

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

**September, 1933.**



" Verily this is that most Great Beauty proclaimed in the books of God's messengers, through whom truth is distinguished from falsehood ; through whom the wisdom of every command is made manifest."

BAHA'U'LLAH.

#### London.

During June and July a conference was held in London which was a fulfilment of the prophecy and admonition of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha—the World Economic Conference—when representatives of sixty-six nations met to discuss world problems. It was the beginning of a new era ; the sign of the awakening in world consciousness of the unity of mankind. If results were disappointing one must remember the immensity of the undertaking, the diversities, in all ways, of the participants, and their ingrained prejudices. But the idea of consultation is sound and definitely Baha'i ; it will eventually succeed when human hearts have become purified and less selfish.

On Sunday, June 11th, the day preceding the opening of the Conference, the Baha'is held a prayer meeting for the spiritual guidance of the assembled delegates. Notices were sent to all delegations, newspapers, and interested people. The effort was not alone to acquaint visitors and others with our teachings, but to focus the dynamic power contained in the Baha'i Cause on the giant undertaking for the good of the human race. This meeting and later ones were advertised in the Saturday "Times" and "Evening Standard", also in the "Observer." Over fifty people attended the initial meeting where, under Mrs. Slade's chairmanship, a sincere spirituality and humility touched all hearts. As announced at this meeting Baha'i prayers for the guidance of the Conference were read in the Baha'i Room at noon, on many succeeding days.

Mr. Mountfort Mills came to London to assist in the Baha'i work. He spoke at several advertised meetings on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. His subjects included : "Today : Our Great Privilege and Responsibility" ; "Our Stricken World : How Its Economic Ills Can be Cured" ; and "Why the World Needs the Baha'i Movement." The Baha'i Room was filled at all of these meetings, many enquirers asking questions and manifesting interest. Among some vital statements made by Mr. Mills were these :

" Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha knew and recognised the conditions of the world and the great need for a change in human

consciousness seventy-five years ago, before any one else thought or spoke of it. They recognised the 'separateness' which existed between religious systems and nations, and that nothing but the power of the Holy Spirit to change hearts could remedy it. I have asked many noted clergymen to explain the Holy Spirit but they have not been able to do it. Abdu'l Baha spoke of it as such a powerful force that when we go with it our possibilities are almost limitless, but when we go against it there is great danger of destruction. To my knowledge it was the first time a Manifestation of God had given a definite plan for the reconstruction of human society as a whole, and the first time that Oneness had been taught in this way. It seems to me that the inertia of the great mass of the people is more dangerous than active wickedness."

Mr. Mills, in answering numerous questions said that "the Baha'i plan worked in the days of Abdu'l Baha ; that the organisation which is inherent in the teachings of Baha'u'llah was the instrument through which the great spirit, which is surging through the world with more power than ever before, can work. He quoted Shoghi Effendi as saying that each one of the believers should think of himself not as English, French, German or American, but as a cell in an organism bounded only by the size of the planet." He spoke of the discipline of submission to the spiritual assembly as a "five-finger spiritual exercise," emphasizing the fact that Abdu'l Baha considered the assemblies as a principle of organisation so important that he referred matters to the Egyptian assembly during his lifetime. He said "The great bounty of working for Baha'u'llah, under the leadership of Shoghi Effendi, constituted an opportunity rather than a sacrifice" and added : "The vital fact (reiterated often by Shoghi Effendi) that the Baha'is as whole did not realize the seriousness of the Cause—that it was not only getting together and beaming on one another, but that the future civilization of the world was embedded in the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the working out of his great plan for Assemblies and individuals."

Every heart was touched by a message from Shoghi Effendi expressing the hope that the believers would so deepen their consciousness of fundamental unity, and increase their capacity to explain the teachings, that when humanity fails to find help in other places it can turn to us and receive spiritual guidance. Mr. Mills said that this would require a well-trained, capable organisation, functioning in direct contact with the Spirit to meet the great need of the world. The structure must be very secure to withstand the powerful forces which will inevitably operate against it.



At the last meeting of the series, held on Sunday afternoon, July 16th, the pressing need of divine help in the baffling conditions of today was realized. Representatives of other religions were invited to join with the Baha'is, in prayer, in their own way, to the one God of all, for guidance and help. Professor Shastri represented the Hindu faith, Mr. A. Ogeerally, of Trinidad, the Moslems, Mrs. Bethune, the Christians, and Mr. Ho the Confucians. Great strength and beauty pervaded the Jewish prayers and readings rendered by the Hon. Lily Montagu. All differences were dissolved in the pure white light of spiritual unity in this meeting which illustrated the teaching of Baha'u'llah that "All are the leaves of one tree," in offering joint prayers to God. It is hoped that a meeting of a similar character, with a larger representation of the various world religions, will be held in the autumn.

Mr. Mills has promised to visit England again in the near future. Upon his return from a fourteen-day visit to Haifa Mr. Mark Tobey gave us many messages of inspiration and love, stressing particularly Shoghi Effendi's desire that the centres be strengthened and made spiritually alive and glowing; as from them must go out a definite spiritual message and influence.

Miss Julia Goldman has been spreading the message in many ways during his stay in London, through talks at the meetings and small gatherings. She has gone to Geneva to assist in the work of the Baha'i Bureau at that place.

The Baha'i Movement was represented at this year's New Thought Conference by Mrs. Slade, who spoke especially of the significance of the coming of Baha'u'llah to the world at this time.

A nineteen-day feast was given by Mrs. Slade at her home near High Wycombe, during June, and a Baha'i garden party at the home of Mr. Asgarzadeh, who is, we are glad to say, recovering satisfactorily from his recent motor accident. Miss Lea acted as joint hostess on the latter occasion. Both gatherings were greatly enjoyed.

Messrs. Rochan and Hakim, Paris; Mr. Safwatt, Cairo; Mr. Anjer, Norway; Miss Henkel, Frankfurt; Mr. Mathews, New York City; Mrs. Fenton, Paris; and Miss Frankenstein, Dusseldorf, and Dr. Ingster, Poland, have recently visited our room.

Public meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 p.m., at the Baha'i Room, 19, Grosvenor Place, S.W.1. (Telephone. Sloane 5012). The room is open every day (except Saturdays and Sundays) for enquirers or for reading the books from 2 to 5. On Mondays at 4 o'clock there is a prayer meeting.

## YOUTH GROUP REPORT.

### London.

Eight of our Young People arranged a Summer School for nine days at Shoreham-by-sea, taking a bungalow owned by one of the older Bahais, with a view to spending part of the time studying, and the rest of the time as vacation.

Two members were chosen to be in charge of the catering and accommodation, and Mr. Balyuzi, the Chairman of the Youth Group supervised the studying. This comprised lectures given by Mr. Balyuzi for about an hour each morning, followed by discussion for about half an hour or more. The lectures were based on the cultural and social evolution of Man since the very early days of Christ, touching briefly on the effect of Christianity upon the world, and following events to the birth of Mohammad, with special emphasis on Islamic culture and civilisation right up to the time of the Bab and Baha'u'llah. It was felt that the Guardian wishes all the Baha'is to be fully conversant with the teachings of Mohammad, thereby reaching a fuller understanding by this knowledge, of the great message which Baha'u'llah brings to the present world.

The meetings of the Youth Group have been closed during the summer vacation, but will be resumed in September; they will be held once a fortnight as a general meeting on Fridays, and alternate weeks for the study class. Miss Baxter holds her Esperanto class every week.

### Manchester.

The friends in Manchester have recently had the pleasure of the loan of a copy of Nabil's Narrative from Mrs. Kenworthy of York, and their thanks are due to her for her great kindness in enabling them to become acquainted with that wonderful book. It is being read and discussed with great interest, the beauty and grandeur of it reaching to the heart of all. Its pages give a vivid picture of events which heralded and succeeded the Declaration of the Bab, and give one a profound realization of the utter significance and awfulness of those events.

Meetings at the room in Queens Road have been suspended, but it is intended to resume them shortly, when a room more suitably situated has been found. Meanwhile, the friends gather regularly at 1, Norton Street, Higher Broughton, and sweet and pleasant are the meetings there held.

The younger element of the group, stirred by the desire to probe more deeply into the teachings, decided to gather themselves to-



gether for that purpose, and consequently a study group was formed. Several good meetings have been held, on each occasion different aspects of the teachings being studied.

The Esperanto class is still held weekly.

We are very pleased to note that three very beautiful and useful reviews of various Bahai Magazines have appeared in the John O' Groat Journal, of Wick, since the last news letter was issued.

Also it is good to note that the director of a well known Paris journal, during a recent tour in Palestine, became interested in the Bahai Movement, and has now come into touch with the Paris Bahai friends.

A recent and happy event was the visit of Mr. Marshall, of Birmingham, to Manchester, when he received the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Hall. His sojourn, though short, was a pleasant one. On the Sunday afternoon a few of the friends, with Mr. Marshall, spent a delightful hour or two in some beautiful gardens to the north of the city. In the evening, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hall, the friends gathered informally and discussed various aspects of the teachings, portions of "Hidden Words," and Nabil's Narrative.

The friends in Manchester send their greetings to all other friends, in Britain and every other country.

#### **Bournemouth.**

There is very little news to report from Bournemouth. A few small meetings have been held during the summer, but the friends have been scattered, and no marked progress has been made. They hope to re-assemble in September, and to discuss plans for furthering the Cause during the winter months."

#### **Bradford.**

The Secretary of the Bradford group informs us that unfortunately through the serious illness of Mrs. Wilkinson, at whose house the meetings were held, they have been unable to continue them. Let all Bahais sincerely pray for the restoration to health and Bahai service of Mrs. Wilkinson!

Information concerning the Movement can be obtained from the Secretaries:

MRS. ROMER, Baha'i Room, 19, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1.

MISS CHEESMAN, Southernhay, Cambridge Road, Bournemouth.

MR. JOSEPH LEE, 392, Northenden Road, Sale Moor, Sale, Cheshire.

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 Asgarzadeh, 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 Book 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.