

Canada's Involvement in the First Teaching Plans 1937–1948

Shoghi Effendi

Original English



Canada's Involvement in the First Teaching Plans 1937–1948

Letter of 27 June 1937

27 June 1937

To the Bahá'ís of Vancouver

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Our beloved Guardian has been inexpressibly touched by your letter of April 28th, which you have so kindly addressed to him on the occasion of his marriage,¹ and he wishes me to hasten to assure your community of his heartfelt appreciation of the sentiments of devoted love and loyalty you have expressed, all of which he dearly prizes indeed.

It is his fervent hope that in recognition of this priceless honour that the Almighty has chosen to bestow upon the community of Canadian believers your group will unitedly arise and will endeavour with firm determination to lend every support possible to the extension of the teaching work throughout all the provinces of Canada, so that the glorious promises given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá regarding the future of the Cause in that land may be speedily and completely realized.

The Guardian is truly delighted to know of the contribution your group has made to the teaching fund of the National Spiritual Assembly, and trusts you will continue extending every assistance you can to the nation-wide teaching efforts of the American believers. He is praying from the depth of his heart that whatever steps you may take for the furtherance of this sacred Cause may be crowned with complete success.

Again with his best and deepest thanks for your message,

Yours in the Cause,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

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ORIGINAL



AUDIO

May the Almighty fill your hearts with joy and gladness, fulfil your highest hopes, and enable you to consolidate your present-day achievements,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 11 August 1937

11 August 1937

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

The Guardian wishes me to thank you for your welcome letter dated June 9th informing him of your plan to visit Europe in the next fall and requesting his permission to also visit Haifa. He would be indeed delighted to meet you in the Holy Land, and cherishes the hope that your pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines will fill you with renewed energy and a stronger determination than ever to serve and promote the interests of the Faith in your country.

As regards Mrs. ... ; the Guardian thinks it preferable that she should stay in Canada and concentrate heart and soul on the promotion of the teaching work there.

Assuring you both of his keenest appreciation of your services in Montreal, and reciprocating your very warm greetings,

Yours in the Cause,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the spirit of this great and invincible Faith enable you and your dear wife to surmount every obstacle and to expand continuously the area of your activities and to deepen the beneficent influence which you exert upon the souls of those whom you wish to attract to this glorious Revelation.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 11 February 1938

11 February 1938

To an individual believer

Dear Miss ... ,

The Guardian has been most pleased to receive your message of the 23rd January last informing him of your absolute acceptance of the Bahá'í Cause, and pledging yourself to devote all your time and energies to its service.

He rejoices to know that through the devoted and valuable efforts of dear Mrs. Ives² a group of thirteen believers has been formed in Moncton, and he cherishes the hope that this truly splendid start that has been made will be followed up by careful and well-planned teaching activity. He would urge you and each one of your fellow-believers to gird the loins of endeavour in this path, and to exert yourselves day and night until this supreme task is accomplished.

He will specially pray on your behalf at the Holy Shrines, that you may meet with increasing success in your activities for the spread of the Faith in Moncton and in the adjoining centres, and that your highest hopes of serving the Cause may be thus fulfilled.

Assuring you also of his prayers on behalf of dear Mrs. Ives, and all the friends in Moncton, and with loving greetings,

Yours ever in His service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh watch over, sustain, and inspire you and your dear co-workers in that promising centre, and enable you to proclaim His Faith and establish the basis, and extend the range of its God-given institutions,

Shoghi



Letter of 27 February 1938

27 February 1938

To an individual

Dear Miss ...,

Shoghi Effendi was indeed pleased to receive your letter of the ninth instant, and has read its contents with attention and deep interest.

². Mabel Rice-Wray Ives — an American believer who taught the Faith in central and eastern Canada. For more details, see The Bahá'í World Vol. IX, 616–623, In Memoriam.

He was particularly rejoiced to know of the experiences you have passed through, and to realize that they all have served to draw you nearer to the Bahá'í Cause. He cherishes the hope that the spiritual forces latent in your heart will continue gaining in intensity and will lead you eventually to fully recognize and wholeheartedly embrace the Message of the New Day.

Now that you have opened your heart to the light of Divine Truth, and have not resisted the flow of Divine grace into it, you should consider it your duty to also endeavour consciously and persistently to investigate the Teachings, so that your mind also may comprehend them. Personal effort is indeed a vital prerequisite to the recognition and acceptance of the Cause of God. No matter how strong the measure of Divine grace, unless supplemented by personal, sustained and intelligent effort it cannot become fully effective and be of any real and abiding advantage.

Shoghi Effendi hopes therefore that you will continue in your efforts to study the Bahá'í Teachings, and trusts that through such deep and concentrated study you will become increasingly penetrated with their spirit, and will be led to eventually embrace the Faith.

With loving thanks and greetings,

Yours sincerely,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty assist you to deepen your understanding of the fundamental verities of His Faith and enable you to promote its teachings far and wide,

Shoghi



Letter of 17 March 1938

17 March 1938

To an individual believer

Dear Mr. ...,

The Guardian was indeed pleased to receive your letter of the 25th February, and to know of your safe return to Montreal, and to realize that the impressions you had carried back from your visit to the Holy Land are still very vivid in your mind. He hopes as years go by your realization of the great privilege you have had of visiting these Holy Spots will deepen, and that you will be increasingly stimulated as a result to work with added devotion and with a clear vision of the task that lies ahead of you.

It is now that you are back home that you can look at your visit in its true perspective, and appreciate its full significance. Gradually you will also be able to find the answer to certain questions which may still puzzle you. These inner struggles of the soul are indeed a necessary part of the spiritual development of a believer, and if faced and overcome with resolute will and deep faith they can be of an immense asset to his growth in the Cause. You need not feel perturbed therefore, but be confident that the outcome of the experiences you have been passing through will be to further strengthen and enlighten your soul, and to make it worthy of the love which you cherish for Bahá'u'lláh and His Faith.

The Guardian will specially remember you in his prayers at the Holy Shrines, asking the Beloved to continue showering upon you His richest blessings and His most inestimable favours.

With warmest greetings and good wishes for a happy Naw-Rúz to you and your dear wife,

Yours in His service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty, Whose Cause you are promoting with such earnestness, devotion and diligence, guide every step you take, remove whatever obstacles may hinder the progress of your work, and enable you to render memorable services to His Faith in the days to come,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 22 April 1938

22 April 1938

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

It is with profoundest sorrow that the Guardian has learned from your letter of March 29th that your mother is suffering from an acute case of cancer, and he wishes me to hasten to assure you of his brotherly sympathy in this truly grievous situation with which you are faced.

He feels that although the physicians have found the disease too advanced, and pronounced her condition as hopeless, you should still endeavour, by means of sustained and concentrated prayer, to bring about her cure. Now that no material effort can be of any effectiveness you still have one more way open before you, namely that of prayer, and you should therefore continue to supplicate from all your heart that, if it be Gods Will, your mother may be restored to full health, and regain all her forces.

Bahá'u'lláh has revealed special prayers for both spiritual and material healing, and it is therefore your bounden duty to use such prayers on behalf of your mother, and thus put all your trust in the all-sustaining and all-healing power of God. It matters not whether you are endowed with high spirituality or not. The essential is that you pray with sincerity and with full purity of heart, and with the one desire of knowing and accepting His Will.

The Guardian too will pray for your mother at the Holy Shrines, that she may be given strength, patience and faith to meet her destiny with absolute courage and complete fortitude.

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty Giver bestow upon you and your dear mother His richest blessings, sustain you in your activities and cares, strengthen your determination, and fulfil your highest hopes in the service of His Faith.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 3 May 1938

3 May 1938

To Siegfried Schopflocher³

Dear Mr. Schopflocher,

Your communications of February 11th and April 14th with enclosure have been received and read with the closest attention by the Guardian.

He has noted with deep satisfaction in your last letter that the sum which you had pledged to contribute to the National Fund has been fully paid, and he has every hope now that, as a result of your most generous donation, the National Spiritual Assembly will be in a position to meet its financial obligations with regard to the Temple, and that the ornamentation work on that beautiful Edifice will henceforth progress without the least interruption.

The Guardian is also pleased to hear of the remarkable results Lorol⁴ is obtaining during her teaching travels to various parts of the States, and particularly in California. Her great zeal, and

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

⁴. 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.

the talents she is displaying in the teaching field are indeed assets to the teaching force in America, which the friends cannot but value and fully utilize.

With loving remembrances and all good wishes to her and to your dear self,

Yours sincerely in His service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dearest Fred:

I cannot refrain from adding a few words in order to assure you of my special, most loving, and fervent prayers for you, that in the course of this year and those following your services will acquire still greater prominence, effectiveness, and wider range, and thus ennoble the unique record that will ever remain associated with your name in the annals of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.

Your true and gratified brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 17 July 1938

17 July 1938

To an individual believer

Beloved Bahá'í Sister,

I am instructed by our beloved Guardian to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter dated June 17th, which you had been requested to address to him by the St. Lambert Assembly conveying your condolences and sympathy on the occasion of the ascension of the Holy Mother. He indeed values the feelings of profound sorrow which you have expressed at her passing, and will pray that the grief which has so sadly overtaken your hearts may be transmuted into a peaceful and abiding joy, and stimulate you to greater heights of service to our beloved Cause.

The Guardian wishes me to take this opportunity of extending through you to the newly-elected Assembly in St. Lambert the expression of his cordial good wishes and heartfelt congratulations upon your first local elections during last April — which occasion, he believes, marked an important event in the history of the Faith in Canada. He now hopes that through your efforts other centres in the vicinity will be gradually opened to the Cause, and that henceforth through the instrumentality of our Canadian believers, who though few in numbers are so aflame with the desire to serve and who have already rendered such eminent services in the field of teaching, that through them the promises of our beloved Master regarding the glorious future awaiting their country will be completely fulfilled.

The Guardian will specially pray on behalf of you all that your Assembly may steadily develop, and be enabled to accomplish its allotted task under the Seven Year Plan, which is now being vigorously pursued and actively supported by all the friends throughout America.

Yours sincerely in His service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Power that directs, permeates and animates this Faith, ever sustain you in your magnificent efforts and meritorious activities for its spread, and aid you to fulfil the dearest wish of your hearts,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 26 January 1939

26 January 1939

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your welcome communication of the 18th December has duly reached the Guardian, and he is indeed rejoiced at your determination to work in the field of pioneer teaching. Your offer is the more welcome and appreciated in view of the increasing demand for pioneer activity necessitated by the heavy responsibilities assumed by the American believers under the teaching program of the Seven Year Plan. During the two years that have elapsed since the inauguration of this teaching campaign considerable progress has been achieved and exemplary self-sacrifice, determination and courage evinced by the believers. But the ground that still remains to be covered is so vast that much greater resourcefulness and consecration than have so far been displayed are needed on the part of every responsible Bahá'í individual and group if this teaching programme is to be fully carried out and completed at its appointed time.

Your offer to assist in ensuring the realization of this teaching task is therefore most opportune, and will be received with profoundest gratitude by all the friends, and in particular by the National Spiritual Assembly, who have been repeatedly urging the believers to offer their services in the field of pioneer teaching.

While the Guardian would advise you to definitely settle in one of the provinces of Canada where there are no resident believers, he prefers to leave it to your discretion as to what particular town or locality in these provinces you should choose to fix your permanent residence.

In case you find such plan impracticable however he would suggest that you should teach instead in either one of the Republics of Central America where the teaching work has very little advanced so far.

This is, of course, in case you find it financially and materially feasible to undertake the journey which is both long and arduous. The Guardian leaves the final decision to you, that you may act as you deem best under your present circumstances. But he will pray, in the meantime, that you may be guided in choosing the best and wisest plan, and be assisted in carrying it through with the fullest vigour and determination.

Assuring you once more of his best thanks for your most cordial and inspiring message,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear co-worker:

I will assuredly and most fervently pray for you in your new field of service, whatever it may be, and feel certain that if you persevere the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh will be showered upon you. I deeply appreciate the spirit that so powerfully animates you, and am proud of your aims and of your determination. Rest assured and be happy.

Shoghi



Letter of 22 April 1939

22 April 1939

To Howard Colby Ives⁵

Dear Mr. Ives,

Your valued letter of the 15th March has duly reached our beloved Guardian, and he was pleased to note that you had safely received his message, as well as the six ringstones, which he hopes you have found satisfactory.

He was also considerably rejoiced to know that Mr. and Mrs. Robarts,⁶ for whom you had asked his special prayers in your last letter, have joined the Toronto Bahá'í Community, and are progressing so well spiritually. He will continue to remember them in his prayers that they may

⁵. See The Bahá'í World Vol. IX, 608–613, In Memoriam for an account of his life.

⁶. In 1953 they became Knights of Bahá'u'lláh when they pioneered to Bechuanaland. In 1957 John Robarts was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God. He passed away in Rawdon, Quebec in 1991. See The Bahá'í World Vol. XX, In Memoriam.

keep on deepening in their devotion and love for the Cause, and that also they may receive ever-widening opportunities of promoting its truth, and of extending its foundations in their centre.

The Guardian wishes me to take this opportunity of assuring you also of his best wishes for the success of your efforts in connection with your projected book on the Cause — which production, he hopes, will soon be completed and ready for publication, and will, through its circulation, help in further reinforcing the teaching work throughout the States.

May Bahá'u'lláh bless your painstaking and devoted exertions in His path, and fulfil your heart's highest aspirations in service to His Faith.

With the season's warmest greetings,

Yours most sincerely,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Wishing you ever-increasing success in your incessant and highly meritorious labours for the spread of the Faith and the consolidation of its institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 28 April 1939

28 April 1939

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your welcome letter of the 17th March addressed to our beloved Guardian has been duly received, and it pleased him very deeply indeed to know of your appointment as chairman of the Temple Guide Committee, in which capacity, he hopes and will fervently pray, you will be able to render outstanding services to the Faith.

The work which the Bahá'í guides at the Temple are called upon to undertake is truly difficult and delicate, and requires such combination of qualities as sound knowledge of the Teachings, ability, tact and wisdom for their adequate and effective presentation as few believers can claim to possess. Only those who are considered well equipped, both intellectually and spiritually, should be selected for this type of work, and it is the duty of the Temple Guide Committee to exercise the utmost care in making such selection.

Those serving as Temple guides should, in all their contacts with the visitors, maintain the full dignity of the Cause, and provide the inquirers with accurate information regarding the Faith, and stress the universal aspects of the Teachings such as world unity, and its various implications. Political questions and all controversial subjects touching current political affairs should be strictly avoided. The conflicting political systems and philosophies of the day should neither be praised, nor censured, but the fact should be stressed that whatever the political regime under which it is enforced no purely national programme can be considered as adequate and self-sufficient. It is on the higher plane of international co-operation that the problems and difficulties now facing the world should be discussed and solved, and nothing short of the fire of a universal ordeal can succeed in infusing the right spirit in the hearts of the masses and leaders alike.

The station of Bahá'u'lláh, and the significance of the age in which He has appeared, together with the supreme and infallible remedy which His Teachings offer to ailing humanity should be equally stressed, in a clear and unequivocal language.

Those inquirers who are found to be receptive should be given more detailed information, and presented, on demand, with comprehensive and authoritative literature on the Faith.

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.

The Guardian wishes you and your dear co-workers in this field continued success in your highly-meritorious services, and will specially pray for the guidance and confirmation of your efforts. He further wishes me to assure you of his prayers for the realization of your hope of visiting the Holy Shrines, together with your dear husband.

With his cordial greetings to you both,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh guide and sustain you in your activities, cheer your heart, illumine your path and fulfil the dearest wish of your heart in His service,

Your true brother,

Shoghi

Letter of 18 July 1939

18 July 1939

To Beulah S. Proctor⁷

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your most welcome and encouraging letter of the 7th June reporting on your pioneer work in Halifax, Nova Scotia, has duly reached our beloved Guardian and his heart was indeed flooded with joy and gratitude at the determination, and the exemplary spirit of consecration with which you are toiling for the spread and establishment of the Cause in that remote and hitherto unexplored Canadian province, and also at the evidences of the heavenly confirmation which you are receiving in the accomplishment of such a vital and highly-meritorious task. He has noted with deep pleasure the various promising contacts you have already established, and notwithstanding the difficulties with which you will have increasingly to contend in the future, you should confidently, earnestly and resolutely continue to maintain, nay widen and enrich, such associations and contacts, and thus gradually pave the way for the formation of a study group which would eventually develop into a group of interested and confirmed believers, and possibly into a duly-constituted and properly-functioning Bahá'í Assembly in a not too distant future.

Regarding Mr. ...: the Guardian would urge you to strive making him a firm believer, and to create in him the desire to dedicate himself heart and soul to the service of the Cause. Also with regard to your contacting the women's clubs of Nova Scotia: there would be certainly no objection to your desire to do so, but it would be preferable that you concentrate on a selected few individuals who are sincere and truly receptive and to endeavour confirming them in the Faith. Personal contacts with limited, but eager and spiritually-minded persons, are often much more effective and fruitful than addressing large audiences. In your talks and lectures you should, for the present, avoid referring to labour problems, or to any governmental scheme regarding labour issues, as such considerations might lead you into the discussion of political questions which, of course, as a believer, you should by all means strictly avoid and disregard.

As regards your daughter ...: the Guardian will pray for her that her devotion to the Cause, and her zeal to promote its knowledge may be deepened, and that she may gradually be inspired to take an active part in teaching the Faith. He would advise you not to press her unduly, but to carefully watch over her, so that she may gradually, of her own accord, arise and lend you full support in your teaching work.

As to your wish to enter into some kind of business, so as to be independent financially, while continuing your teaching work: he highly approves of this wish you have expressed which should be indeed the ideal of every Bahá'í pioneer. Assuring you, in closing, of his prayers for the confirmation of your services, and with cordial greetings,

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Yours most sincerely,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and prized co-worker:

Your most welcome and inspiring letter brought immense joy to my heart. How proud I feel of your accomplishments, your devotion, your perseverance and determination! Persevere in your historic task, be happy and grateful and never lose heart.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 3 August 1939

3 August 1939

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Our beloved Guardian has received your kind and most welcome message of the 13th July, and noted its contents with feelings of utmost joy and gratitude.

He is indeed happy to hear of your good news, and grateful that you should have written him in such moving and assuring tone, expressing such deep longing to become of increasing service to him and to the Cause.

He profoundly appreciates these noble sentiments that so powerfully animate and sustain you in your Bahá'í life, and will assuredly pray to Bahá'u'lláh that He may, in His unfailing love and protection, bestow upon you such measure of guidance, and such strength of body, mind and spirit as would enable you to translate these high aspirations of your heart into deeds of loving and loyal service to His Faith.

Do feel happy, confident, and persevere in whatever share of service it may be your great privilege to render the Cause at present.

Yours most sincerely,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless, guide and sustain you always, and aid you to render distinguished service to His Faith and its institutions.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 25 August 1939

25 August 1939

To Doris Skinner⁸

Dear Bahá'í Sister,

Your delightful message of July 23rd addressed to our beloved Guardian was most welcome indeed, and he wishes me to hasten to thank you for it, and to express his satisfaction and gratitude at the admirable work you have been accomplishing for the Faith in Calgary during the past few months. He hopes that before long you will succeed in establishing an Assembly in that centre, and wishes you from now on to concentrate all your efforts to that end with the help of Miss Dorothy Sheets,⁹ whom you have already confirmed, this goal should not prove impossible of attainment, and it is to be hoped that as soon as the holiday season is over you will jointly endeavour to start a regular study group which will form the nucleus of the future Bahá'í Assembly of Calgary.

Your desire to also assist in spreading the Cause throughout the province, and in the prairie cities, is indeed most commendable, and the Guardian would certainly urge you to persevere in carrying out your plans in this connection, and would also suggest that you endeavour to contact the Germans and Ukrainians who form the largest section of the foreign population of that region.

Now regarding your questions: the Guardian has considered them carefully, and wishes me to answer them in the order in which they have been put.

The question of whether capital punishment should be inflicted on the criminally insane is one for the Universal House of Justice to decide. Such people, however, not being responsible for their actions, will not suffer any spiritual effect from acts committed while mentally deranged....

Regarding "mercy killings" or legalized euthanasia; this is also a matter which the Universal House of Justice will have to legislate upon.

8. Doris Skinner — Bahá'í from Vancouver who was the first pioneer to Calgary in 1939, until 1949, when she pioneered to Newfoundland.

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Suicide is forbidden in the Cause. God Who is the Author of all life can alone take it away, and dispose of it in the way He deems best. Whoever commits suicide endangers his soul, and will suffer spiritually as a result in the other Worlds Beyond.

As regards the sterilization of the mentally deficient or the physically unfit; the Teachings bear no direct reference to the subject, and it therefore devolves on the Universal House of Justice to decide and legislate on this matter.

With the assurances of the Guardian's prayers for the confirmation of your services to the Cause, and also for the spiritual enlightenment and progress of your dear mother in the World Beyond, and with very warm greetings,

Yours in His Service,

H. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Wishing you all success in your devoted efforts to promote effectively the best and vital interests of the Faith of God and its new-born institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 2 March 1940

[From the Guardian:]

2 March 1940

To Sutherland Maxwell¹⁰

GRIEVE PROFOUNDLY YET COMFORTED ABIDING REALIZATION BEFITTING AND SO NOBLE CAREER VALIANT EXEMPLARY SERVICE CAUSE BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. RÚHÍYYIH THOUGH ACUTELY CONSCIOUS IRREPARABLE LOSS REJOICES REVERENTLY GRATEFUL IMMORTAL CROWN DESERVEDLY WON HER ILLUSTRIOUS MOTHER.¹¹ ADVISE INTERMENT BUENOS AIRES. HER TOMB DESIGNED BY YOURSELF ERECTED BY ME SPOT SHE FOUGHT FELL GLORIOUSLY WILL BECOME HISTORIC CENTRE PIONEER BAHÁ'Í ACTIVITY. MOST WELCOME ARRANGE AFFAIRS RESIDE HAIFA BE ASSURED DEEPEST LOVING SYMPATHY.

SHOGHI RABBANI

¹⁰. His "saintly life" is described in The Bahá'í World Vol. XII, 657–662, In Memoriam.

¹¹. 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 22 April 1940

[From the Guardian:]

22 April 1940

To an individual believer

APPRECIATE MESSAGE PRAYING FRIENDS FAITHFULLY FOLLOW MAY MAXWELL'S¹² NOBLE
EXAMPLE LOVE.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 28 June 1941

[From the Guardian:]

28 June 1941

To an individual believer

PRAYING SUCCESS EASTERN CANADA SUMMER SESSION.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 10 July 1941

[From the Guardian:]

10 July 1941

To a regional committee

OVERJOYED FIRST CANADIAN SUMMER SESSION ASSURE ASSEMBLED REPRESENTATIVES
DEEPEST APPRECIATION FERVENT SPECIAL PRAYERS.

SHOGHI RABBANI

¹². 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 24 September 1941

24 September 1941

To the Bahá'ís of Montreal

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

The Guardian has instructed me to answer your welcome letter addressed to him on the occasion of the meeting of the newly elected Montreal Assembly, on May 12th, which he has just received.

He will indeed pray for special blessings to be vouchsafed for your work of spreading the Faith in Montreal and surrounding districts throughout the coming year. Montreal, being as it is the mother Assembly of the Dominion of Canada, should receive every help and encouragement the friends can give it, that it may grow to be at once the first and one of the largest centres of the Faith in Canada.

The marked progress the Cause has made in recent years in that country should be a source of pride and happiness to all the friends. The Guardian feels that your Assembly, with the advice and aid of the regional and the national Teaching Committees, should exert every effort to increase the number of centres in Quebec, to encourage the visits of prominent teachers, and to reach — difficult as the task may be — the French-speaking population of that Province.

The believers of Montreal have contributed many active and outstanding workers in the Faith, whether teachers, pioneers or administrators; and Shoghi Effendi assures you all that you are very close to his heart and often in his prayers.

With the assurance of his abiding love and prayers, and with warm Bahá'í greetings,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dearly-beloved co-workers:

I was so pleased and touched to receive your most welcome message and the noble assurances it contained. You are often in my thoughts and prayers, as I attach the utmost importance to your centre, recall the part it has played in the past and cherish bright hopes for its future. The great and distinguished services which individual members of your Assembly have rendered in the past, and are still rendering at present are assets that I greatly value. The example these have set and the work they have achieved are a source of profound and enduring satisfaction. May the Beloved sustain, guide and aid you to extend rapidly the range of your services, to proclaim far and wide the truths of this glorious Revelation, and lend a mighty impetus to its onward march.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 19 October 1941

19 October 1941

To Rosemary Sala¹³

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of September 14th has been just received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He has been very pleased over recent news of the progress of the teaching work in Canada, and is happy to note that you and your dear husband are again active in spreading the Cause there. He feels sure that your devotion and the added experience gained through your pioneer work in Venezuela will enable you both to contribute richly to the progress of the work in Canada.

Canada must not be allowed to lag behind in the all-important work of the Seven Year Plan. She is a vast and promising country, and is entitled to her full share of spiritual enlightenment, and the Guardian hopes that you will give as much of your time as possible to virgin territories there — aiding in opening them up and establishing nuclei of future Spiritual Assemblies.

He most deeply appreciated your self-sacrificing labours in South America, and trusts that you will win ever greater victories in service to the Faith you love so dearly and have so wholeheartedly dedicated yourself to.

Rest assured that the selfless persistence with which you are serving our beloved Faith is deeply appreciated by Shoghi Effendi, and indeed helps to lighten his burden of cares and responsibility.

He will supplicate the blessings of Bahá'u'lláh for your work, and you will both be remembered in his loving prayers.

With Bahá'í love,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

¹³. 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.

Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to assure you of my deepfelt and abiding appreciation of the noble and exemplary efforts which you and your dear husband have exerted in recent years, and of the sacrifices you have made in the path of service to our beloved Faith.

Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, taken shortly before his passing in 1957

May and William Sutherland Maxwell

Bahá'í Shrine (home of May and William Sutherland Maxwell), Montreal, Quebec

National Convention of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, Montreal, 1927

Montreal Young People's Group, c. 1929 Front row: Henry Bergson, Mary Maxwell, Glen Wade, unknown Middle row: Ruth Lee, Rosemary Sala, Alberta Simms, Else Lohse, Bahíyyih Lindstrom, Dorothy Wade Back row: Eddie Elliot, Walter Lohse, Emeric Sala, Norman MacGregor, Thomas Lee, Edward Lindstrom

Louis Bourgeois, the architect of the mother temple of the West

Siegfried (Fred) Schopflocher, c. 1941

Bahá'í House of Worship, Wilmette, Illinois

Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, 1958

I will specially pray that you may continue your work in the pioneer field in Canada, where the field is so vast and the opportunities are manifold. You are often in my thoughts and I trust that your highest hopes may be fully realized.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 23 March 1942

[From the Guardian:]

23 March 1942

To a gathering of believers in Montreal

DEEPLY APPRECIATE MESSAGE GATHERED FRIENDS PRAYING ABUNDANT BLESSINGS.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 12 April 1942

12 April 1942

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of January 1st was received by the Guardian, and I have been instructed by him to answer you.

He is delighted to hear of your pioneer activities, and hopes that you will meet with great success and be enabled to crown your part of the Seven Year Plan with a notable victory for that Province in the form of a Spiritual Assembly!

Though it is premature to try and endeavour to foresee on what basis various nations would be represented on any international council, or in any international form of government, it is clear that from the Bahá'í standpoint it could only be carried out on a basis of true justice; and justice does not imply one race having a preponderating vote over some other race's representatives, and thus being in a position to dominate them.

The Guardian will pray for those friends whom you have mentioned in your letter, as well as for you, that your work — of such great importance at this time — may be richly blessed by Bahá'u'lláh.

With Bahá'í love,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved of our hearts guide and bless you always, remove every obstacle from your path, and enable you to promote, in a most effective manner, the life-giving principles of our glorious Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 15 April 1942

15 April 1942

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letter of December 14th has just arrived, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He was most happy to hear of how enthusiastically you are serving the Faith in Canada, and the report of the various conferences that have been held was most encouraging to him.

The Faith, at last, seems to be really becoming more widely known and embraced in the Dominion, and the Guardian hopes that, in spite of the difficulties that face you all, the Canadian friends will succeed in fulfilling in its entirety the teaching part of the Seven Year Plan in their Provinces. This is of the utmost importance, and every Canadian believer should make it the very centre of his conscious activities, and determine to see that nothing prevents him from ensuring that the Canadian share of glory, in the fulfilment of the Plan by the first centenary of the Faith, is not lost.

The Guardian was also very pleased to hear that your wife and sister have both recovered health and can continue their devoted services to the Cause.

He received many flattering reports of the last year's Ontario Summer session, and he will certainly pray that the 1942 one will be even more successful.

He will also continue to pray for you and your dear family, as well as for the believer whom you mention, Mrs. ..., that God may strengthen you to render great services to His Faith during the coming days.

With Bahá'í love,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh guide your steps, cheer your heart, and aid you to advance the best and vital interests of our beloved Faith and its glorious, new-born institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 8 May 1942

8 May 1942

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter, on behalf of the Spiritual Assembly, and dated April 18th, was received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer it.

He was most happy to see with what zeal and determination the Montreal friends are going about planning their work, and to learn that a French Canadian believer has been confirmed through the devoted efforts of dear Lorol.¹⁴

He assures you, one and all, of his continued loving prayers on your behalf and his hopes for your future services.

Montreal is an old and distinguished Assembly, and he hopes she will bear rich fruits for the centenary of our Faith.

With warm Bahá'í greetings and love,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers:

I wish to add a few words in person and express my deep and abiding appreciation of the spirit that animates you in the service of the Faith, and of the work you have already accomplished. I will continue to pray for its extension and consolidation from the depths of my heart. Persevere and rest assured.

Shoghi



Letter of 15 June 1942

15 June 1942

To Rowland Estall¹⁵

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letter of February 15th reached the Guardian yesterday, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

¹⁴. 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.

¹⁵.

1.

He was very happy to hear from you. He has been following your activities, through various reports, with deep interest, and the news of the formation of a Spiritual Assembly in Winnipeg this spring greatly cheered him. This is, indeed, a victory of major importance to the Seven Year Plan, and more particularly to the Faith in Canada.

The progress which the Canadian believers, so few, relatively, in numbers, have been making is truly remarkable, and the Guardian hopes that this year they will succeed in doing twice as much as last year! This year is, he feels, the most important one as upon its success and failures depends the entire Plan's success or failure. Of course, needless to say, the Guardian is not envisaging the possibility of failure at all. But the great drive forward towards our goal must be mainly carried on this year, as there will still be a great deal of consolidation work needed to round off what has already been accomplished.

He is pleased to hear that you have fully recovered your health, and he hopes that your efforts during the coming year will be even more richly blessed than in the past.

His prayers will often be offered for you, and he welcomes news of your activities.

With Bahá'í greetings,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

P.S. He thanks you for the photograph you enclosed of yourself, which he was pleased to receive.

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-worker:

I deeply appreciate the strenuous efforts you are so devotedly exerting for the furtherance of our beloved Faith. I will continue to pray for you from the depths of my heart. Persevere in your noble efforts, and rest assured that the Beloved will richly bless your high and valued endeavours.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 29 July 1942

[From the Guardian:]

29 July 1942

To an individual believer

TOUCHED APPRECIATE MESSAGE PRAYING UNPRECEDENTED BLESSINGS MONTREAL'S
SECOND CONFERENCE.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 14 October 1942

14 October 1942

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of August 16th has just reached the beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He was very happy to hear from you and he welcomes you into the world-wide Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and hopes you will be able to carry its light to many other sincere and seeking souls like yourself.

The news you gave him of dear Mr. Schopflocher¹⁶ and his wife¹⁷ was most welcome. He is, indeed, a very devoted Bahá'í, as is Ernest Harrison¹⁸ also, and the Guardian is happy to know you have been able to study the teachings with such fine believers as these.

He assures you that he will pray for the protection of your son, and that God may guide him to the Truth in this day as He has guided you to it.

With the assurance of his loving prayers for your future services in the Cause, and With warm Bahá'í greetings,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved of our hearts bless richly your efforts and aid you to further the vital interests of His Faith and its institutions,

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

17. 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.

18.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 15 November 1942

15 November 1942

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of September 17th has been received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He was sorry to hear of the serious state of health of Mrs. ... whom you mention as being such a fine soul, and he will certainly pray for her in the Holy Shrines that she may accept this great bounty from God of the knowledge of His Manifestation, and find happiness and comfort in it.

He deeply appreciates all you and your husband are doing in the service of the Faith at this critical period in the world's history, and he hopes you will both redouble your efforts, and stimulate the other dear Canadian friends to do likewise, so that the teaching work in Canada may fulfil all its objectives under the Seven Year Plan.

The work already achieved is something to be proud of, and he feels confident the friends can, through united effort, win through to a glorious victory by 1944 — our first Centennial celebration.

You may be sure you and your family are remembered in his prayers, and he feels sure your services will ever increasingly widen in scope and bring home richer harvests to the beloved Faith.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless you, and protect you, and enable you to promote effectively the vital interests of His Faith and its God-given institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 5 May 1943

5 May 1943

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your warm letter was received, and, although the Guardian answered your first letter to him, it seems to have gotten lost. This last letter of yours, dated December 28th, and which I am answering on his behalf, only arrived two days ago. He hopes this time his reply will reach you safely.

He is happy to hear of your great devotion to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh and how clearly you have grasped the fundamental truth that all the Prophets are from One Essence and one in spirit. This is one of the greatest blessings the Faith has to offer to people — the knowledge of the unity of all religions.

He will certainly pray that God may watch over your sons and bring them safely home to you. He will also pray that they may recognize the Bahá'í Teachings to be the solution to the problems of the world today.

Assuring you of his loving prayers for your services to the Cause,

Yours, with Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

P.S. He was pleased to know you see the dear Salas¹⁹ and Ernest Harrison;²⁰ they are all truly devoted Bahá'ís.

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my special prayers for your spiritual advancement and for the success of your efforts in the service of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



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.

Letter of 26 May 1943

26 May 1943

To an individual believer

Dear little Bahá'í Sister:

Your little letter to the Guardian pleased him very much, and he has told me to answer you on his behalf.

He feels that Bahá'í children like you have a lot of wonderful work to do for others in the future. But you don't even have to wait until you grow up, you can help your dear Mother teach the Cause to others right now, and also tell your playmates about it.

The Guardian is going to pray that you may grow up to be a shining light in the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

With love to you,

In His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless, protect and guide you and enable you to serve His Faith in the days to come,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 22 June 1943

22 June 1943

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter dated March 10th has been received, also the photograph of your two girls which you enclosed, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf. He hopes the way will open for you to find and teach some receptive souls, in your neighbourhood, this blessed message. As you say, all are not yet ready for it, and though they need it their eyes are not yet open.

The beloved Guardian is very busy these days with all his worldwide correspondence and plans for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of our Faith, which will take place in May

If you can manage to attend the Bahá'í Convention in Wilmette in the Temple next May it would be a wonderful experience for you and one that would bring you great joy indeed.

The Guardian assures you he will continue to pray for the spiritual development and enlightenment of your children and for your own work in the Cause.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my special prayers for the realization of every wish you cherish in the service of the Faith and for the promotion of the interests of its institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 19 December 1943

19 December 1943

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

The Guardian has instructed me to answer your letter dated November 11th.

He feels that, since the National Spiritual Assembly has requested you to remain away from the Bahá'í meetings for a period of a year, you should obey them implicitly. This does not mean spiritual death, nor that you are not a believer in the Faith.

He does not wish you to be sad, but rather to prepare yourself to take your place again in the Bahá'í Community, and work with all the friends in a spirit of love and harmony. Every stumbling-block in this world can be made a stepping-stone to progress and development.

He assures you he will pray for you in the Holy Shrines, and for your husband, and he will also place some candles there in your name.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless your efforts, and enable you to uphold, at all times and under all conditions, the spiritual and administrative principles of our beloved Faith and advance its best interests,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 30 March 1944

30 March 1944

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of February 20th, enclosing that of your husband, has been received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He hastens to assure you that he will supplicate in the Shrines for that spiritual insight to be given to your husband which he is seeking with so much humility and sincerity.

The Mormons are a people with high principles and ideals, and the step spiritually into the Cause is not as difficult for them as for many others not possessing their faith and devotion. However, the very zeal with which they serve their own Faith makes it difficult for them to grasp the greater vision of our Holy Cause. He hopes that Mr. ..., so obviously a devout Christian, will, through studying the Bahá'í teachings on Christ and the prophecies in the Bible concerning His Second Coming, and through a study of the life and spirit of Bahá'u'lláh, come to see that Christ, far from being lost to Bahá'ís, is enthroned in their hearts more deeply than ever through recognizing Him in this new Manifestation.

He deeply appreciates the tireless devotion with which you are serving the Cause, and he will pray that your heart's desires may be realized and your husband feel moved, of his own free will, to join you in its service.

With warm Bahá'í love and greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved guide your steps, cheer your heart, guide your husband to embrace the truth of this Revelation, and enable you to promote its vital interests.

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 6 July 1944

6 July 1944

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letter of June 6th has been received, and the Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

Regarding your questions concerning the advisability of changing the basis of the National Assembly's election and confining it to the body of delegates or of limiting the term of office: He feels that as any such changes are of a radical nature and should therefore also apply to the National Spiritual Assemblies of other countries they are inadvisable and premature, both for this reason and because of their very nature.

What is needed is to get the Administration in its present form to run more efficiently and at the same time to build up a higher sense of responsibility among the body of the believers. They should be encouraged to think more, not only about the qualifications of members of their elected bodies, but also about such things as you mention, the law of averages, the age and indisposition of some of the members, etc.

When we look back and see what the Administration has accomplished in twenty-odd years, indeed what it has done in the last seven years, we see what strides forward have been made. Far greater tasks lie ahead; but the Guardian does not feel that the way to meet them is to change the present system but rather to perfect it by educating the believers and training them, holding more conferences, publishing more news for Bahá'ís, getting more people active.

He wants you to know that he deeply values your and your dear wife's tireless and devoted services to our beloved Cause, and he will continue to pray for you both.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to add a few words in person and assure you of my keen and abiding appreciation of your devotion, your zeal and perseverance in the service of our beloved Faith. I greatly value your

services, and above all the spirit in which you render them. May the Beloved guide every step you take, and fulfil every desire you cherish for the promotion of His glorious Faith.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 16 October 1944

16 October 1944

To the Bahá'ís who attended the Fourth Ontario Summer Conference

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Your letter of August 6th with the good news it contained of the success of your conference and the large number of friends present reached the beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He is very happy to see with what awareness of their responsibilities and devotion the friends are facing this new Century we have just entered upon.

Although wonders have been achieved in the teaching field in Canada during the last seven years, great tasks still lie ahead in consolidating the new Spiritual Assemblies and forming additional ones. He hopes the Canadian Bahá'ís will forge ahead to new victories and fulfil the Master's hopes for that great Dominion.

Assuring you all of his loving prayers for the success of your devoted labours,

Yours in His service,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-workers:

I was greatly cheered and heartened by your most welcome letter. I admire and feel deeply thankful for your splendid achievements. I will pray for you from the depths of my heart, and wish you to persevere in your noble task and endeavour continually to extend the range of your meritorious services,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 13 November 1944

[From the Guardian:]

13 November 1944

To an individual believer

HEART OVERFLOWING SYMPATHY YOUR SUFFERINGS SO COURAGEOUSLY ENDURED. WOULD HAVE INSTANTLY COMMUNICATED HAD I KNOWN. BOTH YOU I TASTED CUP DISILLUSIONMENT TREATMENT NEAREST RELATIVES. FEEL CLOSE TO YOU REALIZATION YOUR SORROWS MEMORY YOUR SUPERB CONTINUED IMPERISHABLE SERVICES. PRAYING FERVENTLY HOLY SHRINES DEEPEST LOVE.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 6 April 1945

6 April 1945

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Although you were so considerate as to ask our beloved Guardian not to take time to answer your letter of February 11th, he wishes me to nevertheless reply on his behalf and assure you that he will specially pray, for the removal of your difficulties, in the Holy Shrines, and that Bahá'u'lláh may aid you to serve His Cause and exemplify His teachings in your daily life.

The Guardian appreciates the devotion and attachment to the Faith which prompted your letter.

With loving greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my special prayers for your spiritual advancement, and for the success of every effort you exert for the promotion of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 16 May 1945

16 May 1945

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of March 28th has been received a few days ago, and the beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf, and to also thank you for the loving thoughts and messages you have sent him from time to time in your letters to me.

He deeply values the great love and devotion which you feel for our precious Faith, and he assures you he will pray for you, in the Holy Shrines, that Bahá'u'lláh may enable you to fulfil your heart's desire and attract others to His wonderful Message. In some places the people are conservative and the Cause spreads slowly at first, but you should persevere and never feel depressed.

With warm Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Wishing you the utmost success in your devoted endeavours for the promotion and consolidation of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 29 October 1945

[From the Guardian:]

29 October 1945

To an individual believer

FERVENTLY PRAYING SUCCESS CHARLOTTETOWN.

SHOGHI RABBANI



Letter of 22 March 1946

22 March 1946

To the National Youth Committee of the United States and Canada

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

On behalf of the beloved Guardian I wish to thank you for the lovely Naw-Rúz greeting card you sent him from the Bahá'í National Youth Committee and the young believers of the United States and Canada.

He was so happy to see the young believers are celebrating our Bahá'í New Year and entering with full hearts into the new age Bahá'u'lláh has inaugurated in the world.

With best wishes for you all,

R. Rabbani



Letter of 24 March 1946

24 March 1946

To Emeric Sala²¹

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your most welcome letter of March 5th was received by our beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

The graphic and to-the-point description you have given him of the conditions you found in Latin American Bahá'í Centres helped him very much to see the picture of the work there as a whole, and he feels your recommendations to the Inter-America Committee are excellent.

He has felt from the very beginning that these gifted, sensitive Latins, who are capable of being both spiritual and intellectual, have a great contribution to make to the future progress of the Cause everywhere, and he is very anxious that they should become strong enough to manage their own affairs.

The many valuable services you are rendering the Faith — through your book,²² your teaching trips, and your local Bahá'í work — are very deeply appreciated by him, and he rejoices to see

²¹. 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.

²². Emeric Sala's book was *This Earth One Country* (1945).

you and your dear wife toiling so faithfully in the service of our beloved Cause. In this connection he wishes to thank you for the copies of your book which you sent him and which he placed in various Bahá'í libraries here.

He will pray that your labours for the Faith may be ever-increasingly blessed and fruitful.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Dear and valued co-worker:

The services which you and your dear wife have rendered in Latin America are highly meritorious, and evoke my heartfelt admiration. I pray you may have similar opportunities in the near future, and that the Beloved may, wherever you labour, bless abundantly your notable activities and accomplishments. Persevere in your work, rest assured, and be happy.

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 12 June 1946

[From the Guardian:]

12 June 1946

To the Canadian Teaching Committee

ARDENTLY PRAYING UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS NEWLY FORMED TEACHING COMMITTEE. URGE BROADEN BASIS PROSPECTIVE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THROUGH MULTIPLICATION GROUPS ASSEMBLIES. ADVISE INCREASE NUMBER REGIONAL CONFERENCES STIMULATE COMMUNITY LIFE PROMOTE NATIONWIDE CO-OPERATION AROUSE INTEREST MASSES GLORIOUS REVELATION DEEPEST LOVING APPRECIATION SERVICES.

SHOGHI



Letter of 24 July 1946

24 July 1946

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter dated September 8th was most welcome, and the beloved Guardian assures you he would have answered you sooner only he has been so very busy this past year.

He followed your and your dear husband's South American tour with great interest, and was delighted at the number of centres you were able to visit; your trip will surely produce good results in the teaching field, and stimulate the pioneers and local believers to redouble their efforts.

You should never feel discouraged, for your devoted and ceaseless services are much appreciated, and have been of great help to the work in many places.

Now that Canada is so soon to have its own National Assembly, he urges you and your dear husband to concentrate your efforts on strengthening and multiplying the Canadian Assemblies. This is of the utmost importance, as a preparation for this historic step so soon to take place.

Assuring you of his loving prayers on your behalf and for the success of your labours,

Yours with warm Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my heartfelt appreciation of your splendid services to our beloved Faith, and of my loving and ardent prayers that you and your dear husband may be enabled to enrich the record of your notable services, and to fulfil every desire you cherish for the promotion of the Cause and its institutions,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 28 December 1946

28 December 1946

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter (with copies of others enclosed) dated October 18th, has been received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

He fully realizes what a great shock you have sustained through the death of this son over whom your heart had yearned for so many years, especially under such tragic circumstances, and he assures you of his deep sympathy and his loving prayers for the progress and happiness of ... 's soul....

Surely the way you can now be of the greatest help to your son's soul is to serve the Cause and promote its interests. The Master has often pointed out that deeds we do for, or contributions we make to, the Cause of God in the name of a departed person, aid that person's soul in the World Beyond. This is one of the mercies of God!

Before you and your dear mother-in-law make any definite plans for a Bahá'í summer school, he feels you should consult the Assembly. In this way you will be guided to do that which is best for the beloved Faith, and will be able to find a way of serving it in the memory of your son.

He hopes you will be able to not only help guide many young people and children into the Cause, but also to assist the parents to both embrace the Message and, through its teachings, bring their children up in the spirit of the New Day.

He assures you and Mr. ... of his loving prayers for you both, for the success of your Bahá'í work, and, especially, for ... 's soul in the World Beyond.

With warm Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Almighty bless richly the soul of your dear son in the World beyond, console and sustain you in your great loss, enable you to promote, in his name, the interests of the institutions of His Faith, and aid you to fulfil your heart's desire in its service,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 19 February 1947

19 February 1947

To Emeric Sala²³

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

²³. 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.

Your letters dated October 16th and December 19th, with enclosures, were both received, and our beloved Guardian regrets very much the unavoidable delay in answering you, caused by pressure of certain urgent matters that arose.

He feels that there must have been some misapprehension on your part of his statements regarding future Guardians: they cannot “abrogate” the interpretations of former Guardians, as this would imply not only lack of guidance but mistakes in making them; however they can elaborate and elucidate former interpretations, and can certainly abrogate some former ruling laid down as a temporary necessity by a former Guardian.

You asked his views about your statement on the Bahá’í Faith and Communism: frankly he feels that the less the friends discuss Communism, and the Faith in connection with it, the better these days, as the subject is a burning issue, and no matter how discreet we are we run the risk of being involved in this highly political issue.

He wishes you to know that he very deeply appreciates the innumerable services you and your dear wife render the Faith. Reports of your South American work have reached him, as well as your own report of your fifth western trip, and he is delighted to see the response you are getting from the public. Your book²⁴ has, likewise, been a very useful addition to the teaching literature of the Faith in English, and you must rejoice to see the way God is blessing your labours for His Cause.

Tremendous work still remains to be done in Canada before the approaching election of its first National Spiritual Assembly; he hopes you and Mrs. Sala will devote as much of your time to this field as you can.

Assuring you of his loving prayers on your behalf, and for the success of your services.

Yours with Bahá’í love,

R. Rabbani

P.S. Through Mr. Schopflocher²⁵ he recently learned of your joint gift of a property to the Cause in Canada for a Summer School. This is much appreciated, and he hopes it will develop into a fine institution in the future!

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved, Whose Cause you are serving with such zeal, devotion and perseverance, reward you for your labours, guide every step you take in the path of service, and aid you to enrich the record of your meritorious and notable accomplishments,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi

²⁴. Emeric Sala’s book was *This Earth One Country* (1945).

²⁵. For a review of his “numerous, magnificent services” see *The Bahá’í World* Vol. XII, 664–666, In Memoriam.



Letter of 15 March 1947

15 March 1947

To Elsa Vento²⁶

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter of January 15th was received, and our beloved Guardian was very happy to hear from you. He has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

The desire you have to return to Finland and teach your sisters and other people this wonderful Message meets with his full approval, and he hopes you will make every effort to do so. This would be rendering your native land a great spiritual service of historic importance.

Finland is so far away, and so few of the Bahá'ís have been able to visit it or to speak its language, that it has been very difficult until now to teach there. What is needed are believers like yourself and Miss ..., who speak the language and who have the longing to teach the Finnish people.

He will certainly pray that the way may open for you to return to Finland and establish the Cause there on a firm basis.

With warm Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

P.S. He is writing to your sister in Finland, encouraging her to teach the Cause.

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved aid you to fulfil speedily your heart's desire, and enable you, in collaboration with your sister, to promote the interests of the Faith in Finland, and lay a firm basis for its God-given institutions,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 7 April 1947

7 April 1947

To an individual believer

²⁶. For more details see The Bahá'í World Vol. XIII, 900–901, In Memoriam.

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter dated March 10th has been received, and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He quite understands how you feel, and you must have been shocked to find something in the teachings you love so dearly which savoured of church fines! But he assures you this is due to a misapprehension caused by a very bad translation of the Aqdas.

The fines specified by Bahá'u'lláh are very much the same in principle as those applied by common law as a punishment for breaking the law. No one can possibly associate these necessary checks on law-breaking with a church fine of any sort.

If you study the Bahá'í teachings deeply you will see that the laws of the Aqdas, as they will be applied in future, are really the protective framework of the New World Order, and have nothing to do with the ecclesiastical practices of the past.

He will pray that you may become an able and gifted teacher and promoter of our beloved Faith.

With warm greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving prayers for your spiritual advancement, and the success of every effort you exert for the promotion and consolidation of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 14 April 1947

14 April 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated March 17th, was received and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He is very happy to learn of your determination to enter the field of pioneer service, certainly the most thrilling and one of the worthiest branches of Bahá'í service!

As to your question regarding the Fast: if there is any doubt in the mind of a person as to whether it will really be bad for that person's health to keep it, the best doctor's advice should be obtained. But generally speaking most people can keep it, anywhere in the world, with no detriment to their health. It is very good for the health and, once one forms the habit, each year it becomes easier to keep, unless one is run down. No one is obliged to keep it if it really harms them.

He will pray that your services to our Faith may be richly blessed, and that in Moncton you may attract and teach many new souls.

With loving greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless your efforts in the service of our beloved Faith, and aid you to promote the best interests of its God-given institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 14 April 1947

14 April 1947

To the Visual Education Committee of the United States and Canada

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Your letter of February 23rd was received by our beloved Guardian, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He has no objection at all to copies being made of any photographs sent for The Bahá'í World volumes; you are free to make any copies you wish to of those at present being used for Volume X.

There is a great deal of interesting historic data preserved in old photographs of the Cause, and it would certainly be useful to use some of these in the manner you have in mind. Unfortunately at the present time it is not possible here to go through stored material, have copies made and send them on to you; the pressing work of the Cause is such as to keep him and everyone else busy all day long! But he hopes in the future this kind of work can be undertaken and such records shared with the friends.

He assures you of his interest in your work and his loving prayers on your behalf and for its success.

With Bahá'í greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved bless your meritorious efforts, guide your steps, and aid you to assist effectively in the promotion of our glorious Faith and the consolidation of its God-given institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 20 April 1947

20 April 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

Your letter dated February 7th was received and our beloved Guardian has instructed me to answer you on his behalf.

Since you have turned to him for advice he will give it to you quite frankly: he feels that, now that Canada is so soon to have her own National Spiritual Assembly, you should remain in the Dominion and serve there. There are so few Canadian Bahá'ís, relatively speaking, and they are scattered over such a vast territory, that to lose such an active worker as yourself would constitute a weakening of their forces. Where you serve he feels is up to you to decide; no doubt in Eastern Canada the need for help is greatest, but you should make your own choice.

It is very difficult to know what choices to make in life, and they are always conditioned by our own state of spiritual advancement; what would constitute an impossible sacrifice for one soul would seem to another a very small step to take!

There is certainly no reason why you should not go through life with a companion; Bahá'u'lláh strongly upholds the institution of marriage, and it need not hinder the service of an active Bahá'í if he married the right person. He assures you he deeply values your devotion and loyalty to the Faith and your readiness to put all personal desires aside in order to serve it. You may be sure his most loving prayers will be offered for your guidance, success and your happiness.

With Bahá'í love,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Spirit of Bahá'u'lláh sustain, guide, and bless you at all times and under all conditions, and aid you to render inestimable services to the Faith in Canada, and lend a tremendous impetus to its growth and the multiplication and consolidation of its nascent institutions,

Your true and grateful brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 6 May 1947

[From the Guardian:]

6 May 1947

To the Bahá'ís of Canada

SHARE JOYS HOPES DEARLY BELOVED MEMBERS CANADIAN BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY URGE REDOUBLE EFFORTS AS HOUR TRIUMPH APPROACHES LOVING FERVENT PRAYERS.

SHOGHI



Letter of 4 July 1947

4 July 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Our beloved Guardian has received your letter to him dated April 17, and he wishes me to drop you a little line of acknowledgement as he never likes to leave the friends' letters unanswered.

He is happy to hear that your concept of the Temple's tremendous significance has augmented since reading more deeply about it. There are so many movements and people in the world working indirectly for the ultimate realization of Bahá'u'lláh's Order, but only we few believers are working directly for it; that is why we cannot afford to dissipate our limited resources and energies.

He will continue to pray for the success of your Bahá'í work.

With loving greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving prayers for your spiritual advancement and the success of your efforts for the promotion of our beloved Faith,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 23 August 1947

[From the Guardian:]

23 August 1947

To the Charlottetown Assembly

ASSURE YOU SPECIAL FERVENT PRAYERS.

SHOGHI



Letter of 27 September 1947

27 September 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Brother:

I have been instructed by the Guardian to answer your letter to him dated August 26th. He hopes you received the reply to your cable, and was sorry that the answer reached you at such a late date. Your letter took some time to reach him, and as you had not mentioned any date in it he did not realize an urgent reply was needed!

He is very pleased indeed to see your enthusiasm for, and devotion to, this Faith you have so recently embraced, and desire to serve so ardently. As he informed you in his cable he feels your best course is to continue your education which will not only assist your own career, but better fit you for teaching the Faith. If it were possible for you to enter university, some place where you would at the same time be able to strengthen or open up a new Bahá'í centre, he would advise you to do this.

You may be sure he will pray for the success of your work and of your services to the Cause in Canada.

With warmest greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

May the Beloved aid you to fulfil your heart's desire in the service of our beloved Faith, and contribute a notable share to the progress and consolidation of its new-born God-given institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 14 October 1947

14 October 1947

To the Canadian National Radio Committee

Dear Bahá'í Friends:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated September 13th, was received, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He is very pleased to see you have a Canadian Radio Committee now, as this type of teaching the masses is very efficacious and reaches people who would otherwise never hear of the Faith.

Now that Canada is to have its own National Spiritual Assembly the functions of this committee will become even more important in the future, and he hopes your work will meet with great success.

His loving prayers will be offered for the advancement of your work, you may be sure,

With warmest greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving and special prayers for the success of your newly initiated activity, and the realization of every hope you cherish for its expansion, consolidation and ultimate fruition,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 14 October 1947

14 October 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated September 28th has been received, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

He feels, in regard to the question you asked him, that under no circumstances should such a subject be discussed in the presence of non-Bahá'ís, as it might give them the impression we are fanatics. In teaching people, when they begin to seriously study the Faith, there is no objection to impressing upon them that this Message involves great spiritual responsibility, and should not be either accepted or cast aside lightly. But we must be very gentle, tactful and patient, and not administer shocks to people.

Bahá'u'lláh teaches that the Mercy of God exceeds His Justice. Ultimately there is hope for every soul of progress and forgiveness. But at the same time to turn aside from this Cause, once we have really contacted its spirit, is a grave error and one not to be minimized. But although we Bahá'ís know this, we cannot thrust such a statement on non-Bahá'ís. We must always teach constructively, and be very sure that none of us, through disagreement among ourselves or indiscretion, cool off the souls of the seekers.

He assures you all of his loving prayers for the advancement of the Cause in Hamilton.

With warmest greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving prayers for the success of your efforts for the promotion of our beloved Faith, and the realization of every hope you cherish for its advancement,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 10 December 1947

10 December 1947

To an individual believer

Dear Bahá'í Sister:

Your letter to our beloved Guardian, dated November 27th, has been received, and he has instructed me to answer it on his behalf.

Regarding the questions you asked: self has really two meanings, or is used in two senses, in the Bahá'í writings; one is self, the identity of the individual created by God. This is the self mentioned in such passages as "he hath known God who hath known himself", etc. The other self is the ego, the dark, animalistic heritage each one of us has, the lower nature that can develop into a monster of selfishness, brutality, lust and so on. It is this self we must struggle against, or this side of our natures, in order to strengthen and free the spirit within us and help it to attain perfection.

Self-sacrifice means to subordinate this lower nature and its desires to the more godly and noble side of our selves. Ultimately, in its highest sense, self-sacrifice means to give our will and our all to God to do with as He pleases. Then He purifies and glorifies our true self until it becomes a shining and wonderful reality.

He assures you of his loving prayers for the success of your Bahá'í services.

With warmest greetings,

R. Rabbani

[From the Guardian:]

Assuring you of my loving prayers for your success in the service of our beloved Faith and of its God-given institutions,

Your true brother,

Shoghi



Letter of 14 December 1947

[From the Guardian:]

14 December 1947

To the Montreal Assembly

GRIEVE PASSING ELIZABETH COWLES²⁷ PRAYING ARDENTLY PROGRESS SOUL ABHÁ
KINGDOM RECORD HER MERITORIOUS SERVICES WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

SHOGHI



²⁷. Elizabeth Cowles — an early Montreal believer.

