

AFRICA NEWS

(Issued by the Africa Committee of the
National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles)

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"TAKE YE
GOOD HEED..."

The following Tablet by 'Abdu'l-Bahá will surely encourage and inspire all those who are now serving or hope to serve in the African field:

"O ye homeless and wanderers in the Path of God!

"Prosperity, contentment and freedom, however much desired and conducive to the gladness of the human heart, can in no wise compare with the trials of homelessness and adversity in the pathway of God: for such exile and banishment are blessed by the Divine Favour, and are surely followed by the Mercy of Providence. The joy of tranquility in one's home, and the sweetness of freedom from all cares shall pass away, whilst the blessing of homelessness shall endure forever, and its far-reaching results shall be made manifest.

"Abraham's migration from His native land caused the bountiful gifts of the All-Glorious to be made manifest, and the setting of Canaan's brightest star unfolded to the eyes the radiance of Joseph. The flight of Moses, the Prophet of Sinai, revealed the flame of the Lord's burning Fire, and the rise of Jesus breathed the breath of the Holy Spirit into the world. The departure of Muhammad, the Beloved of God, from the city of His birth was the cause of the exaltation of God's Holy Word, and the banishment of the Sacred Beauty led to the diffusion of the Light of His Divine Revelation throughout all regions.

"Take ye good heed, O people of insight."

FROM THE
GUARDIAN

The Africa Project has been given new urgency and clarification in these cables from the Guardian:

"Newly launched, highly momentous African campaign, chief auxiliary manifold agencies operating furtherance 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Plan American, European continents, irresistibly unfolding, gathering momentum, through added participation Indian Bahá'í Community, assignment specific supplementary functions Persian Egyptian National Assemblies, contemplated translation Bahá'í literature additional African languages, multiplication territories Northern, Eastern, Western fringes vast awakening Continent. Brief span two years destined witness first fruits historic continent-wide crusade will ere long terminate. Valorous British Bahá'í Community, central pivot machinery now set in motion, chief agency prosecution mighty, Divinely propelled enterprise, must, aware urgency task, act speedily, resolutely, dispatch without delay volunteers, settle pioneers, disseminate literature, initiate teaching activities, establish fruitful contacts, ensure steady enrolment fresh recruits amongst tribes, races far-flung virgin territories. Transmitting additional contribution thousand pounds ensure vigorous prosecution colossal sacred task enabling well-tried followers Faith

Bahá'u'lláh British Isles write worthily first page history memorable undertaking constituting opening phase their glorious spiritual mission overseas." (June 22nd)

"Work newly assigned Egypt, India, Persia, supplementary; any assistance extended them your Assembly deeply appreciated..." (July 4th)

"..... Approve reinforce Kenya." (July 20th)

BRITISH N.S.A. Impelled by these cables, the British N.S.A. has voted to send volunteers to Africa as quickly as possible, rather than keeping them in Britain until they have found jobs. Available budget will of course be a governing factor. The N.S.A. has also broadened its objectives to send at least one British pioneer to each of the British territories under the jurisdiction of the Persian and Indian National Assemblies, and if feasible, it is hoped to send at least one pioneer to the other territories designated by the Guardian. All co-operating N.S.A.'s have been advised of these new policies to match the Guardian's leadership. Kenya has also been added as a territory for reinforcement by Baha'i pioneers.

TANGANYIKA The arrival of the party of five pioneers in Dar-es-Salaam was the occasion for an historic meeting of believers from England, the Isle of Man, Persia and India - ten adults and three children - on June 30th at the home of Jalal Nakhjawani. Its significance was realized by these friends as "being more than just the first meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, but rather, the first results of the inter-National Assembly cooperation which is to pave the way for the future International House of Justice". Philip Hainsworth was elected as temporary chairman and Jalal Nakhjawani as secretary, pending the formal organization of the Group on the arrival of the Sabris. A letter was sent to our beloved Guardian and a fine photograph of the community taken. Claire Gung is considered a full member of the group, although unable to vote because of distance, and is kept fully informed.

KENYA The British Bahá'í Community and pioneers in Africa have been deeply grieved to learn of the unexpected death of Terence Preston, and many thoughts and prayers have gone out to his wife, Marguerite, who was a well-loved member of this Community until her marriage removed her to Kenya. On learning of this sad loss, the British N.S.A. asked the Guardian whether they should now reinforce Kenya and he approved that they do so. Mr. Preston was the youngest member of the Legislative Council and was much respected and loved throughout the Colony. We are thrilled to learn that Mrs. Preston will visit England in December and will attend the Teaching Conference and consult with the N.S.A. and Africa Committee.

UGANDA After consulting the Guardian on the settlement of the Moussa Bananis and the Ali Nakhjawanis, it was decided that the virgin territory of Uganda offered the best opportunities for them and also for Philip Hainsworth. After a few weeks in Dar, these dear friends proceeded to Kampala via Mombasa and Nairobi. They stopped in Kisumu, Kenya, to celebrate the Feast of Perfection with Marguerite Preston, and planned to arrive in Kampala on August 2nd. Philip,

however, stayed for some days in Kenya as a representative of the British N.S.A., to be of service to Mrs. Preston. With the arrival of these five pioneers, Uganda will be claimed for the Faith. Three Persian families are also striving to reach Uganda.

GOLD COAST Now that Tanganyika and Uganda have both been strongly settled by pioneers, our Africa Committee has invited both the Persian and American Committees to concentrate their efforts on the Gold Coast. We are delighted to learn that a Persian doctor has arisen to settle in Akkra. Effort is also being made to contact a Bahá'í in the Gold Coast whose name has been sent us by the Guardian. Further notes on the Gold Coast are included in the section on "America" below.

EGYPT The Egyptian National Assembly has sent an enthusiastic report of the several days spent in Cairo at the end of June by the Bananis, Nakhjawanis, and Philip Hainsworth on their journey to East Africa. They "have, indeed, infused a new spirit into the believers of Cairo. Both the reception and farewell meetings were very inspiring and enabled the friends to catch a new vision of the manifold responsibilities that confront them... Consultations on the Africa Project enabled us to reach a good understanding of the Plan, and to come to a conclusion that the five participating National Assemblies representing Baha'i Communities of four continents should inaugurate an epoch-making scheme of cooperation along spiritual, administrative, and financial lines. Such scheme should be deliberately determined in such a way as to ensure not only the successful achievement of the Two Year project, but also laying the foundation of an ever-developing cooperation in the Bahá'í World."

The pioneers have also sent thrilling reports of their meetings with the Egyptian N.S.A., the Nineteen Day Feast, the National Youth Committee, Bahá'í youth, and many of the friends individually. Philip writes that "the National, as well as the local Cairo Youth Committees are united in determination to stimulate the pioneer spirit, to give leadership in pioneering, to help in actively supporting the whole African project, to arouse nation-wide consciousness of the significance of the project, and to help in vigorously prosecuting the Five Year Plan." Immediate pioneer offers have been forthcoming, "some of the fathers asked how their sons could best serve the Faith", and many questions about pioneering and conditions in African territories were answered at the Feast. Philip has also written in high terms of praise of Ali Nakhjawani's contributions to these meetings.

The Egyptian N.S.A. also reports that pioneers for both Libya and Algeria are now making efforts to reach these countries.

AMERICA We warmly welcome the first issue, June, 1951, of the "United States Africa Bulletin" which is full of good news of activity for the Africa Project. The following cable from the Guardian to the U.S. Africa Teaching Committee is quoted: "Praying fervently success. Urge strenuous endeavors." From the Committee we learn that since Convention some twenty-five believers have volunteered to pioneer in Africa, and every effort is being made to speed the dispatch of the first of these friends. A pioneer deputization of \$100 month has also been contributed by an American Bahá'í. While recommending the priority of the Gold Coast for American pioneers, it is our hope that American Baha'is will enrich the community life in each of the African goal countries.

We wish it were possible to share a stirring report from the U.S. Africa Committee of their contact with The Honourable Mr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of the Gold Coast, at Howard University, Virginia, on June 8th. Advice of his visit to the United States, in search of Negro technicians for the Gold Coast, had been sent by our British Committee, and on his return via London, Bahá'í books were presented. We trust that this contact, so faithfully pursued by our American friends, may yield its share of benefit to the Africa Project.

We have also read with interest of a week's study course on "Teaching in Africa", which was conducted by Mr. Matthew Bullock at the International Bahá'í School, Colorado Springs, in July. A cable of greeting was sent and we eagerly await details to share in "Africa News".

Grateful acknowledgement is made of the action of the American N.S.A. to budget \$2,000 for the Africa Fund in the coming year. They have also undertaken to pay travelling and emergency expenses for American pioneers. In a recent letter their Treasurer reports that enthusiasm for the Africa Project is rapidly rising in the United States.

THE SABRIS Through strenuous efforts to obtain a sailing, Hassan and Isobel Sabri were able to leave London on the S.S. Warwick Castle on July 6th. Letters tell of most interesting contacts made on shipboard, and of a heart-warming meeting with about sixty believers at the Port Said Bahá'í Centre on the evening of July 18th, including members of the Egyptian N.S.A. and many of Hassan's family. Amongst the friends was the first Egyptian woman Bahá'í to serve on the Cairo Assembly. The Sabris are stopping a week in Mombasa where they are being met by Marguerite Preston.

AFRICAN PAMPHLETS The English version of the pamphlet which is being translated into African languages will be published in Britain and may later be obtained through the Bahá'í Publishing Trust. Plans are being made to have the Adanwe translations checked by Mr. Ernest Welsing, a newly-declared Baha'i from the Gold Coast now living in the United States, and we are deeply grateful for his offer of help with the translations into three Gold Coast Languages.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY The Oxford Assembly has sent a stimulating report of a Social Evening given for Africans and West Indians on June 8th, when twenty-two guests from the University attended and made their first contact with the Faith. The meeting was arranged with the help of Mr. Howeid, translator of the Hausa pamphlet, and on his advice a preliminary consultation was held over coffee with officers of the Oxford University Eastern Africa Association, the O.U. West African Club, and the O.U. West Indian Club. The meeting was held at the British Council and was purely social in nature, although the Faith was spiritedly discussed in many informal groups. In opening the meeting, David Hofman welcomed the guests on behalf of the Oxford Assembly and expressed the hope that a permanent contact would be established between the Oxford Bahá'is and any Africans or West Indians who come to Oxford, so that they would know at least one group among whom they would be sure of finding a warm welcome. The Oxford Assembly plans to hold at least one Africa Night each term.

AFRICA COMMITTEE The British Africa Committee, with the approval of the N.S.A., has enlisted the help of several sub-committees in its constantly-growing administrative work. Following are the sub-committees appointed, which include members not serving on the Africa Committee: Relations with Authorities, Literature, Africa Conference, Contact with Africans in Britain, and Teaching in Africa. The membership of the British Committee is as follows: H.F. Backwell (Chairman), David Hofman (Secretary), John Ferraby, Marion Hofman, Rustun Sabit, Mehdi Samandari.

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