



BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

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CYPRUS SUMMER SCHOOL



Happy faces at the Cyprus Summer School — a report appears inside.

One of the major goals of the United Kingdom is the achievement of a National Spiritual Assembly in Cyprus at Ridván 1978 — in just four months' time. One of the ways in which everyone can help is by supporting activities there and this brings with it a special reward of happiness which is reflected in the photograph above. Only a small number of people came to the summer school, but winter school is yet to come and arrangements have been made to hold it at the College of Arts and Science, 27 Androcles Street, Nicosia. Lecturers will include Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh, Marion Hofman and Gloria Faizi, and there will be studies of the Kitáb-i-Iqán, the Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, and the Tablet of Ahmad among others. Special rates have been arranged with the Asty Hotel (£3.70 — Cyprus pounds) per day for bed, breakfast and half board. The school will last from 22 to 31 December and registration is to Mrs Pauline Fribbens, Flat E1, Helen Court, Lindou Street, Kapsalos, Limassol, Cyprus.

Cable from Cyprus Summer School to the Universal House of Justice:

SUMMER SCHOOL ENDS HIGH PINNACLE SUCCESS DEDICATION ACHIEVEMENT ALL GOALS STOP THREE PUBLIC MEETINGS PROJECTING DEMONSTRATED SPADEWORK PIONEERS IN WINNING MANY FINE FRIENDS OPTIMISTIC EARLY CONFIRMATION STOP DEEPLY GRATEFUL RESIDENTIAL PROJECT MARION HOFMAN BRIEF GRACIOUS VISIT HAND CAUSE DOCTOR MUHAJIR GREAT INSPIRATIONAL ONE WEEK VISIT COUNSELLOR BETTY REED SCHOOL COMPRISING 26 VISITING ADULTS 5 CHILDREN 12 RESIDENT ADULTS 7 CHILDREN 3 BABIES DEVELOPED CLOSER AWARENESS MISSION CAUSE UNITY FRIENDS FIRMNESS COVENANT CONSCIOUS PRAYERS HOUSE PUBLIC MEETINGS BESEECH CONTINUED REMEMBRANCE HOLY SHRINES.

Reply from Haifa:

DELIGHTED WONDERFUL SPIRIT CYPRUS SUMMER SCHOOL AUGURING WELL SUCCESS GREAT OBJECTIVE FIVE YEAR PLAN STOP VISITORS FROM SCHOOL BROUGHT FRAGRANCES LOVE DEDICATION LOCAL COMMUNITY STOP ASSURE ARDENT PRAYERS SACRED THRESHOLD BOUNTIFUL CONFIRMATIONS EVERY EFFORT FIRM ESTABLISHMENT FAITH HISTORIC ISLAND.

THE COMMEMORATION AT THE WORLD CENTRE OF THE CENTENARY OF THE TERMINATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S CONFINEMENT IN THE PRISON-CITY OF 'AKKÁ

IN EARLY DAYS OF JUNE 1877 BAHÁ'U'LLÁH LEFT CITY 'AKKÁ AND TOOK UP RESIDENCE IN MAZRA'IH. TO MARK CENTENARY THIS TERMINATION CONFINEMENT ANCIENT BEAUTY WITHIN WALLS PRISON CITY WE CALL UPON HIS FOLLOWERS ALL LANDS DEVOTE NINETEEN DAY FEAST OF NÚR COMMEMORATION HISTORIC EVENT, REDEDICATING THEMSELVES URGENT TASKS BEFORE THEM, SO THAT PENT-UP ENERGIES HIS PRECIOUS FAITH MAY BE RELEASED TO REACH EVER GREATER NUMBER SEEKING SOULS IN EVER WIDER CIRCLE THEIR FELLOW MEN. The Universal House of Justice, Ridván 1977

In the early afternoon of Saturday, 11 June 1977 the pilgrims and the friends serving at the World Centre made their way to Mazra'ih to visit the Mansion which 'Abdu'l-Bahá had rented a century ago for the use of Bahá'u'lláh. His first residence after leaving the prison-city of 'Akká. While there, each was privileged to visit and offer prayers in the very room occupied by the Blessed Beauty; later they repaired to the gardens at Bahjí.

Meanwhile the Hands of the Cause present in the Holy Land, the members of the Universal House of Justice and the Counsellor members of the International Teaching Centre were paying their respects to the memory of Bahá'u'lláh at the House of 'Abbud in 'Akká and at the Garden of Ridván. The rooms Bahá'u'lláh had occupied were visited and prayers of thanksgiving for His release from confinement were offered in these Holy Places. They then journeyed north to Mazra'ih for prayers at that Holy Spot, and afterwards joined the other friends in the Haram-i-Aqdas at Bahjí for the formal program of the Commemoration of this great event in the history of the Heroic Age of the Cause.

Prayers were recited; 'Abdu'l-Bahá's account of the end of Bahá'u'lláh's confinement and Shoghi Effendi's narrative from *God Passes By* were read; and finally, just as the sun was casting its last light over the Mediterranean, the friends made their way in the utmost reverence to the Most Holy Shrine for the chanting of the Tablet of Visitation.

"The remembrance of God and His praise, and the glory of God and His splendour, rest upon Thee, O Thou who art His Beauty! I bear witness that the eye of creation hath never gazed upon one wronged like Thee. Thou wast immersed all the days of Thy life beneath an ocean of tribulations. At one time Thou wast in chains and fetters; at another Thou wast threatened by the sword of Thine enemies. Yet, despite all this, Thou didst enjoin upon all men to observe what had been prescribed unto Thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

CYPRUS SUMMER SCHOOL

Sunshine and love — these are the feelings left behind by the Cyprus Summer School. The fifty-three attendants included thirteen children, and the committee had thoughtfully considered that for most people the time spent at the summer school would be their annual holiday. They had therefore left a part of each day for the friends to enjoy the beautiful seaside resort of Limassol, where the school was held. The venue was a good hotel with its own restaurant and a swimming pool, of which most people made good use. Among the bounties shared by the friends were an unscheduled visit of one day by Hand of the Cause Dr Muhajir and Counsellor Betty Reed's stay for half the summer school. Marion Hofman was another distinguished visitor and the National Assembly representative was Philip Hainsworth. Members of the United Kingdom community made up the bulk of the school, but there were visitors from other parts of the world, including the World Centre and Ireland.

The programme was most carefully arranged and several sessions each were taken by Marion Hofman, Betty Reed and Philip Hainsworth, other talks being given by Eric Hellicar, Katharine Delpak, John More Nesbit and Lois Hainsworth.

There were three excellent public meetings, one each being given by Eric Hellicar and Philip Hainsworth in Limassol and a third in Nicosia by Philip Hainsworth. For this latter a trip to the town was arranged so that the friends could swell the numbers at the meeting, but the attendance was so good from friends of the Nicosia Bahá'ís, that the visiting Bahá'ís, or most of them, had to sit outside on the verandah or outside the meeting room.

There was a really wonderful spirit at this school, quite impossible to describe, and far beyond the expectation of the rather small number of attendants. The awareness of all present of the wish of the Universal House of Justice that the National Assembly of Cyprus should be established next Ridván was uppermost in everyone's mind, and found expression over and over again during the consultation. The feeling that something was about to explode in the teaching field was ever present and the wish of everyone to do more for this lovely island was expressed many times. There was hope that for the winter school, when off-season fares and hotel charges would be in operation, there would be great support, especially from the friends in the United Kingdom for whom this is a most important goal.

Among the many outstanding sessions at the school were those

given by Marion Hofman, who gave the friends the benefit of her extensive knowledge and research; some interesting sessions from Betty Reed, including a diagrammatic elucidation of the Covenant, and a talk from Eric Hellicar which explained some of the difficulties of teaching on this island. One departure from the norm was during a teaching session, when Philip demonstrated the use of music in giving a talk, even using non-Bahá'í music, sung to her own guitar accompaniment on this occasion by Lois.

This was a school at which everybody contributed something — the children seemed particularly happy with a programme arranged especially for them.

The friends were able to see something of this beautiful island on coach trips which had been organised for them — to beautiful beaches, to see historic and legendary places, such as the spot on the coast where Aphrodite traditionally appeared from the sea, and to visit the village and grave of Archbishop Makarios.

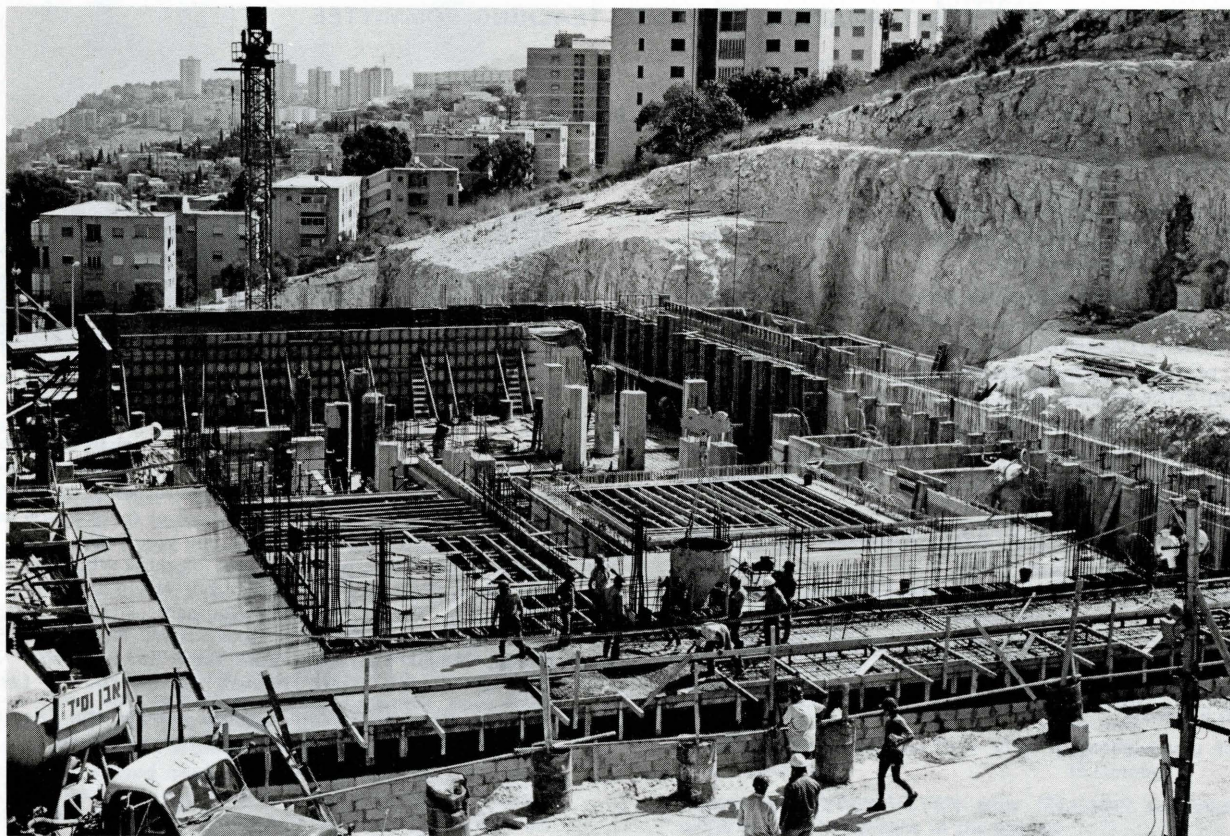
The committee had given careful consideration to everyone's needs and worked unceasingly during the course of the school to ensure its smooth running — its chairman, also chairman of the school, was Terry Fribbons, who, with his wife Pauline and their two sons, pioneered to Cyprus less than a year ago.

One particularly good piece of news came during the course of the school, when it was announced that the Universal House of Justice had asked Marion Hofman to spend as much time as possible in Cyprus until the formation of the National Assembly, and she was able to rent a flat before the school was over.

From consultation upon the Messages from the Universal House of Justice, it had become evident that a more audacious approach had to be made in the teaching work if native Cypriot believers were to be enrolled in time to form a sound basis for the new National Assembly. This was successfully attempted at the two main public meetings and a new spirit of confidence and enthusiasm was felt by the devoted pioneers who have been struggling so hard under the most adverse teaching conditions.

There is one way in which everyone can help in this most important goal — by seeking out and teaching Cypriots who will eventually return to their country.

Winter School will be held in Nicosia from 22–31 December. Give yourself a treat — be there.



Construction of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, 12 October 1977. Workmen are pouring the perimeter concrete slab at ground-floor level which will support the colonnade of the building. Columns will rest in each of the sunken squares. At the centre of the photograph can be seen the structural pillars which will support the dome of the completed building. Work is proceeding on schedule.

LOUGHBOROUGH SUMMER SCHOOL

At least 250 Bahá'ís from more than fifteen countries attended the Bahá'í Summer School at Loughborough University of Technology. They enjoyed many stimulating and inspired talks and took part in a variety of proclamation and other activities. The school was blessed with the presence of Hand of the Cause Dr Giachery and his wife, Angelina, Counsellors Ahdieh, Manuchir Salmanpour, Dorothy Ferraby and Betty Reed, and two Auxiliary Board Members.

The talks were based on three broad themes:

- a history of Bahá'u'lláh's exile;
- subjects related to the personal life;
- selected deepening topics.

While each of these talks had their special interest, the talks given by the Hand of the Cause and the Counsellors deserve particular attention.

Dr Giachery was to have spoken each morning, but unfortunately an infection prevented him from speaking on all but three days. He spoke with a heart full of love about the beloved Guardian, of the compassion of the Guardian and explained how the World Order must be based on such compassion. At other times Dr Giachery spoke of the World Centre, of how its development was a spiritual obsession of the Guardian, of how, by his deeds, he embodied the name Shoghi meaning 'eager'. Dr Giachery told the friends of how the Covenant of God must be built of love, just as the lonely citadel of Machu Picchu had been built by hands alone.

Most significantly, Dr Giachery urged the friends to **re-dedicate** their lives, pointing out that, despite all the hardships in his life, the Guardian's strongest characteristic was perseverance. Dr Giachery left the school with a question ringing in our ears — "How many of us are BURNING with the fire of the love of God in our veins?"

Counsellor Betty Reed captivated the attention of the friends with two talks. The first was centred on the topic of protection of the Faith. She recalled the many attacks on the Faith by Covenant-breakers and explained that the onward march of the Faith is bound to attract enemies, yet Bahá'u'lláh has declared that the Covenant **cannot** be violated.

Dr Bushrui delighted the friends with his effervescent style of speaking; his sparkling wit added immeasurably to the spirit of the school. Counsellor Manuchir Salmanpour contributed to the sessions on history, drawing on his vast reservoir of knowledge about the Middle East.

The school was enriched by varied social activities. Lesley and Ramin Habibi brought their barn dance from Darwen; the American auction raised nearly £700 for the fund; Adrian Burns breezed in with an excellent concert; Dr Giachery talked about his recent visit to Samoa on the occasion of their Independence celebrations and he showed slides of the colourful event; Sylvia Schulman gave a superb recital which was described as a 'public relations exercise of the first order'. An audience of over 150 listened to the recital where the Mayor of Charnwood was presented with a Bahá'í book. The next day Sylvia gave a talk on 'The Lord of Virtue' using the piano and giving many fascinating musical analogies. The children contributed one evening singing songs, giving short character sketches about 'Abdu'l-Bahá and a demonstration of how NOT to hold a fireside.

The friends helped support various proclamation events during the two-week school. A public meeting was held at Loughborough when Philip Hainsworth spoke to an audience of about seventy friends and inquirers. Public meetings featuring 'Summer Breeze' were also held at Grantham and Bottesford, and the Charnwood Assembly held an exhibition in Loughborough during the school.

David Hines and Peter Fothergill spent a week making a sound film of the school. They intend to travel around the northern communities and show the friends that this summer school was a happy, lively and joyful occasion. This school was, indeed, a high point in the rhythm of our Bahá'í calendar. But, as Enayat Rawhani asked at the conclusion of the school, why shouldn't the friends enjoy the spiritual luxury of a summer school — shouldn't they now travel back to their communities and re-dedicate their **lives** and further proclaim this glorious Faith?

Adam Thorne

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TEACHING COMMITTEE

AFRICA PROJECT

Africa! The name still holds magic and promise. The dark continent — full of mystery — but to the Bahá'ís it holds another connotation, spiritual awareness.

Whatever the reason, Africa is still the place most people would like the opportunity to go travel teaching. So the International Travel Teaching Committee, newly embarked on its emphasis on groups of travel teachers, decided to send a large group to Southern Africa and split them up into smaller groups once they had arrived.

As with all new ventures, this project ran into problems and just as plans seemed to be falling through new sacrifices were made and the project was given life once more.

The team finally left Heathrow Airport and settled down to pass the twelve hour flight.

In Nairobi, we landed and met the Continental Pioneer Committee and when we landed in Johannesburg we broke up into four smaller groups. Three went to Malawi, three to Lesotho, four remained in the Republic of South Africa, and two (together with another Bahá'í from England who travelled there separately) went to Botswana.

To each group belongs a story — of sacrifices made, of travel,

of meeting different people, and of meetings, gatherings and firesides where these Bahá'ís from Britain taught and deepened Africans in their own country, in the Cause of God for today. The results of teaching can be as subtle as they are sometimes spectacular. One group, that which went to Botswana, was set the task of establishing and deepening four local assemblies and the surrounding community, which they more than fulfilled.

After thirty days, the groups reunited and returned, with reluctance, to Heathrow.

After they returned, letters began to come back to the International Travel Teaching Committee, thanking them for sending the groups and reporting their successes. It is difficult to try to give more than a brief glimpse of the immense benefit that accrued from this project. If you would like to ask more particular questions, please ask one of those who went on the trip. They were: Abbas Bouroumand, Novin Doostdar, Zarin Hainsworth, Guita Ram, to Southern Africa; Roushauak Alaeinia, Javid Djalili, Mrs Mihan Ram, to Malawi; Farzin Aqdasi, Soheil Keynejad, Vafa Ram, to Botswana; Venus Alaeinia, Corinne Kent, Richard Hainsworth, to Lesotho.

We hope the I.T.T.C. will organise another trip like this — Southern Africa can take twice the number next time.

A SUMMER IN GUYANA

It is 8.30 in the evening and amidst the darkness of the village over 200 people can be seen crowded beneath a small house. They are watching a slide programme and listening attentively while eight young people explain the reason why they have travelled half-way across the world to tell them about the Bahá'í Faith. This was our reception every evening for six weeks as a group of us travelled in one small area of Guyana in South America. Really we cannot properly describe the bounties which were showered upon us.

Guyana witnessed something approaching mass declaration during our trip. We arrived in July to a country with about 2,000 Bahá'ís and thirty-five local spiritual assemblies: six weeks later there were over 900 new Bahá'ís and nine new assemblies formed. Many of these were not mere names on cards, but had sincerely embraced the love of Bahá'u'lláh, — like the man who gave half his land to build a Bahá'í Centre, or the old lady who simply declared that her village could never be the same again now that the Bahá'ís had spoken with hopes of such joy, or the time when we were leaving one village and a stream of children followed us down the road imploring us not to leave.

The eight of us from Britain divided into three teams, about twenty-two local youth joined us, some for the whole period, others travelling long distances just to spend one or two days with us. All our efforts were concentrated on one small area, called Berbice, an area close to the Surinam border. It was beautiful to see the way the administration and youthful enthusiasm were in harmony in Guyana. Before our arrival one young man had made all the physical arrangements in each of the villages we were to visit. Costs were kept to an absolute minimum by renting either a whole house or a room in a house, our food was cooked by someone in the village again at very reasonable prices. (Certainly the cost of living once in Guyana could never be an excuse for someone being unable to go there.)

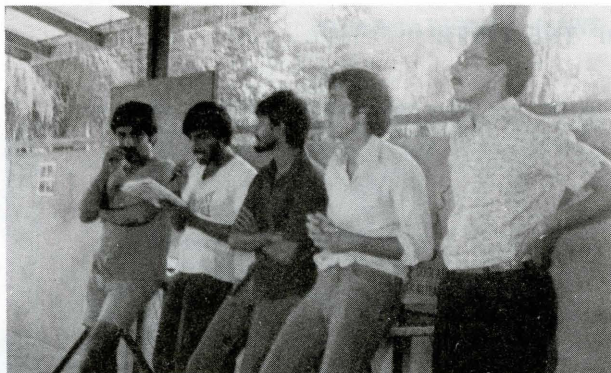
In each village we would stay nine to ten days. Initially we would go all over the area inviting everyone to an evening of slides, music and discussion, — after the first night or so invitations would no longer be necessary as word would soon spread around the village about our presence.

Guyana, for all its beauty and hospitality, is a nation suffering the ravages of a fierce prejudice between the Indians (of Asian origin) and the Negroes. Often we had no need to talk for it seemed that it was only in Bahá'í gatherings that Black, Brown and White came together in such happiness and harmony. Despite this however, the Guyanese, especially once away from the larger towns, are an open and spiritual people, often following our slide programmes a whole barrage of sincere questions would be asked about such topics as the purpose of life, the meaning of soul, heaven, hell, the after life.

In one small village, Betsy Ground, over 140 people declared. In a matter of weeks their assembly met three times and are already planning to build a Bahá'í Centre. The night of the deepening of the assembly members was really moving, a stream of questions were posed as to the duties of the assembly and, by way of summary, the newly-elected chairman spoke with such



The girls of the party setting off from Heathrow Airport — left to right: Ruhi Mostafanajad, Shohreh Youssefian, Mitra Sabet, Vida Yazdi and Fahimeh Yazdi.



Left to right – Nabil Hussayn, Assistant Auxiliary Board Member Balchan Rampergas, Lalman Chalkrih, Brian O'Toole and Moin Tayebi at a youth camp reporting on the activities of the first two weeks.

love and sincerity that a few of us were moved to tears. He said that even though we had only been in his village about a week he could already see visible signs of the way the Faith was bringing people together in a newly discovered love and unity. Indeed, if we had travelled half-way across the world simply for that one evening we would have been rewarded greatly.

Some of the high points of the trip were the children's classes. So often we made friends with the adults through their children. One man, who later became an assembly member, came along one night because he said his son could not stop talking about the fun he had enjoyed at our classes. The children sang, painted, learnt prayers, played games, went swimming and each made a beautiful book on the Faith. I asked one child at the end of about eight days of classes who Bahá'í 'lláh was, and he said, "Bahá'u'lláh is the latest Messenger from God, He has come to bring peace and unity and I'm very happy I'm a Bahá'í."

We spent two weeks in one small village and really became part of the community, so many people learnt our names and real friends were made. The night before we left we threw a party in a village with no electricity, no cinema, no television – this was a real treat. People sang, told jokes, laughed and danced late into the night. The villagers, used to going early to bed, were so happy that no one wanted to leave.

Just three days before leaving Guyana we visited a completely new area and, in two days, over forty-five people declared and the assembly could be formed. This new village, Fyresh, was probably one of the most receptive places we visited. So many people asked us, "Why, if the Bahá'í Faith came so long ago have you only come for the first time tonight?" In the light of the statement from the Universal House of Justice about a "constant stream of travel teachers", we left them with sincere promises that soon many more visitors would come. Whoever goes there is assured of the happiest times of their lives. One of the group, Moin Tayebi, said some prayers the day before his return flight and decided to cancel his flight and stay in Guyana.

Perhaps part of the reason for the "Oneness" was the fact that we were a group. The local Bahá'ís were genuinely impressed that eight young Bahá'ís should come from Britain to help them win their goals. Not a few told us that they had never experienced such excitement from the Faith as their time travelling with us. It was certainly not for reasons of knowledge, wisdom or spiritual capacity, but simply because they could see something of the urgency of the times by our presence there. The very way the five girls were living in the villages was example enough to many people, Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í alike, Guyana, despite its beauty, has certain challenges for the traveller. One boy was stung by a marabanta, a fierce looking bee the size of a helicopter, only to see his hand swell to the size of a football; two of the girls had to visit the hospital because of a mass of mosquito and sand fly bites; one had to rest in bed for three days as she was overcome by the sun. But, without any doubt, none of us would have missed the teaching experience for the world. The warmth, love and encouragement the National Youth Committee, National Teaching Committee, National Assembly and Auxiliary Board Members showered upon us was terrific. We envy those people who are lucky enough to go there next year.

Ruhiyyih Mostafanejad
Shoreh Youssefian
Mitra Sabet-Shavghi
Vida Yazdi

Moin Tayebi
Brian O'Toole
Nabil Houssein
Fatimeh Yazdi

NOTICES

BIRTHS



MARRIAGE

10 September 1977: Jennifer Mizan to Stewart MacLeod, in Bristol.

DEATHS

10 May 1977: Tommy McKecknie, in Glasgow.
19 September 1977: Alex McKay, in Aberdeen.
4 October 1977: George Hackney, in Belfast.

DEADLINE: As the Bahá'í Journal must now await distribution with the first available Newsletter, would the friends please note that there will now be a regular deadline date – six weeks before the first day of the month in which it is scheduled for publication – as follows:

February issue	— deadline —	15 December
April		15 February
June		15 April
August		15 June
October		15 August
December		15 October

Please send **TYPEWRITTEN** copy (PLEASE) and black and white glossy photographs to the Editor:

Lois Hainsworth (Mrs)
136 Thurlow Park Road,
West Dulwich,
London SE21

THE FUND

Ways of making contributions to the Funds.

1. Directly (by cheque or postal order) to the National Treasurer:—

Mrs Betty Goode,
8 Knowle Road,
Stafford ST17 0DN
Tel: Stafford 62157

2. By Bank Giro directly to the bank which is:—

The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3

Our account number is 18188443

3. By Post Office Giro. Our number is 43 301 4008
4. The Capital Projects Fund is in a separate account:—

The National Westminster Bank Ltd.,
186 Brompton Road,
London SW3

Account number 18188648

POINTS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT

- A All cheques no matter for which Fund should be made payable to "NSA OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS" (please NOT to Betty Goode).
- B They should be 'crossed'.
- C It is unwise to send paper money or any money through the post unless it is registered.
- D Receipts are only sent if the donation is accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.
- E It is still cheaper to make Post Office Giro payments than to buy postal orders.
- F Friends wishing to donate by Deed of Covenant, please write directly about it to the National Treasurer.

THE ONWARD MARCH OF THE FAITH

We warmly welcome to the community the following new believers, recorded in the National Office between 24 February and 19 October 1977.

ENGLAND — Adults

Arthur Hugh Lister — Haringey
 Maria Campbell (Miss) — Redbridge
 C. Powell (Mrs) — Wrekin
 Marilyn Linda Lloyd (Mrs) — Bromley
 Stephen Dance — Greenwich
 Polly Plowman (Mrs) — N. Norfolk
 Susan Bagenal (Miss) — Huntingdon
 Margaret Brown (Mrs) — Westminster
 Dennis Corbett — Crawley
 D. J. Heinemann — Camden
 Peter Land — Westminster
 Olive O'Brien (Mrs) — Bexley
 Bettine von Hartmann (Mrs) — Ipswich
 N. Din-Gabisi — Croydon
 Tina Hariri (Miss) — Brighton
 Bernard Oddy — Reigate & Banstead
 William Amponsah — Greenwich
 Bill Brown — Liverpool
 Winifred Geraldine Harris (Mrs) — Carrick
 Douglas Ernest Jones — Aylesbury
 Stephen Michael Spratley — Christchurch
 V. Hyne — North Cornwall
 A. Tidswell (Mrs) — Thurrock

Stephen Tomlin — Harrow
 Elizabeth Stobart (Mrs) — Brighton
 Elaine Moira Morgan — Thanet
 Mahrokh Bayzar (Miss) — Loughborough
 Denise Farrell (Miss) — Sheffield
 John Robert Shipp — Birmingham
 Frank Ballantine — Scarborough
 Roger Bullock — Braintree
 Peter Clark — Birmingham
 Colin Hodgkinson — Rochdale
 Michael Littledyke — Barrogate
 Somaya Ramadan (Mrs) — Oxford
 Ian Wemyss — Elmbridge
 Robin F. Gaskell — Christchurch
 Linda Martin (Mrs) — Poole
 Ingeborg Oddy (Mrs) — Reigate & Banstead
 Chide Awuse Sergeant — Slough
 A. R. Emmanuel — Greenwich
 Jennifer Mary Hood (Miss) — Carlisle
 Ann Montague (Miss) — Westminster
 Elizabeth Coleman (Miss) — Winchester
 MacLeod — Bristol
 I. Yeoman — Bristol

Sheila Smithson (Mrs) — Redbridge
 Lois Keast (Mrs) — Adur District
 Eva Ellen Bew (Mrs) — Tunbridge Wells
 May Frances Brooks (Mrs) — Birmingham
 Susie Eleanor Nicholls (Mrs) — Billingham
 Ann Veronica Thomas (Mrs) — Alvechurch
 Joan Bray (Miss) — Winchester
 Borgny Corbett (Mrs) — Crawley
 Marion Fotheringham (Mrs) — Broxbourne
 S. Vijay — Bracknell
 Angela Moon (Miss) — Westminster
 Adrian Ryder — Mole Valley
 Julian Alexander Paxton Duffey — Mole Valley
 Bridget Hall (Mrs) — Dacorum
 Patricia Matchett (Mrs) — Tunbridge Wells
 Rachel Rogers (Mrs) — Dacorum
 Christine Barber (Mrs) — Bexley
 Michele Fallon (Miss) — Westminster
 Brenda Jones (Mrs) — Aylesbury
 T. A. O'Brien — Bexley
 A. P. Henderson (Mrs) — West Devon
 R. Tidswell — Thurrock

Youth

Anne Stibbads (Miss) — Cambridge
 Shaheen Knox — Brent
 Shahram Badiian — Slough
 Helen Preston (Miss) — Bromley
 Jennifer Darby (Miss) — Thanet
 Danielle Malloy (Miss) — Gillingham
 Candida Ford (Miss) — Brighton
 Clare Thurgood (Miss) — South Oxon
 Afsaneh Adiparvar — Brent
 Anahita Golzari (Miss) — Ealing
 Elizabeth Thomas (Miss) — North Beds

Farid Afnan — Brent
 Saman Massudi — Brent
 S. Franklin (Miss) — Hollingbury
 Frances Robertson (Miss) — Romford
 Mehr Khavari — Cambridge
 Cecylia Russell (Miss) — Brighton
 K. D. Hardy (Miss) — South Oxon
 David S. W. Wilkinson — Chichester
 Firouz Aghdasi — Westminster
 Marcellus Stephens — Bromley
 Angela E. J. Wass (Miss) — Nottingham

Sean Knox — Brent
 Roger David Bancroft — Brighton
 Samandar Manavi — Sheffield
 Mary-Ann Stanley (Miss) — Portsmouth
 Shidan Majidi — Ashford
 Shahram Alaei — Eastbourne
 Robert Anthony Stowell — Pendle
 Laleh Afnan (Miss) — South Oxon
 Angelo Joseph Nesakumar Emmanuel — Greenwich
 Roisin Meagher (Miss) — Brighton

SCOTLAND — Adults

Ian Mellin — Glasgow
 J. Dobbie (Mrs) — Dundee
 John Bardsley — Mull
 Yin Penglim (Mrs) — Glasgow

Maoiliosa O'Rourke (Mrs) — Glasgow
 Doris Stanford (Mrs) — Perth
 Effie MacLeod (Miss) — Renfrew
 Margaret M. Randall (Mrs) — Orkney

Marjorie MacLennan (Mrs) — Isle of Lewis
 Christine Bardsley (Mrs) — Mull
 Sturge Moore Maite (Mrs) — Glasgow
 J. Hurn (Mrs) — Mull

Youth

Anjam Khursheed — Kelso
 Fardin Monshizadeh — Stirling
 John Parris — Kyle and Carrick

Rosemary Leonard (Miss) — Kirkwall
 Dorothy May Stirling (Miss) — Glasgow

Pari Mehrabi (Miss) — Kirkwall
 Senga Thomson (Miss) — Argyle

WALES — Adults

David John Allum — Anglesey
 Maldwyn Morgan Jones — Arfon
 Stephen Bone — Arfon

Janet Cox (Miss) — Swansea
 Malcolm Morris — Brecon

Thomas Eames — Merionnydd
 Jacqueline Prothero (Mrs) — Delyn

Youth

Jacqueline Fisher (Miss) — Gwent
 Pamela Wendy Daniels (Miss) — Llanelli

Nuha Abdul Aziz Sabour — Swansea

Roderic Maude — Ceredigion

NORTHERN IRELAND — Adults

E. Denning (Mrs) — Lisburn

Robert William Elliott — Coleraine

Youth

Geoffrey Lennon — Craigavon

Janet Martin (Miss) — North Down

CYPRUS — Adults

Robert Andrew Lyle — Limassol

Thessalia Lyle (Mrs) — Limassol

MALTA — Adult

E. Cassar — Hamrun



More than 400 Bahá'ís helped gather the materials for this meeting hut, built to house the Third Quechua Tantanakuy (All-Quechua Conference) in Otavalo, Ecuador. The building, a nine-sided affair of wood and thatched with straw, was 14 metres in diameter and sheltered over 450 Bahá'ís during the conference.



Among this group of Bahá'ís attending the Third Quechua Tantanakuy (All-Quechua Conference) in Otavalo, Ecuador, are: Andrés Jachakollo and Sabino Ortega (standing left), Auxiliary Board members from Bolivia; Mario León (with glasses, centre), a member of the National Spiritual Assembly of Perú; and Rufino Gualavisi (second from right, wearing black hat), an Auxiliary Board member from Ecuador.



Most of the 150 participants at this Summer School, organised by the National Bahá'í Youth Committee of Bangladesh, offered time for travel teaching at the end of the session. In fact, three different groups left directly from the school for different districts of the country. Burhân'd-Dīn Afshín, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for South Central Asia, is shown in the centre of the photograph. He, three Auxiliary Board members, and a member of the National Spiritual Assembly spoke on a variety of Bahá'í subjects during the school, which attracted students from all parts of Bangladesh.



Leone, American Samoa, was the scene of this weekend institute, conducted by the Bahá'í Regional Teaching Committee of American Samoa at the home of Mr and Mrs Frank Trump. Suhayl 'Alá'í, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors for Australasia, is kneeling, second from the right.

QURRATU'L-'AYN 1817 – 1852

*A commemorative essay on the one hundred and twenty-fifth
year of her martyrdom*

'Un jour sans pareil, peut-être, dans l'histoire du monde' — 'a day without parallel, perhaps, in the history of the world' — thus the celebrated French historian Ernest Renan, with considerably more rhetoric than historical accuracy, described the day in August 1852 when the pogrom launched against the Bábís living in and around Tíhrán, in the days following the attempt on the life of Násirí'd-Dín Sháh, erupted in an orgy of terror and bloodshed. In the politically unsettled period following the death of Muḥammad Sháh in 1848, and the troubled years of Násirí'd-Dín's early reign, exacerbated by the clashes between followers of the Báb and government troops at Shaykh Tabarsí, Zanján, and Nayríz, the assassination attempt of August 16 1852 reawakened scarcely dormant fears of a Bábí uprising. During the fortnight succeeding the attempt, abortive as it was, a government in urgent need of a scapegoat arrested and put to death dozens of Bábís in Niyávarán and Tíhrán. The names of many of the victims of this witch-hunt have been buried in the dust of history, but those of others have come down to us from a number of sources. The official Persian court history, *Násikh-u't-Tawárikh*, mentions the names of twenty-eight Bábís put to death in various ingenious ways, and a modern Bahá'í account adds the names of nine more.

Of those who died at this time, only a handful stood out as leaders among the Bábí community. The Bábí leadership had been decimated in the preceding years: half of the Letters of the Living had been butchered in the course of the débâcle at Shaykh Tabarsí between 1848 and 1849; the catastrophes of Zanján and Nayríz had further deprived the Bábí faith of capable and enterprising leaders; and the legalised murder of the Báb in 1850 had robbed the community of its origin and direction. Mirzá Yahyá Núrí, the nominal head of the faith, was young, frightened, inexperienced, and generally inaccessible. Now the final blow was to fall.

Within the space of a few days the Bábí community of Írán was shattered forever. Bahá'u'lláh was arrested, imprisoned for a time, and eventually exiled to Baghdád, carrying with him the hope and promise that a phoenix would yet arise out of these dreadful ashes. The witch-hunters, restless furies of state and church, fell to their work with an enthusiasm worthy of the bloodier days of the Inquisition.

Among those who fell victim to the blind fury of a populace outraged by what was seen as an act of revenge for the killing of the Báb and a possible prelude to further outbreaks of civil disorder were Siyyid Ḥusayn-i-Yazdí, a Letter of the Living and the principal amanuensis of the Báb, his confidant and friend for many years, the sharer of his confinement and the bearer of his last wishes; Háj Sulaymán Khán Tabrizí, the man responsible for the transfer of the remains of the Báb after his martyrdom; Hájí Mirzá Jání Káshání, a leading merchant of Káshán who was engaged in the writing of a history of the new faith at the time of his arrest; Luṭf-'Alí Mirzá Shírází, an Afshár prince who had survived the struggle of Shaykh Tabarsí, of which he had written an account; Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím Qazvíní, known as Mirzá Aḥmad, a man who had acted as the Báb's amanuensis on occasion, who had collected and transcribed many of his works, and who was, according to Bahá'u'lláh's statement in the *Lawḥ-i-Naṣír*, one of the only two individuals acquainted with the origins of the Bábí faith (the other being Mirzá Músá, a brother of Bahá'u'lláh); Mullá Shaykh 'Alí Turshízí, known as 'Azím, a leading Bábí of Khurásán through whose agency the Báb had made known his claim to be the Qá'im to the mass of his followers; and finally, one of the most outstanding figures of the entire Bábí dispensation, the only woman among the disciples of the Báb, and probably the most revolutionary among his followers — Qurratu'l-'Ayn, better known as Táhirih.

Táhirih was born in 1233/1817-18 in Qazvín in northern Írán. Her family, which originated in Baraghán, a small village near Tíhrán, had for generations contained religious scholars of ability. During the reign of Fath-'Alí Sháh, Táhirih's father and two uncles raised the prestige of the family to unprecedented heights. The late Aghá Buzurg Tíhrání writes of them as follows: 'this family has been one of the noblest of the houses of learning and one of the most excellent families since the days of their grandfather (i.e. Hájí Mullá Muḥammad Taqí, Táhirih's uncle and father-in-law). From it has emerged a large number of outstanding religious scholars'. Táhirih's father, Hájí Mullá Muḥammad Šálih, was a tolerant and moderate man who dedicated his life to writing books on religious topics, in particular the sufferings of the Imáms, a theme on which he wrote at least ten volumes. Although he never became a Shaykhí or a Bábí, he avoided entering into the controversy surrounding the subject, and refused to condemn Shaykh Aḥmad, Siyyid Kázim, or the Báb. Her younger uncle, Hájí Mullá Muḥammad 'Alí, was a Shaykhí divine who later became a Bábí and is mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Iqán* as one of many scholars who embraced the Bábí faith, itself an evidence of the truth of the Báb's claims; in later life, however, he ceased to associate with the Bábís. Her older uncle, the eldest of the three Baraghání brothers, was Hájí Mullá Muḥammad-Taqí, the Imám-Jum'a of Qazvín and the man responsible for the *takfir* or excommunication of Shaykh Aḥmad-i-Aḥsá'í. To the end of his life Mullá Muḥammad Taqí remained a bitter enemy of the Shaykhís, his bitter denunciations, in which he later included the Báb and his followers, finally resulting in his murder in 1847.

Qurratu'l-'Ayn grew up in an atmosphere of great piety, torn between the strongly anti-Shaykhí sentiments of Mullá Muḥammad Taqí, the pro-Shaykhí beliefs of Mullá Muḥammad 'Alí and of her maternal cousin Mullá Jawád, and the neutral position adopted by her father. Through Mullá Jawád (later to become a Bábí) she obtained some Shaykhí books. Like many women of her class in Írán at this time, she was well educated in the Islamic sciences, and the teachings of Shaykh Aḥmad and Siyyid Kázim-i-Rashtí greatly attracted her sharp and inquiring mind. With her sister Mardíyya, she travelled to Karbilá where she attended the classes of Siyyid Kázim. It was probably on her return that she was married to Mullá Muḥammad Taqí's son, Mullá Muḥammad, for whom she was to bear three sons and a daughter, the sons later becoming outstanding religious leaders in Qazvín. At about the same time, her sister was married to Mirzá Muḥammad 'Alí, a son of Hájí Mirzá 'Abdu'l-Wahháb, a leading *mujtahid* of Qazvín who had been almost alone in supporting Shaykh Aḥmad at the time of his excommunication by Mullá Muḥammad Taqí.

At the end of 1843, she returned to Karbilá a few days after the death of Siyyid Kázim. Taking up residence in the late Siyyid's house, she gave classes on Shaykhism, attended by many leading Shaykhís in the city, most of whom were to become Bábís less than a year later. While she remained in Karbilá, a group of Shaykhís, including Mullá Ḥusayn Buṣhrú'í, his brother and cousin, Mullá 'Alí Bastámi and a number of companions including Táhirih's brother-in-law Mirzá Muḥammad-'Alí and his brother Mirzá Hádí, went to Shíráz where they met the Báb and were enrolled as his first disciples, the Letters of the Living.

Mullá 'Alí Bastámi returned to Karbilá around October 1844, bringing news of the Báb (but not his name) and some of his early writings. Arrested in Baghdád and sent to Istanbul in 1845, he succeeded, before his departure, in converting several important Shaykhís in that region. During his sojourn in Karbilá he communicated the message of the Báb to Táhirih and told her that she had been numbered by the Báb among the eighteen Letters of the Living by virtue of a letter sent by her to him through her brother-in-law.

The Báb was surely one of the most charismatic and magnetic personalities in recorded history. Unlike the modern demagogue or evangelistic religious leader, he only appeared twice before a large audience — one in the Vakíl mosque in Shíráz, once on the barracks square of Tabríz moments before his execution. His appeal was not that of the mob orator nor that of the subtle manipulator of men. Rather, he appears to have exercised a genuine, deep, and lasting influence over those whom he met, either singly or in small groups. Close contact over a period of time won him the hearts of guards and warders as readily as those of saints and dervishes. It was this charm, this remarkable strength of personality combined, we are told, with unusual humility, which captivated and held to the end of their lives men like Mullá Husayn Bushrú'í the Bábu'l-Báb, Mullá Muhammad-'Alí Bárfurúshí Quddús, Mirzá Yahyá Dárábí Vahíd, and Shaykh Mullá 'Alí Turshizi 'Azím. Through their direct influence, through their writing and preaching, their travels and great personal endurance, those who had met the Báb ignited others with the fire of their enthusiasm. Táhirih was one of the great exceptions. Alone of all the Letters of the Living she was never to meet the Báb. Yet, his writings and the tales of his compelling personality brought to her by others were to cast a spell over her which was to lead her, eight years later, to a martyr's death and an unmarked grave. So captivated was she, indeed, that she, like her fellow-disciples, was able to captivate and enthuse others, and there soon grew up around her in Karbilá an important, influential, and controversial group of Persian and Arab Bábís. It was among this group and under the direction of Táhirih, assisted by other Letters of the Living also resident there, that the real implications of the Báb's claims were first made known, and it was here that the theory of Babism was first put into practice.

Táhirih turned her classes on Shaykhism into classes in which she expounded the teachings of the Báb from the pages of the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá*, the *Shahífa Makhzúna*, and other works. Men and women flocked to her classes given in the house of the late Siyyid Kázim. Numbers of the new converts made their way to Shíráz, returning to tell of their meetings with the Báb or to bring back copies of his writings. Letters passed between the Bábís in Karbilá, the heart of Shí'í Islám, and the Báb in Shíráz. Before his arrival there, in the summer of 1846, the Báb had instructed his followers to gather in Karbilá, and had indicated that he himself would head for that city on the completion of his pilgrimage to Mecca. Returning to Búshíhr in May 1845, he sent a message by way of Basra to tell the believers assembled and awaiting him at the holy shrines in 'Iráq that his plans had been unavoidably changed, and instructing them to head for Isfahán.

As a result, the first of several internal crises in the Bábí community of Karbilá occurred, several believers maintaining that the Báb had broken his promise and that this was inconsistent with the claims he made. Others set out for Isfahán, a group of these finally reaching Shíráz and the presence of the Báb. Even here, however, dissension broke out, and three men — Mullá Abú'l-'Alí Harátí, Mirzá Ibráhím Shírází, and Mullá Jawád Vilyání — were eventually expelled by the Báb, made their way to Kirmán, and associated with Háji Mullá Mirzá Muhammad Karím Khán Kirmání, the new leader of the Shaykhí school, and already a firm enemy of the Báb. Mullá Jawád, the last-mentioned above, was Táhirih's maternal cousin, the same man who had introduced her to the teachings of Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim.

In Karbilá, further controversy centred on Táhirih herself. A group of Bábís, led by Mullá Ahmad Mu'allím Hísarí, objected to the position held by her and Mullá Báqir-i-Tabrízí, another Letter of the Living. They even encouraged Mirzá Hasan Gawhar and Mirzá Muhit Kirmání, two of the leading Shaykhís of Karbilá, to attack Táhirih in their classes. The Báb himself was forced to write to those involved encouraging them to unity and patience.

In her public lectures in Karbilá, Táhirih spoke from behind a curtain, but in those she gave for the Bábís, she appeared before men and women alike without a veil. A large group of Bábís, including Siyyid 'Alí Bushr, were outraged by this and by her instructions to the believers to abandon the laws of Islám — at a

time when the Báb himself had commanded their strict observance. Meeting together in Kázimayn, some seventy Bábís wrote to the Báb expressing their criticisms of Táhirih's behaviour. The Báb's reply, defending and praising her, led to the withdrawal from the Bábí community of a number of these men, but only served to confirm in their faith those who were her staunch followers. This group of dedicated believers not only served as her helpers and defenders but became distinguished as the first Bábís to leave the fold of Islám, the forerunners of a movement which was to gain momentum with the announcement, at the conference of Badasht in 1848, of the abrogation of the laws of the Qur'án, and with the Báb's declaration, in the fifth year of his mission, that he was the promised Qá'im. It was largely through the efforts of Táhirih that the Bábí community in 'Iráq and Írán was prepared for developments of such moment.

Following protests made against her and her sister Mardíyya after their celebration of the Báb's birthday in the month of Muharram — a month of mourning and lamentation for Shí'í Muslims — Táhirih moved with a band of men and women believers to Baghdád, where she lived at first in the house of Muhammad Shíbl al-Baghdádí, a devoted Bábí, later being transferred for about two months to the house of Siyyid Muhammad Alúsí, the renowned Muftí of the city. Najíb Páshá, the governor of Baghdád, eventually received instructions from the capital for the expulsion of Táhirih and her companions, and, around the summer of 1847, they left 'Iráq, travelling to her home city of Qazvín by way of Hamadán and Kirmánsháh. In the towns in which they stopped en route, they instructed the people in the teachings of the Báb, reading to them from the *tafsír* (commentary) on the *Súratu'l-Kawthar*, and converting many.

In Qazvín, a serious situation existed prior to their arrival. Táhirih's uncle, Mullá Muhammad Taqí was, as we have seen, the man responsible for the 'excommunication' of Shaykh Ahmad-i-Ahsá'í, and between him and the large Shaykhí community of Qazvín an undying hatred had grown up. The conversion of many of the Shaykhís of Qazvín to the Bábí movement had introduced a third and critical factor into an already tense state of affairs, and Muhammad Taqí's continued attacks on Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim, to which he now added inflammatory diatribes against the Báb, pushed matters further and further towards a crisis. To make matters worse, a group of young Bábís, led by Mirzá Hádí Farhádí, were engaged in the manufacture of arms — mainly swords — in the basement of the Farhádí house, and, despite the Báb's own refusal of their aid, they continued to prepare themselves for holy war. The fears of the Muslim population, exacerbated by Táhirih's uncle, were little assuaged when Táhirih arrived accompanied by a band of armed Bábís, many of whom were Arabs, and almost all of whom had been Shaykhís.

Two events sparked off the inevitable conflagration. The first was the arrest and bastinado, in the *madrasa* (seminary) beside Mullá Muhammad Taqí's house of Mullá Jalíl Urúmí, a Letter of the Living who had been in Qazvín for some two to three years preaching the Báb's doctrines. On hearing of Mullá Jalíl's capture Mirzá Hádí Farhádí and a group of other Bábí hotheads stormed the *madrasa* and, after a struggle, rescued him. No-one was seriously hurt, but animosity was turned to active contention. At about this time the second event occurred — the arrival in Qazvín in the autumn of 1847 of Mullá 'Abdu'lláh Shírází (known as 'Mirzá Sálíh'). On his way to Máh Kú to meet with the Báb in order to confirm the truth of His faith, Mullá 'Abdu'lláh heard of Muhammad Taqí's attacks on Shaykh Ahmad and was incensed to the point of contemplating murder. Either alone, or, as is suggested by Mu'ínu's-Saltana, in company with Siyyid Husayn Qazvíní and the reckless Mirzá Hádí Farhádí, Mullá 'Abdu'lláh came on Muhammad Taqí while the latter was praying in his mosque at the hour of dawn, and stabbed the old man repeatedly. Muhammad Taqí survived two days, unable to speak, eat, or drink, and on his death was buried in one of the Shí'í shrines of Qazvín. To this day he is spoken of by devout Muslims as 'the third martyr', and one of his descendants still leads the prayers in his mosque as the Imám Jum'a of Qazvín. Muhammad Taqí was a fanatical and a spiteful man, a man jealous of the

influence of Shaykh Ahmad and those who came after, but he did not deserve the death inflicted on him in the name of divine retribution.

Taqi's murder marked the turning-point for the Bábí community of Írán. The Bábís, on whom guilt for the murder was, rightly or wrongly, placed, and who had, until this point, generally been regarded as a nuisance, a curiosity, or a challenge, were now seen as a threat. It is unimportant whether the murderer or murderers was or were Bábís — the Muslim population of Qazvín and, very soon, Írán, believed that they were, and that they had proclaimed or were about to proclaim a holy war on the people of Islám. The history of Babism which, until this moment, had been marked by discussion and debate or, at the most, persecution short of execution, was now to be transformed into a modern revenge tragedy, as Bábís and Muslims became locked in a struggle to the death in the course of which thousands of lives were lost on both sides.

Almost the first person to suffer as a result of this dramatic change in attitude was Táhirih. Although she had probably been aware that mischief was afoot — fifteen days before the murder she sent most of her companions away from Qazvín — she was too intelligent a woman to have had a hand in what ultimately ensued. Nevertheless, her husband Mullá Muhammad, Taqi's eldest son, rightly incensed by his father's murder, accused her of complicity and seems even to have regarded her — as she is still regarded by many Muslims to this day — as the instigator and organiser of the crime. She was quickly placed under house arrest, while about seventy Bábís were taken and imprisoned on the instructions of Mullá Muhammad. Although Mullá 'Abdu'lláh Shírází confessed to being the sole murderer, Mullá Muhammad was not satisfied. Forced to release the majority of the Bábís arrested, he sent to Tíhrán five men whom he regarded as having been accomplices in the crime: Háj Mullá Ibráhím Maḥallátí, Shaykh Sálíh Karímí 'Arab (both among Táhirih's companions from Karbílá), Háj Asadu'lláh Farhádi (the uncle and father-in-law of Mírzá Hádí), Háj Mullá Táhir Shírází, and Mullá 'Abdu'lláh Shírází. Shaykh Sálíh was put to death in Tíhrán, the first Bábí to be executed in that country — possibly the first anywhere. Ironically, he was not even a Persian. Háj Asadu'lláh either died from the cold of winter (he was an elderly man) or was put to death in prison, while Mullá Táhir and Mullá Ibráhím were brought back to Qazvín and killed there under brutal circumstances. Mullá 'Abdu'lláh, however, succeeded in escaping, only to turn up later at Shaykh Ṭabarsí where he suffered an undoubtedly deserved fate, being beheaded by a cannonball.

Word was sent to Bahá'u'lláh of Táhirih's predicament and he was able to contact Háj Mirzá Hádí Farhádi, who had secretly fled to the capital, instructing him to effect her rescue. This was accomplished with the help of Mírzá Hádí's wife (a daughter of Mírzá Asadu'lláh), and Táhirih soon arrived in Tíhrán where she met Bahá'u'lláh for the first time. For a short time she stayed in the capital in the house of Bahá'u'lláh and also, it seems, in that of Aqá Khán Núrí, later to be Prime Minister in the very days when Táhirih was put to death there.

At this time, however, the Báb had sent out letters summoning his followers to go to Mashhad where they were to assemble together with Mullá Husayn and Quddús, and, in accordance with these instructions, Bahá'u'lláh left for the province of Khurásán, accompanied by a sizeable band of Bábís, among whom was Táhirih. Hearing of trouble in Mashhad (a rebellion, led by Sálaru'd-Dawla, had broken out), the group stopped at Sháhrúd and then turned towards a nearby village called Badasht. A number appear to have stayed on for a time in Sháhrúd where, twelve days later, they met Quddús and several companions coming from Mashhad; these two groups headed together for Badasht where they joined up with the main body of Bábís.

The significance of Badasht can scarcely be overrated, nor can the role played there by Táhirih. Her pioneering efforts, during the days she spent in Karbílá and Baghdád, to abrogate the laws of Islám were now brought to fruition. Nabíl states that it was Bahá'u'lláh who directed the events at Badasht from behind the scenes, but it was Táhirih who went before the eighty or so Bábís assembled there and proclaimed the end of the Islamic dispensation. Here, rather than in some imaginary attempt to promote 'women's rights' — a concept which the Guardian has

said formed no part of her thinking — was the essence of her greatness, here was the vital role she played in history, here was the single act which made her stand out among the great men and women of all time.

It is probable that Táhirih was chosen to be the herald of the new Dispensation for two reasons — firstly, because she already had a reputation for refusing to observe the laws of Islám, secondly, because she was a woman and as such not immediately subject to the penalty of death for having appeared to renounce Islám. Many of her audience were outraged when she appeared without a veil yet again and announced that the day of the shar'á, the sacred law of over one thousand years, was over. But, in accordance with Islamic custom, they determined to demonstrate to her, a mere woman, the error of her ways and the feebleness of her understanding. The initial championing of the cause of Islamic orthodoxy by Quddús gave to Táhirih's opponents a rallying-point; but his gradual and calculated transition to her point of view gave them an opportunity to move in that direction with him. A few left, abandoned the Bábí cause, and returned to the bosom of Islám. But by the end of the twenty-two days of the 'conference', a new faith had been born and the way prepared for the coming of a new law.

Leaving Badasht in the late summer of 1848, Táhirih headed for Núr by way of Bárfurúsh. In Tákur, she stayed for a time at the house of Aqá Mirzá Muhammad Hasan, an elder brother of Bahá'u'lláh. She later moved to the village of Váz, seeking to remain there in hiding, for a warrant was out for her arrest. For one and a half years she stayed there, but in the end treachery on the part of the brother-in-law of the village governor led to her discovery and arrest.

Brought to Tíhrán, she was imprisoned in the upper portion of the house of Maḥmúd Khán, the Kalántar (chief magistrate) of the capital. Here she was kept under strict confinement, corresponding with her fellow-believers by means of various ingenious devices, writing letters and poems with vegetable dye using fibres from a broom as pens. On rare occasions she was able to meet visitors, but for the most part she was alone for the two years or so of her confinement. Here she met the widow of Hujjat-i-Zanjání, brought likewise as a prisoner to Tíhrán, following the terrible defeat of the Bábís of Zanján, and here she no doubt heard the story of that defeat and the death of Hujjat, during the four months the two women spent together until Hujjat's widow was sent on to Shíráz. Here she must have heard the soul-destroying news of the Báb's martyrdom, the details of the deaths of the seven martyrs of Tíhrán, and the tale of the massacre of the Bábís of Nayríz led by Vahíd whom she herself had spurred to action. Here she debated with Mullá 'Alí Kaní and Mullá Muhammad Andarmání sent to dissuade her from the erroneous path she had chosen to tread, and from here she sent them away, defeated in argument, to sign her death warrant. Here at last she heard of the insane attempt on the life of Nasír-i-Dín Sháh, and from here she was taken to the Ílkhání garden. In that garden, on a night unknown, she was put to death, on the instructions of 'Aziz Khán Sardár, in an exceptionally cruel manner, a ball of cloth being rammed down her throat until she choked. Her remains were thrown into a well and covered over, and there they lie, undiscovered, somewhere to the west of Firdawsí Avenue, behind the National Bank in the bustling heart of modern Tíhrán. When I pass that way I think of her and wonder where she lies and whether she is at peace, waiting beneath her heavy rock and earth for the day when, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá has foretold, her bones will be discovered and honoured as they deserve.

Thus ended the life of one whom the Master has named in the same breath with the four great women of past dispensations — Sara, the wife of Abraham, Ásiya, the wife of Pharaoh, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Fátima, daughter of Muhammad and wife of 'Alí. Of her, Edward Browne spoke as follows: 'The appearance of such a woman as Kurratu'l-'Ayn in any country and any age a rare phenomenon, but in such a country as Persia it is a prodigy — nay, almost a miracle. Alike in virtue of her marvellous beauty, her rare intellectual gifts, her fervid eloquence, her fearless devotion and her glorious martyrdom, she stands forth incomparable and immortal amidst her countrywomen. Had the Bábí religion no other claim to greatness, this were sufficient — that it produced a heroine like Kurratu'l-'Ayn'.

DENIS MacEOIN, TIHRÁN, SUMMER 1977

NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITIES

EAST LoTHIAN: The Bahá'ís of Edinburgh and the district of East Lothian were very happy to welcome "Daystar" during the period August 13–18. They provided a most welcome high-spot in the teaching programme for the East Lothian district, giving two concerts, one in North Berwick and another in Musselburgh, in addition to helping boost a very successful picnic in North Berwick at the weekend. They also gave a well-attended fireside in the same town, and visited hospitals in the vicinity.

Recent teaching in East Lothian has also included an exhibition of visual material and slides put together by some of the Bahá'ís of Edinburgh, which has been shown first at Haddington and then repeated at North Berwick, through which many people have been contacted, several of whom have shown considerable interest in the Bahá'í Faith.

Future plans for the area include the organisation of a sponsored walk in conjunction with UNICEF, and giving a series of community lectures on various subjects of interest, which should prove most edifying for all concerned.

We trust and pray that the results of these efforts will be the re-establishment of the local Spiritual Assembly of East Lothian by Ridván 1978.

EDINBURGH: The Edinburgh University Bahá'í Society was successfully re-established at the beginning of the last academic year, a considerable number of the required twenty signatures being obtained at the Societies Fair during Freshers Week, at which the Society had a stall exhibiting literature, and leaflets were distributed. It was also mentioned in the Student Handbook with a paragraph about the Faith (a concise summary of the basic tenets of the Faith, as expressed by Shoghi Effendi, was thought to be most suitable).

During the first term contacts made through the Societies Fair attended Bahá'í firesides in Edinburgh, but it was in the second term that the Society established its own firesides, held in addition to the general community firesides. It was decided to hold these in rooms in Pollock Halls of Residence, since there were a number of contacts there, and in fact the number of Bahá'ís in the Halls doubled in the second term through two declarations. The firesides were held regularly throughout the second and third terms and were well attended. The aim was to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere in which contacts could feel at home and more free to take part in discussion. A different topic was chosen each week as a basis for discussion and designed to attract all types of students — titles such as 'Science and Religion', 'Is God dead?', 'Bahá'u'lláh: the return of Christ' — and the firesides were publicised around the Halls and University under these titles.

Another venture which proved very successful was when members of the Society, other Bahá'ís in the community, and any friends or contacts who cared to come along, met regularly once a week to have lunch together in the University buildings. This provided an ideal opportunity for members of the Society to bring along friends to meet other Bahá'ís on a very casual basis and to get to know them outside the fireside situation.

Use was also made by the Society of the newly-created and very professional exhibition in the possession of the Edinburgh community. It was set up at strategic points in the University buildings in the lunch hour three times in all during the third term, and information concerning the firesides and a talk to be



First Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Lisburn, the seventh assembly in Northern Ireland.

held was handed out at the same time. The talk, held in a lunch hour in a lecture room, and entitled 'World Unity — One Way', was held immediately after the exhibitions. It attracted only a handful of people, but seemed to be appreciated by those who attended and was excellent as regards publicity and proclamation.

In all its activities the Society endeavoured to work in conjunction with other community activities, and was grateful for the support of other Bahá'ís outside the University group. It owed much of its success to the continual assistance and support of the local assembly.

GLASGOW: The Bahá'ís of Glasgow joined with representatives of the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish and Moslem communities to stage an exhibition entitled "A Presentation of Faiths". The object of the exhibition was to give the people of Glasgow a better understanding of the teachings and beliefs of the various religions practised in their city. The exhibition was planned by the 'Sharing of Faiths' committee, in which Bahá'ís play an active part, and was financed by the Glasgow District Council.

The exhibition lasted from 14 to 16 June inclusive, and was open each day from 11.00 am until 9.00 pm. Each Faith had a separate display of literature and audio-visual material and was manned throughout by representatives prepared to answer the questions of the enquirers. The Bahá'í stand consisted of a large selection of books and pamphlets, posters, and a free-standing exhibition display designed and built by the local teaching committee especially for this purpose. The Bahá'í stand was well supported by the Glasgow community, and friends from Hamilton, Motherwell, Stirling, Dumbarton, Dumfries, and Carlisle came along to offer their assistance.

Many enquirers took pamphlets from the Bahá'í stand and a number of books were sold. A selection of books were also donated to the library of one of the school parties who visited the exhibition, at the request of their teachers.

All told, over 2,500 people visited the exhibition, making this a very successful proclamation activity.

MULL: For the first time ever a Nineteen-Day Feast was held in the goal district of Lochaber. The occasion was the Feast of Asmá.

Ten adults, one youth, three children and two babes in arms made up the contingent of Bahá'ís who crossed over on the ferry from Mull to the village of Lochaline in Lochaber district. Prayers had been said by the Mull community throughout the previous nineteen days for teaching work in the area.

As we arrived the heavens opened and the rain poured down. We knew no one in the area, and had no set place to hold the Feast, and it looked as if it would be a very wet Feast indeed. After brief consultation, we all decided to head for the nearest church. Eventually we found one, and inside the small church we had the devotional and consultation parts of the Feast. Then the rain stopped and we headed back into the village, found a beautiful spot beside the War Memorial and there we shared our food.

Everyone present agreed that the whole day was truly enjoyable. Indeed it was a very simple and easy thing to do, to hold a Nineteen-Day Feast in a goal district.



National Assembly Chairman John Long addressing a meeting in Swansea University during the course of the NSA weekend meeting in Wales.

2 South Street
Oakham
Rutland



THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS¹

Abu'l-Qasim Faizi

"A world in a grain of sand" indeed, this monograph by one so well qualified to write it, upon a Personage scarcely rightly appreciated amongst the followers of his Grandfather's Revelation; barely a name to the majority of the alien West.

This is the first book that makes explicit the origins of that dissension which shattered the Covenant of Islám after its immediate betrayal at the Prophet's death: Tribalism, that is, the unquenched remnants of the 'Age of Ignorance' before the Revelation.

Beginning with the tribute of Bahá'u'lláh Himself in the Kitáb-i-Iqán, and closing with the explanation by the Centre of the Covenant of these very events being prophesied in the Revelation of St. John (Chap.11), this heartrending account of Husayn's own inflexible firmness as the vice-regent of the Prophet and the terrifying slaughter on the bloodied sand of Karbila offers Bahá'ís an insight into their own Karbila, 'Akká; for, from that Most Great Prison, no turning back could be possible:

"Enter thou among My servants,
And enter thou My paradise."

(Qur'an 89:29/30)

MILLY—a Tribute to Amelia E. Collins²

Abu'l-Qasim Faizi

This book contains copious quotations from letters of the beloved Guardian, the love and testimony of his appreciation of her total devotion and obedience; these include one naming her a Hand of the Cause of God as early as 1947.

Those who had the privilege of meeting her at that time would have no doubts about her fitness for this exalted station — had they ever had the audacity to imagine the appointment of living Hands, an event not announced to the Bahá'í world until five years later on.

"She submerged herself in the ocean of the Guardian's love. She was both generous and shrewd. She never plunged her hand into her pocket to pour out money at random. . ."

Both these small books are written with the rare simplicity of a great style — one that makes no concession to vague generalities, but is precise, challenging and self-effacing.

The standard Mrs Collins set herself is given in her own words:

"Out of the immense treasury of all the Writings, I memorised one sentence. . . That phrase is from the Will and Testament of the Master, where He says that the friends should make Shoghi Effendi happy. Whatever step I took. . . I would first ask myself whether my vote, words, trip or thought would make him happy! When I was sure, then I would take action without fear."

Closely associated with his august subject during the period of Stewardship of the Hands of the Cause of God, Mr Faizi — and surely none but one of her fellow Hands could have such tact and insight to select the significant and exclude all trace of sentimentality as he has done — recounts many imperishable incidents and does not leave the conclusion vague either:

"The main purpose in relating these unique and beautiful stories about Milly is to awaken in ourselves an awareness, and to cause us to ponder this point: How many opportunities have we, as individual Bahá'ís, had to make the Guardian happy, but in how many cases. . . ?"

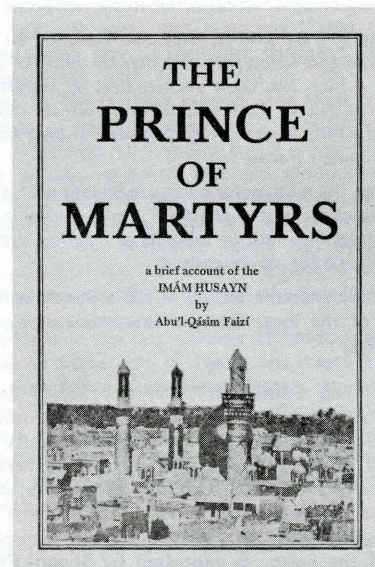
"For the like of this let the travellers travail."

(Qur'an 37:59)

Reviews by Hugh McKinley

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|---|--------------------------------------|------|-----|
| 1 | THE PRINCE OF MARTYRS by A. Q. Faizi | P115 | 75p |
| 2 | MILLY by A. Q. Faizi | P114 | 50p |

Published by George Ronald, available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust.



THE REVELATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH by Adib Taherzadeh Adrianople 1863–68

Counsellor Adib Taherzadeh's long-awaited second of four volumes describing the writings of Bahá'u'lláh became available in November. This book covers the period spent in Constantinople and Adrianople and, although the aim of the author was to describe the contents of some of Bahá'u'lláh's writings revealed during this time, he has also touched upon His life and the lives of His companions during their five years in these two cities. There are also accounts given by people who attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and descriptions of their experiences. For those who are fascinated by history there are numerous stories and anecdotes, including chapters on early pilgrims and illustrious martyrs.

It was in Adrianople that Bahá'u'lláh began to write His letters to the Kings, and these are dealt with in depth in the book.

The momentous Suríy-i-Mulúk, the Tablet addressed to the kings of the world collectively, is analysed at length and for the vast majority of us Counsellor Taherzadeh shows the way to new depths of understanding of this marvellous work.

To those of us who have had the pleasure and benefit of listening to the author, or of reading the first volume of this series, the remarkable content of the book will come as no surprise — he has drawn upon his great reservoir of knowledge, much of which stems from his background. His grandparents on his father's side accepted the Faith of the Báb at the time of Vahid's visit to Yazd; his father was an early disciple of Bahá'u'lláh and a historian of the Faith whose memoirs have formed one of the sources for Counsellor Taherzadeh's researches.

The extracts from the writings of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are mainly the translations of Shoghi Effendi and most other quotations from Persian manuscripts and publications were translated by the author. There are a large number of interesting photographs, including some of early believers, and the frontispiece is a facsimile of the first page of the Suríh-i-Amr, revealed soon after the attempt on the life of Bahá'u'lláh which shows the effect of this upon His handwriting.

LH

B145

(Hardback) £4.75

Published by George Ronald, available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust.