

TEACHING BULLETIN

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The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís
of the British Isles

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Letter from the National Assembly

Dear Friends of 'Abdu'l Bahá;

As we enter upon the ninety-third year of the Bahá'í era, we must surely pause to reflect upon the trend of world events, which are daily bringing mankind closer to the hour foreshadowed by Bahá'u'lláh.

Ours is the high privilege to lift the banner of the Most Great Peace and cultivate the hearts towards that Aim. "Teach the Cause" was the command of 'Abdu'l Bahá. "Teach the Cause" is the appeal of Shoghi Effendi.

"A new life, is, in this age, stirring within all the peoples of the earth; and yet none hath discovered its cause, or perceived its motive"..... "O ye children of men, the fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race.This is the straight path the fixed and immovable foundation. Whatsoever is raised on this foundation, the changes and chances of the world can never impair its strength, nor will the revolution of countless centuries undermine its structure"...." The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established"... "So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth. The one true God, He who knoweth all things, Himself testifieth to the truth of these words...This goal excelleth every other goal, and this aspiration is the monarch of all aspirations." "He Who is your Lord, the All-Merciful, cherisheth in His heart the desire of beholding the entire human race as one soul and one body. Haste ye to win your share of God's good grace and mercy in this Day that eclipseth all other created Days." From Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The National Spiritual Assembly has been deeply gratified to learn of the enthusiastic response to the call sent out in the

first number of the Teaching Bulletin. Conscious of our responsibility to direct and harmonise the affairs of the Cause, we now seek the further co-operation and wholehearted effort of all the friends in establishing the Faith in these Isles.

Your National Assembly is convinced that the Teaching work can only bring its best results when we ourselves are firmly united. "Nothing whatever can, in this Day, inflict a greater harm upon this Cause than dissension and strife, contention, estrangement and apathy, among the loved ones of God. Flee them through the power of God and His sovereign aid, and strive to knit together the hearts of all men, in His Name, the Unifier, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.... Bahá'u'lláh.

Unless we can, among ourselves, reconcile all differences of temperament, we cannot present to the world a practical demonstration of the Baha'i Plan for the unification of mankind. This is our test.

The National Spiritual Assembly has requested the National Teaching Committee to give instruction on Baha'i Administration through this Bulletin. The first part appears in this number. We welcome communications regarding any difficulties which it may present and we will clarify any such points in subsequent numbers.

With Nawruz greetings to you all,

The National Spiritual Assembly.
by Isabel Slade, Secretary.

BAHA'I FUND.

"It is the sacred obligation of every conscientious and faithful servant of Bahá'u'lláh who desires to see His Cause advance, to contribute freely and generously for the increase of that Fund." Shoghi Effendi.

There is a spiritual benefit received by every believer who contributes regularly from his income, no matter how small the amount. Even a few pennies, freely given, are a demonstration of devotion and faith, and serve to unite the friends in a common aim. Isolated believers should contribute direct to the N.S.A. but where there is a group or Assembly, the proper channel is through the local treasurer. The address of the National treasurer is, Mrs. Slade, Mallard's Court, Stokenchurch, Bucks.

BAHA'I ADMINISTRATION

The religions founded by the Prophets in the past, have all been divided into sects. We have only to look at the existing Faiths to see that this is so. Baha'u'llah protected His Faith from this inevitable schism by the appointment of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of His Covenant and the Sole Interpreter of the Teachings.

When, in 1921, 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away, the same problem faced the Faith which had faced all religions in the past. But, through the Will and Testament of Abdu'l Bahá, provision was made against dismemberment. This is the Covenant of God...that no division can ever occur in the ranks of the true believers. With the passings of Bahá'u'lláh, and with the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, many sought leadership and resisted this unity, but none was able to create a following and make a sect.

The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whose word is equally valid and binding with that of Bahá'u'lláh, appoints Shoghi Effendi Guardian of the Cause of God and permanent head of the future Universal House of Justice. As Guardian of the Cause, Shoghi Effendi is the Sole Interpreter of the revealed Word. This function he fulfills by virtue of being "under the care and protection of the Abha Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of the Exalted one..."

He whom we acclaim as "The Master", laid upon us as a final trust before His Departure, the sacred mandate to turn to the Guardian in respectful and loving obedience. Furthermore, the institution of the Guardianship will be maintained throughout this Dispensation, and since this institution obviates the cleavage and schism which has decimated previous Faiths, religion at last, is become the source of Unity in the World. By the succession of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Centre of the Covenant, and Shoghi Effendi as the First Guardian, the channel of Divine Guidance is assured, and the Faith is forever preserved from individual and sectarian interpretations.

Every believer should have a copy of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Apply to the Teaching Committee if you have not got one.

Annual Convention.

On April 26th, at 3 p.m., the annual Convention will be held at 86 Lancaster Gate, London, at which time the National Spiritual Assembly will be elected. All the friends are cordially invited to be present, though only the delegates are entitled to vote. The convention provides a unique opportunity for the friends to gather together and strengthen the bond of Bahá'í fellowship. The N.S.A. sincerely hopes that this bond will become so firmly cemented that we may indeed present the aspect of 'one soul in many bodies'.

The National Assembly wishes to call attention to the American Bahá'í News No. 98, and would urge every Bahá'í to make it the subject of thorough study.

Letter from the National Teaching Committee

Beloved Friends,

We are truly grateful for the ready and energetic response which you have made to our appeal for a new Teaching campaign. We are directly responsible to the National Spiritual Assembly for the promotion and maintaining of Teaching work and it is only through your active co-operation that we can discharge this duty. You will rejoice to hear that letters have arrived from all over the country, informing us of fireside classes and, in some cases, public meetings, which are being arranged in preparation for the visit of Mrs. Bishop.

Let there be no slackening in the Work. Tireless, ceaseless effort is required. It devolves upon each one of us to do our utmost to interest new people in the Teachings. We can, and will, succeed.

The National Teaching Committee attaches great importance to the fact that this is not a sporadic burst of shortlived enthusiasm. All over the world, our Bahá'í brothers are arising to a renewed dynamic impulse. We are part of that movement. We would stress the fact that no believer is alone, however isolated geographically. Not only in the British Isles, but in every part of the larger world where believers reside, there has been a response to this new impulse. We are all part of a great spiritual unity, and though we may lack companionship and the benefit of consultation in our efforts to spread the Teachings, not one of us is alone or unaided.

The Committee suggests that it would be helpful and beneficial for the isolated believers to write to each other, to exchange problems, help each other with suggestions, and thus strengthen the bonds of unity which already knit Bahá'í's together. If any of the friends would care to do this, advise the secretary of the National Teaching Committee, and your name and address will be published in the next number of the bulletin.

A new Teaching campaign has begun! May Bahá'u'lláh bless our efforts!

Sincerely, in His service,
National Teaching Committee.

Election of National Spiritual Assembly

Service on Bahá'í administrative bodies is an obligation joyfully welcomed by every true follower of Bahá'u'lláh. The only valid reasons for exemption from this duty are illness, and domestic obstacles which prevent attendance at meetings. Will all believers who would, if elected, be unable to serve on the National Spiritual Assembly from any of these causes, kindly notify the secretary of the National Assembly, Mrs. Slade, Mallard's Court, Stokenchurch, Bucks., not later than April 9th.