

# The HOME FRONT

## *A News Bulletin*

No. 6.

August 1957

### THE CALL OF GOD

The aim of Bahá'u'lláh is not to establish the Administrative Order, it is not even the establishment of World Order; these are merely means to an end. His purpose in bringing His Revelation is the birth of a Divine Civilization which will endure 5,000 centuries. It is in the light of this goal, for which God has been preparing mankind since the manifestation of Adam, that we should view the present work of the Cause of God in Britain.

In this mighty plan of God the British Bahá'í Community would seem to have a four-fold mission:

1. To carry the light of God's Faith northwards beyond the Arctic Circle, where already there are outposts of the Cause.
2. To teach the Cause of God in the Islands and Oceans of the world.
3. To aid the Bahá'í Communities throughout the British Commonwealth.
4. And to play a prominent role in the world development of the Administrative Order.

These weighty tasks cannot be accomplished by a small community of some 450 believers. It is therefore incumbent upon us now, before the time arrives for this Mission to enter its next stage, to increase the number of Bahá'ís in these Islands.

That is the first step, the consolidation of the Home Front so that it becomes an inexhaustible fount, continually pouring forth pioneers and material assistance for the spread of the Faith beyond these shores.

History is pursuing its irresistible course. Let us arise without delay to re-inforce the wave of activity already sweeping this country so that our numbers will be doubled and redoubled in the months ahead. Then and only then will we be prepared to respond to the call of the Guardian--the call of God--when it comes.

--National Teaching Committee.



## PIONEERS

Those of us who were present at Convention will remember that a special appeal was made for pioneers for the new Goal Towns. This appeal was responded to by a few valiant believers but many more pioneers are needed if we are to achieve our goals for this year.

Our heartfelt prayers were with Mr. and Mrs. Backwell when they moved to Canterbury on July 22nd. It will surely make the Guardian very happy to know that active teaching work is beginning here--the centre of the Anglican Church in this country. Mr. and Mrs. Backwell have bought a house suitable for holding firesides and we understand that they are contemplating knocking down a wall to make more room for the contacts they intend to have. With the Giddings, Canterbury is now a Group of four.

We are happy to welcome the sisters of Roshan Aftabi-Dowlat and Homayoun--to Edinburgh, which has also been strengthened by Mr. A. Azizi. Jeannette Battrick and Richard have now gone home to Reading, after valiantly responding to the Ridván call.

Cambridge and Bristol have joyously welcomed two African Bahá'í students, Peter Vuyuja and Peter Kabeza. Two Persian girls--Tolouieh Lamei and Missaghiyeh Tahmassabi--have arrived in Newcastle and are hoping to remain. Iraj and Doris Mottahedin have moved to Prudhoe, near Newcastle, which strengthens this area. Miss Parvine Furutan has entered Loughborough General Hospital to train, and is in touch with Nottingham friends. Anneliese Haug, a German Bahá'í youth, has taken a post in Cambridge; and Grete Frener, a fellow-countryman, has entered an Oxford hospital for training. A Persian Bahá'í in Turkey, Mrs. Ghobad, is expected to arrive soon in Blackburn for hospital training. Cardiff has welcomed Dr. John Fozdar, Knight of Bahá'u'lláh from Brunei, for a two-year stay. Our warm and loving good wishes go to all these dear friends.

Torquay is also being strengthened by Persian friends, Farhang Rameshi and Miss Nura Yarshatar. All friends of Dora and Betty McWilliams will be delighted to know they are happily settled and holding firesides in their new home.

Prayers are asked for Dorothy Abbott and Beatrice Keery, who are jointly exploring Chester with a view to settlement.

Trudi Scott, valiant Blackburn pioneer, is taking a year's respite to regain her health; and Sandy and Kathleen Ackroyd are being transferred in his work from Cambridge to, we hope, some part of Scotland. Our grateful thanks accompany them.

## "BLESSED IS THE SPOT...."

Britain and the Northern Islands have received the incalculable blessing of a visit from our revered Hand of the Cause, Dr. Hermann Grossmann. Arriving in London, Dr. Grossmann flew to Edinburgh for a "wonderful meeting" with Scottish believers on July 16th. He then visited Peter Esslemont in Aberdeen, and from there sailed North. We shall look to the E.A.T.C. for a report of his fruitful journeys to the Faroes, Shetlands, Orkneys, and Hebrides, where he gladdened the hearts of the Bahá'ís and made many friends for the Cause. He returned to Glasgow on August 5th for a meeting, and then crossed to the Northern Ireland Summer School, where he stayed from August 7-10, illuminating every session with the fragrances of the Cause. He was in Dublin from August 10-12 for a fireside and a meeting with the Townshend family, after which he flew to London for a meeting on August 12th. And so back to Germany, but with the hope of a return visit to Britain in February. All who met our precious Hand were moved to deeper dedication.

## SPITZBERGEN

Paul Adams has offered to pioneer above the Arctic Circle in Spitzbergen! He will leave for Trømsø, Norway, November 18th, from whence he hopes to find means to enter this difficult place. It is the last of the unsettled territories, outside the Iron Curtain, and if Paul succeeds he will bring great blessings on the whole of the British Community. The beloved Guardian has welcomed Paul's plan and assured him it is "highly meritorious in the sight of God". Please pray hard for Paul.

## NEW HOPE FOR DUBLIN

With the arrival of the Anvars, Bocketts, and Aileen Beale at Ridván, Dublin opened a new and more active phase of teaching. The friends have been attending various organisations and have begun regular firesides with new and old contacts. A fine meeting was held at the Unitarian Church, attended by the Minister, a visiting American Minister who knew the Baha'i Temple, and about thirty others. Adib Taherzadeh spoke and much interest was awakened. Adib is now an Irish citizen, a fact of importance to consolidation. Zarin's sister, Zarangi Mousazadeh, has recently come to settle in Dublin, thus replacing Mrs. Beale. The only sad news is of dear John Craven's illness, which will prevent his return as a pioneer. His year's association with Dublin greatly enriches their history.

## "CHRIST AND BAHÁ'U'LLÁH"

### GATHERING MOMENTUM IN THIS NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Now that public meetings and book exhibits have been held in nearly half the communities and goal towns of Britain, it is time to consider how the momentum of this great campaign may be increased. During May and June the campaign has been fittingly launched, but each month of this all-important year should see a steady increase of activity, as we join our forces to impress on the Christians of the West the weighty theme of Mr. Townshend's book. Now we must ask ourselves what further steps can be taken in those communities where the campaign has already been launched; whilst in all other communities it is urgent to plan the first stage of this campaign which draws its guidance and force directly from the instruction of the beloved Guardian.

The N.T.C. now puts before you a number of steps which can be followed in every community. At the same time, the Committee warmly invites suggestions and reports of local activity which can be shared in future issues. Let us work in close harmony to see that the pace is steadily increased, until the theme of "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh" penetrates the consciousness of our fellow-citizens and calls forth a widespread response.

1. Public Meetings - If your community has not yet done so, we strongly recommend a public meeting on "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh", held in a befitting public hall, and supported by a book exhibit in a local shop, advertising, and a wide distribution of invitations and leaflets of the book. You may write directly to David Hofman, 98 Pencisely Road, Cardiff, to ask that a book exhibit be arranged in your town, and free copies of the leaflet will also be supplied. Should financial help be needed, please consult the N.T.C.

2. Follow-Up Meetings - We suggest as follow-up to the first public meeting, a series of meetings or firesides under the same general theme, perhaps with a related title such as "The Coming of the Kingdom". A programme setting out the series could be distributed at the opening public meeting, or might be sent to contacts with a covering letter on the purpose and significance of the meetings. Another possibility is to invite expert non-Bahá'í speakers to share the platform with Bahá'í speakers on various themes of the book, such as "Christ", "Muhammad", "The Coming World Order", etc.

3. Personal Contact with Clergy - It was Mr. Townshend's earnest wish that the friends would call personally on members of the clergy, as he felt this would have more effect than just posting a book or leaflet. This method has already been tried in various places and friends testify to its value. It is useful for two to go together. An appointment should be sought, and the purpose of the interview should be to inform the clergyman of something he will want to know about, and to present him with a copy of "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh". It is good to give also a smaller statement on the history and principles of the Faith, such as "The Message of Bahá'u'lláh". The approach should be friendly, never controversial, and the Bahá'í viewpoint should be put forward with moderation. We should try to leave an acquaintance who, whenever he hears in future of the Cause, will at once have a friendly recollection of your visit. The N.T.C. has gratefully accepted an offer from the publisher to supply cloth-bound copies of "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh" for presentation to the clergy at a price of 5/8d. Please place your order through the Secretary of the N.T.C. for copies for this purpose.

4. Public Libraries - If the friends ask for the book in their central and branch libraries, it is probable the librarian will order it. It is then important to take out the book at frequent intervals so that it will be kept in the active shelves where others will also see it. Some plan could well be agreed between the friends in each community, as availability of the book in public libraries is an important avenue for reaching the public.

5. Book Reviews - The N.S.A. has offered to supply free copies of the book for review in local newspapers. We suggest that local editors be interviewed, a copy of the book shown, and a review copy offered if they care to review it. (See N.S.A. News Sheet, June, 1957).

6. Study by the Believers - As our campaign grows, and the attention of the public is more and more drawn to the challenge of "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh", it becomes ever more important that each of us shall be familiar with the book, and above all ready to explain the meaning of our Faith to Christian people. For this purpose we should study the "Kitab-i-Iqán", "Some Christian Subjects", and "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh". We shall also be helped by knowledge of the Bible, at least of outstanding prophecies of this Day in both Old and New Testaments, and of the life and teachings of Christ as given in the Gospels. We can and should begin now, through study classes and by individual study, to increase our ability to present the Faith to Christians.



## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

The Northern Ireland Summer School, August 7-14, at Mourne Grange, Kilkeel, was one of the happiest Schools in our experience.

Blessed by the presence of Dr. Grossmann, with 56 friends of nine nationalities attending, including Irish, Scottish, and Welsh representatives, this historic School, first in Ireland, was a bright harbinger for the future. (Fuller details will come later).

The Birmingham Weekend School, June 28-30, opened with a successful public meeting at the Imperial Hotel on "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh", with David Hofman speaking. Small but lively study sessions were held for two days at the Bahá'i Centre, and friends from several communities attended.

Hassan Sabri brought joy to friends in many parts of England this summer, when he visited Leeds, Leicester, Nottingham, London, Bristol, Liverpool, Eccles, Blackpool, Birmingham, Portsmouth, and the Lyme Hall School. He and Isobel Sabri were a tremendous help in Cardiff and Isobel spoke twice in the goal town of Pontypridd.

The Eccles Group have won an expression of warm gratitude from the Director of Civic Welfare for the City of Salford, for the film show which they provided for the ladies resident at "Wentworth", a Home for Elderly and Handicapped persons. The prestige of our Faith has thus been enhanced in official circles, and no doubt much pleasure was brought to "these senior citizens".

Cardiff Assembly approved the presentation of copies of "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh" to the 47 high clerical and lay members of the Church in Wales, who met in Convocation during July at Llandaff Cathedral to elect the new Bishop of Llandaff. Cardiff is also basing its autumn programme in Cardiff and Pontypridd on Mr. Townshend's book, with public campaigns and a series of follow-up meetings. Llangollen, North Wales, is the recipient of much seed-planting by our dear American Bahá'i friend, Mrs. Louise K. Sparrow, who is spending several months there.

Prudence George spent a month in Leeds after Convention to assist this community which so nobly served the Crusade at Ridván. The loving co-operation of Phoebe Jay made this project possible.

Isobel Robison has several times visited Blackburn, where she is teaching and making new contacts for the Faith.

Jeannette Battrick visited Newcastle, Leeds, and Sheffield on her journey from Edinburgh, and spoke in Glasgow while pioneering in Scotland.

Mr. Hedayati is another Persian friend to whom we are grateful for spreading news of the Faith widely in various parts of Britain while travelling.

## REJOICE AND BE HAPPY

Well, our much anticipated weekend school at Lyme Hall, June 14-16, has come and gone, literally in a blaze of glory. King Sun shone for us, after a very gloomy period preceding the school, and we all felt that the very elements blessed our gathering! What a gathering! We were full to capacity and had many daily visitors too. Hassan Sabri on leave from his pioneer post in Africa spent part of this precious leave with us, bringing the love of Isobel, his wife, who had to stay behind in Cardiff, and also from our friends in Africa. Marion Hofman flew in from Iceland, full of a radiance and enthusiasm from her stay at the Shetland school. It seemed that we were all coming together from the different points of the compass, concentrated in this lovely spot, with evidences all round us of the bounties of God, in our friends, in our love for each other and in the beauties of nature.

'Abdu'l-Bahá had said, "Rejoice and be happy for this is the Bounty of God to you", and truly we were happy. From Leeds came friends, new and old, from Liverpool, Sheffield, Blackpool, Blackburn, Ilkley, Eccles, Manchester,-- in fact every part of our region gave us the utmost backing and support. May we here say, "Thank you, dear friends, for all your help and contributions".

The school was officially opened by John Gresty, and the speakers at our sessions, --Hassan, Marion, Terry Dunne, Aldie Robarts, Ernest Gregory, --all contributed most useful ideas and inspiration for our future teaching work. We had a recording of the children reciting Bahá'í prayers, and a film show and recordings of a Bahá'í play from America; the wedding of Ellen and Jack Russell was celebrated; and we had a declaration from Mrs. Alexander of Didsbury, the mother of Mimi Smith. (It is an old Lyme Hall custom to receive declarations on these occasions). Marion had brought some slides from Iceland which she shared with us, and actually every moment was so full, I think it is only in retrospect that we can appreciate how much we did absorb of a truly Bahá'í progressive, optimistic, and dedicated resolve to work and give to the utmost of our capacity and beyond, in bringing into effect this spirit and attitude to life as a permanent state, and not just one brief highlight standing out in our hearts and memory. We drew many new friends into our circle just by our joy and happiness.

Will the friends please note our new address: Mrs. Pauline Senior, Secretary, Abbotsroyd, 15, Houghton Lane, Swinton, Lancs:



## ASSEMBLY GOALS

Reading has shared a letter from the beloved Guardian: "He was delighted to receive the news of your activities, and feels that Reading can be cited as a truly exemplary Community in every way. He hopes you will maintain this enviable position as the years go by. He will certainly pray that your teaching efforts may be richly blessed, and that you may not only continue to make Bahá'ís, but to export them, as you have done in the case of Edinburgh."

This Assembly hopes to double its numbers this year and become incorporated. It has hired a Centre, holds fortnightly public meetings and firesides every evening of the week. It recently carried out an intensive campaign on "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh". The Bahá'ís of Reading warmly greet their co-workers "in every nick and corner of the Bahá'í world", and ask for prayers for their success.

London has in mind five areas of contribution to the Crusade.

- (1) Pioneering: The Assembly has arranged a series of talks at Feasts about the Goal Towns, is appealing for pioneers in its Bulletin, and will consider the matter at every Assembly.
- (2) Extension Teaching: Help to Cambridge and Brighton will be continued, and Canterbury will be helped.
- (3) Local Teaching: The year's goal is 19 new believers.
- (4) Funds: The community has been asked to increase its year's donation by £50.
- (5) Consolidation: London friends will be encouraged to visit other communities by attending their 19-Day Feasts and taking holidays there.

Britain's foremost Assembly sets a high example to us all!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

"All Things Made New", John Ferraby's book on the Faith, will be published August 29th and is obtainable from the Publishing Trust. It is a splendid addition to the literature of the Faith, and will become an essential work to all who wish to study the Faith deeply, whether believers or contacts. We urge every community to own a copy for the reference library, and we highly commend it to all the friends. Our Community should feel pride in this enduring achievement by a British Bahá'í.

A Map of the World is published by the Daily Telegraph for 2/6d. and may be obtained at any bookstall. It will help us to understand the Guardian's messages and the progress of the Crusade.

National Teaching Committee; Please note that our Committee has two secretaries, as follows: General Secretary - Ian Semple, c/o Mrs. Crombie, 4 Melgund Terrace, Edinburgh 7. Pioneer Sec: Mrs. Pat Sinclair, M.Y. Ridván, Bridge Boat House, Loughborough Road, Leicester.