

News Letter from Baha'is of the British Isles.

"O Son of Man! Wert thou to observe mercy thou wouldst not regard thine own interest, but the interest of mankind. Wert thou to observe justice, choose thou for others what thou chooseth for thyself." (Baha'u'llah).

"All the Prophets were sent, all the books were revealed, that the Law of Love might be promoted. Let us have love and more love, a love that meets all opposition, that sweeps all barriers that conquers all foes, a love that aboundeth in charity, large-heartedness, tolerance, and noble striving, a love that triumphs over all obstacles, a boundless, an irresistible, sweeping love."

(ABDUL-BAHA).

February, 1935.

London.

THE BIRTHDAY OF BAHÁ'U'LLAH.

November 11th marks the end of a terrible war. November 12th signifies hope and salvation. The Bahá'is of London celebrated this auspicious day very befittingly. It was a real pleasure to have Lady Blomfield in the chair.

The event of the evening was the presentation of the Prologue and the first act of Mrs. Basil Hall's brilliant "Drama of the Kingdom." It was more in the nature of reading, and yet due to Mrs. Hall's excellent management the audience were greatly impressed.

After the refreshments (generously provided by the Hospitality Committee) were served, Lady Blomfield gave a brief and instructive talk on the basic truth of all religions. She mentioned some interesting episodes from the history of Ancient Egypt. Today, she said, Bahá'u'llah has come to reiterate and revive the Truth—the Truth of all ages.

Lady Blomfield ended her talk with a tribute to the younger generation. She was rejoiced to see many young people in the room, and said that theirs was the privilege to assist in the final triumph of the Cause of Bahá'u'llah.

SUNDAY MEETINGS.

These meetings have proved very successful. There are always a good number of enquirers present. In November, Mr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, the founder of the "Men of Trees," gave an illustrated lecture on Palestine, which created great interest, and was highly appreciated; Mrs. Shirin Fozdar spoke on "The Renaissance of Persia"; Miss Beatrice Irwin delivered an instructive talk on "Temple-Builders through the Ages," and Mr. George Spendlove gave an elucidating talk on the "New Age."

December, traditionally the month of "Peace and Good Will," was devoted to the timely subject of Peace. Mr. Hasan Balyuzi dwelt on the economic aspect, Mr. Godfrey Mowatt of the League of Nations Union spoke on "Our Individual Responsibility," Miss Winifred Halstead of the Women's International Peace Crusade, brought in the Contribution of the Press; Mrs. Shirin Fozdar spoke on the part of women, and Mr. George Spendlove concluded the series with an exposition of Bahá'u'llah's peace programme.

The visiting speaker in January was Mr. Alan Burnett Rae, of the "New Commonwealth." He spoke about the organization of an International Police Force. Mrs. Matteson, Mr. Spendlove and Miss Irwin took the other three meetings.

UNITY FEAST—JANUARY 30th.

This meeting was well-attended by Bahá'is and their friends. The theme of the evening was "The Inception and Progress of the Bahai Cause in Great Britain." A review was made of Abdul-Baha's visit to this country; and references and tributes to the Cause, by prominent English writers, statesmen and scholars, were mentioned. Special notice was taken of Dr. Esslemont's immortal work, "Bahá'u'llah and the New Era," which is translated into more than a score of tongues. The subject was then brought down to the present time as another English writer has produced, "The Promise of All Ages."

After the formal part of the evening, those present joined in a social time which, thanks to the services of the Hospitality Committee, proved a great success.

STUDY MEETINGS.

These meetings are held on Wednesday evenings at 8 p.m. The Teaching Committee, under the chairmanship of Mrs. George, arrange the programme. Certain tablets of Bahá'u'llah, such as the "Ishrakat," the "Tarazat," the "Tablet of the World," and also the "Hidden Words" have been covered. At the present the "Book of Certitude" is the subject of study.

VISITORS.

Miss Beatrice Irwin has been spending the last few months here, assisting in many ways with the work of the Cause. We are thankful for her splendid efforts at obtaining publicity. Mr. M. Foroughi, of Persia, was in London, for about two months. He was once a resident of this country, and the friends were very glad to have him again among them. Miss Cheesman, of Bournemouth, is now living here, and gives us her valued help. Mr. Anja, of Norway, has come to London for a short stay.

WOMEN'S SERVICE COMMITTEE.

This Committee, composed of Bahá'is and sympathisers, is formed under the supervision of the London Spiritual Assembly. The purpose is to raise funds for charity and humanitarian work, and attend to such activities.

Mrs. Brown is the chairman appointed by the assembly, Miss Mumm is the vice-chairman, Miss Cheesman is the secretary, and Miss Grimshaw, the treasurer.

PUBLICITY.

Mme. Fozdar has written two short articles on "Qurāt'ul'Ayn" for the organs of some Women's Societies and will speak on the same subject at two meetings. She has also had some personal interviews with well-known people stressing particularly the Baha'i Cause in India and the position of women in the East.

A long article, with illustration, written by Mrs. D. M. Northcroft, who has attended our meetings, appeared in "The Inquirer" of January 19th. The editor, Mr. Leslie Belton, has spoken for us and is most sympathetic and helpful, stating to the Secretary at one time that the "Baha'is were doing what many other societies were trying to do." A review of "The Promise of All Ages" appeared in "The Inquirer" of December 22nd, written by Mr. Will Hayes, who has spoken for us, and known the Baha'i Movement for many years. A letter commenting on the review, written by Mrs. Slade appeared in the same publication of January 12th. A review of the same book appeared in "The Times" Literary Supplement, January 3rd. From this we quote: "The story of this religion is graphically told in 'The Promise of All Ages.' The author brings out Baha'u'llah's teaching on the original and essential unity of the human race, the unity of its religions, and the unity of its divinely guided development in a way which will always charm and not infrequently convince. He pleads with his Christian readers to make a kindly response to the movement, and certainly its ethical and social ideals are largely identical with those of Christianity. The author dwells especially upon the Baha'i emphasis on the unity of the human race; and while Christians are not likely to admit that the Christian and Mohammedan dispensations have now been fulfilled, and the Bab and Baha'u'llah have ushered in a new era, with this insistence on the need for world peace and unity there will be widespread sympathy."

From the Methodist Recorder, December 27th, 1934, headed "The Baha'i Movement," we quote: "Comparatively few people know anything of the Baha'i Fellowship, whose prophet, Baha'u'llah, claimed to be the Supreme Spokesman and Viceregent of God, fulfilling the work of Moses and Confucius and Mohammed and the other High Prophets of the Most High. He made other great claims for himself, as that all the world's scriptures were but as Old Testaments which find their fulfilment in his own writings, in which he set forth the will of God for to-day, and for a thousand years ahead. Very beautiful are most of his teachings, entirely in accord with those of the Christian faith, inasmuch that his successor, Abdu'l Baha was welcomed into Christian pulpits in our land during his visit here twenty-two years ago; and they

are set forth persuasively in the pages of 'The Promise of All Ages' by Christophil (Simpkin Marshall, 5s.), a book which, whatever one thinks of the claims made for and by the founder of the Fellowship, is full of uplifting idealism and should be read as the ablest and most complete exposition of his teachings at present available in our tongue."

Several other small reviews of the above book have appeared.

Through the efforts of Miss Irwin an illustration of the Baha'i House of Worship at Wilmette was inserted in the "London Illustrated News," of December 29th.

A long and adverse article entitled "Baha'ism and Its Claims" written by the Rev. J. R. Richards, B.A. (Persia), appeared in "Evangelical Christendom," November-December, 1934. Mr. Richards, it will be remembered, wrote the book "The Open Road in Persia." Speaking of such writings Baha'u'llah said many years ago, "They are my heralds; they are the ones who are proclaiming my message and spreading my word. Pray that they may be multiplied, pray that their number may increase and that they may cry out more loudly. The more they abuse me by their words and the greater their agitation, the more potent and mighty will be the efficacy of the Cause of God, the more luminous the Light of the Word and the greater the radiance of the divine sun. And eventually the gloomy darkness of the outer world will disappear and the light of reality will shine until the whole earth will be effulgent with its glory."

AN EXPLANATION.

Questions have been asked regarding the words at the beginning of each verse of the Hidden Words, such as "O Son of Man," etc., as they outwardly refer to men only. The Guardian's advice on this point is that no distinction of sex is involved, and the term "Son" is generic, embracing all humanity.

THE LONDON BAHÁ'Í YOUTH GROUP.

The Youth Group Meetings have been regularly held.

DISCUSSION MEETINGS.

Oct. 5th.—“The Immortality of the Soul.”

Nov. 2nd.—“Universal Education.”

Dec. 7th.—“Equality of Sexes.”

Jan. 4th.—“Freedom and Equality.”

Feb. 1st.—“Independent Investigation of Truth.”

The above-mentioned meetings are in charge of the Teaching Committee whose members take a subject in turn, make an exhaustive study of it in the light of the Bahá'í Teachings, and present their findings to the Group.

ADDRESSES.

Oct. 19th.—“Religion and its Accord with Science and Reason.” Speaker: Mr. A. Javid.

Nov. 16th.—“Some Efforts to Peace.” Speaker: Mrs. S. Matteson.

Dec. 21st.—“The Need for Universal Language.” Speaker: Mr. B. Javedani.

Jan. 18th.—“The Seven Valleys.” Speaker: Mrs. S. Matteson.

SOCIALS.

Social meetings were held on the second Saturday of each month. They were all well-attended and immensely successful. Special efforts are being made to enlarge and vary the Youth Group social activities which so far promise well. Good fellowship conquers difficulties, otherwise insurmountable.

PUBLICITY.

The Publicity Committee have sent out a circular letter to a number of young people. Here are some extracts:—

“We believe that everyone looks today for a better order of things. Many hopes and aspirations have sadly come to no result. . . . Our organization is young, but it is born and bred on solid principles given to us more than sixty years ago. At a time when no one thought of International Co-operation, Buha'u'llah arose

in Persia, as the Promised One of all the Faiths, speaking of a world state and Federation of Mankind. He proclaimed the basic oneness of all religions, and ordained equality of sexes, equal opportunity for all, universal education, and a fair solution of economic difficulties. We are following in His footsteps. . . . You will find us a group of people who know what they want, and with faith in their work for making this earth a saner and more congenial place to live in.”

NOTICE.

At the Bahá'í Centre, 19, Grosvenor Place, S.W.1, a public meeting is held every Sunday at 6.30. A meeting for study of the Bahá'í teachings is held on Wednesdays at 8 p.m. The Youth Group meet on the first and the third Fridays. All are welcome.

The Centre is open daily from 2 to 5 (except Sundays and Saturdays) for consultation and reading. A well stocked library of Bahá'í writings is available.

Bradford.

Mr. Alfred Sugar teaches in this district. Through his sincere and untiring efforts, new enquirers have joined the meetings that are held every fourth Friday, at the homes of Mrs. Wilkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Tempest and Mr. and Mrs. Norton, alternately.

Mr. Sugar writes, “At the meeting in the Christmas season, occasion was taken to study the relationship of the Revelation of Bahá'u'llah to that of Jesus. We saw how in the light of the social development of mankind, the latter was essential in order that man should be rescued from the depths of cruel materialism. Jesus had taught men to realize their truer selves: ‘the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.’ But man was not yet saved from himself. Mankind needed Bahá'u'llah and his Gospel to rescue the race from the imminent peril of social chaos. These truths formed an appropriate link in our detailed study of the Bahá'í teachings.”

The London Spiritual Assembly have made a gift to the Bradford Group, of some Bahá'í books and pamphlets, part of the library of the late Miss Rosenberg.

Bournemouth.

There have been no public meetings held during the last three months. Small meetings are held in the homes of the friends, which attract new people. The Bahá'í magazine is being circulated and read with interest.

Perhaps the most far-reaching work is being done through the Service Fund which is helping the needy, and lifting burdens, caused through illness and unemployment, for many lives.

Manchester.

Meetings are held monthly at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chessell. A Study Class is held fortnightly at the home of Mr. Lee. Youth Group meetings are suspended for the present. It is hoped to start them again in the near future.

York.

Mrs. Kenworthy writes, "There is nothing fresh of importance to report from us except that I have been very thankful to have the new book by Christophil, 'The Promise of All Ages.' I feel it is a book that supplies an urgent need, and is inspiring, very helpful and clear."

Brighton.

On October 30th, an advertised meeting was held by the Progressive Thought Society at Brighton, addressed by Mme. Fozdar and Mrs. Romer on "A New Power in Religious Thought." The meeting was very animated and a veritable barrage of questions followed the talks, which were written up in two of the local papers. One of these said, "The two addresses given by these ladies on the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l Baha—the Persian manifestations of God—proved extremely interesting, and indicated that the present revival in all spiritual ideas is really world-wide." NOTE: the reference to Abdu'l Baha as a manifestation is the mistake of the reporter as the matter was very fully explained.

Leeds.

Mr. and Mrs. M. Hussein and their two children are residing temporarily in Leeds, as he is studying at the Zoological Dept., of the University in that city. They would welcome letters or items of interest from friends. They expect to come to London in May for a stay of about six months.

Information concerning the Baha'i Faith can be obtained from the Secretaries:

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

SISTER CHALLIS, Rizwan, Broadstone, Dorset.

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

MR. ALFRED SUGAR, c/o Mrs. Wilkinson, 20, Southey Place, Bradford, Yorkshire.

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

For the "National Spiritual Assembly" they should now 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	10/6
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/-
Divine Philosophy	3/8
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	1/-
Esperanto, Short Account	2d.
Principles of the Baha'i Faith	2d.
The Drama of the Kingdom, by Mrs. Basil Hall	1/-
The World Economy of Baha'u'llah, by Horace Holley	6d.
The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah, by Shoghi Effendi	1/-
Baha'i Administration	6/3
The Brilliant Proof	10d.
Baha'i Faith, by Horace Holley	6d.
The Promise of All Ages, by Christophil	5/-