

THE HOME FRONT

A NEWS BULLETIN

No. 36.

September 1963.

"O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stirreth at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll."

"O people of Baha! Ye are the breezes of spring that are wafted over the world. Through you We have adorned the world of being with the ornament of the knowledge of the Most Merciful. Through you the countenance of the world hath been wreathed in smiles, and the brightness of His light shone forth. Cling ye to the Cord of steadfastness, in such wise that all vain imaginings may utterly vanish. Speed ye forth from the horizon of power, in the name of your Lord, the Unconstrained, and announce unto His servants, with wisdom and eloquence, the tidings of this Cause, whose splendor hath been shed upon the world of being."

Baha'u'llah - "Advent of Divine
Justice," Page 63.

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

N. T. C. LETTER

Beloved friends,

"Forward to 1964."

The days are fleeting by and all too soon we will be on the threshold of the year which will bring to us, by Ridvan 1964, the detailed plan of expansion of the whole Baha'i Community prepared by the Universal House of Justice, after close consultation with the Hands of the Cause, in an examination of the vast range of Baha'i activity and growth.

The day for the launching of the plan cannot come quickly enough if we have achieved the objectives of deepening and consolidation in both our individual and community life. But the remaining months which are left will not suffice if we fail to "Gird up the loins of our endeavour;" if we fail to become selfless in the path of service; if we fail as a community in these Isles, so richly blessed by the two visits of the Master and that within whose shores lie the precious remains of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, to become the best epitome of a unity expressed in an individual and community life wholly dedicated to teaching the Cause of God, and, in this, emulating the Master who without fear or favour, gave of this wondrous gift to all.

How sweet have been the fruits of endeavour garnered by the British Community. With infinite patience, untiring effort and unerring guidance, Shoghi Effendi drew us step by step along the way to the ultimate victory celebrated by the Most Great Jubilee. Even so, teaching on a scale not yet experienced in these Isles will alone ensure that the plan of the Universal House of Justice will be launched from a firm foundation.

There is already evidence of an increased tempo of teaching throughout the length and breadth of the land, stemming from the bounty flowing from the Celebrations of the Most Great Jubilee. This must continue, with an ever increasing tempo, during the few remaining months that lie ahead and culminate in the establishment of active and firmly grounded Assemblies and a vitality in community life which, because it will be divinely impelled, cannot but have effect upon our fellow citizens.

All must teach, it is an inescapable duty enjoined upon each one of us by the Pen of the Blessed Beauty, and it behoves us, as reiterated by Him, not to have regard to our weakness and frailty, but to arise to teach, each in ways which will be opened to us, if we fulfil the spiritual conditions laid upon us, and we will be aided in our endeavour. All must teach; all can teach, and in this lies the wonder and mystery of our gathering together at the Nineteen Day Feast. Here is our point of unity; here is where our main and prayerful consultation should be the devising of ways and means to propagate the life giving message of Baha'u'llah to the waiting peoples. Here is a spirit of loving fellowship, our individual efforts should merge into a community effort. It is here where, as individuals, we begin to grow and develop all that is latent within us in our becoming the very embodiments of that unity which is the pivotal message of Baha'u'llah in this Dispensation, the light of which is so powerful, states Baha'u'llah, that it can illumine "the whole of the human race."

As your National Teaching Committee, during this year of preparation, we seek to serve you. We are ready to assist in accordance with whatever need is presented to us. We can do nothing except we have your love, your prayers and knowledge of your teaching plans and community activity.

The years under the unerring guidance of Shoghi Effendi, which culminated in the initiation and the achievement of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade, have left us with a rich heritage of experience upon which to draw, sufficient for our needs; and in moving towards Ridvan 1964, we would share this experience with you. Above all, we seek to assist in the continuous evolution of the twin processes of pioneering and teaching.

Let us go forward in unity and with confidence that we shall be prepared for whatever plans are set for us by the Universal House of Justice.

Yours, in His Service,

NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE.

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FIRESIDES FOR ALL

We all know that a Fireside held in our home is a happy and successful way of teaching the Cause of Baha'u'llah; each host radiating his own atmosphere of love and friendliness. But many ask "How do we begin?" "What do we do next?" Maybe these notes will help to answer the questions.

Fireside evenings can be arranged on three broad lines, each one a means of teaching the Cause - the choice rests with the individual host.

First - invite friends, not Baha'is, for an evening's chat, music, etc., during which time the Faith may not be mentioned, and here we quote from Ruhiyyih Khanum's pamphlet, "Success in Teaching" -

"To teach is to a great extent the art of listening, if you will listen to the one you want to teach and find out what he wants and needs to hear, then you can start your treatment by giving him from our teaching the right answer and the right remedy."

"How often did 'Abdu'l-Baha greet people with "Are you well? Are you happy?" His loving interest reached out and surrounded them like sunshine. The sincere concern for, and interest in, the person you confront is the greatest teaching technique in the whole world, and nothing will ever surpass it."

This is a wonderful way to build a link of sympathy between you and your non-Baha'i friends. You get to know them, and, at a later stage, can often answer their questions before they are asked.

The important thing to remember is that by Firesides in your home you are building a bridge of sympathy between you and your friends, and the building of the bridge is the first vital necessity in teaching the Cause.

As the beloved Guardian has written:-

"Let him remember the example set by 'Abdu'l-Baha, and his constant admonitions to shower such kindness upon the seeker, and exemplify to such a degree the spirit of the teachings he hopes to instill into him, that the recipient will be spontaneously impelled to identify himself with the Cause embodying such teachings."

Secondly - when a non-Baha'i has expressed an interest in the Cause and you decide to invite him to your home for the express purpose of discussing the Faith. You may, or may not invite other Baha'is, depending on your judgment of your friend's needs and the best way to assist him in his search.

This is where we must pray for guidance and use our wisdom in deciding the best course of action.

During these evenings, it is always wise to use the writings of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha during the course of the discussions. Whether to use one in preference to the other again calls for wisdom, so much depends on the character of your friends and their personal needs. It is a wonderful experience to see the light of joy and understanding on your friend's face when a particular passage has been read in answer to his query.

Always remember that your friend is entering a new world and you must be most gentle in your unfolding of the teachings of Baha'u'llah.

Thirdly - your friend has perhaps reached the stage when he should meet other Baha'is, as a group. In this case, you will seek the advice and guidance of your Local Spiritual Assembly, who may hold a regular "Community Fireside" to which other Baha'is are invited as speakers, possibly to speak on a particular aspect of the Faith. There is also opportunity at these Firesides for open discussion and questions. Here also several non-Baha'is may be invited, their different questions often leading to a most exciting and instructive evening for all.

When the Local Spiritual Assembly arranges a Fireside, then, of course, the details are dealt with by the Assembly in session. Naturally, if your friend expresses a desire to visit your home again, for further opportunity of more intimate discussion or deepening in knowledge of the Cause, then you should fulfil his desire. This is a matter for individual decision.

Wherever possible, it is good to tell of your teaching work at the 19-Day Feast, so that all may share in your work with their prayers.

We should all remember that if we are living in accordance with the teaching of Baha'u'llah and the supreme example set by 'Abdu'l-Baha, then any friendly action, conversation on the street corner, in a shop, in the ordinary course of our day, is teaching the Cause of God.

Firesides are so often the first definite step along the road to the City of Certitude.

TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATION.

The Administrative Order is fundamentally different from anything that any Prophet has previously established, inasmuch as Baha'u'llah has Himself revealed its principles, established its institutions, appointed the person to interpret His Word and conferred the necessary authority on the body designed to supplement and apply His legislative ordinances. Therein lies the secret of its strength, its fundamental distinction, and the guarantee against disintegration and schism.

The Baha'i Administrative Order, as it expands and consolidates itself, will come to be regarded not only as the nucleus but as the very pattern of the New World Order, destined to embrace, in the fullness of time, the whole of mankind. It is the sole framework of the Baha'i commonwealth of the future which will be at once the instrument and the guardian of the Most Great Peace announced by its Author.

Should we build up the Administrative World Order to a point of absolute perfection, but, at the same time, allow it to be hampered or disconnected from the channels within, through which channels the Holy Spirit of the Cause pours forth, we would have nothing more than a perfected body out of touch with and cut off from the finer promptings of the soul or spirit. If, on the other hand, the influxes and goings forth of the Spirit are scattered, diffused and subjected wholly to the more or less imperfect guidance and interpretation of individual believers, lacking both the wisdom secured through consultation, and also the lights of real unity which shine through consultative action and obedience thereto - a disordered and disorganised activity would be witnessed, which would but dimly

reflect the divine purpose for this age, which is no less than the establishment of the reign of divine love, justice and wisdom in the world, under and in conformity to the Divine Law.

SHOGHI EFFENDI -

from Introduction to

"Principles of Baha'i Administration."

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B Blessed be God, his glory be praised
A As we adore Him, our hearts be raised.
H Heaven be ours, some day we pray,
A As God has guided us this day.
U Unite our hearts, that we may share
L Loving friendship, everywhere.
L Let us thank God, each day we beseech,
A Accepting Baha'u'llah, and all He did teach.
H Happy are we, and always shall try

To cherish the Faith, as a sincere Baha'i.

Mrs. Mary Bowers.

W H A T ' S O N ?

We would like to use the Home Front as a medium for exchanging ideas in teaching - telling others of successes and special events. Will you all please help by sending a note of such doings in your ears? London have sent us a copy of their Newsletter which we found most helpful and informative - we hope they will continue to do this, and perhaps other Assemblies who issue one will also remember the Home Front Editor when circulating theirs.

It seems that the British community has hardly stopped to draw breath since the World Congress - taking full advantage of the publicity, visiting speakers and general enthusiasm. Cardiff followed very quickly with a Youth Week-end (and have another S.Wales event at the beginning of September.) The Hainsworths, in Yorkshire, were a great help and inspiration - the four Bolivian Indians endeared themselves in the hearts of the friends in and around Manchester during a notable week's visit - and Mrs. Bobo aroused interest wherever she went. Then followed a memorable Lyme Park Week-end School, and two most exciting and successful Summer Schools.

Picnics and outings have also been a feature of this summer - 112 happy people - a mixture of Baha'is and their friends from London, visited Brighton, which not only proved a very enjoyable event, but gained publicity in the local paper. Another such 'mass' outing from London was made to Portsmouth, when 38 visitors attended a Public meeting addressed by our dear friend Soheil Bushrui. Cardiff's trip took 21 friends to the Malvern Hills and the Wye Valley. Peterborough also have been holding picnics. Once at the farm of Ted and Alecia Cardell, and more recently in Cambridge by the river.

These have become area occasions, with strong support from King's Lynn and Cambridge. On both occasions about 40 people came.

We hear on the "grape vine" of active Youth groups in Oxford, S. Wales and London. Could we hear, too, from Manchester about their Youth activities? (Youth Committees please note - WE WANT NEWS.)

It seems too, that this has been a particularly romantic summer - with Baha'i weddings up and down the country - too numerable to mention in detail - but we take this opportunity of wishing the newly-weds a long and happy life.

And now to the future - plans for the autumn and winter teaching work are being made everywhere - we have heard that Reading is inviting friends to a series of Short Talks at the George Hotel every Thursday during October - Romford are holding their tree-planting ceremony on October 5th, followed by a One-Day School on the 6th - London are arranging special Public meetings in areas outside Knightsbridge - Ealing and Barnet being among the first. Brighton are planning a mass proclamation during the month of October, with four public meetings at the Royal Pavilion, and special advertising. Week-end Schools are being planned in many places - see dates on the back page of this issue - and we would draw your special attention to Dalston Hall Area Week-end School on October 12th/13th. We very much regret that the Avon Tyrell Week-end School in November has had to be postponed - we found it too inaccessible for a winter week-end. If any of the friends know of a suitable place for a Southern Area Week-end School - somewhere which will provide accommodation for up to 75 people (of all ages), please let the N.T.C. know at once. We badly need a venue for a School in the south.

Lastly, will you please keep us in touch with your doings by sending items of news to the Editor - Elizabeth Chapman, at 36 Park Town, Oxford.

C A L E N D A R

Holy Day - Anniversary of the Birth of the Bab -
20th October, 1963.

19-Day Feasts - September 27 - Will
October 16 - Knowledge
November 4 - Power

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Teaching Conference - 11th/12th January, 1964.

World Religion Day - 19th January, 1964.

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Week-end & Day Schools.

Northern Area - Dalston Hall - 12/13 October.

September	8	-	Cardiff
"	21/22	-	Sheffield
October	5/6	-	Salisbury, Sutton Coldfield and Romford.
"	19	-	Scotland (possibly in Perth).
"	26/27	-	Winchester.
November	24	-	Cambridge.
December	14/15	-	Leicester.

Torquay and S. Wales are planning a Week-end School in the early spring and there will also be another Dalston Hall Week-end on 15th/16th February. Eccles and Liverpool are planning Schools in the near future - we would like to hear their dates as soon as possible.

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N.T.C. Meetings

Sept. 28/29

Dec. 28/29.

Nov. 2/3

Feb. 15/16.

Dec. 7/8

Mar. 14/15. April 11/12