

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

January, 1930.

"Do you know in what Day you are living?"

"Do you realize in what dispensation you are alive?"

"Have you not heard in the Holy Scriptures that at the consummation of the ages there shall appear a Day which is the Sun of all past days?"

"This is the Day in which the inhabitants of all the world shall enter under the shelter of the Word of God."

"This is the Day in which war and contention shall be forgotten. This is the Day in which nations and governments will enter into an eternal bond of amity and conciliation."

"The world has become a new world. The darkness of night which has enveloped humanity is passing. A new Day has dawned. Divine susceptibilities and capacities are developing in human souls under the training of the Sun of Truth."

"This century is the fulfillment of the Promised Century."

WORDS OF ABDU'L BAHÁ.

"I have placed in thee the essence of My Light: Therefore depend upon it." "My Love is in thee: Seek, and thou shalt find Me near." (Baha'u'llah).

DEAR FRIENDS,

Since our last News Letter was circulated the old year has passed, and before we advance any further we would wish one another a "happy New Year"—happy—in the deepest, fullest sense of the word. The Divine Messengers have all taught us that true happiness comes from within. "The star of happiness is in every heart, we must remove the clouds so that it may twinkle radiantly." Abdu'l Baha teaches us that "the trials which beset our every step; all our sorrow, pain, shame and grief, are born in the world of matter; whereas the spiritual Kingdom never causes sadness. A man living with his thoughts in this Kingdom knows perpetual joy. The ill all flesh is heir to do not pass him by, but they only touch the surface of his life, the depths are calm and serene." "A Baha'i must be happy, for the blessings of God are bestowed upon him." So may we all "fix our eyes upon the Everlasting Radiance," and find 1930 to be the happiest year we have yet spent.

London.

A young people's study circle has been formed in London to meet once a fortnight. The Baha'i Cause lays great stress on individual responsibility. Teachers may help to engage the attention at first, but no one can enter into the spirit of the movement except by real study and personal experience. Jeremiah (Chapter xxxi. 31) speaking of the New Covenant to be made by God with man in the latter days says: "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest." We hope that enquirers will be encouraged to seek for themselves the hidden treasures of Reality and make them their own. These meetings are not intended to be debates for critical and controversial discussion, but rather an opportunity given that teachings may be explored and explanations interchanged.

An Esperanto class has also been formed which is important in view of the fact that the International Esperanto Congress will be held at Oxford this year.

We have received a visit from Mr. Walter B. Guy, of U.S.A. on his return from Haifa. He spoke at a Wednesday Meeting, giving a description of the Celebration of the Passing of Abdu'l Baha, at which he was present on November 28th. It was pleasant to welcome this well known contributor to the Star of the West,

whose simple sincerity made his words come home to all who heard him.

On December 11th, the Rev. G. Coverdale Sharpe, of the Free Christian Church Croydon, spoke by invitation at Walmer House. His subject was Spiritual Brotherhood. On December 29th, at the Highgate Hill Unitarian Christian Church, the Rev. Griffith Sparham gave an address on the Baha'i Movement, under the title of 'The Religion of Reconciliation.' He dwelt on the Principles set forth by Baha'u'llah and at a subsequent discussion the Baha'is who attended were asked many searching questions.

It is hoped that the Youth Movement of this congregation may be brought in touch with our young people's study circle.

We look forward to welcoming Miss Drake Wright shortly, on her return from Haifa.

In a letter recently received from Haifa, Ruhi Afnan writes, "Now that the Baha'i centre has been transferred to better locality we hope it will attract more attention and add to the number of attendants at the Meetings. We should, however, bear in mind that, no matter how important the hall may be, the talks given and the unity manifested is of far greater consequence.

Shoghi Effendi has a special affection for the English friends for he has been in their midst and knows most of them personally, and he therefore wishes and prays fervently that their numbers may increase, and that they may render distinguished service to the Cause. Please assure them all of his prayers, and extend to them his loving greetings.

Shoghi Effendi also adds—"I rejoice to hear of the new centre in London, I will pray for its extension and growth, and for the success of your manifold activities.

Manchester.

A meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sugar on the evening of December 21st, when Mr. E. T. Hall spoke upon "Christmas and the Newer Glad Tidings."

After pointing out that the real date of the nativity of Jesus is unknown, Mr. Hall went on to say that the latter end of December was chosen by the Christian Church because it is the time of the beginning of the return of the sun from the Winter Solstice. It is therefore symbolical of the beginning of the return of the Sun of Righteousness into Man's life. That is to say it is symbolical of the coming of the Saviour.

The spirit of the festival is the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men."

The spiritual precedes the natural. This glorious Song of the Angels was to become the Song of Man. It takes time to accomplish each phase of Creation. Many centuries and two Dispensations

were needed to bring about a full realisation of the nature of "peace on earth"; the Dispensation of Jesus and the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah. These two Dispensations are the two fitting expressions of the one Sublime Will of God.

The Gospel (Glad Tidings) of Jesus is to prepare the heart of individual man with faith in God, in Christ, and in Spiritual Love. The Gospel of Baha'u'llah, based upon that of Jesus adds to it the final Principles and Laws of World-Unity, without which there cannot possibly be peace upon earth.

The first phase is therefore individual salvation from strife through spiritual love of God and mankind. The second phase is public, or social salvation from strife through legislation based upon that spiritual love. The first phase may be summarised as "Faith"; the second as "Social Righteousness"; both based upon Divine Love. That which is in the heart has become the world's view of life. The peace within has become the peace without.

The second, the Baha'i phase, is the second phase of Christianity and is essential to the perfection of its purpose. It is what Christ meant when He said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth is come—whom I will send unto you from the Father—He will guide you into all truth."

The spirit of Christmas animated the meeting which included seven young people whose ages ranged from six to seventeen. May we not hope that some at least of these young people will, by the Divine Grace, in their turn pass on to their contemporaries the glorious truth of the Newer Glad Tidings.

Bournemouth.

The Bournemouth Assembly send loving greetings to all friends everywhere. They continue to meet as often as possible at Bournemouth or Broadstone. Frequent gatherings of young people also meet at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Forrest, Sway, to study the Baha'i teachings, and much interest is shown.

Special New Year messages from the Baha'i writings were read at the weekly meeting at "Rizwan," on Sunday, January 12th, when a happy gathering of friends assembled.

His Holiness Baha u'llah has revoiced and re-established the quintessence of the teachings of all the Prophets. . . . These holy words and teachings are the remedy for the body-politic, the divine prescription and real cure for the disorders which afflict the world."

ABDU'L BAHA.