

BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

Published by

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES
27 RUTLAND GATE, LONDON, S.W.7

No. 139

Bahá'í Year 115

July 1959



Guardian knit so firmly together, and the foundations of whose Administrative Order he laid so securely during his lifetime that the earthquake of his passing neither shattered the unity nor shook the confidence of the Community of the followers of the Most Great Name. Let us bow our heads humbly in gratitude to

MESSAGE FOR ANNUAL BAHÁ'Í CONVENTIONS YEAR 116, BAHÁ'Í ERA FROM THE HANDS OF THE FAITH IN THE HOLY LAND

Dearly beloved Friends,

The most glorious Feast of the Bahá'í Year, the 'King of all Feasts', the Ridván commemoration of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Whose Day every Prophet hath announced' and for Whose advent 'the soul of every Divine Messenger hath thirsted', is once more upon us, the second Ridván since the passing of our precious, our most beloved Guardian. No report from the World Centre can ever take the place of the wonderful stream of inspiring words he poured out in his great messages to us at this period, when so many of the believers gather together at the Annual Bahá'í Conventions, and which conveyed to us not only the soul-stirring news of the progress the Faith had made during the past year, but called us to new heights of service, rallied our spirits and refreshed our souls with his own great vision of the future. Much as we long for his presence, his words, his inspiration, his loving care, we must realise that what has been given to us no man can take away. What Shoghi Effendi showered on us for thirty-six years of his Guardianship, what he built into the Faith and into its followers' hearts all over the world, is a permanent creation and one that has become on the one hand a part of history, and on the other a part of our personal lives. We must show our gratitude to him in a mighty renewal of deeds. We must rejoice over the continuing evidences of the never-failing grace of Bahá'u'lláh which carries the work of His Faith forward in spite of every test, trial and crisis.

This past year has witnessed the steady onward march of the Cause of God in every field. When we recall how grievous and shattering was the blow we received in November, 1957, we cannot but marvel at the evidences, so clear for friend or enemy to behold, of the indomitable strength of this Cause which the

the Author of our Faith for His protection and manifold mercies showered upon us during these days of supreme test and suffering.

The monument erected on the grave of the beloved Guardian was completed just two days before the anniversary of his passing; the gleaming pillar of pure

white Carrara marble, resting on a base of three steps and surmounted by a Corinthian capital bearing a globe of the world, all of the same stone, rose up against the grey autumn skies of London, in its simplicity and beauty a befitting memorial to that great being who himself created so much beauty on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and around the Holiest Spot on this planet, the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh. Perched, as if about to take off in flight, or just settling from the skies, a gilded bronze eagle, the emblem of so many victories, crowns the monument. A dignified white stone balustrade, surmounted at the four corners by ornate stone urns, encloses the inner garden where the grave lies; adjoining this sanctuary, and constituting its approach, is a second larger garden surrounded by a red brick wall; a red path stretches from the two white steps leading down from the inner garden straight to the beautiful gilden wrought iron gates at the bottom of the second garden—which constitutes the main entrance to the Guardian's resting-place. On either side of these gates two cypress trees reminiscent of the hundreds of cypress trees the Guardian himself planter in the Shrine gardens at the World Centre of the Faith, stand guard. Two lovely weeping holly trees, two white pedestals with white Carrara marble vases planted with flowers, decorate the grounds as one approaches, through this outer garden, that sacred spot where the Beloved of our hearts is laid to rest. Many hundreds of Bahá'ís have already made a pilgrimage to this shrine. Many hundreds of non-Bahá'ís have likewise visited it, drawn by the powerful spirit they feel there, attracted by what they see in the faces of the believers who come there to pray, and by the abundance of radiant flowers which constantly surround the foot of the monument.

The tribute of the believers has been completed outwardly, but the mighty, invisible tribute to his memory continues to be built. The friends will recall that when they were invited to contribute to the Memorial Fund for the erection of this monument, the Hands of the Faith stated that any sum received above that required to construct the monument itself and embellish its precincts would be spent to carry on the teaching work and erect the Temples he specified should be constructed during the Crusade. Sums have been received from the believers all over the world, and now that this blessed grave has been befittingly completed, we could think of no work dearer to Shoghi Effendi's heart at this time than that of the new teaching campaigns being launched in Africa, and aimed at that mass conversion he said in his last message to the Bahá'í world, should be undertaken as part of the work of the remaining five years of the Ten Year Plan. The first expenditure from this Memorial Fund was therefore made to assist some of the Regional African Assemblies in launching an intensive teaching campaign in those areas most receptive to the Faith; many of the African teachers are now travelling amongst their own people financed from this Fund. What better memorial to Shoghi Effendi can be erected, now that his physical resting-place has been suitably completed, than this mighty spiritual one which will endure in the hearts

of men and will help lay the foundation of the Kingdom of God in such distant and promising lands?

Aware of how eager the friends are to receive from the World Centre a report of the progress the Faith has made during the past year and the status of the beloved Guardian's world-girdling Crusade, we are happy to share with the believers attending the thirty-one Annual Bahá'í Conventions now being held in Asia, Africa, the Americas, Australasia, Europe and the Pacific region the following truly inspiring news, which testifies so eloquently to the greatness and the enduring quality of the work Shoghi Effendi achieved during his lifetime, and over which, we firmly believe, he constantly and lovingly watches from on High.

The number of countries, islands and dependencies where the Standard of Bahá'u'lláh has been unfurled now totals two hundred and fifty-five, as a result of the settlement during the past year of a pioneer in Spitzbergen, the one remaining virgin goal outside the Soviet orbit. This feat, achieved by the Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Paul Adams, brings the total number of new territories opened to the Faith since the inception of the Ten Year Plan to one hundred and twenty-seven.

At the end of the sixth year of the Crusade the number of localities included within the pale of the Faith has reached the impressive total of over five thousand two hundred, fulfilling the wish of Shoghi Effendi, expressed in his last Ridván Message that '... strenuous efforts must be exerted for the purpose of multiplying the existing groups and isolated centres in all the continents of the globe, insuring thereby the early attainment of the goal of five thousand Bahá'í centres in the Eastern and Western Hemispheres'. Such a signal achievement represents an increase of almost seven hundred centres since his passing, centres referred to by him as pivots of Bahá'í teaching and administrative activity, and which have more than doubled since the launching of the World Crusade in 1953. This truly remarkable reflection of the victories won under the divinely-guided leadership of our Guardian has brought the number of such centres in the Goal Countries of Europe to over a hundred and twenty, in Germany and Austria to a hundred and thirty-five, in Australasia and in Canada, respectively, to nearly a hundred and forty-five, in the British Isles to nearly a hundred and fifty, in the Indian sub-continent to almost a hundred and seventy, in Latin America to nearly two hundred and forty, in the entire Pacific area to over four hundred and fifty, in the African continent to nearly nine hundred and fifty, in Persia to more than one thousand and fifty, and in the United States of America to more than one thousand five hundred.

The most striking increases during the past year, and indeed since the ascension of the beloved Guardian, have occurred in Africa and in the widely dispersed countries and islands of the Pacific—the two areas whose competition for 'the palm of victory' brought such happiness to his heart in the last years and months of his precious life.

The formation during the current Ridván period of the new National Spiritual Assemblies of Austria, Burma and Turkey, and the Regional National Spirit-

tual Assembly of the South Pacific, as specified by the beloved Guardian himself, brings the total of these fore-runners and future pillars of the Universal House of Justice to thirty-one, sixteen of which are now incorporated, four having achieved this status during the past year. The total number of local spiritual assemblies established throughout the world, and constituting, in the words of our Guardian, 'the foundation of a rising Administrative Order', is now nearly twelve hundred and seventy-five, almost two hundred more than the number reported in last year's Convention Message. Over two hundred of these are now incorporated. Included in the substantial number of recent new registrations is that of the Local Spiritual Assembly of Port Victoria, Seychelles Islands, as a result of an enactment by the Legislative Council, and the approval of the Articles of Incorporation of the Local Assembly of Nuku'Alofa, Tonga Islands, representing significant victories won in important islands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, respectively.

The number of languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated now totals two hundred and sixty-one, an increase of one hundred and seventy-two in six years, over ninety of which represent supplementary languages added since the inception of the Crusade.

The acquisition of the Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds in Caracas, Venezuela, and the endowment in Brussels, Belgium during the past year completes the list of such properties originally specified as goals of the Ten Year Crusade. In addition to these, located in the capitals and chief cities which are or will be the seat of the National and Regional Assemblies to be established by 1963, a significant number of Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds have been acquired in recent years as supplementary goals in such widely scattered and important cities as Apia, Samoa; Osaka and Amagasaki, Japan; Callao, Peru; Kuching, Sarawak; Algiers, Algeria; Rabat, French Morocco; Larache, Spanish Morocco; Bathurst, Gambia; Victoria, British Cameroons; Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia; Rembang, Indonesia; Solano, Philippine Islands; and six in Viet Nam, including Saigon and Tourane. A number of supplementary endowments and sites for future Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds have also been acquired, including properties in Morocco, the Canary Islands, Liberia, Basutoland, the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Malaya, the Philippines, and Brazil.

Although not specified as goals of the Ten Year Plan, the establishment of separate Bahá'í burial grounds has given increasing emphasis to the independent status of the Faith and added to its prestige in the many different places where such properties have been acquired in recent years, such as Dar-es-Salaam, Tanganyika; Nairobi, Kenya; Kampala, Uganda; Rabat and Meknes, French Morocco; Tripoli, Libya; Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia; Khartoum North, in the Sudan; Djakarta, Indonesia; Singapore, Malaya; and Ashiya, Japan.

The independent character of the Faith is further attested by the growing number of countries, states, provinces and other governmental sub-divisions where the Bahá'í Marriage Certificate is recognised. Such

recognition has now been granted in over forty different jurisdictions throughout the five continents, the most recent being Poona, in Bombay State, India, and the Province of British Columbia in Canada. The Bahá'í Holy Days have been recognised by the educational authorities in nearly seventy countries, states or provinces, and cities. Noteworthy during the past year has been the achievement of such recognition throughout Japan, as a result of the inclusion of such provision in the document incorporating the National Spiritual Assembly of North-East Asia.

The original Crusade goal calling for the acquisition of eleven Temple sites was fulfilled more than a year ago, with the purchase of the site of the future Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Stockholm. In anticipation of the day when Bahá'í Houses of Worship will be built, not only in every continent, but in many different countries, the beloved Guardian included the purchase of additional Temple sites in the subsidiary Plans which he assigned to the new National and Regional Assemblies formed since 1953. Seventeen of these supplementary sites have now been acquired throughout the world, eight during the past year, in Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay and Uruguay in Latin America, New Zealand in the Antipodes, and in Tunisia on the northern fringe of the African Continent.

The steady consolidation and expansion of the Faith in the Pacific area and in Africa continues to furnish striking evidence that the rapid spiritual awakening which began in those regions in the last years of the blessed Guardian's life is continuing.

In the countries and islands under the jurisdiction of the four Regional National Assemblies of Africa, the number of declared believers is approaching nine thousand. This area now has almost three hundred Local Spiritual Assemblies, with a substantial increase assured during the current Riḍván period. Two hundred and forty-three African tribes are now represented in the Bahá'í Community, an increase of forty-three during the past year. In Central and East Africa, the total number of believers has more than quadrupled in the three years since the formation of the Regional Assembly in 1956. In North-West Africa, a gain of fifty per cent. has occurred since Riḍván, 1957. In the British Cameroons alone over seven hundred new Bahá'ís have been enrolled since the ascension of the beloved Guardian. In the southern part of the continent, in Swaziland, the Paramount Chief's Council, the legislative body for the Swazi nation, has recognised the Bahá'í Faith as one of the religions that can be taught in that country and one of the prominent tribal chiefs has encouraged the teaching of the Faith amongst his people.

In the Pacific, exclusive of Australasia, the area where the beloved Guardian said that 'Bahá'í exploits bid fair to outshine the feats achieved in any other ocean, and indeed in every continent of the globe', the number of centres has now risen to well over three hundred, seventy-four of which constitute local spiritual assemblies. The ranks of the believers in the Mentawai Islands alone have swelled to more than

three thousand; in all of Indonesia, including Menta-wei, the number of declared Bahá'ís has more than trebled since Riḍván 1957; and in Viet Nam the rate of gain has been even more striking. A seventh Bahá'í School has been opened in Menta-wei, and two more schools have been established in Viet Nam in the past year. The extraordinary progress the Faith has made throughout the highly promising Pacific region has been markedly reinforced by the translation of Bahá'í literature into nearly seventy-five indigenous languages.

Throughout the Western Hemisphere, the Community of the Most Great Name now comprises over nineteen hundred Bahá'í centres. In Central and South America and the neighbouring islands, where a total of twenty new National Spiritual Assemblies must be formed before 1963, there are nearly two hundred and forty centres, sixty-five of which have their own local spiritual assemblies. Since the beginning of the World Crusade, contact has been established with nearly sixty Indian tribes in North, Central and South America, of which nearly thirty are now represented in the Faith. The steady advancement in this field, to which the beloved Guardian attached so much importance, is evinced by the formation of the second all-Indian Local Spiritual Assembly in South America last Riḍván in Vilcollo, Bolivia. Among many other evidences of the expansion of Bahá'í institutions throughout the Americas during the past year may be mentioned the inauguration of the first Summer School in Alaska; the beginning of active publication by the newly-established Bahá'í Publishing Trust in Buenos Aires; the first dependency of the Mother Temple of the West, the Bahá'í Home for the Aged, was officially opened a few months ago, an event of undoubted historic importance exemplifying those institutions of humanitarian service which Bahá'u'lláh Himself specified should cluster about the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in every city and demonstrate the spirit of His Teachings.

As the friends will recall, the beloved Guardian attached such great importance to the various teaching conferences and institutes held all over the world that he included an enumeration of them in his annual Riḍván Message. The following list of some of those held during the past year is very impressive, not only from the standpoint of the very large number of such gatherings which took place, but also in their wide geographical range.

The Conference held by the European Hands of the Cause in Brussels, Belgium, attended by their Auxiliary Board members and representatives of the National and Regional Assemblies of that continent; the National Teaching Conference in Blackpool, England; the Scottish Regional Teaching Conference in Glasgow; the Northern Ireland Regional Teaching Conference in Bangor; and the Northwest Regional Teaching Conference in Manchester, as well as numerous week-end schools held throughout the British Isles; the teaching and study conferences held in the Benelux countries, in Charleroi, Liege, Antwerp, Brussels, and two at the Hague; the National Teaching Conference of France in Lyon, and of Italy in Rome, as well as the Swiss Teaching Conference in Bern; the Regional Teaching

Conferences held in Germany, in Heilbronn, Wiesbaden, Tübingen, Köln, Darmstadt, Ludwigsburg, in Goppingen, Frankfurt, Karlsruhe and Ulm, as well as the three held in Nürnberg, and the two in Hannover; the teaching conferences held in India and Burma, in the cities of Rangoon, Devlali, Bangalore, and Daidanow, and in Colombo, Ceylon; the All-Pakistan Teaching Conference in Karachi; the many teaching conferences held throughout the length and breadth of the African continent and the surrounding islands, including two in Mauritius, one in Southern Rhodesia, four in South Africa; and one in the British Cameroons, in Tangiers, International Zone of Morocco, in Rabat, French Morocco, in Monrovia, Liberia, and in Mogadiscio, Italian Somaliland, as well as the seventeen week-end schools held in Central and East Africa; the Western Canada Summer Conference in Banff, the Maritimes Summer Conference in Shediac, New Brunswick, the Canadian Summer Teaching Conferences in Beaulac, Quebec, and in Ontario, as well as nearly twenty other Teaching Conferences held throughout the Dominion of Canada, from Prince Edward Island to British Columbia; the Teaching Conferences in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Ketchikan, the four major Bahá'í centres in Alaska; the Regional Teaching Conferences held in Rosario, Argentina, and in Quilpué, Chile, as well as the Teaching Conferences held in Asuncion, Paraguay and in Montevideo, Uruguay; the Teaching Conference of Venezuela in Caracas, the all-Brazil Teaching Conference in Jundiai, and the International School held in Port au Prince, Haiti; to which should be added the Teaching Conferences and week-end schools held throughout the United States, too numerous to mention.

The work at the heart and nerve centre of the Faith has progressed steadily during the period from last Riḍván. In November the plenary meeting of the Hands of the Cause was held at Bahjí—the second since the sudden passing of the beloved Guardian forced upon the Chief Stewards of the Faith such crushing responsibility. The mighty institution of Bahá'í pilgrimage, which began in the days of the Manifestation of God Himself, has been reopened, and a steady stream of friends from East and West has poured into the twin Holy Cities of Haifa and Acre to kneel at the Threshold of the sacred Shrines, to visit the historic sites located here, to gaze in reverence at the relics so carefully collected and preserved by the beloved Guardian, to marvel at the beauty of the Shrine of the Báb and in the International Archives Building erected under his direction and according to his own matchless taste, as well as to enjoy the wonderful gardens he designed and created on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and in the plain of Acre; four thousand square metres of land on the ridge of Mount Carmel overlooking the resting place of the Herald of the Faith, have been registered in the name of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Iran; the sixty-six thousand square metres of land facing the Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí, negotiations for the purchase of which were carried out at the Guardian's instruction

during his lifetime, have now been registered in the name of the Israel Branch of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, in accordance with his wishes; the third terrace at Bahjí, artificially created, and which enables the visitor to obtain an imposing view of the Holy Shrine and its gardens, was built according to his own plan on top of the two he had himself completed, and the strip of garden to the East of the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh which he had planned to develop, was likewise completed, thus adding to the landscaped area at Bahjí another four thousand square metres of garden; the visitors to the Bahá'í Holy Places in both Haifa and Acre continue to pour in, the impressive number of over a hundred thousand having been received since last Ridván. During the past eighteen months, six Hands of the Cause have acted as substitutes for those who were permanently selected to serve in the Holy Land, but were temporarily absent either on some special mission or for reasons of health; five of the Hands of the Cause have, at the request of the Hands residing in the Holy Land, undertaken special teaching missions to assist the friends and their elected representatives in areas where either the need, or the promise of results, was the greatest.

The last three of the five mighty Intercontinental Conferences, called for by the beloved Guardian at the mid-way point of the World Crusade, were held in Chicago, Frankfurt and Singapore, and proved the vehicles for a communion of heart amongst the sorrowing believers the world over such as had never before been experienced in Bahá'í history. Over six thousand of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh attended these Conferences, the greatest number being present at the one held in Europe on German soil, at which over twenty-five hundred Bahá'ís from Europe and Asia assembled; the next largest Conference was the one held in the heart of the North American continent, where almost two thousand were gathered, largely representative of believers from the Western Hemisphere; the African Intercontinental Conference, with the exception of some believers from Europe and America, and at which nine hundred friends assembled, was divided almost equally between African and Persian believers; at the Asian Intercontinental Conference about five hundred Bahá'ís, highly representative of the peoples of South East Asia and the North Pacific area, were able to view the portrait of Bahá'u'lláh, whose Faith they have espoused, and to have a share in the bounties of the Conference the beloved Guardian had called for them, whilst in far-off Australia an attendance of almost three hundred Bahá'ís, some of them from such distant places as Japan, Persia and the United States reflected the progress the Cause of God has made in the Antipodes.

At all of these Conferences, in spite of the deep shadow of sorrow upon them, the believers, mindful of the beloved Guardian's words, praised and thanked the Founder of their Faith for His manifold blessings; reverently viewed His portrait, sent to them for this purpose as an act of loving kindness, by the Guardian himself; consulted on ways and means of rapidly achiev-

ing the remaining goals of the Crusade; reviewed its great victories to date and poured forth over half a million dollars in contributions and pledges for the building of the Mother Temples of Africa, Australia and Europe, and the general work of the Ten Year Plan. So great has been the response to the beloved Guardian's appeal to the friends to rapidly build these sacred Houses of Worship that the Kampala Temple and the Sydney Temple, the cornerstones of which were laid during the African and Australian Intercontinental Conferences, respectively, are expected to be completed before Naw-Ruz 1960, and a large sum is now available for the construction of the European Mother Temple.

There can be no doubt in anyone's mind, as we survey the status of the Cause of God six years after the inception of the World Crusade, that the most imposing and in many ways the most difficult part of its tasks were accomplished in the Guardian's own lifetime. One hundred and twenty-seven new territories have been included in the orbit of the Faith as a result of the departure of a veritable army of pioneers to all parts of the world. The Guardian, in the early years of the Ten Year Plan stated that this extraordinary achievement 'the most vital and spectacular objective of the Ten Year Plan' had been 'virtually attained ere the termination of the first year of this decade long, stupendous enterprise' through the opening of one hundred countries and islands. The dedication of two of the three Mother Temples called for in the provisions of this globe-encircling Plan will take place in the near future, and permission to build the third in Langenhain, near Frankfurt, has just been received from the County Council. All the *Házíratu'l-Quds*, all the endowments, all the Temple sites originally called for in the World Crusade have been acquired. The Bahá'í Publishing Trusts enumerated by the beloved Guardian have been established. The number of Israel branches of various National Spiritual Assemblies to be formed in the Holy Land has been exceeded. The resting place of the remains of the father of Bahá'u'lláh has been identified. Bahá'í women in Persia have been elected to the National and the local assemblies. The translation of Bahá'í literature into various languages has already exceeded the original objective set in 1953. Almost a third of the new National and Regional Assemblies which must be established before 1963 will have come into existence by the end of this Ridván.

This impressive tally of victories cannot but lift the hearts of all the believers and fill them with fresh courage to arise and win the remaining goals of the Crusade, in the name and for the sake of their beloved Guardian. Although the work before us may be less spectacular than that already accomplished, there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that upon its successful conclusion depends the ultimate triumph or failure of the entire Crusade. It constitutes no less than the bedrock of future Bahá'í activities for centuries to come, for upon it depends the erection, on a firm and lasting foundation, of those new National Assemblies which are to be among the first pillars of that mighty institution of Bahá'u'lláh, the Universal House of Jus-

tice. The task is a two-fold one: In the republics of Latin America and the ten Goal Countries of Europe immediate action must be taken to reinforce and bring to Assembly status those groups which are at the present time the most promising nuclei for new assemblies, and without the multiplication of which the new independent National Assemblies will lack the foundation the Guardian specified as prerequisites for their election. On the Homefront of such old and tried Bahá'í communities as Persia, the United States, Germany, Great Britain, Australia, India, Canada, Egypt and Iraq, the same process must take place—promising groups must be immediately raised to assembly status.

Careful consideration of the nature of the work facing the Bahá'í world during the coming four years reveals that the paramount need, one might almost say the sole need, is to raise a second glorious all-conquering army of pioneers, who will arise and go forth with the same rapidity, dedication and zeal as did that first glorious army in the opening years of the Crusade, and this time conquer, not new territories and islands, but new cities, towns and villages in the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Asia, North Africa and the Antipodes. We feel the Bahá'ís should have placed before them a factual picture of the work to be done in this field: In the United States, termed by our Guardian the base for operations in every continent of the globe, a hundred and three new local spiritual assemblies must be formed; in the Dominion of Canada, thirty-two; in Latin America, over twenty; in the British Isles, twenty-five; in Germany, twelve; in the European Goal Countries, forty-five; in Persia, the Cradle of the Faith, a hundred and ten; in India, at least twenty-five; and in Australia and New Zealand, over twenty. This presents to each and every Bahá'í a tremendous personal challenge. Is he or she going to have a part, before it is too late, in the Guardian's Global Crusade, the purpose of which is primarily to lay that lasting foundation for the Universal House of Justice created in His Most Holy Book by Bahá'u'lláh. There is no longer time for hesitation, the sands of the Crusade are rapidly running out and with them each one's own great personal opportunity, never to recur. Every single believer must hold before himself the goal of either personally being responsible for the attainment of these objectives, through arising to pioneer himself, or through assisting his fellow-Bahá'ís to do so, and thus be instrumental in ensuring that by 1963 the followers of Bahá'u'lláh will be found in firmly grounded, well informed, actively functioning communities in every area where a National or Regional Assembly exists, and in many of the territories and major islands where His Cause has been established during the World Crusade.

We must face the fact that in Europe and Latin America where the beloved Guardian's Ten Year Plan requires that Regional Assemblies must be replaced by thirty-one National Assemblies, the needs of the various Homefronts cannot be met locally. Bahá'u'lláh Himself has exhorted His followers to 'Centre your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty

to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumb-founded'. The Hands of the Cause, mindful of these words, have recently proposed a joint deputisation project to the assemblies representative of the two strongest Bahá'í communities in the world, namely Persia and America. The oppressed, steadfast and devoted Persian friends are ready and eager to go forth as pioneers in large numbers, but the barrier of language and many other complications such as obtaining visas for the countries where pioneers are required prevents them from doing so. The North American believers are, on the contrary, because of their citizenship, in a much better position to gain entry to these places so urgently in need of teachers and settlers; therefore this great joint undertaking, the first of its kind between the East and the West, has been set in motion, whereby the friends in the Cradle of the Faith can deputise their Bahá'í brothers and sisters who are, as the Guardian said, the spiritual descendants of the Dawn Breakers, to go forth and help win the Crusade. The Persian believers are now raising a fund to be transmitted through their National Assembly to the American National Assembly for this express purpose. It is our ardent hope that a tremendous response will be forthcoming and that the North American Bahá'ís, mindful of the truly extraordinary role the Guardian himself has said they must play as 'the champion-builders of a divinely conceived Administrative Order, the standard-bearers of the all-conquering army of the Lord of Hosts, the torch-bearers of a future divinely inspired world civilisation' will arise in large numbers and place themselves at the disposal of the committee responsible for this mass migration, ere it is too late, and not only cover themselves with imperishable glory, but by doing so, share the lustre of this achievement and sacrifice with their devoted brethren who have suffered so much and so long in Bahá'u'lláh's native land.

No message from the World Centre of the Faith would be complete that did not call upon the pioneers, wherever and wherever they are, be they serving in foreign fields or on the Homefronts, be they old or young, robust or in frail health, of the negro, the white, or the brown race, to remain at their posts at this critical hour. There can be no doubt that in the sight of Shoghi Effendi it was the pioneers who accomplished the most difficult tasks of the Crusade, and because of the sacrifices, the consecration and the enthusiasm of these devoted souls, one hundred and twenty-seven territories of the globe, as well as hundreds of cities and localities on various Homefronts received the light of Bahá'u'lláh. The importance the Guardian attached to the opening of these virgin areas and to the work of consolidation in those countries already possessing National Assemblies cannot be sufficiently emphasised. How dear to his heart were the services the pioneers rendered! How he cherished each one labouring in this vast field, often at the cost of great personal sacrifice! It is not possible for us to des-

cribe the wistful sadness and the look of concern and care that would pass over his blessed face when he received news that a goal had been abandoned for whatever reason, and was lacking a pioneer. We therefore appeal to the friends to remain at their posts, however great the difficulties confronting them, and to persevere in this vital field of service in order to fulfil the wishes of their beloved Guardian and to gladden his spirit in the Kingdom on High.

It is, we firmly believe, the supreme duty of all National and Regional Assemblies to concentrate their undivided attention during this particular year of the Crusade on procuring new pioneers and settling them with no delay whatsoever in those spots where their presence in the chosen objectives abroad or in the goal cities of the various Homefronts will enable new assemblies to be formed next Ridván. There can be no doubt that upon the success of such steps taken immediately depends the fortunes of our Guardian's Crusade, a Crusade which in its world-embracing scope, has carried the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá a mighty step forward in its unfoldment, and which must inevitably lead to the spiritual conquest of the entire planet.

The financial resources of the Bahá'í world must be mustered and expended at this time for the attainment of this mighty purpose. We can do no better than appeal to each and every individual believer in the Guardian's own words: 'Let them resolve, instantly and unhesitatingly, to place, each according to his circumstances, his share on the altar of Bahá'í sacrifice, lest, on a sudden, unforeseen calamities rob them of a considerable portion of the earthly things they have amassed'.

Victories, however glorious, won in other fields, will be empty of their meaning if this most great victory is not achieved. Every follower of the Faith is aware of that great spiritual truth that God in His mercy and all-encompassing love does not require of His creatures something that He will not empower them to do. We cannot and must not fail. How many times have we been assured that the Concourse on High is ready and eager to rush forth and assist us to seize the palm of victory. Our Guardian never doubted our ability to accomplish the Plan he set for us; he entrusted it to our care and left this world, after so many years of sorrow and toil, for realms where his spirit could operate more freely. We cannot betray his sacred trust, we cannot disappoint the hopes he pinned on us or prove unworthy of the supreme confidence he showed us! Let us arise and win his Crusade and meet the challenge and fulfil the promise enshrined in one of his last messages: 'The heights its champions must scale are indeed formidable. The pitfalls that bestrew their path are still numerous. The road leading to ultimate and total victory is tortuous, stony and narrow', he tells us. 'Theirs, however, is the most emphatic assurance, revealed by the Pen of the Most High—the Prime Mover of the forces unleashed by this world-girdling Crusade—that: "Whosoever ariseth to aid our Cause God will render him victorious over ten times ten thousand souls, and, should he wax in his love for

Me, him will we cause to triumph over all that is in heaven and all that is on earth'.

'Putting on the armour of His love, firmly buckling on the shield of His mighty Covenant, mounted on the steed of steadfastness, holding aloft the lance of the Word of the Lord of Hosts, and with unquestioning reliance on His promises as the best provision for their journey, let them set their faces towards those fields that still remain unexplored and direct their steps to those goals that are as yet unattained, assured that He who has led them to achieve such triumphs, and to store up such prizes in His Kingdom, will continue to assist them in enriching their spiritual birthright to a degree that no finite mind can imagine or human heart perceive'.

Signed: RUHÍYYIH

AMELIA COLLINS

MASON REMEY

LEROY IOAS

JALAL KHAZEH

A. FURUTAN

PAUL HANEY

A. Q. FAIZI

April, 1959.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES

Copy of a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly
from the Hands of the Cause in the Holy Land,
dated 2nd March, 1959.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Your letters dated 13th and 21st January, with enclosures, have been received.

Having had the pleasure of close association with two members of your Assembly since the Conference in Bahji, namely, our dear fellow-Hands Hasan Balyuzi and John Ferraby, our thoughts have often been with you, and we are very much concerned about the success of the teaching activities of the British Bahá'ís pursuant with the plans laid down for them by our dearly loved Guardian. We know what love and care he showered on the Community in the British Isles, how much he praised their spirit, how often he held up their activities and their initiative as an example to other Bahá'ís, and in what high esteem he held your Assembly. The extraordinary efforts made in the past in Great Britain to multiply the number of assemblies and centres, to carry the Message of Bahá'u'lláh to the outlying islands which fell to your share as part of your Ten-Year Crusade activities, the wonderful work accomplished in Africa in the early days of the opening of that continent in accordance with a systematic plan for the spread of the Faith there as envisaged by Shoghi Effendi himself—all these things have distinguished this Community in the service of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and attracted to a remarkable degree the divine outpourings promised by Him to all those who arise to serve His Cause.

The Hands of the Faith who met recently at Bahji felt very keenly that the greatest need during this present year is for speed. As only four years remain in

the Ten-Year Crusade left to us by our beloved Guardian as his sacred, his last trust, an immense impetus must be added during this present year to the process of establishing the requisite number of Spiritual Assemblies needed to accomplish your Home Front goals.

We therefore urge your Assembly to consider very carefully the best means of insuring the execution of the plans formulated by you and your National Teaching Committee. Experience in other countries has proved that the most effective method of carrying on a successful teaching campaign, especially in emergency times, is through a National Teaching Committee with all, or most of the members located in one area, where they will be available for prompt and continuous consultation. Also, too many regional committees are not advisable, especially in a country the size of the British Isles.

The National Teaching Committee should be given ample authority to both initiate and approve all teaching projects without having to secure permission from the National Spiritual Assembly. This can be done without in any way violating the principles of either consultation or responsibility by the National Assembly laying down policies for the teaching work, and of course setting up the maximum budget available to the Committee. To a lesser degree the National Committee can delegate authority for action with a limited budget to the regional committees.

We share these thoughts with you because of the vital necessity of fast and streamlined action during the balance of the Crusade period. The emergency is upon us at this moment. What we do to-day will determine whether victory or failure will be ours.

More perhaps than any other Community in the Bahá'í world, the members of the British Community have arisen to pioneer in past years and to settle in places where assemblies were being formed. We hope that with the great love they have for their beloved Guardian, with the infinite blessing, albeit so tragically bestowed upon them, through having his precious remains interred in their homeland, that they will once again demonstrate the greatness of their faith and devotion, and on the tide of a renewed and mighty enthusiasm, once more leave their homes and settle in those places where spiritual assemblies must be formed in order to bring the quota up to that specified in the Ten-Year Plan.

We know that the Palm of Victory is something that can pass only too easily from people's hands without their knowing it. We do not feel for a moment that the British believers will ever willingly allow this Palm to fall from their grasp; and we therefore urge your Assembly to do all in your power to streamline your activities and those of your committees, so that the work may go forward and be a source not only of pride to the British believers, but a stimulation to other communities on the European continent who also have great tasks to achieve during the coming four years, and who would be inspired by reports of what is going on in that community which—with France and Germany—constitutes one of the oldest on the European continent, and is surely the most blessed, through

having the remains of our beloved Guardian interred in its homeland.

During the coming years, the task of the Bahá'ís all over the world is to achieve the beloved Guardian's Plan, which in itself insures that the necessary broad and strong foundation for the Universal House of Justice is laid. We are confident that the British Bahá'ís will gloriously accomplish their share of this wonderful work, and thus gladden the heart of our dearly loved Shoghi Effendi in the Abha Kingdom.

Please keep us closely informed of the progress of your work, so that we can assist and support your efforts.

We do not feel that there is anything in the Message of the beloved Guardian regarding future plans of the British Bahá'í Community, or the emphasis he placed on the work to be done in the neighbouring islands, which detracts from the fact that the multiplication of the Assemblies in Britain, and the incorporation of some of them, are the paramount tasks facing you at present—tasks which must be accomplished at any cost if you are to seal your past achievements with complete victory by the end of the Crusade.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with you, and we supplicate for the success of the British Bahá'ís, in the holy Shrines.

In the service of the beloved Guardian,

HANDS OF THE CAUSE IN THE HOLY LAND.

Ruhiyyih, Leroy Ioas, Amelia Collins,
Mason Remey, Jalal Khazeh, A. Q. Faizi,
Paul Haney.

P.S.—In your *Bahá'í Journal* for January, we noted that the Message from the Hands of the Faith, issued after their second meeting in Bahji, was published in the centre of your Journal. We feel that pursuant with the practice of the beloved Guardian himself, communications from the World Centre should commence on the first page of any Bahá'í news organ.

THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE BRITISH ISLES ANNUAL REPORT

Ridván 116—April 1959

During the past year we seem to have been making haste slowly, too slowly because time is running out so quickly. No doubt the shock of the beloved Guardian's passing has still persisted in its effect on us and will do for a long while yet, but in common with Bahá'ís all over the world we are gradually adjusting to the new situation. There is a desire in so many of the believers to rise to the occasion, devotion and dedication are there but there is not yet a real feeling of urgency. Good signs have been the pioneer response at Teaching Conference, the large number of British believers who went to the Frankfurt Conference, the attendance and good spirit at the various regional conferences and schools. Indeed there has been greater and more widespread activity in the community generally. There is not yet much in the way of tangible results, but most of the goal towns have been or are in prospect of being opened and several existing communities are stronger,

notably the pivotal centres of Belfast and Edinburgh. The latter is in the process of incorporating, whereas two years ago we had to send pioneers to maintain it. In short we seem to be on the right path and to be doing some of the right things, but instead of running, we are crawling.

The Custodians of the Faith in the Holy Land have throughout the year given us inspiration and help, through their general messages such as that to the annual conventions, the messages to the five Inter-Continental Conferences and above all the statement sent out after their meeting in November at Bahjí, also through their letters and cables specifically to us and their answers to problems referred to them by the N.S.A. Always they have encouraged the believers and the National Assemblies, reminded them of the paramount importance of the goals of the Crusade, of the shortness of time remaining and of the need to concentrate all our efforts and to let nothing distract us. By quoting in their messages, they have helped us to keep in mind the most important parts of the beloved Guardian's last letters to the Bahá'í world. They have moreover sent us in Britain material help by a gift of £1,000 from the International Fund at a time when the deficit on the National Fund had mounted very high and also more recently by subsidising travelling teaching. Beyond this, we can be sure that we have been greatly assisted by their prayers for us at the Holy Shrines.

The most important event this year was the building of the Memorial on the grave of our beloved Shoghi Effendi. All the time there has been a stream of visitors from abroad as well as from the British community and the grave was always a mass of flowers. In October workmen began to erect the lovely marble column prepared in Italy from designs approved by the Custodians. The memorial itself was complete by the beginning of November and at the time of writing the balustrade and wall, the erection of the gates and the laying out of the gardens are almost finished.

The building of the memorial gave us the happiness of a visit from Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khanum, who spent a month in London superintending the work and was able to see the golden eagle finally put in its place on the top before she left. At first she was busy with all the work involved and saw only the friends connected with it, but later she was able to consult with the N.S.A. at their meeting about the work of the Crusade here, and on 26th October she met all the Bahá'ís who could get there at a large meeting in the Eccleston Hotel. The response was tremendous and about 200 believers in all were there, far more than have ever attended any other gathering such as convention. Rúhíyyih Khanum spoke to us then of the Guardian, of his work and of the tasks he left for us to do, the Ten Year Crusade, and of the few years left to achieve this. After her talk, she stood for nearly two hours meeting individual friends, talking and encouraging them.

With regard to the all important question of Teaching, there has been a wider consciousness of the necessity for the individual to teach and some increase of

activity. Response to pioneer appeals however, was very small until an awakening seemed to come at Teaching Conference, when eighteen volunteers came forward. Pioneers are at the moment the greatest need.

There have been 49 new believers so far this year; of whom 5 are youth.

Three of the existing assemblies are at the moment below numbers, Cambridge, Eccles and Sheffield, but with the help of pioneers it is intended that they shall be maintained. We also expect to form assemblies in Cheadle and Hove in lieu of those originally formed and lapsed in Stockport and Brighton. There is some hope of an assembly in Bangor, Northern Ireland.

With regard to the goal towns, Chester has during the year been opened by Audrie Rogers and has had two declarations. Motherwell now numbers three, Pontypridd has been opened by the declaration of Beatrice Newman and in Salisbury the resident Bahá'í, Mrs. Rideout, has been joined by Stuart Sweet. Altogether eight pioneers have gone out so far. At the moment the N.T.C. is busy consulting and arranging projects for all the pioneers who volunteered at Teaching Conference. The settlement of Aberdeen, Bangor (Wales), Gloucester, Peterborough and York is now certain and plans are in hand, for Carlisle, Cork, Exeter, Inverness and Plymouth. Only Shrewsbury is left without either a resident believer or a prospective pioneer. A number of the pioneers are Persian believers living or training in this country and they really need the help and support of a British pioneer in each town for as foreigners they face special difficulties. There is therefore, a great need for a big pioneer response from amongst the British believers, particularly from the two biggest communities who could spare a considerable number.

Another development arising from Teaching Conference is the resolution of three groups, Loughborough, Swinton and Wokingham to build up their communities to assembly status by 1963.

It is interesting to note that seventeen of our assemblies and groups have at the moment got Bahá'í centres, though unfortunately two, Birmingham and Bradford, are in the process of losing them due to rebuilding operations. The Local Assemblies and Groups have all kept up regular meetings and active teaching during the year, a number of the assemblies also helping with teaching in goal towns and weak assemblies. Quite a few of the Bahá'í centres have given hospitality to week-end schools and conferences.

Teaching Conference, which was held in Blackpool, was very successful and seemed to start a new phase of greater effort and activity. It may indeed have been the turning point so greatly needed in this very crucial year. Quite a few regional conferences and week-end schools have been held in different parts of the country, in all about fifteen, sometimes organised by Regional Committees and sometimes by individual communities.

In an attempt to free as many people as possible for teaching, the Regional Committees were made smaller this year. All have worked steadily and energetically to stimulate and maintain the teaching in their areas.

Early in June the N.T.C. held a conference at the Ḥaziratu'l-Quds with the members of all the Regional Committees to start them on their work for the year, a practice which they expect to continue in future.

During the year another British believer was added to the list of Knights of Bahá'u'lláh. Paul Adams, who had spent some time in the North of Norway preparing himself and learning the language, succeeded in getting a job in Spitzbergen, one of the last remaining virgin territories of the Crusade and arrived there in June.

The Europe and Asia Teaching Committee has special difficulties to contend with in its work. Its territories are nearly all distant outposts, either on the periphery of the British Isles, or still further away in the Atlantic or Mediterranean and visits to them involve much time and money. Jersey now has three pioneers and in the Shetlands there are two, a pioneer and a local believer, but all the other territories except Eire and Cyprus contain just one. There is hope that a pioneer from Germany, Anneliese Haug who was formerly in Cambridge, will soon go to the Hebrides and Rene Aldridge of Brighton is preparing to go to Malta as soon as she can. Reinforcements are still needed in the Orkneys and the Faroes. However, so long as the virgin goals are kept open by one pioneer, the home goals, which have to build complete assemblies before 1963, have priority.

In Cyprus where there are now about 35 believers, life has been very difficult during the past few years because of the disturbances in the island, but it is hoped that with more peaceful conditions the friends there will be able to meet freely again and the work will go ahead. Three Cyprus believers have moved to Britain for study or business reasons.

The Republic of Ireland, which also comes under the jurisdiction of the E.A.T.C. is not a virgin goal but a territory for consolidation. The Local Assembly in Dublin is weak and needs more pioneers, especially a family who could provide another home in which teaching could be done. Dublin is the pivotal centre for Ireland and the need is therefore great. Plans are going ahead for Terry Dunne to pioneer in Cork, the opening of which will be another step towards the goal of consolidation.

One of the biggest highlights of the year was the Inter-Continental Conference held in Frankfurt at the end of July, which was attended by over 2,300 believers from all over the world, but mainly from Persia and from Europe. It was a tremendous demonstration of unity between the believers of East and West. The talk about the beloved Guardian given by Hand of the Cause Mrs. Amelia Collins, his appointed representative, the viewing of the Portrait of His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh and His blessed Hair, the talks of the other Hands of the Cause present and the pioneers who crowded the stage, were all experiences which will never be forgotten. About two hundred people, including children, went from the British Isles. Most of our island goals were represented and we were specially happy to see the pioneers we had not seen for so long, Eskil Ljungberg from Faroes, Olga Mills from Malta,

and Hugh McKinley and Shamsi Sedaghat from Cyprus.

Following the Conference, the Hands of the Cause in Europe called a meeting of Hands, Board Members and members of European N.S.A.s at which the British N.S.A. was very well represented. There was a further meeting called by the Hands at Brussels at the end of December at which again the N.S.A. was represented by another member besides those who are also Hands and Board Members.

In the weeks just after the Frankfurt Conference, London was flooded with visitors, predominantly from Persia, who came to visit the grave of the beloved Guardian before returning home. From morning till night, when they were not visiting the cemetery, they filled our Ḥaziratu'l-Quds, sitting to chat and drink many cups of tea, or listening in the evenings at various meetings which were arranged for them. They were very impressed by our treasured store of holy archives, which were several times exhibited for them. Many friends helped to care for and entertain them, both at the Ḥazíra and at the cemetery, notably a number of the Persian friends who live here. It was a wonderful chance to build up friendship with our Persian fellow-believers who have given so much and many of them suffered so much for the Faith.

So far as finance is concerned, we have had crises from time to time during the year and most of the time have been operating with a big deficit. Whether in fact the contributions from the friends have been maintained or increased on the year only the accounts when they come from the auditors will tell us. Certainly in the last couple of months they have dropped. We have however, had generous help from outside sources. First of all in July the Custodians in the Holy Land sent us £1,000 from the International Fund. This put us straight for a while, but since our ordinary income is at present not sufficient for the needs of the work, the deficit soon began to mount again. Then a little later we were sent a munificent gift of U.S. \$5,000, equaling about £1,780, by Mrs. Amelia Collins, Hand of the Cause, specifically for sending out and maintaining pioneers and the teaching expenses connected with goal towns. This will make it possible to help any suitable pioneer who arises, which could certainly not have been done out of our ordinary income. The third significant financial event was the wonderful generosity of the Persian friends who visited here after the Frankfurt Conference. They gave, or promised, a great deal of money for various funds such as the Guardian's Memorial, the purchase of British Temple land, etc., though not very much was for the general National Fund. The most exciting promise, which has since been fulfilled, was that of a Persian friend who offered to pay off the remaining debt of £800 on our Ḥaziratu'l-Quds, which is thus now free of debt. Finally a month or so ago the Custodians provided sufficient money for a travelling teacher to devote his whole time to this work for a year and Ian Semple has given up his job in order to do this.

The problem of our recurring shortage of funds is a real and urgent one, which we must grapple with and

overcome. We cannot depend on others always to come to our aid. The Guardian told us we must aim to become self-supporting. We must make every sacrifice to attain this and to provide for the important work we have to do all the financial support which it needs.

In the International field, the National Assembly, at the request of the Bahá'í World Community Committee, sent a letter to the United Nations Organisation in support of the proposals of the Genocide Committee.

The Assembly has given some thought during the year to its responsibility, which continues in some measure till the end of the Crusade, for the overseas territories allocated to us by the Guardian, which now come under the jurisdiction of some of the new Regional Spiritual Assemblies. While we cannot offer them pioneers or financial help, we are glad to report that Betty Chapman of London has gone to Kenya for two years and further, we have from time to time been able to assist in various British territories by approaching government departments on various matters and by acting as the N.S.A. nominally responsible in some incorporation documents.

With regard to Translations, progress on our goal African languages has been slow. The easy ones have been done and for the remaining ones we are dependent on the assemblies and friends in various parts of Africa, who have their own difficulties too. Chuana and Kuanyama have been completed, four proofs are in Africa for checking and Africaans and Ronga are at the printers.

Nearer home, a pamphlet has now been translated into Scots Gaelic and is in the process of checking. This is not a goal language, but is nevertheless a welcome addition to the number of languages into which Bahá'í literature has been translated.

The Public Relations Committee has this year had to contend with a great many difficulties, with the result that the end of the year finds them with a number of projects in preparation but not yet put into operation. Amongst these are plans to send Bahá'í literature, including *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, to Universities, to print *The Tablet to the Hague* for distribution to prominent non-Bahá'ís, to put advertisements in Underground trains, to try to get paragraphs about the Faith inserted in *Pears' Encyclopaedia* and an article in *Readers' Digest*. Amongst the plans carried out were the preparation and sale of Wilmette Temple Photo folders, preparation of publicity material ready for use when the British Temple site is obtained, and a good deal of advice and assistance to Local Assemblies and Groups in getting newspaper and poster publicity. A very interesting development has been the production of Willy Blum's imaginative poster about the Faith, which is gradually being put up in different parts of the country.

World Religion Day was celebrated in a number of communities. As last year, Manchester had a big meeting attended by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, and several other communities reported very successful meetings.

The small periodical *Prediction*, which in the past

has published several articles by Elsie Cranmer mentioning the Faith, gave us further publicity this year. A letter sent by Mrs. Szanto of London was published with a footnote of commendation by the editor, giving our address, with the result that quite a few enquiries about the Teachings were received, and one declaration has been accepted.

Book sales by the Publishing Trust have continued actively, both to home and overseas communities. The book at present in production is *Some Answered Questions*, which should be out before long. It is to be followed by a reprint of *Guidance for To-day and Tomorrow*.

Some time ago the N.S.A. asked Gitta Chaplin and Louis Ross-Enfield to prepare jointly a pamphlet specially designed for contacts from the Jewish Faith. This has now been done and sent for review.

A new venture was an advertisement of Bahá'í literature in the Religious Supplement of *The Times Literary Supplement*. Allen & Unwin, John Murray and George Ronald combined to insert an advertisement for *All Things Made New, The Glad Tidings of Bahá'u'lláh* and *Christ and Bahá'u'lláh*.

The Audio-Visual Aids Committee has been busy and full of ideas through the year, and especially through their system of hiring out tapes and slides, has helped towards success in teaching and at some week-end schools. Some of their publicity ideas have been passed to the Public Relations Committee, and at their suggestion a supply of the little enamel badges produced in Japan has been obtained for sale by the Sales Committee. In the reverse direction some printed cards of Bahá'í prayers, produced by the Canterbury Group, have been popularised by the Audio-Visual Aids Committee. The Committee has been in correspondence with more than one similar committee on the Continent, to mutual benefit, and they have several new plans in hand, notably the preparation of Bahá'í greeting cards.

The National Youth Committee report a good deal of activity during the year. Last April they held a week-end school in Torquay with an attendance of 18 and there was a Winter School lasting ten days at Blackpool in January just before the National Teaching Conference. During the latter a Youth Conference was held at which 28 were present. The Committee already have plans for a number of week-end schools in the coming year. They have held their meetings in several places where they could meet and stimulate local youth, and individual youth have visited a number of communities as speakers. Six youths have volunteered to pioneer and several will soon be at their posts. Youth Groups have been formed in Manchester, Belfast, Reading and Brighton. *The Voice of Youth*, the excellent periodical produced by the National Youth Committee, has increased its overseas circulation by fifty per cent. and its general circulation now amounts to over 200 copies. The Youth Committee are unique amongst national committees in contributing all the money their work has needed and they have used none of the budget allocated to them.

The Committee asks that Local Assemblies should

encourage the youth in their areas to form youth groups and also that in the town where they hold next year's week-end schools or meetings the local communities shall give all the help and co-operation they can.

Because so many were going to Frankfurt, it was decided to make the summer School organised by the N. Ireland R.T.C. in August at Bangor, Co. Down, into the only one for the year, and the friends there were encouraged to widen the range and scope so that people from all over the country could be invited. This school was a great success, being full all the time, and it was very much enjoyed by those who attended, who came from a number of different communities.

For Summer School in the coming year premises have been booked at Harlech, a committee is already at work on the arrangements and bookings are being taken.

The aim of the Child Education Committee throughout the year has been to awaken a sense of community in the children, a realisation that the Bahá'í Faith reaches into all aspects of life, and at arousing the idea of service. They have produced four issues of their periodical *Starlight Magazine*, which has been popular with the children. Children have been encouraged to write for the magazine, to correspond with each other and also to take an interest in the pioneers, especially the Knights of Bahá'u'lláh in the islands. The Committee urges children, parents and other friends to increase contributions to the magazine and draws the attention of parents in particular to the importance of Child Education and increased interest in it, so that the children may grow in consciousness of the importance of the Faith in the world and become workers and pioneers in the future.

Since September the *Bahá'í Journal* has appeared bi-monthly and we plan to continue this. The Committee has made a determined and successful attempt to have the Journal appear on time, which has in at least one case, resulted in a very small issue, because they have difficulty in getting the material in from committees and communities by the due dates. Some never send news at all. If the Journal is to become, and continue to be, a vital part of our community life, we must feed it regularly with reports of our activities.

As a result of a generous offer of help from Habib Habibi, plans are in hand for a Bahá'í Diary for 1960, and we hope the work of preparation and distribution will be done in Manchester.

* * * * *

In 1953 we embarked on a Ten Year Crusade—ten years, which stretched away so far into the future and seemed to give us endless time. Now just four years are left and there is still a tremendous amount left to do. We must work twice as fast, we must do twice as much from now onwards. There must be no time, no attention for anything that does not further the Crusade. Even our rest must be only in order to serve better, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself has told us. There must be no sacrifice we will not make. Even four years ago, in 1955, our beloved Shoghi Effendi wrote us:

'Time is indeed short. The responsibilities shouldered by the members of this community are manifold, pressing, sacred and inescapable. The eyes of the entire Bahá'í world are upon them eager and expectant to witness feats as superb as those which have marked the birth and establishment of the Administrative Order of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh in the British Isles, and exploits as meritorious and significant as those that have accompanied the inception and progress of the mission entrusted to His British followers, on the morrow of the emergence of that Administrative Order in their homeland.'

Are not these words even more urgent to-day? Not only the Bahá'í world, but mankind itself, waits to see if we shall carry out in time the tasks which the Guardian has told us are to lead us on to fulfil a glorious destiny and help to bring the Kingdom of God on earth. The making of history, even the salvation of the world, lies partly in our hands. We surely cannot withhold one single minute, one ounce of strength, one thought, one prayer that might help to achieve the goals—goals which are to be stepping stones to greater, more far-flung achievements. The voice of our beloved Guardian speaks to us from all his messages, giving us encouragement and hope, in words such as these:

'Before the eyes of the warriors enlisting under its banner stretch fields of exploration and consolidation of such vastness as might well dazzle the eyes and strike awe into the heart of any soul less robust than those who have arisen to identify themselves with its Cause. The heights its champions must scale are indeed formidable. The pitfalls that bestrew their path are still numerous. The road leading to ultimate and total victory is tortuous, stony and narrow. Theirs, however, is the emphatic assurance, revealed by the Pen of the Most High—the Prime Mover of the forces unleashed by this world-girdling Crusade that "Whosoever ariseth to air our Cause God will render him victorious over ten times ten thousand souls, and, should he wax in his love for Me, him will We cause to triumph over all that is in heaven and all that is on earth".

'Putting on the armour of His love, firmly buckling on the shield of His mighty Covenant, mounted on the steed of steadfastness, holding aloft the lance of the Word of the Lord of Hosts, and with unquestioning reliance on His promises as the best provision for their journey, let them set their faces towards those fields that still remain unexplored and direct their steps to those goals that are as yet unattained, assured that He Who has led them to achieve such triumphs, and to store up such prizes in His Kingdom will continue to assist them in enriching their spiritual birthright to a degree that no finite mind can imagine or human heart perceive.'

HASAN Balyuzi	Betty Reed
John Ferraby	Louis Ross-Enfield
Dorothy Ferraby	Ian Semple
Ernest Gregory	Marion Hofman
David Hofman	

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE
NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
CONVENTION 116 (1959)

Since the main report was written about a month later than usual, the supplementary report is not very long.

We have gained four new assemblies this Ridvan. One or them, Bangor, is one of our goal towns and was made possible by a declaration and a removal at the last minute. Another, Glasgow, is the restoration of an assembly which lapsed when the civic limits rule came into force, and two, Hove and Cheadle, take the places of two others, Brighton and Stockport, which lapsed at the same time and of which the areas of the new assemblies until then formed part.

With the help of pioneers we hope we have maintained the three Local Assemblies which were below numbers, but there are housing difficulties.

Since the main report was written there have been no more declarations so far as the N.S.A. has been informed. The declaration of Miss Mary Newman at Pontypridd makes it possible to form a group in this goal town.

Regarding our search for a piece of land on which ultimately to build a Temple, we have been using the services of a firm of town planning consultants. They have checked with local authorities in the Thames area about various pieces of land on which we could get permission to build a Temple and two sites in this category at Shepperton have been inspected and approved. The consultants are now enquiring whether the owner will sell. We are also at present investigating some other sites further up the river.

The directors of the Great Northern London Cemetery at Southgate have offered to reserve for Bahá'ís a piece of land adjoining the Guardian's grave. It would be sufficient for about twenty-five graves. We shall not own the land, but on payment of a retaining fee the cemetery people will undertake only to sell these graves to Bahá'ís.

The N.S.A. has decided that in view of the urgent need, a new edition of the *Kitab-i-Iqan* must be printed straight away. Since the Publishing Trust could not finance this until next year, the N.S.A. will make funds temporarily available from the John Mitchell bequest so that printing can go ahead. Until the British edition is ready, the N.S.A. will subsidise sales of the American edition so that they can be sold at 15/- per copy, which is approximately what the British edition will sell for.

With regard to translations, the manuscript in Nubian has now been received and sent to the printer and Shilluk is promised for next month. The Afrikaans proofs have been sent out to Southern Africa for checking.

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY YEAR 116
(1959) — — — — —

The following were elected:

Hasan Balyuzi, *Chairman*
Ernest Gregory, *Vice-Chairman*
John Ferraby, *Secretary*

Dorothy Ferraby, *Assistant Recording Secretary*
David Hofman
Marion Hofman
John Long
Betty Reed
Ian Semple

Election of the Treasurer was deferred until the next meeting when members' other commitments will be better known.

RESULT OF VOTING FOR THE NATIONAL
SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

	<i>votes</i>
John Ferraby	53
Hasan Balyuzi	50
Marion Hofman	46
Dorothy Ferraby	45
Ernest Gregory	42
Ian Semple	41
David Hofman	34
Betty Reed	30
John Long	27
Louis Ross-Enfield	22
Adib Taherzadeh	17
Charles Macdonald	16
Owen Battrick	15
John Wade	12
Eruch Munsiff	6

4 votes each: Gladys Backwell, Habib Habibi, Joan Gregory, Kathleen Hornell.

3 votes each: David Lewis, Marina Nazar, Donald Millar, Terry Dunne.

2 votes each: H. Nahai, Vera Long, Jeannette Battrick, Bobbie Kamming, Bobbie Leedham, Gladys Pritchard, Abbas Afnan.

1 vote each: Dick Lancaster, Ernest Miller, Prudence George, David Mumford, Ian Sinclair, Madeline Hellaby, Henry Backwell, Rose Wade, Micky Mihaeliff, Audrie Rogers, Dr. Naji, Emily Eastgate, Rustam Sabit, Mehrangiz Munsiff, Herbert Conder, Marion Mihaeloff, Kianoush Kouchekezadeh.

MEMBERSHIP OF NATIONAL COMMITTEES
Archives

Hasan Balyuzi, Abbas Dehkan, Dorothy Ferraby, Joan Gregory.

Audio-Visual Aids

Gitta Chaplin, Clifford Johnson, Dorothy Morrissey,* Nuri Sabit, Dennis Smith,* Mimi Smith.*

Bahá'í Journal

John Morley, Valerie Morley (*Editors*), Prudence George, David Hofman.

Bahá'í Publishing Trust

Reginald Coulson, John Ferraby, Marian Mihaeloff, Rustom Sabit, John Shortland.

Bahá'í World Representative

Jean Pitcher.

Child Education

Lilo Jessen, Louis Ross-Enfield, Pamela Sabit,* Margaret Shanks.

Europe and Asia Teaching

Jeanette Battrick, Jean Campbell, Egon Kamming, Charles Macdonald, Marcel Mihaeloff, Betty Reed.

Haziratu'l-Quds

Dorothy Ferraby, John Ferraby, Bobbie Kamming,
Donald Millar, Rose Wade.

Public Relations

Owen Batrick, Evelyn Chilvers,* Janet Coppen,
Habib Habibi, Kathleen Hyett, John Long.

Reviewing

Louis Ross-Enfield, Isobel Slade, Walter Wilkins.

Summer School

Abbas Afnan, Dorothy Ferraby, Joan Gregory,
Bahadur Hagjoo, Vera Long, Ian Sinclair.

National Teaching

Gladys Backnell, Ernest Gregory, David Lewis,
Marina Nazar, Ian Semple, John Wade.

Regional Teaching

NORTHERN IRELAND: David Brown, Billy Glass, Lis-
beth Greeves, Kathleen Hornell, Jane Villiers-Stuart.
SCOTLAND: Molly Hughes, Svend Kamming, Eliza-
beth Laidlaw.

NORTH-EAST: Matthew Hall, Kiapoush Kouchik-
zadeh,* Phoebe Jay,* Marian Mihacloff.

NORTH-WEST: Audrie Rogers, Pauline Senior, Harold
Shepherd.

MIDLAND: Emily Eastgate, Vera Long, Vera Rate,
Ian Sinclair.

EAST ANGLIA

Bob Cheek, Joan Gregory, Peter Vuyiya, Walter
Wilkins.

SOUTH-EAST: Owen Batrick, Betty Chapman, Amir-
Farhang Imani,* Bobby Leedham, Dr. H. Najy,*
Evelyn Rouse.*

SOUTH-WEST: Willy Blum, Alma Gregory, Barbara
Lewis, David Lewis.

Youth

Farhang Afnan, Geoff Bridle,* Ida Kouchikzadeh,
Margaret Higden, Jacqueline Thomas, Christine
Wade,* Iraj Zamiri.

*Signifies a member who served part of the year.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM HAIFA TO A BELIEVER

It is the Guardian's considered view that the time has come when Bahá'ís should establish the Bahá'í way of life, independent of any of the former attachments which individuals may have had, particularly if these attachments contain teachings or methods of operation which are contrary to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Guardian feels, therefore, that membership in Masonic Lodges is not consistent with the pure teachings of the Faith, and that the time has now come when the believers should separate themselves from such membership. The instructions contained in the message to the British N.S.A. and the United States N.S.A. apply universally.

The teaching of Bahá'u'lláh will establish a new life for humanity. Those who are Bahá'ís must endeavour to establish this way of life just as rapidly as possible. Now that the hour has arrived when the Bahá'í Faith is gaining prominence, and is being reviewed by so many peoples, it is necessary that the adherents of the Faith should live up to high ideals in every way. In this way they can demonstrate that the Bahá'í Faith

does create a new way of life, which brings to the individual a complete association with the will of God, and thus the establishment of a peaceful and universal society. Divisional attachments are of men, while universal service is of God.

The Guardian is now anxious that all the friends achieve a universal consciousness and universal way of life.

Note (hand-written): The adjustment should be wisely and cautiously made, not arbitrarily and drastically. My Bahá'í love to you. LEROY IOAS

November 1956

UNITY—TENDER AND COMPASSIONATE—

—An extract from an article by U.S. Spiritual Assembly, which appeared in *Bahá'í News* (No. 336).

In the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh the nature and purpose of religion is for the first time completely unveiled. We who recognise in Bahá'u'lláh the Word of God are called upon to demonstrate what faith in God actually means at this stage in the evolution of man and society.

For Bahá'ís not only have access to truth; we not only have before us supreme examples of heroism and sacrifice; we not only stand obligated to exercise certain virtues and qualities; above all we are spiritually obligated to establish the new world order, with its local, national, and international elective institutions.

It is through the Bahá'í community that the blessings of the new day are poured forth. The more unified and active our community, the greater the bounty received in terms of assurance, justice, peace, brotherhood, and true progress.

Beloved friends! Your National Spiritual Assembly appeals to every individual believer to realize that our first and most important Bahá'í obligation is to take an active part in the life of the Bahá'í community. Let us each resolve to attend each Nineteen-Day Feast with a heartfelt devotion to our fellow-believers. Let us share our resources with the local and national Bahá'í Funds. Let us open our homes for teaching inquirers. Let us realise that from day to day our individual lives, unassuming though they may outwardly appear, contain the germ of superhuman quality and influence bestowed upon us by our Creator. The buried seed cannot yield up its treasure in cold, hard earth, nor can our latent virtues and capacities manifest their powers in an indifferent personality.

It is not for any of us to cherish indifference as a reaction to what other believers do or fail to do. We each stand forth in the eyes of God as His creation, meriting His blessing or His condemnation, as weighed in the scales of perfect love and justice. As others join us in our effort to create unity, the rivulet of individual resolve becomes the irresistible torrent.

Upon the Bahá'ís of the world rests the future destiny of mankind. We who call ourselves Bahá'ís, let us disclose the mystery of faith to our fellow men. This is the eloquence which surpasses the powers of speech, the understanding which human education can never bestow. Unity, tender and compassionate, can alone survive the imminent perils of our day.

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

PORTSMOUTH

Our greatest and most joyful news is the latest declaration of Trevor Bower, who first read of the Faith in 'Prediction' and wasted no time in finding out from 27 Rutland Gate as to the nearest Portsmouth Bahá'í. Finding the Secretary he very soon attached himself to the friends, read diligently, and is now one of our most active believers. We feel that with four new believers in one year, we are well on the way to incorporation, and hope to fulfil the beloved Guardian's wishes. The Week-end School was well advertised, and although the crowds didn't turn up, it was a spiritual feast for all present. With our Hand of the Cause, John Ferraby, and Member of the Auxiliary Board, Marion Hofman, expounding as they always do when talking of our beloved Faith, we, the believers of Portsmouth, felt that, in the words of Olive Long, it was indeed a Spiritual Feast for the friends. Geoffrey Riddell of Reading attended the youth session on Sunday morning and we had the added pleasure of seeing the coloured slides of the Holy Shrines in Haifa, and a very lovely one of the Temple at Willmette together with the inspiring commentary. Visits to the pioneer in Winchester are made frequently and we soon hope to tie up with Brighton and Hove also Bournemouth. We are happy to report the return of Selah Ali who has been visiting his parents in Baghdad. Patricia Green (*née* Pennington) is now living in Luton, Bedfordshire; we are hoping for some good news from that area shortly.

From the Nottingham *Bahá'í Newsletter*.

'O people of God! Be not occupied with yourselves. Be intent on the betterment of the world and the training of nations.'—BAHÁ'ULLÁH.

GENERAL NOTES

We have now started another year of our great Crusade, the goals that have to be attained are many, but I feel that at the moment it would be well to look back at the events of the past year.

The year has seen the number of members in Nottingham increase, Robert Morrell joined us as did Mr. and Mrs. Mehnoush, though we appear to be going to lose them to Sheffield. On the other hand Mrs. Beale left us, she is now in the United States; we were happy to hear that she is doing well after her recent illness. Meetings at the centre have been fairly well attended and our speakers have included a number of non-Bahá'ís, among these was Prof. C. C. Price of Pennsylvania University, U.S.A.

Perhaps the most outstanding event of the past year was the week-end school at the Andrews Hotel, there were 11 non-Bahá'ís present; the school was a great blessing to our community. Another 'event' was John Long's address to the 'Cosmo', there were over 125 people present. The year's work has been one that all members helped in and we face the new year as one of challenge.

CHICHESTER

Cherry Viveash, always interested in meeting various groups with the hope of spreading the Cause, recently spent the week-end in Ventnor, Isle of Wight, with a party of youthful vegetarians, and promptly sent for Bahá'í literature, with the words, 'Don't delay because I want them all to know of the Message before they leave'.

BOURNEMOUTH

We had a very inspiring talk by Owen Battrick of Reading on March 29th. We were glad to welcome Helen Bailey, also from Reading. Mr. L. Chapman of Leicester arrived too late for the meeting, but was able to meet four of the Friends on Easter Monday. Stuart Sweet, recently arrived from Libya, where he has been for some considerable time, and served on the L.S.A. whilst he was living there. He is at present at Boscombe Down, Wilts., and will soon be moving to Salisbury. We are very happy to report the declaration of Susan Sweet, who is the mother of Stuart and his sister Christine. Mrs. Aileen Beale, who has been visiting her daughter in the U.S.A. for the past six months, will return to her home Community of Bournemouth on 11th April. Mrs. Elsie Cranmer has had an article published in the March edition of the *Forum*, organ of the World Congress of Faiths. This article contains a reference to the Bahá'í Teachings on the immortality of the soul. This is only one more of the many articles that Elsie Cranmer has had published in reference to the Faith, in magazines and periodicals read throughout the world.

We have had an interesting letter from Mrs. C. P. Vanston who lives in South Croydon, Surrey, who seems to be an ardent contact worker for the Faith, and reports interested enquirers from Woldingham. The Rev. A. W. Rainbury, Vicar of Emmanuel Church, South Croydon is reading *The Bahá'í Revelation*. Mrs. Vanston encloses an article entitled 'People in the News'.

LEICESTER

In a recent letter to all Assemblies and Groups, the Public Relations Committee put forward the idea that Naw-Ruz was a good time for Bahá'ís to hold a celebration party to which non-Bahá'ís could be invited. The Leicester friends thought this a good opportunity to have a children's party and this was carried out. Twelve children attended with their parents on Saturday, 21st March in the Bahá'í Centre, gaily decorated for the event. After starting with children's prayers, various games were organised and prizes given to the winners. Although the party involved much organising it was very rewarding. In the evening a Unity Feast was held, nineteen friends and contacts attending. The devotional was followed by a short talk on the reason for the celebration and many questions were put by the contacts. The friends afterwards gathered for the social part of the celebration when refreshments were served. This was indeed a happy New Year's Day.

We recently held a Thanksgiving Feast, originally planned as a naming Feast for baby Jane Sinclair, to which we invited two non-Bahá'í families to bring

their babies, while four other young children attended, two of whom were from non-Bahá'í families. The mothers all joined in reading appropriate Bahá'í prayers and the non-Bahá'í parents greatly enjoyed the whole occasion, including the subsequent Feast. In all there were 22 people present.

WOKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT GROUP

At the time that Wokingham R.D. Group decided to offer at Teaching Conference an attempt to attain Assembly status the group of three Bahá'ís and one youth were keenly joining with the Bahá'ís of Bradfield R.D. Group and Henley R.D. isolated believer in a new co-ordinated teaching effort which has resulted in the formation of a Rural Teaching Committee. Greatly excited by the declaration of Helen Bailey to swell their numbers, Wokingham R.D. held their first public meeting in Wokingham Town Hall aided by the Rural Teaching Committee on 18th March. Sending out over 300 cards with also newspaper and poster advertisement. The meeting was well attended by 22 non-Bahá'ís, 6 Bahá'ís being present. David Hofman gave an outstanding address and the question time was enlivening. The whole atmosphere being greatly assisted by a delightfully rearranged room and very eye-catching book and poster display arranged by John Morley of Bradfield R.D. The believers are in close touch with most of the non-Bahá'ís who attended and are actively following them up.

This was followed by a Nawruz party held at the home of Jeannette and Owen Battrick to which 28 non-Bahá'ís came, the party being 35 in all. We were grateful for the support from American Sally True and Nigerian Peter Kabisa from Oxford to give the party an International flavour. The whole company present sincerely wished the Bahá'ís well for their New Year and there was a most happy and friendly atmosphere which everybody enjoyed. The success of this delightful evening was felt to be a landmark in publicising the Faith in view of the fact that the Town Clerk of Reading and his wife, a County Councillor and a J.P. (who asked for a book on the Faith as she departed) were amongst the guests.

Another venture of this community is the display for one year of two of the large posters by Willy Blum. One situated on Wokingham Station, already *in situ*.

Cardiff

Extract from a letter from Marian Hofman

... I have just come from Cyme Park School. It has been a great week-end for the Cause. The R.T.C. arranged five minutes on television, 'People and Places'—for Mehranguiz Munziff's costume show, and they asked her what the Cause was, on the air! The Lord Mayor of Southport and the Lady Mayoress attended the Indian dinner officially, and were happy and friendly. On Sunday night Margaret Shanks shared a pulpit with the Unitarian minister and a Rabbi, and did *very* well, to a full church. ...'

WEEK-END SCHOOL IN WALES

On April 18th and 19th, thirty-eight Bahá'ís met at a week-end school in a small hotel. Visitors were welcomed from Bristol, Edinburgh, Hove and Newmarket.

Dr. Ernest Miller gave the opening talk, 'The essential verities of the Bahá'í Faith'. Ian Semple spoke on the relation of the Faith to other religions. In the evening a party was held, at which slides were shown with commentary on the Temple in Wilmette.

Philip Harvey, who had only just returned from Haifa, gave a thrilling account of his most wonderful pilgrimage.

On Sunday, Alma Gregory and Marian and David Hofman gave a series of inspiring talks on the central figures of the Faith on the Covenant.

Most of those who attended the school were Welsh. At all devotionals, Mrs. Newman, an old lady of 86, read Bahá'í prayers in Welsh. Children also took part in the readings and prayers. Delyth Jones, a talented schoolgirl, contributed musically. Since the school, two of the Welsh ladies present have become Bahá'ís.

ADDRESSES

National Secretary:

JOHN FERRABY,
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National Treasurer:

JOHN LONG,
126 New Walk, Leicester.

National Teaching Committee Secretary:

IAN SEMPLE,
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Edinburgh 7.

Editors Bahá'í Journal:

VALERIE MORLEY (Secretary)
JOHN MORLEY

News Gatherer:

PRUDENCE GEORGE,
291 Hawthorne Crescent, Cosham, Portsmouth.