

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

MARCH 1932.



**LOVING NAUROOZ GREETINGS TO ALL.**



## Naurooz Greetings to All !

DEAR FRIENDS,

Very pleasant thoughts are awakened by the news received of the continuous activities of the Baha'i Friends in Britain. The Spirit of the Kingdom of God is observable at work in the South, Centre, and North in a very general sense, and also typically in the efforts of Mr. Toby of Totnes, Devon, and the Rev. Griffith J. Sparham, of London, and in the efforts of Mr. R. J. G. Millar, who has from time to time published Baha'i reviews in his Journal, and who has just informed us that he intends giving an address in the near future in Wick, Caithness, upon the subject "What is Baha'ism?" The local Brotherhood of which he is vice-president has an average attendance of over two hundred and fifty people, whilst on open nights (free to both sexes) the number of people attending exceeds five hundred.

### Gradual but Sure Progress.

The Baha'i Cause is steadily progressing in Britain. It is little use troubling ourselves about the rise and fall of the wavelets in our activities; the tide is coming in—and it is the tide that matters. It is not a long time since there were no friends of the Cause of Baha'u'llah in Britain; the Baha'i Glad Tidings of the Kingdom were unknown, unvoiced, even unimagined—but to-day scores of earnest souls are alive to the subject, voicing it, loving it, magnifying it, awakening people to the Glory of the coming era; and it is true to say that thousands of people in Britain have now heard the first faint but certain notes of the sweet call of the Abha Kingdom. In fact, the *Call for the Unification of the World in the Glory of God* is being more and more definitely heard by the people through the efforts of a steadily increasing number of friends.

### Energy of the Believers in London.

During the last three months the London friends have had the pleasure of welcoming these visitors from abroad: Mr. Dorakhshan, of Paris and Teheran; Mr. Mountford Mills, of New York and Geneva; Mr. Albert Windust, of Chicago, on his way home to America from Haifa; and Mr. Faridoon, of Kerman and Berlin. At a Unity Feast held at the Baha'i room on February 29th, short talks were given upon the subject "The World Crisis and the Baha'i Movement." Professor Shastri joined

whole-heartedly in the appeal for more enthusiasm in spreading the universal Message of Baha'u'llah in this critical time. Lady Blomfield, Mrs. Slade, Miss Pinchon, Miss Baxter, and Mrs. Romer have given the Message in many places, including New Thought, Quaker, and Esperanto meetings, the International Guest House, and the London Fields Fellowship. In connection with this latter Mrs. Romer and Miss Phillips have spoken to a group of about one hundred children from eight to sixteen years of age.

Mrs. George, indefatigable and faithful at all times, has continued her Sunday afternoon meetings, the most precious function of which is to deepen in the souls of people the profound Spiritual teachings of the Cause.

The London friends are expecting visits from Mrs. Keith Ransom—Kehler, who is touring the world and has already addressed large audiences in Australia besides interesting many people in Japan and other countries; Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford, of the United States—that energetic worker, fine writer, and very able speaker; and Mr. and Mrs. Hyde-Dunn, the apostles of the Cause in Australia. We cannot praise these Baha'i friends and universalists too much. They carry the fragrances of the Spirit of the Kingdom whithersoever they go.

### Fine efforts of the Dorset believers.

Nothing interferes with the faithful services of the Bournemouth and Broadstone friends—not even illness! They are moving in the direction of preparatory meetings ready for the special meeting when Mrs. Ford arrives in the summer. Here is a particularly interesting piece of news which we commend to the notice of all the friends:—

"At a meeting of the Bournemouth Spiritual Assembly in January, the members discussed ways and means of furthering the Cause throughout the country, and it was felt very strongly by all present that the best way of making the Cause known is by the word 'Baha'i' being made synonymous in the minds of the people with practical service to humanity. The idea of a 'Baha'i Service Fund' being started by the Bournemouth Group was enthusiastically taken up by all present, and it was decided that no better beginning could be made than in helping some of the needy cases of sick folk who come under Sister Challis' care at 'Rizwan'—in helping some to stay a little longer than their own resources will allow, or in meeting some unexpected



expense such as X Ray, or other necessary treatment. This is being done at the present time, and it is hoped that other groups and individual Baha'is will see in this work a glorious opportunity of following the Master's example and teachings. It is also hoped that other groups may avail themselves of the privilege of sending some sick one in need of rest and skilled nursing when the need arises. The fund at present is very small, but we are sure that to those who rise up to serve the Cause of God Heavenly aid and the confirmations of the Spirit are abundantly given."

We sincerely trust that the friends everywhere will, by their generous aid, completely fulfil this splendid idea.

#### **Continuous and successful efforts by believers in Mid-Britain.**

The news from Bradford, in Yorkshire, is distinctly good and interesting. Mr. A. Sugar's work there has been faithful and constructive, resulting in a group of friends now partially organised—having a secretary, a treasurer, and a librarian. This addition to the Baha'i activities in Britain is a welcome sign of the reality of the presence of the Holy Spirit of the Kingdom, nor is this activity confined to Bradford, for one of the friends (Mr. Hurst, of Leeds) is carrying the great Message of Baha'u'llah into Leeds. Mr. Hurst's efforts have resulted in several prominent and learned people becoming aware of the universal principles of the Baha'i Cause. Mr. Sugar should be congratulated upon this fine work which the Holy Spirit has led him to do, and the friends in Bradford should have the loving regard of all the friends in England so that they may soon become one of the established centres with a local council of nine.

The news from York, too, is distinctly good, and all the friends may feel happy in that, moved by the Holy Spirit, Mrs. E. P. Kenworthy continues her faithful and inspiring work there. She writes that the little group in York is coming into shape now and that fortnightly meetings are held on Sunday afternoons. The Baha'i teachings are described in their different aspects, and questions are answered. It is intended, by request of some members, to read Nabil's Narrative as soon as the book arrives. The group makes a small monthly collection for the Temple.

In Manchester the work of the Cause proceeds steadily under the guidance of God through the local Spiritual Council. Mrs. Sugar's care for the Cause, especially in the north-eastern part of Manchester and in Hyde, is well worthy of notice although

it is not of the visible meeting type of service. Like that of many ladies in the Cause in various parts of England her labours are of the sociable kind, coupled with personal chats about the life and mission of Baha'u'llah. In this method of procedure her efforts are untiring, and she and Mr. Sugar are lamps at all times aglow in these parts of Manchester. Their son, young, pleasant, always smiling, continues assisting the Cause by holding a delightful Esperanto class of nine to twelve children and young people. These classes are regular, as are the main Baha'i Meetings in Manchester. The Esperanto class is held in Crumpsall, and the Meetings in Higher Broughton. Although Mr. Sugar, our Secretary, has been very ill there has been no break in the Meetings. Manchester, like Broadstone during the recent illness of Miss Challis, has been dominated by the Will of God.

#### **Work in General.**

Thus the work goes on, and though it is not possible in this News Letter to describe the zeal, the care, the inner values, the wonderful inspirations, the great blessings and helpfulness, or the spiritual joys of the Cause in Britain, yet the friends will see in what we have written that in general there is no cessation of activity. Such work as that which Lady Blomfield is doing in London and Geneva, in the interests of the Peace of the world and the true Religion of God, we cannot describe here, nor can we describe the humble yet just as sweet work of Mrs. Hilda Jones under the shadow of Werneth Low. Nor can we record properly the quiet loving work of all the friends scattered about the country, each of whom is lit with the Glory of God—but indeed and truly we appreciate them, each and all, with all the work they do for the Kingdom of God upon earth. The blessing of God is upon us all, and as we become more and more united in this splendid faith and work, the Baha'i Cause will come to be the great blessing in Britain and the fragrance of God in the whole world.

#### **The National Spiritual Assembly.**

Now regarding the N.S.A., the strength of which depends essentially upon two things, namely, the blessing of Almighty God and the loyalty and assistance of all the friends in Britain. We exhort the friends to do their utmost to keep their main Council well supplied with funds, lest its work for the general Cause in this country be seriously hampered. Good literature is constantly required; special meetings must often be held; visitors



from abroad must be given hospitality and attention; the expenses of delegates must be paid, this News Letter costs money to print; and above all, Walmar House must be continued as our centre. It is the beloved Guardian's earnest desire; and, too, all the friends will, we feel sure, fully realise the great value of preserving this common centre of our activities in London. We must all see to it that the N.S.A. is sufficiently supplied with means so that it can function unhampered—for it is our very heart in this country. All the friends will be glad to know that the National Spiritual Assembly sent a message of greeting to the World Disarmament Conference in Geneva, wishing them success in their great undertaking.

### **Grievous need for a World Parliament. (The Moral of Shanghai).**

The hearts of Baha'i friends the world over must have been very heavy with grief at the events which have taken place in and about the city of Shanghai during the last several months. Barbaric cruelties such as were experienced in Europe during the awful war of 1914-1918 have been repeated in the Far East—and the flames of burning Shanghai mark another point where the innocent have suffered for the crimes of the guilty. Had there been a World Parliament with full powers of legislation and execution such a terrible calamity could never have happened.

Here is a case of a great but disunited people (the Chinese) a prey to political and trade exploiters, and an island people (the Japanese) needing room for proper expansion, yet denied the same by the nations of the world. With such disunity upon the one hand, such need upon the other, with such intolerable prejudices rampant in the world, how can justice be done so that both these important peoples can dwell in harmony and general friendship, unless a World Council exists upon which both may rely for Spiritual judgment, good guidance, and reasonable settlement? We know that Japanese immigration is forbidden by the most business-like nations because Japanese employees work for such low wages. The problem is therefore at root economic. In this respect also, how can such an economic problem be justly solved except through the good offices of a world parliament possessing full powers of legislation and of execution of its laws?

We have in the Council of the League of Nations a harmonising power, but its powers of legislation and execution are far

too limited for the present needs of the world. It cannot (except in a very limited way) enforce righteousness and justice even though its deliberations and decisions are undoubtedly in the direction of righteousness and justice—and why? Because its members do not represent the world, but only biased governments. They are under the authority of their various governments which are bound by private treaties and by especial prejudices—for naturally, each national government is biased by the narrow desires of the nation. When the Council of the League has come to a decision upon any world problem it is still faced by the fact that its righteous decision must be sanctioned by the various governments forming the League, and therefore the decision may be hindered in its execution by lack of unanimity outside the League Council. The indecision of the Council over the Sino-Japanese trouble shows us clearly how much the Council is under the national governments, for it merely reflected their indecision, their fears, and their diplomatic relationships. This subordination rendered the Council of the League ineffective—to the misfortune of all those innocent victims of war in Manchuria and in the city of Shanghai! We repeat, had the Council been composed of fully empowered representatives of the peoples of the world, having full policing powers in their hands, the Sino-Japanese case would have been in good care, and orderliness would have been maintained.

This is the moral of Shanghai, and our hearts bleed for the poor men, women, and children whose lives have been sacrificed because mankind is yet asleep to its best interests. We must work to awaken public opinion in all the world so that more power and more independence of action may be given to the Council of the League—until that embryo of the World Parliament has become fully effective to control the world. Two things are essential for the full consummation of our best wishes and hopes: Spiritual guidance and universal education.

It is no use blaming the Council of the League for its present ineffectiveness. It is as yet but the first gesture of the civilised world's best opinion. The right way is to give more and more support to this first sign of a new and nobler policy in the world's affairs—a world-policy transcending all petty national policies, worthy of man—and advance far beyond the mean quarrelsome sectional policies of the past. Party politics such as we



have known all our lives must give place to truthful and well-trained administration, so that health and real happiness shall come to be the common lot of the whole of mankind. We Baha'is love the beautiful sentences of the beloved Abdu'l Baha concerning this great matter:—

“Originally mankind was one family, united and compact; later, the members of this happy family were divided and subdivided through ignorance and prejudice. Now the time has come again for their final unification. Universal peace will bring about this long-wished-for consummation.”

“Once the Parliament of Man is established and its constituent parts organised, the governments of the world having entered into a covenant of eternal friendship will have no need of keeping large standing armies and navies. A few battalions to preserve internal order, and an international police to keep the highways of the sea clear, are all that will be necessary. Then these huge sums will be diverted to other more useful channels, pauperism will disappear, knowledge will increase, the victories of peace will be sung by poets and bards, knowledge will improve the conditions, and mankind will be rocked in the cradle of felicity and bliss. Then, whether a government is constitutional or republican, hereditary monarchy or democratic, the rulers will devote their time to the prosperity of their nations, the legislation of just and sane law, and the fostering of closer and more amicable relations with their neighbours. Thus will the world of humanity become a mirror reflecting the virtues and attributes of the Kingdom of God.”

### **The Baha'i Movement is Universal.**

As no doubt this News Letter will come into the hands of people who have never before heard of the Baha'i Movement, we wish to point out to them its universality.

Throughout the world there is a response to the call of the Kingdom of God through Baha'u'llah, the greatest teacher of the Age, whose principles are entirely necessary for the peace, happiness, and advancement of mankind. These principles when applied will unify mankind; harmonise science and religion; remove the barriers which now separate color, nationality, and religion; eliminate economic injustices; and cause to be established a universal House of Justice for the welfare of the world.

It requires but a perusal of Dr. Esslemont's book "Baha'u'llah and the New Era" to realise that herein is the Spirit of truth guiding us into all truth. It marks the Age of the fulfilment of the Lord Jesus Christ's promises concerning the appearance of the Spirit of truth, the Comforter. Hitherto we have been led by faith, but we are now crossing the borderline into Reality.

As surely as it is the nature of an acorn to develop under proper conditions into an oak tree, or a pippin to grow into an apple-bearing tree, so likewise is it the nature of mankind to develop into the Kingdom of God under proper conditions. These proper conditions are provided in the Baha'i Teachings. It is no use anyone denying this mighty truth, for in the onward march of mankind all opposite doctrines prove themselves to be false and entirely worthless. The way of God is in this Revelation through Baha'u'llah, and His way is best. All lovers of mankind, aye! and all lovers of the animals, and the birds, and the trees, and the flowers (which are our wonderful companions in this life on earth) naturally respond to the teachings of Baha'u'llah.

In Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, India, Burmah, China, Japan, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, the Polynesian Islands, Russia, Turkestan, the Americas, and the European countries—in fact, everywhere—Baha'i friends are to be found; and these have the sympathy of many people around them in their work for the grand ideal; for the people of the Kingdom are of every race, nation, class, and creed. In Geneva the Baha'i friends have a centre (the International Baha'i Bureau) which is in touch with the Peace activities of the whole world; whilst Baha'i teachings and views are disseminated by such beautiful and interesting journals as the Baha'i Magazine, published in Washington, U.S.A.; the Baha'i Weekly, published in Lahore, India; and other magazines published in Rangoon, Adelaide, and Stuttgart. Baha'i book publications are, of course, numerous, and the whole Cause is kept informed of all activities by means of News Letters, correspondence, and Baha'i travellers. There is no secrecy about the Baha'i Movement; it is a frank and very cheerful expression of the Will of God and the very highest hopes of man.

### **Shoghi Effendi's Letter.**

The beloved Guardian's letter of November, which appeared in the Baha'i Weekly of December 19th issue, has been read in all the centres in Britain and by various friends living too far away to attend meetings. It is a most masterly summary of



events and a most urgent call to the friends to do their utmost in these days of world-wide bewilderment. The vision of the Baha'i friends is clear, strong, and unerring. Assurance is theirs. The world of the future is in their hands—a trust from God. We cannot do better than quote the words of Mrs. Annie Romer, one of the very active friends in London, who writes: "The comprehensive letter received from the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, read at a recent nineteen-day feast, awoke in our hearts a deep desire to become, as he entreats us, '*conscious of the sublimity of our calling and initiated into the ennobling principles of the administration of Baha'u'llah.*' The letter is a survey of events happening in the world. It strikes at the root of the disease which affects the whole of humanity. It is a solemn warning and a glorious promise. Every sincere follower of Baha'u'llah has a staggering responsibility in such a time as this, and this is emphasized repeatedly in this message; but coupled with this responsibility is a joy in Shoghi Effendi's vision of the future as foretold by Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha."

We thank the beloved Guardian for this brilliant guidance and encouragement, and for all the great work which he has done and is doing on behalf of the Baha'i Cause. We thank him also for his constant prayers, untiring zeal, and unwavering love. There is no need to say that the friends throughout the world reciprocate his love, and pray Almighty God to bless, comfort, and uphold that heart of Truth and Light on Carmel.

We close this News Letter with the brilliant Baha'i loving greeting to all:—

ALLAH-U-ABHA! ALLAH-U-ABHA!

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 Pinchon ...	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", a translation by Shoghi Effendi of Nabil's history of the early days 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.

#### INFORMATION.

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.  
MISS CHALLIS, "RIZWAN, Broadstone, Dorset.  
MRS. E. P. KENWORTHY, 24, Second Avenue, York.