



# BAHA'I NEWS LETTER

THE BULLETIN OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE BAHÁ'IS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Office of the Secretary

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*"Should any one contend that true and enduring unity can in nowise be realized in this world, inasmuch as its peoples differ widely in their manners and habits, their tastes, their temperament and character, their thoughts and their views, to this we make reply that differences are of two kinds: the one is the cause of destruction, as exemplified by the spirit of contention and strife which animates mutually conflicting and antagonistic peoples and nations, whilst the other is the sign of diversity, the symbol and secret of perfection, and the revealer of the bounties of the All-glorious."—'Abdu'l-Bahá.*

National Assembly Letter No. 6  
1928-1929

December 15, 1928.

To the Local Spiritual Assemblies and Delegates of the 1928 Convention. Beloved friends in 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

At this midpoint in our Bahá'í year, the members of the National Spiritual Assembly feel it both desirable and necessary to emphasize with all love and sincere candor, the essential task the believers throughout America assumed at the Convention last spring.

The work of the Cause in this country was raised to a new and higher plane on that occasion, through the action of the National Assembly and delegates in mutually pledging to observe the budget of the Plan for Unified Action.

As all the friends will recall, it was the suggestion and advice of Shoghi Effendi that the National Assembly make covenant with the body of the believers to limit all expenses payable by the National Fund to the fixed maximum of \$33,000, thus establishing the firmest moral basis for the success of

the Plan in its final period. On the other hand, the believers themselves, through the unanimous vote of the delegates, entered into this covenant by pledging themselves to support the Plan with whole-hearted zeal.

At this hour, less than five months remain before the ninety-five delegates again convene, and the full extent of our collective effort will be revealed.

What are the important facts?

1. The Plan for Unified Action, which the Guardian has endorsed, and most generously supported, has for its fulfilment the creation of a Temple Construction Fund of \$400,000, the condition on which depends the building of the first level of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. The final date for the operation of this Plan is the approaching Convention at the end of April, 1929. Should the Plan have proved a failure at that time, it would appear necessary to reconsider the whole problem and appeal to Shoghi Effendi for fresh instruction and advice.

2. The Financial Report submitted by the National Treasurer as of December 1, 1928, shows that on November 30, the cash and securities on hand amounted to \$50,711.91.

3. The sum of approximately \$350,000 must be contributed before the Convention terminate if the believers of the United States and Canada are to meet the supreme opportunity and privilege granted them by Bahá'u'lláh through the oft-repeated hopes and expectations of the Guardian of the Cause.

4. Every National activity has been reduced to the lowest possible appropriation, so that the National Assembly may meet its pledge. Practically every penny received by the National Treasurer from now until the Convention period can be placed in the permanent Temple Construction Fund. (When all

amounts pledged at the Convention, but not yet paid, have been received, the Treasurer will have much more than is required to meet the budget of \$33,000).

5. What has been accomplished so far this year is, in comparison with previous years, abundant cause for confidence and joy. By concentrating our minds and hearts upon the tremendous goal; by seeking daily for inspiration and guidance through meditation and humble prayer; by examining every detail of our lives, to find new methods of economy; and by keeping in true unity with our fellow-believers, the success of the Plan for Unified Action is still within our grasp. The example of those who have confined their Christmas giving to a special donation to the National Fund, and the avowed purpose of many to make large contributions during the balance of the year—all this is sign and proof that the American believers are nobly responding to the needs of our mighty yet glorious task.

Now let us turn to these words which the Guardian has just written to the National Assembly in his own handwriting: "I wish to . . . express in person, the deep sense of my appreciation and gratitude in view of the sustained, unanimous and generous response of the body of the believers to the Plan. Much still remains to be achieved, and the future still holds its perils and uncertainties. I would, however, renew, with the utmost earnestness, my plea for perseverance, concentration and self-sacrifice, that the eyes of an expectant world may soon witness the concrete evidence of the undiminished vitality of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in that land."

We ask you to share this letter with all the believers in your community, and suggest that it be read at the Nine-

### NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

of the Bahá'is of the United States  
and Canada

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"The NEWS LETTER which you have lately initiated fulfills a very vital function and has been started admirably well. I would urge you to enlarge its scope, as much as your resources permit, that in time it may devote a special section to every phase of your activities, administrative, devotional, humanitarian, financial, educational and otherwise. That it may attain its object it must combine the essential qualities of accuracy, reliability, thoroughness, dignity and wisdom. It should become a great factor in promoting understanding, providing information on Bahá'í activity, both local and foreign, in stimulating interest, in combating evil influences, and in upholding and safeguarding the institutions of the Cause. It should be made as representative as possible, should be replete with news, up-to-date in its information, and should arouse the keenest interest among believers and admirers alike in every corner of the globe. I cherish great hopes for its immediate future, and I trust you will devote your special attention to its development, and by devising well-conceived and world-wide measures transform this NEWS LETTER into what I hope will become the foremost Bahá'í Journal of the world."—  
SHOGHI EFFENDI.

teen Day Feast falling so providentially on New Year's Eve.

Yours faithfully, in service to Shoghi Effendi,  
National Spiritual Assembly of the  
Bahá'is of the United States and  
Canada.

### Meeting of the National Assembly

The proceedings of the meeting held by the National Spiritual Assembly at Chevy Chase, Maryland, December 8 and 9, 1928, are summarized as follows:

Communications from Shoghi Effendi were read, both of which are published elsewhere in this NEWS LETTER. The Treasurer's report for the period April 1-October 31, 1928, was read and approved. The sum of \$7,362.83 was received in the month of November and \$6,844.55 was spent. Amount on hand November 30, \$50,711.91. On recommendation of the Committee for Promotion of Plan for Unified Action, in order to effect economy, the general letters issued by that Committee are in future to be issued through the NEWS LETTER. The Teaching Committee was requested to submit a complete report on its activities and policies, especially in relation to the subject of indirect teaching and the progress being made on the teaching plan submitted at the 1927 Convention. The report of the Finance Committee was read and approved. A vote of appreciation and thanks was recorded for the generous offer of Mrs. Louie Mathews to donate the expense of publishing a new Prayer Book, compiled by a special Committee some time ago. It was recorded in the minutes that the Indenture of Trust was recorded on November 13, 1928, as document No. 10204534 in the Registry Office of Cook County, Illinois. A resolution relating to the World Unity Conferences is published elsewhere. Preliminary plans were made for the 1929 Convention, as noticed in a special article in this NEWS LETTER. The need of a special Committee to look up references in the teachings, and also compile historical material on occasion, led to the appointment of a Research Committee, details of which will be given as soon as possible. The general letter issued some weeks ago, addressed to Bahá'í young people in order to stimulate their interest in the Temple, and approved by the Teaching Committee, was very much appreciated, but it was made clear that donations should be made only to the local or National Bahá'í Fund, and not to Committees or individuals. Careful consideration was

given the suggestion that the National Assembly appoint a special nineteen-day prayer period during which the believers should hold daily prayer for the success of the Temple building plans. In view of the fact that daily prayer is an ordinance in the teachings, it was felt inadvisable to appoint such a prayer period, but to point out the need for greater individual initiative in these spiritual matters and also for the utmost concentration of our collective forces at the Nineteen Day Feasts. It was voted to inform the believers that friends planning to visit local Assemblies where they are personally unknown should carry proper letters of introduction.

### Guardian Requests Bahá'is Not to Observe His Birthday

The following words were written by Shoghi Effendi to the National Assembly on November 1, 1928: "My dear and valued co-worker: I wish to add a few words in person regarding the commemoration of my birthday anniversary. I would earnestly request all the believers and Assemblies not to observe, under any circumstances, whether officially or privately, my birthday anniversary. I strongly feel that only anniversaries in connection with the life of the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá should be celebrated by the believers. It will, I am sure, prove conducive to my own spiritual growth and happiness, and would be in the best interests of our beloved Faith. I trust that you will acquaint all the believers with this insistent request of mine and I feel sure that they will all joyfully respond. Your true brother, Shoghi."

The other message from the Guardian received by the National Assembly is quoted in Letter No. 6.

### Distinguished, Beloved Servant Passes Away

On December 21, 1928, the National Assembly received the following cablegram from Shoghi Effendi:

"Bahá'u'lláh's distinguished, beloved servant Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney passed away. Hearts greatly afflicted. Urge holding befitting memorials. (Signed) Shoghi."

In accordance with this urgent request from the Guardian, the National Assembly suggests that the Local Assemblies and Bahá'í groups of the United States and Canada, each according to its own conditions, arrange as soon as possible for a meeting to commemorate the passing of our dear fellow-believer. For many years host

and inspiration of the gathering of Bahá'is in Paris; scholarly translator of many texts into French; devoted follower and frequent companion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; closely identified with the Master's stay in Switzerland and France; trusted co-worker of the Guardian; and through his extensive travels known to and highly regarded by believers in Europe, Asia and America, M. Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney is one of that noble company which wealth and high position did not blind from recognizing the Manifestation, but on the contrary devoted their hearts and resources to the promotion of His Cause.

The friends will recall that the Guardian made it clear at the time when Dr. Esslemont passed on that special memorial meetings held the fortieth day after death are a Muhammadan and not a Bahá'i custom.

A cablegram was sent to Mme. Laura Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney, Paris, France, in the name of the National Assembly: "American friends deeply grieved passing our dear Hippolyte, a true friend and distinguished world figure in Bahá'i Cause. Accept our profound sympathy and love. National Assembly arranging memorial meetings Local Assemblies United States and Canada."

A cablegram was also sent to Mr. Mountfort Mills requesting him to represent the American Bahá'is at the services.

#### To Those Intending to Donate Jewelry and Other Gifts to National Fund

In connection with the donation of gifts, the National Assembly has established the following procedure: that jewelry and other objects are to be given direct to the Finance Committee (Mrs. Nellie S. French, Chairman), which shall make acknowledgement to the donor; and the Finance Committee shall take steps to sell these objects and report its sales to the National Treasurer, who shall then issue receipts to the donors for all cash received from the sales.

The National Assembly prefers to have the individual turn the gift into cash and then donate the cash, rather than the gift itself.

#### The World Unity Conferences

The following reference to the World Unity Conferences appears in the minutes of the meeting held by the National Assembly on December 8 and 9, 1929: "Moved, seconded and voted that it is the sense of this meeting that

Bahá'i bodies should refrain from employing the descriptive phrase 'World Unity' as the official title or designation of any public meeting, in order to prevent misunderstanding as to the auspices under which all such meetings are held, inasmuch as the World Unity Foundation is a New York State corporation, and we desire to avoid conflict and confusion with the public program of World Unity Conferences being carried out in the United States and Canada."

With the permission of Mrs. Florence Morton, the following words written to her by Shoghi Effendi on October 14, 1928, are quoted in this place: "My dearest co-worker: Your most welcome letter has brought joy, strength and relief to my heart. Your unquestioned faith, your unwavering constancy, your patience, tact and judgment, your vital and in many respects unique position as a connecting link between the direct and indirect method of teaching has endeared you to us all and earned for you increasingly our esteem and admiration. I pray that your valued efforts may be constantly and richly blessed by Bahá'u'lláh, that you may be aided to add to the number of those who have, through the World Unity work, been identified with the Cause, and thus demonstrate to every doubting and wavering believer the salutary and effective results of your arduous and noble enterprise. Do not, I entreat you, lose heart and continue with undaunted faith your great work. Your grateful brother, Shoghi."

#### Preliminary Notice of 1929 Convention

The National Assembly has taken the following action with respect to the Twenty-First Annual Convention.

1. The Convention will be held in the Temple Foundation Hall, Wilmette, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 26, 27 and 28, 1929.

2. A Convention Committee was appointed, consisting of Mr. Carl Scheffler, Mrs. Shelley N. Parker and Mrs. Willis Hilpert, with power to appoint sub-committees and plan the details of the Convention, under the supervision of the National Assembly.

3. A letter was issued to all Local Assemblies and groups on December 15, 1928, requesting them to report the number of believers on their membership rolls by January 15, 1929, so that the National Assembly may draw up the list of Participating Communities and correctly assign the number of delegates to each Community.

#### Addresses Wanted

The following list of believers are those whose mail has been returned undelivered by the Post Office. Their present address is requested. The addresses printed are the last address known in each case.

Mrs. R. J. Fairbanks, Shoshone, Calif.; Mrs. Kenneth C. Adams, 1120 18th St., Sacramento, Calif.; Mr. A. M. Morris, Tombstone, Ariz.; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Nickel, 8B Linden Ave., Toronto, Ont.; Mrs. Gertrude Christine, P. O. Box 398, Louisville, Ky.; Dr. F. K. Starnes, 431 Matthewson Place, Atlanta, Ga.; Mrs. Jones, 1253 Dennison Ave., Columbus, O.; Mrs. Hattie S. Laughlin, 2000 Sunset Blvd., San Diego, Calif.; Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Jackson, 710 Blucher St., Corpus Christi, Texas; Miss Geneva Scott, Big Spring, Ky.; Mary Schuster, 201 W. Washington Ave., McAlester, Okla.; Mr. Arthur M. Jones, 1860 Preble St., Charleston, Wash.; Rev. Eli McArn, Samarkand, N. C.; Mrs. Leon J. Cooper, Springdale, Conn.; Miss A. Bander, The New Edgewood, Delaware Water Gap, Pa.; Mrs. Aletta B. Martin, R. D. 1, Box 112, Riverside, Calif.; Mr. Alexander Baker, 214 Jefferson St., San Antonio, Texas; Mrs. Edw. Tipton, 403 Grandview Ave., Daytona Beach, Fla.

#### Important Notice by Publishing Committee

On all orders received by the Bahá'i Publishing Committee after the date of this NEWS LETTER, the discount given to the local Librarians on orders amounting to \$10 or more will be 33 per cent, instead of the 10 per cent hitherto allowed. Postage, express, customs duty and all other similar charges will be borne by the Librarian. On orders from individuals, not Librarians and not representing a Bahá'i Assembly or group, a discount of 10 per cent will be given when orders amount to \$10 or more.

The believers are requested to note that this larger discount on books sold to Bahá'i Communities places at the disposal of each Spiritual Assembly an entirely new source of revenue for the local Bahá'i Fund. As the Cause progresses, and as the friends are trained to handle these affairs with efficiency, the income resulting from the sale of Bahá'i literature will become extremely important.

A new edition of The Bahá'i Revelation, by Thornton Chase, is now ready and the price per copy is \$2.00.

Orders for Attar of Rose, in vials at \$1.00, \$1.50 and \$2.00, may be sent

to the Publishing Committee. A discount of 20 per cent is given on orders of one or more dozen vials.

### Teaching Outline on Material and Divine Science

The Outline Bureau of the National Teaching Committee, consisting of Mrs. Marion Little, Mr. R. C. Collison and Mrs. Doris McKay (Secretary) has issued a special letter to the Local Assemblies and groups, dated December 12, 1928, announcing a new Teaching Outline on the above topic. The Outline, supplied in the form of mimeographed sheets, offers the greatest assistance to individuals and groups desiring to study the relation of the Bahá'í Teaching to Science in a thorough and accurate manner. By using this and other Outlines to be prepared by the same Committee, the friends have an opportunity to educate themselves along universal lines, to a degree impossible in any college or university. The cost price of the first Teaching Outline is fifteen cents, and orders are to be sent to Mrs. Doris McKay, Secretary, Pre-Emption Road, Geneva, N. Y.

### The Bahá'í Magazine

Contents of the *Bahá'í Magazine*, Star of the West, for October, 1928: Wonder-Working Rays, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; Editorial, by Stanwood Cobb; Each Hour is Yours, by Ruth Ellis Moffett; President Thomas Masaryk, by Martha L. Root; The Problem of Youth, by Rosa V. Winterburn; Children's Purposes and Education, by Genevieve L. Coy; The Dual Nature of Man, by Walter B. Guy, M.D.; Lighted Lamps, by Sophronia Aoki; Educating the Personality, by Keith Ransom-Kehler; 'Abdu'l-Bahá in America, by Dr. Zia Bagdadi; Phyllis Wheatley—An African Genius, by Mary Church Terrell; World Thought and Progress.

Contents for November, 1928: How Humanity Finds Security, by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; Editorial, by Stanwood Cobb; International Congresses Use Esperanto, by Martha L. Root; A New Child Born to the Pacific, by Alexander Hume Ford; America's Asiaward Destiny, by Stanwood Cobb; Significance of the Women's Pan-Pacific Conference, Compilation by Julia Goldman; Complete Healing, by Walter B. Guy, M.D.; Religion and Education, by Marzieh Nabil; Can Races Harmonize? A Significant Inter-Racial Conference, by Louis G. Gregory; 'Abdu'l-Bahá in America, by Dr. Zia Bagdadi.

### News of Activities in Foreign Assemblies

The following brief notes are taken from recent letters received from Assemblies in Europe and the Orient, and many items have also been supplied through the courtesy of Mrs. Bedikian.

NEWS LETTER No 1, dated September 11, 1928, has been issued by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iraq. By this new medium, published in English, the friends are given information about the Cause in one of the most significant Bahá'í centers of the world. In the village of Avashiq, near Baghdad, a Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is now under construction, and already has produced widespread interest in the Cause. At Baghdad the believers maintain a guest house at which Bahá'í travelers are invited to enjoy the hospitality of the Assembly. The recent visit of Mrs. Florence Evelyn Schopflocher receives enthusiastic comment, and the NEWS LETTER in fact is accompanied by a separate report embodying a summary of an address which Mrs. Schopflocher delivered at the general meeting of the Baghdad believers on July 1. The N. S. A. of Iraq is now forming a general reference library in the Bahá'í headquarters. One of the Baghdad believers, Haji Mahmood Kassabaji, has donated three houses to Shoghi Effendi, to be used, in the future, in connection with the Houses of Bahá'u'lláh.

An interesting general letter was issued by the devoted workers of the International Bahá'í Bureau, Geneva, Switzerland, on August 1. The following statement will be carefully considered by all believers: "We must take into consideration that this is the first International Bahá'í Bureau ever established, and that it cannot attain to a fulfillment of its office, either in name or work, until it becomes international in character as a body cooperative, through the united interest and efforts of the friends throughout the Bahá'í World. The importance of this function can be easily realized when one visits Geneva and finds the points of contact possible, and those already formed by those bodies working here. . . . It is hoped that all the National Assemblies may consider these facts with earnest prayer and consultation, and arrive at some plan whereby the hopes and desires of Shoghi Effendi regarding this Center may be actuated."

It is a matter of grateful joy to the friends that the Bahá'í delegate to the Preliminary Conference of the Univer-

sal Religious Peace Conference, which held sessions at Geneva on September 12, 13, and 14 last, was made chairman of the most important committee—that which drafted the statement explaining the purpose of the Conference to the general public. This delegate was Mr. Mountfort Mills. Another friend of the Cause, Mr. Alfred W. Martin, of New York City, delivered what was generally considered to be the most inspiring and spiritual address heard by the Conference.

In the general letter published by the National Assembly of Tihiran on July 20, the encouraging statement is made that a recent letter written by the Guardian to Jinabi Fadil gives assurance that existing difficulties and troubles faced by the friends in Persia will soon vanish away. At Sari, in the Mazendaran district, a house has been purchased for use as the local Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, and the Cause is progressing favorably throughout that district. A believer in Isfahan has transferred his house and other property to the local Spiritual Assembly for the establishment of a Bahá'í Girls' School.

Fifteen hundred believers voted in the annual election held for the members of the Spiritual Assembly of Ishqabad. At the request of Shoghi Effendi, Jinabi Fadil spent last year teaching in various cities of Turkestan and Caucasia, where he overcame great obstacles. By his efforts and influence, the House of Teaching has been completed on the grounds of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar at Ishqabad. It is open five hours daily, under the direction of teachers who speak Persian, Turkish and Russian. On the last day of Ridván, the Ishqabad believers celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Boys' School with impressive ceremonies which attracted wide attention.

Miss Fanny Knobloch has resumed with great success her mission in South Africa. Among the many meetings she has held have been one in the Pretoria Prison, at the invitation of the matron, and one before the third year students of Pretoria College.

### Mr. Louis Bourgeois Addresses Illinois Society of Architects

An unusual opportunity for serving the Cause was given to Mr. Louis Bourgeois, architect of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in America, in an invitation to address the Illinois Society of Architects on September 25 last. The subject assigned Mr. Bourgeois was The Bahá'í Temple.