

# III. From the Writings of Shoghi Effendi and Letters Written on His Behalf:

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi

Original English



## III. From the Writings of Shoghi Effendi and Letters Written on His Behalf:

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For the members of the Children's Educational Work Committee ... I supplicate Divine Assistance, that He may graciously aid them in a work which was so near and dear to the Master's heart and enable them to assist in the rise of future devoted and efficient servants to the Cause of God.

From a letter 23 December 1922 written by Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada, 'Bahá'í Administration', p. 29

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They must promote by every means in their power the material as well as the spiritual enlightenment of youth, the means for the education of children, institute, whenever possible,



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Bahá'í educational institutions, organize and supervise their work and provide the best means for their progress[pg 294] and development.

From a letter 12 March 1923 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of America, Australasia, France, Germany, British Isles, Italy, Japan and Switzerland  
'Bahá'í Administration', p. 38

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As to the spiritual activities of the “Children of the Kingdom” in America, my hope and prayer is that they may grow to become efficient servants of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Their devotion and self-sacrifice, their readiness to help the cause of the Bahá'í Temple, their activity in connection with the “Bahá'í Magazine” these are all unmistakable signs of the glorious future of the Cause in that land. May the care and loving-kindness of the Heavenly Father guide them, protect them and aid them in their future mission in life.

From a letter 26 November 1923 written by Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada

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A basic and vital requirement of these days is the matter of educating the boys and girls. One of the duties devolving upon the members of Spiritual Assemblies is that, with the support of the friends, they should exert all their powers to establish schools for the instruction of boys and girls in the things of the spirit, the fundamentals of teaching the Faith, reading the Sacred Writings, learning the history of the Faith, the secular branches of knowledge, the various arts and skills, and the different languages — so that Bahá'í methods of instruction will become so widely known that children from every level of society will seek to acquire divine teachings as well as secular knowledge in Bahá'í schools, and thereby means for the promotion of the Cause of God will be provided.

From a letter 19 December 1923 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Local  
Spiritual Assembly of Tīhrán, Írán — translated from the Persian

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The “Magazine of the Children of the Kingdom”, the latest issue of which I have just received from that indefatigable pioneer of your cause, ... has kindled in me such fresh hopes that I feel moved to send you this message of love and confidence in the great part you are destined to play for the future of the Cause.

I feel it is urgent and important that this first and only organ of the Bahá'í youth throughout the world should, in whatever it publishes, instil in its readers, and particularly in every Bahá'í child, the sense of his unique opportunities and future responsibilities in the great task that awaits him in future.

Its duty is to initiate, promote and mirror forth the various activities of the rising generation throughout the Bahá'í world, to establish and [pg 295] strengthen a bond of true fellowship amongst all the children of 'Abdu'l-Bahá whether in the East or in the West, and to unfold to their eyes the vision of a golden future before them. It should impress upon their hearts the vital necessity of establishing, now, whilst in their tender age, a firm foundation for their mission in life.

The cause of the Children of the Kingdom, whom the Master so loved, and on whom He showered many a blessing and infinite loving-kindness, is, I assure you, still dear and close to our hearts. In you, the descendants of the heroic pioneers of a world Movement, rests the hope of achieving the task which they have so nobly begun — their task for the service and salvation of all mankind.

As to my humble share of service and support, I can but pray on your behalf, and supplicate during my hours of prayer at the three Holy Shrines, the guidance, the blessings, and the assistance of Bahá'u'lláh, beseeching Him most fervently to enable you, in the happy days to come, to establish His Kingdom and fulfil His Word.

May your Magazine inspire you to achieve this end.

From a Letter 30 December 1923 written by Shoghi Effendi to the Magazine of the Children of the Kingdom, Boston, U.S.A.

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'Abdu'l-Bahá has always attached very great importance to the education of children and we take this opportunity to congratulate you on your signal success in this field of service. We hope some day your work will extend into the East extensively where it is so badly needed.

From a letter 9 April 1925 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 104 —

In connection with the question that you had asked as to whether you should take a trip to the Holy Land or keep the sum to defray the expense of a young man you are educating. Shoghi Effendi wishes me to write you that although it means profound pleasure to him and to the members of the holy family, to welcome you in the home of our beloved Master and to share with you the eternal outpourings of His Grace in and around His blessed Shrine, he deems it of greater importance for you to keep up helping the young boy whom you have undertaken to educate. This he would advise you with a deep realization of Bahá'u'lláh's most pregnant[pg 296] utterance that he who educates his child or another's it is just as though he is educating a child of Bahá'u'lláh Himself.

From a letter 29 May 1925 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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Among the sacred obligations devolving upon the Spiritual Assemblies is the promotion of learning, the establishing of schools and creation of the necessary academic equipment and facilities for every boy and girl.

Every child, without exception, must from his earliest years make a thorough study of the art of reading and writing, and according to his own tastes and inclinations and the degree of his capacity and powers, devote extreme diligence to the acquisition of learning beneficial arts and skills, various languages, speech, and contemporary technology.

To assist the children of the poor in the attainment of these accomplishments, and particularly in learning the basic subjects, is incumbent upon the members of the Spiritual Assemblies, and is accounted as one of the obligations laid upon the conscience of the trustees of God in every land.

“He that bringeth up his son or the son of another, it is as though he hath brought up a son of Mine; upon him rest My Glory, My Loving-Kindness, My Mercy, that have compassed the world.”<sup>1</sup>

From a letter 8 June 1925 written by Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of Persia

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Shoghi Effendi was very interested to hear of the plans you are making for the education of your children. He hopes that they will all grow to be ardent adherents of the Bahá'í Cause, able servants of the Blessed Threshold, and eloquent speakers on religious and social subjects. He desires to be remembered to them as well as to their dear father.

From a letter 24 December 1925 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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We had heard through various channels the wonderful way your children had grown to speak about the Cause in public. Shoghi Effendi's [pg 297] hope is that they will, the three of them, become able and devoted speakers on the Cause and subjects akin to it. To do this properly they will need a firm foundation of scientific and literary training which fortunately they are

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<sup>1</sup> *“Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas”*

rev. ed. (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1982), p. 128.

obtaining. It is just as important for the Bahá'í young boys and girls to become properly educated in colleges of high standing as it is to be spiritually developed. The mental as well as the spiritual side of the youth has to be developed before he can serve the Cause efficiently.

... I will specially pray for your dear children, that they, too, firmly-grounded through a well-guided plan of sound education, may in days to come serve efficiently and effectively the Cause of God. They are richly endowed with gifts, and my prayer is that a proper training may enable them to utilize those gifts for the propagation of God's Faith.

From a letter 28 November 1926 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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In philanthropic enterprises and acts of charity, in promotion of the general welfare and furtherance of the public good including that of every group without any exceptions whatever, let the beloved of God attract the favourable attention of all, and lead all the rest.

Let them, freely and without charge, open the doors of their schools and their higher institutions for the study of sciences and the liberal arts, to non-Bahá'í children and youth who are poor and in need.

...and next is the propagation of learning and the promulgation of Bahá'í rules of conduct, practices and laws. At this time, when the nation has awakened out of its sleep of negligence, and the Government has begun to consider the promotion and expansion of its educational establishment, let the Bahá'í representatives in that country arise in such a manner that as a result of their high endeavours in every hamlet, village and town, of every province and district, preliminary measures will be taken for the setting up of institutions for the study of sciences, the liberal arts and religion. Let Bahá'í children without any exceptions learn the fundamentals of reading and writing and familiarize themselves with the rules of conduct, the customs, practices and laws as set forth in the Book of God; and let them, in the new branches of knowledge, in the arts and technology of the day, in pure and praiseworthy characteristics — Bahá'í conduct, the Bahá'í way of life — become so distinguished above the rest[pg 298] that all other communities,

whether Islámic, Zoroastrian, Christian, Judaic or materialist, will of their own volition and most gladly enter their children in such advanced Bahá'í institutions of learning and entrust them to the care of Bahá'í instructors.

So too is the promotion and execution of the laws set forth in the Book of God.

From a January 1929 written by Shoghi Effendi to the believers of the East — translated from the Persian

— 109 —

Your short but impressive letter addressed to Shoghi Effendi was received. He perused it with deep interest and charged me to thank you on his behalf and to express his fondest hopes that you will pursue with an abiding zeal your academic studies. Being a Bahá'í you are certainly aware of the fact that Bahá'u'lláh considered education as one of the most fundamental factors of a true civilization. This education, however, in order to be adequate and fruitful, should be comprehensive in nature and should take into consideration not only the physical and the intellectual side of man but also his spiritual and ethical aspects. This should be the programme of the Bahá'í youth all over the world.

From a letter 9 July 1931 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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We hope that before long the Bahá'ís will even afford to have schools that would provide the children the intellectual and spiritual education as prescribed in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Master.

From a letter 25 December 1931 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Local Spiritual Assembly of New York City

He is very glad to know that you attach importance to the training of the children, for whatever they learn in that early stage of their development will leave its traces upon their whole life. It becomes part of their nature.

There is no especial book which the Guardian can recommend. It is for the older friends to attempt a compilation that would suit that purpose, and after many attempts a good one will ultimately be produced.

The Master used to attach much importance to the learning by heart of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. During His days it was a usual work [pg 299] of the children of the household to learn Tablets by heart; now, however, those children are grown up and do not have time for such a thing. But the practice is most useful to implant the ideas and spirit those words contain into the mind of the children.

With "The Dawn-Breakers" in your possession you could also arrange interesting stories about the early days of the Movement which the children would like to hear. There are also stories about the life of Christ, Muḥammad and the other prophets which if told to the children will break down any religious prejudice they may have learned from older people of little understanding.

Such stories regarding the life of different prophets together with their sayings will also be useful to better understand the literature of the Cause for there is constant reference to them. It is however the work of experienced people to bring together such materials and make of them interesting text books for the children.

The Cause will gradually produce people who would answer these needs. It is only a question of time. What we should strive to do is to stimulate different individuals who have the talent to attempt the task.

From a letter 19 October 1932 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi  
to a Local Spiritual Assembly and a State Teaching Committee



He was deeply gratified to hear that the friends are attaching such a great importance to the teaching and training of Bahá'í children. The education of the youth is, undoubtedly, of paramount importance as it serves to deepen their understanding of the Cause and to canalize their energies along the most profitable lines. Inasmuch, however, as the national expenses of the Cause in America are daily increasing, the members of your Committee should be very careful not to extend beyond their financial resources the sphere of their activities. The plans your Committee has made should not develop to such an extent as to hamper the progress of the Temple work.

From a letter 20 April, 1933 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the members of the Committee on the Teaching and Training of Children, 'Bahá'í News' 77, September 1933, p. 2

Shoghi Effendi wishes you particularly to give all your attention to the education of your boys so that they may become sincere, loyal and active Bahá'ís. It is to the youth that we should look for help, and it is, therefore, the sacred obligation of the parents to provide their children with a thorough Bahá'í training.

From a letter 31 May 1933 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

The Bahá'í Faith ... advocates compulsory education...

From a June 1933 written by Shoghi Effendi to the High Commissioner for Palestine

He was deeply gratified to learn that your material conditions are improving and he sincerely hopes that they will give you an opportunity to give ... the best educational training, so that they may become, in a not distant future, devoted servants and champions of the Cause.

Your responsibility as a mother, and especially as a Bahá'í mother, whose sacred obligation is to look after the training of the children along Bahá'í lines, is indeed immense. It is hoped that through God's help and guidance you will be enabled to fully discharge your duties.

From a letter 22 July 1933 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

Shoghi Effendi was deeply saddened to learn from your letter... of the rather serious situation which your daughter's conduct and her general attitude towards the Cause have created...

Although he highly deplures this fact, and is fully aware of the bad repercussions which it may have on the Cause, yet he feels that nothing short of your motherly care and love and of the counsels which you and the friends can give her, can effectively remedy this situation. Above all, you should be patient, and confident that your efforts to that end are being sustained and guided through the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh. He is surely hearing your prayers, and will no doubt accept them, and thus hasten the gradual and complete materialization of your hopes and expectations for your daughter and for the Cause.

The Guardian would advise you, therefore, not to take any drastic action with regard to your daughter's attendance at the meetings... For in this way there is much greater chance to reform her character than through force or any other drastic method. Love and kindness have far[pg 30] greater influence than punishment upon the improvement of human character.

The Guardian, therefore, trusts that by this means you will succeed in gradually introducing a fundamental change in your daughter's life, and also in making of her a better and truer believer. He is fervently praying on her behalf that she may fully attain this station.

From a letter 26 January 1935 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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The Guardian sees no objection that reference be made to the fact that the teaching classes and conferences which the believers are now organizing might evolve in the distant future into departments of education, or such institutions of learning as will be established in the future Bahá'í social order.

From a letter 12 July 1938 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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As regards your plans: the Guardian fully approves indeed of your view that no matter how urgent and vital the requirements of the teaching work may be you should under no circumstances neglect the education of your children, as towards them you have an obligation no less sacred than towards the Cause.

Any plan or arrangement you may arrive at which would combine your twofold duties towards your family and the Cause, and would permit you to resume active work in the field of pioneer teaching, and also to take good care of your children so as to not jeopardize their future in the Cause would meet with the whole-hearted approval of the Guardian.

From a letter 17 July 1938 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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The Guardian wishes me to assure you, in particular, of his supplications on behalf of your children, that they may, through Divine confirmations and assistance, and under your loving care and protection, receive such training as may lead them to fully recognize and unreservedly accept the Faith, and provide them with the necessary spiritual equipment to effectively and loyally serve and promote its interests[pg 302] in the future.

As a Bahá'í mother you have certainly a most sacred and weighty responsibility for their spiritual development in the Cause, and you should from now endeavour to instil into their hearts the love of Bahá'u'lláh and thus prepare them for the full recognition and acceptance of His Station once they attain the age and capacity to do so.

From a letter 20 April, 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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With regard to your activities in connection with the training and education of Bahá'í children: needless to tell you what a vital importance the Guardian attaches to such activities, on which so much of the strength, welfare and growth of the Community must necessarily depend. What a more sacred privilege, and also what a weightier responsibility than the task of rearing up the new generation of believers, and of inculcating into their youthful and receptive minds the principles and teachings of the Cause, and of thus preparing them to fully assume, and properly discharge the weighty responsibilities and obligations of their future life in the Bahá'í Community.

From a letter 28 April, 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to a National Committee and an individual believer

— 121 —

You have asked him for detailed information concerning the Bahá'í educational programme: there is as yet no such thing as a Bahá'í curriculum, and there are no Bahá'í publications exclusively devoted to this subject, since the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá do not present a definite and detailed educational system, but simply offer certain basic principles and set forth a number of teaching ideals that should guide future Bahá'í educationalists in their efforts to formulate an adequate teaching curriculum which would be in full harmony with the spirit of the Bahá'í Teachings, and would thus meet the requirements and needs of the modern age.

These basic principles are available in the sacred writings of the Cause, and should be carefully studied, and gradually incorporated in various college and university programmes. But the task of formulating a system of education which would be officially recognized by the Cause, and enforced as such throughout the Bahá'í world is one which [the] present-day generation of believers cannot obviously undertake, and [pg 303] which has to be gradually accomplished by Bahá'í scholars and educationalists of the future.

From a letter 7 June, 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 122 —

With regard to the statement attributed to 'Abdu'l-Bahá and which you have quoted in your letter regarding a "problem child": these statements of the Master, however true in their substance, should never be given a literal interpretation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá could have never meant that a child should be left to himself, entirely free. In fact Bahá'í education, just like any other system of education, is based on the assumption that there are certain natural deficiencies in every child, no matter how gifted, which his educators, whether his parents, schoolmasters, or his spiritual guides and preceptors, should endeavour to remedy. Discipline of some sort, whether physical, moral or intellectual, is indeed indispensable, and no training can be said to be complete and fruitful if it disregards this element. The child when born is far from being perfect. It is not only helpless, but actually is imperfect, and even is naturally inclined towards evil. He should be trained, his natural inclinations harmonized, adjusted and controlled, and if necessary suppressed or regulated, so as to ensure his healthy physical and moral development. Bahá'í parents cannot simply adopt an attitude of non-resistance towards their children, particularly those who are unruly and violent by nature. It is not even sufficient that they should pray on their behalf. Rather they should endeavour to inculcate, gently and patiently, into their youthful minds such principles of moral conduct and initiate them into the principles and teachings of the Cause with such tactful and loving care as would enable them to become "true sons of God" and develop into loyal and intelligent citizens of His Kingdom. This is the high purpose which Bahá'u'lláh Himself has clearly defined as the chief goal of every education.

From a letter 9 July 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

The task of bringing up a Bahá'í child, as emphasized time and again in Bahá'í writings, is the chief responsibility of the mother, whose unique privilege is indeed to create in her home such conditions as would be [pg 304] most conducive to both his material and spiritual welfare and advancement. The training which a child first receives through his mother constitutes the strongest foundation for his future development, and it should therefore be the paramount concern of your wife...to endeavour from now imparting to her new-born son such spiritual training as would enable him later on to fully assume and adequately discharge all the responsibilities and duties of Bahá'í life.

From a letter 16 November 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

With regard to your little daughter ...; he is truly rejoiced and encouraged to realize how eager you both are to provide her with a thoroughly Bahá'í training, and is confident that under your wise and devoted care, and through the unfailing protection and guidance of Bahá'u'lláh she will in time develop into a devoted and loyal servant of the Faith.

With this in mind, the Guardian thinks it would be preferable not to place the child in a purely Catholic institution, and to give her instead a broad spiritual and intellectual training that would enable her, at a later age, to fully appreciate the spirit of the Cause. While it should be your constant endeavour to bring her up in a thoroughly religious atmosphere, you should also be careful in keeping her away from all such influences that would tend to breed in her the spirit of religious bigotry, and thus narrow down the horizon of her spiritual understanding.

From a letter 12 December 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to two believers

With reference to the question of the training of children: given the emphasis placed by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the necessity for the parents to train their children while still in

their tender age, it would seem preferable that they should receive their first training at home at the hand of their mother, rather than be sent to a nursery. Should circumstances, however, compel a Bahá'í mother to adopt the latter course there can be [pg 305] no objection.

From a letter 13 November 1940 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 126 —

The question of the training and education of children in case one of the parents is a non-Bahá'í is one which solely concerns the parents themselves, who should decide about it the way they find best and most conducive to the maintenance of the unity of their family, and to the future welfare of their children. Once the child comes of age, however, he should be given full freedom to choose his religion, irrespective of the wishes and desires of his parents.

From a letter 14 December 1940 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi  
to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma

— 127 —

The Guardian was delighted to hear of your youth group. The children who are trained in the world-embracing teachings of Bahá'u'lláh cannot but grow up to be a truly new race of men. He hopes these young people will prepare themselves for the great task which will face them in the future, that of helping to rebuild the world with the aid and inspiration of the Bahá'í teachings.

From a letter 25 December 1941 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Bahá'ís of Hobart,  
Australia

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These Bahá'í children are of such great importance to the future. They will live in times, and have to meet problems, which never faced their elders. And the Cause alone can equip them to properly serve the needs of a future, war-weary, disillusioned, unhappy humanity. So their task

will be very great and a very responsible one, and too much care cannot be devoted to their upbringing and preparation.

From a letter 11 January 1942 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 129 —

... The Guardian feels that it would be better for either the mothers of Bahá'í children — or some Committee your Assembly might delegate the task to — to choose excerpts from the Sacred Words to be used by the child rather than just something made up. Of course prayer can be purely spontaneous, but many of the sentences and thoughts combined in Bahá'í writings of a devotional nature are easy to grasp, and the revealed Word is endowed with a power of [pg 306] its own.

From a letter 8 August 1942 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi  
to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles

— 130 —

You Bahá'í children and young people have both great privileges and great obligations ahead of you, for your generation will be the ones to help build up a new, better and more beautiful world after the dark years of this war are passed. You should prepare yourselves for this great task by trying to grasp the true meaning of the teachings and not just merely accepting them as something you are taught. They are like a wonderful new world of thought just beginning to be explored, and when we realize that Bahá'u'lláh has brought teachings and laws for a thousand years to come, we can readily see that each new generation may find some greater meaning in the writings than the ones gone before did.

From a letter 14 October 1942 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to some individual believers



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The Guardian, in his remarks ... about parents' and children's, wives' and husbands' relations in America, meant that there is a tendency in that country for children to be too independent of the wishes of their parents and lacking in the respect due to them....

From a letter 22 July 1943 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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Regarding your question about children fighting: the statement of the Master, not to strike back, should not be taken so extremely literally that Bahá'í children must accept to be bullied and thrashed. If they can manage to show a better way of settling disputes than by active self-defence, they should naturally do so.

From a letter 11 May 1945 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 133 —

You ask him about the fear of God: perhaps the friends do not realize that the majority of human beings need the element of fear in order to discipline their conduct? Only a relatively very highly evolved soul would always be disciplined by love alone. Fear of punishment, fear of the anger of God if we do evil, are needed to keep people's feet on the right path. Of course we should love God — but we must fear Him in the sense of a child fearing the righteous anger and chastisement of a parent; not cringe before Him as before a tyrant, but know His mercy exceeds[pg 307] His justice!

From a letter 26 July 1946 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 134 —

He is sorry to hear your little boy is not developing satisfactorily; very few children are really bad. They do, however, sometimes have complicated personalities and need very wise handling to

enable them to grow into normal, moral, happy adults. If you feel convinced your son will really benefit from going to Father Flanagan's school you could send him there. But in general we should certainly always avoid sending Bahá'í children to orthodox religious schools, especially Catholic, as the children receive the imprint of religious beliefs we as believers know are outdated and no longer for this age. He will especially pray for the solution of this problem.

From a letter 30 May 1947 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

— 135 —

Regarding the questions you asked him: there is no objection to children who are as yet unable to memorize a whole prayer learning certain sentences only.

He does not feel that the friends should make a practice of saying grace or of teaching it to children. This is not part of the Bahá'í Faith, but a Christian practice, and as the Cause embraces members of all races and religions we should be careful not to introduce into it the customs of our previous beliefs. Bahá'u'lláh has given us the obligatory prayers, also prayers before sleeping, for travellers, etc. We should not introduce a new set of prayers He has not specified, when He has given us already so many, for so many occasions.

Your work for child education is certainly important, and he urges you to keep it up.

From a letter 27 September 1947 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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In regard to your question: he feels this is a matter for you and your husband to decide, especially in view of his attitude towards the Cause; the children, being minors, are under your jurisdiction, and you both have sacred rights and responsibility as regards[pg 308] their future.

From a letter 24 November 1947 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

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Any Bahá'í can give to the Cause's Funds, adult or child. No statement is required on this subject; Bahá'í children have always given to the Cause, everywhere. Whatever situation may arise in a class which non-Bahá'í children attend is for the teacher of the class to solve. No ruling should be made to cover such things.

From a letter 18 August 1949 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi  
to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States

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Just because you are children does not mean you cannot serve the Faith, and teach it, by your example and by the way you let people see that you are better and more intelligent than most other children.

From a letter 16 March 1952 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the Santa Monica Children's  
Class

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The general principle ... is that a request for excuse from School sessions on Bahá'í Holy Days is desirable. This applies to all Bahá'í children regardless of their age. Children of Bahá'í parents, under the age of 15, are considered Bahá'ís.

What a Bahá'í parent or your Assembly should do is apply to the School Board to grant to their children permission to remain away from School on Bahá'í Holy Days, and then abide by whatever decision the School Board may make, and not try in any way to force the matter.

From a letter 19 August 1952 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

The beloved Guardian was greatly delighted to learn of the success of the institute for teaching the Indian children. He feels this is a very fine method of implanting the teachings of the Faith in the hearts and the minds of the young children, so that they may grow and develop into strong and virile men and women who will serve the Cause. Likewise through this effort, he hopes you will be able to attract some of the parents.

From a letter 18 February 1954 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

The Guardian will pray for the spiritual development of your dear son. On the shoulders of the youth today rests the future of the Faith.[pg 309] Therefore they should be well educated and trained not only in the Teachings of the Faith, but also in secular matters.

From a letter 24 May 1954 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

The Guardian is happy to see you are teaching the children, as a firm foundation of the Teachings in their minds will greatly assist in forming their characters, and enable them to become well-balanced and useful believers when they mature.

From a letter 6 March 1955 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

In explaining the fear of God to children, there is no objection to teaching it as 'Abdu'l-Bahá so often taught everything, in the form of parables. Also the child should be made to understand that we don't fear God because He is cruel, but we fear Him because He is just, and, if we do wrong and deserve to be punished, then in His justice He may see fit to punish us. We must both love God and fear Him.

From a letter 15 February 1957 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to some individual believers

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Individual Bahá'ís may press for getting religion taught in the public schools, but this should not be done officially, as we don't yet carry[pg 310] enough weight.

From a letter 15 August 1957 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer

