problem here. I have been to a 19-day Feast where everything had to be translated in four different languages. It takes a lot of time, but they are so patient.

In 1956 we formed four National Regional Assemblies. I had the great privilege to be present at the forming of one of the N.R.S.A.s It was so thrilling: many of us felt like the early Bahá'ís. It was indeed a great event and a Miracle. It cannot be recounted here, but one day when the history of the Bahá'í Faith of Africa is written it will be worth reading. Bahá'u'lláh is ever watching over us. In 1957 we had three more revered Hands of the Cause—Mr. William Sears, Mr. John Robart and Mr. Enoch Olinga. We also have now 16 board members.

We had an almost all-African Convention this year: out of the 95 delegates, 89 were Africans, and next year we know we shall have 190 delegates, the largest number of delegates in the Bahá'í world. Nearly all the Goals our beloved Guardian has given us, have been already achieved. Our Mother Temple is well on its way. And to think that seven years ago there were only three lonely pioneers in East Africa!

If only I could make Bahá'ís understand what a privilege it is to pioneer, and what a joy it brings. Such joy cannot be bought with money—Bahá'u'lláh gives it FREE.

SPOTLIGHT ON CYPRUS

Cyprus is the most eastern island in the Mediterranean surrounded by Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and the Holy Land. This island was opened to the Faith in 1953, one pioneer family from the East (Iraq) and another from the West (U.K.) met at its capital, Nicosia, where they shared a house for some time.

The Cyprus population consists of about 300,000 Greek-speaking people, 100,000 Turks and 50,000 different nationalities (including Armenians and Maronites.)

Already in 1954, more pioneers arrived in the island, one from the U.K. starting work near a village on the north coast and two from the U.S.A. at Famagusta.

Also some Iranian families arrived, hoping to settle here. In 1955 there were two declarations one Armenian in Nicosia and one British in Famagusta. The following year, 1956, gave us another two declared: one Greek from Famagusta and a Turk in Nicosia.

In Famagusta the pioneers had great difficulty in finding employment and one of them even left and worked for a short time in Kyrenia. Alas! in early spring Mrs. Mildred Mehl had to return to the States to be followed a few months later by Miss Frances B. Jones.

In Nicosia the first Local Spiritual Assembly was formed in 1956. In the fall of 1957 there was one Turkish declaration after another. Just when we had such a large Bahá'í family, Mr. Missagiyeh of Iran visited us and presented us with a site for the future *Házíratu'l-Quds*.

Meanwhile the political situation in Cyprus had gradually become very bad. Winter 1957-58 saw a greater worsening. That spring life was so difficult that the newly declared (about 25) wanted to withdraw. They stopped all attendance.

For a long time even the firm believers, the pioneers and one Turkish Cypriot family had to stop all their activities and only met when it was not too dangerous. At last at the end of the summer the Nicosia Assembly started its teaching work again, firesides were held, but few sincere contacts were found even after the situation had become quieter there was not the expected visible progress. The authorities were once more approached to speed up the incorporation of the Assembly.

At present there are many plans for the time when this incorporation will have become a reality. Already the Assembly has appointed several committees and it hopes to start work again soon, but we are still in great need of more able pioneers to help us in this sacred enterprise. For instance in Famagusta there are only two friends; in Nicosia we count only twenty-three active believers (4 babies included). So please come to Cyprus! You are warmly welcome!

OUR CORRESPONDENCE COMMITTEE

APOLOGY

The Editors apologise for the delay in publishing the Journal, caused by time lost during their removal, plus the late arrival of material.

ERRATA

In the last issue of *Bahá'í Journal*:

Page 7. In the message from Cyprus reprinted from the *Islander*, the heading should have been 'Famagusta'—not 'Nicosia'.

Please note the following changes of address:

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Final date for material for the next issue of *Bahá'í Journal*: First post on December 5th, please.

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