

# **News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.**

**December, 1930.**

**"The most splendid fruit of the tree of Knowledge is this exalted Word . . . .**

**Ye are all fruits of one tree, and leaves of one branch. Glory is not his who loves his own country, but glory is his who loves his kind."**

**(Baha'u'llah).**



"O Son of Man! Magnify my Cause, that I may take manifest unto thee the secret of my Greatness, and shine upon thee with Everlasting Light."—BAHA'U'LLAH.

DEAR FRIENDS,

By the time this letter is circulated, the Christmas season will be upon us, and the old greeting, "A Happy Christmas," will be upon many lips. It is the season of good-will, of peace and harmony; but it passes by, and still wars rage, and nations rise up against nation, and strife and turmoil prevail. Only those who have seen the "Glory of God" can realise that we are living in the New Day, when we hear the echo of the promise "The Most Great Peace shall come." From the hilltop of vision we see the old order of things passing away, and the fruit of the teachings of Baha'u'llah transforming the world. Oh, friends, let us who have caught even a glimpse of the Light, seek to walk in its rays, with the mirrors of our hearts cleansed from the dross of self and sin, that we may reflect its glory, and bring light and healing to those who sit in darkness and sorrow.

"Arise, shine; for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." (Isa. 60. 1).

London.

The London Baha'is have had the great pleasure of welcoming Miss Maryam Jalal, whose mother is Ruha Kharnum, Abdu'l Baha's eldest daughter. She has come to England to study.

Miss Vandell has made over to the London Spiritual Assembly a sum of £200 to be held in trust for the purpose of one day building a Temple or to provide a building as Headquarters in London. The income accruing is to form a benevolent fund in the interval. The money will be dealt with by the Finance Committee of the Assembly, in future to be known as the Finance and Building Committee.

It is felt by many that though the time for building a Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is still distant, if an opportunity arose for acquiring a building as Headquarters such as Shoghi Effendi has sanctioned in other countries, that with this capital as a nucleus and a further loan from a building society, a start might be made and the annual sum now guaranteed for the rent of the room at Walmar House would then go towards paying off the loan and securing for the future a permanent headquarters. It is not thought advisable to open a building fund at present, for the utmost effort is required to keep up the payments guaranteed for the room at Walmar House, which Shoghi Effendi has urged us to maintain 'at all costs'; but

the Spiritual Assembly wishes the friends to know that this project is being considered.

It has been suggested that some of the Friends may like to set aside the money usually expended on Christmas cards, for the funds, and Mr. Asgarzadeh has led the way. Anyone missing his customary greeting will know that he has not forgotten them and think with pleasure of the benefit to the Cause.

On November 12th, the Anniversary of the Birth of Baha'u'llah, a meeting was held in commemoration. A short sketch of the Life of the "Blessed Beauty," as His followers loved to call Him, was given. The Tablet of the Manifestation was read and the believers felt anew the great power of that wonderful utterance. At the close of the Meeting special prayers were offered for the Delegates now sitting at the Round Table Conference.

Though the Baha'is are strictly enjoined to take no part in political agitation or strife, and to be loyal to the governments under which they live, they have always the resource of prayer that discord may be changed to harmony and that the Most Great Peace may be consummated.

During the next critical weeks this will be especially remembered at the weekly prayer meeting and in our own homes.

On November 28th, there was a solemn commemoration held in memory of the Passing of Abdu'l Baha.

Lady Blomfield has returned from Geneva, and we hope to have her with us often during the winter. Miss Hodgkinson is recovering from her serious accident, and we look forward to welcoming her at Walmar House by the end of the month.

A cheering letter has been received from Pretoria, South Africa, where there are now from 40 to 50 Baha'is. The Message has come to them through Mr. and Mrs. Campbell Bleasby, the latter was known to many of the friends years ago as Miss Campbell, and it is a joy to us to be in touch with her again. We shall send our warmest greetings with the copy of this news letter which will be posted to the Group whose address is Box 876, Pretoria.

On November 17th, Miss Ethel J. Rosenberg passed peacefully beyond the veil while sleeping.

For some time she had been prevented by illness from taking an active part in the work of the Movement, but older believers can estimate the value of the pioneer work done by her. She was inspired by her great personal devotion to the Master who accorded to her the great privilege of much intimate intercourse with Him.

One who has known her during the years she has worked for the Cause writes:

"With the passing of Miss Ethel Rosenberg a large circle of Baha'i friends have lost one of the most indefatigable workers for



the Cause. During 25 years she devoted herself wholeheartedly to the teaching of Baha'u'llah's Message, and never spared her strength, nor purse, to send out the precious Word. She made several journeys to Akka and Haifa, staying as a guest for long periods in Abdu'l Baha's family, where she was an earnest student, besides giving her services for secretarial work.

The Meetings held in her own house many years ago were a real inspiration to the seekers after Baha'i truth. These she taught the great value and beauty of the Message.

An old student of those days remarked quite recently that she had never forgotten Miss Rosenberg's remarkable teaching nor her wide cultured outlook on life."

Ethel Rosenberg had an unusual gift for imparting knowledge to others and it is the strength of this gift that she leaves on our memories today, the indelible work of her personal contribution to the Baha'i Cause.

One of the most important duties of a local assembly, especially in a world capital such as London, is to keep in contact with groups of liberal thinkers and religious workers which surround it. There is a constant effort maintained by emissaries of and individuals connected with the London Assembly to keep up and multiply the efficiency of this contact work.

During the past four or five years practically all of the Unitarian centres of London were brought in contact with the Baha'i Movement and almost without exception have received it with sincere appreciation.

The London Fields Fellowship, a group of people showing forth a wonderful Christian spirit, has welcomed Baha'i speakers before its various groups on three occasions already and has invited a fourth presentation of the Baha'i Message at an early date.

Plans are being discussed for a joint meeting with a large Brotherhood Movement which is studying different religions and teachings. Baha'i literature is being sold at a Bazaar held by the Threefold Movement, an organization working in many countries for the elimination of all prejudice and the unity of religions.

Descriptions of the Universal Temple being erected in Chicago invariably attract the people and several talks on this concrete and vital subject will be given before groups who already know something of the principles of this Great Movement.

Avenues are opening up daily and the tremendous task before the followers of the Manifestation for this day is :

To purify their own lives so that they may show forth the light ;

To strengthen the Baha'i centres so that others coming amongst

the believers may feel the glow and radiance of the Bahai' love and unity ;

To present the Message in such a way as to bring about the fulfilment of the promise of Abdu'l Baha when he declares : " Whoever listens to these teachings, properly explained, will say : ' Here is Truth—that which will render life a greater thing.' "

#### Manchester.

Meetings are being held regularly at 16, Lily Street, Hr. Crumpsall, on the evenings of the first Saturday and the third Sunday of every month. Believers who may be in Manchester at such times are assured of a loving Baha'i welcome to our gatherings. Under the guidance of Mr. Hall we make them devotional and educational. The meeting on November 16th was devoted to the celebration of the Anniversary of the Birth of Baha'u'llah, on the 12th of that month. We rejoiced to have with us on that occasion Mr. Craven of Altrincham and a visitor from Bradford.

We cannot record an increase of numbers but we do realise a deepened Confirmation of the Spirit. This expresses itself in greater and still greater love for God's Manifestation in this our age ; strengthened devotion to His Cause and unflinching belief in its acceptance by a troubled world.

" Thou art My Possession ! And My Possession shall never be destroyed. Why dost thou fear destruction ? ' Thou art My Light, and My Light shall never become extinct. Why dost thou dread extinction ! ' Thou art My Glory and My Glory shall not be veiled. ' Thou art My Garment, and My Garment shall never be onworn. Therefore abide in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me in the Highest Horizon." (" Hidden Words " of Baha'u'llah.).

#### Bradford.

The first Baha'i Meeting in this city was held on November 12th, the anniversary of the Birth of Baha'u'llah. (The meetings addressed by Mrs. Hanford Ford last July were held under the auspices of various organisations). Seven persons attended. After prayer Mr. Sugar spoke on " The Origin and Purpose of the Baha'i Movement." Questions and friendly discussion followed. These, in the main, turned upon the relationship of the Baha'i Manifestation to Christianity. The message was received sympathetically but, of course, it will have to be repeated again and again before complete acceptance is realised. God will provide opportunities for further meetings ; we pray for the power to make true use of them.

" Surely the Lord hath come, the Possessor of Great Glory !



Verily, We have opened unto you the Gates of the Kingdom ;  
Are ye closing the door of your houses before My Face ?"—  
Baha'u'llah's Message to Christians.

#### **Altrincham.**

Owing to several changes and removal of some of the friends, it has not been possible to hold regular Meetings in Altrincham, but the members are earnestly endeavouring to sow the seeds of Baha'i love wherever possible, and we cannot doubt but that as time goes on a strong band of earnest Baha'is will be working in this district. One of the friends joined the Baha'i gathering at a Meeting in Manchester recently, and so we believe that bonds of love and harmony are being strengthened between believers in these cities.

#### **York.**

Mrs. Kenworthy writes—We in York are holding on with our little Meetings at Mrs. Pegg's on Thursday afternoons, and have had some very good and helpful times. We do not forget other Baha'i people in our prayers, and especially those who are isolated. So, if anyone reading this thinks of us at that time, they may help us in the Spirit and we them, and thus the 'Unity in the Love of God' we are taught to pray for, may be deepened and extended everywhere, and "the drop may become a sea."

#### **Bournemouth.**

Since our last News Letter was issued, we have started a study class, which is being held fortnightly on Tuesday evenings at the house of Mr. and Mrs. King, "Greenacre," Ophir Road, Bournemouth. Dr. Esslemont's book, "Baha'u'llah and the New Era," is being studied chapter by chapter, and much real interest shown. There were nine present at the first class on November 18th, and we hope that as time goes on, more people will be attracted by the Baha'i message, and desire to come and join us in the study of the Teachings.

On Friday, November 28th, a few of the friends gathered at "Rizwan," Broadstone, to commemorate the passing of Abdu'l Baha nine years ago. It was a most impressive time, when all felt the influence of the Master's presence, and the power of the Spirit uniting all believers in different parts of the world who were commemorating this event.

Information concerning the Movement can be obtained from the Secretaries,

MRS. ROMER, at Walmar House, 288, Upper Regent Street, W.1.

MR. A. SUGAR, 16, Lily Street, Hr. Crumpsall, Manchester.

MR. J. CRAVEN, 15, Norman Road, Altrincham, Cheshire.

MISS CHALLIS, "Rizwan," Broadstone, Dorset.

Books and literature may be bought from the Secretary, Baha'i Reading Room, 288, Regent Street (Walmar House), London, W.1., who will also attend to orders by post.

There are now some copies of photographs for sale of Abdu'l Baha, taken when he was in Paris, price 7/6 and 10/6.

**Walmar House.** It has been found necessary to discontinue the Sunday evening Meeting for the present, and during the winter months the Reading Room will be open from 1 to 5, instead of from 1 to 6, except on Wednesday, when it remains open till the Meeting at 8 p.m.

The registered cable address is—for cables, Bahalonsa, London. Telegrams, Bahalonsa, Wesdo, London.

For the National Spiritual Assembly, cables—National, care Bahalonsa, Wesdo, London.