



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
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"Now strive ye that the Collective Center of the sacred religions, for the inculcation of which all the Prophets were manifested and which is no other than the spirit of the divine teachings, be spread in all parts of America, so that each one of you may shine forth from the horizon of Reality like unto the morning star, divine illumination may overcome the darkness of nature, and the world of humanity may become enlightened."—Abdu'l-Baha.

Dear Baha'i friends:

The important happenings of the recent Convention are faithfully mirrored in the record made by Mr. Louis Gregory at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly. His admirably detailed and accurate description is the feature of this issue of the News Letter, and the many available items of Baha'i activity in various Assemblies will be deferred to a later date in order that all the believers may acquaint themselves with the transactions of their delegates in San Francisco.

We regret the delay in placing his report in the hands of the friends, but the weeks intervening since the Convention have, we trust, been profitably spent in the effort made by several members of the National Assembly to visit local Assemblies and groups throughout the Western States. The geographical problem confronting the American Baha'is has almost invariably called for larger sacrifice from the believers on the Pacific coast than from those in other regions, which fact made it a matter of essential service to the general unity of the Cause for the National Spiritual Assembly to devote this time to direct association with the western friends.

Referring briefly to the Convention itself. It would be impossible to over-emphasize the significance of the fact that a true unity was established among the elected del-

egates, even though more than half the number were physically absent from the convention floor. Undoubtedly this condition reflected the devoted spirit of those delegates who, in the various cities, spent the days in meditation and prayer, as well as the attitude of joyous service among those actually present. In a larger sense, however, the power manifest in this Convention would seem to betoken a new era in the Cause as a whole—a dawning of that conscious maturity within the worldwide Baha'i body when the elements and physical functions are in harmony, and the higher faculties begin to reveal themselves under the inspiration of the spirit. More than ever before, the delegates this year constituted one unified body inspired by one will and concentrating upon one supreme purpose.

Such a condition of positive unity means the beginning of effective action—action capable of conveying the Baha'i spirit into concrete effect. It also means a new degree of inner freedom and capacity for service on the part of each loyal believer striving to contribute to the general unity of the Cause. The essential condition is that the chief concern need no longer be lest something injure the Cause from within—our only concern today, individually and collectively, should be lest we fail to take full advantage of the glorious opportunities surrounding the Baha'i Faith on every hand.

The transition has been from negative loyalty to positive devotion; from the irresolution and gloom of sickness to the exhilaration and vigor of health. A certain period may still be required for the new spirit to penetrate to every atom of the body, but we may be assured that this spirit is both rapid in action and irresistible in effect. Have we not at last arisen to that station of true obedience to

the Guardian when we can see inwardly and outwardly the meaning of his words: "Nothing can stay the onward march of the Cause!"

Well is it for us all that the power of unified action has been born at a moment when our help is so sorely needed by our Persian brothers and sisters. The story of the recent martyrdoms related in the letter from Shoghi Effendi printed in this News Letter reveals in fact the first supreme endeavor which must be made by the American believers this year. The Baha'i Cause is one—their suffering is felt by their Western friends as though we shared the same tragic fate; and our condition of freedom and happiness has been given us in order to make it possible to strive the more effectively for their relief. As soon as possible the National Spiritual Assembly will request each local Assembly and group to join in a concerted movement for publicity, and we ask the patience of the ardent friends until a suitable comprehensive plan can be formed.

In the words of the Guardian: "Grave and manifold as are the problems confronting the struggling Faith of Baha'u'llah, none appear more significant, nor seem more compelling in their urgency, than the incredible sufferings borne so heroically by our down-trodden brethren of the East." While awaiting the call for mutual action, let us send forth, with all our might, the helpfulness of poignant daily prayer.

The attention of every believer in the United States and Canada is called to one resolution of great importance unanimously passed by the delegates this year: that it shall be considered an explicitly un-Baha'i action for any individual to write a letter of criticism, complaint or negative character to the Guardian on any subject or under any circumstances whatsoever. This resolution, the need for

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
of the Baha'is of the United States
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Allen McDaniel . . . Chairman
Horace Holley . . . Secretary
Florence Morton . . . Treasurer

Roy C. Wilhelm .
Amelia Collins
Ali Kuli Khan
Carl Scheffler
Mountfort Mills
Siegfried Schopfhofer

Office of the Secretary
Green Acre, South Elliot
Maine, U. S. A.

Office of the Treasurer
5 Wheeler Avenue
Worcester, Mass.

which was shameful beyond words, arose from information placed before the Convention in a letter written by Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler just returned from a visit of many weeks in Haifa. By this letter the delegates became informed of the lamentable burden laid upon Shoghi Effendi, both physically and spiritually, through correspondence addressed to him by individuals more conscious of their own unhappiness and grief than of the spirit of the principles laid down for the solution of every Baha'i problem. The individual believer must first have recourse to his or her local Spiritual Assembly; only if this fails should the matter be brought to the attention of the National Spiritual Assembly; and if there is still no solution then at last should the Guardian be approached. What we all have to realize is that this very principle of spiritual consultation is actually the vital Baha'i contribution to human progress on the mental and material plane; so much so that to avoid this consultation reveals a graver problem than anything which the individual himself might be perplexed with. Consultation through the medium of a Spiritual Assembly is of the essence of the mystery of unity in this age.

The first evidence that the Cause in America has become penetrated with a new spirit has been the opening of the doors of public teaching. Scarcely had the Convention closed when the call for teachers arose along the entire Pacific coast, and the numerous meetings addressed by Mr. Albert Vail and Mr. Louis Gregory are being blessed with results recalling the first ardent days of the Faith. Our Baha'i teachers arise so signally to every opportunity offered them that the National Spiritual Assem-

bly will this year concentrate largely upon the work of establishing important public meetings in different cities at frequent intervals. But the confirmations have by no means been confined to one locality. Paralleling these brilliant achievements in the West we have the remarkable example of Orceila Rexford in New York and Brooklyn, whose series of public lectures during April and May led to Baha'i study classes conducted by Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler and containing hundreds of serious inquirers.

No formal vote of thanks could possibly express the warm feeling of gratitude felt by every delegate and guest toward the San Francisco believers for the ideal arrangements made by them to insure suitable setting and conditions for the Convention and Congress. Their service is permanently impressed upon all hearts, in cherished memories of a convention notable for beauty and charm. We trust that the efforts put forth so sacrificially by the Baha'is of San Francisco will have their reward in a hastening of that day which shall fulfill the Master's prophecies, published in the Divine Plan, concerning the Cause in California.

And now, as we turn to our immediate Baha'i tasks, let us bear in mind these words of the Guardian, quoted from his letter to the National Spiritual Assembly dated May 11, 1926: "In connection with the Plan of Unified Action, enclosed in your letter of January 19th, I feel that the friends must be constantly reminded of the vital necessity for a continuous and whole-hearted support of the scheme, the success or failure of which will to a marked extent affect the course of the progress of the Cause not only in Northern America but throughout the Baha'i world. Let the friends recall and ever bear in mind the repeated exhortations and glowing promises of our beloved Master with reference to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, the crowning institution in every Baha'i community. Let them arise with determination and confidence to lend a helping hand to the Plan which you have so admirably devised for its speedy and practical realization. There is a splendid opportunity; let their response to your call be prompt, whole-hearted and decisive."

In this connection the method of serving the Plan lately adopted by the Boston Assembly might well be followed by every other Assembly and group. The Boston Spiritual Assembly have chosen the evening

of the ninth day of each month as the date of a general meeting of the local friends devoted entirely to discussion of the Plan. At that time contributions are received by the local treasurer, a report of all previous contributions received for this purpose is made, doubtful matters and details not clearly understood are cleared away, and the unity of the Assembly with the Baha'i world through conscious co-operation with the goal set by the National Spiritual Assembly, thoroughly emphasized. We feel sure that local Baha'i matters will prosper to the degree that each Assembly endeavors to live up to the standards of that Plan. Nay, more—in the cablegram received from the Guardian April 20th, and read to the delegates at the Convention, we find these words: "May this calamitous event, (i. e., the martyrdom of twelve Persian Baha'is) though casting shadow on Ridvan Festival, reinforce inwardly America's unwavering determination and faith, and ensure as visible evidence the speedy success of the National Assembly's newly published Plan." May we not in this precious blood of the divine friends wash our hands clean of any non-cooperation, aloofness and exclusiveness which has served to prevent constructive action in times past?

Yours faithfully, in love of 'Abdu'l-Baha,

**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL
ASSEMBLY.**

By: Horace Holley,
Secretary.

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE BAHAI'S OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

From Maine to California, is a stock phrase indicating the vast stretch of territory between two oceans comprising the American Commonwealth. It is also applicable to the conventions of the Baha'is of the western world, who in their campaign of peace would bring blessings to all regions. San Francisco, for the second time in history, was selected as the place to welcome the friends of God. Local scenes were inspiring. A spirit of romance broods over the Bay cities, the Golden Gate and the Land of Sunset. The outer charm of scenery had its correspondence in the beautiful spirit of those who dignified and glorified service. The local friends with a love, thoroughness and devotion born of the Spirit, spared no pains to make the visitors ideally happy. Although the vastness of the distance from the center of population made the

journey impossible to many, yet in the aggregate attendance there was gain rather than loss. Although but one-third of the accredited delegates appeared, the numbers were swelled by visiting friends who came, a few from the distant East, but mainly from western centers. Amidst the joy of the new, old faces were missed and not forgotten.

The Feast of El Ridvan was a shining and beautiful scene, with fully three hundred seated. The evening especially given to public teaching saw a fine, large and responsive audience which completely filled the ball room of one of the largest hosteleries. Every session of the convention itself was valuable for teaching. Gems of reality issued from the mouths of speakers. One may well wish that conditions were such that the entire proceedings might have been broadcasted, so that the world might know how Baha'is assembled apply the divine law of "consultation and kindness." The cosmopolitan nature of the city with its divers races, nationalities and creeds, from many of whom attendance was drawn, made the effect far-reaching. The soil was well prepared and interest previously awakened by the World's Unity Conference, directed by the local friends a short time ago. It appears therefore that this convention, through the devotion and harmony of the friends, has done much to promote the Word of God locally, internationally, and throughout the world.

The Opening

The Convention, following prayers, was organized during the afternoon of April 29 by the election of Roy C. Wilhelm as president and Horace Holley secretary. The genial humor and wit of the president, the distribution of a printed agenda prepared by the secretary, kept the convention in motion. There were no dull moments from beginning to end. The roll call showed ninety-three delegates, of whom thirty-two were present. The absent delegates were kept in close touch by wire and the innovation of voting from a distance in the selection of a new national body proved no obstacle. Only three ballots were necessary, six of the nine members being elected on the first and the other three on the third. The following will serve as members of the new National Spiritual Assembly for the ensuing year: Horace Holley, Mrs. Florence R. Morton, Roy C. Wilhelm, Mrs. Amelia Collins, Siegfried Schopflocher, Allen McDaniel, Mirza Ali Kuli Khan, Carl

Scheffler, and Mountfort Mills. It is not the first time that a national committee has been re-elected, as a whole; but it is the first time that balloting for individuals has so resulted. That two-thirds of those voting were widely scattered makes the result all the more remarkable. This is a compliment to rare souls whose united service has brought forth so much that is constructive in action and healing to the great body of the Cause.

At the opening, the wires brought a shower of beautiful and inspiring messages from East and West. Foremost were those messages of light and guidance from the beloved Guardian of the Cause. Another of special interest came from the great teacher, Jinab-i-Fadil, at Resht, Persia. Washington, D. C., Green Acre, Miami, Philadelphia and other centers widely scattered combined notes of affectionate greeting. Another communication referred to the very valuable services of Mountfort Mills, who at the request of the Guardian is detained abroad, looking after the important matter of the Baghdad settlements. A resolution of the convention directed to the government of Irak, and of Great Britain, which holds the mandate over that region, in courteous and dignified tones urged the need of justice to the Baha'i Cause. The president remarked that no other movement, inclusive of so many racial, social and religious elements, could have acted so speedily as in this case, when fully three hundred cables of protest were recently forwarded from different quarters of the world. A committee composed of Mrs. French, Messrs. Hoilev and Latimer acted for the convention in sending a cable. The convention also made solemn protest to the Persian government against the twelve martyrdoms of our Oriental brothers, whose sacred blood is still shed by the Moloch of intolerance and fanaticism. The passing of our noble brother, Dr. J. E. Esslemont, whose many talents and devoted services made him practically a hand of the Cause, also drew forth warm and feeling tributes. He departed this life at Haifa, October 24, 1925.

Horace Holley, national secretary, read the report of the N. S. A., covering the activities of the representatives of the American-Canadian friends for the past year. This embraced the lucid and inspiring messages received from Shoghi Effendi; the hearty and generous response of the friends for the protection of the sacred shrines on Mt. Carmel by the purchase of adjacent lands; the plan evolved for the speedy erection of

the Mashriqu'il Adhkar; the merger of Green Acre and the passing of its plant and activities under the direction and control of the N. S. A., when the legal details are completed; a tribute to Dr. Esslemont; emphasis upon the need of care in dealing with Orientals, as many of the self-seeking variety are likely to be attracted with the expansion of the Cause, at the same time not losing sight of the divine purpose in the true unity of East and West; approval by the Guardian of the new budget plan; the resumption of building operations upon the raising of \$400,000; a digest of the minutes of ten meetings of the N. S. A.; account of Green Acre activities; the teaching convention in Chicago as of Nov. 15 and the feast in the Temple foundation; the removal of the Baha'i Magazine to Washington, D. C.; a tribute to the retiring business manager, Miss Herlitz; the very efficient services rendered by the new manager, Allen McDaniel; the correlation of the teaching work of the five regions under the executive direction of Mrs. El Fleda Spaulding; the service of the Baha'i News Letter; the increase in volume of Assembly letters; the activities of the national teachers and the stimulus to the teaching work throughout the five regions; preparations for the convention of 1926, which according to the divine plan should function as a deliberative body, and as link with the body of believers; action in the matter of the Baghdad settlements; the appearance in future of a Baha'i world wide directory, to be published by the Guardian of the Cause; the establishment of the secretariat of the Cause at Green Acre; the enrollment of three new assemblies during the year; the appearance of new Baha'i publications; steps looking toward national incorporation; activities of American teachers in foreign lands; completion of material for a Baha'i year-book, which has been sent for review to the Guardian of the Cause; an exhortation to end all useless discussion and to arise with renewed energy in service; steps looking toward regular schedules for travelling teachers, and the unified functions of Temple and teaching. The report closed with an eloquent plea for the lifting of useless burdens imposed upon the Guardian of the Cause by more thoughtfulness on the part of the friends.

On motion of Mr. Clark, thanks for this report was unanimously voted.

Mrs. True read the report of the National Teaching committee, signed by Mrs. El Fleda Spaulding, secretary. It reviewed the effort to put into execution the plan

adopted by the N. S. A., beginning with letters to regional chairmen asking earnest cooperation, suggestions, and seeking divine confirmation. Prompt and enthusiastic replies came from all but a few assemblies. The responses from the South, under the direction of Mrs. Boyle, were especially hearty and prompt. The report also told of world unity conferences in San Francisco, Boston, and Worcester; that many cities have taken up the study of Esperanto, and recommended that local teaching work should embrace the spread of the cause and building of the Temple. The work of the committee was executive only and was not intended to include the selection of teachers. Perhaps the word administration was better adapted to the present, as many of the old friends seemed to fear the word organization. The report filed in general review the teaching activities of the five regions.

Mrs. Boyle's report for the Southern states was read by LeRoy Ioas. It conveyed loving greetings from the Southern regional committee. Recent industrial development has attracted to the South people from all parts of the country. There is also now a new energy in the teaching work which brings vital contacts with new souls. Special mention was made of the growth of the Cause in Florida, where during the past winter Mesdames Corrodi and Boyle, the MacNitts, Dr. Locke, Mr. Gregory, Mrs. Kretz, the Atwaters, the Guys, Miss Sunshine and others have worked faithfully and where many bright souls are attracted to the Cause. The linking up of the Cause with inter-racial groups and encouragement to the isolated believers of the South were recommended.

El Ridvan Feast

The Feast of El Ridvan was a brilliant and inspiring scene, marked by infinite happiness. LeRoy Ioas, presiding, voiced greetings. Inspiring indeed, said he, is this sight; here in far-off San Francisco, only sixty years after the declaration of Baha'u'llah, this gathering, representative of all races and nations, has assembled. The chairman from time to time read selections from the Creative Word. With entrancing music, a delicious repast, sparkling wit, bright humor, eloquent addresses conveying the message in various phases and withal a spirit of love and true joyfulness, the Feast of the Declaration of His Holiness, Baha'u'llah, proceeded.

Mrs. Cooper, speaking for the local friends said: Forgive us if we are a little hilarious. Such occa-

sions intoxicate us with the wine of the love of God. At the time when Baha'u'llah was summoned to Constantinople, with all that such a summons implied of personal danger and humiliation, the first Ridvan Feast occurred. Despite dark conditions and grievous afflictions, it was an occasion of supreme joy, for the declaration was of Baha'u'llah, the expected One. It was like the voice of one who appeared long ago, saying: "I have overcome the world!" The announcement of Baha'u'llah breathed joy and fragrance all over the world. It was significant of a closer unity among mankind with happiness as its key-note. It was, as Abdu'l Baha' said, "The new cycle of human power which makes luminous all the horizons of the world." We welcome the friends to enjoy the hospitality of this feast of commemoration.

Mrs. May Maxwell: I respond, in behalf of the visiting friends, to the beautiful welcome of Mrs. Cooper. Our long, wearisome journey is at an end as we enter the beautiful garden of California. It is truly a symbol of the garden of the hearts, the new age and the new springtime of happiness and peace dawning upon the whole earth. The spirit of Abdu'l Baha is in this gathering tonight. Mrs. Maxwell then eulogized one whom she called a flower of humanity, Kurrat ul Aine, describing her penetrating vision, glorious life and triumphant martyrdom in the Path of God. It is through the fire of the love of God as revealed in such wondrous sacrifices that a new humanity is born.

Horace Holley: The spiritual quality of the Baha'i Movement is a new power of association among human beings. In most movements separation is made necessary. It is implied by the nature of human desires. But here there is a new power of association, stimulated by divine ideals. It enables us to associate with temperaments and dispositions not of our own selection. This is a proof of our willingness to associate with all mankind. It would be manifest hypocrisy to claim willingness to associate with those far away, and yet be unwilling to associate with those near at hand. These small groups contain all the elements of mankind. They put into effect universal human relationships. Under the old order of things the power of the human soul was not realized. The old order failed, because it caused separation and strife. In the new day flowers forth the inner being of man. It gives a new meaning to life, awakening in every hu-

man soul possibilities of life and power that formerly belonged only to men of genius. Universal comradeship reveals heaven not as a place, but as a state of being in which man can dwell here and now.

Albert Vail: It is a great joy to be at the Golden Gate and to remember the pioneers of long ago. One of these great souls was the late Mrs. Helen Goodall, who was ever willing to open the door to new truth and new ideals. We should not be mere imitators, but should keep our minds ever open, joyfully accepting new Truth. It is interesting to know that the Ridvan season began just about the time of the freedom of slaves in America. Baha'u'llah brings freedom to the whole world, freedom from self, pride, retaliation. Let us accept this bounty, becoming united in truth, arbitration, love of justice. The whole world loves those who sacrifice for humanity. 'Abdu'l Baha ever longed for martyrdom. When he mentioned it his eyes shone, his voice rang and the room was full of dynamic energy. This is the power that moves the world. The great teacher is like a radiant sun. Inspired by him thousands long to give their lives in service in the Path of God. This is the way out of self. It is the power to unite the world.

Mrs. Stuart W. French: We speak of great principles; but what does all this mean to me? What part can the individual have in it? Many people think religion something afar off. If we read the Hidden Words, they touch the daysprings of spiritual life. They make us more kindly and charitable. "The most glorious journey is to relieve a sorrow-laden heart." They point the way of duty and restore lost treasures, all teachings of the prophets of the past.

Louis Gregory spoke on Baha'i courage, relating several stories to illustrate various aspects of courage. He referred to the battle of Tabarassi, to the marvellous fortitude of the Great Founders of the Cause, of the martyrs whom they inspired, and of a faith that made innumerable brave followers, including not only strong men but delicate and refined women and even tender children. He closed with a passage of supreme optimism from the exhortations of the Bab: "In the name of God the Victor of the Most victorious proclaim: God will assist all those who arise to serve Him."

Mrs. Corinne True: Baha'is are engaged in the erection, in the heart of the continent, of a Tem-

ple whose foundation is the oneness of God and the oneness of humanity. The great Teachers, who have revealed and established the great religions of the world, have been the chosen mouthpieces of God. In this great Temple the truth of God will be expressed both in its inner and outer aspects. The nine sides, nine walks and nine gardens convey perfection and universality. The architecture will symbolize the same ideal. Here all men will meet in love and kindness. Here all the precious and priceless teachings of God will be given and renewed.

Toraō Kawasaki, the Japanese consul, was the next speaker: It is a unique privilege for me to say a few words. In this gathering I find inspiration. Yes, I can say that I reach the point of sublimation. The fifteenth century was the period of the renaissance, the eighteenth of revolution, the nineteenth of economic and social adjustment. What follows? In this century we expect to find a world consciousness and a new realization of the world's spiritual awakening. In this great field of service the Baha'is are pioneers. You have found the oneness of existence and one reality. In former days reforms were local; now they are universal. The Manifestation is to enlighten the world and I hope his influence will be felt throughout America.

Shinji Yamamoto, a Japanese youth, under the tutelage of Mrs. Frankland, charmed all by reciting a beautiful Tablet of 'Abdu'l Baha beginning: "I am a Baha'i. I have divine love, not selfish love, etc."

Mrs. Elizabeth Greenleaf: In listening to this Japanese boy I am almost overcome. He brings to mind the beautiful tribute of Shoghi Effendi to another Japanese, Mr. Fugita, for his faithful services year after year. All those dear friends are so anxious to render service and to banish sorrow. Shoghi Effendi is so much like 'Abdu'l Baha'; it is as if the latter manifested through him. Tonight Haifa and San Francisco are in close touch. It is as if Shoghi Effendi were here. In him the ocean of spirituality is reached. He is the arch-type of evolving humanity. The spirit of all the great ones gone before pours through this channel. He is clear-headed and clear-hearted, executive and efficient. He has the latent power of a conqueror, but radiates love always. His understanding is complete; so is his humility. He made me the bearer of his love to this convention. The harmony that is

here will rejoice his heart. I greet you in the name of our beautiful young Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

The beautiful souvenir of the Ridvan Feast was Mrs. Shahnaz Waite's lovely poem, written especially for the occasion and presented to each guest on a card hand painted by Mrs. Addie R. Cole.

The Convention, Friday.

Consultation, in which the chairman and secretary, Messrs. Bosch and Hatch, Mesdames Greenleaf, Maxwell, Morton and True took part, placed clearly before the delegates the rules of balloting and the qualifications expected on the part of those who should serve on the new National Spiritual Assembly. Shoghi Effendi was quoted by nearly all the speakers, who knew his views either through correspondence or personal touch. The election proceeded without nominating speeches. A message of love was cabled Shoghi Effendi.

Mrs. Florence R. Morton, treasurer, read her report, which is always audited by a public auditor. It will be printed and appear in full. A synopsis of her oral explanations are here given: For the first in a long time, there are no outstanding notes. In two months all outstanding debts to Mr. Bourgeois will be settled. There is now more teaching service than ever before. The splendid rally to relieve the situation on Mt. Carmel came in for high praise. The Baha'i Magazine has been placed upon a sound financial basis by Mr. McDaniel. A budget, now used by practically all governments and corporations, was strongly recommended, as heretofore, without this, it has been almost impossible for the N. S. A. to plan work ahead. Shoghi Effendi's endorsement of the new budget plan was quoted. Already the friends have nobly responded to this suggestion. One has made a contribution of \$95.00 per month and some have already sent in their contributions for the entire three year period. Responses are loving and generous. These are but the first fruits; we are only at the beginning. What joy will it bring to all when the fund is complete! The unity of 1500 Baha'is will be a magnet to attract eager souls! Shoghi Effendi says:

"We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving our all for the good of our fellows, undisturbed by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the source of all

wealth and all good is the true secret of right living."

On motion of Mr. Clark, a unanimous vote of thanks was returned to the treasurer and her helpers.

Hearts were burdened with sorrow and sympathy by a letter from Mrs. Keith Ransom-Kehler, with news of a threatened nervous break-down on the part of the Guardian, and who is again forced to leave Haifa. Much of his hardship was due to an avalanche of personal correspondence, consuming 80 per cent of his time, and leaving no chance for exercise or recreation. Some letters entered the devious paths of censure of the spiritual assemblies and dissatisfaction with the new plans. The greatest lesson to be learned in America, said Mrs. Kehler, is full and hearty support of the assemblies, beginning with the N. S. A. If there is inharmony there is no need to teach and there is nothing to teach.

Led by Mrs. Maxwell, the convention united in prayer for Shoghi Effendi. Mr. Clark made a powerful appeal for harmony, explaining the working of Oriental assemblies, which delegates might convey to their respective centers.

Mr. Vail told of the Green Acre Summer School, emphasizing two things: The study of comparative religions and methods of teaching adapted to various audiences, such as Jews, Theosophists, Unitarians, Liberals, Fundamentalists, New Thought, etc.

Mrs. Ida A. Finch, in recognition of her services East and West was presented with a box of beautiful flowers. She responded in modest words of appreciation.

Mrs. True reported for the Teaching Committee of the Central states: She told of Shoghi Effendi using a map to keep tab on the various Baha'i centers all over the world, making additional notations from time to time. The campaign in these states, where Mr. Vail has worked so effectively, was described. In Lansing, Mich., one of the friends has attracted a spiritualist circle almost completely. Kenosha, Racine, Denver, Detroit, Topeka, Dayton, Grand Haven, Columbus, Chicago, etc., were mentioned. The need of adequate follow-up work was emphasized.

In the evening an informal session called forth much freedom of expression on the part of delegates and friends and various phases of Baha'i life and activity were presented.

Saturday.

Mrs. May Maxwell reported for the Canadian Teaching Committee: 'Abdu'l Baha has said that ev-

ery meeting in the world should revolve around the matter of teaching. There should be free, open consultation in which the divine forces in the friends may be released. Reports of any one city apply to others, as problems are much the same. It is not wise to proselytize, as the whole world is now submerged in the Light of Baha'u'llah. She referred to workers like Thomas Harrison and Dr. Watson of Toronto, who were doing a fine service in getting people ready for the message of Baha'u'llah.

Youth Meeting.

A very pleasing feature of the convention was the meeting especially arranged for young people, over which Miss Marion Carpenter presided. A letter from the youth of Green Acre, signed by their secretary, Bahiyyih Randall, was read. It set forth the vision of youth, their highest aspirations, the organization of their summer school, their wish for correspondence with other youth, their love and greetings to all the friends. Fifty questions prepared by Mr. Gregory, which had served them as points for study and subjects for talks, were also read. Mr. Vail spoke very beautifully of their work. The youth of the West then carried out their program, consisting of recitations of the Holy Words by the younger ones and addresses by the more mature. The speech of Miss Weaver was especially notable. It was about the education of youth, which should be free from prejudices, and in the joyfulness of the new day. The chairman related echoes of the visit of 'Abdu'l Baha to Stanford University and how it had impressed. Following this session all were happily entertained at an afternoon tea by Mrs. Cooper.

Informal Session.

The second informal session was held with George Latimer presiding. Mr. Freeman, a young American Indian, made a remarkable address, showing keenness of observation, power of analysis, and true eloquence, as he described Indian virtues, customs and religion with great skill. He also sang Indian lullabys and other songs. Their love for the open life and stand against a double standard of morals for men and women made a fine impression. Gibes at American life were overlooked by the audience, which overflowed with good humor toward the speaker. The Portland friends report Mr. Freeman as a heroic soul and one much drawn to the Cause of Baha'u'llah. Other interesting speakers were Mrs. Laura Luther for Van-

couver, Mrs. Clark, who portrayed the marvellous life of the Greatest Holy Leaf, Mesdames Bosch and Tomlinson told of the late scientist, Luther Burbank, who shared with Mr. Bosch in a Tablet of 'Abdu'l Baha and saw the need, which he expressed, of the Baha'i Cause, the world religion. Mrs. Latimer of Portland told some charming stories of children and introduced Mrs. Canaday, a Baha'i of Portland, who extended greetings to the convention in behalf of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, explaining some of the trials of American life which this organization is trying to efface.

Sunday.

Mrs. Cooper reported for the Western Teaching Committee, telling of the intensive and confirmed services of the great teacher, Jinab-i-Fadil, in the Bay cities, at Stanford University, with various clubs, fraternities and other gatherings, a written and detailed report which was supplemented by statements of Mrs. Grace B. Holley, LeRoy Ioas and George Latimer. Included with Mrs. Cooper's report was an account of the World Unity Conference in San Francisco which included many races and religions and aligned in its active support various humanitarian organizations and welfare workers.

Mrs. Morton reported the world unity conference held in Worcester March and April, the notable speakers that took part, including Dr. John Hermann Randall, Messrs. Alfred W. Martin, Ali Kuli Khan, William H. Randall, Syud Hossein, Horace Holley and others. Others who helped with advice and suggestions were Mrs. Movius, Dr. Wallace W. Atwood, president of Clarke University, Father DeLand of Holy Cross College, Dr. Thompson of the Unitarian Church, Dr. Knapp of the Congregational, Rev. Mr. Brodesian of the Syrian, the Y. M. C. A., and the Rotary Club. An influential friend who attended wants the same program repeated in his own city of Cleveland. Mrs. Sego of Honolulu made a talk on the unfoldment of spiritual life.

Public Meeting.

A public meeting for teaching was held on Sunday evening. It brought together in the ball-room of the Palace, one of the largest hostleries, a large, responsive and enthusiastic audience. Every seat was occupied. Horace Holley presided and the speakers in order were Mesdames Elizabeth Greenleaf, and May Maxwell, Louis Gregory and Albert Vail. On the printed program appeared these

eloquent words from the pen of 'Abdu'l Baha:

"The glorious Sun of Truth has once again risen in the East. From the Horizon of Persia, its radiance is spreading far and wide, dispersing the dense clouds of superstition. The light of the unity of mankind is beginning to illuminate the world and soon the banner of divine harmony and the solidarity of nations will be flying high in the heavens. Yes, the Breeze of the Holy Spirit will inspire the whole world!"

"O peoples and nations! Arise and work and be happy! Gather together under the tent of the unity of mankind."

LOUIS G. GREGORY,
Convention Reporter.

COMMITTEES OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

In appointing its committees for the ensuing year, the National Spiritual Assembly has given careful consideration to certain fundamental principles which give the character to Baha'i administration. First and foremost, the members have borne in mind the fact that each and every Baha'i, as such, is charged with a spiritual mission which no passing committee title or appointment could increase or enhance. Second, the members would emphasize the supreme importance of the local Spiritual Assembly, and the numerous functions of that body, as clearly stated in the letters of Shoghi Effendi. Third, we desire to avoid mere complexity of administrative machinery without real increase in results. The following committees represent, we trust, actual "hands of service" the activities of which will contribute directly to the development of the Cause in one or other of its aspects.

TEACHING—The National Spiritual Assembly considers this the first and foremost function of each local Spiritual Assembly as well as of its own body. We feel that each local Spiritual Assembly should so far as possible retain full responsibility for local teaching plans in its own membership, while the National Spiritual Assembly will assume responsibility for teaching along national and also regional lines. A detailed statement concerning National Baha'i Teaching Plans will be published in the next News Letter.

WORLD UNITY CONFERENCES—Mrs. Florence Morton, secretary; Mrs. Mary Rumsay Movius, Mr. Horace Holley. This committee will organize a series of public meetings in the form of World Unity Conferences, in the larger

cities of the country. The purpose is to have these Conferences once a month, coinciding in time and place with the monthly meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly. This committee will work in direct cooperation with the local Spiritual Assembly of the city in each case, and the speakers will be chosen from the best available list of local and national Baha'i speakers. Men and women of vision, already striving to establish one of the universal principles, will also be invited to speak. The following cities are on the program of the committee at present: Green Acre, August; Philadelphia, September; Cleveland, Ohio, October; Chicago, November. Local Spiritual Assemblies in other cities desiring such conferences should correspond at once with Mrs. Florence Morton, secretary, 5 Wheeler Avenue, Worcester, Mass. The work of this committee is considered by the National Spiritual Assembly as the most important effort yet put forth to spread the teachings in North America. A more extensive announcement will be made in the next News Letter.

PUBLISHING—Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mr. Albert Windust, Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher, Mr. Horace Holley; Mrs. Marie Moore, manager.

TEMPLE—Mrs. Florence Morton, Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher, Mr. Alfred E. Lunt, Mrs. Amelia Collins, Mrs. El Fleda Spaulding, Mr. Albert Windust, Mr. Monroe Joas, Mr. A. J. Mathieson, Mr. Carl Scheffler. (This committee functions legally as Baha'i Temple Unity, and the National Spiritual Assembly will therefore shortly send out a proxy to each delegate of the recent Convention to have the above names ratified).

BAHA'I MAGAZINE, STAR OF THE WEST — Mr. Stanwood Cobb, Mrs. Mariam Haney, editors; Mr. Allen McDaniel, business manager.

REVIEWING COMMITTEE — Mr. Bishop Brown, Miss Wright, Mrs. Nelson.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE—Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Mr. Albert Windust, Miss Gertrude Buikema.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE — Mr. Charles Mason Remey, Miss Elizabeth Hopper.

LEGAL COMMITTEE—Mr. Ali Kuli Khan, Mr. Louis Gregory, Mr. Alfred E. Lunt.

YEAR BOOK—Mr. Albert Windust, secretary, Mrs. Mariam Haney, Mr. Horace Holley.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN BAHAI'S OF NORTH AMERICA AND PERSIA—Mr. Roy C. Wilhelm, Mr. Ali Kuli Khan,

Mr. Arthur Agnew, Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher, Mr. Allen McDaniel.
TRANSLATION OF CORRESPONDENCE—Mr. Ali Kuli Khan, Mr. Herman Pauli.

GREEN ACRE EXECUTIVE—Mr. Ali Kuli Khan, chairman; Mrs. Florence Morton, Mr. Siegfried Schopflocher, Mr. W. H. Randall, Mr. Horace Holley, secretary.

GREEN ACRE

It is hoped that a large number of the friends have planned to spend some portion of the summer at Green Acre, to attend the sessions of the Baha'i School, drink deep of the recreative beauty of this chosen environment, associate with believers from many parts of the country, and contribute of their loving thought and effort to the upbuilding of this unique institution.

The program of activities this year will include a daily devotional meeting; instruction classes under the supervision of recognized Baha'i teachers; opportunity to join the interesting activities of the Arts and Crafts Studio; a program of lectures on subjects of universal importance; dances, concerts and informal entertainments of many kinds. Life at Green Acre is not and never can be institutionalized, but remains fluid and open to the impulse of whatever facilities and talents are at hand.

The culmination of the public program will be a World Unity Conference on August 7th and 8th, arranged by a committee of the National Spiritual Assembly, with daily sessions to which are invited all Baha'i workers for the informal discussion of ways and means to further the Cause. The annual meeting of the Green Acre Fellowship will be held on August 9th.

Friends of Green Acre on returning this year will be delighted to find many important improvements in buildings and grounds. The Arts and Crafts Studio, next to the Tea House and Gift Shop, stands as a colorful reminder of the joy of creative work; the little store adjoining the Ball Cottage has been moved farther away from the road and completely transformed, so that it now harmonizes with the other Green Acre buildings; an impressive new stone wall runs along the front of the property; and the Ball Cottage has been completely equipped as a rest house and health center. The energy and generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Schopflocher have given Green Acre the permanent advantage of these improvements.

We are grateful that Mrs. Bliss will once again manage Green Acre Inn, the opening date of which is Saturday, July 3. Inquiries for accommodation at the Inn should be addressed to the Inn itself, while information about other accommodations, or concerning the program or other activities, should be addressed to Secretary, National Spiritual Assembly, Green Acre, South Eliot, Maine.

LETTER FROM SHOQHI EFFENDI

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

Fellow-laborers in the Vineyard of God!

Various happenings of recent months, highly-disquieting in their suddenness, their complexity and consequences, have time and again to my regret, compelled me to defer correspondence with you, my highly valued co-workers, who are destined to share no small a part of the burden that now weighs so heavily upon me. The prolonged and delicate negotiations arising out of the critical situation of Baha'u'llah's house in Baghdad; the shameful recrudescence of unrestrained barbarism in stricken Persia; the unexpected reverse recently sustained in our legal transactions for the deliverance of Baha'u'llah's mansion at Bahji from the hands of the enemy; the unprecedented increase in the volume of work resulting from the rise and expansion of the Movement in various parts of the world—these and other issues, no less pressing in their demand upon my time and energy, have gradually affected my health and impaired the efficiency required in the discharge of my arduous duties. But, though body and mind be sorely strained by cares and perplexities which a Movement such as ours just emerging from obscurity must needs encounter, yet the spirit continues to draw fresh inspiration from the manner in which the chosen deliverers of the Faith in the Western world, and particularly in the American continent, are proving themselves increasingly worthy of such a stupendous yet so noble a task.

Grave and manifold as are the problems confronting the struggling Faith of Baha'u'llah, none appear more significant, nor seem more compelling in their urgency, than the incredible sufferings born so heroically by our down-trodden brethren of the East. Recent reports confirming the news which I have lately communicated

to you, have all emphasized the barbarous severity practiced on the innocent followers of our Cause. They reveal the possibility of the extension of this agitation, partly instigated for political purposes and selfish motives, to neighboring towns and provinces, and dwell upon the traditional slackness of the local authorities to inflict prompt and severe punishment upon all the perpetrators of such abominable crimes. It has been ascertained that in the town of Jahrum women have suffered martyrdom in a most atrocious manner, that the knife of the criminal has mercilessly cut to pieces the body of a child, that a number have been severely beaten and injured, their body mutilated, their homes pillaged, their property confiscated, and the homeless remnants of their family abandoned at the mercy of a shameless and tyrannical people. In other parts of Persia, and particularly in the province of Adhirbayjan in the town of Maraghih, the friends have been pitilessly denied the civic rights and privileges extended to every citizen of the land. They have been refused the use of the public bath, and been denied access to such shops as provide the necessities of life. They have been declared deprived of the benefit and protection of the law, and all association and dealing with them denounced as a direct violation of the precepts and principles of Islam. It has even been authoritatively stated that the deficiencies of public interment have been refused to their dead, and that in a particularly case every effort to induce the Moslem undertaker to provide the wood for the construction of the coffin, failed to secure the official support of the authorities concerned. Every appeal made by these Baha'is on behalf of their brethren, whether living or dead, has been met with cold indifference, with vague promises, and, not infrequently, with severe rebuke and undeserved chastisement.

The tale of such outrageous conduct, such widespread suffering and loss, if properly expressed and broadcast, cannot fail in the end to arouse the conscience of civilized mankind, and thereby secure the much-needed relief for a long-suffering people. I would, therefore, renew my plea, and request you most earnestly to redouble your efforts in the wide field of publicity, to devise every possible means that will alleviate the fears and sorrows of the silent sufferers in that distracted country. Surely these vile wrong-doers cannot long remain unpunished for their fero-

cious atrocities, and the day may not be far distant when we shall witness, as we have observed elsewhere, the promised signs of Divine Retribution avenging the blood of the slaughtered servants of Baha'u'llah.

In connection with the Plan of unified action, enclosed in your letter of January 19th, I feel that the friends must be constantly reminded of the vital necessity for a continuous and whole-hearted support of the cheme, the success or failure of which will to a marked extent affect the course of the progress of the Cause not only in Northern America but throughout the Baha'i world. Let the friends recall and ever bear in mind the repeated exhortations and glowing promises of our beloved Master with reference to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, the crowning institution in every Baha'i community. Let them arise with determination and confidence to lend a helping hand to the Plan which you have so admirably devised for its speedy and practical realization. Theirs is a splendid opportunity; let their response to your call be prompt, whole-hearted and decisive.

I have specially requested that indefatigable pioneer of the Cause of God, our well-beloved Baha'i sister, Mrs. Victoria Bedekian, to concentrate for the present all the resources of her mind and heart upon this vast and vital undertaking. I have urged her to direct her energies to this lofty purpose, and by the aid of her most valuable letters arouse both the East and the West to a fresh consciousness of the significance and urgency of the object you have set yourselves to achieve.

Regarding the series of World Unity meetings which some of the thoughtful, capable and devoted servants of the Cause have carefully organized and successfully conducted, and to which you have referred in your letter of March 8th, I wish to express my keen appreciation of such a splendid conception, my deep gratitude for the efforts they have exerted, and my gratification in view of the success they have achieved.

The administrative machinery of the Cause having now sufficiently evolved, its aim and object fairly-well grasped and understood, and its method and working made more familiar to every believer, I feel the time is ripe when it should be fully and consciously utilized to further the purpose for which it has been created. It should, I strongly feel, be made to serve a two-fold purposes. On one hand, it

should aim at a steady and gradual expansion of the Movement along lines that are at once broad, sound and universal; and on the other it should ensure the internal consolidation of the work already achieved. It should both provide the impulse whereby the dynamic forces latent in the Faith can unfold, crystallize, and shape the lives and conduct of men, and serve as a medium for the interchange of thought and the coordination of activities among the divers elements that constitute the Baha'i community.

Whether it be by an open and bold assertion of the fundamental verities of the Cause, or the adoption of a less direct and more cautious method of teaching; whether by the dissemination of our literature or the example of our conduct, our one aim and sole object should be to help in the eventual recognition of all mankind of the indispensability, the uniqueness and the supreme station of the Baha'i Revelation. Whatever method he adopts, and however indirect the course he chooses to pursue, every true believer should regard such a recognition as the supreme goal of his endeavor. Whilst consciously laboring towards the attainment of this end, he should, by supporting every branch of the administrative activities of his national and local assembly, seek and obtain the fullest information on the character and extent of the world-wide progress of the Cause, and strive to contribute his share towards the strengthening of the spirit of solidarity among the component parts of the Baha'i world.

Such in their broad outline are the guiding principles which those who have been placed in charge of the administration of the affairs of the Cause should at present endeavor to promote, explain and securely establish. Nothing short of the spirit of unwavering faith, of continuous vigilance and patient endeavor can hope to secure eventually the realization of this our cherished desire.

May America's national representatives arise with clear vision, with unswerving determination and renewed vigor to carry out in its entirety the sacred task they have purposed to perform.

Assuring you of my continued and earnest prayers for the success of your efforts,

I am your true brother,

SHOGHI.

Haifa, Palestine,
May 11th, 1926.