

The  
L O N D O N   B A H A ' I   B U L L E T I N

Baha'i Centre, 46 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1.

SUPPLEMENT to No.8, May 1938.

ANNUAL REPORTS - RIDVAN 1938.

THE SECRETARY'S REPORT.

The year now ended has been a year of ebb and flow. Our task is great, in the true sense of that word. As pioneers in a Kingdom which Prophets have suffered and martyrs have died for, we have to toil very, very hard. Brick by brick we have to raise an Edifice. What can be more glorious than assisting to build the world to be? The world as we know it around us will consume itself. The promise of Baha'u'llah is crystal clear. His shall be the Power and the Dominion.

Eighteen months ago the Guardian sent us the following message :

"Aside from the fact that London is the heart of the British Empire, and as such commands an importance which few other centres in the world can equal and should consequently be raised to the status of one of the leading outposts of the Faith, it should be stated that now that the Administrative Order has at last been firmly established and is being increasingly consolidated in that centre, it is the supreme obligation of all the believers, both in Great Britain and in other European countries to assist by every means in hastening this internal development and growth."

Should we realize the full significance of these words, we would be a long way nearer to our goal and destiny.

The Assembly is happy to report that during the year three friends have joined the London Community: Miss Molly Brown (on coming of age), Mrs. Edith Millar and Miss Zara Warman.

Three dear friends have in the course of the year answered the Call and passed into the Abha' Kingdom: Miss H. I. J. Cather, Miss Gillman and Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper. The pioneering work of Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper will forever shine in full glory. Hers was the honour of being the first Baha'i in London.

Miss Claudia Aldridge has left the London Community for the time being and gone to America.

Mr. Kiyani of Tihiran, Iran, came to London last September, and he is now a very welcome addition to our numbers.

Our visitors during the year have been Miss Alexander, who brought us invaluable messages from the Guardian; Mrs. Routh of Australia, whom we were very glad to see among us again and whose prized help at the Centre will be dearly cherished; Miss Rena Gordon of Montreal, who stayed with us for a number of months; Mr. Emeric Sala of Montreal on a flying visit, Mr. Naimi of Tihiran, whom we have had the privilege of meeting before in 1934; Mrs. Lutfullah Hakim of Tihiran, whose husband is so well-known to many of us; Mr. Abbas Dehkan, and Mr. Jalal Farrukh, who is a student at Exeter, both of Shiraz, Iran. We are delighted to have met them all.



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Mrs. Romer, whose memorable services to the Cause in London need no mention, was with us for a few months in 1937. We were very sorry to lose her again.

Mr. and Mrs. Bishop and Madame Gita Orlova returned to America in the course of the year. Their dynamic work in this country can never be forgotten.

Two series of public meetings were held at Caxton Hall in May to June and in September to October 1937. Mrs. Bishop addressed most of them.

A disappointing feature of our work has been the small attendance at Sunday meetings. The growth and the consolidation of the Institution of the Nineteen-Day Feast, however, has been highly encouraging. Friends have realized more and more the intrinsic value of this divinely-ordained Institution. Attendance has appreciably increased.

A step forward was taken in a partial observance of the Intercalary Days. Baba'u'llah commands feasting, rejoicing and charitable works during these days that precede the month of fasting. The Centre was kept open during those evenings, and a number came to partake of fellowship. A beautiful spirit pervaded the Centre.

Friends have made more use and better use of the Centre during the past year. The Spiritual Assembly has consistently attempted to make the Centre a home for the London Community - and a home is a place where we go whenever we are tired and weary.

Mrs. Cranmer has gallantly maintained her Fireside Meetings. Mr. and Mrs. Disney, who attend Mrs. Cranmer's meetings, held a fireside gathering in their home last December. Twentyfive people were present.

Feasts and Anniversaries have been regularly observed, and attendance has been highly satisfactory. Both on May 23rd and March 21st, we were crowded out.

A word on the Baha'i Theatre Group. This Group will present "The Rector of Hallowdeane", a challenging and original play by Mary Basil Hall, on Sunday, May 1st. Mrs. Basil Hall has greatly assisted the Theatre Group, for which help and persistent encouragement the Group is abidingly grateful. Mr. McArthur Gordon, who is a professional producer, has given his services to the Theatre Group - a magnanimous gesture. Mrs. Editha Simonds has in many ways generously helped and supported the Theatre Group, for which the Group feels deepest gratitude. To Mr. St. Barbe Baker the Group also owes sincere thanks for the use of the headquarters of the Men of the Trees (2 Jay Mews) for rehearsals.

The Publicity Committee sent the following resolution to the Assembly in November last year, which was approved and recorded :-

"No publicity campaign could be profitably undertaken until the body of the Cause in London could be presented to the outside world as a solid, healthy and vital organism. The work at the moment should be done quietly. Work by individuals should be encouraged and supplemented. Fireside meetings ought to be held and augmented."

A limited exhibition has been kept at the Centre since the end of February. Lady Blomfield has kindly lent a number of invaluable objects, which the friends have greatly appreciated.

The Assembly sent a speaker to Letchworth on the invitation of the Treasurer of the Letchworth Theosophical Lodge. The meeting that heard the Baha'i talk was convened by Theosophists, Spiritualists and Unitarians. It was an animated meeting and great interest was shown. As a result the Assembly has made a present of two



Baha'i books : "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" and "The Promise of All Ages" to the library of the Letchworth Theosophical Lodge.

Lady Blomfield has addressed a session of the Society for the Study of Religions on the Baha'i Cause. Sir Denison Ross was in the Chair. Lady Blomfield's talk induced lively discussion.

A Dinner was held on December 13th at Linden Restaurant, Notting Hill Gate, in honour of Mr. W. J. Grant, the Editor of the "Rangoon Times". More than twenty attended. It was indeed a happy and profitable occasion.

Mr. Grant is a friend of the Cause and has thrown his paper open to Baha'i articles. He gave an address at the Centre on February 2nd on the Caste System of India and Brahmanism, which was well attended and highly appreciated.

The issue of a monthly Bulletin, started last October, has passed the stage of experiment. It has proved to be beneficial and has gradually assumed larger proportions.

May Baha'u'llah assist and lead us to unprecedented triumphs in the year we now inaugurate, and may London rise to the status of a prominent centre of the Cause in the five continents.

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#### TREASURER'S REPORT.

The past year has something to its credit and yet prospects are not so good as a year ago. However, if we are willing to sacrifice ourselves, we can rest assured confirmation of the Spirit will descend upon us and the Cause will stride forward. The Fund is a reflection of the virility and stability of the Community. If contributions are regular, then it means the community is steady. As the years have passed by, the Community has grown stronger, though poorer financially. It is not the amount we own as a body, but the spirit of love and sacrifice and the consciousness of unity which is our wealth. It is our effort that Baha'u'llah seeks.

The expected income for the coming year is only £90. We shall need £120 minimum, to cover the expenses of the Centre to which we are contracted until September 1940. This sum means nothing beyond quarterly bills. Our quarterly expenses in the past year have totalled £37. This has included the cost of public meetings at Caxton Hall for two series in May-June and September-October respectively. Our total receipts for the year were £162.15.6. and expenditure £160.14.4. leaving a balance of £2.1.2. This must be kept to pay bills not yet come in to the amount of about £2. so we are just solvent. Last year we had a deficit of £5.2.6., which shows we have improved our financial stability.

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#### TEACHING COMMITTEE REPORT.

The chief event sponsored by the Teaching Committee during the year has been the formation of Study Classes, at which Baha'is may go deeper into the Teaching. These classes were begun owing to the initiative of Mrs. George and were at first held at her home in the form of fireside meetings. Later they were held in more formal fashion at the Centre. "Some Answered Questions" have been exhaustively studied and throughout the classes have been of the greatest help.



## REPORT OF THE WOMEN'S SERVICE COMMITTEE.

At the beginning of the Baha'i Year the sum in hand was £16.5.3.

May. An appeal for clothes was made, since when some useful garments have been received and distributed to patients at Sister Challis's Nursing Home at Broadstone and to other persons.

July. A suggestion that chocolates might be sold at the Baha'i Centre and the profit placed to the W.S.C. fund was approved by the Assembly. A small profit is made on each box.

September. The annual collection for the maintenance of Miss Olive Hockley's wireless set was made and the subscriptions totalled the sum of £1.6.6.

Financial assistance to the amount of £6. was granted to a Baha'i friend who needed dental treatment.

October. Flowers were placed in the cabins of Mrs. Romer, Mrs. Bishop and Mrs. Hellyer when they sailed for America.

December. Flowers and letters of condolence were sent to the relatives of Miss Cather and Miss Gillman.

February. A box was placed at the Centre for contributions during the Intercalary Day and £1.6.6. was received by the W.S.C. Gifts of £1 and 10/- were sent to Baha'i friends by the W.S.C. during this period.

March. The Thavian Players gave their services on behalf of the W.S.C. and three one-act plays were performed at the Millicent Fawcett Hall on March 29th. As a result the W.S.C. fund benefited to the extent of £4.1.3.

During the year many letters and gifts of flowers and fruit were sent to sick friends. A weekly paper is sent to Miss B. Haynes, who has been in a sanatorium since October 1936. Occasional gifts of Baha'i books were sent to Miss Gillman during her illness.

A list of hotels with moderate charges has been collected in the hope that it may prove useful to visiting Baha'is.

The sum in hand at the close of the year is £13.15.0.

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## YOUTH GROUP REPORT.

During the year the Youth Group has continued its efforts to interest young people in the principles of the Baha'i Cause. Regular meetings have been held, at which young speakers have dealt with the various aspects of the Teaching and also of Baha'i history and a good number of new contacts have been made.

During the series of public meetings held at Caxton Hall last autumn, the Youth Group did its part by providing the speakers for one of the meetings, which took the form of a symposium with five short talks. This meeting was very well attended.

The Youth Group also held a public meeting of its own on February 27th, when, in conjunction with Baha'i Youth all over the world, a meeting was held with the special object of interesting young people. There was a good crowd there, the room being quite full, and a number of people who were present have been to other meetings since and have shown a lot of interest.

The Youth Group has also kept up its activities on the social side and has held parties, whist drives and, in the summer, picnics, which have served the double purpose of providing an opportunity for Baha'is to have a good time together and also of enabling us to entertain friends and people who have shown interest in the Principles.

A number of members of the Youth Group were also at the Summer School, either for the whole of the time or part of it, and one or two of them gave talks there.

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