

1934

Shoghi Effendi

Original English



1934



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January 2, 1934

[To Professor Pritam Singh][pg 108]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your welcome letter of December 21st has been duly received, and the Guardian was very pleased to learn of the progress made by the Indian National Spiritual Assembly in its efforts to consolidate, widen and maintain the scope of its national activities. The difficulties in your way are tremendous. The differences of language and of social and intellectual background do, undoubtedly, render the work somewhat difficult to carry out and may temporarily check the efficient and smooth working of the national administrative machinery of the Faith. They, nevertheless, impart to the deliberations of the National Assembly a universality which they would be otherwise lacking, and give to its members a breadth of view which is their duty to cultivate and foster. It is not uniformity which we should seek in the formation of any national or local Assembly. For the bedrock of the Bahá'í administrative order is the principle of unity in diversity, which has been so strongly and so repeatedly emphasized in the writings of the Cause. Differences which are not fundamental and contrary to the[pg 109] basic teachings of the Cause should be maintained, while the underlying unity of the administrative order should be at any cost preserved and insured. Unity, both of purpose and of means, is, indeed, indispensable to the safe and speedy working of every Assembly, whether local or national.

Another factor which, in the Guardian's opinion, is essential to the development of your National Spiritual Assembly, is the holding of frequent meetings. Although the members are stationed at great distances from one another yet they can communicate through correspondence. — It is not necessary that all the members should be present in all the sessions. Those, who for some reason or another, are unable to attend in person the meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly, can express their views in a written form and send them to the Assembly. The main point is that your national activities should not be let to suffer in any way, and its work be



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retarded and postponed because of such necessarily unimportant and secondary considerations.

In closing please extend the Guardian's best wishes to each and every member of the National Spiritual Assembly and assure them of his ardent prayers on their behalf. May Bahá'u'lláh guide, strengthen and inspire you to persevere in your endeavours for the promotion of the Faith.

Dear co-worker:

I wish to assure you in person of my prayers for the removal of the difficulties, domestic and otherwise, that beset your path in these days. I will supplicate the Almighty to guide you in your manifold and valuable activities in the service of His Faith, to cheer your heart, and to deepen your understanding of the fundamentals of His Faith. You should concentrate your efforts at the present time on whatever will, in your opinion reinforce the basis, and extend the influence, of the administrative institutions and the teaching activities of the Faith. The Cause will, no doubt, surmount the obstacles that now hinder its growth, and will establish its ascendancy in the fulness of time and at the appointed hour. We should persevere and never feel disheartened.

Shoghi



February 19, 1934

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi][pg 110]

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

I wish to thank you most warmly on behalf of the Guardian for your letter of February 5th which was so full of the news of the progress of the Cause in Mandalay. He was particularly gratified to learn that through your efforts and through the assistance of some other friends the Bengali translation of the "New Era" is ready for publication. He hopes you will be soon able to send it to the press, as he feels that the circulation of this valuable book can highly stimulate the spread of the Cause.

Shoghi Effendi was also much pleased to learn that you have successfully completed your history of the rise and progress of the Cause in India and Burma. He trusts that the Indian National Spiritual Assembly will be pleased over it and will approve of its being sent to Tīhrán. This is undoubtedly a real and abiding contribution you have been able to make to the Faith. May it fully serve its purpose and become a means whereby our Indian friends can be strengthened and inspired in their labours for the promotion of the Cause.

In closing I wish to convey our Guardian's best wishes and the assurance of his continued and ardent supplications for the further extension and consolidation of your pioneer work for the Cause in India and Burma.

Dear and precious co-worker:

The work you have recently accomplished is highly meritorious in the sight of God, and will no doubt attract fresh and still greater blessings from the throne of the Almighty. You have, in the evening of your life, added fresh laurels to the crown of immortal glory which your many services to the Faith have won for you and which future generations will gratefully and joyfully remember. I will continue to pray for you, for your dear wife and your devoted collaborators in that land. Rest assured, be happy, and persevere in your high endeavours.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



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April 10, 1934

[To Professor Pritam Singh][pg 111]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

Your letter of March 13th addressed to the Guardian has just been received through the kind care of our dear Mr. Vakíl, and the realization of your inability to serve as Secretary to the National Spiritual Assembly has deeply grieved his heart. It is, indeed, a matter of deep regret that such an able, devoted and efficient worker like you should be forced to leave such an important post in the national sphere of the administration. You should, therefore, make every possible sacrifice in order to continue serving the Cause in this field where you have already attained such a high distinction.

The Guardian, however, wishes by no means to force you to occupy a post which, in addition to the tremendous amount of work it demands, entails a responsibility which, for some reason or another, you may feel unable to assume. He would advise you, however, to submit your case to the National Spiritual Assembly at its next meeting at Delhi, that they may carefully consider the possibility of your resignation from the National Secretariat. They will surely consider the matter sympathetically and dispassionately and will give you all the advice you need. The National Spiritual Assembly cannot refuse accepting a resignation when it is well justified, and when it is done not with the purpose of shirking responsibility but with the intention of giving a chance to others to prove themselves worthy of occupying responsible posts in the administrative field.

Assuring you of the Guardian's prayers on your behalf, and with his best wishes for the development of your work for the Cause.

Dear valued co-worker:

Your sustained and inspiring labours under such trying and difficult circumstances are indeed highly praiseworthy and meritorious. I will pray from the depths of my heart that you will find it possible to lend your invaluable assistance to your collaborators in both the teaching and administrative fields of Bahá'í activity. Your competence, your loyalty, your experience and knowledge of the essentials of the Faith eminently[pg 112] qualify you to take an active and leading part in its manifold activities.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi



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April 11, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

I wish to thank you in the name of the Guardian for your letters dated March 4th and 30th, 1934, together with the enclosed copy of Bahá'í activities in India and Burma for the period 1933 1934, which has already been forwarded to Mr. H. Holley for incorporation in his general survey of current Bahá'í activities for the "Bahá'í World." He has also received Prof. Pritam Singh's letter and has given it his careful consideration. He is sorry to learn that he is not able to continue serving as National Secretary. But he feels that the matter should be referred to your National Assembly, that they may consider the advisability and the possibility of his leaving the office. Of course, incase Mr. Pritam Singh feels wholly unable to act as Secretary to the National Spiritual Assembly, there is no reason for that body to refuse complying with his wish in this respect...

Concerning the translation and publication of the "New Era" into Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali, Shoghi Effendi wishes you to continue pressing the friends that they may bring the work to successful completion. He is rather surprised that no acknowledgment has thus far been made of the copy of his last general epistle to the friends which he sent over a month ago to your address. In case that copy has been lost, please inform him that he may send you some more. He is much relieved to learn of your improving physical condition, and he would strongly urge you to take the utmost care of your health which is such a real asset to the Cause in India. In view of that he sees no objection if you give up your journey to Delhi, specially if you have been advised by the physicians to avoid the heat and the fatigue of the trip.

The epistle referred to is "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh"

Dear and precious co-worker:

I am deeply sorry to hear of your continued ill health and wish you to concentrate for the present on the ways and means that enable you to[pg 113] recover fully and speedily and resume your valued labours for the spread of the Cause. I will be very pleased and grateful if you could send

me as soon as possible photographic reproductions of the Registration Certificate incorporating the National Assembly of India and Burma. I hope to receive them before the end of May for incorporation in the "Bahá'í World" Vol V. Your National Constitution I feel should be identical with the American Declaration of Trust and by-laws as published in the "Bahá'í World."

Your true brother,
Shoghi



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May 29, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

The Guardian wishes me to acknowledge the receipt of your letters dated April 23rd and May 11th with enclosure, and to extend to you and to your collaborators in the National Spiritual Assembly his grateful appreciation of your ceaseless and ever widening efforts for the consolidation of the Faith. The resolutions passed by your National Spiritual Assembly at its recent meeting at Delhi have given him sufficient evidence of the new spirit that has come to animate its members. It is his hope that through the continued development of that same spirit your Assembly will be enabled to do more effective work for the Cause.

The Guardian was also gratified to learn that your health is gradually improving, and that the change of climate has done you some good. He will continue to pray on your behalf that your physical condition be fully restored, and that you may soon be in a position to adequately resume your duties for the Cause.

With his best wishes for Mrs. Vakíl and children and yourself.

Dear and valued co-worker:

The splendid resolutions passed by the National Assembly at Delhi are admirable and indicate the revival of the spirit of fellowship and determination to consolidate the administrative basis of the faith in India and Burma. I am eagerly anticipating to hear the news that these resolutions have been duly carried out, particularly regarding the [pg 114] incorporation of the Bombay Assembly and the translation and publication of the "New Era" into Urdu and Sindhi.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi



June 2, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Shoghi Effendi is mailing to your address a copy of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to the Greatest Holy Leaf, in His own handwriting, photographed in the States and illuminated in Ṭihrán. He wishes you to present it to the National Spiritual Assembly, that they may place it in their archives. He has also sent copies of this same Tablet to our various National Assemblies for that purpose.

With best wishes for yourself, your family and the friends in Surat...

P.S. A translation of this Tablet by the Guardian has already been published in the States, together with other Tablets, in the form of a pamphlet.



June 5, 1934

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

In reply to your kind letter of May 11th concerning the case submitted by the Bombay Assembly to the National Spiritual Assembly, I wish to inform you that I have submitted the matter to the Guardian for his consideration and advice.

He fully agrees with the Bombay Assembly that they are in need of an English-speaking secretary, in view of the increasingly large volume of correspondence they receive in English. But he feels that this emergency does not afford sufficient justification to any believer or Assembly to make the slightest departure from the recognized and duly established principles governing the election of the members of any Assembly, whether local or national. If the Bombay Assembly feels it necessary to have a secretary for the English correspondence they can appoint an assistant Secretary from outside the Assembly. It [pg 115] is only the body of Bahá'í electors who can bring about any change in the membership of the Assembly, and this during the Riḍván feast which for all administrative purposes is the beginning of the Bahá'í year.

In view of that the Guardian wishes you as the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly to formally inform the Bombay Assembly of his suggestion that they should appoint an assistant Secretary, till the renewal of elections in the next Riḍván...



July 11, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Your letter of June 17th, with the enclosed report on the election of the National Spiritual Assembly have been duly received and deeply appreciated by the Guardian. The news of the sudden passing of your father into the Kingdom has, however, deeply grieved his heart. He fully shares your sorrows at this great loss you have come to suffer, and wishes me to assure you of his fervent supplications on behalf of the departed, that the Almighty may open before him the doors of His grace and mercy and to enable his soul to progress still further in the other world.

May I also assure you once more of his prayers for the speedy and complete recovery of your health. It is such an asset to the welfare and safety of the Cause in India, that you should consider it to be your chief responsibility to do all that you can in order to keep it in the best condition possible.

With best wishes and greetings to Mrs. Vakíl and children.

Dear and most valued co-worker:

I wish to extend to you in person my deepest sympathy in the great loss you have sustained. I will specially supplicate on behalf of your dear departed father that he may be made the recipient of the richest blessings in the Abhá Kingdom. I urge you to take all the measures required for your complete recovery. Rest as much as you possibly can and rest assured that my prayers will continue to be offered on your behalf.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



August 13, 1934

[To N.R. Vakíl][pg 116]

Dear Bahá'í Brother,

On behalf of the Guardian I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated July 23rd, together with the enclosed report on the election of the officers of the Indian National Spiritual Assembly. He hopes and fervently prays that this newly elected body may be fully assisted and guided in the discharge of its manifold and heavy responsibilities and functions, and that it may succeed particularly in fostering and preserving among its own members, and in the general body of the believers as well, a greater measure of unity and of cooperation.

Shoghi Effendi wishes me also to assure you once more of his continued supplications on your behalf, and on behalf of all the members of your family. May Bahá'u'lláh keep, strengthen and guide each and all of you in the path of His service, that through your devoted and continued endeavours the interests of the Faith in India may be further promoted and more effectively preserved and insured.

Dear and precious co-worker:

I truly rejoice to learn that you have sufficiently recovered to resume your great work of service to our beloved Faith. I trust that this year will witness unprecedented triumphs for the Cause of God and will mark a milestone in the progress of the Faith in that land.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



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August 20, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

I am charged by the Guardian to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated July 27th, and to thank you for the enclosed copies of your financial reports on the National Spiritual Assembly's fund.

It gives him real pleasure to witness the energetic and truly substantial part you are taking in administering the national affairs of the Cause in India, and this despite your physical disabilities and ailments. He is continually praying for your strength and guidance, that[pg 117] you may continue to play your part in consolidating the foundations of the Administration in your land.

Dear and precious co-worker:

How profoundly I appreciate, and how deeply I feel thankful for the share you have had in guiding, coordinating and consolidating the affairs of God's struggling Faith in your land! The Beloved is well pleased with the example you have set for the rising generation of your fellow-labourers in India and Burma. I will continue to pray for your good health from all my heart.

Your true and grateful brother,
Shoghi



November 3, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Your welcome letter of October 4th addressed to the Guardian is just at hand. He wishes me to thank you for it... He wishes me also to gratefully acknowledge the receipt of the group photograph of yourself, Mrs. Vakíl and a few other believers.

He is, indeed, very happy and deeply comforted to learn of the rapid improvement in the condition of your general health, and feels particularly glad that you are now able to attend to your court work. He wishes me, nevertheless, to urge you to be extremely careful not to overburden yourself, and not to tax your energies to the point of exhaustion. Your health is, indeed, a real asset to the Cause in India, and the friends can ill afford to lose it, specially now that new prospects for the development of the Faith throughout that country are appearing.

It is their, as well as your responsibility to take every measure which is necessary for the maintenance and continued expansion of your labours for the Cause.

With the assurance of the Guardian's prayers on your behalf, and on behalf of Mrs. Vakíl, Mrs. Bahera and Mrs. Ṭáhirih.

Dearest brother:

I am so glad to note a decided improvement in the administrative conduct of Bahá'í affairs in India, and I trust and pray that the teaching[pg 118] work will as a result receive afresh and unprecedented impetus. To teach the Cause is the ultimate purpose and the supreme objective of all Bahá'í institutions. These are but means to an end. May the Beloved grant you strength to enhance the splendid work you have already achieved. I am eagerly awaiting the news of the publication of the Urdu and the .Sindhi editions of the "New Era." With the assurance of my continued prayers for you and your dear family.

Your
Shoghi

true

brother,



November 20, 1934

[Addressed to an individual believer]

... He himself would have much liked to intervene in the matter and solve it in person for you... But the principles and laws of the Administration require him to let such local matters take their

normal and due course through the Local to the National Assembly, the highest administrative institution in that land...



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November 25, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,

Your welcome letter of the 18th of this month is just at hand and it has received the careful attention and consideration of our beloved Guardian.

He notes with deep satisfaction the important steps take by your National Spiritual Assembly for intensifying the spread of the Cause throughout India and Burma, and particularly values the encouragement and help which they have extended to dear Mr. Pritam Singh in his teaching tour in Northern India. He is praying from the depth of his heart for the success of this trip, as well as for the speedy and complete materialisation of the plans which you, in close collaboration with your fellow members in the National Assembly, are initiating for the wider diffusion of the Teachings throughout your country.

He fully appreciates, indeed, the suggestions you have offered him in this connection. The lack of competent teachers is no doubt a serious obstacle facing the Indian believers at present. But it is by no means the most difficult problem with which they have to deal. The[pg 119] essential is that all the friends, without any exception whatever, should realise the full measure of the responsibility which Bahá'u'lláh has placed on them for teaching far and wide His Message. It is only through such an awakened consciousness of their heavy and sacred responsibilities and duties that the believers can hope to effectively promote and safeguard the interests of the Cause. The Bahá'í era is thus the age of individual responsibility — the age in which everyone is called to consider the spread of the Cause as his most sacred and vital obligation.

This is the point which the Guardian wishes your Assembly to emphasize in connection with the problem of teaching in India. He hopes that through their collective efforts a new zeal for teaching will come to animate the entire community of the believers throughout India and Burma.

Shoghi Effendi approves of your suggestion to utilize the £50 which he sent to you, for the publication of the Bengali translation of the "New Era." He hopes that this work will soon be ready for distribution.

You will certainly be interested to know that the photograph you sent him sometime ago representing your family as well as Mr. Hishmatu'llah, has been placed by him in Bahá'u'lláh's Mansion at Bahjí.

With his renewed greetings and prayers for you and all the members of your family.

P.S. Will you kindly mail to the Guardian's address fifty copies of the Bengali "New Era" as soon as it will be ready.

With the renewed assistance of my loving prayers for you, for your dear family and collaborators in the service of the Cause.

Your true brother,
Shoghi



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November 27, 1934

Dear Mr. Vakíl,[pg 120]

I am directed by the Guardian to request you to kindly mail to his address five copies of the Urdu translation of the Kitáb-i-Íqán (Book of Certitude).

With his loving greetings and thanks.

P.S. You will certainly be interested to know that the Íqán has already been translated and published into Russian, English, French, German, Chinese, Albanian, Urdu and Braille. Steps also have been taken for its rendering and publication into Arabic, Armenian, Swedish and Danish...



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December 9, 1934

[Addressed To Mr. and Mrs. Muḥammad Ishaq]

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Guardian was deeply interested and gratified to learn, through Mr. Rustam Khusrove of Poona, that you have recently embraced the Bahá'í Cause, and have openly and in the face of the malignant enemies of the Faith identified yourselves with it. He wishes me to hasten in conveying to you his warm and heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of your conversion to the principles and teachings of this Movement, and also to express the hope that you will befittingly and steadfastly arise to contribute your full share towards its wider penetration and establishment in your locality.

He is grieved beyond words at the severe opposition with which your non-Bahá'í relatives are trying to undermine your faith in the Cause. Nevertheless, he is confident that such attacks,

however persistent and malicious, will eventually serve to intensify your zeal and to keep you firm and steadfast in the service of our beloved Cause.

The Guardian will specially pray on your behalf at the Holy Shrines, and will ask Bahá'u'lláh to guide and strengthen you in counteracting the evil machinations and designs of your enemies, and thus impress them with the invincible and divine character of this Revelation.[pg 121]



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December 17, 1934

[To Siyyid Muṣṭafá Rumi]

Beloved Bahá'í Brother,

The Guardian wishes me to thank you for your deeply appreciated letter of December 4th with its enclosures, all of which he has carefully read and considered.

With reference to the Bengali translation of "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era," he wishes me to convey to you, and to dear Mr. A. Islám as well, his hearty congratulations and grateful thanks for your splendid, sustained and successful efforts in this connection. He feels certain that nothing short of divine assistance, and of your painstaking and continued labours, could have brought this task to a successful consummation. He fully approves and deeply appreciates Mr. A. Islám's wish to defray the expenses for the printing of the book, and sincerely hopes that in this, he will receive the whole hearted collaboration and encouragement of the National Spiritual Assembly. He wishes you to urge the National Assembly to return the manuscript as quickly as they can to Amiru'l Islám so as to expedite its publication.

The Guardian was also gratified to learn of the important Bahá'í publications which you have translated into Burmese. He advises you to keep these manuscripts, or, in case you wish, to send them to the National Spiritual Assembly for publication in the future.

As regards your account of the history of the Cause in India and Burma, he hopes that the National Spiritual Assembly will soon find a way for forwarding your manuscript to the Ṭihrán Assembly. He feels that, in view of the fact that the entry of Bahá'í literature is banned in Persia, it would be safer to send the manuscript through the care of a reliable person, preferably a believer.

In connection with your chairmanship in the National Spiritual Assembly, Shoghi Effendi has no objection if you, for reason of health or for any other important consideration, feel it essential to present your resignation as chairman of the Assembly. He would request you, however, to retain your membership in that body at any cost, even though you may feel unable to attend the sessions of the Assembly. Your membership in the National Spiritual Assembly he considers as a unifying force which is of essential importance to its effective working and progress.[pg 122]

With his renewed greetings and thanks and with his prayers for you and for dear Mr. Amiru'l Islám.

Dearly beloved co-worker:

Your letter profoundly touched me. I grieve to learn of your increasing infirmities and my heart is filled with inexpressible gratitude as I recall the long and distinguished record of service which will for ever remain associated with your dear self and name. I am asking the National Assembly to relieve you of the Chairmanship of their assembly and am sending a message of love and gratitude to dear Amiru'l Islám for his remarkable work and his generous offer. Rest assured that my thoughts and prayers are often with you and your dear wife and at the Holy Shrines I constantly remember you and pray for you. You belong to the heroic age of our Beloved Faith — an age to which you have so richly contributed.

Rest assured and be happy.
Shoghi

