

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

August, 1932.

"If thou seekest the attainment of the Holy Spirit, be a companion of the noble, for the righteous have quaffed from the Chalice of Immortality passed by the hand of the Cup-Bearer of Eternity, and they quicken and illumine the hearts of the dead."
(Baha'u'llah).

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is our sad duty to record the departure from this world of Abdul Baha's revered and saintly sister, "The greatest Holy Leaf," as Baha'u'llah named her. But we know that from the spiritual plane she has entered she can help us more than when hindered by her weak body, some of us have felt the reality of this since her passing very strongly. In her immediate circle she was always a fountain of peace and serenity, but now her influence can spread far and wide more freely. For those who had the privilege of meeting her, the wise far-seeing eyes were deep pools of spiritual calm, she seemed to move in another world than ours, remote from our faithless agitations. Her life had been full of work and usefulness, as well as much hardship and trouble.

As in the presence of the Master one could not think an untrue thought, so when with her all littleness and untruth shrank away, for a great soul raises our vibrations, and we see more clearly.

From Haifa we have received a news-letter written by the Spiritual Assembly which gives us the following account:

"Hearts are filled with unutterable grief at the irreparable loss the Bahai world has suffered through the passing away of the glorious spirit of the Greatest Holy Leaf from the life of the earth, after an illness which lasted nine days. On Friday morning, July 15th, about 1 o'clock, she passed beyond the Veil into the Realm of Light and Beauty.

The funeral took place on Saturday afternoon. It brought together representatives of various religious communities, chief officials of the Government, notables of Haifa, and native friends. With the casket upraised on the shoulders of the mourning believers the procession slowly wended its way up Mount Carmel. The sacred coffin was first laid in the shrine of the Bab where a Tablet was chanted, then taken to its hallowed resting place on the slope of Mount Carmel, about 250 meters from the Sacred Shrines of the Bab and Abdul Baha."

London.

On June 18th an interesting wedding service was held at the Bahai Room, Walmar House, when Miss Winifred Edwards married Mr. Lontfullah Alizade. About fifty friends, including many Persians gathered in the flower-decorated centre. Mrs. Ford from

New York and Mr. Asgarzadeh, performed the simple ceremony, which consisted of chanting in Persian by Mr. Asgarzadeh and the reading of the beautiful marriage tablet of Abdul Baha, in English, by Mrs. Ford. This is printed in the Baha'i prayer book and appeared in an early copy of the Star of the West (now called The Baha'i Magazine). Nothing could more beautifully express the reality of a spiritual union on earth.

The wedding cake, cut by the bride, finished a most joyous lunch and the spiritual joy and unity seemed indeed a symbol of the joining of East and West. To those present not familiar with the Baha'i teaching and practice it was a revelation, and to the Baha'is an added realization of the priceless privilege of nearness to the Great Message of truth and power for this day. The best wishes of all go with Mr. and Mrs. Alizade in their new life.

The friends welcome to the London Assembly Mr. Louis Dear of Montreal and Mr. Oziz Yazdi, from Egypt, both enthusiastic Baha'is. The increasing number of young people attending meetings and showing interest augurs well for the future of our Young People's Group.

Our visitors during the last three months include: Mrs. Scott, Denver, Col.; Prof. Makoto Nagai, Tokio; H. Nabhan, Esq., Lebanon; M. Bozorgmehr, Birmingham; Dr. Cohen, Danzig; Mrs. Selma Cohen, Vienna; B. Kailhoosrah; Mrs. Lunt, Boston; Hossein Ovaregan, Paris, and Mrs. Sherborne, Ocean Falls, Canada.

A striking factor in recent Baha'i work is the great diversity of nationalities represented at the gatherings. At a recent Monday afternoon meeting with eight present, no two were of the same nationality; at another meeting of sixteen, nine nationalities were represented. Many visitors have spoken of this practical application of the Baha'i principle that all prejudice must be eliminated, stating that they have not found the same thing elsewhere.

Mr. H. B. F. Bingham, a devoted member of our group, and for many months treasurer of the London Assembly, passed away suddenly during the spring. Baha'i prayers were said at the Room and deep appreciation expressed for his loving service.

The sixth summer of activity under the inspiration of Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford of New York has passed. Several outside groups were addressed but the main work to which this inspired servant of Baha'u'llah devoted herself here was concentrated upon the furthering of the Cause at its London centre. The activities at the Baha'i centre went forward steadily, with enthusiastic meetings testing the capacity of the room. Several teas were given and interviews with persons of capacity whose interest was attracted to the Cause.

A very enjoyable outing was held at Chipsted, with a talk on the hillside; two Sunday afternoon meetings at Mrs. George's; a peace meeting at Armitage Hall, with Lady Blomfield in the chair, Godfrey Mowatt, Esq., and Mrs. Ford as speakers on Peace and the Baha'i Movement; and a beautiful garden party arranged by the young people at the home of Mrs. Brown, here Mrs. Ford's talk was given on the lawn where music, interpretative dancing and tea added to the joy. Many young people heard the message for the first time and expressed great interest.

The summer's work definitely shows an increase in the working body of the Cause and a most gratifying spirit of unity. Many groups have asked that Mrs. Ford reserve a date for them next year.

In many talks the better world of the future emerging out of the present day chaos and disintegration, so clearly foretold in the Bahai teachings was vividly pictured. Daily the signs increase constantly the opportunities multiply. The coming months will see great changes in the spread of peace, in economic revisions, in religious unity. Now is a time for Baha'is to have unbounded faith, and to put into practice Abdu'l Baha's oft-repeated words, "Rest not for a moment. Teach the Cause. Teach. Teach."

Brighton.

On March 21st Mrs. Knight of Brighton passed beyond the veil. For many years she has been a faithful believer in the Baha'i Message which she first heard in New York. She left instructions that she wished for a Bahai Funeral, and some of the Friends travelled from London on March 24th bringing with them a beautiful wreath from the National Assembly and bunches of the little "Anemone fulgens," which covers the slopes of Mount Carmel at this season, and were called by the Master the "red tulips of the love of God." It is thought that these flowers were those that Christ commended as "the lilies of the field."

Some of these were placed inside the coffin and some were dropped on to it after it was lowered into the grave.

A very beautiful and impressive service was held in the little Chapel in the Cemetery. First prayers of Abdul Baba and Baha'u'llah for the Dead, selections from the Hidden Words, and words of Abdul Baha on the Soul after Death were read. For the sake of some of the relatives the Psalm, "The Lord is My Shepherd" was included, and prayers of Baha'u'llah were chanted in Persian. Many of the hearers were much impressed by the beauty of the words that they heard, and some said afterwards that they recognised some of the "Hidden Words" that had been often on the lips of Mrs. Knight during her illness.

At the grave the Friends stood in silent prayer as the coffin was lowered, and the sunshone out with the joyful promise of early spring symbolising the breaking of the winter of old age into the new and glorious life in the Abha Kingdom.

Manchester.

The friends in Manchester are holding cheerful public meetings every Sunday evening in a well lit room over the Blackley Co-operative Stores, 17, Queen's Road, Harpurhey. They have a simple yet well defined Service from 6.45 to 8 o'clock, after which, opportunity is given for questions and testimony. It is hoped that this Assembly Room will form a good base for future propaganda efforts. The friends are happy to report that they keep contact with Wick, Caithness, one of the results being another review of recent Baha'i Magazines in the John O'Groat Journal of July 15th issue. The kindly, broad-minded editor himself writes these reviews, which, during several years, have gone into all parts of the world.

Bournemouth.

Meetings are regularly held every Sunday evening at Broadstone, and several new people have become attracted to the Baha'i message, and are slowly absorbing the teachings.

We were privileged in again being visited by Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford, who on July 8th gave a splendid lecture at St. Peter's Hall, Bournemouth, to an enthusiastic audience. We are endeavouring to follow up her work by prayer, and personal effort to keep in touch with those interested.

Members of the Group are giving regularly and systematically to the Temple Fund, and the Baha'i Service Fund started by this Group in January last, is doing splendid work in helping sick folks in many practical ways, and thus spreading the Baha'i spirit of service for which our cause stands.

If members of other Groups can offer any suggestions or take any part in the work of this Service Fund, please communicate with the Secretary of the Bournemouth Group at Rizwan, Broadstone.

Bradford.

Mrs. Mary Hanford Ford paid a visit to Bradford by the invitation of the Baha'is there, and was the guest of Mrs. Booth of Radfield, Eccleshill, for about seven days. She spoke on the Baha'i teachings many times, and the meetings were well attended. Both members of the Baha'i group and friends were inspired by the spiritual explanations of the Cause given by Mrs. Ford.

The Secretary of the "No More War" Movement arranged a meeting at his house where Mrs. Ford spoke specially on Peace. Two Wesleyan churches made a joint meeting for her to give an address; and the Bradford "Society of Friends" invited Mrs. Ford to speak at their Sunday evening meeting.

Leeds.

On Tuesday evening, July 26th, the first Baha'i meeting was held in this city. Through the kindness of Mr. Frank Hurst of Leeds (a member of the Bradford group), we were able to hold a meeting at the Y.M.C.A. rooms. We were delighted that in view of only one advertisement in the newspaper about 16 people were present at this meeting. Mrs. Ford explained the Baha'i Cause in a most interesting way, and expressions of appreciation came from the audience after the address. A few people were definitely interested in the Cause, and the Bradford group for the time being (through Mr. Hurst) will keep in touch with Leeds friends. This was indeed a great venture, and our special thanks are due to Mr. Hurst.

York.

Mrs. Kenworthy writes: Owing to illness, and to a variety of causes, the regular meetings in York have been given up for the summer, but we have had a beautiful visit from Mrs. Ford who gave us helpful meetings and conversations. We wished that thousands could have listened to her when she spoke on the "World Crisis and the Baha'i teachings." She gave an inspiring survey of world conditions, and of the wonderful working of God in the midst of it all to bring about results greater than we know.

Information concerning the Movement can be obtained from the Secretaries:

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

MISS CHALLIS, "Rizwan," Broadstone, Dorset.

MISS ALICE WILLIAMS, 330, Chester Road, Old Trafford, Manchester

MISS MARION BURGESS, 7, Summer set Place, Great Horton, Bradford, Yorkshire.

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 | 15/6 |
| Some Answered Questions | 8/- |
| Baha'u'llah and the New Era. Cloth 6/-, Paper | 2/6 |
| Baha'i Prayers (on order) | 3/- |
| Small Books of Prayers | 6d. |
| Small grey covered Book of Prayers | 3d. |
| Hidden Words. Leather 4/6, Cloth 2/3, Paper | 9d. |
| Paris Talks of Abdu'l Baha | 3/- |
| London Talks of Abdu'l Baha | 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. |
| "Book of Certainty" (Iqan).....to order about | 13/9 |

Postage extra.