

"Blessed is the spot..... where mention of God hath been made"

TEACHING NEWS BULLETIN

ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL TEACHING COMMITTEE

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THE STORY OF GLASGOW

The faith, perseverance, and sacrifice which have characterised the work in this Goal Town are inspiring reminders of the true spirit of pioneering. With but one Glaswegian Baha'i, Mrs. McKechnie, to help her, Ada Williams, of Manchester, has persistently pitted her spiritual strength against the conservatism and religious orthodoxy of the Clyde-side. Not only has she willingly given all of her time, energy, and resources to the work in that city, but she has also been successful in stimulating the interest of a considerable group of contacts who are already attending the six-week intensive teaching course.

Every morning at 4.50 a.m., Ada rises to travel 46 miles to her work. In blitzed Glasgow, her bed is two chairs pushed together in a contact's sitting room. To save precious time, she eats a meagre cafe supper each evening and immediately sets out for the study-course or to visit contacts, often not arriving "home" until almost mid-night.

The struggle to make contacts has not been an easy one. Newspaper advertisements, which are very expensive in this town, have reaped but little response. It is almost solely by the personal approach that the Faith is being spread. Soon a trial distribution of dignified printed hand-bills will be made among the friends of the Baha'is and their contacts in the hope that greater interest will be aroused in this way.

Through successful efforts to obtain the use of a public hall for the meetings, the way was opened for official correspondence between the N.T.C. and the Glasgow Corporation, thus making the Faith known to the local authorities.

The Edinburgh Community, acting as parent Assembly, has already given support to Glasgow by sending Dick Backwell as visiting teacher for the first week of the course and by several of the friends going through for the opening reception and the devotional meeting, at which Dr. Wm. Johnston played several selections on the piano. Nellie Winstanley, of Manchester, spent her holidays in Glasgow helping with the teaching work and bringing loving support, news and cheer to Ada.

We know that the selfless dedication being demonstrated in Glasgow will surely not only attract the pioneer help Ada so badly needs but the confirmations of the Holy Spirit which will ultimately win the new Assembly.

THE REMAINING VIRGIN TERRITORY

In Belfast, we have one pioneer, Ursula Newman, of Dublin, and one native believer, Robert Sloane. Using the work of last year as the foundation, the intensive teaching course has been inaugurated here. Grace Watson of Manchester, choosing to help in the teaching field instead of attending Summer School, spent her holidays last month in Belfast, helping to start the course and to bring fresh inspiration to the friends.

The reports from the Group, however, indicate that the struggle is a arduous one. Attendance at the meetings has fallen off to almost nothing. The work is going through a most difficult stage. Your special prayers are most urgently requested for this remaining Virgin Territory.

HELP FROM OTHER LANDS

Several of the Communities have recently received what is, surely, historic teaching service from our beloved Baha'i friends from the east. From Liverpool, Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, and Edinburgh have flowed enthusiastic reports of the visit of Rashid Hakimian of Bombay, India, who has for three weeks been giving Baha'is and contacts alike fresh inspiration and love of the Cause. His deep devotion to the central Figures of our Faith and his perpetual optimism about the success of the teaching work prompted one believer to remark that he should be sent as a regular tonic for all pioneers.

Two of our Persian believers from Northampton, Shomais Alai and Nura Faridian, spent their holidays in Brighton and St. Ives, respect-

ively. There they made every effort to meet with the friends and to help by speaking at meetings and fireside.

In Oxford, Sadegh Mehreban, visiting Baha'i from Tereran, Persia, has met with the believers on several occasions. His reports of the teaching plan in his homeland and the activities of the youth there were of great interest to the friends and contacts.

"VIE YE IN THE CAUSE OF GOD!"

The N.S.A. has announced that all new Local Assemblies formed by February 1st, 1950, will be allowed to send delegates to the triumphant concluding Convention of the Six Year Plan, Ridvan 1950. With this added incentive for winning the 10 Goal Towns at the earliest possible date, the Groups and adopting Assemblies are already rising to the challenge of "Vie ye in the Cause of God!" Which Assembly will be the first to bring its adopted Goal Town to number nine believers?

The London Community, having adopted Brighton, recently held a special meeting with all of the friends from that town, together with Claire Gung, resident teacher from Cardiff. Plans were discussed for making contacts and for visiting teachers to give support to the work there. The London Assembly has given a generous gift of literature to the Brighton Group for use in their teaching activities.

In Liverpool the teaching work is going forward with increased vitality. Not only has the Manchester Community provided speakers and supporting audience, but regular consultation meetings have been arranged between the Group and the Adoption Committee of the Assembly, when the teaching needs of the Goal Town are carefully considered. In conjunction with the intensive six-week course now being carried on in Liverpool, the Manchester friends are arranging a special Brains Trust when contacts will be encouraged to ask their questions. The Liverpool believers are meeting with their contacts each day of the week, either for the regular classes or for rambles, picnics and informal discussions.

Oxford has been adopted by Birmingham, Sheffield by Nottingham, and Blackpool by Blackburn. News of these activities will be printed in later Bulletins. With this new concentration of spiritual and practical assistance from neighbouring Local Assemblies, the Goal Towns will, we feel sure, flourish as never before.

THE KEY-NOTE IS PRAYER

The Guardian has often times emphasised the importance of prayer in the activities of confirming new believers. The N.S.A. has called on all of us to join in prayers for the work of this final year of the Plan. And now from Goal Towns and Assemblies in all parts of the country comes the news that of all the types of meetings being held, those best attended and most successful are the devotional programmes. In Liverpool six contacts bought prayer books after one such meeting and requested that all meetings include prayers. In Nottingham the devotional has been adopted as a regular part of their activities. In Northampton, the L.S.A. has inserted the entire Prayer for All Nations in the local newspaper. The key-note to our teaching success this year is surely reliance upon God and continual prayer for His confirmations.

GROUP HARMONY AND PROPER PROCEDURE ESSENTIAL

The Assembly Development Committee has stressed the fact that the firm foundations of a Local Assembly are built from the time that the first Group is formed in that town. It is, therefore, very important that the members of the Group carry on the Feasts and Anniversaries in the way stressed by Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha, and that the Group Business meetings are conducted in the true spirit of Baha'i consultation. The N.T.C. re-affirms the underlying principles thus indicated by the A.D.C. and is anxious to do everything possible to promote the proper functioning of all Groups.

NEWS FROM LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

In Edinburgh, the friends are actively co-operating to open that town to the Crusade for World Government. Through the efforts of Eric Manton, pioneer from Northampton to Edinburgh, one of the first Crusaders in Scotland, Dick Backwell was invited to speak at the first Public Meeting held by that organisation in Edinburgh. Ethel Dawe, of Australia, has been visiting in that city recently and has been a great stimulus to the teaching work. Eighteen people attended the Public Meeting at which she spoke, and she extended her stay in Edinburgh to help make contacts through a United Nations Association party she had been invited to attend.

Philip Hainworth, of Oxford, recently spoke on the Faith at a Meeting of the Manchester International Club. He was the last speaker in a weekly series on the religions of the world. ©Afnan Library Trust, 2023-