

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

'ULÁ 104, BAHÁ 105

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"O people of Justice! Be as brilliant as the light, and as splendid as the fire that blazed in the Burning Bush. The brightness of the fire of your love will no doubt fuse and unify the contending peoples and kindreds of the earth, whilst the fierceness of the flame of enmity and hatred cannot but result in strife and ruin."
(Bahá'u'lláh)

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Beloved Friends,

We have reached the portals of a new year - the year 105 of the Bahá'í Era. May it bring us a deeper consciousness of the bounty conferred upon us. May it see our Community striving more than ever to serve the Cause of God, and thus to serve better our fellow-men. And may our services be worthy of attracting the confirmations of the concourse on high.

The Chairman of the Spiritual Assembly, Mrs. Isobel Slade, offered to serve on the pioneering front in Edinburgh for an indefinite period. Therefore a by-election was necessary. Mrs. Backwell was elected. Whilst we miss Isobel Slade very much, we feel honoured that our Chairman went out to pioneer. The London Community is indeed proud of its growing roll of pioneers. Our love and gratitude go to them for having brought us such imperishable honour.

Ever lovingly in His Fellowship,
The London Spiritual Assembly.

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A Letter from the Local Teaching Committee

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The effectiveness of fireside meetings for teaching the Cause is known to us all. In every part of the world, Bahá'í fireside meetings are held, and there are few believers who did not attend one of these before declaring their faith in Bahá'u'lláh. Some of these meetings are well established, with a regular attendance of perhaps ten or twenty enquirers. Others are less developed, consisting of one or two occasional enquirers only. The story is told that in the early days of the Cause, Louis Gregory held a regular fireside meeting at which, in spite of his invitations, nobody appeared. For many months he prepared each week for a meeting, until at last his perseverance was rewarded and a flourishing fireside meeting was established which confirmed many enquirers in the Faith.

Our Wednesday evening meetings at the Centre are still in the early stages of development but let us not be discouraged by this. They should be regarded as the fireside meeting of those who, for various reasons, are unable to hold a fireside meeting in their own home. Do not be afraid that your friends will go away discouraged when they find there are few people there. It is possible to explain, when writing them, that on Wednesday evenings we hold open home for anyone who would like to come in to discuss the Bahá'í Faith. We are there to answer questions at that time. Your friends will not then expect a large meeting and will not be disappointed. If possible, come with your friends so that there may be somebody there they know, at least on their first visit. Let them feel this is an occasion for friendly conversation rather than speech making. If we all come to think of these meetings as being our own fireside meetings, surely they will develop into a potent force for confirming believers. Let us each resolve that it is our personal responsibility to make them a success, just as we would do if they were held in our own home.

With Pioneers

Before Una Townshend went back to Eire, she was stationed near London and was a member of our Community. Now she is in the pioneering front in Dublin. It was with great joy that we received from her an account of the Bahá'í work in the Capital City of Eire. To her we send our deepest love, and here is the report she has sent us:

"Work has been going on steadily here. Public meetings are held every Wednesday evening, Feasts are kept and everyone tries to make new contacts.

"In the autumn Manuchehr Zabih was with us for about eight weeks. He spoke at many societies, he visited universities, libraries (where he presented books) and had more personal invitations than he could accept. Every Monday evening he held a fireside meeting in his own room, and sometimes had as many as 20 guests. He usually spoke at the public meetings.

"In December, Brian Townshend came over and addressed a public meeting on 'The Oneness of Religion'. In January, Shoa Nikanpour spoke on 'The Independent Search after Truth', and with Brian Townshend spoke on 'The Abolition of Prejudices'. We have been continuing to speak on the basic principles and in February, David Hofman came and spoke on 'The World Economy of Bahá'u'lláh'.

"Youth activities have been begun. We are writing a letter to the German Bahá'í Youth, and plan to study 'A Rising World Commonwealth' followed by 'A Guide to the Administrative Order'. We are celebrating International Youth Day on Wednesday, 18th February; four people (two of them Nigerians) will speak on 'Youth Challenging the Old World Order'. Another youth is providing music. So far we have six declared Bahá'ís."

Our Community

We are most happy and gratified to welcome Mrs. Mehrangiz Munsiff into our Community. Mrs. Munsiff, who is a cousin of Mrs. Shirin Fozdar, comes from India. There are some of us who remember with great pleasure Shirin Fozdar's visit in 1934-35. Her father, we hear, has very recently passed away. Through her cousin we sent her our loving thoughts and heartfelt condolences. Mrs. Munsiff proposes to hold a memorial meeting in April. The next issue of the Bulletin will give you the time and the date. Once again a loving welcome to Mrs. Munsiff.

Nawrúz Feast - Sunday, March 21st at 2 p.m. at the Alliance Hall. Special invitation cards will be issued. You are requested to contribute towards the refreshments in kind. Sugar, tea, milk or lemon are particularly needed. Beryl de Gruchy is in charge of the refreshments. The Festival of our New Year provides us with an opportunity to invite many of our friends to a joyous gathering. We have received a generous gift of a very large cake from Miss Blundell of Auckland, New Zealand, for which we are indeed grateful. It is reserved for the Nawrúz Feast.

Jumble Sale. Acting on a recommendation from the 19-Day Feast, the Assembly is arranging another jumble sale for Saturday, April 3rd at 3 p.m. at the Centre. All the proceeds will go to the National Fund. As previously, a Unity Feast will also be held at the same time. We think that the other spiritual assemblies in the country might also find a jumble sale a useful way of making further increases in their donations to the National Fund. Such sales make it possible for the believers to make offerings in kind.

Youth Committee. The newly appointed Youth Committee is composed of: Bruce McCombe, Chairman; Brian Townshend, Secretary; Andashin Khosravani. The International Youth Day was celebrated at the Centre on Sunday, February 22nd at 7 p.m. As it happened, the N.S.A. was meeting in London over the same week-end and Phillip Hainsworth, the Chairman of the National Youth Committee was present. He opened the Youth meeting and was followed by speakers from various countries. Six countries were represented.

News and Reviews.

1. Mrs. Olga Mills came from Germany on February 19th and stayed in London more than a week, before she went to Nottingham. We were exceedingly happy to greet her at the Centre on several occasions. We wish her every confirmation in her work for the Cause.

2. The meeting at the Alliance Hall on February 26th, was well attended, and a great deal of interest was shown. We were very glad to have Arthur Cole, our dear friend from Liverpool, on the Brains Trust.

3. Bahiyyih Jalili, a young Persian believer who is studying at Eynsham near Oxford, wishes to hold a memorial meeting on the anniversary of her mother's passing on April 2nd. The Spiritual Assembly has offered her the facilities of the Centre. The Memorial Meeting will be at 6.30 p.m., to which all the friends are invited.

4. Our Community is given five delegates to the National Convention. Election of the delegates will take place this month. Ballot papers will be sent out in due course.

Last Minute Report from the Treasurer.

Contributions during February have fallen very low. Donations to the London Bahá'i Fund from March 31st 1947 to January 31st 1948 amounted to £215. 3s. 9d. Should not we make every effort to make good the marked decrease during February?

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