

Baha'i Centre, 158A, Old Brompton Road, S.W.5.

QUDRAT, QAWL 104

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"The disciples of Christ forgot themselves and all earthly things, forsook all their cares and belongings, purged themselves of self and passion and with absolute detachment scattered far and wide and engaged in calling the peoples of the world to the Divine Guidance, till at last they made the world another world, illumined the surface of the earth and even to their last hour proved self-sacrificing in the pathway of that Beloved One of God. Finally in various lands they suffered glorious martyrdom. Let them that are men of action follow in their footsteps."

(Ábdu'l-Bahá, in His Will and Testament)

Beloved Friends,

One of the London believers who has not been seen at the Centre for years, has just sent in a letter enclosing a contribution to the funds, which, it is known, must represent a considerable sacrifice. The letter also apologised for inactivity in the service of Bahá'u'lláh, due to very real disabilities. This believer may derive comfort from the knowledge that by sending this contribution to the funds, very real help has been given both to the local Community directly, and indirectly to the Six Year Plan, since the local fund supplies the National fund. Those who cannot be physically active, but support the fund, are still our valued co-workers in the Cause.

Elsewhere in this Bulletin you will find excerpts from the Report of the Assembly Development Committee founded on the Questionnaire sent out to all of the local Assemblies. Three significant facts emerge which have proved a shock to your Assembly, and are here presented to you for your very serious consideration. These are:

1. Only 33% of the London believers had during the first three months of the year, contributed to the local Fund.
2. Our attendance at feasts and anniversaries is only half the average of all the other Communities.
3. Our inactive Membership is twice the average for all Communities and is nearly half of all our registered believers.

Dear Friends, these three points alone ought to provide serious heart-searchings for us all. Do we realise that once we enter into fellowship of this Faith, we receive a share in its immense and sacred work - the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth? It is a life dedication on our part, and Ábdu'l-Bahá says: We can have no conception of the bounties and blessings that will be ours in this world and the world to come as a reward.

When we become members of this Faith we are also members in the great Body of Believers. We are all members one of another. Now we know that in a human body if one of the members is paralysed the health of the whole body suffers.

In a fruit tree we prune off useless branches so that the others may be strengthened and bear better fruit. But in the Tree of God, of which we are leaves, so sacred is the calling of each one and so great is the worth and the value of each, that except for the denial of the Covenant of God, we cannot be removed.

Therefore it is all the more incumbent that we do our utmost to give the Message, and support the activities of the Cause in every way possible.

Recently some have said: I don't come to the Centre because there does not seem to be the warmth and friendliness there used to be. If we feel like this we should ask ourselves whether we bring that warmth and friendliness when we come. We are not in the Cause to get, so much as to give; and as we give we receive "good measure pressed down and running over".

There is not one of us who cannot find further channels of service, if we have the dedicated will.

Now with the splendid example from one of our Community before us, let us resolve, every single one of us, to do all we have in our power to serve the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh in these crucial and difficult times. Let us be healthy leaves of the Tree, and each do our bit in whatever way it is, to make it grow and flourish, and not allow London to become a useless limb in the National Body of the Baha'is.

With loving greetings,
In His Service and Fellowship,
The London Spiritual Assembly.

TREASURER'S REPORT

(For Six Months: April 1st to September 30th 1947)

<u>Total outgoing</u> £174.17. -	<u>Total incoming</u> £138. 3. 2.
This figure includes special donation of £17 to the National Fund and 10% quarterly donation to the same amounting to £6.7s.6d.	1946 Balance 60.19. 8.
	<u>£199. 2.10.</u>
	Balance of £24. 5.10.
Contribution to the London Fund for the 1st six months:	1946 £168. -. -
	1947 £105. 2. 9.

This drop can be explained by lack so far of "windfalls" and loss of pioneers. Otherwise contributions have kept steady but not increasing in order to meet and keep up with and exceed the loss of above. Expenditure so far as is possible to judge, is not relatively higher this year than last, but our 1946 balance is dwindling away too rapidly, and does not show a healthy situation in the London Community where an increase in contributions must be the constant thought and action of the friends (who have not pioneered) in this particularly crucial period of the Six Year Plan.

Faithfully,

D. J. Millar

Your Treasurer.

P.S. The number of contributors has now risen to 23.

George Mabbutt moved to Bristol with his family on October 17th. The previous evening we had him at our 19-Day Feast and wished him Godspeed and all success. As he joins the heroic band of pioneers, he adds to the pride that the London Community feels in having so many of its believers active on the pioneering front. May their numbers still increase to redound to London's honour.

And here is another thrilling letter from our dear friend Walter Wilkins now settled as you know in Blackburn.

Dear Friends,

It is disconcerting to receive a request for another letter for the London Bulletin. News of those activities that are expected of a pioneer seem to be entirely wanting. But then I am no longer a pioneer. I am now an established member of the Blackburn Community, with a satisfactory place to live in, and a landlady whom I get along with very well.

Perhaps I should not call myself settled till I have a job, but I feel confident that this state will not last long. Perhaps, some day I shall find myself back in London, but on the other hand, Africa, or the Channel Islands may be waiting to welcome me when the Six Year Plan is finished. This is not the wanderlust speaking. I have just put as quotation for the advertisement of our meeting on Sunday, Abdu'l Bahá's words: "Do you know in what Day you are living?" Cyril Hargreaves is to speak on "Whither bound?" This is the day of man's embarkation on a journey to a land which will be his home perhaps for a half-million years. We are like Moses, not destined ourselves to attain that promised land, but neither will anyone, unless the preparations for the voyage are carried out. But I have mixed the metaphor frightfully.

Starting with my own wanderings I have gone on to talk about the preparations for a bigger voyage. Well, perhaps I can cook something out of the mixture. There has to be a crew for this voyage, that's what the Bahá'is are for, and we have to wander over the land and indeed throughout the world to recruit enough hands to get the ship of humanity on its way. There is something of the press-gang about Bahá'u'lláh's methods of recruiting. No questions are asked as to our skill in seamanship, no one is passed over but those too obviously physically unfit. But the real press-gang officer is the condition of the times.

It isn't only Bahá'is who find the times urgent. This is a time when all men of goodwill are rising to save the situation in some way or other. Pity is that there are so many ways, and no time for that rough and ready compromise that practice forces on enthusiasts.

The wisest statesmen are helpless. They have to do with peoples whose prejudices, hates, narrow vision, and selfish regards hamper and block their every move. They cannot change men's hearts. In all the world, only Bahá'is can do it. Christianity cannot do it, not in the way that is needed. For organized Christianity teaches prejudice against other religions, and therefore fails in the very quality which is so urgently needed today. Political idealists try to appeal to "Enlightened self-interest", only to find that that requires a quality of detachment not found except amongst a few scientists and saints! And Bahá'is cannot do it. But the Word of Bahá'u'lláh can do it, and God has decreed that the Word should be carried to the people not by statesmen or the acknowledged leaders of thought but by obscure people like you and me. May we all have an ever-increasing realization of our opportunity.

Walter Wilkins.

WEDNESDAY MEETINGS AT THE CENTRE

7.30 p.m.

Here is your opportunity. Come and bring your friends to study the Teachings of the Cause together. Come, and in such numbers as to make soon the room too small for the meeting, forcing it into bigger and bigger accomo-
dation. Here is your opportunity. At these meetings we hope to do real study, not in a stodgy way, but creatively. The fellowship we establish and experience there will also be of everlasting value.

ALLIANCE HALL MEETINGS: These meetings will be held every three months. The next one will be on Tuesday, December 8th. Invitation cards will be sent out.

FEASTS AND COMMEMORATIONS:

The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh. Wednesday - November 12th - 7 p.m.
The Day of the Covenant. " " 26th - 7 p.m.

(Please contribute in kind to these two Feasts)

The Passing of Ábdu'l Bahá. Friday - November 28th - 7 p.m.
(Owing to the lack of facilities at the Centre the Commemoration Meeting at 1 a.m. will not take place.)

NINETEEN DAY FEASTS:

The Feast of Qudrat (Power) Tuesday - November 4th - 7 p.m.
(Hosts: Mr. and Mrs. A. Dehkan)
The Feast of Qawl (Speech) Sunday - November 23rd - 3 p.m.

HOSTESS : MISS DOROTHY DEWHIRST

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VISITORS

With greatest joy we have met the following friends from abroad:

1. Professor Zeine of the American University of Beirut. Professor Zeine, whose grandfather, the noted Zayn'ul-Muqarrabin shared Bahá'u'lláh's exile, and whose father served the Master as His secretary and is still serving the Guardian in the same capacity, is a Professor of History.

2. Colonel and Mrs. N. Ala'i, and family, of Tehran. These friends came from Paris specially to meet the London friends.

3. Mr. H. Mufakhkham of Isfahan, Persia. Mr. Mufakhkham is at present staying in London for medical treatment.

Meeting these friends has brought us true happiness.

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NEWS AND REVIEWS

1. Ealing. The meeting held on Wednesday, October 1st, at the Questors' Theatre, Ealing, was a real success. The dramatic script was much appreciated and the Brains Trust which followed under the direction of a guest chairman, Major Venables, went off very well. Professor Zeine was present and spoke at the end. Both before and after, the meeting received publicity in the local press. Now Vivian Isenthal is energetically carrying on with follow-up Fireside Meetings. It has been said that if we repeat the meeting at the Theatre, we will draw double the previous number.

2. Professor Zeine at the Centre. On Wednesday, October 15th Professor Zeine spoke at the Centre. He told us about the Master Whom he personally remembered. It was an excellent meeting and so absorbing that those present stayed on till very late. Professor Zeine carried us by his eloquent speech to very high realms of spiritual experience.

3. Mr. Nazar. Our dear friend Asher Nazar was taken very seriously ill in Nottingham, and removed to hospital. Your prayers for his recovery are invited.

4. Mr. Mrs. Mansur Javid. These friends from Persia, who were married last year at our Centre, have now left for Brussels. In a letter to the Secretary they bid you all good-bye.

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Deductions Culled from the A.D.C. Questionnaire, No.1.

Points for special commendation:

1. Outstanding number of other organizations consorted with.
2. Variety of type of public meeting.
3. Excellent total of average non-Bahá'i attendance at regular firesides.
4. Ability to maintain both regular and irregular fireside teaching work.
5. Large number of books in Bahá'i lending library.
6. Initiative in placing books in libraries.
7. Fine record of attendance at L.S.A. Meetings.
8. Exemplary devolution of activity to local committees on which such a high proportion of the community function.

Points apparently showing weakness and needing attention:

1. Indifferent attendance figures for feasts and anniversaries (for former the community record is but half the average for all the communities).
2. Lowest proportion of any community of contributions to Local Fund. (one of the older communities achieves 90%)
3. Inactive membership double the average for all communities and nearly half the entire community.
4. Enormous proportion of unresponsive contacts offsets an apparently large contact list and indicates list to be obsolete. Unknowns should surely be eliminated (i.e. by knowing them!)
5. Low figure of value of book stocks for sale in view of London's position as focal centre for Bahá'is from overseas.