

# The HOME FRONT

## *A News Bulletin*

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### PASSING THE MID-POINT

"O my God! Open Thou the door, provide the means, make safe the path, pave the way".

Teaching Conference was, for all of us privileged to attend, a moving experience. From session to session we were carried along by a deep ground swell of emotion, never disturbing the surface, yet flowing through each word and expression with a heart-moving, heart-inspiring rhythm which we all felt and all knew to be the influence of our dearly-loved Guardian. Each of us came away with a longing, voiceless but all-pervading, to do something for Shoghi Effendi, to find some new path of work and service in the circumstances of our daily lives.

It is the conviction of the National Teaching Committee that ways do, indeed, lie open before us, that we are equipped and perfectly able as a national Community to lay at our Guardian's feet next April an offering of real achievement throughout the British Isles. We believe that every single Bahá'í can, if he will, take steps along one or several of these paths, thus adding his own individual blossom to the bright flowers of spring with which we long to array his Shrine at Ridván.

### Four Paths of Service

Here, we propose, are four paths beckoning to us:

#### 1) Opening the new Goal Towns

With 20 Local Assemblies now established, and 7 lapsed Assemblies and 10 Goal Towns designated for growth to Assembly status, we have already 37 chosen points for concentration. But the requirement of the Ten-Year Crusade is for 48 Local Spiritual Assemblies by 1963. Thus, 11 more Goal Towns are



needed. Some of these will develop from our present Groups, but at least 6 should be specially opened so that key towns in every part of Britain may be won for the Faith during the Crusade.

Here then are six paths lying open to six believers, young or old, who have the audacity and valour to walk them as pioneers. The call is for six pioneers before Ridván, who will go to Goal Towns in Britain chosen by the N.S.A.

## 2) Winning new Spiritual Assemblies

Amongst the 17 Goal Towns and lapsed Assemblies which are the focus of intensive teaching, we are confident that at least 6 can achieve nine believers by Ridván and thus function as Spiritual Assemblies. In fact, Eccles, Birmingham, and Brighton have already reached this goal! Newcastle, Torquay, and Cambridge are well within sight of it. Others are working hard and it would be a great triumph if more than six new Assemblies could be formed. Not only the friends in these towns, but members of Regional Committees and those who go as visiting teachers, can all walk this path of service.

## 3) Protecting the Weak Assemblies

Half of our Local Assemblies count only 9 members, or less. Leeds and Nottingham are below nine. There is a strong, continuing challenge to the friends in these communities to do all that is necessary to protect and preserve these Divine Institutions. The need may be for more collective teaching, or for more individual activity, or for loyal support of Feasts and consultations, or for greater kindness and understanding amongst the friends. Nor must we forget that the Guardian was "immensely proud" of the spirit "which invariably produces, at an hour of crisis, a strong and healthy reaction on the part of the Community to rush reinforcements to its weak Assemblies, when they are in danger of dissolution". Here again is a wide path of service for many, many friends.

## 4) Forming the Nuclei of Future Assemblies

There are 85 small groups and isolated centres in Britain, and every one of them is a potential Spiritual Assembly. This is how Assemblies start, in the faith and action of one or two believers who arise to build their share of the World Order. Fully a quarter of our National Community lives in such centres and has open before it this glorious path of service, so full of promise for the future.

### A THOUGHT FROM HAIFA

"It is increasingly evident that the only solace which the Friends will find will be in renewed service to the Cause of God. The true test of devotion to the Guardian is arising with new zeal to win all of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade and to win them as quickly as possible. This will give him real happiness in the Realms Beyond, when he sees how those whom he loved so much and served so diligently, have arisen now to carry out the work which he started, on their own shoulders".

Leroy Ioas.

### A RETROSPECT OF LEEDS

The praise which has flowed so frequently from the pen now stilled, and the generous appreciation which for 36 years has inspired us from lips now silent, came home to every attendant at Teaching Conference this year. This 1958 Conference, immaculately housed, well supported, and pulsating with life, will, in the years ahead, probably be quoted as the first positive indication of the gathering strength and dogged determination which enabled the British Community to achieve with such distinction their "Baghdad" goals.

Confidence, strength, loyalty, devotion, love and harmony have never been in greater evidence. There can never have been more constructive consultation, nor outside the U.S.A. can speakers have faced a more formidable battery of microphones and flash-lights. In fact, all the ingredients for "ultimate, total and complete victory" were present in full supply, except for one.

It was woefully apparent, although without any despondency, that the half-way point in time in the Crusade had not reached halfway in those goals which focus on propagation of the Faith and the rapid increase in numbers. The wonderful tribute of "plodding on" must not be allowed to become our epitaph, but we must only plod where others cannot move at all.

The spirit of personal sacrifice is yet in short supply. It showed as a glimmering light, firm and clear, but needing to be fanned to that flame which will set this country alight as never before: and that would seem to be the lesson of this most successful and inspiring Teaching Conference.

-Ernest W. Gregory.

## "O PEOPLE OF BAHÁ!"

"Be not concerned with the smallness of your numbers, neither be oppressed by the multitude of an unbelieving world... "Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious". ('Abdu'l-Bahá)

### All Must Arise

"It is, therefore, to the teaching requirements of the...Plan that the community... must henceforth direct their careful and sustained attention. The entire community must, as one man, arise to fulfil them. To teach the Cause of God, to proclaim its truths, to defend its interests, to demonstrate, by words as well as by deeds, its indispensability, its potency, and universality, should at no time be regarded as the exclusive concern or sole privilege of Bahá'í administrative institutions, be they Assemblies, or committees. All must participate, however humble their origin, however limited their experience, however restricted their means, however deficient their education, however pressing their cares and preoccupations, however unfavourable the environment in which they live. 'God, 'Bahá'u'lláh, Himself, has unmistakably revealed, 'hath prescribed unto every one the duty of teaching His Cause'....

"How often - and the early history of the Faith in the land of its birth offers many a striking testimony - have the lowliest adherents of the Faith, unschooled and utterly inexperienced, and with no standing whatever, and in some cases devoid of intelligence, been capable of winning victories for their Cause, before which the most brilliant achievements of the learned, the wise, and the experienced have paled ....

"The field is indeed so immense, the period so critical, the Cause so great, the workers so few, the time so short, the privilege so priceless, that no follower of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, worthy to bear His name, can afford a moment's hesitation".

"'The holy realities of the Concourse on high,' writes 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'yearn, in this day, in the Most Exalted Paradise, to return unto this world, so that they may be aided to render some service to the threshold of the Abhá Beauty, and arise to demonstrate their servitude to His sacred Threshold.'"

(From "Advent of Divine Justice", by Shoghi Effendi)  
pages 37 - 39 )

## THE GUARDIAN'S APPEAL

"It has often happened that one blessed soul has become the cause of the guidance of a nation. Now we must not consider our ability and capacity, nay rather we must fix our gaze upon the favours and bounties of God..."

( 'Abdu'l-Baha )

### The First Stop

"Wise as may be the measures which their elected representatives may devise, however practical and well-conceived the plans they formulate, such measures and plans can never yield any satisfactory results unless a sufficient number of pioneers have determined to make the necessary sacrifices, and to volunteer to carry these projects into effect."

### To Those in Professions and Employment

"I would particularly direct my appeal to those ... believers ...who may find it possible, whatever be their calling or employment, whether as business men, school teachers, lawyers, doctors, writers, office workers, and the like, to establish permanently their residence in such countries as may offer them a reasonable prospect of earning the means of livelihood."

### To Those Living on Fixed Incomes

"It would, no doubt, be of exceptional importance and value... if certain ones among the believers, whose income, however slender, provides them with the means of an independent existence, would so arrange their affairs as to be able to reside indefinitely in those countries."

### To the Women of the West

"I am moved ... to stress the significance of such a preponderating share which the women of the West have had and are having in the establishment of His Faith throughout the whole world.

'Among the miracles.' 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself has testified, 'which distinguish this sacred Dispensation is this, that women have evinced a greater boldness than men when enlisted in the ranks of the Faith'...The 'boldness' which ... has characterized their accomplishments in the past must suffer no eclipse..."

("Advent of Divine Justive,"

pages 47, 55-58)



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ISLANDS

"The sign of life is motion", said 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the report of the E.A.T.C. at Teaching Conference gave hope of an exciting new phase in the Islands. Cyprus now has 19 Bahá'ís, with an Assembly of 16 in Nicosia and a Group in Famagusta. A site for their Hazíratu'l-Quds has been generously donated by a visiting Persian believer. Jersey received a pioneer in December, when Gwen Venus joined Evelyn Baxter in St. Helier; and Beryl de Gruchy will pioneer to Jersey in February. It is noteworthy that Beryl has found a job and her place in Reading has been filled by a new Baha'i, since she decided to pioneer! Houmai Aftabi has arisen to pioneer in Malta, but our prayers are needed that she can obtain a visa. Olga Mills has students very close to the Faith. Orkney is being energetically cultivated by Dr. Ernest Miller, who went in January for some months, when Charles Dunning had to withdraw for a much-needed rest. At Teaching Conference Daryoush Mehrabi arose to pioneer, and prayers are asked that he may find work in Orkney. Eskil Ljungberg in Faroe has had his first spontaneous inquirer; it is hoped a Persian friend will visit Eskil on his way to Iceland. In Shetland Brigitte Hasselblatt, under guidance from the Guardian, is preparing for a new pioneer post; another pioneer is needed who, with Lilian McKay, would surely reap a fine harvest. Also for Hebrides the Committee's plea continues for a pioneer, preferably a young woman, to support Geraldine Craney in her lonely task.

It is noteworthy that this report contains news of the first four pioneers for the Islands around Britain since 1953! The Islands now boast one Assembly and three Groups.

### SOME POINTS TO NOTE

Teaching Conference: We are urging the incoming N.T.C. to call a conference with members of R.T.C's to open the new Bahá'í year. This was one of the excellent ideas put forward in Leeds; we hope soon to announce action on others.

"The Advent of Divine Justice" - In 1938 the beloved Guardian wrote his own suggestions for the conduct of teaching under the Divine Plan. His booklet provides wonderful guidance for us to-day, and we urge friends who own it to share it with their communities. It can be ordered from America through the Trust.

"A Life Plan" - This little book by Peter Esslemont is an excellent introduction to the Faith for Christians, and for Scots.

## HOME FRONT PIONEERS

Aberdeen is soon to be pioneered by Betty Bowd, who first took the high road to Scotland last Ridvan, and is now fulfilling a hope lately expressed by the beloved Guardian that this university town could be won for the Faith.

Audrie Rogers offered to pioneer at Teaching Conference and we hope she may find a teaching post in Chester. She moves next term and we have no doubt she will be richly confirmed.

Recent moves of Persian nurses, for the sake of the Cause, include Ghamar Rayati to Sheffield, Golrach Sabit to Eccles, and Nikou Raoufian to Northampton, all much appreciated.

Brighton has attained nine members by the settlement of new friends from Persia, Mr. and Mrs. Siahpooni and Mr. Amir F. Imani.

## WORLD RELIGION DAY

The first national celebration of this Baha'i-inspired Day coincided with the opening of the fourth phase of the Crusade, and was a bright signal of hope for increase of interest in the Faith. News has reached us of meetings in twelve towns; in Reading 70 attended, in Bournemouth 56, in Bristol about 40, in London the Hazira was filled to capacity. Manchester met in the Town Hall with the Lord Mayor presiding. Here, and in Eccles, Reading, Cardiff, and other centres, the platform was shared by leaders of many world faiths and Christian churches. Birmingham, Leicester, Northampton, Oxford, and Edinburgh have also reported meetings.

## WEEKEND SCHOOLS

We are happy that this activity, so acceptable to our Guardian, is developing vigorously throughout Britain. Here is a list of recent and forthcoming Schools:

October 19-20	London	February 1 - 2	Newcastle
November 16-17	Torquay	" 15-16	Leicester
December 14-15	Manchester	March 1 - 2	Cambridge
Autumn	Portsmouth	March 23	Brighton

A NOTE FOR THE BLIND - "Renewal of Civilization" is available in Braille through The National Library for the Blind in London, and also through its Manchester Branch.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

248 Not Out - Three believers in Salé, whose ages total 248 years, have responded to our appeal for the organization of Groups, and will "make every effort to maintain the observance of these Feasts...It will benefit the three of us, physically, mentally, and spiritually, if we function as a Bahá'í Group," writes Mr. Sugar. Calcot and Wokingham have also formed, and we now have 10 Groups organized which have reported officers. We hope all others will follow suit.

Bahá'í Centres are being opened this month by Belfast on Feb.1st and Leicester on Feb.15th-16th. The latter would welcome any help with furnishings.

Kilmarnock held its first fireside in Sven Kamming's flat. This is now the fourth active centre in Scotland.

Leeds held a splendid public meeting after Teaching Conference, attended by at least 30 inquirers and many Bahá'ís.

Eccles is winning contacts and free publicity through its activity in community affairs. Nuri Sabet is chairman of the "18 Plus" Group, and recently films were shown to an "Over 60" Group sponsored by Manchester Rotarians.

Cardiff followed its "Christ and Bahá'u'lláh" campaign with a series of public meetings and is now conducting the Study Course. The friends arranged a bookstall in Pontypridd market.

Northampton has been sending 50 pamphlets weekly to professional people chosen from the classified directory. It is sponsoring a class on "The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh".

John Ferraby spoke to 25 undergraduates of the Cambridge Society for the Study of Religions, at Newnham College, in Nov.

Ted Cardell is on home leave from Africa. He visited Scottish centres in January and hopes to tour Ireland in February. He is also attending Weekend Schools.

Adib Taherzadeh spoke in the Manchester area after Teaching Conference, and also in Blackpool and Liverpool.

Dorothy Wigington spent a fruitful long weekend in Torquay, and Pat Sinclair has recently visited a number of Northern centres.

Following the funeral of the beloved Guardian, Mr. and Mrs. Jameson Bond, pioneers in the Northwest Territory of Canada, visited Oxford; Mrs. Katherine McLaughlin, Mrs. Margery McCormick, and William deForge, American Auxiliary Board members, helped in Cambridge, Brighton, and London; and Challoner Chute obtained good publicity in Cambridge.