

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

September, 1931.

"Consort with all the people with love and fragrance. Fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity is the source of order in the world. Blessed are they who are kind, and serve with love."

(Baha'u'llah.)

"O my Servant! Free thyself from the fetters of this world, and loose thy soul from the prison of self. Seize thy chance, for it will come to thee no more."

DEAR FRIENDS,

We have much cause for deep thankfulness as we review the work of the summer months. The believers in the different centres have been stimulated and strengthened by contact with inspired souls from other countries, and many people have become interested in the Baha'i message. But this is not sufficient. Interest must be deepened till the teachings are accepted in their entirety. We must show forth in our lives the beauty of the Baha'i revelation, we must show to the world that we have a message which can transform the world,—which can build up from the ruins of a broken civilisation a new creation. Abdu'l Baha has said, "When the Divine message is understood, all troubles will vanish. Shadows disappear when the universal lamp is lighted, for whosoever becomes illumined thereby no longer knows grief: he realises that his stay on this planet is temporary, and that life is eternal. When once he has found reality, he will no longer know darkness." And it is for us to show that we have found reality.

"Praise be to God, the doors of Divine Knowledge are flung wide open, the infinite light is shining, and to such as believe and obey, the Divine mysteries are revealed."

London.

Among the visitors who have gladdened us by their presence this summer have been: Miss Joy Elgar, New York City; Mr. and Mrs. Eardley, Detroit, Michigan; Mr. Spendlove, Washington, D.C.; and Mrs. Amy Dewing, New Zealand. Miss Bailey, of Australia, brought us welcome news from the friends in that country, and has joined in many of our activities.

We have also had with us Mrs. Nellie French, International Correspondent of the U.S.A. Secretariat. She spoke at Walmar House on the Temple which is nearing structural completion, especially of its universal significance. Around the central hall are nine chambers which will be available for use by other religious denominations. No more wonderful symbol could be given of the unique freedom from prejudice which characterises this Cause, and of the oneness of True Religion. The Mashriqu'l-Adhkar will indeed be "A House of Prayer for All Nations."

Mrs. French is also collecting material for the next Year Book to appear in 1932.

Manchester.

Since our last report we have been blessed by visits from our dear Baha'i friends and teachers, Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford, of New York, and Willard P. Hatch, of Los Angeles. Mrs. Ford's visit was made the occasion of a very happy little ceremony. Her first meeting was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chessel, on July 11th. This date was the birthday of Mr. Chessel, and Mrs. Ford handed to him, on behalf of the Manchester friends as an expression of their love for him and their appreciation of his devotion to the Cause, their birthday gift of a volume of the Baha'i Scriptures. Mrs. Ford then gave us one of her interesting instructive addresses, thus completing a loving, happy meeting. On July 13th Mrs. Ford addressed a public meeting in the city. Here she was called upon to meet a number of critical questions. This she did very ably. There are questioners who are determined not to be convinced. To such apply especially the words of Baha'u'llah, "Transgress not thy limits, nor claim that which becometh thee not. Prostrate thyself before the Countenance of thy God, the Lord of Might and Power."

The meeting addressed by Mr. Hatch was held at 16, Lily Street, on August 21st, and though called together at but a few hours' notice, sixteen of the friends assembled to meet him. Much light was thrown on various aspects of the Teachings. Love, happiness and inspiration combined to form a true Baha'i atmosphere. The friends were loth to disperse. The beautiful influence created by this meeting will never be dispersed.

New friends are being attracted to our meetings; gradually the Cause is becoming better known, and the need for the Baha'i Teachings is creating the search for them. Abdu'l Baha said, "Mankind needs a universal motive power to quicken it. The inspired messenger who is directly assisted by the power of God brings about universal results. Baha'u'llah rose as a light in Persia, and now that light is going out to the whole world."

Bradford.

With great thankfulness we record the holding of the first Baha'i public meeting in this city. This took place in the Friend's Meeting House on July 3rd. The speaker was our dear friend and beloved teacher, Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford. The title of the address was "Disarmament a Divine Command." Mrs. Ford sustained with eloquence gave the Baha'i Message in its relation to Peace and International Friendship. Through the agency of willing friends Mrs. Ford was enabled to address various religious and pacifist organisations in the Bradford district. One of the friends was so good as to hold a reception for her in his home. Here Mrs. Ford

met some sympathetic enquirers, and the opportunity was utilised to enlighten them on various aspects of the Teachings. Several new friends have been drawn to attend the meetings at 20, Southey Place, and we look forward with hope to a still more extended attraction to the Cause.

On August 20th we had the pleasure and privilege of a visit from our dear brother, Willard Hatch, of Los Angeles. Eleven of the friends assembled to meet him. We had from Mr. Hatch a most interesting account of his visit to the Holy Places, Acca and Haifa, an account which led up to a simple, clear summary of the Baha'i Revelation. To the believers the visit and address of Mr. Hatch were a means of inspiration and confirmation, and the enquirers were stimulated to greater interest in what the Teachings have still to reveal to them.

Attendance at our meetings on the first and third Fridays in the month have been well sustained. We are justified in hoping that by the Divine Favour there will be established in this city a worthy centre of our beloved Cause.

"Great is My Claim upon thee, it cannot be forgotten. Abounding is My Grace unto thee, it cannot be veiled. My love is dwelling in thee, it cannot be concealed. Manifest is My Light unto thee, it cannot be hidden."

Baha'u'llah.

Altrincham.

The friends in this district have not met together during the summer months, but it is their hope to start a fortnightly study class this month. Two of the friends were present at the meeting at Crumpsall on August 21st, when Mr. Willard Hatch, of Los Angeles, was present. Of this meeting Mr. Craven writes: "Our Baha'i brother demonstrated by his experiences the evident Oneness of Humanity, and the dominant desire of the Baha'i believers for Universal Peace and Brotherhood, which they amply manifested to him in the various towns and cities in Europe and the Near East, by the reception with which they greeted him. It is the desire of the friends here that we may so progress as to attract visitors from other lands to this centre, especially those illumined teachers of the Cause and those able to speak of progress in other centres. This contacting creates a bond of assurance and faith which is often a tower of strength in times of distress and storm, and signalises the true spirit of Love and Unity which are so essential."

York.

The visit of Mrs. Ford to this city was much appreciated, and although meetings were small, several people were much helped, and

Another welcome visitor has been Mr. Willard P. Hatch, of Los Angeles. His short stay in this country was one of ceaseless activity in the service of the Cause. He spoke several times at Walmar House, and visited Manchester, Bradford, Bournemouth, Bristol and Ireland, bringing to all the inspiration of his deep sincerity, clear faith, and radiant Baha'i spirit. This wonderful fellowship which unites believers of all lands is a source of strength to workers in the Cause, and we hope to go forward to increased activities, cheered and inspired by the help and sympathy that has been accorded to us.

During the latter part of Mrs. Ford's visit, as throughout her stay here, the Baha'i work was carried forward unceasingly with gratifying results. Several afternoon teas were held at the Centre with the co-operation of many broad-minded followers of other Movements who expressed much interest in the Baha'i Movement and its broad platform. Especially were they interested in the universal Temple being erected in Wilmette. On Sunday afternoons also three meetings were held: at one, Dr. H. P. Shastri, a professor of literature and philosophy, who was in close touch with the Baha'i group in Shanghai, China, at one time, spoke most inspiringly on "The Seven Valleys" of Baha'n'llah, which he knows well in the original Persian; and at another meeting Mr. Cradoza gave a very interesting account of the work accomplished at the Dockland Settlement. At each meeting Mrs. Ford gave the Baha'i Message with eloquence. She also spoke at a Buddhist Mission, two Unity Meetings, a large Men's Meeting at Whitefield's Tabernacle, and some smaller gatherings.

Lady Blomfield represented the Baha'i Movement at the Annual Congress of the New Thought Alliance and many enquirers have called at the Baha'i Centre as a result of this talk.

Mrs. George has carried on her Sunday meetings on alternate Sundays and held an especially enjoyable meeting during the visit to London of Mr. Sugar, of Manchester, and Mr. Hatch, of California.

One very interesting afternoon at the Centre was devoted to the Economic problem when Mrs. Helen Hanning, of New York City, spoke on some work done there by the Community Councils, citing housing conditions, child welfare, etc. Mrs. Ford gave a comprehensive talk on Abdu'l Baha's plan for the betterment of the world. This is a subject on which she has spoken many times, as it has been one of the aspects of the Teachings in which she has been most deeply interested and which she has studied very carefully.

A most gratifying result of this season's work has been the great number of nationalities represented in the gatherings, over twelve such being present at one meeting, with at all times a number

of Indians. The editor of an Indian Magazine has promised to print an article on the Movement in forthcoming edition of his publication. Surely nowhere could this Message do more good now than in India. One very influential gentleman writes that he is studying the Persian edition of the Ighan carefully and hopes to write an article about it. He is not a professing Baha'i.

May we not all feel a glow of hope and gratitude for the way in which the Holy Spirit is opening doors for this work?

It has been a summer of activity and inspiration. Many have heard of the Baha'i Teachings and are investigating them. In various ways considerable publicity has been received; an advertisement in the New Thought Monthly Leaflet, and the inclusion of our books for sale at their Annual Congress; the distribution of many programs of our meetings; reviews of the Baha'i Year Book in the Unitarian Magazine and the All People's Association publication; announcements of Baha'i lectures from other platforms, particularly the announcements made both orally and in the Church calendar of Whitefield's Tabernacle when Mrs. Ford spoke at their Men's Meeting.

The light is being focussed on those who profess the Baha'i belief. It is, therefore, increasingly important that their love for, faith in and obedience to its teachings become manifest to a greater degree in this sceptical and cynical time.

More and more must we keep our centre pure and radiant, like a sparkling and bubbling mountain spring which feeds many waters. All the knowledge and guidance is in these teachings. We must become divested of self so that they may flow through us. What a glorious privilege that even for a few brief months or years we may be used to carry on this noble task and give forth this wonderful teaching! Our privilege and our supreme duty! Upon each one, we must remember, rests the urgent admonition of Abdu'l Baha to go forward with His work. "I have worked and laboured all my life; . . . now see what your efforts will bring forth," He said.

And so there must go forth from the Baha'i Centre, and from each Baha'i heart and home, the love, the faith, the joy, the power and the glory of this Cause, which is destined to become the Tree overshadowing all mankind. In this troubled day it is the Baha'i who has the inestimable privilege of absolute authority and guidance and the assurance not only that all will be well but much more beautiful than past ages have ever conceived of or present minds are capable of comprehending.

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
Baha'i Prayers	2/6
Small Books of Prayers	6d.
Small grey covered Book of Prayers	3d.
Hidden Words. Leather 4/6, Cloth 2/3, Paper	10d.
Paris Talks of Abdu'l Baha	3/-
London Talks of Abdu'l Baha	3/-
Divine Art of Living. Cloth 6/-. Paper	3/-
Divine Philosophy	3/-
In Galilee, by Thornton Chase	1/9
The Baha'i Revelation, by Thornton Chase	4/-
Peace Programme	2/-
The Baha'i World	10/6
The Coming of the Glory, by Florence Piuchon	2/6
Esperanto Hidden Words	1/-
Esperanto, Short Account	2d.

Postage extra.

The N.S.A. hopes soon to have on sale "The Dawn-breakers.'s A translation by Shoghi Effendi of Nabil's history of the early day' of the Baha'i Revelation, fully illustrated. The cost will be about 27s., and the proceeds will go to the Temple Fund. The price of the book will make it difficult for many of us to order copies, but it is hoped that perhaps each Group may take one for the use of its members.

An edition de luxe with the autograph of Shoghi Effendi will be issued costing £7 subscription, limited to 150 copies.

the members feel that real progress is being made. There have been three group meetings held since Mrs. Ford's visit, and each were characterised by an earnest and enquiring spirit. We are hopeful that ere long there will be a great move forward in the progress of the Cause in York.

Bournemouth.

The members of this group have had the privilege of some inspiring and helpful meetings during the summer months. The visit of Mrs. Ford was very highly appreciated, in view of the fact that our friend had only a few hours to spare, after her travels in different parts of the country. An enthusiastic audience assembled on the evening of July 24th, at St. Peter's Hall, Bournemouth, and listened in breathless interest while Mrs. Ford delivered a marvellous address on "Spiritual and Material Evolution." Her visit resulted in new people becoming interested, and many enquiries are being made as to further meetings for studying the Teachings, and offers of service for the progress of the Cause in this locality.

Week by week the believers meet, and on several Sunday evenings have had the pleasure of visitors from other places. Very specially helpful was that of our brother, Mr. Willard P. Hatch and the friends who gathered to hear him speak of the work in other places, and of the deeper aspect of the Baha'i teachings as revealed by Baha'u'llah, and of our dear Guardian's service and wishes for the believers, were cheered and strengthened in their endeavour for the service of the Cause.

Other visitors have been Miss Pinchon, who spent a week with us, and Mr. Craven, of Altrincham, also here for a week, and on different Sundays, Mr. and Mrs. Asgazardeh, Mr. Cole, Mr. Itta-hadie, Miss Yandell, and Miss Grimshaw. Visits from these friends have been much appreciated, and helped to deepen bonds of love and unity between the believers in the different Baha'i centres in this country.

Esperanto Congress.

We are always glad to report activities in the field of Esperanto, and this time there are several items of interest.

The most recent and perhaps most important is the 23rd. Universal Congress of Esperanto held at Cracow, Poland, the first week in August. Although the numbers attending were not so large as at some previous ones, owing to the deplorable condition of finance in many countries, it was none the less a great success; and especially was it a proof of the efficacy of Esperanto as a means of communication, because, in all probability, not a single visitor

was able to speak Polish ! The official recognition was most satisfactory, handsome decorations in the streets, an official reception, and a certain number of police, waiters, and shop-assistants had learnt Esperanto for the convenience of visitors.

A highly satisfactory Baha'i meeting was held, attended by more than 50 people of many nations. All seemed interested and sympathetic, and gladly took copies of "Nova Tago" and No. 9 in Esperanto, distributed free. Miss Lidja Zamenhof (Warsaw) gave a graphic portrayal of the need for and mission of Baha'u'llah as the World Teacher ; and Miss Almida Zetterland (Stockholm) spoke of the intimate personal response to the Teachings. These two devoted and isolated believers sent sincere greetings to the English believers, and so did Mr. Teo Lehne, of Berlin.

We are fortunate in having the services of our devoted sister, Lidja Zamenhof, whose latest work is the translation into Esperanto of "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" by Dr. J. E. Esslemont. Already this translation has proved effective, a very active member of the London centre having come into the Movement entirely through purchasing and reading this book. A splendid review of this Esperanto edition appeared in A.P.A. (All Peoples' Association) Bulletin, and also in the "British Esperantist," a wonderful sign of the way in which the Cause is being welcomed in all spheres.

News Items.

In two cities of England earnest Baha'is have taken up their residence : Mr. and Mrs. Busby in Newcastle-on-Tyne, and Mr. and Mrs. Weeks in Bristol. The knowledge that these souls are carrying on the work in two such important centres is most joyous, and they will receive our constant prayers and co-operation.

News from the different groups, and items of interest from individual believers for the September News Letter should be sent to the Editor at Rizwan, Broadstone, Dorset, not later than November 24th.

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.