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MOMENTOUS NEWS FROM HOLY LAND

The following cables have been received from the revered Hands of the Cause in Haifa:

“Impelled share recent evidence vitality, rapid expansion, consolidation beloved Faith. Twenty-one Latin American National Bodies successfully formed, raising total number (to) forty-eight throughout Bahá'í world. Formation (of) all European goal Assemblies including one extra Holland, Denmark, Spain (and) eight new Assemblies Ceylon now constitutes firm foundation erection next Ridván (of) twelve independent National Bodies, future pillars Universal House Justice. Mass conversion stipulated last message beloved Guardian, essential feature second half Crusade, steadily gaining momentum (in) Africa, India, South America. Central East Africa membership increased three thousand since March. Past four months seventeen hundred new believers enrolled Ujjain District India. Bolivian community now boasts fifteen hundred Indian Bahá'ís, twenty-five local Assemblies largely Indian membership. Chad recently opened Faith, raising countries illumined Revelation Bahá'u'lláh (to) two hundred fifty-eight. Constant evidences grace Blessed Perfection, realization Divine Plan (of) Center Covenant, sustaining inspiration beloved Guardian, uplift all hearts, inspire every believer renewed effort, determination win all goals. Invite friends join prayers thanksgiving, supplication still greater victories. (signed) Handsfaith.”

May 28th, 1961

VITAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

“Rejoice announce first momentous meeting (of) Hands Holy Land (and) all members newly elected International Council held in precincts (of) Holy Shrine Bahá'u'lláh. Consulted measures necessary discharge high hopes beloved Guardian, pave way election Supreme House Justice (on) occasion Most Great Jubilee. (signed) Handsfaith.”

Received July 3rd, 1961.

“Hearts greatly encouraged by enthusiasm, energy, determination elected International Bahá'í Council (to) discharge vital, ever increasing responsibilities. Delighted share news election following officers: ‘Alí Nakhjavání, Sylvia Ioas, Charles Wolcott, Ian Semple, Jessie Revell (as) President, Vice-President, Secretary-General, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, respectively. Other members Ethel Revell, Lotfullah Hakim, Mildred Mottahedeh, and Borrah Kavelin, Member at Large. (signed)

Handsfaith.”

Received July 6th, 1961.

MESSAGE TO LATIN AMERICA

At Ridván the Hands in Haifa addressed an inspiring message to the twenty-one historic Conventions in Latin America, from which this is an extract.

“A bright picture stretches before the eyes of the believers in the New World and the harvest, in many places, stands ready for the garner's hand. The greatest possibilities for mass conversion at the present time are undoubtedly amongst the Indian tribes. As long ago as 1947 the Guardian wrote that particular attention should be directed to the ‘various Indian tribes, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Latin republics, whom

the Author of the Tablets of the Divine Plan has compared to the “ancient inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula.” He then quoted the wonderful words of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá regarding them. ‘... Attach great importance to the indigenous population of America. For these souls may be likened unto the ancient inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, who, prior to the Mission of Muhammad were like unto savages. When the light of Muhammad shone forth in their midst, however, they became so radiant as to illumine the world. Likewise, these Indians, should they be educated and guided, there can be no doubt that they will become so illumined as to enlighten the whole world.’”

NEWS LETTER

ISSUED FROM THE WORLD CENTRE

Dear Friends,

The Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land have asked the International Bahá'í Council to be responsible for seeing that a News Letter is issued from the World Centre of the Faith. It will appear approximately every two months, and in it we hope to share with you some of the outstanding items of news which are received here, and also news of work and developments at the heart and nerve centre of the Faith in the Holy Land.

The days of our first meetings as an elected body were a moving and intensely interesting experience for the members of the International Bahá'í Council, whether they had been serving here for many years, or were newly arrived.

On Sunday, the 25th of June, the Council joined the Hands of the Cause in the home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and drove with them to Bahjí, where after deeply moving moments of prayer and supplication in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, a joint meeting was held in the hall of the Mansion. Here the Hands conveyed to the Council the terms of reference with which it was to start its work, reiterating what they announced in 1959 from the annual gathering of the Hands in the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh that two of the functions originally allotted to the Council by the beloved Guardian, namely "to forge links with" and "conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with" the civil authorities here in the Holy Land, would continue to be discharged. To these were added duties involving the legal and financial protection and management of various properties at the World Centre; assisting the Hands in preparation for holding the World Congress and electing the Universal House of Justice, both events which will take place in 1963; the issuing of a Bahá'í News Letter from the World Centre; arrangements regarding guiding at the Shrine of the Báb and supervision of various other local matters.

The room provided for the meetings of the Council is the circular room in the Western Pilgrim House where the beloved Guardian used to dine with the pilgrims. The small room off it, through which he used to leave, has been equipped as an office. In this place, hallowed in the memories of so many believers who had the bounty of meeting Shoghi Effendi, the Council met for eight days. From time to time we went to the Master's House for a meeting with the Hands, or would go out to inspect properties or consult insurance agents, etc., as we considered in detail the work before us. The volume of work at the World Centre is prodigious, and it is the ardent desire of the International Council to render every help it can to the Hands of the Cause, whose already voluminous mail has

increased since the formation of the twenty-one new National Spiritual Assemblies last Ridván, and will no doubt continue to increase as the victories of the Crusade are won.

The whole Bahá'í world is thrilled as the flame of mass conversion leaps from place to place. We hear that in Ceylon where there were eight new Spiritual Assemblies at Ridván, raising the total to ten, there are signs of a sudden acceleration in the number of new believers. In India the flame is now a blaze, as attested by these extracts from a recent letter: "... It is really unbelievable to be confronted with thousands and thousands of people who literally beg you to go to their villages and make them Bahá'ís. You know that we have no money, we have no workers, excepting a handful of them. But God is great! We have enrolled over 1,700 Bahá'ís during the last four months ... " "Just to give you an idea ... every other day villagers are forcing us to hold a Conference in their village. They gather together people ranging from 300 to 800 participants in the Conference, and something like 100 declare themselves Bahá'ís within the duration of two days ... They belong to different villages; and these different villagers want us to go to them. If we go to them there are still more from other villages represented in this new meeting who in turn call us to their places ... "

In Central and East Africa, where this flame was first ignited, 3,000 believers have declared in the last two months, raising the total to 17,000 Bahá'ís in 1,140 centres, of which 470 have local Spiritual Assemblies.

In one part of Central America the inhabitants of three Indian villages have embraced the Faith.

From South America the Hand of the Cause, Dr. Muhájér, writes: "In truth, to meet the Negroes of Africa and the Red Indians of America was an unexpected bounty for me. Truly these people are the best people on earth and as our beloved Guardian promised they will be the standard bearers of the Cause, and through them it will spread. In spite of the fact that I was born in the Cradle of the Faith and from my childhood was used to the kindness, sincerity and pure-heartedness of the Persian Bahá'ís, especially those in the villages, I am convinced that these new believers have seized from us the palm of victory and turned a new page in the annals of our religion through their faith and sincerity.

"A Conference of the Bolivian Indians was held and some of them came to it on foot, walking for four days to attend it, and returned four days' walk to their

BY THE INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL

homes; and all this way was through forests and ravines in the high mountains. The forty days I was in Bolivia were the best of my life, because of the love and loyalty of the Indians. I remember on one of my trips, I reached a village which we had driven to and from which we were to walk fifteen miles to another village through the mountains, where the Bahá'ís were waiting for us. After we had walked a few miles, a violent rain and hail storm broke out which made it impossible for us to go on. I was terribly upset and saddened by this, but we sent one of the Indians to the Bahá'í village to explain to the friends I had arrived at this other village and been waiting two days to go to them but had not been able to and I was very sad because of this and asked them to excuse me. The dear friends when they heard this said, 'If it is impossible for him to come to see us we will go to see him' and all of the Bahá'ís, who were over a hundred in number, left and came to join me. We had a most spiritual and fruitful teaching meeting and afterwards they all walked back as they had come.

"I could never express the love and blessings these believers showered on me. My only wish is once again to go back to these countries and be the servant of these people and sacrifice my life for them."

Further north in the Western Hemisphere the newly-formed N.S.A. of Nicaragua reports that all the teaching goals of their Twelve-Month Plan have been fulfilled in less than two months.

In some parts of the world territories which had fallen empty have been reopened to the Faith, and the R.S.A. of the South Pacific reports: "In the first year of its formation one of the Tongan believers was elected to the Regional Spiritual Assembly . . . and now last Ridván another Tongan was elected . . ." "In Samoa . . . one believer has given up his job so that he can spend full time doing teaching work in the various villages and doing translation work." "The Regional Spiritual Assembly has appointed Island Teaching Committees on each of the island territories where the Faith is firmly established, and the indigenous people are well represented on these committees. And of course it is the indigenous peoples who must do the translation work. Of the twenty local Spiritual Assemblies in our area, only five of them have pioneers in their community . . ."

The legal recognition of the Cause has also made several important advances. In New Zealand Bahá'í marriages now have legal approval throughout the country. A ruling of the Attorney General of South Carolina, U.S.A., dated 3rd April, 1961, authorised

the solemnizing of Bahá'í marriages throughout the State. The L.S.A. of Jackson, Mississippi, U.S.A., received similar recognition on 10th December, 1960.

This legal recognition of the institutions of the Cause is of great importance, for a rapid increase in the number of believers will inevitably arouse the opposition of unenlightened religious bodies and possibly the apprehension of those civil authorities which are ill-informed of the true nature and aims of the Faith. Already in Australia the activity of the Bahá'ís and especially the building of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is drawing criticism in ecclesiastical newspapers from anxious ministers—and this in turn publicizes the Faith and gives rise to more declarations.

The Temple in Germany is steadily rising. The foundations are now complete and work is beginning on the superstructure. The principal cause of concern is still the need for funds; 55 per cent of this year's building costs still remain to be contributed.

The rise of these sacred buildings in so many parts of the world, and the settlement of so many territories is leading to a greater inter-action of the teaching efforts of different countries. How often now when one introduces the Faith to a stranger does he reply: "Oh yes; I saw your Temple in Kampala," or, "I met some Bahá'ís on the ship coming over." A sign of this growing awareness of the interdependence of the Faith is the International Youth Summer School which is being held for the third time, this year in Delft in the Netherlands on 4th-14th August.

It is this aspect of the Faith—its world-wide unity in purpose and action—which is seen so strikingly from the World Centre, and which contrasts so vividly with the tensions and rivalries of a disordered world.

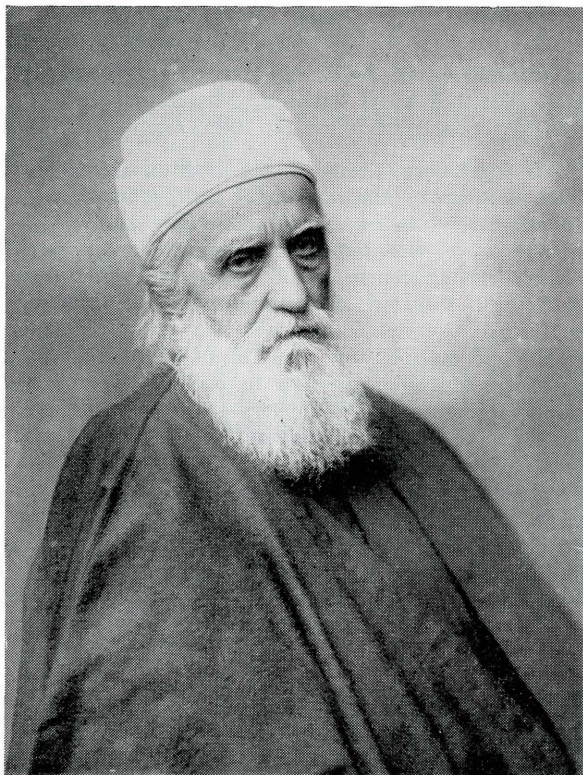
As the mighty Plan of God, inscrutable to mortal minds, works through the tumultuous processes of human history to knit the sundered limbs of mankind into one united body, the Bahá'ís see the fruits of their labours beginning to mature, and, in the words of our beloved Guardian, "Conscious of their high calling, confident in the society-building power which their Faith possesses, they press forward undeterred and undismayed, in their efforts to fashion and perfect the necessary instruments wherein the embryonic World Order of Bahá'u'lláh can mature and develop."

INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í COUNCIL.

World Centre of the Faith.

29th July, 1961.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S



'Abdu'l-Bahá

The Centre of the Covenant

"Render thanks unto God, O people, for His appearance; for verily He is the most great Favour unto you, the most perfect bounty upon you; and through Him every mouldering bone is quickened . . ."—Bahá'u'lláh.

"He is, and should for all time be regarded, first and foremost, as the Centre and Pivot of Bahá'u'lláh's peerless and all-enfolding Covenant, His most exalted handiwork, the stainless Mirror of His light, the perfect Exemplar of His teachings, the unerring Interpreter of His Word, the embodiment of every Bahá'í ideal, the incarnation of every Bahá'í virtue, the Most Mighty Branch sprung from the Ancient Root, the Limb of the Law of God, the Being 'round Whom all names revolve,' the Mainspring of the Oneness of Humanity, the Ensign of the Most Great Peace, the Moon of the Central Orb of this most holy Dispensation—styles and titles that are implicit and find their truest, their highest and fairest expression in the magic name 'Abdu'l-Bahá.'"—Shoghi Effendi.

The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh.

TABLET FROM 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ TO THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF ENGLAND

HE IS GOD

O ye sons and daughters of the Kingdom!

Your letter, which was written by heavenly inspiration, whose contents and meanings are full of interest, and whose discrimination springs from hearts that shine, has been received. Of a truth, the believers of London, being steadfast servants, stand firm. They shall not slacken, nor, in the lapse of time, shall their light grow dim. For they are Bahá'ís, children of Heaven and of the light of the Godhead. Surely, without doubt they shall be the cause of spreading God's Word, and the channel for spreading the Divine Teachings and bringing about the unity and equality of mankind.

It is easy to accept the Kingdom, but it is difficult to endure therein, for the tests are hard and heavy. On all occasions the English are firm and are not turned aside, being neither prone to begin a matter for a little while nor ready to abandon it for a little reason through failing in zeal. Verily in every undertaking they show firmness.

Though you dwell in the West, praise be to God, you have heard the Divine Call from the East, and like unto Moses you have become warmed by the fire of the Tree that has been lighted in Asia; and you have found the true Path, becoming kindled like lamps, having entered into the Kingdom of God. Now in thanksgiving for this bounty you pray for blessing on the people of the world, till by light of the Kingdom of Splendour their eyes become illuminated and their hearts become even as mirrors attaining the rays of the Sun of Truth.

My hope is this: that the outbreathing of the Holy Spirit be inspired into your hearts, that your tongues begin to reveal the mysteries and to expound the meaning and the truth of the Holy Books. May the friends become physicians to cure by the Divine Teachings the deep-rooted diseases of the body of the world, to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, life to the dead and awakening to the sleepers. Be sure that the blessing of the Holy Spirit will descend upon you, and that the Hosts of the Kingdom will come to your aid.

Upon you be the Glory of God!

(Signed) 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbás

Given at Ramleh, Egypt, May, 1911.

VISIT TO THE BRITISH ISLES

The month of September, 1961, is the fiftieth anniversary of the first visit to these islands of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Centre of the Covenant which God has bestowed upon humanity in this Dispensation for the establishment of His Kingdom upon earth. It was the greatest event in British history and may never be excelled in the annals of the British Isles.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's mission to the Western world, the Guardian has told us, was "so momentous that it deserves to rank as the greatest exploit ever to be associated with His ministry." In His travels He "arose to blazon the glory and greatness of His Father's Faith among the peoples of the West." The three years during which He travelled in Europe and America marked "a turning point of the utmost significance in the history of the century."

Two visits were made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the West, and on both He visited Britain. The first time He departed from Egypt in August, 1911, disembarked at Marseilles, stayed briefly at Thonon-les-Bains on Lake Geneva, and arrived in London on 4th September. Welcomed by Lady Blomfield to her home at 97, Cadogan Gardens, he remained in London for about one month, except for a weekend spent in Bristol at the Clifton Guest House, 23rd-25th September, and one night at Vanners, Byfleet, 28th September. He then proceeded to Paris on 3rd October for a stay of nine weeks (during which Lady Blomfield, her daughters and a friend recorded the immortal *Paris Talks*), and returned to Egypt in December.

His second journey carried Him by steamer directly to New York where He arrived on 11th April, 1912, from whence He carried out a prodigious eight-months' tour of the United States and Canada, which took Him from coast to coast. On 5th December He sailed on the s.s. *Celtic* to Liverpool, where He disembarked on 13th December and spent two nights at the Adelphi Hotel. He then took the train to London, from there visited Oxford and Edinburgh, and departed from London on 21st January, 1913, for a nearly six-months' stay on the Continent, when He visited Paris, Stuttgart, Budapest, and Vienna.

The Guardian has said in letters to the British Bahá'ís that these two visits "singled out" this community from the communities of Europe and North America, sowing "potent seeds" which "are now, after having lain dormant . . . , at long last, sprouting throughout the length and breadth of the British Isles"

To London fell the honour of being the place chosen by 'Abdu'l-Bahá for His first public talk to a Western audience. Although "broken in health" and near to seventy years of age, "He arose with sublime courage, confidence and resolution" and proclaimed, "for the first time in His ministry, those basic and distinguishing principles of His Father's Faith, which together with the laws and ordinances revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas constitute the bed-rock of God's latest Revelation to mankind." He spoke in every meeting with "brilliant simplicity, with persuasiveness and force"; to leaders of thought as well as to His followers and the masses at large, He expounded "these vitalizing truths" which "He characterized as the '*spirit of the age*'"

" . . . For three crowded years" He continued "to

trumpet to a world sunk in materialism and already in the shadow of war, the healing, the God-given truths enshrined in His Father's Revelation." (Quotations from *God Passes By*.)

His first public appearance was at City Temple, London, on 10th September, when He addressed an overflowing audience at evening service, being introduced by the Reverend R. J. Campbell. He spoke in Persian and the translation was read by W. Tudor-Pole. It was here that He inscribed His testimony in the old Bible used by generations of preachers: "This Book is the Holy Book of God, of celestial inspiration It is the Divine Bounty, the sign of the guidance of God."

One week later, on 17th September, He addressed the congregation of St. John the Divine, Westminster. The Venerable Archdeacon Wilberforce, wrote one who was present, "had the Bishop's chair placed for his Guest on the Chancel steps, and standing beside him read the translation . . . himself. The congregation was profoundly moved, and following the Archdeacon's example, knelt to receive the blessing of the Servant of God—Who stood with extended arms—His wonderful voice rising and falling in the silence with the power of His invocation."

"Whilst he sojourned in England," Shoghi Effendi has remarked, the house in Cadogan Gardens "became a veritable mecca to all sorts and conditions of men, thronging to visit the Prisoner of 'Akká Who had chosen their great city as the first scene of His labours in the West." Lady Blomfield has given a vivid account of these wonderful days in *The Chosen Highway*, and the names of many who came to see the Master are there recorded.

There were other public engagements during 'Abdu'l-Bahá's first visit. Early one morning He accepted the Lord Mayor's invitation to breakfast at the Mansion House. On 29th September Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper arranged a farewell reception at Passmore Edwards' Settlement in Tavistock Place, when nearly five hundred guests heard distinguished speakers, with Professor Michael E. Sadler in the chair, pay tribute to the Master. On 30th September He addressed the Theosophical Society at its new Headquarters, on invitation of its President, Mrs. Annie Besant. Two days before leaving London he spoke at the Higher Thought Centre, and on 1st October he performed a Bahá'í marriage for Eastern believers, the first He had ever done except for His own daughters.

Words which He spoke at the wedding breakfast will ever be cherished by British Bahá'ís. "I have enjoyed London very much and the bright faces of the friends have delighted my heart. I was drawn here by their unity and love These few days will pass away, but their import shall be remembered by God's friends in all ages and in all lands.

"There are living nations and dead nations The English nation is a living one, and when in this spiritual springtime the Divine truth comes forth with renewed vitality, the English will be like fruitful trees, and the Holy Spirit will enable them to flourish in abundance. Then will they gain not only materially, but in that which is far more important, spiritual progress, which will enable them to render a greater service to the world of humanity."

THE CRUSADE ON THE HOME FRONT



The First Local Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of Chester

Convention this year laid great stress on the need to achieve the goals of the Ten-Year Crusade by Ridván, 1962, and to this end, on 4th June, the National Spiritual Assembly called together seventeen friends, representative of all parts of the British Isles, to consult together and to devise a plan. Those who were privileged to attend this Conference will long remember the deeply moving devotional meeting at the graveside of the beloved Guardian, when they pledged their endeavours for the fulfilment of the goals. We ask each and every one of the friends in these islands to pray for the success of this great undertaking, and to pledge themselves to assist in every possible way.

It is envisaged that the communities in the goal towns will have available to them a Helper who has volunteered to give his special attention to the development of teaching, and who will be able to visit the friends regularly during the remaining months of this vital year. The National Assembly has every confidence that these communities will open their hearts and doors to their Helpers with thankfulness and a great welcome.

In this drive to complete the goals of the Crusade, thought has also been given to those Assemblies which need special help, either to maintain numbers or for some other reason. This is to be the final spurt in the last phase of the race; let us, with Bahá'u'lláh's guidance and help reach our goal in good time.

The National Teaching Committee was made responsible for launching the scheme in the ten goal towns and, at their first meeting only a week later, details were worked out and instructions issued to the Helpers to start their task. Already reports have come in giving teaching programmes for the next few months—regular weekly firesides, study classes for deepening the friends' knowledge of the Faith, public meetings, weekend schools, social gatherings, and publicity, all taking their place in the general plan to spread the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and attract more followers to His Cause. In particular, we should like to announce a few dates:



The First Local Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of Pontypridd

2nd-3rd September—Weekend School in Motherwell, to be followed, throughout October, with a month's intensive teaching.

23rd-24th September—Weekend School in Sutton Coldfield, being part of Sutton's month of intensive teaching.

7th-8th October—Weekend School in Dalston Hall, Carlisle.

5th September—Public Meeting in Salisbury.

4th October—Public Meeting in Winchester.

The Helpers assigned to the goal towns are as follows:

Aberdeen—Tom McArthur, with Aldham Robarts to visit twice during the year.

Carlisle—Joe Jameson, assisted by the Newcastle friends.

Exeter—David and Barbara Lewis.

Inverness—Charles Macdonald.

Motherwell—Joe Jameson, assisted by Charles Macdonald and Abbas and Shomais Afán.

Peterborough—Vera Long.

Salisbury—Owen and Jeannette Battrick, assisted by John and Valerie Morley.

Southport—Aldham Robarts, assisted by Bahadur Haqqoo, Charles Macdonald, and Abbas and Shomais Afán.

Sutton Coldfield—Tom McArthur, assisted by Abbas and Shomais Afán.

Winchester—John and Valerie Morley, assisted by Owen and Jeannette Battrick.

York—Ernest and Joan Gregory, assisted by Abbas and Shomais Afán.

Burnley—Abbas and Shomais Afán.

Three Study Institutes have recently been held in Leeds, Edinburgh, and Birmingham. Attendance, particularly in Leeds and Birmingham, was not as good as we had hoped, and we very much regret that the friends were unable to take advantage of these studies, when the compilation, *The Covenant and Administration*, was used. We are grateful to the three group leaders, Richard Backwell, Joe Jameson, and Joan Gregory, for carrying out what was undoubtedly a most interesting and inspiring study. The gratitude and enthusiasm of the friends who were fortunate enough to attend have assured us that these courses have indeed served

a useful purpose and fully justify continuance. The next one is, we hope, to be held in Cheadle early in September, possibly followed by another in Cardiff. We urge all who have the opportunity to attend these courses to do so.

We have been greatly blessed recently by visits from revered Hands of the Cause, Mr. 'Alí-Akbar Furútan and General Shu'á'u'lláh 'Alá'í. As both were in the country just before Ridván, Mr. Furútan visited the friends in Wales, the Midlands and South of England, between 5th and 17th April; whilst General 'Alá'í travelled to Northern Ireland, Scotland and Northern England between 25th March and 13th April.

In September we shall have the privilege of a visit from the revered Hand of the Cause, Mr. Leroy Ioas. We hope that he will meet the friends at the Irish Summer School, and in Scotland, Wales, and England both North and South. We are indeed grateful to the revered Hands of the Cause for giving so much of their time to us, especially now when we are in great need of their inspiration and encouragement to urge us forward to win the goals of the Crusade.

But let us not overlook the great efforts which are being made by our own travelling teachers. Richard Backwell toured the Midlands during the first two weeks of June. Paul Adams spent two weeks of his holiday on tour of the North of England and Scotland, meeting the friends at firesides and showing his films. Adib Taherzadeh visited Scotland during the last week of July, going to Edinburgh, Inverness and Glasgow. Tom McArthur is celebrating his demobilization by a month's tour of Scotland, addressing a public meeting in Edinburgh on 13th August and visiting the friends in Aberdeen, Inverness, Motherwell and Glasgow.

Meherangiz Munsiff spoke at a public meeting in Edinburgh, a joint meeting with U.N.A. in Torquay, and a fireside in Exeter. David Hofman visited Peterborough, Sutton Coldfield, Cambridge, and Cardiff. Carl Card travelled from Cardiff to address public meetings in Exeter and Brighton and was undismayed, and fortunately not badly hurt, by an accident to his car. The Battricks continue their weekly visits to Brighton. We are also grateful to Mrs. Margaret Harnish, a Bahá'í from Canada, who has visited Torquay and proposes to make several visits to Bristol.

There is a steady flow of people, from home and overseas, who have volunteered to pioneer. Last Bahá'í year there was a total of seventy pioneers, thirty of them British, twenty-nine Persian believers in Britain, and eleven from Persia and abroad. The London community contributed fourteen of these. This year Mrs. Low from New Zealand hopes to settle in Exeter, as do also Mr. Mogaddam and his sister, Mrs. Taghdiri, from Persia. Andrew Gash hopes to find employment in York for the next two years. Geoffrey and Marina Bridle have found accommodation and plan to settle in Peterborough. P. P. Singham has moved from Dublin to Leicester, where he has settled happily. Mrs. Anvar has returned from Persia and hopes to stay in one of the goal towns.

We would like to pass on a suggestion which has come from Lizbeth Greeves. "We have found," she writes, "that part of the reason that we have such a thrilling big family unity in Belfast is because we have the habit of reminding one another at Feasts to pray for

all those who are ill, or looking for jobs, or sitting for exams., etc. We all do our special praying at home, but include a healing prayer and remind ourselves to remember those who have asked for prayer, or anyone we know who is in need . . . so that day by day, Feast by Feast, the real sense of fellowship and belonging will be fostered and grown."

Finally, a word about your Committee, which has changed its membership a little. Ernest Gregory is Chairman for this year, and Elizabeth Chapman the full-time Secretary installed at the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds. Other members are Joan Gregory, Jeannette Battrick, Bahadur Haqjoo, Tom McArthur, and John Wade. Its Emergency Committee which now meets weekly consists of Jeannette Battrick, John Wade, and Elizabeth Chapman. N.T.C. meetings have been fixed as follows:

9th-10th September, 7th-8th October, 4th-5th November,
2nd-3rd December, 30th-31st December, 3rd-4th
February, 3rd-4th March, and 7th-8th April.

Teaching Conference will be held on 6th-7th January, the place to be announced later.

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

NEW PROSPECTS FOR IRELAND

Teaching in Ireland, both in Eire and Northern Ireland, has been entrusted this year to an Irish Teaching Committee responsible directly to the National Spiritual Assembly. In a letter written on 18th May, the Hands in Haifa stressed the urgency of the work in Eire, where "little progress" has yet been made toward the Crusade goal of consolidation. "During the remaining two years of the Plan it should receive the attention it warrants . . ."

Dublin has been maintained for many years chiefly by the devotion of Persian pioneers, but now the time has come to attract native people to the Faith. In this great mission, Dublin has the whole-hearted support of believers from the North, who frequently visit Dublin and who are now endeavouring to send Irish pioneers. At Ridván Dublin was strengthened by the pioneers, Cyrus Bazeah and P. P. Singham. Recent visitors have included the revered Hand of the Cause, General 'Alá'í, 10th-12th April, and Dorothy Wigington at Easter. A Weekend School is planned for Dublin on 28th-29th October.

One of the first achievements of the new Irish Teaching Committee was the holding of a lively Weekend School at Bangor, County Down, on 24th-25th June, at Pollock's Hotel. Attendance throughout the School was thirty-four, including seven inquirers, while on Saturday night an audience of forty heard Eric Kent speak on Bahá'u'lláh's fulfilment of prophecy. Other teachers included Marjorie Hogg, Beman Khosravinezhad, Charles Macdonald, and Adib Taherzadeh. Beman has now taken up residence in Bangor to reinforce this important community.

The Summer School at Mournie Grange, Kilkeel, County Down, which is being held from 26th August to 5th September, will no doubt stimulate greatly the spiritual enthusiasm and devotion of the Bahá'ís of Ireland.

Alfred Sugar

Alfred Sugar was one of the most indefatigable fighters for our beloved Faith. A clear thinker with a lucid mind and eloquent tongue, year after year he brought his immense wisdom to the Nineteen-Day Feast, his logical reason to his public talks, and his unequalled power of exposition to the fireside meetings at which he presided with dignity, love, with capability and with humour.

In Manchester he was a real colossus. No topic found him unprepared—no question did he leave unanswered. Whereas others would spend hours in preparing their talks, Mr. Sugar would rise at a moment's notice, chair a meeting with distinction and courtesy, or give an outstanding talk out of the treasure-house of his memory which, at all times, was phenomenal. He could recall at will and up to the last few months of his life of dedicated service, the line, even the paragraph of the Holy Writings that bore upon the topic. He built up his subject with the comprehensive understanding of a barrister. He made everything add up to the answer which was always the Bahá'í Faith.

When the call came to pioneer he rose even in his nineties and although prevented from moving by domestic duties, he gave new life and vigour to his home community of Sale. For the last few years of his life he served faithfully on his own homefront doing things as he always did them—conscientiously and well.

Our dearly-loved teacher, savant, philosopher and friend has now left us. But when we look at the smiling face of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, we know that Alfred Sugar is now held within His loving embrace. Of him it may well be said that when he left this sorrowing world, all the trumpets sounded on the other side.

—LOUIS ROSS-ENFIELD.

(Mr. Sugar died on 22nd March, 1961)

The Law of Burial

Some time ago the National Assembly took legal advice on the instruction which a Bahá'í should give in his will to ensure that the Law of Bahá'u'lláh concerning burial is carried out after his death. One or other of the following clauses is recommended:

- (1) I direct that my body be not cremated for the reason that cremation is contrary to the laws of the Bahá'í Faith.
- (2) I direct that my body be not cremated and I request that any burial service which may be held be conducted according to the customs of the Bahá'í Faith.

—NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY.

National Assembly By-Election

Due to Ian Semple's permanent residence in the Holy Land as Assistant-Secretary of the International Bahá'í Council, it was necessary to fill a vacancy in the National Assembly, and Charles Macdonald was elected.

Summer School at Coleg Harlech

Bahá'ís from Spitzbergen, Orkney, Africa, America, Portugal, Hong Kong, and Austria, as well as those from the Homefront, of all ages, gathered at the third Summer School to be held at Coleg Harlech, Wales, from 8th-22nd July this year. At least one hundred and fifty attended the School during the two weeks, staying in the Coleg, hotels, town, tents and caravans.

During the first week, despite wind and storms, the friends joined in the warmth of the Sun of Bahá with the wonderful spirit of happiness always found in Bahá'í gatherings. The classes followed through a course of talks on "The Christian Heritage," from God's Promise to Abraham to the fulfilment of this Promise in Bahá'u'lláh. The evening entertainment included a Welsh choir—which somehow ended with a Persian solo!—a show by the children with an uproarious modern pantomime, and a fancy dress dance. The public meeting, on the theme "Seek and Ye Shall Find," was addressed by Shomais Afán and attended by a number of friends from Harlech and nearby.

The second week brought finer weather, and a full programme of classes, slides, plays, music, a public meeting in Bangor with Dr. Ernest Miller as the speaker, even midnight swims. The morning talks were on "Heroes and Heroines of the New Age" and the "Life and Work of Shoghi Effendi," the latter being given by the revered Hand of the Cause, Dr. Mühschlegel, whose radiance and love enveloped us all in the precious days he was with us.

And so another Summer School came to an end, inspiring the friends with renewed spirit and strength to carry back to their homes, near and far; to be remembered in communities and in isolation until and beyond Summer School, 1962.—JACQUELINE MEHRABI.

Lyme Park School

A great oak-panelled room in a mansion at the heart of a hundred-acre deer estate in Cheshire was the scene of the annual gathering of Bahá'ís of the North Country for their Lyme Park Weekend School, 26th-28th May.

The theme of the School was "The Covenant and Administration," ably dealt with by Adib Taherzadeh, Betty Reed, Joan Gregory, Tom McArthur, and Ian Semple in a wonderful climax.

Speaker at the evening public meeting was Richard Backwell, a number of inquirers being present who also attended the School. Afterwards a joyous social was held.

The value of this annual event cannot be over-estimated. The children enjoyed themselves, the youth had an exhilarating time, and everyone gained from the lectures and discussions a surer grounding in the evolution of Bahá'í Administration and the wisdom of the Guardian's plans. About sixty people attended, many from their homes in nearby Manchester, including ten inquirers.

This Lyme Park School could well become a pattern for other short residential courses elsewhere in the country, to supplement the essential deepening work done at Summer School, and to provide a glimpse of Bahá'í life as we are beginning to live it.

—TOM MCARTHUR.