

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

May, 1933.

To the Editor of the Bahai New Letter of the British Isles...

How shall I write of Khanum the beloved, the "Greatest Holy Leaf" ?

To sit day after day in the Tea room of her home in Haifa, listening to her gentle voice, serene with its own passionless patience of loving, as she told of things which, in scene following scene, made up the story of her devoted life, was an experience to be treasured, rather than a circumstance to be described.

These pictures live :—

In a dark room near the fearful prison a lovely, sensitive little girl of six is in hiding. She holds the baby brother close in her slender arms, she comforts him and stills his cries, lest they should be heard by the enemy who, mad with fanaticism, had thrown her Father into prison. Her Mother, taking with her the eldest child, Abbas, has gone out, seeking tidings of the adored husband.

Cowering in terror, Khanum hears the shouts and howls of a maddened crowd, thirsting for the lives of those against whom their hatred has been directed !

Torture and cruelty are stalking unrestrained through the streets of Tihiran. Who shall be the next victims ? Her Father, her Mother, her brother ?

"I am making you sad, my dear, by my stories, but, if I did not tell you sad things, I should have nothing to tell, for everything in my life has been sorrowful ! but I myself have always been happy, for in the Path of God, all is joy !"

When Khanum was growing up into a lovely maiden, she besought her Father to permit her to remain unmarried, free to devote her whole life to His service and that of Abdul Baha.

Her heart's desire was granted.

Therefore it came that from the terror of the tiny girl's ordeal in Tihiran to the day of her passing in July, 1932, through the long story of trials, difficulties and anxieties without number, her radiant love made luminous her deeds and her words.

To be in her presence was to be conscious of a benediction, as from one who dwelt always in that City not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Khanum was a shining example of the triumph of the spirit over every human condition, however tragic !

To have known and loved that beautiful saint, "the greatest Holy Leaf," is to live ever more with the deep sense of a vouchsafed privilege.

Sitarieh Khanum, Lady Blomfield.

London.

Evidence that the Baha'i Cause is becoming better known to progressive and influential personalities in Great Britain is furnished by allusions to it found in current periodical and other literature. An example is the statement made by the Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel, G.C.B., M.P., in John O'London's Weekly, March 25, 1933. He says :

"It is possible indeed to pick out points of fundamental agreement among all creeds. That is the essential purpose of the Baha'i Religion, the foundation and growth of which is one of the most striking movements that have proceeded from the East in recent generations."

During the past year there has been a welcome increase in the number of Persian students in London who are of the Baha'i faith and have affiliated themselves with the activities of the Cause here. These have included Mr. Balyuzi, Mr. Homayon, Mr. Djavidani and Mr. Yazdi. Other accessions to the local group have been Miss Gilmore and Miss Haines, who have been transferred to London from Bournemouth, for residential reasons. One of our newest and most active recruits, Mrs. Routh, formerly of Hampstead, has been lost to us temporarily. Her return from her sojourn in Australia is eagerly awaited.

That the Baha'i spirit and ideals are permeating other groups is manifest in many directions. At the regular Wednesday meetings the speakers have included Mr. Lionel Aird, Secretary of the Friendship Committee of East and West ; Mrs. Brants, International House for Students ; Mr. Goldsmith, Esperanto Movement ; and Mr. Chaplin of the All People's Association. The co-operation gives like-minded workers a fuller knowledge of the Revelation. Prayers for the work of the Cause are read especially on Monday afternoons ; and Mrs. George's Sunday meetings are specially for teaching.

A delightful Unity Feast was given at the Baha'i Room by Miss Gamble on the last day of the Rizwan, at which there were many guests as well as Baha'is.

When Abdu'l Baha was in London he outlined the idea of a play which has now been written by Mrs. Basil Hall and published under the title of "The Drama of the Kingdom," much to the satisfaction of the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. A new avenue of approach to the Cause is opened by this notable work.

Miss Julia Goldman, of Honolulu, who has spent much time in London during the winter, has assisted the Baha'i group in many

ways. She is now in Haifa and we anticipate fresh inspiration upon her return. Mr. Mark Tobey, also, has been visiting the Holy Shrines and the Guardian. It is hoped that he may bring back some photographs for use in an illustrated talk.

At the annual election of the London Spiritual Assembly : Mr. Alizade, Mr. Asjarzadeh, Lady Blomfield, Miss Baxter, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Balyuzo, Miss Lea, Mrs. Romer, Mrs. Slade were chosen as members.

The National Spiritual Assembly, chosen by 19 delegates previously elected by local assemblies, consists of : Miss Challis (chairman), Mrs. George (vice chairman), Mrs. Slade (secretary and treasurer), Mrs. Romer (assist. secretary), Mr. Asgarzadeh, Mr. Balyuzo, Mr. Lee, Mr. King, Mr. Toby, Editor of the " News letter " Mrs. George.

The newly elected spiritual assemblies are discussing plans for advancing the work of the Cause and hope that, with a true spirit of unity, greater results may be obtained during the coming year. The confirmations of the Supreme Concourse are promised when the magnet of unity is present to attract these rays from the divine world.

At the Bahai centre, 19, Grosvenor Place, S.W., public meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock ; and the room is open every day from 2 to 5 for reading or for inquiries, except Saturday and Sunday.

London Youth Group Report.

This is a brief resumé of the activities of our Youth Group since its inception four months ago. We started with a committee of six. Cards were printed with the 12 basic Bahai principles which are read at the beginning of every general meeting. Miss Baxter kindly undertook to teach Esperanto, and her classes have been attended with great enthusiasm by her pupils.

Mr. Balyuzi undertook our study class of Nabil's Narrative which is held every second and fourth Wednesdays in the month. This study class was suggested by our Blessed Guardian, who also advised us to keep in close and constant touch with the Persian and American Youth Groups. This suggestion was carried out, and we had a charming letter of cheer and encouragement from Miss Herklotz, the New York Secretary. Every few months an open meeting is held to obtain new ideas from the members for making the programme more interesting and furthering the Cause.

On April 22nd at the Rizwan Party given by Lady Blomfield, the Youth Group gave an Eastern play called " We are still nine," written by a Persian student (named Fazi) while at Beirut. This was excellently rendered by Miss Molly Brown, Mr. Asgarzadehs, two little daughters, Parvin and Pamela, and Messrs. Balyuz'i Dehkan and Djavidani. The Youth Group also gave an evening party on Saturday, April 29th. Over 200 tickets were sold, and the guests numbered 180. The programme was divided into an entertainment for an hour, and two and a half hours for dancing. A play was acted by our young people entitled : " Disinherited "—the story of a young Muslim who is disinherited by his father, as he has fallen in love with a Christian Armenian girl. There was singing, recitations, and some exquisite dancing to finish the entertainment.

On April 30th the new committee of 9 members was elected : Mr. H. Balyuzi (chairman), Mr. A. Dehkan (vice chairman), Mrs. L. Alizade (secretary), Mr. Yazdi (assist. secretary), Miss R. G. Gray (treasurer), Mr. L. Alizade (assist. treasurer), Miss M. Brown, Miss C. Aldridge, Mr. Audigier.

Manchester

The spiritual assembly for the ensuing year has been elected, and consists of the following members :

Mr. E. T. Hall (chairman), Mr. Joseph Lee (secretary), Mr. James Chessell (treasurer), Miss Alice Williams, Mr. Alfred Sugar, Mr. Alfred Collinge, Miss Lucy Hall, Miss Mabel Chessell, Mr. Edward Sugar.

A retrospect of the preceding year is interesting and somewhat gratifying, inasmuch as it has been a progressive one for the group. The thanks of the friends are due to the officers and members of the retiring council, for their admirable management of affairs during that period.

An important step made during the year was the taking of a public room, and there maintaining weekly services on Sunday evenings. The beauty and sweetness of those meetings have been wonderful ; the Principles of the Cause having been taught with vigour and the fragrances of Baha'u'llah diffused with joy.

A notable event was the visit of Miss Julia Goldman, of Honolulu, on Sunday, 19th of February.

The evening was a memorable one, and long will the remembrance of it live in the minds of the friends who were present. Miss

Goldman gave an interesting account of the activities of the Bahais in Honolulu, her journey across America, and the activities of the Bahais with whom she came into contact upon that journey. Dwelling upon her visit to the beautiful Mashriqu-l-Adhkar, at Wilmette, on the shores of Lake Michigan, she gave us a vivid description of the temple and a realization of the significance of this wonderful symbol of the Glory of God.

Her departure was an occasion of regret and joy. Regret that she was leaving us, joy that she had been with us. Truly she is an ambassador whose embassy is above all other embassies.

Recently the festival of Rizwan was celebrated by special services on two successive Sunday evenings. On the respective occasions, Mr. Alfred Sugar, and Mr. E. T. Hall gave the friends feasts of truth and beauty by speaking of the first Rizwan, the friends feeling that the event had been fitly, if quietly, commemorated.

The Esperanto class still continues to flourish under the direction of Mr. Edward Sugar.

Recently the Assembly issued a new booklet, entitled "The Bahai Call to Unity and World Fellowship."

It consists of extracts from the John o'Groat Journal, of Wick, Caithness, Scotland reviewing the Bahai Cause. They were written by Mr. Millar, the editor of the Journal, who has for some years evinced a growing interest in the activities of the Movement.

It is hoped that the beauty and sweetness of these selections will further assist us in our diffusion of the fragrances of the Cause of Baha'u'llah.

The Group is now looking forward to continuing its work with increasing vigour; with the hope and faith that the Cause will be spread further and wider during the ensuing year.

Bahai meetings Sunday evenings at 6.45, at 17, Queen's Road, Hapurhey, Manchester.

Bournemouth.

At the last meeting of the Bournemouth Assembly the following officers were elected:

Chairman, Miss Challis; secretary, Miss Cheesman; treasurer, Mr. H. King.

There has not been an opportunity for a public meeting re-

cently, but the usual weekly Sunday Meeting has been held regularly at Broadstone.

Two delegates went to London on April 29th in order to vote for the N.S.A.

We are happy to say that the members of the Bournemouth Group are working as quietly and harmoniously in the Service of the Cause as they have always done.

Bradford.

The friends in Bradford have had the pleasure of a second visit from Miss Julia Goldman, who spoke to our Bahai Group at the home of Mrs. Wilkinson.

Miss Goldman's visits have been a great inspiration and help to the Bradford friends. She spoke on "The Station of a Prophet of God" and "What it means to be a Bahai" and convinced us that we must know more of the teachings of Baha'u'llah, this latest and great manifestation of God. We are therefore, on Miss Goldman's suggestion, starting to study the thirty specified lessons, and hope our knowledge gained thereby will be the means of equipping us to put the Bahai teachings before enquirers more clearly and convincingly. We are indeed grateful to Miss Goldman for her valued help, and want her to feel that her talks and her presence have been a great stimulus to the Bradford Group. Miss Goldman also addressed a Re-union of an important "Peace Society" in Bradford, and ably put the Bahai viewpoint relative to peace and international co-operation. Her visits to this city will long be remembered by all friends whose privilege and joy it was to meet her.

Information concerning the Movement can be obtained from the Secretaries:

MRS. ROMER, Bahai Room, 19, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1.

MISS CHALLIS, Rizwan, Broadstone, Dorset.

MR. J. LEE, 525, Oldham Road, Faelsworth, Manchester.

MISS M. BURGESS, 6, Crow Tree Lane, Daisy Hill, Bradford.

The address for all cables is now "Asgarzadeh, London."

For the National Spiritual Assembly cables should be addressed: "National, care Asgarzadah, London."

Books can be purchased from the Librarian, Baha'i Room,
19, Grosvenor Place, S.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	2/10 —
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/- —
The Baha'i Revelation, by Thornton Chase	4/- —
Peace Programme	2/- —
The Baha'i World	to order, about 10/6 —
The Coming of the Glory by Florence Pinchon	1/- —
	(reduced from 2/6)
Esperanto, Short Account	2d. —
"Book of Certainty" (Ighan)	to order, about 13/9 —
Baha'u'llah and the New Era in Esperanto ...	4/-
The Baha'i Movement (short account)	7d. —
The Brilliant Proof (by Mirza Abul Fazl)	10d. —
The "Spirit of the Age" by Horace Holley	7/6 —
Baha'i Administration	6/3 —
Observations of a Baha'i Traveller by Mason Remey	4/0
The Oriental Rose, by Mary Hanford Ford	3/6 —
The Benediction—Music, and Words in English and Esperanto	2d. —
Calendars (Cards)	9d. —

Postage extra.

The edition of Hidden Words at 9d. can be sold at 25 per cent.
discount on taking a dozen or more, plus postage.

*Universal Religion
Unity Triumphant*

*7/-
2/6*