

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

SHARAF, SULTAN, 104

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"Cleave unto that which draweth you together and
uniteth you." (Bahá'u'lláh)

Beloved Friends,

The Annual National Teaching Conference will be held in Birmingham in the Hertford Room of the Imperial Hotel over the week-end of January 17th-18th. The theme is "THIS MOMENTOUS UNDERTAKING" taken from the Guardian's letter in which, referring to our Six-Year Plan, he says, "Alike in its magnitude and significance, this momentous undertaking is unprecedented in the annals of the Faith in the British Isles". The Conference will open at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday afternoon. Subsequent sessions will begin at 8 p.m. Saturday evening, 10 a.m. Sunday morning, and 2 p.m. Sunday afternoon. On Friday evening, previous to the Conference, the Birmingham Spiritual Assembly is holding a meeting and reception in the Imperial Hotel. It is of utmost importance that every believer who can possibly do so, should come to the Teaching Conference. Please send your booking to the Reservations Secretary, Mr. Hassan Sabri, 27 Portland Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham 16. The friends will be accommodated in the Arden and Cobden Hotels.

Our assembly will be officially represented at the Conference by Vivian Isenthal. It is the earnest hope of your assembly that many believers from London will attend the Conference. This opportunity of helping with the outward march of our Six-Year Plan is too great to be missed.

Beloved Friends, Here is another important announcement. We are given a rare privilege - to receive at our next 19-Day Feast, that is the Feast of Sultán on January 19th, Mrs. Dorothy Baker, the Chairman of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of United States and Canada. Mrs. Baker will visit us in this country on her way to the pioneering fields in the European Continent. She will also be present at the National Teaching Conference. We need hardly tell you that having Mrs. Baker with us is indeed a wonderful experience. She is a speaker of great eloquence and accomplishment and has spoken in some 250 Colleges and Universities. Even more, her faith and dedication to the service of the Cause are truly inspiring.

Your Spiritual Assembly, dear Friends, makes this urgent plea to every one of you, to come to the 19-Day Feast on January 19th and give Mrs. Dorothy Baker a rousing welcome.

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

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Treasurer's Report: Contributions in November to the London Bahá'í Fund totalled £13.1.0. This showed a drop of over £2 as compared with the previous month. This needs your careful attention. "No sacrifice is too great" in the service of the Cause of God.

Our Pioneers: Here we give you with pleasure and gratitude the first letter for this Bulletin, received from Robert Cheek. After a year in Bournemouth, Robert has entered another pioneering field, this time in Bristol. We are indeed proud of him.

Dear Bahá'í Friends, It seems but yesterday or was it long ago, that I used to wonder what the little box marked "Six-Year Plan" was for. I remember it used to be put on the table on Feast Days, and as time went my attention was drawn towards it more and more, in so many different ways - snatches of conversation I couldn't

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always fully understand, the Treasurer's report, reference by the Chairman, and beloved Guardian's letters. As I look back over this past year or so, my most vivid impression is when I first really listened to his words, and because it was from that moment that the mists of doubt began to dispel, causing the whole pattern of my life to take a new shape, it will no doubt remain the milestone. How often have I recollected those words, "We must learn to rely more and more on the unfailing bounty of Bahá'u'lláh", until at last I could firmly believe that this was the essential promise to all pioneering venture, the surest reward, the firmest of foundations. Then came the departure of Kathleen, Ursula, then Walter. How I missed them. But these were seasoned campaigners I thought, how long would it be before I could gain the necessary experience to follow in their steps. My guess was two years at least, but then my interpretation of what necessary qualifications meant was hopelessly wrong. Events moved quickly, mysteriously. Summer School at Matlock Bath, a chance discussion with a Bournemouth friend, interview with the N.T.C., their assurance of all material and spiritual aid, a loving farewell, off to my post - Bournemouth. My two years had shrunk to two months.

A year at Bournemouth away from my family passed quickly, time had no meaning except when we thought of Convention. How overwhelming our task seemed when we took stock of our resources, how distant the goal. Trials and difficulties were encountered, but in the depths of sorrow one learns new standards, acquires a greater capacity to appreciate great joy, feels a greater need for unity, and in turning to the Bahá'í brothers and sisters, new strength, the joy that comes from unity. Slowly we learned something of the mystery and wisdom in tests, and in the process, the foundations of the Group were laid, the framework raised. By the appointed time the required number of believers had arisen, and beloved Guardian's prayers answered.

As we gathered to observe the Feast of Ridván, all memories of the past paled into insignificance, only the supreme joy of being an Assembly, a cellular unit of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, remained. Such happiness as this cannot be described or conveyed in human tongue. That it was present and felt by all, I have no doubt. Long will I remember this occasion and the Friends there - Elsie Cranmer, our ever smiling resourceful contact maker; Maudie Flowers who in some mysterious way always succeeded in providing tea and buns; Floy Pinchon, ever patient and serene though sorely tried, Mr. King, Mr. Twycross, Mrs. Norman, and Beryl de Gruchy who gave us much pleasure.

Time is drawing near for me to leave Bournemouth, but I will tell you how we got to Bristol another time, Friends.

Our Community: Bruce McCombe, a young believer from New Zealand has come to this country in pursuit of his profession. He is now living in London, and is a member of our Community. His first 19-Day Feast with us was on December 12th. We extend to him the warmest and the most joyous welcome.

Nineteen-Day Feast: Feast of Sultán (Sovereignty), Monday, January 19th, 7 p.m.
Hostess: Doris Govey. Do not forget, this is the Feast at which we shall have Mrs. Baker with us.

Wednesday Evening Meetings: 7.30 p.m. Time and place to bring your friends and contacts to study together the teachings, and spend an evening in warm fellowship.

Placing Books in Libraries: We have been reminded once again by the National Spiritual Assembly of our duty to seek to place Bahá'í books in public libraries. Please approach librarians in your district, and if they accept Bahá'í books, inform the Secretary who will see that they get them. If you prefer, you can get the books yourselves from the Centre. Here is an ample field for service. The following books can be offered to public libraries and are available: "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era", "The Promise of All Ages", "The Heart of the Gospel", "The Chosen Highway", "The Renewal of Civilisation", "Selections from Bahá'í Scriptures".

News and Reviews:

1. On the evening of Monday, December 22nd, the London Spiritual Assembly had a consultation meeting with the Assembly Development Committee. Many valuable suggestions were made, which the Assembly will report to the Community, after due consideration.
2. We were very glad to receive a visit from Mrs. Hilda Jones of Manchester at the 19-Day Feast on December 12th. Through her we greeted our dear brothers and sisters of that city.
3. The meeting held on December 9th at the Alliance Hall proved a success. There was a very good attendance of interested enquirers. Mr. Frank Smith of the Questor's Theatre, Ealing, gave us valuable help by taking part in our dramatic presentation for which we are truly grateful.