

"Blessed is the spot..... where mention of God hath been made"

TEACHING NEWS BULLETIN

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

Teaching Bulletin - No. 4.

LITERATURE

Significance.

Inasmuch as the Word of God itself is, in the final analysis, the real source of the spirit of confirmation, the literature of the Cause becomes the most important teaching instrument we possess. In the early days of the Faith, the believers had only a few prayers by Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha, and the Tablets they received from the Master. Yet these early believers were people of such individual regeneration that "the purity of their lives and the exalted character of their devotion" enabled them so to teach the Cause that the foundation of what is today the Baha'i World Community was established.

Today we have a wealth of books, periodicals and pamphlets, giving in detail the Writings themselves, as well as a number of excellent commentaries on various aspects of the Teachings. Therefore, if the laws of proportion really operate, we are surely in this age well equipped to spread the Faith far and wide across the surface of the earth.

Knowledge of the Literature of the Faith.

It is our responsibility to study the literature of the Cause very thoroughly, not only so that we ourselves will be qualified to teach the Faith, but also that we will know the

particular type of literature suitable for the people we encounter in our teaching work. The first book or pamphlets which a new contact reads plays a vitally important role in the course of his spiritual life. As Baha'is, we will learn first to study the seeker and his particular approach to the Faith and then help him to select the type of literature which will deepen his attraction to the Faith.

Suggested Literature List.

When an individual first hears of the Cause, an assortment of the smaller pamphlets outlining briefly what the Cause actually is is helpful for him to read.

Pamphlets:

The Baha'i Faith

Baha'i Teachings on Economics - by John Ferraby

Progressive Revelation

Pattern for Future Society

Headlines Tomorrow - by Marzieh Gail

The Rising World Commonwealth

Baha'u'llah - by H. M. Balyuzi

The Message of Baha'u'llah - by Dr. J.E. Esslemont

As soon as real interest has been stimulated and it becomes evident in which direction the individual's approach to the Faith lies, one of the more general text books outlining the whole of the Faith in brief could be given to him together with a pamphlet or book containing mention or explanation of his particular point of interest. Thus the interest of the contact is satisfied while at the same time his general knowledge of the Faith is broadened.

Textbooks:

Baha'u'llah and the New Era - by Dr. J. E. Esslemont

Renewal of Civilization - by David Hofman

Security for a Failing World - by Stanwood Cobb.

Simpler Books Covering Specific Aspects of the Faith:

The Promise of All Ages - by George Townshend
Heart of the Gospel - by George Townshend
Portals to Freedom - by Howard Colby Ives
The Chosen Highway - by Lady Blomfield
Unfoldment of World Civilization
Goal of the New World Order

As early as seems advisable introduce the actual Writings of the Bab, Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha to the contact, as well as the Baha'i Prayers.

Introductory Books and Compelations from the Writings:

Hidden Words
Paris Talks
Some Christian Subjects
Divine Wisdom
Some Baha'i Prayers

As interest is deepened, literature bearing directly on the fundamental verities of the Cause should be given - i.e. on the Covenant, the Station of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and 'Abdu'l-Baha, and the significance of the Guardianship. At the same time the contact should have an opportunity of seeing and reading such publications as the "Baha'i World" Volumes and "World Order Magazine", so that he can grasp a vision of the present-day scope of the Faith in the world. "Appreciations of the Baha'i Faith" will let him know what men and women of eminence in the non-Baha'i world have thought and written about the Cause.

Gradually the contact should be given a deep knowledge of the fundamentals of the Faith, and a wide vision of the scope of its Teachings, and its influence in the world today. Love of the Central Figures of the Cause should consistently be more deeply implanted in the seeker's heart through the reading of more and more detailed accounts of the history of the Faith. The

Will and Testaments of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha should be read by the contact as a matter of general study rather than a special document given after the individual has expressed a desire to become a Baha'i. He should, if possible, have read a fairly representative cross-section of the Writings of the Cause before coming into the Faith, so that his knowledge of the Faith is sufficiently deep and comprehensive that he does not later suddenly discover an entire aspect of the Faith about which he has not heard.

Books to Deepen the Contact's Understanding of
the Fundamentals of the Faith.

Kitab-i-Iqan

Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah

Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha

The Pattern of Baha'i Life

Selections from Baha'i Scriptures

Dispensation of Baha'u'llah

Twenty-five Years of the Guardianship

A Commentary on the Will and Testament of
'Abdul-Baha

A Guide to the Administrative Order

After the contact becomes a Baha'i, further reading should be continually encouraged, for it is through constant perusal of the "Writings" that the new believer so strengthens his own Faith that no test or trial can later shake his belief.

The Literature of the Cause is something in which every Baha'i should take joy and pride, for it is in the "Writings" more than any other place that the proofs of the Faith lie. Let us make every possible effort to read the "Writings" for ourselves, encourage our contacts to do so as well, and by placing the books of the Cause in the Public Libraries and those of institutions of learning and other organizations provide opportunity for all people to read of the Faith.

The Publishing Trust stand ready to supply books,

and to advise on all questions of literature. They will provide catalogues and send books direct to any address.

The Secretary who will advise you is R.H. Backwell, c/o Mrs. Wilson, 5, Grosvenor Street, Edinburgh, 12.

The Business Manager who will dispatch your books immediately is Reg. Coulson, Baha'i Centre, 39, High Street, Manchester, 4.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.