

1932

Shoghi Effendi

Original English



1932



— 87 —

January 7, 1932

Dear Prof. Pritam Singh,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to drop you these few lines to draw your attention to a general principle he has laid down for all the Bahá'í periodicals, namely that they should be very careful in selecting the advertisements they accept to publish. It should be highly dignified, such as books for example, otherwise it would detract from the dignity of the periodical itself. This may cause certain difficulty in financially establishing the paper, but we should face the sacrifice and not endanger the prestige of our publications. He wishes you to take note of this general recommendation in accepting advertisements for the "Bahá'í Weekly."

Furthermore, he wishes me to inform you, that he has decided to put your name among the editors of the "Bahá'í World," as representing India and Burma. He thinks that you are best fitted to keep in touch with the Bahá'í World Committee, and supply them all the material that refers to India and Burma. Among the duties that will devolve upon you is to arrange a report covering the activities of the friends for the previous two years, the address of the different [pg 77] Assemblies, gathering of photographs of groups, and the name of any book published in India—whether English, Urdu, or otherwise. In short, you will have to find what can be contributed by India and Burma as material for any of the different sections of the "Bahá'í World."

In closing may I assure you of Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings and prayers and express his deep appreciation for the wonderful services you are rendering to the spread of the Cause.



— 88 —

February 11, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,



ORIGINAL

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated January 29th 1932 as well as the two enclosed drafts.

Please find enclosed a receipt for the same. He was very sad to hear that you have not been well, for it undoubtedly caused much anxiety to the members of your family and also kept you from your work. The Cause cannot afford seeing its fine servants ill and handicapped. Please take great care of yourself that the attack may not recur.

Mrs. Ransom Kehler has informed us of her trip to India. Shoghi Effendi hopes that the friends will give her all the necessary facilities to make of her tour a real success. The report of her work in Australia and New Zealand has been brilliant. There is no reason why she should not do the same in India and Burma if she is given the chance and be put in touch with really open minded and interested people. In America she is considered among the first class national teachers and is well informed as to the progress of modern thought and the teachings of the Cause. Maybe she will be able to give a new impetus to the teaching work.

In closing may I assure you of Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings and best wishes. He trusts that through the efforts of you and the other members of the National Assembly the Cause will take a real lead in uniting the different elements existing in India and turn the face of its people to the light of God shining through Bahá'u'lláh.

Dear and precious co-worker:

Your most welcome letter, interrupting a prolonged silence on your part, has brought joy and strength to my heart. I will most assuredly pray[pg 78] for your complete recovery, for in you the Cause in India has an invaluable asset which I for my part; greatly value and prize. I trust and pray that Mrs. Kehler's visit will lend a fresh impetus to the work which you are so ably conducting. I would certainly advise her to prolong her stay in your midst if it is practicable for her to do so. It is a splendid opportunity which the friends in India should utilize to the utmost possible extent. May the Beloved bless and reinforce your high endeavours, remove every obstacle from your path, and enable you at once to broaden and reinforce the foundations of the Faith in that troubled land.

Your true and affectionate brother,
Shoghi



March 12, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated February 26th,15. He was very sorry to hear that you have been very ill and forced to take a leave from your work and have some rest. He sincerely hopes that this vacation will restore your strength and enable you

to resume your work with even greater vigour and determination. In his moments of prayer at the Shrines he will think of you and ask God to help and guide you, to keep you both for your family and also for His blessed Cause. Shoghi Effendi was very glad to hear of the arrangements you have made for the trip of Mrs. Ransom Kehler to India. Being thoroughly familiar with the teachings, and a competent speaker, she should succeed to render wonderful services to the progress of the Movement in India. She could be easily ranked as a first class teacher among the Bahá'ís of America and has been the cause of guidance to innumerable souls. Guided and helped by Prof. Pritam Singh she should be able to awaken many souls to the spirit and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Please extend to them both Shoghi Effendi's loving greetings and best wishes.

Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to urge you to take as soon as you possibly can, the necessary and most effective steps to ensure the translation of Dr. Esslemont's book into Urdu and Gujrati. I have already expressed the desirability to have [pg 79] these translations to a number of pilgrims, but so far my hopes have not materialized. This book has already been translated and printed into eight different languages, the latest being Russian, Hebrew and Chinese. The Persian, the Albanian, the Bulgarian, the French and the Swedish versions will be printed this year. I wish you to do all in your power to ensure the speedy and correct translation of this book into these two languages, and if necessary to hire the services of a competent non-Bahá'í translator. I shall be only too pleased to assist financially both with regard to their translation and publication. May the Beloved guide and assist you in this vital and important task.

Shoghi



— 90 —

March 24, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

One of the interests of Shoghi Effendi at present is to have the book of Dr. Esslemont's translated into as many different languages as possible. He already has had it translated and published into a dozen languages and others are forthcoming.

This deep interest is primarily due to the fact that the teachers are in many countries hampered in their work by the lack of proper literature to be handed to an earnest seeker. Neither they have the time nor the beginner has the patience for long discourses on the tenets of the Faith and there is in many countries no book to fill that gap.

Dr. Esslemont's book is in many respects the best available. It is comprehensive in its scope and also clear and simple in its rendering. It has also been corrected partly by our beloved Master.

In short, Shoghi Effendi would be very thankful if you should arrange for its translation into the Burmese language. It should, however, be done by a person who is well versed in that language and also is thoroughly conversant with English. He also promises to send a contribution when it is ready for publication as he has been doing in the case of the other translations.

He believes very fervently that when that book will be out from the press the teaching work will be stimulated and the task of the teachers infinitely facilitated.

In close may I express his loving greetings and best wishes and [pg 80] also his many thanks in advance for this work which he is sure you will take up immediately and with all your fervour and love.



— 91 —

March 28, 1932

Dear Mr. Rahman,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated March 14th 1932 informing him about the arrival of Mrs. Ransom Kehler to Calcutta. He was very glad to know that her visit was successful and that it has very much stimulated the teaching work in that city. He sincerely hopes that as a consequence a number of souls will enter the Cause and be inspired by its divine teachings and ennobling spirit.

Such teachers of the Cause who, with all sincerity and determination, undertake such long trips, should be very much helped by the resident believers if real progress is to be achieved. They ought to be assisted to reach important people, speak to intelligent and receptive audiences, and obtain interviews with persons whose heart is open to the light of God. Otherwise, during their short stay, they would, like a helpless man in a strange country, be impotent to achieve their purpose.

Shoghi Effendi is very glad the friends have taken the necessary step to assist Mrs. Ransom Kehler by appointing Professor Pritam Singh to accompany her in her trip through India. May God help her and help you in proclaiming the word of God through the length and breadth of that vast land.

Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes both for you and also for the members of the Spiritual Assembly and the other Bahá'ís of Calcutta.

With the assurance of my loving and fervent prayers at the Holy Shrines for your spiritual advancement and success in the service of our beloved Faith.

Your
Shoghi

true

brother,



— 92 —

April 5, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,[pg 81]

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated March 11th and 25th¹⁷. He was very glad to learn of the plans you made for Mrs. Ransom Kehler. He sincerely hopes that in these meetings and public lectures delivered in so many cities, she has been able to attract some new souls to the Cause and confirm people who until now have been merely interested. We should admit, however, that the time at her disposal was too short to give her the chance of doing her best. A teacher ought to remain at least a few months in the same city if he wants to really confirm souls. Mere passing and giving a lecture or two is not sufficient unless there are resident Bahá'ís to continue the work that was merely started. Anyhow Mrs. Ransom Kehler is expected to reach Haifa in about 3 weeks and Shoghi Effendi will hear the report of her journey from herself.

The Guardian was very glad to learn of your quick response to his expressed desire in having Dr. Esslemont's book translated into Urdu and Gujrati. As he comes to learn from one of the Parsee pilgrims here in Haifa, the book has already been translated by a competent Bahá'í in India into Gujrati. So there remains only Urdu. Shoghi Effendi wishes you to concentrate upon having the book translated only into Urdu.

He was very glad to hear that your health has very much improved. He sincerely hopes that your illness will gradually disappear — and leave you again strong and fit to serve the Cause. We need workers and cannot spare any of the very few we have.

In closing, may I assure you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes and extend his hope that you as well as the members of your family will ever remain under God's protection and loving care.

Dear and precious co-worker.

I wish you to concentrate your efforts on the completion of the Urdu version of Dr. Esslemont's book, and to take the necessary steps for its early publication. I shall be only too glad to assist financially in its printing as soon as its translation is completed. I also desire to stress the paramount importance of following up the valuable work accomplished by Mrs. Kehler, which I hope other international Bahá'í teachers will reinforce. How vast is the field and how small the number of competent[pg 82] teachers! Bahá'u'lláh will however bless and crown our efforts with success if we persevere and labour with unabated confidence and vigour. Your self-

sacrificing endeavours are worthy of the highest praise and I pray that the Almighty may continue to guide and sustain you in your great work for His Cause.

Your
Shoghi

true

brother,



— 93 —

April 12, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated April 1st 1932 as well as the enclosed letter from Mrs. Keith Ransom Kehler.

He sincerely hopes that as a result of her trip the Cause will make a great progress in India and many souls will be drawn into the Cause. It was surely very nice and wise on the part of the National Assembly to appoint Mr. Pritam Singh to travel with her and help her make openings into intellectual circles. It is unfortunate, however, that she cannot stay long in every centre and make really confirmed believers such as she did in certain centres in Australia. But perhaps the National Assembly will attend to that task and keep in touch with persons she will interest, and gradually make them embrace the Faith and lend help towards its progress. We need teachers in every part of the world, and as those who are in active service are few we should create some from the material we have. It is the work of the National Spiritual Assembly to attend to such matters and develop some of our young Bahá'ís into competent teachers.

In a previous letter I informed you on behalf of Shoghi Effendi that as we already have a translation of Dr. Esslemont's book into Gujrati, you concentrate your efforts on having it rendered only into Urdu, so that the work may soon be completed and published. Shoghi Effendi is sending the sum of \$200 or £48 for that purpose, sent by Mrs. Esty of Buffalo. He was very glad to know that you are feeling better and that your health has very much improved. Please convey his greetings to all the friends specially the members of your family.

Assuring you of his prayers and best wishes.[pg 83]

Dear co-worker:

I trust you have by now taken the necessary steps for a prompt and careful translation of the book into Urdu. This service will, I am sure, be an added blessing to the masses of India, whom you are striving so devotedly and energetically to arouse and teach. May it prove a prelude to an intensive and fruitful teaching campaign that shall bring in its wake enlightenment, peace and hope to the distracted multitudes of that agitated country. I will continue to pray for you, your dear family and your devoted collaborators, from the depths of my heart.

Your
Shoghi

true

brother,



— 94 —

May 31, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated April 8th, 15th, 30th and May 20th20. He was very glad to hear that Mr. Hishmatu'llah has undertaken to translate Dr. Esslemont's book into Urdu for he is sure that he will exert himself to produce a first class translation.

Even though we can refer to a non-Bahá'í when we have no one among the friends to undertake a proper work of translation, yet it is always preferable to have it accomplished by a person who is imbued with the spirit and is already familiar with the different expressions of Bahá'í conceptions unfamiliar to a non-Bahá'í. Shoghi Effendi wishes him success and will pray for his guidance.

He was also delighted to hear that Mr. Chatterji has rendered the book into Hindi. It is surely a wonderful service which will prove of great help among people who are familiar with that language. Shoghi Effendi is sending a check for £50 which I will enclose, as his contribution towards the publication of this book. In case there is a great difference between publishing five hundred copies and one thousand copies, and you do not find the need of so many books in that language, Shoghi Effendi would advise you to have only five hundred copies published. He would however leave the decision to you.

Mrs. Ransom Kehler is now in Haifa taking some rest before starting for Persia, where she expects to stay a few months. Shoghi Effendi was very glad to hear of her great success in India. He hopes that she will after Persia pay another visit to that country and resume[pg 84] the work she has started. She is surely a very competent teacher and well versed in the Writings.

Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes.

Dear and valued co-worker:

I trust and pray that you will be enabled to start promptly the publication of the Hindi translation on one hand, and to ensure, on the other, the early completion of the Urdu version, both of which, I feel are indispensable preliminaries to an intensive teaching campaign among the great masses of the Indian people. I am confident that the publication of the Gujrati version together with these and the Burmese translations, will reinforce the impetus which the

projected visit of Mrs. Kehler to India next autumn, will lend to the onward march of our beloved Cause in India. May the Almighty reinforce your labours and bless your high endeavours.

Shoghi



— 95 —

July 10, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Beloved Bahá'í Pioneer,

Shoghi Effendi was very glad to receive your kind letter of June 13th, 1932 and he wishes me to thank you on his behalf and to extend to you his loving appreciation of your continued and precious services to our beloved Faith.

In regard to the translation of Dr. Esslemont's book into Burmese, Shoghi Effendi wishes you to persevere in your efforts and not be discouraged by the difficulties and obstacles that stand in your way. He sincerely trusts that through your devotion, wisdom and selfless endeavours the book will be soon translated and published.

I need not assure you how deeply appreciative the Guardian is of all that you have done and are still doing for the spread of the Cause, and he is confident that such splendid efforts on your part will lead to the future consolidation and extension of the Faith in your land. He will be always very glad to be in close touch with your activities and to give you whatever help and assistance you may need.

And in closing, may I assure you of Shoghi Effendi's continued prayers on your behalf and on behalf of all the friends in Mandalay.[pg 85]

Dear and precious co-worker.

I am fully conscious of the difficulties that confront you as well as of your extreme desire to achieve the task I have requested you to perform. I continue to pray that every obstacle may be soon removed from your path and that your unsparing and exemplary efforts, in this as well in all other branches of Bahá'í activity, may be crowned with signal success.

Your
Shoghi

loving

brother,



JULY 14, 1932

GREATEST HOLY LEAF ASCENDED ABHÁ KINGDOM OUR GRIEF IMMENSE OUR LOSS IRREPARABLE INFORM LOCAL ASSEMBLIES COMMEMORATE BEFITTINGLY SACRED EXPERIENCES SO RICH SO SUBLIME SO EVENTFUL A LIFE. MAGNITUDE OF OUR SORROW DEMANDS COMPLETE SUSPENSION FOR 9 MONTHS THROUGHOUT BAHÁ'Í WORLD EVERY FORM RELIGIOUS FESTIVITY. HER MORTAL REMAINS LAID VICINITY HOLY SHRINES.

SHOGHI



JULY 27, 1932

RANGOON ASSEMBLY CARE VAKÍL MY SORROW LADEN HEART RELIEVED YOUR VALUED SYMPATHY

SHOGHI



August 25, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Beloved co-worker in the Faith,

Your message of condolence and sympathy dated July 18th, 1932 ... was received and its perusal greatly comforted the bleeding heart of the Guardian. He wishes me to thank you from the very depth of his heart and assure you of his abiding appreciation of your continued and precious services to the Faith.

The ascension of the Greatest Holy Leaf has grieved his heart beyond words and had it not been for his assurance that in this[pg 86] calamitous event the friends are experiencing a profound spiritual awakening he would have remained utterly disconsolate.

His thoughts, in this terrible hour, are with you who are toiling so faithfully for the greater extension and consolidation of the Faith. I need not assure you how deeply appreciative he is of your work and he hopes that you will be enabled to serve the Cause with still greater zeal and success.

The memory of the beloved K̲hánūm will, assuredly, prove to be your great comfort in your moments of sufferings and anxiety and will guide your steps and strengthen your spiritual power and insight...



— 99 —

October 1, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Shoghi Effendi has kindly read your letter of 29th August 1932 and is deeply thankful to God for having given him such devoted helpers who are always ready to arise and serve.

The Guardian would surely be most appreciative if you undertake to translate Dr. Esslemont's book and then have some expert go over it and polish it. Perhaps this would be the most practical method of achieving that task.

In his moments of prayer at the Shrines, Shoghi Effendi will think of you and ask God to guide and assist you.

The Guardian is sending you under separate cover five copies of the Persian translation of Dr. Esslemont's book. You might be interested to know that we will have five new translations of this book during this year.

We sincerely hope that this literature will be profitably used by the friends to attract new souls to the Cause of God...



— 100 —

October 12, 1932

Dear Mr. Pritam Singh,

The Guardian wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated September 14th 1932 expressing your words of sympathy for the passing away of the Greatest Holy Leaf.[pg 87]

She was such a source of joy, hope and inspiration to those who met her that not only Shoghi Effendi but every single Bahá'í pilgrim will miss her terribly. To the lady pilgrims it was a real treat to go to have tea with her in the afternoons. She was always so radiantly hopeful and tried to persuade others that sorrows are passing and have to be disregarded. The only consolation of Shoghi Effendi is that she has been freed from the physical weakness that during these last

years was confining her to her room for most of the time. He is sure that in the realm in which she now is she is thinking of her friends and asking for them divine guidance and help.

The Guardian was very sorry to hear that the financial burdens of the “Bahá’í Weekly” are pressing upon you, but as you say these are exceptionally hard times. We should be glad if we can just steer our boat and keep it floating. Conditions cannot remain as they are. Some material change has to come about if all the world is not to perish.

In his moments of prayer at the Shrines, Shoghi Effendi will think of you, the members of your family as well as your “pet child,” the “Bahá’í Weekly.” Do not lose hope or feel discouraged. Every undertaking has to pass through difficulties before it can prove to be really successful. Consider what stormy days the “Bahá’í Magazine” had to pass through before reaching its present status. I am sure that even now she feels great concern about her financial resources. The instructions of our Faith are based upon trust in God, and God I am sure will never fail us.

May the Beloved cheer, sustain and guide you in your valued and continued efforts despite almost unsurmountable obstacles to promote the interests of our beloved Faith and to diffuse its spirit throughout your native land.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



— 101 —

October 19, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

The Guardian wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your four letters dated June 26th, August 12th, September 2nd and 16th

He is very glad to know that the different translations of Dr Esslemont’s book, that you have undertaken to have made, are[pg 88] progressing rapidly. He sincerely hopes that before long they will be passed through the press and be ready for distribution.

Even though the book was written by a Christian and was meant to be for people of that Faith to read, yet it is a very fine presentation of the teachings as a whole and might prove interesting to other people as well. Shoghi Effendi surely hopes that before long the Cause may produce scholars that would write books which would be far deeper and more universal in scope, but for the present this is the best we possess to give a general idea as to the history and teachings of the Faith to new seekers. After reading this they get the necessary introduction to delve more deeply into the fundamental tenets such as are explained in the Íqán.

Shoghi Effendi hopes that these books will greatly stimulate the teaching work in India and become the cause of guidance to many sincere souls.

The Guardian wishes me also to thank you for your kind words of sympathy in connection with the passing away of the Greatest Holy Leaf. This great loss will be felt by every Bahá'í, but specially the pilgrims to whom she used to be such a source of inspiration and joy. All those who met her left her presence with a new spirit and a firm determination to serve the Cause for which she suffered so much and whose progress was near to her heart.

What the Guardian is glad about is that her passing is creating a new spirit among the friends and arousing them to greater effort. May her death do for the progress of the Faith as much as her life did.

Please extend Shoghi Effendi's greetings to all the friends specially the members of your own family.

Dear and valued co-worker:

I wish to emphasize afresh the vital necessity of speeding up the work of the translation and publication of the Gujrati, the Urdu, and the Hindi versions of the "New Era," a book that has already been published into fourteen different languages and is being translated into sixteen additional tongues. I am deeply appreciative of what you have already achieved, and wish to assure you of my continued prayers for the success of your painstaking efforts and the realization of your dearest wish in the service of our beloved Faith.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



— 102 —

October 26, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi][pg 89]

Dear Bahá'í brother,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated October 10th 1932 regarding the translation of Dr. Esslemont's book into Burmese.

He was very glad to learn that the work is progressing gradually and surely, and that already a considerable amount of pages have been translated. He hopes that until the expiration of the time appointed the work will be completed. It is however very necessary that the reviewing committee go over the book very carefully, because a newcomer is generally not familiar with Bahá'í terminology or method of expression.

The Guardian hopes that the financial part of the work will also be solved. Such matters have never blocked the way of the friends or even retarded their progress. Let us have faith in God's mighty hand and He will surely help us. Please convey Shoghi Effendi's greetings to all the friends. He sincerely hopes that they will always be guided in their work of serving the Cause and that they will succeed to attract many souls into a full acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh and His divine message.

Assuring you of Shoghi Effendi's prayers and best wishes.

Dear and valued brother:

Your welcome letter imparted joy and abiding consolation to my heavy-laden heart. I so deeply appreciate your inspiring efforts, as well as the diligent and self-sacrificing endeavours of your devoted co-workers in Mandalay, Rangoon and Kunjangoon. I wish to associate myself with their high efforts and am enclosing the sum of £9 in order to assist and hasten the completion of the translation of the book into Burmese. Sixteen printed translations have been already gathered together and placed in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí close to His Sacred Shrine, and the book is now being translated into sixteen additional languages including the Burmese. Persevere in your efforts, never feel disheartened and rest assured and confident.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



— 103 —

November 19, 1932

Dear Mr. Vakíl,[pg 90]

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to communicate with you to inquire regarding the Hindi and Urdu translations of Dr. Esslemont's book. It is some time that he has had no definite word as to the progress of that work which you have so kindly undertaken to supervise. He sincerely hopes that gradually that task will be successfully achieved and that they will be ready to be submitted to the printers and then to the readers who may be anxiously awaiting to study them and benefit from their contents.

This work once completed will become a great stimulus to the teaching activities of the friends, for books can do infinitely more work than teachers. Sitting in a chair in a solitary corner one is infinitely more receptive to truth than in a lecture hall or in a discussion group. The public has learned the habit of reading. It is through that channel therefore that we have to approach them.

Assuring you of the Guardian's prayers and best wishes.



December 6, 1932

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Shoghi Effendi wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated November 21st 1932, as well as an account of the contributions made towards the translation of Dr. Esslemont's book into Burmese.

He deeply appreciates these gifts and hopes that instead the contributors will see with their own eyes the service the book will render towards the spread of the Cause and its teachings in that land. With such literature at his disposal the teacher can render his work much more secure. He can make sure that the new corner has some source for the information he needs, and to which he can refer.

Now, the Guardian wishes you to obtain an estimate as to the cost of the printing of that book once the translation is completed. He has helped in the publication of the other translations and he wishes to help in this case also.[pg 91]

He was very glad to know that the work of the translation is proceeding.

He wishes you to exert your efforts along that line and make sure that no unnecessary delay is incurred.

Please convey the greetings of Shoghi Effendi to all the Bahá'ís specially your wife. In his moments of prayer at the Blessed Shrines he will think of you all and ask God to guide and assist you in your endeavours to serve His Faith.[pg 92]

