

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

June, 1931.

"O Children of Men! Do ye know why we have created you from one clay? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder in your hearts how ye were created. It behoveth you, since we have created you all from the same substance to be even as one soul, in such wise that ye may walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth, and dwell in the same land; that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. This is My Counsel unto you O ye concourse of Light! Heed ye this counsel, that ye may obtain the Fruit of Holiness from the Tree of Wondrous Glory."

(Baha'u'llah.)

"O Son of Man!

Thou art My Dominion, and My Dominion perisheth not, wherefore fearest thou thy perishing? Thou art My Light, and My Light shall never be extinguished, why darest thou extinction? Thou art My Glory, and My Glory fadeth not; thou art My Robe, and My Robe shall never be destroyed. Abide then in thy love for Me, that thou mayest find Me in the Realm of Glory.

O Son of Man!

Rejoice in the gladness of thine heart, that thou mayest be worthy to gaze upon Me, and mirror forth My beauty."

DEAR FRIENDS,

Since the Naurooz News Letter was circulated, various changes have taken place in our groups,—local and National Spiritual Assemblies have been re-elected, Committees re-organised, and new ideas for work brought forward, and we are conscious of a new Power amongst us, urging us on to a fuller surrender of ourselves in the service of the Cause.

On April 25th, delegates from the different Baha'i Centres met at Walmer House, to elect 9 members to form the National Spiritual Assembly for the forthcoming year. Result of ballot being as follows:

Mr. Asgarzadeh	Mr. A. Joseph
Lady Blomfield	Mr. H. King
Miss Challis	Mrs. Romer
Mrs. George	Mrs. Slade

Mr. A. Sugar

Officers (elected at 1st Meeting of the new Assembly, on May 17th)

Chairman	Mr. A. Sugar
Vice Chairman	Mrs. George
Treasurer	Mr. Asgarzadeh
Secretary	Mrs. Slade
Assist. Secretary	Miss Challis
Editor News Letter.....	Miss Challis

When the election was over, a number of the friends, who had been invited to meet the delegates from other centres came in, and a happy time was spent over tea. Several very helpful suggestions as to work for the Cause were made and discussed, one of which, the formation of a Service Bureau, was taken up with great enthusiasm. The offers of service and articles of value and usefulness, to sell in aid of the funds, came from all parts of the room, and we feel encouraged to hope that the Bureau will be a great help, not only to the funds, but also in bringing us closer together in mutual service for our beloved Cause.

London.

The Baha'is of London have elected the following as the members of their Assembly for the current year:

Mrs. Isabel Slade, Chairman; Mrs. Annie Romer, Secretary; Miss Elsie Lea, Treasurer; Lady Blomfield, Mrs. George, Miss Evelyn Baxter, Miss Phyllis Hodgkinson, Mr. Z. Asgarzadeh, Mr. H. B. F. Bingham. Committees have been appointed for Publicity and Meetings, Walmar House Room, Finance and Building, Study Group, Esperanto, Feasts and Memorials, etc. The New Year has started with enthusiasm. Lady Blomfield gave a beautiful Ridvan Feast attended by over forty friends. The Anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab and the Birthday of Abdu'l Baha was held at the home of Mrs. Brown on May 23rd, an inspiring occasion; at Walmar House, on May 28th, a fitting memorial meeting marked the solemn event of the Passing of Baha'u'llah. Nineteen Day Feasts will be held regularly on the Feast Days, in the future, and spiritual teachings will share with practical discussion the celebration of these occasions.

Mr. Mehrabi, of Kerman, Persia, has been visiting his brother in London. At a Wednesday meeting he gave us a message and greeting from Haifa and his home.

The annual visit of Mrs. Ford is bearing fruit in increased numbers and enthusiasm at the Wednesday evening meetings; many individuals have received the Message. Mrs. Ford has spoken at meetings held by the Threefold Movement, the Young People at Whitefield's Tabernacle, the Unity Centre, a group of thinkers in a studio, a reception to outside friends given by the Study Group and a Sunday evening meeting at Walmar House when Lady Blomfield acted as Chairman and a most interesting talk was given by Hussein Bey Afnan. In these troubled days of widespread unemployment and stress the Baha'is must increasingly strive to spread these Teachings of joy and add to their own numbers, for Abdu'l Baha has said that ten candles give more light than one.

On the eve of the great day when Baha'is celebrate the Declaration of the Bab and birth of Abdu'l Baha, Claudia Stewart Coles passed to the Abha Kingdom.

Through the sad weeks of her illness the thoughts and prayers of the believers have been constantly with her; and many have been rejoiced by letters from her which seemed to bring messages from behind the veil drawn by her failing powers and physical disabilities. It was with quiet joy that all who were able, gathered at her home in Warwick Gardens on May 27th, to pay their tribute of love. The house seemed to blaze with flowers of every sort and colour, amongst which shone predominant the gold which she always spoke of as the Baha'i colour, the symbol of light.

One after another the friends read passages from the Hidden Words, a special petition from the Dawn Prayer of which she was fond, and those prayers ordained by Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha for departed spirits. The Persian friends chanted, and to all who stood round came a solemn peace and joy as they followed in thought the spirit of her whom they loved.

Cable messages of love and sympathy from Shoghi Effendi and the Baha'is of U.S.A. and Canada were read.

Later on the lamp from which the light had gone was laid reverently away in the peaceful little country churchyard at Bledlow Ridge.

For many years now Claudia Coles has given herself to carrying out a trust laid upon her by the Master, always looking forward to the day when she should be able to pass to what she hoped would be a more active missionary life.

Now the Master has called her to other and higher work, though not of the kind she visualised, and yet as we all go back to the memories of dear Claudia as we have known her, we may well feel that the life she has lived among us has been one of ceaseless activity for the Cause, which all might envy.

To have a home and welcome ever open to the stranger, to have a great heart full of loving kindness to all, a generosity which never counted the cost when the service of the Cause was in question, has been no small service to offer.

A small incident, of which the impression has never left one who was new in the Cause, well illustrates the qualities that made us all love her.

At one of the little meetings in London, a Chinese appeared who had heard something of the Cause elsewhere, and visited us in passing on his way to Shanghai. After the meeting he was given some literature and then he asked where he could obtain a ring stone which he much wished to possess. No one had a stock of them and time would not allow of procuring one, and a pause of regret followed. It rested with Claudia to solve the difficulty. She drew from her finger one of her most prized treasures, the gift of the Master, and gave it joyfully to this stranger. It is hard to describe the effect of this little action, the reflection of which seemed to glow in the hearts of all, and will never be forgotten by one at least of those present.

We shall miss unceasingly her loving help and sympathy, always ready for us in trials and difficulties, and the inspiration of her glowing faith and single minded devotion that made her so beloved by all, but we shall all go forward strengthened and inspired by her example to devote ourselves to the Cause she loved, knowing

that her prayers and activities are none the less able to help us now that her physical presence is removed from our sight.

Mrs. George, one of those who were associated with her in the early days of the Cause writes :

"Death is the crown of Life in every sense, and we feel that our dear Claudia Coles has been crowned in death by the great love for her we have all found in our hearts—a love which her passing has only served to deepen, though the sense of loss remains. When she first came to live in London in 1920 the strong flame of her enthusiasm brought a new impetus to the work for the Cause ; we warned ourselves at her fires ! Claudia Coles helped on the Movement by the deep sincerity of her devotion and her intimate knowledge of the writings but it was the big loving human heart of her which attracted everyone and which we miss. We know that from the Other Side, with new knowledge and spiritual wisdom, she will continue to work for the Baha'i Cause in England."

From another believer comes the following tribute—

"As long as I have breath to speak or pen to trace, my thoughts of her will ever recall her live soul, the radiant spirit, which shone from her eyes, like stars of Light, warm with love and power. I feel sure her firmness of spirit and power of resolve alone enabled her to carry on the Baha'i work so long. I am glad I knew her."

Manchester.

Meetings for worship and the study of the Teachings have been held regularly on the first Saturdays and the third Sundays of the month. On May 2nd we celebrated the Ridwan by a tea at a city café. After tea there was an informal meeting in the course of which we had an interesting address by Mrs. Slade. Other speakers followed, and the rest of the evening was spent in social conversation by the grown-ups and play by the children. All agreed that it was a "happy" gathering. On this occasion there were present twenty-seven seniors and seven children.

On May 23rd, the Anniversary of the Declaration of the Bab, we held a Picnic Tea-meeting amidst sylvan surroundings in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jones at Werneth Low—a hill on the Cheshire borders and an outpost of the Derbyshire Peak.

The average attendance at the meetings has been good. The spirit of loving fellowship and Communion in the Baha'i Faith has been well maintained. An interesting feature of all our meetings is the presence of young people and children. These will be the citizens of the coming generation. We thank God that we are privileged to be the medium through which they may learn of those

Divine Baha'i Truths which constitute the sure, the Spiritual basis, on which true citizenship may alone be built. In the words of the Master, our great Teacher "The nobility and glory of man consist in the fact that, amidst the beings, he is the dawning-place of righteousness. Can any greater blessing be imagined by man than the consciousness that by divine assistance the means of comfort, peace and prosperity of the human race are in his hands."—Abdu'l Baha.

Bradford.

A few interested friends meet at 20, Southey Place at intervals of two or three weeks to study the Baha'i Teachings. Questions and answers, criticism and discussion flow freely, always in a friendly spirit. Even in the earlier meetings the atmosphere of loving fellowship, the spiritual communion which characterise Baha'i gatherings were present. In the later meetings these characteristics have become more evident. They are accepted with joy by the participating friends. On May 1st we had Mrs. Slade with us, nine friends assembled to meet her. At the meeting on May 15th, it was decided that we meet regularly on the first and third Fridays in the month. We know that we shall have the prayers and the loving thoughts of the friends with us on these evenings. We shall learn to realise the truth of Abdu'l Baha's words, "All the divine messengers have come to this earth as specialists of the law of love. They came to teach a divine love to the children of men; they came to minister a divine healing between the nations; they came to cement in one the hearts of men and to bring humanity into a state of unity and concord. In this pathway, each one of these divine Manifestations of God's love has accepted innumerable calamities and hardships. For the sake of a realisation or love and concord among men, they have sacrificed their lives. How many persecutions have they suffered so that they might bring into a state of harmony those contending nations and religions, so that they might create peace and consolation among these various peoples of the earth."

Altrincham.

On Sunday, May 3rd, a Unity Feast was held, in the Co-operative Welfare Institute Altrincham, when Mrs. Slade's and Mr. Sugar's addresses were much appreciated, and thoroughly enjoyed.

Though regular Meetings have not been held of late for various reasons, it has been resolved that from Thursday, June 18th, the friends will hold a Meeting at least once a month, and they look forward to more definite progress in the near future.

York.

The friends in York report: "We have had very helpful visits from Mrs. Slade and Mr. Sugar. The meetings arranged on two occasions were small but good ones, and as a result a small group is slowly forming here. We are keeping in touch with one another, and a few of us have held two group meetings, but from a variety of circumstances it is impossible at present to find time and place where all can meet together."

Bournemouth.

Since our last report was given, Meetings have been held week by week, and although progress appears to be slow, we are assured of spiritual work being done, and are very conscious in our gatherings for prayer and study of the teachings, of the Spirit's presence and power uniting in deeper love the hearts of those in the Meeting with believers in other parts of the world.

We greatly appreciated week-end visits from Mrs. Cowles of Montreal, who has been staying in London for several weeks and helping with the work at Walmar House, and of Miss Phyllis Hodgkinson. The presence of these dear friends at our Sunday Meetings, and the times of fellowship spent together, strengthened each one of us to press forward in the service of the Cause. On Sunday, May 24th, news reached us of the passing on May 22nd, of our beloved sister, Mrs. Claudia Coles, and at our evening Meeting, the thoughts of all turned to the Life beyond the Veil, of the supreme happiness of those who have passed over, and the many precious promises given by Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, were read, and rejoiced over, and prayers for the dead offered for our dear sister.

"Blessing be upon the spirit that departs from the body purified from the doubts and superstitions of the nations. Verily it moves in the atmosphere of God's Holy Will and enters into the Supreme Paradise. All the angels of the Supreme Paradise attend and surround it, and it will have fellowship with all the prophets of God and His saints, and speak with them, and tell them what happened to it in the Cause of God, the Lord of the Universe."—Baha'u'llah.

Announcements.

International co-operation among the Baha'is is already widely developed, but the Baha'is of Great Britain would appreciate an extension of the effort so that all possible means be employed to bring them into contact with any Baha'is, not connected with our assemblies, whom our friends outside the United Kingdom may know to be residing here or who are contemplating visits to the British Isles. Will our friends abroad kindly notify either the

National Secretary or the Secretary of the local assembly of any information they may have in this connection? The same request holds good for information concerning persons residing in or visiting Great Britain who may not yet be connected with the Baha'i Movement but whom it may be valuable to contact in our effort to spread the teachings and enlist recruits for our beloved Cause.

Will anyone wishing to make use of the Service Bureau kindly communicate with the Secretary, Walmar House, from whom all particulars can be obtained.

News from the different groups, and items of interest from individual believers for the September News Letter should be sent to the Editor not later than August 20th.

The Reading Room at Walmar House is open each day from 2 to 6 p.m. (except Saturday and Sunday).

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.

The address for all cables is now Asgarzadeh, London.

For National Spiritual Assembly, National, care Asgarzadeh, London.

Books can be purchased from the Librarian, Baha'i Reading Room, Walmar House, 288, Regent Street, London, W.1.

Baha'i Scriptures.....	10/6
Some Answered Questions	8/-
Baha'u'llah and the New Era. Cloth 6/-, Paper	2/6
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