

The HOME FRONT

A News Bulletin

No. 9.

July, 1958

EVERY ONE SHARES

This month will witness the Intercontinental Conference at Frankfurt, when the believers of Europe and many from other lands will be summoned by the last message from our beloved Guardian to arise, at this mid-point of the Crusade, to ensure the completion of all its goals.

We in Britain have much of victory to share at Frankfurt, but of the Home Front we can report only a beginning. Twenty-five new Spiritual Assemblies is our pledge and our commitment for the next five years.

Do we sufficiently take this in? Do we realise what it means in hard work and sacrifice? Do we appreciate that every single one of us is needed, is involved in this campaign? Is it not clear that the battle is joined; we can put it off no longer?

Twenty-five new Assemblies in less than five years! All told, 48 L.S.A.'s in Britain for 1963. This is the Guardian's measure of British capacity and duty to the Ten Year Crusade. We can do it and we must do it. But the pace must now quicken. Many new pioneers must take the plunge. Many hands must go deeper into pockets. Every believer and community must find a share in this pressing work, and strive loyally to carry it out.

Who will be first?

Who will lead the way?

These are the Goal Towns, as approved by the N.S.A., with the present position shown in each case. You will see for yourselves how many do not have even a single Bahá'í.

Ireland

Bangor - 5
Cork - 0

Scotland

Glasgow - 6
Motherwell - 2
Aberdeen - 0
Inverness - 0

Wales

Bangor - 0
Pontypridd - 0

(contd next page)

		<u>England</u>			
<u>North East & West</u>		<u>Midlands & E. Anglia</u>		<u>South East & West</u>	
Cheadle	- 7	Newmarket	- 1	Torquay	- 7
Newcastle	- 4	Peterborough	- 0	Brighton	- 8
Blackburn	- 1	Shrewsbury	- 0	Canterbury	- 4
Chester	- 1			Gloucester	- 1
Carlisle	- 0			Salisbury	- 1
York	- 0			Winchester	- 1
				Exeter	- 0
				Plymouth	- 0

Dear Friends,

The first step in any Goal Town is to have a Bahá'í living there. No teaching plans can be carried out until there is at least one soul to be a point of confirmation and service. This person need not be a "teacher", an "Administrator", an "old Bahá'í", experienced in the Cause or in the world. He need not even call himself a "pioneer". There is only one qualification, that he be a Bahá'í, and that, in his love for Bahá'u'lláh, he arise to answer the supreme need of our Faith.

The "crying need of this critical, this challenging, this swiftly-passing hour", our beloved Guardian has written, is "an increased awareness on the part of all believers whether newly-enrolled or of old standing in the Faith, that every one shares, vitally and directly and without any exception, in the responsibility for the successful prosecution of the Plan"

- NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

GREAT NEWS OF SPITZBERGEN

All hearts have been stirred to hear that Paul Adams, English Bahá'í youth, who has been since November in Tromso, Norway, seeking a way to pioneer in Spitzbergen, has been invited to spend a year there in the cabin of a hunter, and sailed on June 24th to this most Northern goal of the Crusade. Paul will live on Sassen Fjord, 78 degrees 22 minutes North latitude. It is a project "highly meritorious in the sight of God", in the words of the beloved Guardian, - words which must have sustained Paul through the long dark winter of cold and suspense.

Now friends throughout the world will be strengthened by this great glad news, and the exploits of our dear champion will brighten British Bahá'í history in years to come.

CONSULTATION OF NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE
WITH REGIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEES

This Conference, the first of its kind held in this country, at the Hazíratu'l-Quds, London, on June 14th-15th, was in response to suggestions made by the friends at Teaching Conference, and later at Convention. Everyone to whom we have spoken felt that it was an outstanding success, and the N.T.C. is unanimously of this opinion.

We met in the Hazíratu'l-Quds on the Saturday afternoon, and after some devotional readings we made our way to the Great Northern London Cemetery to gather in homage at the graveside of our beloved Shoghi Effendi. There, standing in an arc at the foot of the grave, in the afternoon sunlight we read from the Scriptures and prayed, renewing our dedication to the Cause of God. We were joined there by our two Hands of the Cause of God and Mr. Ghosayn, a Persian friend who has been to each of the Intercontinental Conferences. It was a most deeply moving experience, and we could hardly tear ourselves away.

In the evening we gathered again the Hazíratu'l-Quds for a meeting held by the Hands of the Cause of God. This seemed to gather up the strings of our thoughts, put into words what we had felt during the afternoon, and directed our attention to the tasks which lay ahead of us, and which were to be discussed the following day.

Almost the whole of Sunday, apart from short introductory statements to each session, was devoted to consultation covering the fields of the operation of the R.T.C.s, their relationship to other bodies, their primary functions, also the basic importance of teaching and the present condition of the Community, and the path before us. From this consultation were culled many suggestions which are already being put into operation, and which will guide the work of all these Committees.

One attendant summed up the Conference in this way: "This gathering was something very special, one huge committee intent on achievement in 'propagation' ... Outstanding was a quiet concentration and attention, and utter absence of restlessness which augurs well for the teaching plans. Yes, we shall do it! Devoted souls can win an Empire of Bahá'is, let alone a few paltry hundreds!"

CUSTODIANS OF LOVE AND UNITY

Extracts from letters from Shoghi Effendi

"The friends must, at all times, bear in mind that they are in a way, like soldiers under attack. The world is at present in an exceedingly dark condition spiritually; hatred and prejudice of every sort are literally tearing it to pieces. We, on the other hand, are the custodians of the opposite forces, the forces of love, of unity, of peace and integration, and we must continually be on our guard, whether as individuals or as an Assembly or Community, lest through us these destructive, negative forces enter into our midst. In other words, we must beware lest the darkness of society become reflected in our acts and attitudes, perhaps all unconsciously. Love for each other, the deep sense that we are a new organism, the dawn-breakers of a New World Order, must constantly animate our Bahá'í lives, and we must pray to be protected from the contamination of society which is so diseased with prejudice." (through his secretary, Bahá'í News, August, 1948)

"He is indeed grateful for this active support, this love that shows itself in deeds that rise to meet and overcome every obstacle!" (through his secretary, Bahá'í News, August, 1948).

CATHEDRAL GOAL CITY

Canterbury had its first Bahá'í public meeting on June 5th at the Friends' Meeting House which is located within the old city walls. The title was "Be Eyes to the Blind", and the meeting was chaired by the Chairman of the local voluntary Association for the Blind who were largely instrumental in distributing the posters. The Vice Chairman gave a short account of the local work of the Association, followed by Vida Backwell telling of the problems she had overcome in undertaking her considerable work for the blind in British Guiana. Dick Backwell then gave an outline talk on the Cause after explaining the pioneer reasons which took them to British Guiana. He read the tribute to the Faith by Helen Keller and ended with the passage, "Be generous in prosperity .."

This excursion with local people interested in humanitarian work has resulted in very friendly relations with several people we might not have met in any other way.

"THY HEAVENLY ARMY .."

PIONEERS: Our debt to fellow-believers who have entered the pioneer field is great in these last months. Cambridge was won as a new Assembly, Nottingham was preserved, Chester was opened as a new Goal Town, and Cheadle has been strengthened for a future re-organisation - all with the help of pioneers. Here is the Roll of Honour, which we pray will unfold in the coming months.

Mrs. Lam	Cambridge	April
Janet Coppin	Cambridge	April
Mr. Mehrnoosh	Nottingham	May (Ridván)
Aileen Beale	Nottingham	April
Audrie Rogers	Chester	May
Marjory Lucas	Cheadle	June

TEACHERS: The Home Front has been greatly enriched by the home leave from British Guiana of Richard and Vida Backwell, who are living in Canterbury and working vigorously in this Goal Town. Dick has visited Bradford, Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Eccles, Manchester, the Lyme Park School, and Cambridge, and is just now undertaking talks in Cardiff, Bristol, Reading and Torquay. His mature knowledge of the Faith and his gentle and logical exposition is working wonders wherever he goes. We are deeply grateful for all that Dick and Vida are doing to help us.

Kathleen Hornell visited Scotland before Ridván, and since June 22nd has spoken in Birmingham, Oxford, London, Canterbury, Portsmouth, Brighton, and Cambridge, - a truly prodigious schedule in the short time available. Our loving thanks!

Mr. Long, Micky Mihaeloff, and Dorothy Wiginton have all offered teaching service, and communities interested should contact the N.T.C.

GOOD THINGS TO COME. We are expecting many visitors after the Frankfurt Conference, and emergency plans have been made to route those who are able to visit communities. Among those expected are Mrs. Marguerite Allman, Canadian pioneer to Iceland; Miss Honor Kempton, Alaska's first pioneer and long-time European worker; Mr. William Smits and Mr. John McHenry III of Korea; Mr. Firuz Kazemzadeh; and Ralph and Rosemary Crates on leave from Nigeria. They have recently met the Hand of the Cause, Mr. Olinga, and other Cameroonian Bahá'ís.

NORTHERN IRELAND CONFERENCE

The first Northern Ireland Regional Teaching Conference was held at Bangor, Co. Down, on May 10th-11th, near the site of one of the earliest Christian communities. Meeting under the influence of the Ridván message from the Haifa Hands, to whom the Conference sent a message, the 18 believers and one near contact representing Belfast, Bangor, three isolated centres, and visitors from Dublin and Edinburgh, were moved throughout by the desire to achieve the goals set by the beloved Guardian.

The basic requirements of teaching, teaching in Northern Ireland, the relationships of national and local institutions of the Faith, the attitude of churches and our approach to clergy, were all matters of consultation. The Conference was grateful for the help of Adib Taherzadeh, and encouraged by the presence of his wife and family and Mr. Robertson of Edinburgh.

"We all feel that the community is maturing", the Conference wrote to Haifa, "and through the mysterious Grace and Bounty of God, that each one of us now has a new vision, renewed dedication, and an increase of spiritual food which will enable us to prosecute the goals of the Crusade with more love, vigour, and determination."

LYME HALL, MAY 30 - JUNE 1st

Believers and friends of the Cause in the Northwest Region some 90 strong, met for three wonderful days to talk and consult on many aspects of the Faith, under the theme of "Divine Spring-time". The School was blessed by the presence of John Ferraby, Hand of the Cause, and other visitors included Board members... Ian Semple and Marion Hofman, Richard Backwell of British Guiana, Ernest Gregory and David Beckett of Dublin. The visit of Mr. Sugar also brought much happiness, and he spoke from the wisdom of his 92 years. One session was devoted to a Teaching Conference, and on Friday night Pamela Tingle and Nuri Sabet of Eccles had their Bahá'í marriage, an occasion of joy and festivity.

"I think the most pleasing thing about the School", writes the RTC secretary, "was the response which the fervency and deep devotion of the speakers evoked in the listeners. One simply could not take part in the meetings without feeling how the Faith was a living part of being ... We are planning a one-day school in Chester in September, and Lyme Hall is booked for 1959."

SOUTHEAST WEEKEND SCHOOL

Believers of the Southeast met at the Hazira in London on May 31st- June 1st. The occasion was notable for the presence of Hands of the Cause Hasan Balyuzi and John Ferraby, who spoke particularly about the last letter (August, 1957) addressed to the British Community by our beloved Guardian. These talks alone "made" the weekend. The school was also notable because six Assemblies and Groups were asked to send speakers on two of the subjects, and the different approaches and points of view caused much interest and discussion. The youth of the region presented the subject, "Emerging from Obscurity", most successfully.

The weekend proved that such gatherings fill a real need, and we feel sure that all go from them happier and with a deeper understanding and dedication.

OTHER RECENT CONFERENCES

Cambridge held a Weekend School at the beginning of March, with about 50 in attendance including over a dozen contacts. "You can imagine how wonderful it felt to have so many Bahá'is in Cambridge!" The Hands of the Cause, John Ferraby and Hasan Balyuzi, greatly enriched the sessions. Ted Cardell spoke for a successful public meeting, and the group obtained a good newspaper write-up. This active group attained Assembly status at Ridván.

Brighton held a School on the weekend of March 22nd-23rd, which was given a wonderful start by tape recordings of two talks by Hasan Balyuzi, Hand of the Cause, including his moving report to the friends on his return from Haifa. On Sunday, with about 30 friends present, Mr. Balyuzi spoke in person on "The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh", a real highlight, and Mr. Long spoke on the Administrative Order with lucid detail.

The weekend was notable for many happy reunions amongst the friends, and the most radiant and loving spirit that seemed present all the time.

Scotland has just held a Weekend School at the end of June, but details must wait until next issue. We hear it was most successful.

THE ISLANDS AND EIRE

The really exciting news since Teaching Conference has been the spread of the Faith in Cyprus. Despite tremendous difficulties there are now twenty believers in Nicosia and eight youth, with the future potential in the thirteen children of these families. Five believers in Famagusta and six believers in four other towns, making a total of 31 adults, 8 youths, and 15 children in Cyprus - this is indeed a challenge to the entire British Community.

Elsewhere the picture is not so rosy, but the fault does not lie with the pioneers who have to overcome the conservatism of the people. Geraldine Craney is still alone in the Hebrides, as is Eskil Ljungberg in the Faroes and Daryoush Mehrabi in Orkney. These pioneers need help badly. The EATC have made a survey of posts in these Islands, and though jobs are not easy, they are there. The staunch sacrifice over four years of two of these pioneers is beginning to bear fruits at last. Daryoush is finding that he is given a warm and friendly reception, due to a great extent to the seeds sown by dear Charles Dunning, and now we hear that Eskil has been invited to a big reception in Thorshavn. This is most unusual in an Island where they are so suspicious of foreigners.

Brigitte Hasselblatt and Lilian McKay continue to do noble work in the Shetlands. Brigitte goes over to help Daryoush from time to time, and he to help them both in Lerwick. Dr. Miller, during his time in Kirkwall and Papa Westray, has been active in both Orkney and Shetland and has held several meetings. Olga Mills is alone again in Malta, as Houmai Aftabi had to return due to ill health. We have, however, established that jobs are available in Malta, of a secretarial and nursing category, and pioneer offers will be welcome. The group of three in Jersey is off to a flying start with two successful public meetings in Town Hall; the attendance though small was most encouraging.

Dublin, a pivotal centre, is in bad need of reinforcement if the consolidation needed to enable the message to go out to the rest of Eire is to be attained. Belfast friends help as much as they can, Mrs. Beale recently spent six weeks in Dublin, and we are striving to send teachers once a month. Again, we earnestly ask for pioneering and teaching offers - to Mrs. Battrick, Field House, Twyford, Berks.

STOP PRESS English teachers (men or women) for Cyprus, a Ward Sister, S.R.N., for Jersey, dentists for Shetland - details of these needs may be obtained from Mrs. Battrick.