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BAHA'I NEWS LETTER

THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Office of the Secretary
GREEN ACRE, SOUTH ELIOT, MAINE

No. 9

December, 1925-January, 1926

"The Baha'is must be the servants of universal peace, the workers for the cause of the oneness of humanity, the spreaders of heavenly love amongst the children of men, the promulgators of the principles of the progress of mankind.

This is the work of the Baha'is."—Abdu'l-Baha.

To the Baha'is of the
United States and Canada.

Dear friends in 'Abdu'l-Baha:

From time to time events take place which throw significant emphasis upon the interrelation of the Baha'i Cause and the world at large.

On November 4th the National Spiritual Assembly received the following cablegram from Shoghi Effendi: "Iraq's highest tribunal unexpectedly pronounced verdict against us regarding Bagdad Houses. Situation of unprecedented gravity. Effective prompt action urgently required. Strongly urge National Spiritual Assembly and every local Assembly and group immediately communicate by cable and letter Iraq High Commissioner through British Consular authorities if feasible, protesting vigorously against courts glaring injustice, appealing for redress to British sense of fairness, asserting spiritual claims of Baha'is to this sanctified abode and declaring their unflinching resolve to do their utmost to vindicate their legitimate and sacred rights. Similar appropriate communications to King of Iraq and British central authorities. Highly desirable cable any suggestions. America's action in present circumstances of unique significance and value. Messages should not be identical in wording.

(Signed) "SHOGHI."

The instructions outlined in this message were immediately telegraphed to the secretaries of sixty-

three Assemblies and groups in the United States and Canada. Numerous letters have been received which indicate that suitable cablegrams and letters were sent, as directed. It would be advisable for each local secretary who has not already done so, to send to the National Secretary an exact copy of each cablegram and letter sent out on the subject of the houses of Baha'u'llah in Bagdad. These copies, together with those sent by the National Spiritual Assembly itself, will then be available for any later use that may arise.

The letter written to the National Spiritual Assembly by the Guardian on October 24th has been reprinted and is enclosed with this issue of the News Letter for the information of the friends.

Once again, a situation has developed in the Near East requiring energetic and full-hearted cooperation on the part of the believers in this country. We refer to Shoghi Effendi's request that the friends make every effort to transmit funds for the purchase of land on Mount Carmel adjacent to the Holy Tombs. This situation was brought to the attention of all local Assemblies and groups by means of a general letter with which was enclosed a form of power of attorney to be used by those sending funds direct to the Guardian. It is necessary to add further instructions in connection with the power of attorney, namely, that it should be witnessed by a notary public, then presented for stamped verification at the County Clerk's office, after which it must be vided by an English consulate. As stated in our general letter, sums of five hundred dollars or more can be sent direct to Shoghi Effendi at Haifa, together with a power of attorney; while amounts less than

this can be sent to the National Treasurer who will take proper steps to place all such contributions in the Guardian's hands.

We may be assured that Shoghi Effendi would not have directed these appeals to his American friends unless abundantly justified by an understanding of their relative importance in the evolution of the Baha'i Cause which will become perfectly clear to us later on. At present, in the case of the Holy Shines at Bagdad, one may venture the assertion that, apart even from their infinite preciousness, as places which witnessed mighty deeds in the life of the Manifestation, they have become a focal issue with the enemies of the Cause in the Near East. Were these houses to be lost to the Baha'is at the present time, the enemies would thereby become so encouraged that the nature and extent of their further onslaughts could not be foreseen. On the other hand, firm action on the part of the believers of all lands to safeguard this property would have the contrary result of establishing more firmly than ever the position of the Cause throughout the entire Orient. The interaction of East and West in the Near East at this moment is so involved that it is obvious that great issues are being decided right now for many years to come.

Similar considerations assure us that the matter of purchasing the desired land at Haifa also has an importance to the Cause far greater than the material factors concerned. The international center and executive heart of the Baha'i Cause will in all probability ever be located in that spot, and the development of the Cause will consequently require area and equipment far beyond the measure of that which the Guardian possesses

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of the Baha'is of the United States
and Canada

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Office of the Secretary
Green Acre, South Elliot
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at the present time.

Turning now to the enclosed letter from Shoghi Effendi: the friends will note his emphatic reference to the great care which should be taken by each Spiritual Assembly in deciding its voting list. We know that the Guardian's words will be most carefully pondered and scrupulously heeded by all who are called upon to undertake this important task.

In this letter it will be noted also that the matter of the Annual National Convention is further clarified. One great difficulty has been removed through the permission given to delegates unable to attend the Convention, to vote for members of the in-coming National Spiritual Assembly by mail. Suitable ballots will be sent to each duly organized Spiritual Assembly for this purpose previous to the Convention of 1926. This provision will insure each National Spiritual Assembly being representative of all the local Assemblies and not merely of those nearby the city at which the Convention is held.

Since the Guardian evidently prefers that the National election shall be held during the period of Ridvan, the present National Spiritual Assembly has decided that the 1926 Convention at San Francisco shall be held on April 29, 30, May 1 and 2.

It is with profound grief that we now place before the friends the information conveyed in a cablegram received from Shoghi Effendi on November 23rd: "Beloved Esslemont passed away. Hearts overwhelmed with sorrow. Urge all American believers dedicate special day for universal prayer and remembrance."

Will the friends uniformly adopt the date of December 31st for this special day. The loss of our brother Dr. Esslemont must be keenly felt by the Guardian, with whom he was working on the important service of translating Tablets of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha. In Dr. Esslemont had been raised up one who was able to discern the significance of the Baha'i Message to the Western world, with its predominating scientific point of view. The book, "Baha'u'llah and the New Era," has since its publication been accepted as the ideal introductory text book on the Baha'i Movement. With our grief let us mingle prayers of gratitude that a mind of such penetration and a pen of such force and dignity had been enrolled in service to the beloved Cause.

The National Spiritual Assembly will shortly distribute to all American believers a printed pamphlet embodying a plan of uniform action whereby it is confidently expected that the teaching work can be greatly increased and, by the end of three years, a fund of four hundred thousand dollars be accumulated to construct the first permanent unit of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar. We consider that the formulation of this plan represents the outcome of many years' longing and intensive thought on the part of the American believers. Each believer should study this plan in detail and make it the foundation of his or her Baha'i services until its various provisions shall have been fulfilled. The fact that, though so late, a definite plan has at length been decided upon, will, we feel sure, bring joy to every faithful and ardent Baha'i worker in the United States and Canada.

Yours faithfully,

**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL
ASSEMBLY**

by Horace Holley,
Secretary.

**WORK OF NATIONAL
COMMITTEES.**

The November issue of the Baha'i Magazine, Star of the West, is a special number, considerably enlarged in size, devoted to the subject of universal peace. The leading article is a significant analysis by Mr. Alfred E. Lunt of present public agencies striving to establish peace, with a clear presentation of those factors that enter into the Baha'i conception of "the Most Great Peace." In view

of the fact that the adherence of the United States to the World Court is a public issue, the friends one and all are urged to distribute copies of this number far and wide among those already attracted to the Cause and also among those whose interest or whose responsibility has opened their minds to the spiritual significance of the subject of peace. The National Spiritual Assembly authorized an extra edition of twenty-five hundred copies, and copies can be obtained either from Baha'i News Service, P. O. Box 283, Chicago, Illinois, or Baha'i Publishing Committee, P. O. Box 348, Grand Central Station, New York City, at ten cents each. This number of the Star should, in fact, be regarded more in the light of a permanent Baha'i pamphlet than as a dated issue of a magazine. Local Baha'i librarians are requested to order a generous supply of extra copies, for sale to the friends.

The Publishing Committee has issued a revised catalog, printed in two sizes. The larger size lists all books and pamphlets now in print, while the smaller size presents selected books and pamphlets which are more suitable for distribution to the general public. The cooperation of Assembly librarians and the friends generally is requested in order to give wide distribution to these catalogs. No charge is made for them.

The little blue Number Nine compilation has also been revised, and published in a new edition under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly. Inasmuch as this Baha'i pamphlet is the one most widely circulated, local librarians should order them in as large a quantity as possible and recommend that each individual believer pass them out constantly to interested inquirers.

The friends will be pleased to know that the Publishing Committee has also issued a new edition of the Esslemont book "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" in paper covers to sell at sixty cents a copy. This low price will enable the friends to circulate this invaluable introductory work on the Cause more widely than ever.

The National Spiritual Assembly is pleased to announce the appointment of Mrs. El Fleeta Spaulding, Chicago, as Chairman of the National Teaching Committee. Mrs. Spaulding will take steps to arrange traveling circuits whereby teachers can visit all the local Assemblies at regular intervals. This

forward step in the direction of a permanent and efficient organization of the teaching work has a direct relation to the new national plan announced in our letter to the friends in this issue of the News Letter. The five regional chairmen of the National Teaching Committee will continue to be responsible, each in his own region, for the important work of the Teaching Conventions, the working out of teaching outlines, subjects for public addresses, and for developing ways and means to educate Baha'i teachers, an all important aspect of the work on which as yet all too little has been done. Each local Spiritual Assembly and group is requested to appoint one or more of their number as a local Teaching Committee to make contact with their Regional Chairman and also with Mrs. Spaulding who will have charge of the executive and business side of the work.

REVISIONS IN BAHAI DIRECTORY.

Local secretaries and members of National Committees, who recently received copies of the new printed Baha'i Directory are requested to make the following corrections and additions:

The secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Turkistan and the Caucasus spells his name Asgharzadih; the secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of India and Burma is Mr. Hashmatullah whose address is Havadia, Chekila, Surat, India; the address of the secretary of the Chicago Spiritual Assembly is 6121 South Marshfield Avenue; for Helena, Montana, read Mr. Fred Mortensen, 335 Breckenridge Street; add Mr. W. E. Warner, 924 Michigan Avenue, East Lansing, Michigan, for the Lansing group; omit name of Mr. Ahmad Faik as secretary for Cairo, Egypt, and substitute name of Muhammed Taki Esfahani, Marjoush Street; under Germany and Austria add name of Herr Walter Reinecker, Howaldt 8, IV, Frankfurt a/Mein, Germany, and Mr. Theodor Lehne, Heiligendammerstrasse 10, Schmargendorf, Berlin, Germany; under Russia change Petrovka 15, Kr. 24, to Petrovka 15, Kv. 24, and Miss Grinerskaya should be written Miss Isabel Grinerskaya with the same address as given. The friends are requested to assist in maintaining a correct Baha'i Directory at all times.

REVISIONS IN NATIONAL COMMITTEE LIST.

Kindly make the following revisions and additions upon the names of national committee members as sent out with November News Letter. To Teaching Committee, add name of Mrs. El Fleda Spaulding, chairman; the address of the secretary of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar Committee should be Lincoln street and not Lincoln Avenue; add name of Mr. Arthur Agnew as member of committee on cooperation between Baha'is in North America and Persia; the address of Mrs. Victoria Bedikian should be P. O. Box 179 instead of P. O. Box 128; add name of Mr. Alfred E. Lunt as member of Green Acre Trustees.

TO SECRETARIES OF LOCAL ASSEMBLIES AND GROUPS.

From time to time, letters have been received which indicate that in certain localities the News Letter is not being distributed carefully and conscientiously to all the believers. Will the friends bear in mind that the News Letter is the sole means of communication between the National Spiritual Assembly and the entire body of the believers in North America. By the same token, it is the only agency whereby the communications received from Shoghi Effendi can be published and placed in the hands of all.

The National Spiritual Assembly is confident that all local secretaries will appreciate these facts and take steps to give the News Letter full and immediate distribution, where this has not previously been done.

In the larger centers it may prove necessary to mail the individual copies to the local list, and advantage can be taken of this to include a program or other information concerning local Baha'i activities.

Several Assemblies have not yet returned the Assembly Roll sent to them several months ago, and we are still awaiting lists of the recognized believers required to make up the complete National list which has been requested by the Guardian of the Cause. The local secretaries should feel entirely responsible for sending in changes of address from time to time and also keep in contact with any members who may be traveling.

We are compelled to state also

that a few Assemblies have not yet indicated the names and addresses of those in their city who are entitled to receive copies of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. Several hundred of the friends are consequently still deprived. Isolated believers can apply for their copy through the Teaching Chairman of their region.

Will the friends bear in mind that the Central Office of the National Spiritual Assembly contains a file of the communications from each local Assembly and group, and these files are intended to enable the National body to arrive at accurate and complete conclusions respecting the activities and condition of the Cause in the various cities. In addition to the acknowledgement of all urgent letters and telegrams from the National Spiritual Assembly, local secretaries are requested to send in copies of all printed Baha'i programs, newspaper clippings on the subject of the Cause, and such news of the activities as should be brought to the attention of all the friends through the News Letter. The organization of the work of the local secretary and treasurer is the first responsibility of each incoming Spiritual Assembly.

We urge the local Assemblies of the United States and Canada, in conclusion, to take steps to have a permanent P. O. Box address for international Baha'i correspondence, thus doing away with the changes of address caused by annual elections.

TO THE ISOLATED BELIEVERS.

Every isolated believer whose name and address has been received through an authoritative source is receiving an individual copy of the News Letter. These friends are requested to notify the National Secretary immediately of any change of address. Some response on the part of isolated believers indicating that they receive the News Letter and are making use of it would also be appreciated. The National Spiritual Assembly does not wish to have these communications sent to any save those truly interested in the Baha'i Cause.

OUTLINES FOR TEACHING.

How to Give the Message.

The Baha'i Message is the glad tidings of a new Messenger who brings a new teaching which will establish world peace and unity.

To give the message is to declare both the Messenger and His message, in such a way as to appeal to the particular type of people to whom one is speaking.

A. If we study carefully Abdu'l-Baha's American addresses we will be able to use his method of giving the message not only to different types of people but to a general audience. Read, e. g., his addresses in the *Star of the West*, Vol. III, No. 6, p. 2ff; No. 9, p. 10ff; No. 11, p. 13ff; No. 10, p. 25ff; Vol. IV, p. 4ff; or *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. 1, p. 101ff; p. 122ff; p. 171ff; Vol. 2, p. 365ff; p. 384ff, and make an outline of the points he brings out in each address. Then give that address in our own words to an imaginary listener. It will fix the ideas in our memory and give us practice in speaking. Abdu'l-Baha's method in these addresses is:

1. To tell how the East was in the darkness of prejudice, racial fanaticism, superstition.

2. To tell how in this darkness Baha'u'llah rose like a glorious sun, and changed the darkness into light. He gave, perhaps, just a few words about the historical setting of Baha'u'llah and the Bab; how they came from the East, as all the great prophets of the world have arisen in the Orient. Spiritual light has always come from the East.

3. To outline the universal principles, sometimes describing each one in detail, at other times simply mentioning them, laying particular stress upon the oneness of mankind, universal peace, the fundamental oneness of religions and the power of the Holy Spirit which, alone, can change human nature and put these teachings into practice. A splendid outline of these universal principles will be found in *The Tablet to the Hague* (pamphlet); *The Wisdom of Abdu'l-Baha*, part 2; *Baha'i Scriptures*, p. 274ff; *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Vol. 2, p. 308ff; p. 428ff; p. 435ff; p. 449ff; Vol. 1, p. 175ff. Baha'u'llah and the New Era, Chap. 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 show us just how to present these universal teachings to our world.

B. "If they ask 'What is your belief regarding Baha'u'llah'?" wrote Abdu'l-Baha in 1920 to Ahmad Khan Yazdani, The Hague, "reply that we regard him as the foremost teacher and instructor of the world in this age, and make clear and explain in detail that these teachings regarding univer-

sal peace and other subjects issued from the pen of Baha'u'llah fifty years ago and were published in Persia and India and spread abroad throughout the whole world. In the beginning all were incredulous about the idea of universal peace, believing it to be a thing impossible. Further, speak of the greatness of Baha'u'llah, and of the events which took place in Persia and Turkey, and of the astonishing influence which he exerted, and of the epistles which he addressed to all the sovereigns, and their fulfillment. Also speak of the spread of the Baha'i Cause."

C. But the supreme secret of giving the message is ourselves to be the message. When the teacher is radiant with the light of universal love and peace and the joy of his new discovery people immediately say, the Baha'i Message must have in it some reality to produce such an effect upon its disciples, and they will be inspired to study the sources of this wonderful light and new revelation.

"When the teacher delivers an address, first of all his own words must have a supremely powerful effect upon himself, so that others in turn may be affected. His utterances must be like a flame of fire, burning away the veils of dogma, passion and desire. Moreover, he must be in the utmost state of humility and self-effacement, that others may be rendered mindful. He must have attained to the station of renunciation and annihilation. Then and not until then will he teach the people with the melody of the Celestial Course."—Abdu'l-Baha.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

By: Albert Vail, Secretary.

NEWS OF THE CAUSE.

North America.

Baha'is throughout the world will be more than pleased to know that thanks to special contributions from friends of the Cause, a draft was sent to the Guardian in November of an amount sufficient to complete the Western Pilgrim House. Many local Assemblies cooperated several years ago in the matter of providing suitable furnishings, and details concerning all these arrangements will be given through the News Letter as soon as possible.

The Central States Teaching Convention was held in the Temple Foundation at Wilmette, Illinois, from November 12th to

15th. A large group attended the opening Feast held in joyous commemoration of the birthday of Baha'u'llah and members of the National Spiritual Assembly brought their greetings. Mr. Horace Holley spoke Friday evening, November 13th, upon "The Religion of Reality." A splendid audience came to hear the message on Sunday afternoon, Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings Mr. Vail conducted a class in methods of teaching at which various ones gave talks and answered extemporaneously the questions which Mr. Gregory prepared at Green Acre last summer. Saturday afternoon was devoted to the problem of the spiritual education of children, and a conference with the National Spiritual Assembly, Dr. Bagdadi, Miss Alma Knoblock, Mrs. True and others gave beautiful suggestions as to methods of teaching. There was a call to make heroic sacrifices to raise the \$100,000 to build the Temple, and a call to sustain at the same time all our Baha'i activities that the Cause may move forward to glorious victory.

A Spiritual Assembly has recently been elected by the friends of Eliot, Maine. It is the special purpose of the Eliot Assembly to create a spirit of cooperation for Green Acre on the part of the local community. One of the members of the Eliot group, Mrs. Kate Ives, is the second American believer to have received the Message.

A letter has been received from one of the Baha'i teachers resident on the Pacific Coast expressing great pleasure at the joyous activity of the Seattle Assembly. The Assembly room has recently been moved from the University district into the center of the city and attendance at the public meetings is steadily increasing. The Seattle friends have started a series of monthly entertainments, combining a musical and literary program with luncheon with excellent results. A Universal Religious Forum is held at eleven a. m. Sundays to which many inquirers are attracted. By confining all the speakers to points of agreement, it has been found that those who originally came to express prejudice or antagonism are drawn into the spirit of unity and concord.

The Buffalo Assembly has recently taken a public hall at 505 Delaware Avenue, where several pub-

lie meetings are held weekly. The meeting place of the Buffalo Assembly is extremely well appointed and attractive. It was largely through the encouragement and cooperation of Dr. John Herman Randall that the Buffalo friends took this step. Well qualified teachers are requested to visit Buffalo whenever possible.

From Washington, D. C. has been received the following report of Baha'i activity: "We have a public meeting every Sunday night, which is extensively advertised. Mr. Howard MacNutt has been with us for about ten days, when a meeting was held in some part of the city every night. Mr. MacNutt has been in Washington twice a year for the last few years and has always served with true spirituality and intelligence. Some of his subjects have been on the Unity of Religion, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar and the Manifestations of God.

"We have also been favored with a week-end visit from Mr. Hooper Harris of New York and we would recommend that Mr. Harris be invited to speak for every nearby Assembly. Mr. Harris gave two remarkable public talks, one at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Ardeshtir Irani on the subject of Spiritual Fundamentalism, and the other in our public hall on the subject of Spiritual Modernism. A third talk was given before the members of the Assembly on the subject of Baha'i Teaching.

"Regular Friday night meetings have been held at the home of Mrs. de Lagnel for many years and a study class for adults is held Sunday mornings at the public hall. The splendid progress of the Baha'i Junior Group has been a notable feature of the work in Washington for many years."

Late last spring, the Baha'i Assembly of Worcester, Massachusetts, was able to make a vital contact with the minister of the largest Universalist Church in Worcester, and it was arranged that Dr. John Herman Randall should give an address on the Significance of the Baha'i Cause in the pulpit of that church on the 25th of October. The enthusiasm and interest manifested on this occasion was so genuine that the minister immediately asked for another address on the Baha'i principles. The date has been arranged for February 28, 1926.

From the kind sympathy of the friends in this congregation, a significant result has been obtained:

the Dean of Clark University in Worcester is seeking an engagement for a Baha'i lecture to be given to his whole student body; the officials of the Women's Club, some of whom are members of the Universalist Church, are also strongly interested in the Baha'i work. These places demand efficient, experienced and well-known speakers. The Worcester friends feel that all the believers should make special efforts at this time to attract leading ministers to the Cause.

In a previous News Letter mention has been made of the splendid meetings held under the auspices of the Fellowship of Faiths. On October 26th at Grace Church, New York City, a public meeting was held in honor of Judaism. Addresses were delivered by representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, Ethical Culture, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Zoroastrianism and New Thought. Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford represented the Baha'i Cause.

The Fellowship of Faiths also arranged two public meetings in Boston, in both of which Baha'i speakers were included. On November 30th at Old South Meeting House the subject of peace and brotherhood was discussed by adherents of the various religions. Mr. W. H. Randall spoke in behalf of the Baha'is. On December 14th tributes to Christianity were delivered in Temple Israel by representatives of the other world faiths and a Baha'i was included in this program.

The printed program published by the Baha'i Assembly of Boston for December is a model both in appearance and arrangement which could well be adopted by the friends in other cities. Among the speakers at the Sunday evening public meetings were Mr. Charles F. Weller, founder of the Fellowship of Faiths, Dr. Alfred W. Martin and Dr. John Herman Randall. The Boston Assembly has recently set apart the evening of Tuesday each week for teaching meetings to be held in different homes throughout the city. Splendid results have already been realized from these meetings, which enable new friends to be invited, many of whom have willingly opened up their homes for similar neighborhood meetings in the future.

Shoghi Effendi wrote a letter to the Boston Baha'i Assembly on October 27th in which he expresses genuine satisfaction with their

plans. "Your main purpose, I feel, should be to conduct your general meetings for the public in such a manner as to attract liberal minded, capable and sincere souls, and to endeavor in your individual private intercourse with those already interested, to enlist gradually their whole-hearted and unreserved support and acceptance of the Baha'i Faith. These should be your primary considerations, as both are necessary and complementary."

The Philadelphia Baha'i Assembly has appointed a special committee to prepare a local history of the Cause. This Committee is collecting copies of the public addresses delivered by Abdu'l Baha in Philadelphia and also programs of important public meetings as held from time to time. It might be well for other Spiritual Assemblies to undertake in the same way to make a clear record of the development of the Cause in their locality since the earliest days.

The good news has been received from Miss Helen Whitney of Lansing, Mich., that a majority of the members of a local Spiritualist Church have now organized themselves as a Baha'i group. Visits from Mrs. Corinne True and Mr. Arthur Agnew greatly assisted Miss Whitney in her work. Mr. Warner has been appointed secretary of the Lansing group.

It was the privilege of the friends in New York to hold once again their meeting in commemoration of the Ascension of Abdu'l Baha in St. Mark's Church. Through the courtesy of Dr. W. N. Guthrie, St. Mark's Church has been available annually for this commemoration service. Several hundred believers attended the meeting on November 28th.

Those present at the 1925 Convention will recall the beautiful report of teaching work in the Southern States rendered by Mrs. Louise Boyle, Regional Chairman. Thanks to Mrs. Boyle's energy and executive capacity, the teaching work is being steadily developed in those states to which Abdu'l Baha attributed such importance in the Tablets of the Divine Plan.

The entire South is being industrially and socially regenerated at present by new developments tending to give to the South many large manufacturing projects which only a few years ago would have been located in the Central States or New England. All the groups and isolated believers in that region are now being linked

up through Mrs. Boyle and the presence of the two teachers, Mr. Louis Gregory and Mr. Howard MacNutt is most opportune. The seeds of spiritual interest so faithfully sown in the South by these and other teachers, during past years, are now producing wonderful results in attracting ardent audiences for the Message in many cities.

The following information has been received concerning the activities of Mr. Gregory. Space is lacking for all save a brief resume: During October, Mr. Gregory spent two days at the State Industrial School for Colored Students, Bordentown, N. J., giving an address before faculty and three hundred students, and making individual contacts. Proceeding southward, Mr. Gregory spent a day with the friends in Riverton, N. J. and Philadelphia, where Mr. MacNutt and Dr. Moody also spoke to the friends. During ten days in Washington, D. C., he devoted much time to meetings of the Congregational Council and the Y. M. C. A. Convention. Many of the delegates present had already heard the Message and were pleased to add to their information and interest. Mr. Gregory found that both these Conventions reflected very clearly the spirit and the letter of the Baha'i principles.

Arrived at Jacksonville, Florida, early in November, Mr. Gregory was greatly assisted by Rev. Dr. John E. Ford, Pastor of the Bethel Baptist Institutional Church, who arranged nine Baha'i meetings among various groups including the faculty and students of Edward Waters' College, Bible Study class of Bethel Church, Choir of Bethel Church, faculty and students of Stanton High School, thirty-two public school teachers, seventy-five officers and agents of the Afro-American Insurance Co., the regular service of the Colored Presbyterian Church, and the young people's meeting of the Simpson Memorial Methodist Church. Dr. Ford first heard of the Message nine years ago.

In St. Augustine, Mr. Gregory found the ground thoroughly prepared by Dr. and Mrs. Guy, who have upheld the Cause in that city against severe opposition and criticism for many years, these unfavorable conditions now happily coming to an end. Three churches and two schools were opened to Mr. Gregory in St. Augustine, and one clergyman has requested a series of twelve Baha'i talks. Further

details about the teaching work in the South will be given in the next News Letter.

Under the supervision of the Central States Teaching Committee, the Assembly of Kenosha, Wisconsin, are conducting a series of public lectures which are greatly encouraging the local friends and attracting interested inquirers. Among the speakers are Mr. Albert Vail, Mrs. Corinne True, Mr. Arthur S. Agnew, Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Moffett, Mrs. Walrath, Mrs. Illeich, Dr. Zia Bagdadi and Mr. Albert R. Windust. The assistance given the Kenosha friends by the Regional Teaching Committee is an admirable example of how local efforts can be reinforced by drawing upon the organized resources of the Cause. It is to be hoped, and confidently expected, that before long it will be possible to establish traveling circuits whereby well-qualified teachers will periodically pay visits to each local Assembly and group.

The Portland Assembly have recently enjoyed a visit from Mr. Robert L. Gulick, of Paradise, California. Mr. Gulick heard the Message about twenty-five years ago and is now in a position to devote all his time to the Cause. His public address in Portland was greatly enjoyed. Mr. Gulick plans to go into various rural districts, deliver a series of addresses and have these printed in the local paper and distributed to all residents in the district, after which he will follow up inquiries until actual results are obtained. When this method can be employed by a number of confirmed believers, the growth of the Cause in this country will be magnificently accelerated.

All Convention delegates and visitors will recall the reading by Mrs. Sylvia Margolis of selections from her book of poems entitled "Letters to Jesus, by a Jewess." This striking expression of the new, universal spirit has now been published, and copies of the volume can be obtained from The Lincoln Press Co., Dayton, Ohio.

In the last few weeks Mr. Albert Vail has been traveling in Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin and as far east as Pittsburgh, speaking many times in schools, churches, and to Baha'i gatherings. The interest in the Glad Tidings seems to increase every month, and ministers and educators express more and more to students and congregations their rejoicing in the universality of the Baha'i teachings and the remarkable lives of Baha'ullah and Ab-

du'l-Baha. Classes and groups and interviews for the fuller study of the teachings are proving of great value in confirming the newly attracted ones.

Other Countries.

In a letter recently received from Jinabi Fadil, a member of the National Spiritual Assembly is informed that Jinabi and his family are leaving Haifa for Persia by way of Bagdad. His address in Persia will be either c/o Mirza Fazel Ullah Nasserah, Sarai Taki, Rasht, Persia, or c/o Mirza Golon Ali Dawfoush, Rue Naserrieh, Teheran, Persia. Letters should be sent registered. The beloved teacher sends loving greetings to all the American friends.

We are informed by the Hamburg, Germany, Baha'i Assembly that their plans for the Esperanto Baha'i Magazine, "La Nova Tago," of which mention was made in the November News Letter, have been greatly amplified since the foundation of the magazine, as the result of encouragement and suggestions sent them by Shoghi Effendi. Concerning La Nova Tago, the Guardian writes: "I hail the inauguration of an international Baha'i organ, so vitally needed at the present stage of our work, and destined to render services that are unique in their character to the component parts of the ever-expanding Baha'i world."

"Though limited in its sphere of influence, and modest in feature, yet it shall, due to the vital position it fulfills, grow from strength to strength, and vindicate its claim as the one medium of international Baha'i intercourse."

We are informed that beginning March, 1926, La Nova Tago will be sent free to each Baha'i center throughout the world, individual believers being able to obtain copies at a very moderate subscription cost. The magazine will be published quarterly and contain reports furnished it by each National Spiritual Assembly.

From Hamburg also have been received three copies of a general news letter published in German and containing significant information concerning the progress of the Cause. The National Spiritual Assembly of Germany are arranging to establish a national Baha'i Archives in Stuttgart to collect all writings on the subject of the Cause. A system of exchanging Baha'i writings with friends in other countries is also being inaugurated. "The Neue Freie

Presse" of Vienna recently published an article concerning the persecutions of the Persian Baha'is by Dr. Auguste Forel, which has proved very influential, being quoted even in the Turkish paper of Stamboul. A general dictionary or encyclopedia to be published shortly in Vienna under the title of "Menschen und Menschenwerke" will contain an article about the Baha'i Movement and its leading figures.

The sad news is also contained in the Hamburg Baha'i news letter that Dr. A. Brauns, while on a visit to his father-in-law, Dr. Forel, was drowned in the River Rhone. Dr. Brauns was a member of the German National Spiritual Assembly from its origin and his broad vision of the Cause and ardent spirit will be forever missed by his Baha'i associates.

Dr. Albert Muhlischlegel of Konigsstrasse, 68, Stuttgart, Germany, has been requested by the German National Spiritual Assembly to maintain correspondence with the English speaking friends. Dr. Muhlischlegel took part in the recent international Esperanto Congress at Geneva, working with Miss Martha Root to represent the Cause.

Mrs. Louise Gregory returned in time to attend the 1925 Convention after extensive travel and Baha'i work in Europe. Mrs. Gregory passed six months in Luxembourg sowing seeds which will appear manifest later on. Mrs. Gregory visited the Baha'i group at Vienna and also assisted in forming a study class at Grez, Austria. The Women's League for Peace and Freedom at Vienna, Grez and Buda Pest gave Mrs. Gregory cordial cooperation and support. The president of the Buda Pest branch of the Women's League had met 'Abdu'l-Baha and heard him speak on his visit to Buda Pest in 1913. A talk given by Mrs. Gregory in Buda Pest was reported in the Hungarian papers. There is splendid opportunity for follow-up work in Buda Pest. En route to take ship at Antwerp, Mrs. Gregory had the privilege of paying short visits among the friends at Stuttgart and Esslingen.

Through Miss Leonora Holsapple we have learned interesting details about the progress of the work in Bahia, Brazil. Dr. Esslemont's book has been translated and is now being printed for circulation in South America. Miss Holsapple and Miss Mickie have

confirmed a small group in Bahia and Miss Holsapple is arranging to travel in other cities to establish active centers. Mr. H. H. Rycroft who has been associated in the Baha'i work at Bahia has recently written a number of beautiful hymns, the publication of which has been approved by the Reviewing Committee. Mr. and Mrs. Rycroft visited England during the spring and summer. On account of certain revolutionary movements in Southern Brazil, public meetings of all kinds have been suspended by the Government, but Miss Holsapple has been able to keep up her teaching work. There is great need for well equipped teachers to make their residence in Bahia and extend the work which has been so courageously and effectively begun. Miss Mickie recently returned to the United States.

The Spiritual Assembly of Teheran has recently appointed a special committee to compile a general news letter and distribute it regularly, in English or Persian, to Baha'i centers throughout the world. The American Assemblies are requested to send their important Baha'i news to Mr. Enad Rouhani c/o M. G. Ali Khan Davatchy, Teheran, Persia. It is advisable to address all communications to Persian centers in plain envelopes as those which contain any reference to the Baha'i Cause are likely to be confiscated by the Post Office.

The first of these general letters from Teheran is dated September, 1925, and contains an admirable digest of activities throughout the East. Among the important committees appointed by the Teheran Spiritual Assembly is one for compiling the history of the Cause in Persia. This committee is engaged in collecting historical data from Assemblies and survivors of the early days, and it is expected that from this material will in the near future appear the authoritative, accurate and complete history of the Movement which is so much desired.

Cases of recent persecution are reported from Teheran as follows: In Mian Doab a number of people rose against the Baha'is, arresting two of the believers by order of a mullah. They then decided that no Baha'i should be admitted into a public bath or barbershop, but Government officials interfered and released the prisoners. The believers of Mian Doab have started a Baha'i school and are now planning to construct a Mash-

riqu'l-Adhkar. A Baha'i school started in a town near Sangsar was closed by a local mob but an order was secured from the Department of Education that the school should be reopened. The local antagonism still exists and the results cannot be foreseen. A Baha'i was recently mortally wounded in a village in Mazandaran. Similar difficulties have been reported from the Baha'is of Yazd, Nain, Shabad and Bender Abbas. Many anti-Baha'i demonstrations have been checked by the Government.

The splendid effects of the visit of Mrs. Florence Schopflocher to cities of Persia where the friends met a western woman for the first time, are reflected in many communications lately received. The American friends are very grateful to the Persian believers for the beautiful hospitality extended to Mrs. Schopflocher during her journey.

The extensive journey of Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher also produced most favorable comment on the part of our Oriental friends. A recent issue of The Dawn contains a most interesting account of a Baha'i address delivered by Mr. Schopflocher for the Baha'i Assembly of Rangoon. This address was devoted to the subject of the life and teachings of Mohammed and deeply moved the Mohammedan inquirers who were present at the meeting.

We have been greatly interested to receive clippings of articles on the Cause published in La Tribune de Geneve on August 15th and in the Egyptian Gazette of April 15th.

A beautiful circular letter has been received from the Spiritual Assembly of Navriz reflecting the sympathy and affection shown by the friends throughout the world towards those who suffered from the flood last year. In addition to restoring the devastated houses the Nayriz Baha'is have started the construction of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkar and a public dam to prevent future floods. This latter is an important service to all the inhabitants of Nayriz and is producing a most favorable impression.

General letters are now being issued by the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma through Mr. Hashmatullah, secretary. The first of these letters quotes important instructions sent by Shoghi Effendi to Spiritual Assemblies throughout the East on June 8th last. The result of the recent elections of the National

Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma are reported in the September issue of *The Dawn*. The American friends who wish to follow the progress of the Cause in the Far East should subscribe to this important Baha'i magazine.

In a letter received from the National Spiritual Assembly of Egypt we are informed that in the small village of Kom El Saayda the people have been aroused against the local Baha'is and an action brought before the Mohammedan court with the result that the marriage of the Baha'is has been annulled on the grounds that the Baha'i Cause is a heresy against the Muslim faith. This case is now before the Mohammaden Court of Appeal and it is hoped that justice will be obtained.

From Mr. Rustom Khosrove of the National Hotel, Poona, India, a letter has come setting forth enthusiastically the many opportunities of service that await Baha'i teachers from America or Europe who visit India prepared to make a tour of the various Baha'i centers. It is greatly to be hoped that this inter-exchange of Baha'i teachers between the various countries will steadily increase, and the American National Spiritual Assembly suggests that all believers who travel outside their own country carry with them a suitable letter of endorsement and introduction signed by their own National Spiritual Assembly or other recognized Baha'i authority.

Grateful acknowledgement is made of letters received from Port Said, Beirut, Baku, Ishkabad, Bagdad, Awashigh Spiritual Assembly (care M. H. Wakil, Bagdad), Moscow, Sultanabad, Iraq, Persia, and Bombay.

From Mr. Badi Bushru'i, English secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of Haifa we are indebted for most interesting news letters dated May 17, June 5th, June 2, July 13th and August 1st from which suitable excerpts will be made in the next News Letter for the information of the American friends. Functioning as they are under the inspiration of the direct example of the Guardian of the Cause, the Haifa Spiritual Assembly is rendering notable services, not the least of which has been to provide the believers of Europe and America with accurate and timely news of activities throughout the East.

IN MEMORIAM.

Mrs. J. Wesley Thompson, elected delegate at the 1925 National Convention, from the Honolulu Assembly, passed away while making the journey to Green Acre. The extensive memorial notice appearing in the Honolulu Advertiser of June 2nd testifies to the high esteem and cordial respect felt for Mrs. Thompson throughout a wide circle of acquaintances. It is significant of her universal spirit that this notice was written by a Japanese student. "The most tangible expression of Mrs. Thompson's pioneering spirit was the founding of the Kona Forum. She honed devoutly that the organization would serve as a potent agency in promoting direct social and intellectual intercourse among the many and mingled races represented in Kona. . . . The Persian cult of Baha'ism, with its varied humanitarian tenets, also strongly appealed to Mrs. Thompson. She was its sole missionary in Kona, conducting a series of evening meetings in her library, when the various aspects of the Baha'i religion were explained to and discussed with her friendly neighbors."

From Annie L. Libby of Los Angeles has been received the following notice of the passing of Dr. Maxwell Ryder. "On July 7th Dr. Maxwell Ryder, husband of Zuriel Libby Ryder, a faithful follower of Baha'u'llah and a firm believer in the Center of the Covenant, ascended to his true home in the Kingdom of Abha. He lived rather than voiced his religion. No one who sought his help for either spiritual or material relief left him empty-handed." The following quotation is from a Tablet revealed by Abdu'l Baha for Dr. Ryder on April 9, 1921. "Your letter has been received. Its contents was the cause of joy because it is indicative of the loftiness of your aspiration, the nobility of your character and the sincerity of your intentions."

Mrs. Marion N. Potter has contributed the following memorial for the beloved Baha'i, Dr. Pauline Barton-Peeke. "As we think of our beloved Dr. Pauline Barton-Peeke, we know that the ideal spiritual connection has become established, that while the human voice is silent, the physical form gone from our human sight, that we are becoming increasingly conscious of a spiritual love welling up within us and attuning our hearts to

her radiant reality. . . . We realize more and more her untiring devotion and activity, and her deep love for Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Her connection with the Cause began many years ago. She had been a searcher after truth for years, so that when she heard of the Revelation she became intensely interested and accepted the Baha'i Message. From that time until her passing she gave of her abundant and virile energy and forcefulness to the spreading and upbuilding of the Cause in Cleveland.

"Very shortly after she had accepted the teachings the meetings were centered in her home and it became a real hospice for the friends here and for traveling Baha'is and teachers from all parts of the country. . . . When Abdu'l Baha came to this country in 1912 Dr. Barton-Peeke hastened to arrange for his coming to Cleveland that it might be blessed by His Presence and that the friends might have the bounty of meeting Him face to face."

On Sunday morning, November 1st, Mrs. Elizabeth Ashton, wife of John R. Ashton, and mother of Miss Alice Ashton, passed into the life eternal and radiant after but a few days illness. This sad event coming so suddenly was a great shock to the family and friends.

The Ashton family became believers and devoted adherents of the Baha'i Faith in 1913. They seemed ready and waiting for the Water of Life and responded to the call of the Kingdom with enthusiasm and an unusual understanding of the spiritual life of man.

Their home in Washington, D. C., became the gathering place of the friends of God, and many remarkably spiritual meetings have been held there when the standards of the New Day were raised aloft, and always especially fine programs were arranged for the visiting teachers. Also for four or five summers Mrs. Ashton served the friends at Green Acre and many will remember her, and her loving ministrations.

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LETTER FROM SHOGHI EFFENDI

To the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and Canada.

My well-beloved friends:

The numerous communications which your distinguished Secretary has lately addressed on your behalf to the Greatest Holy Leaf and myself, have been eagerly perused and their contents carefully noted. The news they imparted and the spirit they revealed have caused us both genuine satisfaction, and have served to intensify the feelings of joyous confidence, of pride and gratitude with which we have greeted the inauguration of your term of service.

The notable advance achieved by this year's memorable Convention is, I am certain, attributable in no small measure to the energy, the thoroughness, the insight and the loving kindness that have characterized in an unprecedented degree the activities of the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly. I am confident that the work of America's newly elected representatives, so splendidly and auspiciously begun, will further consolidate the labors of the past, will resolve to a great extent the problems and perplexities of the present, and open up fresh fields of future achievements and service.

I rejoice to learn that ways and means have been found to enable the National Secretary, who discharges in such an exemplary manner the manifold and exacting duties of a highly responsible position, to devote all his time to the pursuit of so meritorious a task. I am fully conscious of the privations and sacrifice which the choice of this arduous work must involve for him, as well as for his devoted and selfless companion; I cannot but admire and extoll their heroic efforts; and wish to assure them both of my continued prayers for the speedy fruition of their earnest endeavors.

Regarding the very delicate and complex question of ascertaining the qualifications of a true believer, I cannot in this connection emphasize too strongly the supreme necessity for the exercise of the utmost discretion, caution and tact, whether it be in deciding for ourselves as to who may be regarded a true believer or in disclosing to the outside world such considerations as may serve as a basis for such a decision. I would only venture to state very briefly and as

adequately as present circumstances permit the principal factors that must be taken into consideration before deciding whether a person may be regarded a true believer or not. Full recognition of the station of the Forerunner, the Author, and the True Exemplar of the Baha'i Cause, as set forth in Abdu'l Baha's Testament; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of our Beloved's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of the present day Baha'i administration throughout the world—these, I conceive, to be the fundamental and primary considerations that must be fairly, discreetly and thoughtfully ascertained before reaching such a vital decision. Any attempt at further analysis and elucidation will, I fear, land us in barren discussions and even grave controversies that would prove not only futile but even detrimental to the best interests of a growing Cause. I would therefore strongly urge those who are called upon to make such a decision to approach this highly involved and ever-recurring problem with the spirit of humble prayer, and earnest consultation, and to refrain from drawing rigidly the line of demarcation except on such occasions when the interests of the Cause absolutely demand it.

In connection with the annual holding of the Baha'i Convention and Congress, I feel that although such a representative body need not be convened necessarily every year, yet it is highly desirable, in view of the unique functions it fulfills in promoting harmony and good-will, in removing misunderstandings and in enhancing the prestige of the Cause, that the National Spiritual Assembly should exert itself to gather together annually the elected representatives of the American believers. It would in some ways be obviously convenient and eminently desirable though not absolutely essential, if the National Spiritual Assembly could arrange that the holding of such a Congress should synchronize with the time at which the national elections are renewed, and that both events should take place, if not on the first of Ridvan, at least during the twelve joyous days of what may be justly regarded as the foremost Baha'i Festival. Apart from the local elections, which universally are to be renewed on the 21st day of

April, it is entirely left to the discretion of the National Spiritual Assembly to decide, after having given due consideration to the above mentioned observations, on whatever time and place the Baha'i Convention as well as the annual elections are to be held. Were the National Spiritual Assembly to decide, after mature deliberation to omit the holding of the Baha'i Convention and Congress in a given year, then they could, only in such a case, devise ways and means to ensure that the annual election of the National Spiritual Assembly should be held by mail, provided it can be conducted with sufficient thoroughness, efficiency and dispatch. It would also appear to me unobjectionable to enable and even to require in the last resort such delegates as cannot possibly undertake the journey to the seat of the Baha'i Convention to send their votes, for the election of the National Spiritual Assembly only, by mail to the National Secretary, as in my view the advantages of such a procedure outweigh the considerations referred to in your letter. It should, however, be made clear to every elected delegate—who should be continually reminded—that it is a sacred responsibility and admittedly preferable to attend if possible in person the sessions of the Convention, to take an active part in all its proceedings, and to acquaint his fellow-workers on his return with the accomplishments, the decisions and the aspirations of the assembled representatives of the American believers.

I am eagerly looking forward to your sending me in manuscript form the projected Baha'i Year Book, that I may be enabled to contribute my share in rendering it as comprehensive, as attractive, and as authoritative as possible. I strongly advise you to combine in a judicious manner the two methods outlined in this connection in your letter of September 2, 1925. A short, concise and forceful account of the primary objects, as well as of the principles underlying the world-wide administration of the Cause, together with a brief description of various features of the present day administration of its activities, supplemented with a not-too-detailed survey of the actual accomplishments and plans evolved in the current year, would serve to acquaint the outsider with the purpose and the achievements of the Cause, and provide sufficient material that would be edifying and helpful to the active be-

lievers whether in the East or in the West.

Touching the nature of the activities of our untiring and devoted Baha'i sister, Mrs. Victoria Bedikian, I shall postpone any definite decision until my forthcoming meeting with her in the holy land which I trust will banish the present confusion and remove the outstanding misunderstandings in this connection.

The Greatest Holy Leaf desires me to convey in her name to the esteemed members of the Green Acre Fellowship the expression of her cordial thanks and sincere appreciation in having been made a life member of the said Fellowship. She assures them of her prayers for the success of this noble institution as well as for the spiritual advancement of its individual members.

Recent developments in the Holy Land have led various organizations in the Jewish world to contemplate seriously the early possibility of transferring to Palestine's sacred soil the mortal remains of certain prominent founders and leaders of Jewish thought, and Mount Carmel, which next to Akka's Most Holy Shrine is the most cherished object of Baha'i veneration, has been cited on various occasions as a permanent and most befitting burial ground for their illustrious dead. Surely the Baha'is of the world, ever on the alert and with an eye to the future, will, no matter how pressed by financial obligations, arise while

there is yet time to contribute each his share in securing for posterity such land as lies in close proximity to the Holy Shrine—an area the acquisition of which in time will prove indispensable if the sublime vision of Abdu'l Baha is to be realized. I appeal to you, and through you to every earnest and conscientious believer, to safeguard in particular the land extending southward from these Shrines which now, alas! is gravely exposed to the assaults of covetous and speculating interests. I am loth to press further claims on friends who have displayed so magnificent a spirit of self-sacrifice on several occasions in the past, but I feel the urge of a sacred and impelling responsibility to call your attention to what I conceive to be one of the world-wide issues of the greatest moment requiring a prompt, generous and collective response. I may add that whatever land is purchased will be registered in the name of the contributor, and I would therefore request every contributing believer to forward together with his donation such power of attorney as will legally empower me to transact in his name and on his behalf the purchase of the plot he desires to acquire. It would be desirable to forward small contributions to the National Spiritual Assembly, who will then decide upon the manner in which the transaction should be conducted.

The compilation of newspaper clippings with regard to recent

persecutions in Persia which has been sent by our dear brother, Mr. H. Holley to the Greatest Holy Leaf has been forwarded to the National Spiritual Assembly of Persia, that they may witness for themselves and share with the rank and file of the Persian believers the results of the extensive and vigorous campaign so promptly undertaken on their behalf by their sympathizing brethren in the West. It grieves me to inform you that this sad tale of barbarism and unrestrained aggression on the property, the lives and the honor of the heroic sufferers in that land is still continuing to reach our ears, and the campaign of obstruction, of intimidation and plunder is, but for short periods of comparative lull, being systematically pursued with unabated vigor. I am certain that the members of the National Spiritual Assembly, fully alive to the uncertainty, the confusion and the seriousness of the present situation, will seize the first opportunity to redress as much as it lies in their power the interminable grievances that are being inflicted upon harassed yet law-abiding citizens.

Wishing you success from all my heart, and assuring you of my continued prayers for the steady expansion and consolidation of your work,

I am, your brother and fellow-worker,

(Signed) SHOGHI.

Haifa, Palestine.

October 24th, 1923.