

T h e

# HOME FRONT

A News Bulletin

---

No.30.

August 1962

"The purpose underlying the revelation of every heavenly Book, nay of every divinely-revealed verse, is to endue all men with righteousness and understanding, so that peace and tranquility may be firmly established amongst them. Whatsoever instilleth assurance into the hearts of men, whatsoever exalteth their station or promoteth their contentment, is acceptable in the sight of God. How lofty is the station which man, if he but chooseth to fulfil his high destiny, can attain! To what depths of degradation he can sink, depths which the meanest of creatures have never reached! Seize, O friends, the chance which this Day offereth you, and deprive not yourselves of the liberal effusions of His grace. I beseech God that He may graciously enable every one of you to adorn himself, in this blessed Day, with the ornament of pure and holy deeds. He, verily, doeth whatsoever He willeth."

Gleanings from the writings of Baha'u'llah.

N.T.C. L E T T E R

Beloved friends,

"Greater Coherence"

In his last major message to the British Baha'i community whom he so dearly loved, the beloved Guardian listed seven "prime requisites" as "essential" for a further unfoldment of the mighty potentialities inherent" in this spiritual Mission. The opening of a new chapter in the development of that Mission directly depends on the fulfilment of those prime requisites.

The Seven Prime Requisites

Careful study of the beloved Guardian's message seems to show that these seven prime requisites are listed deliberately in a definite order, each one depending to a considerable degree, if not wholly, upon the previous one, yet all inter-dependant. Thus "greater coherence" will lead to "more rapid increase in numbers"; "more rapid increase in numbers" will help towards "definite emergence from obscurity"; "definite emergence from obscurity" will call for "plumbing greater depths of consecration" because of the challenges incurred; "greater depths of consecration" and concomitant problems and funds, will result in "enrichment of administrative experience"; "enrichment of administrative experience" will attract and make possible "definitely self-supporting" financial independence; "definitely self-supporting financial independence, because of the greater vigour and the more to share, will of itself entail "associations more closely" with the N.S.A. and with the Hands of the Cause both in Europe and throughout the planet.

Meaning of Coherence

First, then "greater coherence", a word which has several meanings in the dictionary, but would seem here

to mean 'to be clear in the expression of our Faith both by the way we live our Baha'i lives, and in the harmonious functioning of the Baha'i institutions and the communities: and so firm must be the background of our Baha'i living that we must be ready to speak of and share our precious Faith with those we meet, and at the same time we must draw closer together. 'Abdu'l-Baha, Who with every breath He drew demonstrated the perfect Baha'i life and always spoke to others from their own viewpoint of the Message of His great Father, is the ideal for us to study and bear in mind for the first meaning; and Baha'u'llah's own words, "Be ye as the fingers of one hand, the members of one body" provides our ideal for the second meaning.

Greater coherence then demands effort at all times; to become coherent as Baha'is we need to pray for the aid from on High and regularly take of our spiritual food, which is the reading of the Holy Scriptures. By these means, the Baha'i will be aided "to fulfil his high destiny" and be enabled "to adorn himself, in this blessed day with the ornament of pure and holy deeds. (See quotation on page 1.)

### Two Ways of Distinction for the Believers

We British believers can come to stand out from the general run of our compatriots in at least two ways, - our readiness to talk to, befriend, indeed to love strangers, and our deep, immediate, sensitive awareness of the capabilities, and response to the needs of other believers, particularly of those who live in our own locality.

### Personal Teaching

It is a privilege for each one of us to teach the Cause, indeed "God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds". (Gleanings pp 277).

We should all strive to clearly demonstrate the truth of the Message, not just by words but by our deeds. This we all find difficult but we are assured of assistance. "It is known and clear that Today the unseen divine assistance encompasseth those who deliver the Message. And if the work of delivering the Message be neglected, the Assistance shall be entirely cut off, for it is impossible that the friends of God could receive assistance unless they be engaged in delivering the Message."

Though at first our efforts at both deeds and words are incoherent, gradually, with the aid of the unseen assistance, we will become coherent.

### Fireside Teaching

The beloved Guardian stressed that fireside teaching was of paramount importance and that this method, together with that of personal teaching, will bring about declarations. What is a fireside? An intimate informal discussion of the Faith with one or more enquirer based on loving hospitality. Each individual can do this too, and can add to his or her daily work of personal teaching, the privilege of inviting somebody into his home at least once in 19 days, for the express purpose of teaching the Cause.

If we do not have a suitable room to which to invite people, we should borrow or hire one or find some other suitable way, and call upon our fellow believers to help us if we need help. The aim of every community should be to assist the enquirer to progress by means of the organised firesides, thus leading him from personal to community teaching. This regular and planned fireside arranged by the Local Spiritual Assembly should certainly be held at least once a week.

### The 19-Day Feast

In this Day, personal living of the Baha'i life and personal teaching of the Cause of God do not fulfil our obligations which then must extend to the community. The spiritual heart of our community activity is the 19-Day Feast established by the Bab and ratified by Baha'u'llah. Here we contribute and receive. It is the promised Lord's Supper.

### The Local Spiritual Assembly

We can do no better than refer you to the words of the beloved Guardian, found on page 110 of "Guidance for To-day and To-morrow" when he speaks of the principal of "The Universal Baha'i Organism".

Therefore to acquire "greater coherence" involves prayer, study of the writings, living the Baha'i life, personal teaching, community teaching, attendance at the 19-Day Feast, the Divine institution of the Local Spiritual Assembly. To all these we give and receive, and become a "coherent" part of the body of the Universal Baha'i organism.

### "Increase more Rapidly in Numbers"

This must result from the acquisition of "greater coherence", but if we are to be "more rapid", we must increase the tempo of our activity. This increased tempo of activity will be the result of more individual believers engaged upon personal teaching; the personal firesides that should result, which will in turn lead to better attended community firesides or public meetings.

With regular use of the long Obligatory Prayer and the Tablet of Ahmad; with a fresh perusal of the Guardian's so consummate teaching advice in "Advent of Divine Justice" pp 41-45; with systematic, prayerful, loving consultation, both formally with our Local

Assembly and informally with the believers living within reach, we shall be able to increasingly manifest the spiritual potentialities which the Guardian has assured the British community they have already acquired. Confidently we may then expect to 'increase more rapidly in numbers' and surprise ourselves.

"So intense must be the spirit of love and loving kindness, that the stranger may find himself a friend, the enemy a true brother, no difference whatsoever existing between them" ('Abdu'l Baha's Will and Testament)

"Let your heart burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path". ('Abdu'l-Baha)

Yours, in His service,

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

Dick Backwell	Joan Gregory
Owen Battrick	Bahadur Haqjoo
Elizabeth Chapman	Malcolm Lee

THE UNITS

One of the high spots of Teaching Conference is the tremendous spiritual upsurge received by all those who attend it; one's batteries are re-charged, as it were; ideas are exchanged; considered views on certain ways and means of teaching are put forward in the light of the beloved Guardian's innumerable letters of guidance and encouragement; pioneers arise and new plans for the achievement of goals and the consolidation of Assemblies are discussed; the believers are refreshed and revitalised. It is a very happy occasion, and the presence of so many brothers and sisters in the Cause broadens our horizon. Sometimes the weekend is graced by one of the Hands of the Cause, or believers from other lands who are passing through. The day is enriched by these visitors from overseas, and we realise again the vastness of Baha'u'llah's Cause and the spiritual force He has brought, capable of welding mankind into one world. In our mind's eye we see ever expanding communities, growing, growing, ever outward, encircling in their loving fold the weak and the strong, local Assembly, group or lone believer, until all go forward together.

A Unit Conference, is in a way, a miniature teaching conference. It offers the possibility of mutual aid and co-operation to all alike, be it from one individual to another, the Assembly to the Group, or Assembly to Assembly, in an atmosphere benefitting from that spiritual upliftment that comes about when any group of Baha'is anywhere in the world are together and consulting on the ways of propagating the beloved Cause.

It is very easy to become parochial in outlook. The Unit Conference tends on the one hand to break

down our independence and builds instead our interdependence. The individual, group and Assembly problems become lost in the overall realisation that problems are, country-wide, world-wide, basically the same. They disappear when we immerse ourselves in teaching the Cause of God. Out of the consultation ideas come for new teaching projects geared to bringing about a more rapid spread of the Cause and an emergence from obscurity, a deepening of new believers and a consolidation of newly won Assemblies. The lone believer is encouraged, as he now knows he can ask for help from his nearest group or Assembly and they will assist him to hold a fireside, or even a public meeting. The Assembly, gradually growing to maturity, becomes increasingly aware of the spiritual link between one Divine Institution and another.

Consultation at the Conference shows people up in a new environment, and ideas previously put forward and unacceptable are often now seen to be practical. Last, but by no means least, the Conference offers a platform for the Youth of the area to voice their views; their energy and enthusiasm can inspire a community and spur older believers to be more audacious.

A dynamic, devoted body of believers can by their harmonious and loving co-operation, bring about the "unprecedented increase in numbers" so long awaited.

The Conference over, a recharged body of believers return to put their ideas before their Assemblies for consideration, or to be consulted upon in the group at the next 19-Day Feast.

It has come to the notice of the N.T.C. that there has been a varying understanding of the Unit Scheme throughout the country. Some seem to have gained great benefit, whilst others have thought that a rather useless structure has been brought into being.

It will be seen from the preceding paragraphs that, in fact, the Unit provides a necessary means for interchange of ideas and plans between geographically conveniently placed communities. Therefore the allocation of Local Spiritual Assemblies, groups and lone believers to the various Units has no administrative function whatsoever.

THE N.T.C. FEELS CERTAIN THAT THESE UNIT TEACHING CONFERENCES HELD AT INTERVALS, BUT NOT MORE OFTEN THAN FOUR TIMES A YEAR, CAN PROVIDE THE MEANS, AT THE PRESENT STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAITH IN THIS COUNTRY, FOR MUTUAL AID, EXCHANGE OF TEACHERS, AS WELL AS THE NEIGHBOURLY SUPPORT BY BELIEVERS ON BAHAI OCCASIONS IN OTHER TOWNS.

It should be realised that actions must be initiated only by the independent Divine Institutions of the Local Spiritual Assemblies and by organised Groups. In deciding upon these actions, however, they should all benefit from the airing of views, the details of programmes as well as recommendations coming from the believers assembled at the Unit Teaching Conference.

.....

ATTACKS IN THE NORTH

An outburst against the Faith by the Rev. Moore of Inverness has opened a new chapter in the development of the Faith in Scotland, and we would like to take this opportunity of sharing with the friends the events there, that we should all be ready should similar outbursts occur within our own areas.

The Rev. Moore, a Baptist Minister, addressed a letter to the Inverness press abusing the Faith, warning his readers to 'shun this poisonous sect'. This was followed by further press publicity in the Scottish "Daily Mail" and "Daily Express", as well as the local newspaper in Inverness. The newspapers in Aberdeen took up the challenge and interviewed the friends there, resulting in a series about the Faith over five consecutive days. The Baha'i answer was to stage public meetings in both Inverness and Aberdeen at which David Hofman and Charles Macdonald spoke on the theme: "Christ and Baha'u'llah", and copies of that book were sent to all the local clergy and leading citizens, inviting them to attend the meetings. The Ministers stayed away in large numbers from both meetings, but the attendance of non-Baha'is was 17, and 11 respectively. The following evening the Inverness "Evening Express" headed their front-page report with the words: "CULT CHIEF SCOFFS AT ABSENT CRITICS" - a very exaggerated reference to David's polite expression of regret. All eleven enquirers at the Aberdeen meeting stayed for more than an hour afterwards for discussion and several were deeply interested. Three reporters have been involved, and one young woman in Aberdeen seemed to be quite overwhelmed by the message of Baha'u'llah and hopes to attend the Beatties' firesides.

We remind ourselves of Abdu'l-Baha's words in America, when He counselled the friends on attacks they could expect after He had returned to the Holy Land: "But after I leave, some people may arise in

opposition, heaping persecutions upon you in their bitterness, and in the newspaper there may be articles published against the Cause. Rest ye in the assurance of firmness .... If such things do not happen, the fame of the Cause will not become widespread and the summons of God will not be heard. Consider the history of the past. Recall for instance the days of His Holiness Christ and the events subsequent thereto ... But remember that these statements did not affect the Cause of Christianity. On the contrary, Christianity advanced daily in power and potency. Day by day the majesty of Christ grew in splendour and effulgence. Therefore my purpose is to warn you and strengthen you against accusations, criticisms, revilings, and derision in newspaper articles or other publications. Be not disturbed by them. They are the very confirmation of the Cause; the very source of upbuilding to the movement. May God confirm the day when a score of the ministers of the churches may arise and with bared heads cry at the top of their voices that the Baha'is are misguided. I would like to see that day, for that is the time when the Cause of God will spread. Baha'u'llah has pronounced such as these the couriers (Heralds) of the Cause. They will proclaim from pulpits that the Baha'is are fools; that they are wicked and unrighteous people; but be ye steadfast and unwavering in the Cause of God. They will spread the message of Baha'u'llah." (Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp 423/4)

Scotland has been chosen by Baha'u'llah as the place where the cry of these "heralds of the Cause" will first be raised with a loud voice. This must be a source of great pride and joy to all the believers in Scotland. Thousands are now reading about the Faith and discussing it, and the meetings and accounts of them have helped to keep the pot boiling. It behoves us to concentrate all our efforts that the fire which has been lit will be fanned into a blaze.

.....

IN THE NORTH

YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT

Perhaps pre-occupation with the examinations, perhaps re-action to the pre-Ridvan flurry - maybe the effects of a belated spring - whatever the causes the Northern Youth Committee admits to a lull in organised activity during the last two months.

But, whilst the 'office' has been allowed to grow cobwebs, the Youth of the North certainly haven't allowed the grass to grow under their feet - judging by the accounts which filter through the grape-vine. Stories of midnight devilment escapades at Lyme Park Weekend School, and reports of the Day School in Southport (where a team of youth speakers presented an entertaining and - we hope - enlightening view of the Faith), and a Weekend School organised by the Manchester Youth - all indicate the ability of young Baha'is to direct their high spirits towards serious teaching.

The next few weeks promise to be exciting ones, particularly for the small band of young believers who are planning to hitch-hike to the Islands during August, devoting their holidays to help spread the Message in these far distant reaches of our country. They will attend the Carlisle Weekend School on 4th and 6th August where it is hoped a large contingent of fellow youth will give them a warm send-off.

The N.Y.C. is helping to arrange a Youth Weekend School in Scotland on 1st/2nd Sep. as part of the Scottish Campaign, to be followed by a Day School in Burnley on 30th September.

.....

NEWS FROM THE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Similes regarding the vegetable kingdom can often be used to best describe teaching the Cause. The beloved Master did so frequently. Some seeds when sown take a long time to come up, whilst others, perhaps having fallen on richer soil, come up quickly. The areas where the soil is hard take longer to till and need much fertilising before any growth is seen. Trouble arises, if at the date of harvesting, the sower has forgotten to sew any seeds, then no harvest will appear at all. Experience of teaching the Faith has shown in some parts of the world that the 'soil' of the cities is very hard, and quicker results of 'harvest' are obtained away from materialism. This does not mean that the 'sower' in the cities is in any way less capable, less devoted or less willing to make sacrifices - but it does mean that he has to have great love and patience.

This lesson is very evident in the Welsh Campaign where after 14 public meetings and wide-scale publicity by the devoted believers in Cardiff, very little response to the Message is to be seen, whereas in Pontypridd where fewer meetings were held with slightly less publicity, contacts are coming forward, and there is an excellent attendance at firesides. But we must not loose heart because of the seeming unsuccess in Cardiff. Seeds have been sown in plenty, aided by television when for the first time in the history of the Faith in this country, an Anglican Bishop appeared with a Baha'i and discussed the Faith. This achievement alone, largely due to the Cardiff believers, will have widespread repercussions in other more fruitful areas in Wales. The local Campaign Committee is fanning the flame which is appearing in Pontypridd, and considering ways and means of extending the fire of the Message up the Valleys.

It should be realised that these campaigns are of a very experimental nature; we are learning every day; we will make many mistakes; but eventually we hope we may find the key to the pattern.

In order to use in Scotland what we have learnt from the Welsh Campaign, we are planning the Scottish Campaign on a wider base. In Scotland there are four Assemblies; Edinburgh, the pivotal centre; Glasgow; the northern outposts of Inverness and Aberdeen; and the Crusade goal of Motherwell. To bring the Message of Baha'u'llah to the peoples of such a vast area on a budget of £333 is extremely difficult, but a plan has been worked out with Scotland, giving to each of the Assemblies and the Goal Town a proportion of the budget; the largest proportion being given to Edinburgh where expenses are higher and as the Centre from which the main plan stems.

The four-month Campaign will affect the whole of Scotland, though the intensive effort in Glasgow, Motherwell, Inverness and Aberdeen will be for a fortnight's duration in each town in sequence. The Exhibition will travel round Scotland and visit each Centre, backed up with a well advertised Public Meeting, free literature, advertising of the Publishing Trust and advertised firesides. Each town will also advertise the activities carried on elsewhere. Edinburgh, which will no doubt be as equally hard to till as its sister city of Cardiff, will commence the Campaign during the first month of September, including in its programme meetings and use of the Exhibition in two suburbs. During the remainder of the four months, Edinburgh will hold monthly public meetings, advertise their own as well as those elsewhere, step up their fireside programme, keep the name of the Faith well before the public eye to the best of their ability and within the limitations of their financial resources, seeking everywhere as much free publicity from the Press as can be achieved by way of articles and Editorials.

The Campaign will end with the Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Baha's visit to Edinburgh on the 6th January, at a public meeting. The Assembly are uncovering interesting newspaper accounts of the beloved Master's stay in their city and are having photostat copies prepared so that we may use these for publicity.

Meanwhile the softening-up process in Scotland seems to be well under way with critical articles from the clergy causing wide newspaper reporting in Inverness and Aberdeen. The temptation is to rush in and begin the Campaign at once, but this could be interpreted as panic measures; whereas the Local Assemblies are keeping the flames well fanned with support from the N.T.C. and it is hoped that the well organised events and manned Exhibition to follow with the Campaign, will present a further opportunity for the populace to investigate. We have to remember that we have few funds and they must be stretched as far as possible.

How much of the present attacks in Scotland are due to the tremendous outpouring of devotion and effort on the part of the believers in Wales, who initiated the first Campaign, as well as the steady work done by the local believers, it is hard to tell. Nothing would please the Welsh friends more if it were to boomerang back! This may well happen, and we are already beginning to look to the future with this thought in mind.

Your support of the closing Campaign Weekend School at Rhoose, near Cardiff, on 8th/9th September is sought. The cost is £1.9.6. per person (same price for children) from Saturday 2 p.m. until Sunday 5 p.m. The overall theme will be "The Glory of God". Programmes and further news will be available nearer the date.

Please direct your thoughts and prayers both to Scotland and Wales.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A PIONEER

When Viola and John Herman leave Chester in August to return to Sweden, Chester will be short of two Baha'is. Here is a possible solution for someone who could replace John. The firm for whom he worked as an insurance inspector (Wesleyan & General Assurance Society) is anxious to find someone to take his vacated job. This needs someone with a sales or insurance background. The salary is a drawing account of £550 per annum. With commission it is possible to make it more. The one big snag with this job is that it entails long hours, and lots of night-time door-to-door canvassing. Should anyone be interested, there are two addresses that he may write to:-

Mr. F.J.E. Oliver,  
District Manager,  
Wesleyan & General Assurance Society,  
14, St. Werberg Street,  
Chester.

or: Mr. R.H. Hunt,  
Divisional Manager,  
Wesleyan & General Assurance Society,  
4, Highfield Road,  
Edgbaston,  
Birmingham, 15.

Enquirers are warned that this is a possible means of employment, not the promise of the job.

The First Baha'i Public Meeting to be held in Horsham

Attention of the friends in the South of England is drawn to this event to be held on Saturday, 11th Aug. 1962 at 3.30 p.m. in The Women's Institute Market Hall, Carfax, Horsham. The meeting which is sponsored by the Brighton friends in support of the lone believer in Horsham, will be addressed by Mrs. Meherangiz Munsiff.

ECONOMY

The National Assembly has urged us to exercise economy wherever possible in the carrying out of our administrative work, particularly in the use of the telephone. The amount charged to the National Fund for this one item alone is colossal. We regret, therefore, that, except in cases of great urgency, we cannot accept calls on a reverse-charges basis.

FIRESIDES

Will Local Assembly Secretaries please inform the N.T.C. which day of the week regular firesides are held, as this information facilitates the planning of teaching tours.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES

19-Day Feasts:      1 Aug: Perfection      8 Sep: Might  
                         20 Aug: Names              27 Sep: Will

50th Anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Visit:

to Liverpool - 12 December, 1962  
to Edinburgh - 5 January, 1963

Weekend Schools

4/6 Aug: Carlisle - at Dalston Hall  
1/2 Sep: Edinburgh  
8/9 " Cardiff - at YMCA Hostel, Rhoose  
15/16 " York's "Annual Lost Weekend"  
30 " Burnley - One Day School  
13/14 Oct: Bradford  
20 " Motherwell One Day School  
17/18 Nov: Norwich

Teaching Conference:      5/6 January, 1963

Some Regular Firesides

Sunday      - Bournemouth, Canterbury  
Monday      - Reading, Romford, Cambridge, Inverness  
Tuesday      - Salisbury, Oxford, Watford, Bristol  
Wednesday   - Winchester, Portsmouth, Brighton, York,  
                 Nottingham, Ellesmere Pt., Cheadle,  
                 Sutton Coldfield, Liverpool, Peterboro'  
Thursday      - Ellesmere Port, Southport, Manchester  
Friday        - Twyford, Hove, Eccles, Chester  
Saturday      - Kings Lynn