



AFRICA NEWS

Issued by The Africa Committee of the National
Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of
the British Isles.

*"The earth is but one country, and
mankind its citizens."*—Bahá'u'lláh.

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AFRICAN EDITION

"The obligations of the Hands of the Cause of God are to diffuse the Divine Fragrances, to edify the souls of men, to promote learning, to improve the character of all men and to be, at all times and under all conditions, sanctified and detached from all earthly things. They must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words."

- 'Abdu'l-Baha -

HANDS OF THE CAUSE

With the swift decisive pen of Divine Guidance, our beloved Guardian, on December 24th, wrote a cablegram destined to stir the very depths of every Baha'i soul and then to flood upon his consciousness the thrilling realisation that the Community of the Cause of God, in this the second epoch of its Formative Age, is now at long last taking upon its shoulders the mantle of maturity.

In part we read, "Hour now ripe take long inevitably deferred step, conformity provisions 'Abdu'l-Baha's Testament, through appointment first contingent Hands Cause God, twelve in number, equally allocated Holy Land, Asiatic, American, European continents. Initial step now taken regard preparatory full development institution provided 'Abdu'l-Baha's Will, paralleled preliminary measure formation International Council destined culminate emergence Universal House Justice."

MRS. COLLINS IN EGYPT

Among the twelve holy souls appointed as Hands of the Cause of God is Mrs. Amelia Collins, Vice-President of the newly inaugurated International Baha'i Council and for many years member of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States. Early in December Mrs. Collins came to Africa, directed by the Guardian to visit the Baha'is of Egypt. So full of the spirit and news of that visit is the report from the Egyptian National Assembly, that we quote from it here.

"The arrival of our dearly beloved sister, Mrs. Amelia Collins, was thankfully received by the friends as an invaluable gift graciously granted by their Beloved. Her meeting with the friends, her talks to them, her amazing spirit of love, and besides that patience, the great happiness and delight she brought lifted our hearts and minds to a higher sphere of understanding and showed us the way to real sacrifice and self-detachment in serving the Faith of Baha'u'llah."

"From the time of her arrival, Thursday, early morning, December 6th, she did not lose a single moment without thrilling the hearts with the joyful news of the wide progress of the Cause and with the glad-tidings of the establishment of the Kingdom of Abha. On Friday, December 7, she received welcome from the Local Spiritual Assembly. On Saturday, she met with the Executive Committee of the National Spiritual Assembly and gave an outline of the Intercontinental Conferences to be held in 1903. On Sunday, she attended the public meeting. Her speech was concentrated on the Holy Shrine, the miraculous work for its completion and the beauties of its surroundings. On Monday, she visited the Baha'i cemetery; and on Tuesday she attended the meeting of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Cairo, where her presence was a real inspiration to its members."

"Friday, December 14; she attended the meeting of the Baha'i youth to which all the friends were invited. As two cablegrams from the Guardian had been received, the Arabic translation was read, and Mrs. Collins began to explain the significance and purpose of the Intercontinental Conferences, and more fully the importance of the African Conference. With joyful heart and wonderful spirit, she remained on the platform for over two hours illuminating the hearts and minds of the friends with a new and deeper understanding, answering their various questions and arousing zeal and encouragement in them."

"The example of devotion and energy which Mrs. Amelia Collins manifested in words, deeds and love taught us the right way to serve. She even made every one of the friends feel that he was, throughout her short yet unforgettable stay, in direct communication with his beloved Guardian after a long deprivation of such. As we earnestly apologise to her for not allowing her a single moment for rest, we bow our heads in devotion and thankfulness to our beloved Guardian for his grace towards these servants."

PILGRIMAGES If the news of the appointment of the Hands of the Cause
PERMITTED plumbed the depths of the hearts of Baha'is everywhere, is it possible to describe the feelings of joy and thanksgiving which these words from our Guardian brought to those who for so many long years have yearned and dreamed and waited for that single word which would summon them to the sanctuary of the Holy Shrines and to the dynamic, vibrant World Centre of our Faith, Haifa, where day and night our beloved Guardian ceaselessly labours for the establishment of the World Order of Baha'u'llah? "Announce all National Assemblies restrictions pilgrimages being gradually removed. Owing prevailing conditions maximum duration nine days. Permission necessary as few at a time are now permitted." Thus through those souls who are privileged to make this holy trip, the Baha'i World Community will come once again into that cherished and long-awaited direct contact with our beloved Guardian.

Living and pioneering in the heart of Africa are two such Baha'is, Mr. and Mrs. Moussa Banani, of Kampala, Uganda, who were among the first Persian believers to arise in pioneer service to the Africa project. Immediately that the news of the opening of the Holy Land to pilgrimage reached them, they sought permission from the Guardian to visit Haifa. Swiftly, he responded with an invitation to them; and on 29th January, Mr. and Mrs. Banani flew to Haifa.

Shortly before their departure, the Kampala Group wrote, "At our meeting this week-end we planned a very special meeting for Saturday next, 2nd February, from 4 to 6 P.M. East African time. At this very hour, the Bananis have been asked to pray in the Holy Shrines for confirmation of the teaching work, and they are also going to advise the Guardian of this, beseeching his prayers as well. We ourselves feel that this visit is on behalf of us all here in Africa and that our work will be greatly stimulated by this personal link."

The friends in Dar es Salaam, at a special devotional meeting, joined with those praying at the Holy Threshold and with all of the Baha'is of Africa who at that hour were turning their hearts to God, invoking His assistance in this enormous task of quickening the spirit of the Dark Continent.

DAR ES SALAAM Eight months ago Mr. Denis Dudley-Smith Kutendele, originally of the Yao tribe Zomba, Nyasaland, and now resident with his wife and children in Dar es Salaam, where he works in a solicitor's office, first heard of the Baha'i Faith. He was immediately attracted to its principles of religious and international unity, and swiftly set upon a course of study of the Faith, both through reading its literature in English, Swahili and Chinyanja, and by attending a special class each week arranged by the Group for his specific assistance.

Now Mr. Dudley-Smith becomes the first African in Tanganyika to declare his belief in Baha'u'llah and to be welcomed into the Dar es Salaam Community. The British National Spiritual Assembly cabled to the Group on February 8th, "Delighted accept new member. Please, convey warmest greetings."

It has been largely through the enthusiasm and effort of Dudley, as he is known, that several of the contacts of the Faith have been attracted to the Cause in Dar es Salaam and have attended the study-classes there.

Very shortly now, Mr. Dudley-Smith will return to Nyasaland, for a period, in order to enter his son in school there. By thus returning to his homeland, Dudley also becomes the first Baha'i to set foot on the soil of Nyasaland, one of the territories of the Africa project assigned by the Guardian to Persia. May Baha'u'llah bless the words he may speak about our beloved Faith in that land.

ERIC MANTON For five happy, carefree days in January, the Baha'is of Dar es Salaam welcomed to their Community Eric Manton and his young son, Terry, en route from Britain to Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia, where they are now pioneering for the Cause with the loving guidance and encouragement of both the British and Persian National Assemblies.

Many long and interesting hours of talk about the Faith, the Africa project, teaching and pioneering methods, and the tremendous significance of the rapid growth of the International Baha'i Community filled the Dar friends with new energy and will. Eric's deeply

spiritual attitude towards his pioneer project, his calm, steadfast determination to accomplish his desired goal, Terry's radiant enthusiasm for all that is Africa - these were example and inspiration indeed to the friends in Dar es Salaam.

Eric met and talked with a number of the contacts of the Faith in Dar on several different occasions. The sincerity and character of the words he spoke helped the contacts to appreciate more fully than before the serious and profound importance of our Faith.

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"Death proffereth unto every confident believer the cup that is life indeed. It bestoweth joy and is the bearer of gladness. It conferreth the gift of everlasting life."

- Baha'u'llah -

The news of the sudden, tragic death of our dearly beloved Baha'i sister, Mrs. Marguerite Preston and her young son Adrian, of Sotik, Kenya, East Africa, in an airplane crash, on February 16th, in the mountains of Sicily, brings deep sorrow to the hearts of her fellow Baha'is in all parts of the African Continent. Marguerite, who was, until her marriage and departure for East Africa in 1945, a member of the British National Spiritual Assembly, was returning to her home and to her two other children in Kenya after having visited in England for the past two months. She had attended the British Annual Baha'i Teaching Conference in January and had actively participated in the sessions on the Africa Project. It was only 7 short months ago that the Baha'i World had sent messages of love and sympathy to Marguerite at the untimely death of her beloved husband Terrance. The fervent prayers of her many Baha'i friends the world over will be offered for the spiritual progress of her soul and that of her son in the Abha Kingdom, as well as the merciful protection of God for her two infant children.

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Dear Baha'i friends,

It has come to our attention that some of the believers and Baha'i Communities have been reluctant to send news reports for use in Africa News due to the fact that they must write in languages other than English. We wish to assure all of the friends in Africa, regardless of what language they speak, that we are eager to receive regular news reports from them and that means either exist or most certainly will be found for the full translation of all that they write. Please send your news now to Mrs. Isobel Sabri, Secretary; P.O.Box 1668; Dar es Salaam; Tanganyika; East Africa.

Africa News Sub-Committee.