

The Early Years 1923–1937

Shoghi Effendi

Original English



The Early Years 1923–1937

Letter of 20 April 1923

20 April 1923

[From the Guardian:]

The beloved of the Lord and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout the Dominion of Canada
c/o the Secretary to the Montreal Spiritual Assembly

My dearly beloved friends!

I was deeply interested and immensely gratified to read the newly received messages and letters from that distant land, all testifying to the growth of a new spirit of enthusiasm and fellowship recently kindled in the hearts of those few, yet earnest, workers for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. The report sent to me recently by the Secretary of the Montreal Spiritual Assembly, as well as the letters which our beloved spiritual sister, Mrs. Schopflocher,¹ has received from America, all gave me the assurance that a new era of spiritual activity is dawning upon the people of that land. May the repeated promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá regarding the ultimate religious revival of that spiritually conservative country, and the universal and whole-hearted response of its people to the Call of Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá be speedily fulfilled!

It behoves us, now that the signs of that glorious and promised Day are fast appearing, to arise, with utter selflessness, unity and determination, to promote and consolidate the Work which He has Himself established in the heart of that vast Dominion, and prove ourselves, by our wisdom, moderation, and constancy, worthy of the many bestowals He has showered upon us in the past. If we but follow in His Way, regard at all times the dignity of the Cause, guard sedulously its unity and vital principles, and exercise the utmost endeavour to keep its Spirit pure, effective, and unobscured, then, and only then, can we hope to achieve the immediate spread and triumph of the Cause.

1. Florence Evaline (Lorol/Kitty) Schopflocher — an early Montreal believer who travelled to 86 countries on behalf of the Cause. Her life and travels are described in *The Bahá'í World* Vol. XV, 488–489, In Memoriam.



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

Our beloved Bahá'í sister, Mrs. May Maxwell,² the pioneer of the Cause in Canada, will soon be with us in the Holy Land, and I trust that after her visit to the Three Holy Shrines, she may be enabled to return, invigorated and refreshed, ready to continue, in collaboration with you all, the great mission which the Master has destined her to fulfill in this world. May I assure you again of my constant prayers for your success, and of my desire to hear from you all, individually and collectively, regarding the progress of your labours, and the plans you contemplate for the further advancement of the Movement in those regions.

I am your brother and co-worker,

Shoghi



Letter of [13] December 1923

[From the Guardian:]

[13] December 1923

To the Montreal Assembly

ASSURE YOU MY PRAYERS AND AFFECTIONS.

SHOGHI



Letter of 1 February 1924

1 February 1924

To an individual believer

My dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your spiritually beautiful letter of December 16th sent through our beloved brother, Mr. F. Schopflocher³ to our dear Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, has been received. He was deeply impressed with the spirit of your devotion and attachment to the Holy Cause of God and lofty aspirations to serve humanity which is the fundamental aim of the Bahá'í Movement.

He has instructed me to answer your letter and convey to you his loving greeting. He assures you that he remembers you in his ardent prayers at the Holy Shrine of our Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá,

². For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see The Bahá'í World Vol. VIII, 631–642, In Memoriam.

³. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

so that you may day by day grow stronger and stronger in your understanding the realities of the heavenly teachings.

Shoghi Effendi approves of your consideration for your husband. He hopes that through your wise conduct and loving-kindness to him, he will also gradually understand the significance of the Holy Cause. People are not naturally against the Truth. There are obstacles between them and the Truth. These obstacles must be wisely removed and then they surely will be attracted to the Cause. The magnet for this attraction is real love and tolerance towards the ideas and customs of the people. We must follow our Lord, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who taught us to be well-wishers of mankind disregarding religious and racial differences. Our love must be so spacious as to engulf the whole of the people of the world. With love and only with unlimited love we have been and will be able to conquer the hearts of the people and direct the current of their sentiments along the channel of the happiness of mankind and thus usher in the era of the regeneration of man. It is unlimited love which is the Elixir that turns the common metals of the human being into pure gold.

Dear sister, the Jewish nation are a religious people. They are strong in their faith. When they become Bahá'ís, they are apt to become strong in the Cause too. We have thousands of Jewish Bahá'ís in Persia, who have broken the barriers of exclusiveness from other people and are most active in the service of the Cause. Shoghi Effendi's desire is that you ought still to be more considerate and kind to your husband and relatives. This is Bahá'í spirit.

For several days we have had the pleasure of having our dear brother, Mr. Schopflocher,⁴ with us. We are impressed deeply with his love, devotion and sincerity or in other words, with his Bahá'í spirit. We are sure that when he returns to Canada, through the inspiration he has received from his personal touch with our beloved Guardian and from the Holy Shrine of our Master, he will be able to reach the hearts of the people with a greater power than ever before.

Be assured dear sister, that I will not also forget you in my humble prayers and I am cherishing the hope that you will succeed in bringing up your dear children to become good Bahá'ís and servants of the world of humanity.

With Bahá'í love and greeting, I remain,

Your humble brother in His love and service,

Azízu'lláh S. Bahadur

[From the Guardian:]

My dear Bahá'í sister:

It is true that you are labouring for our beloved Cause under difficult and trying conditions, yet you realize, I am sure, that by so doing you are treading the Path our Beloved has pursued throughout His heroic life, that your fortitude, your perseverance, your services, your loyalty to Him will be abundantly rewarded in the world to come in His Divine Presence. Be then, cheerful, radiant and resolute and persevere to the very end and be assured of my constant and ardent

⁴. For a review of his "numerous, magnificent services" see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

prayers for your happiness, prosperity and spiritual advancement. My beloved Fred, that living torch, lit by the spirit of our departed Master, joins me in praying for you at His Shrine.

Shoghi



Letter of 4 February 1924

[From the Guardian:]

4 February 1924

The beloved of the Lord and the handmaids of the Merciful throughout Canada

Esteemed fellow-labourers in the Vineyard of God!

My close companionship during the last few days with that zealous and promising disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, our dearly beloved Mr. Schopflocher⁵ has served to remind me of my Canadian friends, who are destined and chosen by Bahá'u'lláh to prepare the way for the ultimate triumph of His Cause in that great and vast Dominion.

I have received from him the assurance of your warm and abiding affection, of your unflinching faith and noble resolve to carry on the work so heroically begun by the Báb, so securely established by Bahá'u'lláh, and so widely and powerfully promoted by His beloved Son 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In my hours of association with your beloved representative I could not but feel deeply impressed by the sweetness of his nature, his ardour, his humility and selflessness, his clear understanding of, and entire devotion to, the interests of our beloved Cause. True, his has not been the privilege to gaze at our Beloved's face, yet who that has seen him can but for a moment doubt that his soul is aglow with the flame of our Master's love, that in him the Spirit of our departed Master abides in all its power and beauty?

I am confident that his radiant heart is but the reflecting mirror of that undying Fire, lit by our Beloved's hand in the heart of your country, and destined one day to blaze forth and illumine all the Dominion of Canada — nay the whole of the Western continent. My prayers at the three Holy Shrines are that the Almighty may guide you and enable you to adhere steadfastly to the admonitions and counsels of our All-Wise Master, that you may combine and harmonize the essential qualities of prudence and courage, discretion and candour, dignity and lowliness, fidelity and goodwill, that thus you may guard His Cause and promote its interests at all times and under all conditions.

I am glad to convey to you the glad news of the improving health of that loved one of God, our dear Mrs. Maxwell.⁶ That pioneer worker of the Cause, so precious an asset to the Movement in Canada, will soon be in your midst, refreshed and restored. I am waiting with intense

⁵ For a review of his "numerous, magnificent services" see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

⁶ For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see The Bahá'í World Vol. VIII, 631–642, In Memoriam.

expectation to see your individual activities and talents all merged into one motive force, sustained by your combined efforts, directed by a unified purpose, and inspired by one common aim. Then will the showers of His grace rain upon you, and the unfailing promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá be speedily and effectively fulfilled.

That His Word will eventually be spread and firmly established none of us can ever doubt; my only yearning and hope is that we may through sustained effort and prayer be graciously aided to hasten by our words and deeds the advent of this glorious and long-awaited Day.

Your true brother in His service,

Shoghi



Letter of 16 October 1924

16 October 1924

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your highly spiritual letter of August 24th written to our beloved Guardian, expressing your deep attachment to the Beloved of our hearts and His Will, arrived and impressed him very much. He was also very glad to learn that the dear friends are doing their best to make Green Acre the focal centre from which the heavenly Teachings may radiate to all parts of America.

Yesterday he instructed me to write a few words in answer to your letter conveying his profound affection to you and make you and your beloved husband assured that he remembers you both in his ardent prayers at the Holy Shrines. He wishes you both to be always two burning sparks in the Cause of God so that you may kindle the love of God in anybody with whom you may come in contact. He expects you also to often write to him and tell him how you are.

The Greatest Holy Leaf, the Holy Mother and the other Holy Leaves are well and send you their tender love. They pray for your happiness and success too.

Your humble brother in His love,

Azízu'lláh S. Bahadur



Letter of January 1926

January 1926

To an individual believer

My dear Mr. ... :

After reading your short yet delightful letter, Shoghi Effendi passed it over to me to acknowledge its receipt. He was most pleased to hear that the Cause has lately aroused some interest among the people in Canada. This has been the case everywhere. This last world war together with the treaty of peace and its consequences have taught humanity that unless national, religious and political prejudices be abolished, unless universal brotherhood be established, unless spiritual civilization be given an equal footing with material civilization and thereby change the standard of individual, national and international morality, the world is doomed to failure and society to utter destruction. Confirming this idea, Mr. Lloyd George, in one of his late addresses, stated that one morning he had invited some church dignitaries for breakfast to Downing Street. Their talk was about the real need of England. The church dignitaries were almost unanimous in their view that the real need of England was a political revival. Mr. Lloyd George, who was the only layman present, and was at that time the British Prime Minister, stated that the real and only need of England was a religious revival, because religion changes the character of the individual, and once the individual changes the nation changes, and once the nation changes the government has to change and follow a new code of laws in its dealings towards other nations. Thus we see that even those who hold the reins of world politics believe that religion is essential for human welfare. If so what religion is more broad in its views, more liberal in its ideas, and more modern and scientific in its principles than the Bahá'í Religion?

The reason why the Cause has not spread more than it has is that the world up to the present has not really felt its critical position and the friends not done their best. It is the duty of the Bahá'ís, the world over, to study the Teachings, become versed in the principles and history of the Cause, catch the spirit of the Movement and then arise to service. This was the Master's last word of command, this is Shoghi Effendi's first desire.

Whenever Shoghi Effendi visits the Blessed Shrines, and kneels at those Sacred Thresholds, he earnestly prays and asks God to help the friends in this great work and pave the way for their service. Had it not been for his tremendous work, Shoghi Effendi would have written to the friends individually and nerved them to action. Yet his correspondence with the Assemblies does not permit him as yet to attend to the letters of the individual friends, so he tells us who are around him to take up that part of his work and put on paper what he communicates to us orally.

At present we are having Mrs. Maxwell⁷ and Mrs. Schopflocher⁸ with us. They tell us about your Assemblies in Canada and the wonderful success you have had in teaching and interesting the people. I really hope your group will increase from day to day and achieve great things in the path of God.

With best wishes to you as well as to your family, I beg to remain,

⁷. For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see *The Bahá'í World* Vol. VIII, 631–642, In Memoriam.

⁸. Florence Evaline (Lorol/Kitty) Schopflocher — an early Montreal believer who travelled to 86 countries on behalf of the Cause. Her life and travels are described in *The Bahá'í World* Vol. XV, 488–498, In Memoriam.

Yours most sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan



Letter of 9 August 1926

9 August 1926

To an individual believer

My dear Mr.:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated June 19th¹⁵. The sentiment it expressed, the feeling it revealed, the words used all seemed to go down into one's heart. Here stands the Bahá'í Cause with absolute need of true and ardent servants who are ready to raise its call and invite the heedless people to the acceptance of its teachings. Few are those who have already taken their allegiance to the Master. But even smaller in number is that group of those who have also the freedom to go out and teach it to others.

There is, however, one hope. God is not heedless to the sighings of the soul. When we desire such an altruistic thing, when we pray for it ardently and truly seek some outlet for the realization of our hopes, sooner or later the occasion will present itself. We are told that the way to Paradise is thorny, but we are also assured that if we persist we shall attain it and obtain our victory.

So, Shoghi Effendi prays that, though at present circumstances may prevent you from rendering those services you desire, you will keep up the hope and await that moment. It will undoubtedly come and bear you the fruit of anxious waiting. The Master surely knows your heart's desire and grants it to you; especially as it is for better service to His Cause.

With deepest love I remain,

Yours in His Name,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear brother:

Your touching letter has been read by me with deep sympathy and interest and my prayer will henceforth be offered for you that strength may be given you to withstand and overcome the trials that are sent you by the All-Wise for your ultimate deliverance, regeneration and victory. Do not despair, remember the sufferings of our Beloved and rest assured in my sympathy, affection and prayers for you. Persevere in your labours for our beloved Cause.

Shoghi



Letter of 2 December 1926

[From the Guardian:]

2 December 1926

To the Montreal Assembly

ASSURE CANADIAN FRIENDS LOVINGLY REMEMBERED ASCENSION NIGHT.

SHOGHI



Letter of 10 December 1926

[From the Guardian:]

10 December 1926

To an individual believer

Dear co-worker:

Your welcome letter, breathing the spirit of loving devotion to the interests of humanity, has touched my heart.

I am greatly pleased to learn of your awakened interest in the Divine Message Bahá'u'lláh has given to the world, and of your keen desire to investigate and study it. You have truly grasped its essence when you characterized it as a Faith so new and fresh in its vitality and yet so old in the truth upon which it is based.

I am convinced that as you travel, whether in America, Europe, Asia, or Australasia, and get in contact with its fervent and devoted followers in the divers regions of the world you will increasingly realize the unique potency, the transforming power, the all-unifying force which distinguish the Bahá'í Faith from the religious and humanitarian movements of this age.

I shall be delighted to meet you in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's home here in the Holy Land, and I cannot tell whether future developments will enable me to seek a much needed rest during the hot summer months. If I can at all manage to get the rest I need, I will certainly be back by the middle of October at which time I trust you will be able to visit Palestine.

I wish to assure you of my best wishes for your success, happiness and spiritual advancement and of my joy and hope to accord you a warm welcome in our home.

Your true brother in the service of God and humanity,

Shoghi



Letter of 10 March 1927

10 March 1927

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The beloved Guardian has asked me to write to you on his behalf, and to tell you how very pleased he is that you have been able to form a Spiritual Assembly in Vancouver, after the inspiring visit of Mrs. Maxwell.⁹

He will earnestly pray for confirmation and blessing for your Assembly, that its members may become ever more detached and illuminated, so that all may become living witnesses to the truth, and may be enabled to spread widely the knowledge of these Divine Teachings which are now so vitally necessary for the healing of the spiritual sickness of the world.

Please accept my warm good wishes for your Assembly. Many years ago, about thirty years ago I should think, I visited your beautiful city! It was then fully planned out, but few houses were built.

Your sincere fellow-worker in this great service,

Ethel J. Rosenberg

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

I cannot let this letter go without adding a few words in person and assure you of the great joy and encouragement which your letter has brought me. I will most lovingly and fervently pray for your group that it may grow from strength to strength and develop into a radiant and powerful centre of Divine Guidance and fellowship. Persevere in your efforts and let not inevitable obstacles dishearten you in your pioneer labours.

Your true brother and well-wisher,

Shoghi



⁹ For a review of the vast range of her contributions to the Faith in Europe and America, see The Bahá'í World Vol. VIII, 631–642, In Memoriam.

Letter of 12 April 1927

12 April 1927

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Shoghi Effendi thanks you very much for your letter to him dated March 20th

He rejoices to hear that through the influence of your devout and Christian parents and family your life has been guided by the Hand of God, until you have now received and accepted the message of God in this Day and the inspired teachings of the Bahá'í revelation.

You are indeed most blessed through receiving at this time in your life, when you are entering upon the full responsibilities and duties of manhood — these sacred teachings and principles — which should be an inspiration to you to put forth your utmost efforts to draw other souls into this radiant light.

As you realize, these principles can only be rendered attractive when they are exemplified by a life lived wholly in accordance with these heavenly counsels. Then they will have their full effect. Many years ago, when as a young believer I asked of the beloved 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructions as to the method of teaching and attracting souls to the Light — He replied in a beautiful Tablet describing the life of detachment, purity, and dedication to the service of God, which should be lived by the one who was desirous of teaching. And now, in this time of grave difficulties and trials which surround all the peoples of the world, our first duty is to teach, and gain adherents for our Bahá'í Faith and the life-giving precepts and principles given to us by Bahá'u'lláh, and the beloved Master 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

'Abdu'l-Bahá once said to me that we should use the Hidden Words as a mirror — comparing our actions and thoughts with what is there revealed — and if they did not match, so to speak, and fully reflect these Divine Counsels — then we must change our actions and conduct until they were in perfect harmony and agreement with these heavenly exhortations.

With all Bahá'í greetings, and wishing you every success in your endeavours,

Your sincere fellow-worker in this great Service,

Ethel J. Rosenberg

[From the Guardian:]

My dear spiritual brother:

Your letter has brought joy to my heart. I will pray for you from the bottom of my heart that the Beloved may pour upon you His richest blessings, guide your steps, sustain your faith, deepen your understanding, and remove every obstacle from your way. I urge you to study the

Teachings and particularly “‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Some Answered Questions and Dr. Esslemont’s Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Some Answered Questions and Dr. Esslemont’s Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era”, two of the outstanding books in our Bahá’í Literature. I hope to meet you some day in Haifa in the Beloved’s home.

Your well-wisher,

Shoghi



Letter of 13 April 1927

13 April 1927

To the Montreal Spiritual Assembly

Dear Spiritual brothers and sisters:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated March 18, 15. He hopes and prays that through your endeavours and the Master’s ever-showering blessings you will succeed to make of this first Convention held in Canada a true and brilliant success; that the result of the conferences will be to begin a new era in the spiritual life of that land, and hoist the flag of peace and brotherhood as never before.

There are some important questions that await immediate settlement and we hope that the deliberations made there will give them a true and final solution. In short the eye of the Bahá’í world is now anxiously following the steps you are taking and the decisions you are to attain.

The members of the Master’s family are all well and join in wishing you the greatest success. Their only hope rests in seeing the friends set aside their petty differences and in one accord and with a firm determination carry the burdens bequeathed to them by their dear Master.

Yours in His Service,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear and valued co-workers:

I fear this letter will reach you after the closing of the Convention, but I hope it will serve to assure you of the necessity of adopting for future Conventions the essential method of a full, frank and unhampered consultation between the National Assembly and the assembled delegates. It is the vital duty of the delegates to unburden their hearts, state their grievances, disclose their views, and explain their motives. It is the duty of the National Assembly to give earnest, prompt and prayerful consideration to the views of the delegates, weigh carefully their

arguments and ponder their considered judgements, before they resort to voting and undertake to arrive at a decision according to the dictates of their conscience. They should explain their motives and not dictate, seek information and invite discussion.

Wishing you the fullest success,

Shoghi



Letter of 4 May 1927

4 May 1927

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Shoghi Effendi desires me to thank you very much for your letter mailed April 14,

He is so glad to hear all that you tell him of your visit and of the inspiration it has been to you, and he earnestly hopes that, as you say, "Inshá'lláh" the way will be opened for you to make another visit when he may have the pleasure of meeting you face to face.

He is truly grieved to hear of the serious accident which befell your little daughter, and he prays that no ill-consequences may arise from it. He has been thinking very much of the Convention held for the first time in Montreal, and is hoping that it will bring about great results which will be of much benefit for the progress of our beloved Cause.

He will pray at the Holy Shrines for you and your family, and the dear friends around you, that you may receive abundantly the Divine blessing and guidance in all the efforts you are making to attract souls to this heavenly Light. The Greatest Holy Leaf and the Holy Family send you their warm love and greetings.

Your fellow-worker in this great service,

Ethel J. Rosenberg

[From the Guardian:]

My dear and precious sister in 'Abdu'l-Bahá,

Your sweet letter has brought joy to my heart. To feel that such an ardent, enlightened and devoted soul is tirelessly engaged in diffusing the Spirit of the Faith in that land is a great relief and encouragement to me. I too deplore my inability to meet you face to face at the Beloved's home. My thoughts however were directed to your needs and wishes during your stay in Haifa, and I will continue to pray for you from the depths of my grateful heart, that the Beloved may

guide you, comfort you, sustain you and pour upon you His rich and manifold blessings. Hoping to meet you some day in the not distant future,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 25 August 1927

25 August 1927

To an individual believer

Dear Friend,

Our dear Guardian has instructed me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated July 22nd and to express to you his gratification at your determination to arouse the student generation to an intelligent understanding of the tenets of the Faith.

He admires your resolution to abandon all thought of a material career and to consecrate all your energies to the services of our beloved Cause.

You are most welcome to visit the Holy Land in case you find it feasible, but whether you are able to come or not, an intensive period of study in the light of the Bahá'í Teachings seems, to our beloved Guardian, a necessary preliminary to your work. He hopes and prays that you will in time prove yourself to be an exemplary advocate of the universal teachings of the Bahá'í Cause.

Wishing you every success in your endeavours,

Yours very sincerely,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

My dear and valued co-worker:

Your welcome letter was a cheer and inspiration to my heart and I will follow with eager interest the progress of your labours for the promotion of God's sacred Cause. Do not feel depressed if obstacles arise in your path. I will pray that the Holy Spirit may guide you and sustain you in your noble endeavours.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 27 October 1927

27 October 1927

To an individual believer

My dear Bahá'í Friend,

I thank you so much on behalf of our dear Guardian for your very kind letter of May 19th together with the interesting enclosures you had sent.

Unfortunately pressure of work and later his absence for the summer from Haifa prevented him to have your letter answered earlier.

Your account of the Bahá'í Convention at Montreal, the measure of its success and the hopes and aspirations that it had raised in the hearts of the friends and delegates assembled there, was indeed most gladly welcomed, and our Guardian awaits with expectant eyes to see those hopes realized in this coming year.

Naturally it depends mostly upon the individual effort of the friends, their zeal and enthusiasm which must sustain their endeavours in serving this great Cause. Shoghi Effendi will be always glad to hear from you and trusts hopefully in the success of your work.

With heartfelt greetings from the members of the family and loving assurances of our Guardian's prayers for you,

Sincerely in His service,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

Although much pressed by a multitude of cares and responsibilities, I find time to assure you personally of my genuine interest in your work, and of my fervent prayers for your success. May the Beloved guide your steps, remove every obstacle from your path, and enable you to fulfil your heart's desire.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 7 March 1928

7 March 1928

To an individual believer

My dear Friend,

I am instructed by Shoghi Effendi to thank you for your welcome letter of February 17th.

He read with interest and pleasure your short account of the stages you had passed ever since your youth, the thoughts and feelings that occupied you in your earnest pursuit of what could bring you contentment and peace. He is now gratified to learn that the path you chose when you were still so young in years has finally led you to the Fountain-head from which you can drink deep and which can satisfy the genuine hunger of your soul. He would be very glad to help you in the study and understanding of the Bahá'í teachings and would welcome you as a fellow-worker in the happy task of carrying to others the "Light" that we have seen and in trying to reflect in our humble lives the glory that it claims.

He would be always interested and glad to hear from you and of your doings and trusts that the Bahá'ís in Montreal will find in you a devoted, sincere and able friend and collaborator.

He wishes me to assure you of his heartfelt good wishes and prayers, that you may succeed in the realization of all that your earnest soul asks for.

With many greetings and loving regards,

Sincerely in His service,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

I wish you from all my heart the fullest success in your efforts to teach and spread our beloved Cause, and trust that you may some day undertake the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and visit The Bahá'í sacred Shrines and thus obtain a clearer vision of the mission and significance of the Faith.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 26 April 1928

26 April 1928

To an individual believer

My dear ...,

I am instructed by Shoghi Effendi to thank you for your letter of the 9th instant.

He was very much touched by your letter so full of hope, of faith and encouragement and he does not doubt for a moment that the Bahá'í youth of today, they are the men upon whom shall fall one of the happiest and yet one of the most difficult duties that the Cause requires of us, and it is in them that he lays his greatest hope for the future.

That is why the assurance of your hope to do your part is so deeply appreciated and he would be always glad to co-operate with you.

He is very glad to learn of the possibility of your visit to Haifa in the near future, and he wishes me to extend to you a most hearty welcome. It will be a pleasure to him to hear from you and of your doings and he trusts, that in the near future, you will render valuable and permanent services to a Cause that is so near and dear to your heart.

Assuring you always of his good wishes and prayers and with happy greetings for the Ridván festivals,

Sincerely yours,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

I just wish to add a few words in person in order to assure you of my deep interest in the efforts you exert for the advancement of our beloved Cause. I will supplicate for you Divine Guidance and assistance, that you may be graciously assisted to fulfil your heart's desire.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 6 May 1928

6 May 1928

To an individual believer

My dear Bahá'í Sister,

I am instructed by our Guardian to thank you for your welcome letter of April 13th with enclosure.

He was much interested in what you had written him as regards oil mines in your and neighbouring properties and I must say at the beginning that he has been deeply touched by

the spirit in which you had written your letter and by your desire that in accordance with Bahá'í teachings, if the mines prove valuable, the proper proportion may go for public Bahá'í utilities.

Whether the lots prove valuable commercially or not, the fact still remains that your gesture in writing to our Guardian is truly worthy of a Bahá'í and is sufficient to prove your eagerness to apply the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith and not profess it by name.

As regards the exploitation of the lots, and their value from a practical point of view, of course our Guardian would not wish to say much and would advise you to seek expert advice on the subject. Perhaps in the few words he will append to this letter, he will suggest the name of one of the friends who could help and advise you in the matter.

Please accept the love and good wishes of the Master's family for yourself, your husband and children and permit me to assure you of Shoghi Effendi's heartfelt greetings.

Sincerely yours in His service,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

I advise you to consult our dear, trusted and capable brother in the Faith, Mr. Roy Wilhelm,¹⁰ who I feel will be only too glad to assist you with his advice regarding a matter that may prove beneficial to the interests of our beloved Cause. I will pray for your success from the bottom of my heart.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 10 October 1928

10 October 1928

To an individual believer

Dear Mr. ...:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him dated August 7th. He very much appreciates the constant efforts you are making in arousing the interest of the friends on the subject of the Temple. Those who are fortunate enough as to attend the Convention should on their return home carry with them the spirit they have experienced there

¹⁰. See The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 662–664, In Memoriam.

and inform the friends of the decisions that the delegates came to, so that a concerted effort be made and a unity in thought and action be obtained at least along the main issues of the year.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that the Montreal Assembly will succeed to play an important part in establishing and manifesting that wonderful spirit.

He also wishes you to extend to the friends there, especially the members of your family, his best wishes and greetings. Please convey my deepest regards to....

Yours very sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

With the assurance of my best wishes for you and steadfast prayers for your success,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 25 October 1928

25 October 1928

To an individual believer

My dear Mrs. ...,

I am directed by Shoghi Effendi to thank you for your letter of September 17th which he was very glad to receive.

He was much interested and touched with your spiritual yearnings and the way in which the Master's spirit had filled your heart and satisfied it. It shows well your sincerity and eagerness to become a worthy channel for His grace and a worker in His Cause.

Shoghi Effendi appreciates deeply your wish to co-operate with him in serving the progress of the Bahá'í Faith and he welcomes you as a valued sister and fellow-worker.

He is always glad to hear from you and awaits your good news of progress in Edmonton. He trusts that some day you will be able to come to Haifa where you would be gladly welcomed.

With much love and greetings and assuring you always of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and good wishes,

Sincerely yours in His service,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear co-worker:

I will supplicate for you the blessings of the Almighty and trust that in the days to come you will render inestimable services to the sacred Threshold. The Beloved will surely guide you in your efforts and will strengthen you in the fulfilment of your task.

Your well-wisher,

Shoghi



Letter of 20 March 1929

20 March 1929

To an individual believer

My Dear Mr. ...,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to hasten and thank you for your good letter of February 23rd which he has been so glad to receive.

The news of the co-operation of the Bahá'í young men and women in Montreal, their establishment of a group for study and discussion, the sane and sober expression of their methods as expressed in the programme you had enclosed, and their thoughtful and enthusiastic outlook upon the future, all these have helped to create the liveliest hopes and the deepest satisfaction in the heart of our Guardian. It is indeed with no little pleasure that he welcomes the active co-operation of his young friends in Montreal, and he sincerely trusts that with an adequate study of the proper teachings and its spiritual significance coupled with a sufficient knowledge of the problems and perplexities that the world is beset with, you will be able to render great services to the Cause and therefore to humanity.

He considers it a splendid idea to keep in touch and if possible communicate with other youth organizations in Canada and the United States. It may open immense fields for service at a time when beneath a casual indifference there often lies searching and serious thought.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to express his appreciation of your own personal efforts and to ask you to convey his sincere good wishes to every member of your group. It will be always a pleasure to him to learn of your work and for your communications he will always have time.

Assuring you of his affection and prayers,

Sincerely yours,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear and precious co-worker:

I was delighted by the tone of your letter, and the news it conveyed and the assurances it gave greatly heartened me in my task. The youthful and eager workers for the Cause in Montreal occupy a warm place in my heart. I will remember their hopes, their plans, their activities in my hours of prayer at the Holy Shrines. I urge them to study profoundly the revealed utterances of Bahá'u'lláh and the discourses of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and not to rely unduly on the representation and interpretation of the Teachings given by the Bahá'í speakers and teachers. May the Almighty sustain you and guide you in your work.

Shoghi



Letter of 4 June 1929

4 June 1929

To Siegfried Schopflocher¹¹

Dear Fred:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to thank you for your letter dated May 19th as well as for the trouble you have undertaken to obtain for him the papers. The colour seems to be the most fitting and he hopes to receive them in due time. In case he leaves for his summer vacation he will not be here when they arrive but proper care will be taken of them, you may rest assured.

Shoghi Effendi as well as the others were very glad to hear of your election as member of the National Spiritual Assembly. The spirit of co-operation you have been showing and the wonderful sacrifices you have been making are fully appreciated by the friends and your election is only a token of that.

We all hope and pray that you may succeed in your work, both materially and spiritually, for as you have shown the object of both is the advancement of the interests of the Cause.

In close may I assure you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and extend to you his loving greetings.

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

My dear and precious co-worker:

¹¹. For a review of his "numerous, magnificent services" see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

I deeply appreciate the effort you have exerted in connection with my request and I wish to assure you that I am much pleased and satisfied with the quality and colour of the paper you enclosed. I am also delighted to learn of your election as member of the National Assembly and I am sure that your participation will greatly contribute to the success of its deliberations.

Assuring you of my affection, appreciation, and prayers and with my best wishes and loving greetings to Kitty¹² whose services I shall never forget,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 20 September 1929

20 September 1929

To an individual believer

My dear Mrs. ...,

I am directed by our Guardian to thank you for your letter of July 9th.

He has read your letter with great interest and pleasure and he admires its spirit — so frank, so thoughtful and as regards the Cause, with such abounding hopefulness.

In connection with your dear husband, Shoghi Effendi would consider it in full and happy accord with the expressed desire of the Master that every man should have some permanent work. Much as he desires to see you both devote your entire energies to a well thought out, progressive and attractive presentation of the Cause — a thing he feels we lack lamentably — he would be very pleased to see your husband follow what the Master often repeated even to His own immediate family, namely the necessity of a profession. Of course you know that He always said His had been mat-making.

As to your entrance to Reed College as an undergraduate, he also feels that it would be a very nice idea if it is possible and if it meets with the wishes of your husband. No one could think more than the Master did of the great need for capacity, knowledge and a broad scientific outlook in the service of the Cause, but as against the hard and dry intellectuals, he wished such knowledge to be coupled with an intense love for the welfare of humanity. Perhaps the enlightened world already suffers because it has too much of the former and very little of the latter, but could it be that we suffer a bit because we have too much of the latter and too little of the former?

¹². Florence Evaline (Lorol/Kitty) Schopflocher — an early Montreal believer who travelled to 86 countries on behalf of the Cause. Her life and travels are described in *The Bahá'í World* Vol. XV, 488–489, In Memoriam.

I am also asked to express Shoghi Effendi's deep appreciation of your kind sentiments and of your husband's and your own burning desire to devote your hearts and thoughts to the progress of the Cause.

With warm regards and greetings to you both.

Sincerely yours,

Soheil Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

With the assurance of my best wishes and prayers for you at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 5 January 1930

5 January 1930

To an individual believer

Dear ...:

You cannot imagine the great pleasure it gives me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to Shoghi Effendi dated October 18th, 23. It reminds me of those meetings I attended in Montreal and of the wonderful friendships I cultivated among its Bahá'í group.

Shoghi Effendi wants me to assure you of his prayers for he has great hopes in those young persons who do not let their worldly desires and needs stand in their way in serving the movement and spreading its teachings. He hopes that in due time your numbers will increase and you will count among your group youthful souls who are determined to work for the inauguration of the era of peace and goodwill.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that you will not merely interest the young people that come to your meetings, but that you will also exert your efforts in awakening them to the full import and station of Bahá'u'lláh, for it is only by coming in touch with the source of light and inspiration that a soul can appreciate the full significance of the Cause. The task is surely harder but the fruits will be so much greater.

Please convey Shoghi Effendi's love and greetings to all the friends especially those of the young people who are working with you.

With best wishes I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

With the assurance of my loving prayers at the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh for the success of your much-appreciated endeavours,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 3 January 1932

[From the Guardian:]

3 January 1932

To Fred Schopflocher¹³

KINDLY CABLE APPROXIMATE SIZE COST AND TIME REQUIRED RESTORATION TEMPLE MODEL LOVE.

SHOGHI



Letter of 18 January 1932

18 January 1932

To an individual believer

Dear Mr. ...:

Shoghi Effendi gave me your letter of December 20th, 1931, sent through the kindness of Mr. Dewing, to read. First let me say that Shoghi Effendi would like me to extend to you his loving greetings and assure you of his prayers. He sincerely hopes that you will ever be guided and assisted in your work as well as in your services to the Cause.

Concerning the Tablet of the Master explaining one of the doctrines of Sufism, which He revealed during His youth at the demand of Ali Shawka Pasha: this is published in the second

¹³. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam

volume of His Tablets published in Egypt. Unfortunately it has not been translated into English. It is an epistle of about fifty pages, otherwise I would have attempted to translate it for you. It is not however very important from a Bahá'í point of view for He says at the end that His object was merely to state the Sufi view and not to criticize it in the light of the Bahá'í teachings. Moreover, the task would be very difficult for I am unfamiliar with the terminology used. It needs a scholar on Sufism to render the Tablet into English.

Mr. Dewing is now with us in Haifa. He has given us very encouraging news about the progress of the movement in Montreal, especially in the work that the young people are doing. I sincerely hope your daughter ... is taking an active part, for I am sure she could do much. Please give her my love and express to her this hope of mine. Please remember me also to Mrs.

With best wishes,

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

With the assurance of my loving and fervent prayers at the Holy Shrines for your welfare and spiritual advancement,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 10 February 1932

[From the Guardian:]

10 February 1932

To Fred Schopflocher¹⁴

ACCEDE REQUEST PROFOUND LOVING APPRECIATION.

SHOGHI



Letter of 1 April 1932

1 April 1932

¹⁴. For a review of his "numerous, magnificent services" see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam

To an individual believer

Dear Mr. ...:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated March 11th, 1932 as well as the enclosed copy of the report of the activity of the Bahá'í young people in Montreal. He is sure that Mr. Horace Holley¹⁵ will find in it many interesting facts to incorporate in his review of the progress of the Faith during the last two years.

Shoghi Effendi was very glad to read it and obtain first hand information as to the way the young people in Montreal have succeeded to attract many souls and inspire them with the spirit of service to our beloved Faith. Once the youth learns that this Cause is their Cause, and that through it they can ensure their future social tranquillity and spiritual progress, then they will arise and consecrate their life to the promotion of this Faith. And as you clearly state in your report, no one can awaken the youth of the world to a consciousness of this road to salvation except from their own numbers — youths already inspired with the Bahá'í spirit.

Shoghi Effendi will remember you and the other members of your group in his prayers, and ask for you all divine guidance and help in this all-important task.

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved of our hearts bless richly your efforts, deepen your understanding of the truth and principles of His Faith, remove all obstacles from your path, and enable each one of you to render inestimable services to His Cause. I will pray that each one of you may be graciously assisted to become a living embodiment of the ennobling principles inculcated by the Message of Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi



Letter of 26 April 1932

26 April 1932

To the Bahá'ís of Montreal

Dear Bahá'í brothers and sisters:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your joint letter dated March 21st,¹⁶ He trusts that, with the aid and blessings of the Master, you will succeed to realize your hopes and create a great impetus among the friends that will ultimately lead towards the completion of

¹⁵. See The Bahá'í World Vol. XIII, 849–858, In Memoriam.

that noble and beautiful edifice. It is only through such a general sacrifice that we can bring that task to a successful completion.

Consider what a wonderful prestige we will create for the Cause in the eyes of the public! At a time when stupendous undertakings are being given up for lack of funds, when all the human institutions are crumbling down and failing to inspire hope in their followers, the world will see our Temple completed, not through the donations of wealthy people, but through the sacrifices of humble souls who have the love of God burning in their hearts.

In Persia the Cause was established through the blood of the martyrs shed in its path; in the West it seems it shall prosper as the result of constant sacrifice on the part of its handful of followers. It is only by dedicating our life to the Cause of teaching and our means to establish its Institutions that the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh will conquer the West.

In his moments of prayer at the blessed Shrines Shoghi Effendi will think of you and ask God to guide and assist you. The spirit of the Master, he trusts, will enable you to advance the cause of peace and good-will in that city and at the same time make you set an example of service for all the friends in that continent.

With best wishes and loving greetings,

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

Dearly-beloved co-workers:

I was greatly touched by your message and wish to assure you in person of my deepest appreciation of your collective and untiring efforts for the spread of our beloved Cause. The Bahá'ís of Montreal are often in my thoughts and occupy a warm and abiding place in my heart. They are the object of my continued prayers at the Holy Shrines, and constitute the vanguard of that spiritual host which will, in the fullness of time, achieve signal victories for the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in that promising country. May they, by their high, their self-sacrificing endeavours, be enabled to contribute a notable share to the heroic efforts which the American believers are now exerting for the completion of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 20 August 1932

20 August 1932

To individual believers

Beloved Friends in the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh,

Shoghi Effendi was deeply touched by your letter of July 18th, 1932 and he has charged me to thank you on his behalf and express his lively appreciation of your heartfelt sympathy at the great loss which the Faith has come to suffer through the sudden passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf.

Your beautiful words, which eloquently testified to your genuine love for our departed Khánum, have immensely relieved the burden of sorrow that weighs so heavily upon our Guardian's heart and have given him the assurance that the friends are amply sharing his grief at this cruel hour. For in this great calamity his share is, perhaps, the greatest as he had found in the Greatest Holy Leaf the only one who could sustain his energies and inspire him with hope and vigour. Her departure, at this critical hour, will, undoubtedly, continue to be deeply felt for many long years.

The removal of her physical presence from our midst, however, though a source of immeasurable sorrow, will ultimately serve to rekindle the flame of faith in our hearts and inspire us with a fresh resolve to promote and safeguard the very best interests of the Cause. Through intense sufferings and hardships this Faith of God has been able to win its immortal victories and it has always welcomed such moments of profound and well-nigh demoralizing sorrow as providential means whereby its vitality can be best safeguarded.

Might not this calamity serve to intensify our devotion to the Cause and by deepening our spiritual insight make us worthy instruments for the promotion and the consolidation of the Faith?

The Guardian is anxiously waiting to see the friends once more united and whole-heartedly striving to spread those teachings and principles through which an ailing humanity can alone find the real path to salvation.

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and precious co-workers:

I am greatly touched and relieved by your message. I value the sentiments you have expressed and I will pray that the Almighty may guide and sustain you in your efforts to follow in her footsteps and to perpetuate the memory of her glorious life.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 10 September 1932

10 September 1932

To the Spiritual Assembly of Montreal

Beloved co-workers in the Faith,

It was with a great satisfaction and joy that Shoghi Effendi received your message of condolence dated August 5th, 1932 written through Mr. E. Harrison, your secretary. He was greatly pleased to see how faithfully the friends are sharing his grief. His sole comfort now is to see you all as ever devotedly working for the realization of our departed Khánum's dearest wishes. Surely, from the Realm Beyond she is watching over us all and is continuously sending us her blessings. May we prove worthy of such manifold bounties.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that this overwhelming grief caused by the unexpected ascension of the Greatest Holy Leaf will serve to release forces of such vigour as would tend to speed up and consolidate the work so gloriously undertaken by our American friends.

Assuring you all of his best wishes and of his fervent prayers for your spiritual advancement.

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear co-workers:

The messages of sympathy, sent by an Assembly which has distinguished itself by its eminent services to the Cause, has brought solace and strength to my heart and eased the burden of my sorrow. I value the sentiments you expressed, and the assurances you gave me. I will continue to pray for you from the depths of my heart. Persevere, and never allow the sense of your grievous loss to damp your zeal or to influence your determination to prosecute the task to which you are committed. I will pray that you may be enabled to perpetuate the glorious memory of our beloved Greatest Holy leaf, and to diffuse, far and wide, the knowledge of her inspiring life.

Shoghi



Letter of 21 October 1932

21 October 1932

To an individual believer

Dear Mr. ...:

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated September 12th, 15. He was very glad to know that the teaching work was progressing fairly rapidly and that there is all reason to hope that good results will be obtained. In his moments of prayer at the Shrines he will think of you as well as of the other members of the committee and ask for you all divine guidance and confirmation in the very important work you are directing.

As regards the meaning of the Bahá'í Covenant: The Guardian considers the existence of two forms of Covenant both of which are explicitly mentioned in the literature of the Cause. First is the covenant that every prophet makes with humanity or more definitely with His people that they will accept and follow the coming Manifestation Who will be the reappearance of His reality. The second form of covenant is such as the one Bahá'u'lláh made with His people that they should accept the Master. This is merely to establish and strengthen the succession of the series of Lights that appear after every Manifestation. Under the same category falls the covenant the Master has made with the Bahá'ís that they should accept His administration after Him.

The Guardian has on various occasions made it clear that the friends should abstain from voting for any political posts unless this abstinence would be considered as civil disobedience and punishable by law which I believe does not exist anywhere.¹⁶

To divide the inheritance as it is prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh we have to divide it into 2520 shares. But we can also divide it into forty-two shares (not forty as you mention in your letter). Then every one of the beneficiaries will take so many of these shares. These numbers form like a highest denominator for the different fractions which represent the shares of the different individuals that will benefit in case of intestacy. In case of the non-existence of one class of inheritors the Aqdas mentions how it should be divided. As a general rule a part goes to the House of Justice, a part to the children.

As to your fourth question, Shoghi Effendi believes that it is preferable not to confuse the methods explained by the Master with present systems. They may have many resemblances but also many points of difference. Moreover these general statements we have in the teachings have to be explained and applied by the House of Justice before we can really appreciate their significance.

Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,

¹⁶. The Universal House of Justice has provided clarification on this issue: "It is clear from further elucidations given by Shoghi Effendi that Bahá'ís may vote for political posts only when they can do so upon a non-party line, without affiliating themselves with any political party or organization." (Letter dated 13 September 1998 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada)

Ruhi Afnan

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless richly your efforts, deepen your understanding of the essentials and distinguishing features of the Faith and enable you to promote its interests far and wide,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 1 June 1933

1 June 1933

To an individual believer

Dear ...:

If Shoghi Effendi knew the address of the place where you order his stationery for him he would surely not give you that trouble. But unfortunately he does not, and knows what a pleasure it gives you to render him this added service.

He will, therefore, be very thankful if you order for him two thousand papers and two thousand envelopes of each of the two specimens I enclose for you — that is two thousand of the white sheets with the red engraving of the Greatest Name, and two thousand of the creamy colour paper with the blue engraving. Please remember that the envelope of the white sheets only have the Greatest Name on the back, while the other kind of envelope is ordinary and without the Greatest Name.

The Guardian sincerely hopes that the Convention now sitting will inaugurate a new era in the history of the Cause in America and that momentous decisions will be taken. His thoughts are all with you and he wishes you success from the bottom of his heart.

Assuring you of his prayers and deep appreciation for the services you are constantly rendering to the Faith, I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,

Ruhi Afnan



Letter of 8 March 1934

[From the Guardian:]

8 March 1934

To Siegfried Schopflocher¹⁷

BAHÁ'Í WORLD GREATLY INDEBTED YOUR OVERWHELMING SHARE PROMOTING ITS
NATIONAL INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS ABIDING LOVE GRATITUDE.

SHOGHI



Letter of 30 April 1934

30 April 1934

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Guardian wishes me to acknowledge on his behalf the receipt of your letter dated April 5th with enclosure, and to convey to you his appreciation of your efforts for the spread of the Message. He is gratified to learn of your contact with the ... family, and particularly with that gentleman whom you found to be somewhat receptive to the Teachings. Your close association with him, and with the other members of his family, who seem to have been so severely afflicted by some sad events, will, it is hoped, win them to the Cause and open before them a new field of constructive activity. His prayers on your behalf and on behalf of them all will be specially offered to Bahá'u'lláh that through His grace and mercy you may be strengthened and illumined, and be given the necessary inspiration to serve His Cause.

With sincere greetings and best wishes,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

With the assurance of my prayers for your welfare, your success and spiritual advancement,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



¹⁷. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

Letter of 3 December 1934

3 December 1934

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Guardian has directed me to acknowledge on his behalf the receipt of your welcome letter dated November 16th, and to renew his appreciation of your efforts for the spread of the Message in your locality. His prayers for the success and expansion of your labours in this field are being continually offered to the Almighty, that through His blessings and guidance you may be assisted in effectively attaining your goal.

In regard to Mr. ... , Shoghi Effendi is deeply grieved to learn that his difficulties have not yet been solved. He hopes and prays that through your kind help and encouragement, as well as through the assistance of God, he will soon be enabled to overcome the obstacles which beset his path.

He wishes me also to assure you of his supplications on behalf of Mr. ... 's cousin, that your hopes and wishes for him may each and all be fulfilled. He would advise you to persevere in your efforts for attracting him to the Cause, and for enabling him to eventually enlist himself under its banner.

With loving greetings and good wishes,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless your efforts, guide your steps and enable you to promote the interests of His Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 18 June 1935

18 June 1935

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

I am directed by our beloved Guardian to acknowledge on his behalf the receipt of your deeply-appreciated letter dated May 22nd, together with the enclosed report written by you on this year's Annual Convention which he has specially enjoyed reading, and for which he wishes me to convey to you his deepest thanks. Your report is, indeed, quite comprehensive and highly illuminating, and must have been surely read with profoundest interest and appreciation by those who have not had the privilege of attending the sessions of the Convention. You have, therefore, rendered a real and most valuable service to them in this connection.

With regard to your suggestion relative to the translation of Bahá'í literature from Arabic into English by orientalists, Shoghi Effendi does not think it advisable the friends should take such a step at present. He feels that the matter of translations, particularly when it involves the rendering of the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Master, is such a difficult and highly responsible task that only believers who are deeply versed in Arabic and English, and who are also thoroughly familiar with the Writings, can possibly undertake it.

With the assurance of his best wishes, and of his prayers for your guidance and welfare, and with cordial greetings to you and to all the friends in Montreal,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-worker:

Your highly illuminating report is a service for which the friends should feel truly grateful. I value your services and above all the spirit that prompts you to render them. I will continue to pray for your success from all my heart.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of [No Date Indicated]

[No Date Indicated]

To Charles Murray¹⁸

Beloved Bahá'í Brother,

The Guardian has directed me to acknowledge on his behalf the receipt of your letter, and to express his thanks and appreciation for the efforts you are exerting for the spread of the Cause

¹⁸.

throughout Prince Edward Island. He can well realize the nature and number of the obstacles that face you in your arduous labours for the attainment of this task. But he feels confident that your perseverance, and your utter devotion to the cause of teaching will enable you to gradually fulfil this most cherished desire of your heart. Although alone and unaided, you can be certain that the invisible hosts of Bahá'u'lláh are continually helping and guiding you in your labours.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that Mrs. Emeric Sala's¹⁹ visit to your centre will serve to impart to your heart a fresh encouragement, as well as a more powerful incentive to carry on your work for the Cause.

In his prayers and meditations at the Holy Shrines he will specially supplicate the Almighty on behalf of you both, that your efforts for the spread of the Teachings may be continually enriched and may bear full fruitage.

With every good wish and loving greetings,

Yours in His service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless, protect and sustain you in your labours for the spread of His Cause, deepen your understanding of its distinguishing features, and assist you to render memorable services to the sacred Threshold,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 17 March 1936

[From the Guardian:]

17 March 1936

To Fred Schopflocher²⁰

BAHÁ'ÍS WORLD OVER INDEBTED TO YOU FOR YOUR PREPONDERATING SHARE IN SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS OF FAITH IN ITS FORMATIVE PERIOD PUBLICATION BAHÁ'Í

¹⁹. During the first and second Seven Year Plans, they pioneered to Venezuela (1940–41) and travelled throughout Latin America. In 1953 they pioneered to South Africa, and returned to Canada in 1968. In 1971 they pioneered to Mexico, where Rosemary died in 1980. Emeric passed away in 1990. See The Bahá'í World Vol. XVIII, 713–715, and Vol. XX, In Memoriam.

²⁰. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.

WORLD IS YET ANOTHER EVIDENCE OF SUCH GENEROUS SUPPORT ASSURE YOU ABIDING GRATITUDE LOVING REMEMBRANCE LOROL²¹ AND YOUR DEAR SELF.

SHOGHI



Letter of 11 December 1936

11 December 1936

To F. St. George Spendlove²²

Dear Mr. Spendlove,

The Guardian is in receipt of your welcome message of the 19th November with enclosures, and is indeed pleased to learn that you have joined the staff of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology in Toronto. For although he had suggested to you at the beginning to return to England, provided it would be financially possible, he now feels that your stay in such a town as Toronto where there is as yet no well-established group of believers can be equally fruitful and of high value to the promotion of the teaching work. Do not feel worried, therefore, if circumstances did not prove to be favourable to your return to England. In Canada there are still so many places to which the Message has not yet been carried. It is perhaps as virgin a soil as many parts of Great Britain. The essential for you now is to make every effort in order to increase the number of confirmed souls in Toronto and thus pave the way for the formation of an Assembly in that centre.

The Guardian is pleased that your labours in this connection will not be unaided, but will be reinforced through the close and continued collaboration of Messrs. William Suter²³ and Gerrard Sluter,²⁴ the only active believers besides you in Toronto. It is his fervent hope that your united endeavours will greatly stimulate the promotion of the teaching work in that centre. May Bahá'u'lláh send down upon you His confirmations, and assist you in the attainment of this supreme objective.

Assuring you and them of the Guardian's ardent supplications on your behalf at the Holy Shrines,

Yours in His Service,

²¹. Florence Evaline (Lorol/Kitty) Schopflocher — an early Montreal believer who travelled to 86 countries on behalf of the Cause. Her life and travels are described in *The Bahá'í World* Vol. XV, 488–489, In Memoriam.

²². F. St. George Spendlove — a Montreal believer who served on the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles (1935–36), and settled in Toronto. His many services and accomplishments are described in *The Bahá'í World* Vol. XIII, 895–899, In Memoriam.

²³.

1.

²⁴. Shoghi Effendi later declared him a Covenant-breaker for his persistent political involvement.

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to assure you in person of my deep appreciation of the work you are so devotedly accomplishing in Toronto. My hope, indeed my prayer, is that you may be graciously assisted to establish a group of fervent believers who will form a nucleus and foundation for a flourishing spiritual Assembly. Persevere in your pioneer efforts and rest assured.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 12 April 1937

[From the Guardian:]

12 April 1937

To the Montreal Bahá'í Community

DEEPLY TOUCHED MESSAGE ASSEMBLED FRIENDS PRAYING REALIZATION HIGHEST HOPES.

SHOGHI



