

AFRICA NEWS

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

No.9 - December 1, 1951

English Edition

THE A remarkable letter from our beloved Guardian has been received by
GUARDIAN the British National Spiritual Assembly, dated October 16th. It was
followed by a supplementary letter on November 11th. Attached are
excerpts dealing with the Africa Project. They bring both guidance and blessing to our work.

AFRICA Replying to an inquiry from our N.S.A., the Guardian cabled on
CONFERENCE November 23rd: "Conference should be held Uganda." Meanwhile,
the Africa Committee has tentatively chosen February, 1953, as the
date. A sub-committee is now actively studying all phases of the Conference,
and plans will soon be sent to the co-operating National Assemblies and Committees for consultation. The friends in Uganda are being called on for investigation and advice. Thus, hearts around the world focus on Uganda, the site chosen by our Guardian for this historic All-Africa Teaching Conference.

NEWS OF We are overjoyed to announce that Eric and Terry Manton will depart
PIONEERS for Northern Rhodesia at the end of December. They will sail on
the "S.S. Modasa" and will disembark at Beira, the port of Mozambique. They will then travel to Lusaka where Eric will look for work. They are the first pioneers to Northern Rhodesia, and the first British believers to serve in a territory assigned by the Guardian to Persia. Terry is just thirteen!

We also welcome with delight the news that Reginald and Mary Collison of Geyserville, California, plan to settle in Uganda. They hope to leave America in February and will travel via England. Both are believers of long standing and rich Bahá'í experience. Their services at the Geyserville Bahá'í School give them a special qualification to help the Africa Conference.

Ted Cardoll has found a splendid job as photographer in Kenya. After enduring a month of many trials in the Gold Coast, Ethel Stephens has found an excellent teaching post. We congratulate both these dear friends and assure them of continued prayers.

Philip Hainsworth has been transferred to Jinja and will now be able to take an active part in the Group activities at Kampala. His address is: c/o Health Office, Jinja, Uganda, B.E.A. It is of interest that Jinja is the centre of a great hydro-electric project being carried on in the next few years.

Thomas Hansford, who recently had to return from Dar-es-Salaam to England, is now making efforts to settle permanently in East Africa. We assure him of the loving thoughts and good wishes of the friends for his speedy success.

VOLUNTEERS FOR AFRICA The Africa Committees in Persia, the United States, Britain, and the Indian N.S.A., assisted by our pioneers and Groups in Africa, are making vigorous efforts to aid volunteers for the African field, whose number is constantly growing. As our beloved Guardian wrote last February: "The most important thing of all is to get the pioneers out there and established if possible in some self-supporting work."

The number of pioneer projects receiving active co-operation include:

Persia	9
United States	10
India	5
British Isles	8

TEACHING PROGRESS Reports from the Groups in Dar-es-Salaam and Kampala bring thrilling news that several African students are drawing very close to the Faith. We may indeed look back on November, 1951, as a touchstone of future victories. Our loving prayers and admiration go to these two devoted Groups who are working so intensively to confirm the first African Bahá'ís of the Crusade.

AFRICAN LITERATURE Plans for the publication of Bahá'í pamphlets are well advanced. The pamphlet in Twi is ready to print and in the hands of the Publishing Trust. Translations have been finished in the Yoruba, Adanwe, Ewe, and Luganda languages. Kikuyu, used in Kenya, has been chosen as the final language in this series. It is hoped that a number of these pamphlets will be ready by Convention.

BAHÁ'ÍS IN AFRICA At the request of the British N.S.A., a circular letter has just been sent to all the believers in Africa, calling their attention to the Tablet by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Miss Fanny Knobloch, first Western pioneer to South Africa. In it He stressed that Bahá'ís should "not pronounce a word pertaining to politics", and that they are "friend of all religions and nations". The importance of following the Master's words has been emphasized, especially in the conditions which are so rapidly developing in Africa to-day.

We rejoice that letters have been received by our Committee from Bahá'ís in Morocco, Tripolitania, South Africa, Nigeria, and the Gold Coast.

AFRICA NEWS The first African Edition of "Africa News" has now been received, and we feel sure that this fascinating bulletin will bring to all who read it a vivid and happy awareness of the Africa Project.

Bahá'ís in every part of the world will soon have the opportunity of subscribing to both Editions of "Africa News", and if you are interested, please watch for the announcement of subscription rates which will soon be made.

The flow of pioneers to the African Continent must be noticeably accelerated. The provision of Bahá'í literature in all the selected African languages must be speeded up. The ties binding the Community with its co-operating sister communities must be steadily reinforced. The prizes already garnered as a result of the operation of the Six Year Plan in England, Wales, Scotland, Eire and Northern Ireland, must at all costs be safeguarded. The preparations for the forthcoming first African Teaching Conference must be carefully planned and meticulously carried out. Above all, the zeal kindled in the hearts of administrators, pioneers, teachers and supporters, jointly contributing to the success of this meritorious enterprise must burn ever more brightly and be reflected in still more remarkable exploits.

Then, and only then, will this Community be enabled to contribute its share of tribute to the memory of the Founder of its Faith, on the occasion of the centenary of the birth of His prophetic mission, in as befitting a manner as the share it already contributed, through the consummation of the first historic Plan, to the world-wide celebrations which commemorated the hundredth anniversary of the founding of its Faith. Then, and only then, will it be qualified to embark upon yet another crusade, whose scope will transcend the limits of the vast African Continent and the culmination of which might well coincide with the Most Great Jubilee that will commemorate the centenary of the formal assumption by Bahá'u'lláh of His prophetic office - a jubilee envisaged by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Tablets, and prophesied more than two thousand years ago, by Daniel in His Book.

So glorious a vision, now unfolded before the eyes of the British followers of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, cannot but galvanize them into action, at once swift, resolute and unrelaxing, and fire their souls with a spirit so consuming as to melt every obstacle that may intervene between them and the achievement of their present goal.

May they, one and all, prove themselves in the crucial months immediately ahead, worthy of the blessings vouchsafed to them in the past, and of the high destiny which it lies in their power to achieve in the future.

Shoghi

November 11th, 1951

... The ideal thing would be to have at least one Bahá'í from every territory in Africa attend the African Conference. This is the goal to be worked for, and attained if possible, as it will greatly stimulate the work and especially the inexperienced and isolated believers.

The solar calendar should, by all means, be adhered to in Africa,

He feels that your Assembly is responsible for the time being for the work in territories not under the charge of other N.S.A.'s; (Tunis, Sudan and Ethiopia under Egyptian care.)

4.

You are not directly responsible for any work done in territories which have been allotted to other N.S.A.'s. But you should correspond with them, and give them any help and advice you can, both the N.S.A.'s and their African Committees. In the case of ----- though he will be under Persia's jurisdiction you can keep him informed of your work, so as to cheer him up.....

The Africa work is not an international undertaking but an inter-assembly one, confined to five National Bodies.

He is very pleased over the way the work is progressing, and sends you all his loving greetings.

P.S. He thanks you for the Quarterly Report enclosed. He reads with great interest everything related to the African work.

(Through his Secretary)

THE GUARDIAN'S LETTERS TO THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í'S

October 16th, 1951

... Now we come to the part of your activities nearest to his heart at present - Africa Campaign. By all means any translation at present into Somali should be given up, as the advice of experts prove it both unnecessary and very expensive....

He fully appreciates the fact that Somaliland is going to be somewhat difficult. In view of its peculiar status your Assembly should bear in mind the possibility of sending there a British subject, if this should prove feasible, and pending a time when the Persians can go there or make arrangements for someone to represent them.

The Guardian considers that your Assembly is the consultative body for all African territories, and that the other National Assemblies should keep in close touch with you. This does not mean, however, that the initiative for the places allotted to them by the Guardian does not lie in their own hands. Likewise, the planning of the African Conference should be handled by you, in close co-operation with the other N.S.A.'s....

The unfortunate crisis in Persia may hold up, for a time, their services in Africa, and he hopes you will do all you can to offset this most unfortunate setback to their work. The Persian believers have, for over a hundred years, borne the brunt of persecution and are still doing so, being the unhappy victims of their country and their race. They merit the ardent sympathy of their fellow-Bahá'ís the world over....

He feels that the Africa Campaign has been launched in a way far exceeding his hopes, is being visibly blessed from on High, and, with the same amount of perseverance shown so far, is assured of great and speedy victories.

(Through his Secretary)

Dear and valued co-workers,

The auspicious launching of the first teaching crusade undertaken by the British Bahá'í Community beyond the borders of its homeland marks yet another stage in the evolution of the Bahá'í Administrative Order in the British Isles, and signalizes the opening of an epoch of the utmost significance in the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. Though the operation of the Plan is of short duration, yet it constitutes a prelude to a series of successive campaigns which a firmly knit, vigorously functioning, clear visioned, intensely alive national community is destined to initiate, direct and control from its newly consolidated administrative headquarters in the heart of the British Isles, not only throughout the Dependencies of the British Crown within the African Continent, but eventually in the widely scattered territories of an Empire whose ramifications extend into every continent of the globe.

A little over half a century ago, this Community, now invested with a

mandate of the utmost significance both at home and overseas, was called into being in the course of the opening years of the third and last epoch of the Heroic Age of the Faith. A decade later, the Appointed Centre of a Covenant, through the creative and potent energies of which so important a member of a steadily rising world community was conceived and nurtured, chose to infuse, through the impact of His personality in the course of a twice repeated visit to the heart and centre of that Empire, a measure of His own mysterious power, which, as He Himself prophesied, was destined to unfold its potentialities in the course of a later age. On the morrow of His passing the earliest evidences of the unfailing promise He had made, revealed themselves through the first stirrings of an Administrative Order - the Child of the Covenant, the Shield of that Community, and the divinely appointed Agency for the execution of the mandate with which that Community was to be invested in the second epoch of the Formative Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation. A little over two decades later, that Community, armed and equipped with the mighty, divinely conceived agencies of a laboriously erected, unassailably established Administrative Order, embarked upon a six year enterprise that culminated in the erection of the institutions of that Order in the very heart and capital cities of its island home - the essential pre-requisite for the inauguration of yet another stage in its unfoldment. On the morrow of the triumphant termination of the first collective enterprise launched by that Community in British Bahá'í history, its jubilant members braced themselves, during a one-year interval, for the initial onslaught, which they were preparing to launch, unitedly and determinedly, far beyond the shores of their homeland, amid alien, widely diversified, politically restless, economically backward, spiritually famished tribes and peoples, and in the course of one of the most critical periods in human history. On the morrow of the centenary of the martyrdom of the Prophet Herald of its Faith, this same Community had already formulated its plans, initiated its programme of publications in various African languages, despatched its first pioneer to the heart of that Continent, forged the necessary links with its allied sister communities participating in various enterprises in that same continent, and established its first essential contact with divers government agencies capable of giving their advice and assistance in the prosecution of its historic and arduous task.

This Community, so young in experience, so richly endowed by the love and care of a departed all-powerful Master, so firmly entrenched in the stronghold of its Administrative Order, already so rich in prizes won in the course of the first collective enterprise undertaken in its history, so promising in the vigour, the zeal and devotion which it is now displaying, is faced, at the present hour, with a grave, a sacred and inescapable responsibility - a responsibility that will increase as the brief eighteen-month interval separating it from the termination of its two-year Plan speeds to a close.

Upon the discharge of this weighty responsibility now resting upon it must depend the inauguration of yet another Plan, of longer duration, of greater scope, of a still more challenging character, and of greater consequence in the effect it must have on that Community's destiny.

Time is running short. The present hour in the fortunes of mankind is critical. The Centenary of the birth of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is fast approaching. The British Bahá'í Community must gird up its loins, redouble its exertions, undertake further sacrifices, demonstrate greater solidarity and rise to still greater heights of consecrated devotion.