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### **Dinner Talks of Shoghi Effendi**

**Isobel Sabri**

**19-28 April 1957**

**Auto-generated Table of Contents**

#### **Notes**

Recorded after the nightly dinner-table talks  
of the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi  
19-28 April 1957  
by  
Isobel Sabri  
of Kampala, Uganda

### **Dinner Talks of Shoghi Effendi**

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Present with the beloved Guardian at the dinner table each evening during my pilgrimage were: ‘Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, Hands of the Cause of God Mrs. Amelia Collins and Leroy Ioas, Mrs. Sylvia Ioas, Misses Ethel and Jessie Revell. Hand of the Cause Charles Mason Remey arrived on 28th April. All of the above-named believers are members of the International Bahá’í Council appointed by the Guardian and are resident in Haifa where they are directly assisting the Guardian in his work.

All present at the dinner table were the following pilgrims, all of whom are Americans: Mrs. Alice Dudley (19th through 23rd April), Mrs. Florence Mayberry (23rd through 26th April), and Miss Sally Sanor (19th through 24th April).

Although some of the notes recorded below appear to be in direct speech, it would be wrong to consider them as quotations of exactly what the beloved Guardian said. They are rather notes of what the writer afterwards remembered

the Guardian to have said. Explanations of the context in which his remarks were made are given in parenthesis, as are explanations of his seeming intention or mood in making various statements.

### **19th April.**

(The Guardian's opening words were addressed to this servant — as the most recently arrived pilgrim.)

How are the friends in Africa? How is your husband? He is very active in the service of the Cause, isn't he. How was your flight? Did you fly directly to Lydda?

(Rúhíyyih Khánúm mentioned to the Guardian that the night before my departure I had been reading the message of the Guardian to the National Convention, received that day.) Are you pleased with the progress of the Faith all over the world? (Then, with eagerness and remarkably keen memory, the Guardian repeated numerous items of information and statistics of the Faith throughout the world which are contained in that long, detailed and historic message.)

Each of the 13 new National Spiritual Assemblies to be formed will have a six year plan as the three new National Assemblies in Africa had seven year plans (assigned to them at the time of their formation in 1956). Each National Assembly will have its own objectives. In South America each of the 20 Republics will have its own temple land. Also temple land will be bought in London on the Thames, in France outside Paris on the River Seine and in Switzerland outside Berne. By the end of the Ten Year Crusade it is my intention that land will have been bought for 50 temples — instead of for only 12, as originally planned.

Have the excavations of the Kampala Temple begun? Yes, the National Spiritual Assembly cabled me that they have. (The National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa had asked me to convey to the Guardian a photograph of the commencement of temple excavations, as he had earlier asked that the work be started by Rídván 1957. I had sent the photograph to the Guardian earlier in the day. At the dinner table he enquired about it.) Does the photograph show the excavations for the temple or the cutting of the access road? It looks like the road. In Australia they hope to begin their temple this Rídván.

The teaching work in Africa must not suffer with the formation of the National Spiritual Assemblies and the building of the temple. These other activities must not cause the teaching work to suffer.

How many centers are there in Uganda? (Rúhíyyih Khánúm replied by giving the current Uganda statistics.) One hundred ninety? That is good. (The Guardian compared Uganda and the Mentawai Islands of Indonesia — and, with a decided twinkle in his eye, thus sought to stimulate competition between two areas.) Uganda was opened six years ago, Mentawai four years ago. Uganda has 1,200 believers, Mentawai 1,100. Mentawai has two schools, Uganda none! The Faith is going ahead very rapidly in the South Pacific.

(I asked when the “Regional National Assemblies would be de-regionalized.) The teaching work is going forward well. The numbers are enough. The Assemblies are enough. But the African believers must gain experience, must learn how to administer the Faith. They must gain experience in administration; they must be trained in administration.

In the formative Age the spirit of the Faith, born in the Heroic Age, must incarnate itself in the institutions of the Faith. The building of the Administrative Order, the establishment of the World Order and the flourishing of the World Civilization is a three-fold successive process. “Civilization” means the working of the spirit of the Faith through human institutions — also the development of new architecture, the arts, the sciences, and letters. The World Order of Bahá’u’lláh must absorb the outer world.

(A question was asked concerning the future of the Faith in Africa.) Yes, certainly, the destiny of the black and brown races is very great. The brown, black and yellow races constitute the majority of the people of the world. One day perhaps the majority of the believers will be from the brown, black and yellow races. And the white race will be in the minority in the Faith. This is right.

The Master said that the destiny of the American Indians is great. He told the American believers to concentrate on them, but the American believers have not done enough. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá compared the original Americans, the Indians, with the original inhabitants of Arabia. He said that the Arabs were murderers. They killed their own girl children. The urine of cattle was their perfume. But they became saints and heroes.

(A question was asked about music in the Temples.) No tape-recordings are to be used, or musical instruments. There is to be only the sound of human voice — not the sound of a machine.

(Rúhíyyih Khánúm asked why the believers could not build modest houses of worship — why did they need such elaborate ones. I took this question to be a reference to the fact that the National Spiritual Assembly of Uganda had proposed the introduction of a wall and doors into the original, simple designed conceived by the Guardian — which had no wall below the drum of the building and no doors. The Guardian’s reply was a general one.) Even modest Temples require money.

(Towards the close of the evening the Guardian asked me.) Did you meet Mr. and Mrs. Yazdí in Nairobi? They are very energetic and successful. Did you meet Mr. and Mrs. Alizadeh — the English lady and her Persian husband there?

## **20th and 21st April.**

(On the afternoon of the 20th the pilgrims were taken to the House of Mazra’ih and then to stay in the Mansion of Bahjí, from where we visited the Holy Places in the City of ‘Akká and its vicinity until the afternoon of the 22nd, when we returned to Haifa. On the 21st we were blessed to be included amongst all those

resident in the Holy Land at the celebration of the first day of Ridván at Bahjí and in the Most Holy Shrine. The beloved Guardian was present in the Shrine and chanted in his wonderfully soft, melodious voice.)

## **22nd April.**

(This was a most memorable evening with the Guardian when he spoke at length and with fervor on several important subjects. Because of the swift effort which was needed afterwards to recall and record as much as possible of what the Guardian had said, it was not possible to be certain of the correct order in which the subjects discussed were mentioned nor the exact nature of the transition from point to point. No great importance should, therefore, be attached to the sequence of the paragraphs throughout these notes.)

Europe is not the seat of the Christian civilization — not by any means. It is the seat of material civilization. And America is the stronghold of material civilization — the center of gravity of material civilization. (The Guardian was here speaking in the strongest terms against the excesses of materialism.) Bahá'u'lláh established His Faith in Persia — the most decadent nation on earth. The Persians were more barbarous than the savages of Africa. The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh will be established and has been started in America because it is now the most corrupt politically. The American nation is not altruistic in what it does. The American government lends money to other nations only to protect itself. Other nations know this and resent it, but they take the money. America is trying to buy friends. They won't succeed. It is too late to change the course of the world. The people of the world are impure. The world needs a blood-letting. The retributive calamity which is to come will be like a giant blood-letting through which the non-Bahá'ís of the world will be purified. The Bahá'ís are also impure and they will be purified through the opposition which will come to the Faith everywhere in the world. There are two processes of purification which must take place: purification of the outer non-Bahá'í world through the retributive calamity, the purification of the Bahá'í world through the world-wide opposition to the Faith.

It is quite possible that the two-thirds of the earth's population spoke of in the Bible will be annihilated. This is quite possible. The world is over-populated, and the blood of the people is impure. The retributive calamity will correct over-population problem this time. When the world is re-made, the advance of techniques and science will solve the problem of over-population in the Golden Age. Now, so much money is being used for armaments that there is no money with which to solve the population problem.

I have appealed directly in my messages for many years for the American Bahá'ís to arise and pioneer and fill the needs of the Faith. But they did not respond. But why should they respond to my letters when they did not respond to the Master when he went there in person?! I shall never appeal to the American believers to pioneer again.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to America to warn the nation and appeal to the believers. The Master was very sad at the lack of response of the American nation and the American Bahá’ís. This is why he was so sad when he died. If you want to know the truth, history will record that the Master’s mission to America was a failure because of the lack of response of the nation and the believers. (The beloved Guardian was here speaking with considerable emotion; and when he made this last statement about the failure of the Master’s mission to America, he clenched his fist, brought it down soundlessly onto the table and turned side-wise from the table in his chair. The impact of his grief in rendering this verdict was truly heart-wrenching.)

A retributive calamity which will be worse than war will come. It will appear suddenly — not by degrees. It will take place in the twinkling of an eye. You will go to bed one night; and when you wake up in the morning, it will be all over. You will know when it is coming. You will read about it in the newspapers and hear about it on the radio. You will recognize the signs of its coming. Read the newspaper editorial pages. The interpretation of the news is what is important.

The northern hemisphere will suffer most. There will be large areas of the earth that become uninhabitable — unarable. The southern continents will become more important in the future.

North America will be the worst affected — especially the United States. The Bahá’ís should not think that they have any special protection simply because they are Bahá’ís. Their only protection is in their dedication to the Faith. The homes of the American Bahá’ís will evaporate over-night. They will become refugees to other continents.

(Turning specifically to me, he continued) Kampala will be safe — so long as they don’t build American air bases in Kenya. The foothills of the Himalayas Mountains will also be safe.

You have trouble getting enough pioneers for Africa, but at that time the believers will come to Africa happily. They will come as refugees — nothing in their hands. And they will be only too happy to come. You will have more help than you ever dreamed possible.

Russia will also suffer. When the Russians gain military equality with America, America will be trapped. Both the Russian system and the American system are wrong. Both are materialistic. Both are to be condemned by the Bahá’ís. The Russians have a system of control by the proletariat. America has a system of control by the capitalists. Both are wrong.

America’s motives are not pure — because they do not want to coalesce with other nations — far from it. America must be purified by tribulations. Read the talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in America. Read between the lines. He gently, tactfully warned them. But they did not heed his words.

In connection with the race problem in America, the Master said that the streets of New York would run with blood. (At this point the Guardian asked the

American pilgrims present at the dinner table if there had been any inter-racial marriages in the American Bahá'í community, but before a reply could be given he continued speaking.) Even when there are such marriages, if you looked at them couple by couple and examined their individual motives in marrying, you would probably find impure motives, (Rúhíyyih Khánúm interjected at this point by remarking: "But, Shoghi Effendi, people in America only marry for love!") Yes, they idolize love; they only think of love. They idolize their wives; they idolize their money; they idolize their friends; they idolize their homes; they idolize their possessions. They have no principles — just possessions.

There are three types of marriage being practiced in the world today. None of them conforms to the Bahá'í principles of marriage. The first is the so-called "romantic" marriage of the west. This is the least successful type of marriage. The second is the marriage of convenience practiced in Europe — in which the marriage is intended to benefit the social or financial position of the partners and there is usually a mistress in the background. The third is the arranged marriage of the east — of which there are several kinds. In the Bahá'í marriage the two people must choose each other, and the four parents must give their consent to the marriage. The two people study each other's character before deciding to marry — to make sure that there are no character traits in the other person which would in time become intolerable and become the cause of separation.

period of transition when the believers will be almost spectators instead of participants. Look at them even now. How many items of American news are in my Convention message — as compared to Africa and the Orient? Their news bulletin contains only programs, agendas, marriages, death, etc. And they do not even know how to present the news of the victories of the Faith in other areas. The American "Bahá'í News" has become an international organ of news. But the Committee does not seem to know how to report the victories all over the world.

The black and the brown races will lead the world. They will rise up — through materialism, education and other means. The white race will go down — through the retributive calamity. An equipoise will be established among the nations, and then they will go forward into the World Commonwealth of the future on the basis of equality. The black race of Africa has been protected by God through their geographical isolation from the rest of the world. The African people will play a very important role in the World Commonwealth of the future.

The American people are too fond of their central heaters, their comforts. They are not willing to sacrifice. Victories come only through self-abnegation and sacrifice. The American believers should not only leave their homes and go pioneering; they should go as far away as possible — to the other ends of the earth. Otherwise they will go as refugees — bankrupt both materially and spiritually. The Bahá'ís should be willing to lower their standard of living in order to teach and serve the Faith. The Americans already have far too high a

standard of living.

There is a great distinction between pioneering and dispersal. In the past I appealed to the American Bahá'ís to pioneer — to arise and sacrifice for the sake of the Faith and to meet the needs of the Faith. But when I saw that they did not respond to my appeals and saw in what danger they were, as a loving father I advised them to save themselves. I urged them to disperse to the farthest corners of the earth — and to take with them all those things which they love more than the Faith: their money, their cars, their refrigerators — their wives! (His eyes lit up with amusement and triumph as he added “wives!”) But this is dispersal, and it is very different from pioneering which is done with sacrifice and for the love of the Faith.

(As soon as the Guardian had left the dinner table that night Rúhíyyih Khánum told us that she had never before heard the Guardian speak so strongly and feeling to the pilgrims as he had that evening on the above subjects.)

(Towards the close of the evening discussions the Guardian would sometimes be asked questions by the pilgrims. On this occasion, I explained to the Guardian that a thought has arisen that the African believers could build local Bahá'í centers in the villages, constructed of temporary materials, but that it was not clear to us whether we were permitted to go outside and beyond the goals of the Plan.) There is nothing to prevent you from going beyond the Plan. By all means, go ahead and build local Ḥazíratu'l-Quds if you can. The African believers must not be pressed to build such centers but encouraged. The most important thing is that there should be at least one Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in every country or territory, as in the Plan.

Plans are like blue-prints, skeletons onto which flesh is to be put. Supplementary achievements of all kinds are very desirable and certainly to be encouraged. But of course the specific goals of the Plan must also be won.

(One of the pilgrims, Alice Dudley, an American pioneer to France, was soon to leave Haifa. The Guardian spoke of the work of the Faith in France, which was soon to have its own National Spiritual Assembly.) There is need of extension teaching in France. There are five Local Spiritual Assemblies now. Only those five can participate in the election of the National Spiritual Assembly next Riḍván. The believers in Paris should go north to teach; from Orleans they go west and north; from Chateauraux, south to Lyon.

Mrs. Dudley should go behind the “iron curtain” to teach — later, after the National Spiritual Assembly of France has been formed. There are six provinces that do not have believers in them: the three Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), also the Ukraine, Moldavia and White Russia. It would be highly meritorious to open these areas to the Faith.

(The Guardian said that he had been receiving cablegrams all day containing news of the formation of Assemblies in Salzburg, Innsbruck, Milano and Hiroshima. Over 1,000 local Assemblies were elected on the first day of Riḍván.

(To me, he said) When the National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa cabled me the progress of the administrative activities, I answered them with an appeal for teaching!

(When asked by Mrs. Dudley if the French Community could go ahead and acquire their temple site even before their new Plan begins, the Guardian replied.) I would not mind if the temple land were bought before the Plan begins — I would think of something more spectacular for you to do!

(The Guardian asked me if I had seen the photograph of the first African Bahá'ís which he had placed on the wall in a room in the Mansion of Bahjí.) Mr. Max Kanierezy is in it, isn't he? Where is Mr. Kanierezy? He is in Uganda, isn't he? He is on the new National Spiritual Assembly. (I had seen the picture to which the Guardian referred. In it are Mr. Enoch Olinga, Mr. Fred Bigabwe and Mr. Crispian Kajubi — three of the first believers in Uganda. It does not, however, include Mr. Kanierezy.)

(As he was leaving the dining room, the Guardian wished us all a very happy Feast of Ridván.)

### **23rd April.**

(When Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum arrived at the Western Pilgrim House for dinner, she told the pilgrims that the Guardian, during his meeting with the Persian women pilgrims just ended, had been asked if the hydrogen bomb would be used. He had replied, "Yes." Rúhíyyih Khánum said that that question had not been asked of the Guardian before; and as it was an important question, she thought we would be interested in the Guardian's reply.

Rúhíyyih Khánum later told me that the Guardian, commenting on a quotation from Winston Churchill which had had read in the Manchester "Guardian", a British newspaper, had said that Churchill's warning concerning the contamination of the atmosphere which would result from a nuclear war was the closest forecast he had read by a world statesman of what would be the most serious result of nuclear war.)

(Mrs. Florence Mayberry had arrived as a pilgrim, and the Guardian asked her about the receptivity of the people of America to the Faith.) We should not be surprised if the American people are not receptive, as America is the stronghold of materialism. Europe is the cradle of materialism.

The time has come for the destruction of the world — for the destruction of the systems of the world: political, economic, social and religious. The economy of the world will collapse. The dollar will become totally valueless. The world-wide retributive calamity will burn, purify and weld the people of the world. This is the function of fire — to burn, purify and weld.

The Lesser Peace will come in the Formative Age, in this century. The unified outer world must be merged with the Bahá'í World Order. This will begin the



spiritualization of the world. The world must be spiritualized. The Golden Age will appear towards the end of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh. Then the World Civilization will be born and will extend over a period of 500,000 years. The Golden Age of Bahá'u'lláh is only the birth of the World Civilization. After the World Order has been established, the Golden Age will come, and the World Civilization will be born.

(The Guardian was asked a question concerning whether or not the next Manifestation of God would be opposed by the people of the world, as had Bahá'u'lláh and all former Messengers of God.) In the future, when the next Manifestation appears, the Guardian of the Cause at that time will tell the believers who the Manifestation is and will call on them to accept Him. What is the use of the infallibility of the Guardian if he does not do this? This is one of the very important things that he will do. Opposition to the next Manifestation will thus be much less than in former times — that is to say, the area of opposition will be reduced. “This is the day that shall not be followed by night” means that divine guidance will not again be withdrawn from the world. This civilization which we are beginning to build now will not decline. Other Manifestations will change the institutions and the laws, but there will be no decline. The earth will be the footstool of the throne of God. The throne is in heaven and the footstool on earth.

(Mrs. Mayberry is an Auxiliary Board member, and the Guardian spoke to her on the subject of the Hands of the Cause and the Auxiliary Boards.) The function of the Auxiliary Board members is to remind the friends of their Bahá'í duties and responsibilities. The Auxiliary Board members should be in continual close touch with the Hands of the Cause. They should meet together with the Hands several times a year — once is not enough. (In response to a question about the distances and difficulties of travel in Africa, the Guardian said that this frequency of meeting with the Hands of the Cause should be “if feasible”.)

The Bahá'ís must teach the Faith through their conduct — rectitude of conduct. The African people will look to the pioneers to be more kind, more just. You must administer the Faith with justice.

You should not fear the church. You should defend the Faith before the missionaries. The sooner the opposition comes the better it is. But you should do nothing to provoke opposition or cause it to come earlier than it should. The African believers should defend the Faith against the missionaries — after consultation with the National Spiritual Assembly. (The Guardian was notably enthusiastic about opposition.) We must be careful with government — and reckless with missionaries! We must be very careful with the Government in South Africa. (In using the word “reckless” with the missionaries, the Guardian seemed to be expressing his zest for believers' defense of the Faith before the missionaries. He clearly was not implying that the believers should be careless, foolish or rash in their contact with missionaries.)

There are seven stages through which the Faith will pass in all countries in the

course of its establishment and emergence: obscurity, repression, emancipation, recognition as an independent religion, establishment as the state religion, the emergence of a Bahá'í state and finally the coming into being of the Bahá'í World Commonwealth. In the various countries these stages may be either long or short, and in some places one or the other stage may be missed altogether.

(Again, as on the previous evening, the Guardian spoke to Mrs. Alice Dudley about France.) More American pioneers are needed in France — pioneers who will settle and stay there whatever happens. We need French Olingas! The pioneers to France and the French pioneers should follow the example of the African pioneers in settling and teaching.

(The Guardian again told Mrs. Alice Dudley to go to the Balkans — later, when it would be possible for her to leave France for a time.) There are the most important places behind the Iron Curtain, as they were once independent states and soon will be so again.

#### **24th April.**

(Once again, as on the previous evening, the Guardian spoke of the functions of the Hands of the Cause and the Auxiliary Boards.) The function of the Auxiliary Boards is to encourage the friends, to remind them of their duties and responsibilities, especially their responsibility to pioneer. The National Spiritual Assemblies should report the conditions and needs of the Faith to the Hands of the Cause, and the Hands should inform the Auxiliary Board members of these conditions and needs. The Auxiliary Board members should do what they can to meet these needs — especially the need for pioneers.

The Hands of the Cause should travel as much as possible. When they do not have administrative duties, they should travel as much as possible. This is their responsibility — to travel and encourage the friends. The Hands of the Cause on each continent must work and consult together as a body, and the Auxiliary Board members on each continent are responsible to this body of the Hands of the Cause on their continent.

There is a hierarchy in the Faith. You must not be afraid to teach the people that we have a hierarchy. In the west they do not like hierarchies, but they must understand that the Faith has a definite hierarchy. The Bahá'í hierarchy is composed as follows. At the top is the function of interpretation — the Guardianship; next comes protection — eventually the function of the Hands of the Cause; then comes propagation — now in the hands of the Assemblies, but in the future the responsibility of the Hands of the Cause; and finally administration — the Assemblies. The primary function of the Guardian is interpretation, of the Hands protection and propagation, of the Assemblies government.

The believers should not be afraid to teach about the Bahá'í hierarchy. The Bahá'í hierarchy should be compared with the hierarchy of the Catholic Church — the Pope, the Cardinals, the Archbishops, the Bishops, etc. In the Catholic

Church individuals do the administering and groups do the teaching. It is the opposite in the Faith. Individuals are responsible for the teaching work — the Hands of the Cause; and the groups are responsible for the administration — the Assemblies.

Later the Hands of the Cause will have all the teaching work in their charge. The Auxiliary Boards are only the beginning. Later the Hands of the Cause will have their own hierarchy — with the Auxiliary Boards and each Auxiliary Board member having his own Committees to help him. Later the Assemblies are to be concerned only with government, and all the teaching work will be the responsibility of the Hands of the Cause.

I noticed in the Annual Report of the American National Assembly that a report of the Hands of the Cause is printed just ahead of the National Committee reports. This is all wrong. The Hands of the Cause are not on the same level as the National Committees. The friends do not understand. The Hands of the Cause rank far above the National Assemblies. The Hands do not report to the National Assemblies. On the contrary, the National Assemblies report to the Hands. The Hands of the Cause are to be venerated. In America today they do not know the meaning of the word veneration. Look how they treat their parents — especially the youth of America. They must learn to venerate their parents. They must venerate the Hands of the Cause.

In England and Germany and, to a degree, in France the believers are disciplined, but it is not so in America and Africa. The friends must be reminded of their duties. They are holy duties. The African friends particularly must learn to accept their responsibilities. They must teach and take part in the Bahá'í administration.

Concerning drinking, the Bahá'ís must learn to obey the Bahá'í law. They must be told and they must know that eventually they will have to obey the laws. You must tell them the laws; then remind them that they must obey; then warn them; and then warn them again. They must come to know that eventually they will have to obey the laws.

The believers in America should pioneer. The flow of pioneers has almost stopped. This is a great detriment to the Faith. America is a large reservoir which must not dry up. The pioneers should copy the example of Marion Jack — “General” Jack. She was dedicated and consecrated. She did not leave her post — despite the fact that I advised her to go.

(The Guardian was asked by Mrs. Mayberry to speak about child education.) You should look at what the non-Bahá'ís do and do the opposite! That is the general principle. It is good to have Bahá'í children's classes, but the machinery is not as important as to know the principles involved. The machinery is a means to an end, and you should know what the end should be.

The parents, especially the mothers who are with the children more than the fathers, are responsible for the Bahá'í education of their children. The parents

must be strict in all matters. The mothers must exercise their influence when the child is young — not wait until it is too late. The parents must teach the children the difference between right and wrong, between good and bad! They must insist that the children do what is right and good. If the mothers neglect their duties, the children, when they come to the age of decision-making, will make the wrong decisions. All that parents think about today is ensuring the child's future financial success, security and position in the world — but not their spiritual character. The principle purpose of Bahá'í children's classes is the training of the children to have a spiritual character.

(The Guardian spoke in a light-hearted manner about Persian food.) Persian food is the richest food — it is poison, delicious poison. All the Persians have liver trouble. Now they are learning to give up animal fats. They are even taking vitamin pills. Do you find the Americans are more energetic from vitamin pills — or more excitable?!

(The Guardian told us of news received of 21 Local Spiritual Assemblies newly formed in East Africa — 9 in Kenya and 12 in Uganda.)

#### **25th April.**

(In the morning Rúhíyyih Khánúm had told me that the Guardian had said I was to have an extra day of pilgrimage in gratitude for certain help which I had given to her and because I had had malaria on the first day. That evening the Guardian confirmed this joy-producing information and told me that I would be spending the extra day at Bahjí.

On this particular evening, the Guardian included in his discussion many useful points about Africa. He also spoke again in detail about the international victories and statistics of the Faith.)

Regarding the need of pioneers in the Central and East Africa Region, the African friends will eventually be able to solve the problem of the pioneer needs in the territories other than Uganda. There are avenues open to them for teaching which are not open to the non-African pioneers. The National Spiritual Assembly must consult and solve this problem. (I asked if any pioneers could come to some of our Central and East African countries from other parts of Africa.) It is questionable whether pioneers can be spared from other parts of Africa for Uganda. There are all too few pioneers in Africa now. (Rúhíyyih Khánúm asked which pioneers in Africa we had in mind, and I replied that there were concentrations of Persian believers in some of the coastal areas.) The Persian believers like the coast because it is better for trade. (The Guardian smiled.)

The progress of the Faith in Africa is due to the lack of prejudice of the Persian believers. If you could get the African friends to open their hearts you would find that they have a great love for the Persian pioneers. The British are not as prejudiced as the Americans. The American believers in Africa have had much to learn about teaching in Africa from the Persians. It is very important that

association with the African people should be informal, spontaneous, friendly, consistent and continuous — but most of all informal.

It is essential that the pioneers and the African believers visit among the village communities. The National Spiritual Assembly must arrange this. The National Spiritual Assembly must ensure that the local communities receive visitors. Visitors are the life-blood of the Faith. Without the circulation of this life-blood the village communities will die.

(I asked if women pioneers could travel to the villages and whether they could travel alone or should be accompanied.) Yes, the women pioneers can and must travel — along or accompanied. (Rúhíyyih Khánum asked about the effect of this on the missionaries as it might be contrary to the customs of the people.) It does not matter that this is contrary to the customs of the people. The benefits to be gained are most important. But wisdom must, of course, be exercised.

The use of “visual aids” is very important in the teaching work in Africa. These “visual aids” include the pioneers themselves and their cars — moving through the villages; also the Bahá’í buildings, books, slide, photographs, rings, etc.

The African friends must be warned now that opposition to the Faith is coming. You must tell the African friends that the missionaries are their age-old enemies who have long made the African people their tools. They should be told to expect opposition in the form of falsehoods told to the government about the Faith by the missionaries, especially falsehoods about the pioneers so as to have them sent out of the country. They must be urged to remain steadfast.

Some of the pioneers may be made to leave their posts. They should not put their roots down too deeply so that they will not have difficulty or find it too painful when and if the time comes that they have to pull them up again. Tell John Allen not to put all his eggs in one basket. (The Guardian knew that Mr. and Mrs. Allen were friends of mine, and he spoke directly to me at this point.)

You must expect defection among the African believers when opposition comes. But you must not let this worry you. When the opposition comes, it will be like a strong wind blowing the “tree of life”. All the dead leaves will be blown away, and afterwards you will know that the leaves that remain on the tree are strong and healthy. In those days some of the believers whom you thought were strong will completely disappear and others, of whom you were hardly aware, will prove themselves to be the pillars of the Faith.

These points and warnings concerning opposition should not be put in the newsletters or in correspondence — they should not be disseminated in printed form. The traveling teachers must do this work of explaining about the opposition. This subject should be discussed at conferences, the conventions, the weekend-schools, at the gatherings of the believers. These discussions will help the friends to become conscious of Bahá’í community life. It is very important that the African believers should have a feeling that they are members of a

strong world-wide community.

The American Negroes are infected with materialism. The African believers will probably have to go to the United States to teach them. But it should not have to be like that. The Bahá'ís of America must be more aggressive in teaching the Negro people of the south.

(I mentioned to the Guardian that a very fine chief, Seth Nyakahuma, had come into the Faith recently in Uganda.) Avoid the chiefs; they are politically-minded; they have impure motives. Chiefs may lead their people into the Faith, but they may lead them out of the faith again as quickly as they lead them in. This may cause great trouble. It is an eastern trait to approach higher-ups — because orientals like association with important people. Seek the pure-hearted Africans. The educated Africans are acceptable if they have no political or material ambitions. You will not find many Enoch Olingas.

(I had been requested by two of the pioneers in Kenya, Mr. and Mrs. Allen Elston, to enquire from the Guardian as to the advisability of Mr. Elston holding a job in a firm owned and run by a member of the Ismaili Community. The Guardian's reply went beyond simply answering my question.) You should avoid the Ismailis. There is no possibility of their becoming Bahá'ís. On the contrary, they are our potential enemies. You should stay away from them. They are jealous of us. You should also avoid the Indians, the Europeans and the Arabs. The Indians want money and the Europeans political supremacy. You should avoid the Arab Moslems — they are jealous of us. They are dangerous to us. You can teach the Faith to the African Moslems — because they are still pure-hearted and can respond. But the Indian Moslems and the Arab Moslems are our potential enemies and are to be avoided. Of course, Mr. Elston should be leave his job and endanger his ability to stay in Africa. But they should not try to teach the Faith to the Ismailis.

(Before the following explanation, which introduced a subject totally unrelated to the previous subjects of the evening, the beloved Guardian paused for quite some minutes in his conversation; and then without any preface to his remarks, he made the following statement.) People wonder what happened to the body of Christ after the crucifixion. It was buried by the disciples under the wall of Jerusalem to protect it from the Roman legions. It remained buried there for some 260 years. (The Guardian gave the exact number of years but afterwards none of the pilgrims could remember precisely the number.) It remained buried under the wall of Jerusalem until the mother of the Emperor Constantine, who had herself become a Christian, came to Jerusalem and had the Church of the Holy Sepulcher built — at which time the body of Christ was removed from under the wall of the city and was placed under the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. And that is where it is today. The Bahá'ís should be aware of this fact when they visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which is the holiest place in Christendom.

The Bahá'ís when they come to the Holy Land should come first to Haifa and

‘Akká for their pilgrimage to the Bahá’í Holy Shrines. Then after their pilgrimage they should visit the Jewish, Christian and Moslem Holy Places in the Holy Land so that they can compare them with the Bahá’í Holy Places.

The Bahá’í pilgrimage is to the Holy Shrines and the Holy Places. (This remark was made in the context of the pilgrimage not being for the purpose of meeting the Guardian — but for the purpose of worshipping at the Holy Shrines.) In the future, the pilgrimage, which will be obligatory for the men, will be to nine Holy Places and will be performed in this order: the House of the Báb in Shíráz; the House of Bahá’u’lláh in Tíhrán; the place of the Martyrdom of the Báb in Tabriz; the House of Bahá’u’lláh in Baghdád; the House of Bahá’u’lláh in Istanbul (Constantinople); the House of Bahá’u’lláh in Edirne (Adrianople); the Shrine of the Báb in Haifa; the Most Great Prison in ‘Akká; and the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh at Bahjí. Special visitation prayers have been revealed which will be said when approaching each of these Holy Places.

(I had been speaking to Rúhíyyih Khánum in the morning and had asked her if the Guardian had ever been asked about the permissibility of contraception. She said that he had told other pilgrims that there is nothing in the Holy Writings about it. In the evening, Rúhíyyih Khánum asked this same question of the Guardian.) There is nothing in the Holy Writings on this subject. It will be up to the Universal House of Justice to decide about it.

## **26th April.**

I have been receiving and answering cablegrams all day. (The Guardian appeared to be very tired. The cablegrams he referred to were those sent to him from the various National Conventions throughout the world.)

There are now 252 countries opened to the Faith. Chagos Archipelago has been opened by a believer from Mauritius Island. The Faith in the capital of Mauritius, Port Louis, has been registered. The Canadians have offered an alternative to Anticosti Island, but I would rather that it be a supplement. Nothing that happens in territories other than those mentioned in the Ten Year Plan will be added to the Plan.

There is no restriction on what the believers should do. I have encouraged the friends to buy more endowments. I have told them where to buy temple land. I have asked them to obtain at least one Ḥazíratu’l-Quds in ever territory. In Africa the endowments can be anywhere in the territory — where the land is cheapest. They need not be in the important cities. In Africa land can be obtained cheaply — not so in Europe. In South America it is not very expensive.

(In response to a question about the organization of the teaching work in Africa, the Guardian commented as follows.) In the northwestern area of Africa there must be a Regional Teaching Committee for the whole region — with sub-committees for the various countries or for smaller areas. This is because the region is so large. The general pattern which is good is a Regional Committee

for the whole region and sub-committees for the territories that are within the region. But the other three National Spiritual Assemblies must study the situation to find their own best solutions. It is not necessary for each National Assembly to have the same system. In fact, you should encourage them to try different methods. We insist on uniformity in matters of principle, but we encourage diversity in lesser matters.

If the members of the Committees cannot travel, because of distance and expense, much can be done by correspondence. As with the Convention delegates who need not attend to Convention, Committee members need not necessarily attend all the meetings.

The National Spiritual Assembly of Central and East Africa must ensure that the Pygmies are reached. It is their responsibility. All such minority groups must be reached — the Berbers, the Somalis, the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, the Pygmies. In the United States there must be a committee for miscellaneous minorities, with a sub-committee for each minority.

The fund is the individual responsibility of each believer and the responsibility of each Assembly. Contributions must be a sacrifice by the individuals and must be voluntary and steady. Every believer should watch the needs of the Cause and contribute where they see the need is greatest. It is at the discretion of the people how they make their contributions. In Africa the National Spiritual Assemblies should make token contributions to the International Fund in order to be a part of the unity of giving of the world-wide community.

The African friends must learn to sacrifice for the fund. They should be encouraged to contribute to the Temple Fund. Only through sacrifice will the Cause and the teaching work prosper. In America the friends have to realize that they have been helped for fifty years with their temple. Now they must repay their debt. They must lower their standard of living in order to contribute more.

#### **April 27th.**

(This was the day and night of my second visit to Bahjí and the Most Holy Shrines.)

#### **April 28th.**

(On this last evening with the beloved Guardian, I was the only pilgrim at the dinner table, as Mrs. Mayberry and the Persian pilgrims were still in ‘Akká. The Guardian welcomed Hand of the Cause Charles Mason Remey and asked him if he had a good trip to America.)

How is the Faith progressing in Washington, D.C.? It is very important that the Faith should be firmly established in the capital city of the United States. This is an important responsibility of the American believers.

(The Guardian then spoke of the Temples.) The plans are ready for the Kampala



and Sydney Temples. The Kampala Temple can now be widely publicized among the believers of the world. Photographs of the progress of the building work should be sent for publication in the Bahá'í news organs. Publicity among the Bahá'ís of Africa should be constant and wide-spread. But there should be no publicity among the non-Bahá'ís — in the press or anywhere else. It would be dangerous to do that, as the missionaries are very watchful and might try to cause the government to prevent the building of the Temple. Tell the National Spiritual Assembly that they must act quickly and quietly to ensure that the Temple is built.

It is very important that there should be firm, harmonious relationships between the Bahá'ís and the Uganda government. Philip Hainsworth should act as a liaison between the National Spiritual Assembly and the government. It is providential that he occupies a position in the government. It is a very grave and important responsibility which he has — to establish the firmest and most harmonious relationship with the government authorities in order to safeguard the building of the Temple. The National Spiritual Assembly must consult and instruct Philip what he is to do, and Philip must carry out the instructions of the Assembly. Tell this to the National Assembly and to Philip.

Will your husband visit Egypt en route to England? No? I hope he can see his father in Libya. It is many years that they have not met. I hope you will try to meet his father in Libya, and I hope you will go to Fezzan. This is a most important place for the Faith to be established because it is the place to which 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd wanted to banish 'Abdu'l-Bahá. There is a center there now — there must be a Spiritual Assembly. Tell Fuad Rushdy that he should try to stay in Fezzan.

(Rúḥíyyih Khánúm asked the Guardian if he knew that Fuad Rushdy is my husband's cousin. He said yes, that he did know this.) Abdel Rahman Rushdy and Abdel Fattah Sabri, one in Alexandria and the other in Cairo, are brothers. This is one of the staunchest Bahá'í families in Egypt. Abdel Fattah Sabri is the pillar of the Faith in Egypt. He must be very proud of his son's pioneer services in Africa. Please tell Mr. Sabri to urge the Egyptian friends to pioneer to Libya, especially to Fezzan, as this is a most important place to which they wanted to banish the Master.

(My husband, Ḥasan, and I had wanted to make this pilgrimage together. But the Guardian had replied to our request by asking Ḥasan to postpone his pilgrimage while welcoming me. It seems clear to us at the time that the postponement of Ḥasan's visit to the Holy Land related to the war between Egypt and Israel the previous year, as Ḥasan's country of origin is Egypt. On this final night of my pilgrimage, I asked the beloved Guardian if Ḥasan would be able to make the pilgrimage in the future.)

Yes, Ḥasan is welcome to Haifa. He should come in February or March, 1958, a year from now. Is that convenient? (I replied that he might not be able to have leave from his job so soon again.) No — then he should come in May, 1959.

I am sending with you to the Hand of the Cause Musa Banání a piece of the plaster from the ceiling of the room in which the Holy Báb was incarcerated in the Prison Fortress of Mah-Ku. This is a most important room, for it is the room in which the Báb revealed His Book of Laws, in which book is contained His Covenant. This is the important difference between the Báb's Covenant and the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh. Both the Báb's Laws and His Covenant are contained in one book. Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant is in a separate book from His book of Laws.

You will yourself carry this piece of plaster to Mr. Banání and will tell him what I have told you about it. Tell him it is to be placed in the foundation of the Kampala Temple on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone. Mr. Banání will be my representative at the laying of the foundation stone, and he will place the plaster in its position with his own hands. A photograph must be made of this important event. (The beloved Guardian then took from his pocket a small, beautifully inlaid Persian mosaic box wrapped in a many-colored Persian silk handkerchief. He opened the box and removed the plaster which was wrapped in a piece of paper on which was written a statement, in Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum's handwriting, explaining what the plaster is. He then replaced the plaster and the paper in the box, again wrapped it in the silk handkerchief and handed it to me.)

Your work has not ended. It has only just begun. When you go back to Africa, you must be active in confirming many more new believers, in establishing many more new centers, and many more Local Spiritual Assemblies. New believers revitalized the Faith; new centers broaden its basis; new Assemblies consolidate it. New believers bring new centers; new centers bring new Local Spiritual Assemblies; new Local Spiritual Assemblies bring new National Spiritual Assemblies; and new National Spiritual Assemblies bring new Temples! (He gave this last series of in a tone of rising enthusiasm and, when he said "bring new Temples", he was smiling very broadly and triumphantly.) I want more believers, more centers, more Assemblies. Now is the time for the people of African to come into the Faith. Africa is like a dry field of grass. The Faith can spread across Africa like a flame.

(As this was the final night of my pilgrimage and my final opportunity for asking questions, I overcome my shyness and spoke to the Guardian of the perplexity which I and some of the other pioneers in Uganda felt at realizing how very little the newly declared African believers really know about the Faith.)

You cannot expect the illiterate African friends to understand much about the Faith. Watch them closely — watch their spirits. If the people are strongly attracted, if they are enthusiastic about the Faith, accept their declarations — even though they know little about the Teachings. This is a most delicate matter. You must watch closely for their reactions to the Faith. If they are enthusiastic, eager and have pure motives, accept them. Tell them that there is nothing to be gained from becoming Bahá'í except the blessing of sacrifice. Do not be too rigid about accepting their declarations — and do not be too right

about letting them leave the Faith. They have the right to leave the Faith if they want to, and you must let them do so if they find they really cannot accept the teachings and principles of the Faith as they come to know of them. The doors of the Faith must be wide open for them to come into it, and open also for them to leave it if they really cannot accept the teachings. Some who are weak will grow to be strong and will be good teachers. Some will drop out. It does not matter if they know very little. They cannot be expected to know very much. The work of the pioneers is to keep the doors of the Faith open. And they should not stand in the doorway!

In America they teach the Faith by discussion and argument to convince. This is because the people are so materialistic. In Africa the people are not materialistic — hence they are more pure-hearted and responsive. In Persia they teach through the heart. The American believers must learn to teach through the heart.

(I had been wondering exactly what the Guardian referred to when he so often wrote about the “purity of heart” of the African people. I asked him to elaborate on this theme.)

When I speak of their purity of heart, I mean one thing and one thing only. I mean that they are not materialistic — that they have the capacity to live happily with new material possessions. When you see that the people have become materialistic, you will know that they have lost their purity of heart.

Materialism is like a cancer which is beginning to spread in Africa. It has already started in the cities and is now spreading outward from the cities to the villages. If you want to reach the pure in heart who are the spiritually receptive people, you must go as far away from the cities as possible — to the villages which have not yet been touched by the cancer of materialism. This spreading cancer of materialism will ultimately envelop the whole continent. The people of Africa are entering a long dark valley of materialism. Once this happens, it will be a long time before they come out of that valley. You must hurry. The time will come when the pioneers will be like spectators sitting on the sidelines, hardly able to do anything because of the materialism which will deprive the African people of their purity of heart and their spiritual receptivity. You must hurry, hurry! If you lose this opportunity, it will be a long time before it will come again.

The pagan peoples in the remote villages are the purest in heart and the most receptive people in Africa. You should go to the places which are farthest from the cities and are where the pagan people are to be found. There are still large numbers of pagan people in Africa. Try to find them and attract them to the Faith.

(Some of the Bahá'í friends hold the view that the Guardian is all-knowing and that it is, therefore, not necessary in writing reports to him to include all the facts. This, in my view, could result in reports that do not give a clear picture and could be misleading to the Guardian. I decided to ask the

Guardian to clarify this matter. He replied to my explanation and question in a very emphatic tone.) I must be told all the facts. Nothing must be withheld from me. How can I give the best advice if I do not have all the facts before me?

(The beloved Guardian spoke of the Temple designs which were ready. Hand of the Cause Leroy Ioas was asked to bring the designs to the dinner table. The Guardian showed the plan for the German Temple to Hand of the Cause Mason Remey and asked Mason what he thought of it, as it had been designed by a non-Bahá'í German architect. Mason said he thought it was good and that he liked the dome. Then the Guardian showed the Australian design to Mason — with the changes the Australian friends had made in the columns. Then he showed him the Persian plan and told him that its construction was to be definitely postponed. Lastly he showed him and me the Kampala design. The Guardian commented on the shame of the dome being like the Shrine of the Báb and said that he liked the lantern on the top.) The Kampala Temple is being built because the Persian Temple cannot be built. The Persian Temple will cost about £350,000, the German one about £100,000, and the Kampala Temple about £50,000 or £60,000. Millie (Hand of the Cause Amelia Collins) has contributed £100,000 for this project. I have given two-fifths of the cost. So there are two-fifths still to be given by the 4,300 Bahá'í centers in the world. It works out about \$18 per center.

The believers all over the world must now start contributing for the building of the Australian and Kampala Temples — especially the Americans for whose Temple the Bahá'ís of the world, especially the Persian, contributed for 50 years.

(The Guardian asked Mason how he like having two of his Temples under construction at the same time. He also asked Mason if he is prepared to draw the plans for forty more Temples, as land is to be acquired for fifty temples during the Ten Year Crusade.)

(Taking from his pocket a small metal phial containing a glass phial of perfume, the Guardian said to me):

I am giving you this attar of roses to take back with you to the friends. Please, share it especially with the African believers. How many African believers are on the National Assembly? Four — that is good.

(The beloved Guardian left the dinner table on that final, memorable evening at 11 PM. As he disappeared through the doorway, I wondered with very heavy heart if I would ever meet him again. Six months later he has “winged his flight” to the Abhá Kingdom, and life has never been the same again.

The zest and zeal, the eagerness and enthusiasm, the certitude and consecration of Shoghi Effendi were the very breath of life to those who served our Lord in his day. The warmth and gentleness of his love and kindness, his encouragement and inspiration were the experience of every pilgrim. But far and away the most distinctive characteristics which were graven upon the memory were the

manifest nobility of nature, the deep strength of intellect, the burning single-mindedness of purpose, and the profoundly guided depth of insight and wisdom of the Guardian of the Cause of God.)

[end]