

The HOME FRONT

A News Bulletin

No.26.

February/March, 1961.

National Teaching Committee
of the National Spiritual Assembly
of the Baha'is of the British Isles.

February 21st, 1961.

Dear Baha'i Friends,

We have your letters of 11th and 12th January with the report on the Teaching Conference held in Chester. Please convey our loving greetings to those who attended it. We are pleased to hear of the success of the Conference and of the pioneer offers made there. There is no doubt that in spite of the gathering momentum of the teaching work in the British Isles, there is still a long way to go before all goals of the Ten Year Plan have been achieved. Great efforts will be needed from all the friends.

Nevertheless, if they bear firmly in their hearts the words of the Guardian in the many inspiring letters he wrote the friends in the British Isles during the Ten Year Crusade, and consecrate themselves to following his instructions, whatever sacrifices may be involved and whatever difficulties arise, we are confident that the spirit animating the British believers, which carried them to such great victories in the past, will again enable them to achieve ascendancy over whatever stands in their path and cause them to end the Plan in a blaze of glory that will open the way to still greater triumphs in the decades ahead.

With warm Baha'i Love,

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND.

Amelia Collins, Leroy Ioas, Jalal Khazeh, Paul S. Hancy,
A. Furutan, A. Q. Faizi, John Ferraby.

TEN YEAR CRUSADEGOALS TO BE ACHIEVEDTIME LEFT

20 Local Spiritual Assemblies
(Five attained numbers)

2 years and 1 month

15 Incorporated Assemblies

N.T.C. LETTER PAGE

14th March, 1961.

Dear Baha'i Friends,

We are thrilled to be able to share with you the letter on the front page from the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land sent to this committee in response to the report from Teaching Conference sent to them, as published in the last issue of the Home Front, and to convey their loving greetings to all who attended it.

All the friends will, on careful reading and thoughtful reflection on every line of this letter from the Hands of the Cause, undoubtedly be moved to dedicate themselves anew in their services for the prosecution of the tasks facing this blessed community to complete the goals of the beloved Guardian's glorious Ten Year Crusade.

The immediate needs are clearly shown in the following pages, needs which must be filled now, and will only be filled by the arising of fifteen faithful and dedicated pioneers.

Yours in His Service
NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

CRUSADE GOALS FOR RIDVAN 1961

Since the urgent appeal for pioneers recently circulated by the National Spiritual Assembly, four people have made arrangements to move to Assemblies needing help, and one to the Goal Town of Pontypridd, as follows:

NEWCASTLE: John Dayall, recently arrived in London from Fiji, consulted with the NTC at its last meeting and agreed to move to Newcastle.

NOTTINGHAM: This Assembly has been maintained as the result of pioneer Fred Stahler who will be moving there shortly.

CAMBRIDGE: A newly arrived student from Shiraz consulted with the NTC and immediately arranged to transfer his classes from London to Cambridge; this, together with a declaration just received will ensure the maintenance of this Assembly.

PONTYPRIDD: Emily Eastgate, who offered to spend three weeks' holiday on a teaching project, has gladly accepted to extend this to a three months' pioneering project in this Goal Town. ONE MORE PIONEER is needed here to enable this group to form their first local Spiritual Assembly this Ridvan.

In all, FIFTEEN pioneers are urgently needed for the completion of the targets aimed at for April 21st in the following places:

PONTYPRIDD	1
WATFORD	1
BRIGHTON	4
HOVE	4
NORTHAMPTON	1
OXFORD	1
SHEFFIELD	2
BRISTOL	1

The NTC secretary will be pleased to advise anyone wishing to pioneer to any of the above places.

GOAL TOWN NEWSABERDEEN

2

Jean Campbell has now been joined by the second pioneer to this town; Pari Rawshan has arrived and started her hospital training.

BANGOR (Wales)

1

Raffi Mavaddat is still alone here. He recently arranged for a Baha'i speaker to address a meeting of students at his college, and Ian Semple spoke to an audience of about ten. A weekend school will be held next term.

BURNLEY

3

This is a newly chosen Goal Town. Much valuable teaching work is being carried out by Dr. and Mrs. Shoamis Afnan.

CARLISLE

2

There are still only two Persian nurses here. A Public Meeting was held recently, organised by the Newcastle friends, at which Aldie Robarts spoke.

EXETER

2

Very good monthly public meetings are held with about 30 people attending. Arthur Weinberg, Dorothy Ferraby and Suheil Bushrui have visited recently.

BRIGHTON

5

Successful monthly public meetings are held in the Royal Pavilion with visiting speakers, and audiences of about 30-40. The London friends continue to give their support, and Mrs. Etty Graeffe and Arthur Weinberg have been recent speakers. Owen Battrick attends a weekly study/fireside class held in the home of Mrs. Kouchek-zadeh which has about five regular contacts. Mrs. Prudence George has also spent a week here helping with the teaching work, and Dick Backwell is at present spending a week in concentrated teaching.

CHESTER

9

Mr. Habibi from Manchester has pioneered here thus enabling the first local Spiritual Assembly to be formed here on April 21st. Dorothy Ferraby, Ian Semple, and Joan Gregory have all recently spoken at meetings here.

TORQUAY

12

Joe and Elsie Lee have now moved in from Newton Abbott. The Centre has been newly decorated and is used frequently for weekly public meetings, study classes and meetings of the Baha'i sponsored "New Era Club" which is well attended and appreciated particularly by the many overseas students who go regularly. Joan Gregory has visited recently, and Dorothy Ferraby. Suheil Bushrui stayed a few days and spoke at a number of meetings, including a UNA meeting with an audience of over 60 people.

INVERNESS

4

Splendid monthly reports are received by this group. They say "Daily prayers for guidance and help has been our first step. At times when we contemplate the colossal tasks ahead we feel so powerless and inadequate, but the reassurance that comes with prayer and the knowledge that we are not alone but being helped by the Concourse on High, that, as tools of God, we cannot fail, upholds us, and enables us to greet each new day with the optimism and hope that there are waiting servants, and if we form a plan of campaign we shall be led to them because it is God's will that we should do so and He will lead us to victory." Weekly quotations in the newspaper have brought correspondence from places as far afield as London and Australia! Various ways and means of making new friends are constantly tried, and a programme of Baha'i activities up to the end of May has been drawn up, culminating in a Public Meeting on Friday, May 26th and a One Day School on Saturday, May 27th.

MOTHERWELL

5

Weekly fireside meetings are again being held; Ian Semple spoke at one at which two contacts were present. Arrangements are being made to display Baha'i posters preparatory to a Public Meeting to be held on Sunday, April 9th.

WINCHESTER

4

We are very happy to announce the arrival of a new, and very badly needed, pioneer. Dermot Knox, originally from Northern Ireland, who became a Baha'i in Cardiff, has just been released from the Army and has

taken up a job in this important cathedral city. And a fifth Baha'i is also making arrangements to move here in the very near future - Cherry Viveash from Chichester, who is pioneering for the first time and is very keen to do all she can to help teach the Faith in Winchester.

SALISBURY

3 The group here contacted their local newspaper at the time of World Religion Day, and the Dedication of the Mother Temple of Africa, and succeeded in getting a short account of these two events printed. Subsequently a reporter spent some time with Margaret and Stuart Sweet and printed a fairly lengthy feature article on their religion.

PETERBOROUGH

3 Although 2 members of this group are about to leave, they have the great happiness and satisfaction of leaving behind them one newly declared Baha'i of Peterborough to help the two remaining pioneers. Mrs. Beatrice Smith, the new Baha'i will be of inestimable value in teaching the Faith in her own home town.

YORK

3 Golrokh Sabit has at last been joined by a fellow Baha'i. Malcolm Lee, from Leeds, has already moved into York, and will be joined before the end of this month by another pioneer, also from Leeds, Farhang Jahanpur. Farhang will travel daily to his University classes in Leeds, the return journey taking nearly two hours.

"Be unrestrained as the wind while carrying the Message of Him Who hath caused the dawn of Divine Guidance to break. Consider how the wind, faithful to that which God hath ordained, bloweth upon all regions of the earth, be they inhabited or desolate. Neither the sight of desolation, nor the evidences of prosperity, can either pain or please it. It bloweth in every direction, as bidden by its Creator." Baha'u'llah.

BLACKPOOL: Dorothy Ferraby spent 2 days here, speaking at a fireside meeting and visiting contacts.

Mrs. Mehrangiz Munsiff also kindly offered to speak at a fireside meeting whilst in the region, and 6 contacts attended. The Blackpool friends continue to support wholeheartedly the nearby activities in Blackburn and Southport.

CAMBRIDGE: Meetings are held regularly every Wednesday in their Centre. They have appreciated particularly the regular fortnightly visits of David Hofman. A happy and successful One Day School was held recently, attended by friends from Norwich, Newmarket and Peterborough; David Lewis came from Cardiff to speak, and Tom McArthur from Lichfield. Two declarations have been joyfully received from Jeremy Fox and Denise Giraudoux.

EDINBURGH: There is great activity here with well attended public meetings, study classes, fireside meetings, and a children's class. Following their very successful World Religion Day meeting at which over 120 people attended, the Assembly was approached for a Baha'i speaker to address a meeting organised by the Christadelphians. Charles Macdonald went over for this from Belfast, and spoke to an audience of over 40 non-Baha'is. Owen Battrick has also spent a very busy weekend here.

SHEFFIELD: The Sheffield friends greatly enjoyed having Dorothy Ferraby with them for two days, and during her stay, 12 contacts attended a fireside meeting.

LEICESTER: Hassan Sabri did a great deal of valuable teaching and consolidation during his 5 day stay. A newspaper reporter and photographer visited the Baha'i centre to interview Hassan, and a long article on the Faith was printed together with a photograph of the Kampala Temple. The Leicester friends also welcomed a pioneer from Falkland Islands into their community recently, Mr. Hermann Wessel, who moved from London to Leicester very promptly after consultation with the NTC.

PORTSMOUTH: The friends here greatly appreciated the visit of Bruce Wightmen from London who spoke at a public meeting which was also attended by Baha'is from Salisbury, Bournemouth and Chichester. They are also looking forward to a visit by Adib Taherzadeh in the very near future.

NOTTINGHAM: Hassan Sabri spent a few days here and spoke at 2 public meetings. Adib Taherzadeh will also be visiting the Nottingham friends, who always appreciate and welcome the help and stimulation of visitors.

NORTHAMPTON: A very successful and happy week end school was held during the stay of Hassan Sabri in this town. Altogether about 26 Baha'is attended from Northampton, Leicester, Cambridge and Peterborough.

CARDIFF: The Cardiff friends continue to help and support the work in the Goal Town of Pontypridd to assist the valiant efforts of the group there. The Fireside Teaching Plan outlined by Dr. Muhlschlegel and printed in the Home Front last August is being put into practice, and regular monthly public meetigs are also held.

BELFAST and BANGOR (N.I) Have both had the pleasure of a visit by Board Member, Marion Hofman, and Hassan Sabri. Marion reports that 23 contacts were met in this area and that the teaching potentialities are very great.

ACTIVE TEACHING GROUPS

SOUTHPORT: In October, Margaret Shanks was joined by a Baha'i from the Yukon who returned home to her native Southport. The two of them returned from Teaching Conference in January filled with enthusiasm to teach, and intensified their teaching activities and renewed their monthly public meetings. In February, they were thrilled to receive a declaration from Joan Clegg, who had been attending for about a year. Now they are busy planning their first week end school.

The following is taken from the Poha'i Newsletter of South and West Africa of January, 1961, which we thought all would like to read:

THE STORY OF JEAN FABRE'S DECLARATION

"Mauritius, this island so charming for tourists, is, in reality a hell for thousands of unemployed. In the face of unrelenting misery which lies in wait for them, some prefer to be engaged on small islands that are exploited by Mauritian companies who have, likewise, the monopoly of justice, police, etc ... just as in the Chagos islands.

In the Mocambique strait between Madagascar and Africa, is found a very small island which has been frequented for centuries only by sea-birds. Their excretion has given the valuable natural manure, the guano. Apart from cocoa-palms, there is no vegetation of value. There, on this tiny isle, about a hundred men live a harsh life, having no diversion, except drinking, or gazing at the sea during the long weeks until the arrival of the food-ship which brings a few preserves ... and some letters.

A torrid climate, men hardened by voluntary exile, a sea silent and indifferent, long nights in which home sickness rules like a master, here you have the background of the isle of Juan de Nova.

Two years ago a young mechanic Claude Rene, after having signed his declaration went into exile on this tiny

island. In spite of every ounce of enthusiasm he did not have the satisfaction of getting one fellow worker to join the Faith during his stay on this small island. He was mistaken; a young man thirsty for the Faith was guarding quietly in his breast the astounding message of Baha'u'llah. Before leaving him Claude Rene gave him my address. It was in this manner that a warm hearted exchange of letters took place between us.

One day, after having sent books and encouraging letters to Jean Fabre, I had the joy of reading these exciting lines: "I shall devote my entire life to proclaiming and preaching Baha'u'llah's message to those, like myself, who are in darkness, suffering and misery. I shall give everything to restore peace and hope again to homes that are in gloom. I shall give everything in my power to advance the Baha'i program and to put it in practice."

With a spirit so aflame, Jean Fabre took his leave for the island of his birth. Alas! Sickness resulting from his stay on the tiny island kept him in bed the entire duration of his holiday, preventing the possibility of any contact with the Mauritian Baha'is who were ignorant of such a soul on fire with their Faith. He was anticipating the conversion of his family; he was cruelly deceived. They mocked him and made fun of him; they did not believe in his ideal.

Frustrated, still sick, he returned to Juan de Nova, happy in finding his fellow workers:

"I have come back to the Island for its loneliness and its quiet in order to study better and to understand better the words of Baha'u'llah." And Jean Fabre adds: "Make me to know all conditions. I wish to sign my pledge. I have a desperate longing to be a Baha'i and to end my days a Baha'i. Monsieur Robert, I am worn out, I am in pain. I can no longer write to you at length."

And so, in spite of his illness which has caused cruel suffering he is on fire with love for Baha'u'llah. All alone in his exile, Jean Fabre signed his declaration. But he has become the "happiest man in all Juan de Nova." In his last letter I was stunned with joy to read these lines: "I am beginning to make progress with my little group of 20 people. Every evening we end our discussions with prayers, sometimes until ten o'clock. I am proud of myself. The Teachings of Baha'u'llah have given me joy and happiness." Isn't this a masterful and moving lesson of simplicity?

Since this article is destined to make known the story of Jean Fabre it would be well, perhaps, that the friends should know if his awful isolation on this island. Newspapers, good books, magazines, medicines, sweets, letters would bring happiness among the contacts of our spiritual brother whose address is as follows: Monsieur Jean Fabre, Juan de Nova, c/o Monsieur Lois Maurel, B.P. 215, Majunga, Madagascar.

(signed) Gilbert Robert.

DATES TO REMEMBER

The next meeting of the National Teaching Committee will be on March 25th/26th at 27, Rutland Gate, S.W.7.

CONVENTION: April 29th/30th and May 1st in the Central Library, Phillimore Walk, Kensington.

SUMMER SCHOOL: Colleg Harlech, Harlech, Merioneth, from July 8th to the 22nd.

LYME PARK:

Yet another of these popular schools will be held here from May 26th - 28th. Details to be circulated later.

TAPE RECORDING OF THE DEDICATION AND PUBLIC INAUGURATION OF
THE KAMPALA TEMPLE

The National Assembly are arranging for the purchase of this tape which will be suitably edited and prepared for use by the Audio-Visual Aids Committee. This should be ready in a few weeks' time and will be available to borrow from the A.V.A. committee in their usual way.
