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## **1940, 'Azíz Sabour, In the Presence of the Beloved Guardian**

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### 1940, 'Azíz Sabour, In the Presence of the Beloved Guardian

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### **In the Presence of the Beloved Guardian**

**24th February — 7th March, 1940**

'Azíz Sabour Ashton Court 507 Blackpool Road PRESTON PR1 1EQ England  
19th December 1997

To The Bahá'í World Centre Department of Library and Archival Services

Dear Bahá'í Friends

I humbly submit my translation of my Arabic Pilgrimage diary,  
about which you wrote in your kind letter of 16th February 1983,  
that it was the first Arabic Pilgrimage diary. The sixth day is his-  
torical.

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours humbly

'Azíz Sabour

Enc.

My translation of my Arabic Pilgrimage diary.

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### **The first day in His presence on Saturday 24th February:**

At quarter past five we three, the only pilgrims from 'Iráq, stood at the door of the guest-house on Mount Carmel to welcome the Guardian. We were: Mr Adíb Baghdádí, the N.S.A. Secretary; Mr. Salmán Dloomí, the N.S.A. Treasurer and myself, a teacher in Kurdistan, Arbil. We saw the Guardian afar, standing in the high "Monument Garden" by the Resting Place of The Purest Branch, and we heard his voice sometimes, talking to the gardener, Mr Barzu Bemán.

Then he came walking along the street which leads to the guest-house, with a white handkerchief near his face which he opened with both hands. Who am I to describe his majestic pace, his form and beautiful face; the young, healthy, Promised Guardian of our Faith?

When he came near he smiled and said to me, "Welcome! You are 'Azíz Effendi?" I came forward and said "Yes, Beloved Guardian", and I bent before him, but he held me up and said, "God forbids, it is not permitted; but we may embrace." Then he greeted my two colleagues, who had been in His presence three days before me, and he said to them, "Please, come forward".

He asked me "When did you arrive?" I said "I arrived today." He asked "By which route?" I replied, "By train via Mosul" He asked "Past which cities?" I replied, "Past Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Tripoli and Beirut." He said "Did you stay in Beirut?" I replied, "No, because I arrived at midnight." He said "Did you meet anybody in Beirut?" I said, "I wished to meet Mr Húsayn Iqbál, but I did not have the opportunity.

Here, Adíb pulled me back when I was near the Guardian, but the Guardian noticed that and said, "No, no. I don't agree. Please come forward. Don't stay behind."

Then the Guardian said to me, "Did you encounter any difficulties on your way?" I replied, "Everything was fine, through your Bounty." He said, "Did you come in the name of Pilgrimage?" I said that I was coming to visit the Bahá'í Shrine in Haifa.

Here, the Guardian stepped up the marble steps to the gardens of the Shrine and asked my two colleagues, "Did you come also in the name of pilgrimage?" They replied, "Yes, Beloved Guardian." He said, "To whom did you say this?" Adíb said, "To the French Consul." The Guardian said, "And to the Iraqi Government?" I said, "Yes, to the Iraqi Passport Officer." He said, "Yes, the believers should come in the name of Pilgrimage and not even in my name. They should say that they are going to visit the Holy Shrines in Haifa and 'Akká, the Bahá'í World Administrative and Spiritual Centre."

I said, "Beloved Guardian! The enemies of the Faith want to uproot the Cause!" He replied, "No doubt that they want that." I said, "Even those who know the Teachings oppose the cause." He said, "Some of them are afraid and some of them are ignorant. But the more the Cause progresses, the more shall be

the opposition". The believers should study the Teachings, trust God and be steadfast. Then the Divine confirmation comes to their aid."

Here, the Guardian briskly, with broad paces, went up the garden overlooking the Shrine and turned to me and said, "Do you know the English language?" I said, "Yes, Beloved Guardian, through your Bounty." "Bounty," I said to him, I did not say to him that I learnt English through my personal translation of his Letters: "The Goal of the New World Order" and "The Unfoldment of World Civilization."

Then he said to me, "Where in 'Irâq are you?" I replied, "In Kurdistan." He asked me, "How long have you been there?" I said, "This year." He said, "What is your job?" I said, "A teacher in the secondary school." He asked, "Did you learn the Kurdish language?" I said, "Beloved Guardian! Little by little." He said, "Yes, little by little." He said, "Of course, you have the book 'Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era' in the Kurdish language?" I said, "Yes, Beloved Guardian, the Kurds are nice people. They maintain their religion." He said, "No! Not because of this, but because their nature is pure and not like the hideous Shí'ah of Baghdád." The Guardian said that with a smile.

Then he pointed to the entrance door below and said, "That is the entrance through which the High Commissioner and his lady came to visit the Shrine and that is the private entrance through which they left. To visit the Shrine, they took their shoes off outside, and entered.

Then the Guardian looked at the garden and said to us, "Look, how beautiful this side is! Where are our sacred Shrines compared to the Sacred Shrines in the hands of the Shí'ah? In 'Irâq, when Mrs Kehler wanted to visit the Shrine of Imám Ḥusayn, the Shí'ah leaders prevented her, saying, "She is Christian!" Salmán said, "They also said she was a woman." The Guardian said, "Yes, they did. The Bahá'ís are the only people who can prove the right of the Pure Imáms. Bahá'u'lláh proved their right in 'The Book of Certitude'. The friends of the West will prove their right and will promulgate Islám. This is an essential belief in our Faith. We acknowledge the validity of the Imámate Institute and the invalidity of the Caliphate. The greatest proof is the collapse of the Caliphate after thirteen centuries. The believers should study 'The Book of Certitude' and 'Nabíl's Narrative' for teaching the Faith."

I said, "Beloved Guardian! In Mosul, Mullá Aḥmad says that in the Qur'án, Súra Care, proves the right of the Imáms." The Guardian said, "Mullá Aḥmad is ablaze in his love to the Faith. He has communication with the believers in America, but Aḥmad Hamdi in Basrah has imperfect faith."

Then the Guardian said, "The National Assembly should establish new Centres. In America there are one hundred Centres. In Irán six hundred. In 'Irâq, nine. They should rise to nineteen Centres."

I said, "Please, we speak but nobody heeds." The Guardian said, "The people of the world shall suffer a great calamity. Unless they suffer, they do not wake up.

‘The unforeseen Calamity’ promised by Bahá’u’lláh in Baghdád eighty years ago (i.e. Hidden Words, Persian, No 63) and His Words: “And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake” revealed in ‘Akká seventy years ago, refer to the Calamity, and both have not yet been fulfilled. The believers should also be ready. Trials, opposition and upheavals will take place in all human society, but that will lead to the establishment of the Most Great Peace.” Then he said, “The belief of the Shí’ah in dissimulation (i.e. recanting the belief under duress and danger) is not acceptable in the Bahá’í Faith. I informed the believers of this several years ago. It brings shame to the Cause and makes the enemies more daring. The Islámic court in Egypt, in Babbá, had issued its verdict saying, “Bahá’ism is an independent religion.” So what do we Bahá’ís say?” He smiled and said, “Do we say we are Muslims?” Then he said, “In Baghdád, the Shí’ah misappropriated the Great House of Bahá’u’lláh; and they thought that the judicial proceedings had finished and the Bahá’ís had been extinguished, but they shall suffer what the learned Muslims have suffered in Írán and Turkey, “Woe for people governed by their dogs” [i.e. the verse revealed by Bahá’u’lláh].

Then he asked us, “How are the learned Muslims in ‘Iráq? Are they dominating over the Government or is the Government dominating over them?” I asked, “Will any of the politicians arise to help the cause?” He said, “We should be pleased if they leave us alone and do not injure us. After this war they will approach the Bahá’ís to attract them to their aims, so you should be awake about this. You should teach the unprejudiced people.”

In our walk with the Guardian, we arrived at the door of the Shrine of the Báb, and he told the caretaker to open the door. He took off his shoes and entered, and we followed. He prostrated himself on the threshold and then stood up and chanted the Tablet of Visitation. Then he drew back to the door and we followed. He went to his car and with a shining face bid us farewell. Then I noticed that my thumb had swollen through my rubbing the index finger, unintentionally, over my thumb while I was replying to the Guardian’s questions and hearing his blessed statements.

### **The Second Day in His Presence on Monday 26th February:**

After visiting the Holiest Shrine, the Mansion in Bahjí, the ‘Riḍván Garden’ and the high plain covered with red flowers outside the Mansion called “Albuq’atu’l Hamrá” the previous day, and staying overnight in the Mansion, we arrived at the house of the Guardian, which is the House of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. When we arrived back at the house of the Guardian, we met the gardener, Isfandiyár, who told us to go up the steps to the Guest-Room where the father of the Guardian wanted to see us. We saw him for the first time. While we were drinking the coffee served to us by Mr ‘Alí Asghar, the gardener came to tell us that the Beloved Guardian was in the Shrine gardens and that he called us to join him there.

We hurried to the street leading up to the Shrine. When we arrived, we were told that the Guardian was in one of the three rooms of the Sacred Relics and Archives, next to the six rooms of the Shrine. We stood near the Shrine, waiting. When he came out, he welcomed us and said, “I was busy in the Sacred Relics room. Mr Khádím has brought me Valuable Relics from Írán. Amongst them is a bomb that was fired on the believers at Ṭabarsí Fortress. It is historic and not sacred. The friends in ‘Iráq have the privilege of seeing the Sacred Relics and the original Tablets on their way from Írán to Haifa, and they help in sending them safely on to us. This is a great service which they render to the Cause and at the same time is a service to the Bahá’í World Centre. They connect Írán, the Cradle of the Faith, to Haifa and ‘Akká, the Heart of the Faith.”

Then the Beloved Guardian asked us about our visit, yesterday, to Bahjí and said, “Did you visit the Blessed Mansion? It used to be the centre of the Covenant-Breakers, but now it has become the Bahá’í Museum of East and West Materials. It is an International Museum, because the relics within it are both Eastern and Western. Did you visit the Room of Bahá’u’lláh? It is very moving, isn’t it? I did not fix electricity in this Room, but left it with its old lighting. I also advised the Friends in Írán to leave the Blessed House of Shíráz with its original lighting when they rebuilt it. We shall remove the electricity fittings from the Greatest House in Baghdád when we repossess it.”

Here, the Guardian asked us, “What are the Shi’a doing now with the Greatest House?” Salmán replied, “They made the Greatest House as ‘Ḥusayniyyah’ (i.e. a place for their religious ceremonies) and they wrote on the door: ‘Enter ye therein in Peace, secure.’ (i.e. Qur’án 15:47). The Guardian said, “Yes, it is ‘Ḥusayniyya’ after the Name of Bahá’u’lláh: Ḥusayn ‘Alí, the name in which the second name Ḥusayn (he said in Persian: “Rukniduw — wúm”, i.e. The Second Supporting Pillar) has preceded the first name ‘Alí (he said in Persian: “Rukni-Awwal”, i.e. The First Support Pillar) and the Name of Bahá’u’lláh is a proof of the right of the Pure Imáms and all the Tablet of Bahá’u’lláh, known as the ‘Tablet of the Commander of the Martyrs’, refers to Imám Ḥusayn (i.e. second Imám in Islám) and ‘The Book of Certitude’ confirms ‘The Tablet of the Commander of the Martyrs.’”

Then the Guardian said, “In the Blessed Mansion I have collected five thousand precious books in forty languages, eastern and western. Amongst them is the book of Esslemont. The Covenant-Breakers tried to purchase one third of the Blessed Mansion, which belonged to the Sham’ah family in Damascus, while the two other thirds belong to the Cause. At that time Músá, the son of Muḥammad-‘Alí, was an official in the Estate Registry. At last they managed to possess one sixth, and that was through bribery and blackmail. They registered this one sixth in the name of Majdid-Din, who gave it as a gift to Muḥammad-‘Alí (i.e. the Arch Covenant-Breaker). When the structure of the Mansion became deplorable, after they had lived there for forty years without spending a penny on its repair, I sent a messenger to tell them: “Either repair it or vacate it.” They vacated it. I sent ‘Abdu’l-Samad to repair it. Then I furnished it and

set the Relics and the Bahá'í books in such a beautiful way that the Covenant-Breakers were astonished. I invited the Governor of Haifa to Bahjí, where he first visited the Holiest Shrine, and then he visited the Mansion where he saw the model of the American Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and visited the Room of Bahá'u'lláh. I explained to him that the Mansion is a sacred place, exempt from tax and that the pilgrims only sleep one or two nights there, but they have their meals outside the Mansion."

I said, "Please, we wish to visit the Mansion again." He replied, "I shall send you for the second time."

Then the Guardian said, "After the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Covenant-Breakers took the key of the Holiest Shrine by force from the keeper, Abú'l-Qásim Khurasání. But cables and letters came from Írán, from the cities, towns and villages, in such a number that the Governor was astonished to know that there are six hundred Bahá'í Centres in Írán. He, himself, took back the key from the Covenant-Breakers and handed it over to the keepers."

Then the Guardian pointed, with raised arm, to the high lands of Mount Carmel, and said, "These lands are endowments to the Shrine. The friends of 'Iráq have shared in its purchase: Salmán Effendi, the Baghdádí family, 'Azíz Effendi and Dawood Effendi. Some of these lands I have registered in the name of the National Assemblies of America's and India's Branches in Palestine, with the Estates Registry. When the government of 'Iráq registers the Bahá'í Endowments, I shall register some of these lands in the name of 'Iráq National Assembly's Branch in Palestine."

Here the Guardian arrived at the door of the Shrine. He entered after taking off his shoes outside, and we followed. He prostrated himself on the Threshold and then rose up and stood and chanted the Tablet of Visitation.

When he came out he said to me, "Where did you hear about the transfer of the Purest Branch?" I replied, "I received a copy of your telegram to 'Iráq from my brother or from Mr. Adíb in Baghdád when I was in Arbíl." Then I asked, "We have known something about the Station of His Holiness the Báb from reading Nabíl's Narrative, but when shall we know about the Station of the Purest Branch?" He said, "Yes, the believers should say, "The Báb is the manifestation of God." The Station of the Purest Branch will be known in the second Bahá'í century." Then the Guardian walked to his car and bid us farewell: "KhudáHáfiz."

### **The Third Day in His Presence on Tuesday 27th February:**

The Guardian had already arrived at the upper garden overlooking the Shrine while we were visiting the Sacred Relics in the three rooms next to the six rooms of the Shrine. He had arranged that we would join Him after visiting the Sacred Relics with his youngest brother, Mr Riyád, who was telling us some information about them. We hurried to the upper garden and when we approached, the

Beloved Guardian said, "Welcome! Where is Mr Salmán?" Mr Salmán appeared from behind the trees and called, "Here I am, Beloved Guardian." The Guardian said to us, "You have been busy visiting the Sacred Relics. Some of them were in the Blessed House in Haifa, in the room of the Greatest Holy Leaf. I have put them together in the three Archives rooms in order that they will be in the future 'The International Archives Preservatory'. These precious Relics are Blessed Clothes, Tablets and other priceless Holy Writings." I said "In this Dispensation, there are many Relics, whilst from past Dispensations there are none." He said, "This is a distinction of this Dispensation." I said, "Amongst them is the Blessed pot with chains." He said, "Yes, it is there." I asked, "What was the reason for the departure of the Blessed Beauty to Sulaymáníyyih?" He said, "The reason was the machinations of Azal; and after His departure, twenty five people claimed the Station of 'He Whom God Shall Make Manifest'."

Then the Guardian said to me, "You are in Kurdistan." I replied, "Yes, Beloved Guardian, in Arbíl." He said, "I want one believer to settle in Sulaymáníyyih and one to settle in Kirkuk." I said, "They can teach the Faith in a wise way." He said, "Yes, they can teach the Faith through good behaviour and attract the hearts through good actions. The National Assembly should consult about this matter and should exert their efforts."

Adíb said, "Beloved Guardian! In Kurdistan there has appeared a faction group called 'Haqqah'. Do they have any connection to the Faith?" The Guardian replied, "They have no base of truth. In this Dispensation, no schism appears as it has appeared in past Dispensations, where the Authority after the Manifestations was not appointed in their Laws; neither in the Qur'án, nor in the Gospel." I said, "Please, what was the wisdom behind that?" The Guardian said, "That was in order to prove the distinction of this Revelation." I said, "Mullá Aḥmad Malláh in Mosul says that in Qur'án the Verse: 'They said "We have tarried a day or a part of a day" and the verse: 'They tarried in the Cave three hundred and nine more" and Bahá'u'lláh passed in the year 1309 A.H. and that refers to the Imáms whose right was proved by Bahá'u'lláh. Please, is that the meaning of the two verses [i.e. 18:19, 25]?" The Guardian said, "Yes, this is one of its meanings. The words of God have many meanings and everyone of the believers understands according to his capacity."

Then the Guardian said, "Yes, in Christianity there appeared differences about the statement of His Holiness Christ, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church' [i.e. Matt.16:18] and there has opened a great schism which has led to the emergence of Catholics and Orthodox. Then there happened the schism between the Sunnís and the Shí'ís in Islám. But in this Revelation only differences have happened and will happen in the future, but they will not cause schism. In this Dispensation the Covenant-Breakers wanted to create schism, but they failed and were driven away from the realm of the Cause. And if non-Bahá'ís object, saying, "What is your proof that no schism occurs to you? You should say, "Because in the Bahá'í Revelation, the Authority, to whom the believers turn after the Manifestation, is specifically appointed, while the

Authority after past Manifestations was not appointed in Their Books.” Yes, the Caliphs in Islám usurped the right of the Pure Imáms.” I said, “Please, when we say this to the Sunnis, they shiver.” He smiled and said, “For the sake of this point, teaching the Faith to the Shí’ah is easier than to the Sunnis. You should be careful not to let this point lead to arguments. But, this is the belief of the people of Bahá. So don’t admit anyone into the Community, unless he has professed the truth of the Pure Imáms. In America, nobody is admitted into the Community, unless he professes the truth of Muḥammad and the right of the Pure Imáms. Mrs Kehler, in Írán, told the learned of the Shí’a that she was grieved in ‘Iráq when she was not allowed to visit the Shrine of Imám Ḥusayn. So they were surprised in Írán that an American lady becomes grieved because of her being not allowed to visit the Shrine of the Commander of the Martyrs.”

In future the believers from the West will come and will prove the right of the Pure Imáms and this point shall awaken the people in ‘Iráq and cause their entering by troops the Cause of God ‘And thou seest men entering the religion of God by troops.’” [i.e. Qur’án 110:1]. Adíb said, “Will that happen in the second century?” The Guardian said, “Yes, it will happen in the second century.” I said “How will that happen when it is promised — “It will be harsh for the Arabs.”” The Guardian said, “They will face a severe calamity. Look how they are seized ‘as a Mighty and a Strong can seize’ [i.e. Qur’án 54:42]. Then the Guardian said, “Look at their peninsula, at Palestine, at Egypt! These are Arab-populated. They say ‘We are independent’ while they are captive. They will be gripped by trials which will surprise the peoples of the world.”

Then I asked, “How will science serve the Cause?” He said, “Science can do this through scientists who turn to God and maintain detachment, straightforwardness and pure intentions. When a person has pure intentions, he can render important service to the Cause, even if he is illiterate.” I asked, “Is it spiritually necessary for me to continue my education?” He said, “Why not? It is indispensable as long as it is possible. The youth should study the Laws, the Principles and the History of the Cause. These three aspects. There is a difference between Laws and Principles. The Principles are in the Talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, such as: ‘The equality between Men and Women’ and ‘The Obligatory Education’ and ‘The Three Unities of God, of the Manifestations of God, of The Human Races’. The Laws are in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The Universal House of Justice will enact the laws which are not in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Nobody can change the texts of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

Adíb asked, “Will the House of Justice replace the governments?” The Guardian said, “Yes; but it is not permissible to say that now, because the governments will be disturbed. You should say that the Bahá’í Assemblies are institutions for the spiritual, social and administrative tasks in the Bahá’í Communities.”

Adíb asked, “Will monarchies survive, and for what are they necessary?” The Guardian said, “They should survive, because they are the Signs of God on earth, but the work will be in the hands of the Houses of Justice.”

I said, “Beloved Guardian! This is mentioned in your letter: ‘The unfoldment of World Civilisation’.” He said, “I have informed the West of all this.” I said, “Is it permissible for us to translate it?” He said, “Why? It should be translated. I write to the West and to the East.” I didn’t tell the Guardian that, in ‘Iráq, I was afraid to translate the sections in His letter under the titles of ‘The Collapse of Islám’ ‘The Deterioration of Christianity’.

#### **The Fourth Day in His Presence on Wednesday 28th February:**

It was half past four and we did not receive the order to be in His presence. So we decided to go to the Blessed House of the Guardian. We arrived at the gate and saw Mr ‘Alí Asghar carrying in his hand a bucket of water and when we entered, the father of the Guardian said that the Guardian was coming. Then we heard the Guardian say: “‘Alí Asghar! Where are the guests?” We came forward and bowed. The Guardian smiled and welcomed us and said, “How are you today?” We thanked him. He said, “Please, come along.” Then he said, “Today I was busy reading and arranging ‘The Bahá’í World’ Volume 8. Six parts of it have safely arrived by post. This is a wonderful thing in this disturbed day.” [i.e. World War II]. The Post Office didn’t open them because they are sure of our side. We have no secrets.”

Adíb said, “Beloved Guardian! People have even published Kitáb-i-Aqdas.” The Guardian said, “Yes. In Bombay they have printed it and I heard that they have also printed it in Baghdád. They will print it in America. Even the Ahmadiyyah [i.e. that faction of Islám in India] have printed it.” Adíb said, “Beloved Guardian! The Ahmadiyyah are childish and are backed by machinations.” The Guardian said, “Yes, the Ahmadiyyah faction is mere imaginations. This is the beginning of the humiliation of Islám. In London, the Ahmadiyyah have a mosque furnished with mats and it is miserable.”

I said, “Will the Muslims be humiliated for being astray?” He said, “No, but for their oppression. They have committed great oppression. The common people are not responsible. Their leaders will be humiliated.”

Here, the Guardian walked silently and then said, “The weather is fine.” I said “Beloved Guardian! What is the station of Dr.Esslemont?” He said, “He is a Hand of the Cause.” I said, “Today we have visited the Bahá’í Cemetery in Haifa.” He smiled and said, “When did you visit it?” I said, “This morning.” He said, “Did you go on foot?” We said, “Yes, Beloved Guardian!” He said, “Were you not tired?” We said, “No, we weren’t tired.” He said, “It is a very moving cemetery under the shadow of the Holy Shrines. East and West have met therein. Dr Esslemont from the West and the Afnán, the cousin of the Báb, from the East.” I said, “We wish to have a cemetery in Baghdád.” He said, “Yes, it is necessary, but now is not the time for it.” I asked, “Shall we acquire it amidst troubles like Egypt or shall we acquire it by law?” He said, “It is not known.”

Then he said, “In Egypt, they said that Bahá’ís are not Muslims and they

should not be buried in Muslim cemeteries.” I said, “They declared the independence of the Faith.” He said, “They separated themselves from us and they declared our independence and publicly showed the independence of the Faith.” I said, “Beloved Guardian! They severed, and “The day of severance is fixed.” (i.e. Qur’án 78:18).” He said, “A dreadful Day!”

I said, “In ‘Iráq, in February 1939, the newspaper, Istiqlál, (has) printed Egypt’s verdict against the Faith.” He said, “This blessed movement of opposition has started in Egypt and from Egypt it spread to the other Islámic countries. In Egypt they separated wives from their husbands and this was an unprecedented legal case. Then they came to the burial of the dead. But in ‘Akká, when the Mufti (i.e. the Islámic Law expounder) heard that verdict, he said, “No. No we don’t agree. The Bahá’ís are in the shadow of Islám and this verdict acknowledges their independence.” Thus the Muslims are now two different parties: one in Egypt considers the Bahá’ís as infidels, and one in ‘Akká considers the Bahá’ís as Muslims.”

The Guardian added, “This opposition had started in Írán, by the Shí’ah, and resulted in the extinction of the governing dynasty. Then the opposition passed to Turkey and this led to the collapse of the Caliphate and of the Sovereignty by Mustafa Kamál Atatürk. From the East, the opposition passed to the West and the Presbyterians rose against the Faith and their opposition is still going on. The Protestants are less prejudiced than the Catholics, who are very prejudiced and have many vain imaginings.”

Then the Guardian said, “The Bahá’í Faith is independent and has no connection with any political institution. ‘Abd’ul-Bahá said “The Bahá’ís should not meddle in politics.” This statement has left no room for interpretation. Some Bahá’ís try to interpret it, but it doesn’t accept any interpretation. And if non-Bahá’ís oppose this statement, you should tell them: “Bahá’ís look to the hearts. They do not accept political jobs. Give them political jobs and test them! The Bahá’ís accept administrative jobs.” Then the Guardian said, “Administrative jobs are plenty and the Bahá’ís are now in forty five countries. The Bahá’ís cannot meddle in their politics, and if they do, they bring the shame of disunity to their communities. The politicians can tell lies, break promises, and have hypocrisy. They have different policies. For example, Russia’s policy is different from Írán’s policy which is different from England’s policy. To join any political party means to bring disunity.”

When the Guardian mentioned Russia, I asked, “Please, how are the believers in Russia?” He said, “They are very distressed. Some of them are in prisons and the rest have been dispersed. The enemies of the Faith shall suffer for their cruelty.”

Here, the Guardian, while walking along the clean street of Haifa below Mount Carmel, arrived at a point overlooking the city’s green stretches of land, surrounded by white houses. He said, “How delightful the landscape is.” Then he looked up at the side of the top of Mount Carmel. Raising his arm, he said,

“There, near the monastery, the Tablet of Carmel was revealed.” I said, “Please, was Muḥammad Mustafa Baghdádí among the believers at the time of revealing the Tablet of Carmel?” He said, “Why? This is not known”. I asked, “Is the verse: “Oh Carmel!” addressed to this mountain?” He said, “Yes, to this mountain. That is the top of the mountain and there, the heart of the mountain, where The Shrine is. Then he said,” “The address “Oh Carmel!” was to the mountain itself just as in the Tablet of Visitation of the Purest Branch is revealed: “When thou wast laid to rest in the earth, the earth itself trembled in its longing to meet thee” and an earthquake happened at the passing of The Purest Branch, but it was mild.”

I asked, “Beloved Guardian! In the Tablet of Carmel: “Book of Names” what does it mean?” He said, “It means the Knowledge of the Blessed Beauty, and it doesn’t mean anything else.”

Then he said, “The Verse: “The people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names” means the members of the Universal House of Justice. The verse “Ere long will God sail His Ark” means the enacting of laws by the Universal House of Justice, which were not revealed.”

Adíb asked, “Can the number of members of the Universal House of Justice be more than nine?” The Guardian said, “Not only can that be, but the number of all the Houses of Justice, local and national, will increase afterwards, but not now.”

Then the Guardian said, “The Universal House of Justice will be built on top of Mount Carmel in the shadow of The Holy Shrines: The Holiest Shrine in ‘Akká and The Shrine in Haifa. The Qiblih has been appointed for the people of Bahá by His Holiness, the Báb, when He revealed, “The Qiblih is indeed He Whom God will make manifest; whenever He moveth, it moveth, until He shall come to rest.” (i.e. in The Arabic Bayán).

Then the Guardian said, “Through the sacrifices of the believers and through the power of the Almighty, we could purchase the lands around The Shrines. The day will come when all these lands will be in the hand of the Cause. These lands are eternal endowments and The Shrines are eternal Shrines. I wrote to Írán to exert efforts to purchase the Holy places. In future, pilgrims will come here by troops.”

Adíb asked, “Beloved Guardian! Is the site of the martyrdom of Ṭáhirih appointed? The Guardian said, “Its photograph is in Nabíl’s Narrative. The site is now the land on which the Bank of Russia is built.”

Then the Guardian said, “How are the Holy places now in ‘Iráq?” I said, “The Riḍván is now a government hospital.” Adíb said, “Yes, it is Health Institutions.” I said, “On the land next to the Riḍván is the Minister’s Guest-House. The Washásh farm (i.e. the place where the Tablet of the Holy Mariner was revealed) is now the Airport of Baghdád.”

The Guardian said, “Do you go to visit the Riḍván?” I said, “Yes, we go.” He

said, "Do the believers gather there in the Feast of Ridván?" I said, "Half of them do." The Guardian said, "Do non-Bahá'ís go there?" Adíb said, "Yes, Beloved Guardian." He said, "Is it not prohibited?" I said, "No, Beloved Guardian." He said, "Is it pleasant gardens or just for patients?" We said, "For patients."

The Guardian said, "Yes, Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs and administrative institutions should be built over the Holy places, so that they shall be inspired by these Holy spots. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in a detailed Tablet has revealed: "This is that which the dust of the Spot around which circle the Concourse on High has inspired me." The Guardian said, "Not only the Holy places in Palestine, but also in the other lands they grant this inspiration."

I said, Beloved Guardian! The world's equilibrium hath been upset." He said, "The verse: "The World equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order" means the collapse of all the present political systems. If they do not collapse, how will the new World Order be established?"

Then he said, "The Bahá'ís and the non — Bahá'ís are not aware! Bahá'u'lláh has revealed: "This, truly, is a Revelation which revealeth only once every five hundred thousand years. Thus have we removed the barrier and lifted the veils"" Then the Guardian said to us, "It is an Arabic Tablet, haven't you read it? The Manifestation who shall come after one thousand years is the Manifestation of He Who does what He wishes and He Who ordains what He wants. He can annul the laws of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The changes of time necessitate His advent." I said, "Of course, great differences will happen in the Cause that shall necessitate His advent." He said, "No. Not differences, but great changes will happen that will necessitate new Law or necessitate changes in the revealed texts of Bahá'u'lláh. The next Manifestation is the Manifestation of He Who does what He wishes. You can know this when you read my English letters and you will know that I do not write from me, but I write excerpts from the Tablets." I said, "Beloved Guardian! You arrange the excerpts as you string the pearls in a necklace of jewels." The Guardian did not comment. I asked, "Please, in your letter 'The Unfoldment of World Civilization' (i.e. in the passage 'Humanity's Coming of Age') these words: "The Golden Age is the furthestmost limits in the organisation of human society" — will not man's progress necessitate a greater Revelation than this Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh?" The Guardian said, "What for? Another Manifestation will come and He will change some or all of the Laws of Bahá'u'lláh." Then the Guardian laughed with that shining face and said, "We can't imagine what will happen after five hundred thousand years." Adíb said, "Not even after one thousand years." Salmán said, "Not even after one hundred years." The Guardian said to us, "Read the verses revealed by the Pen of the Blessed Beauty, but with minute observation and attentively."

Here, the Guardian, in his walking along the street below Mount Carmel, arrived at the 'Germans Street' and looked up to the lights of the Shrine and said, "Look how beautiful is this view from the Shrine to the sea! The terraces are

mentioned in the Tablet of ‘Abd’ul-Bahá.” Adíb said, “We hope that this street will continue down to this public street.” The Guardian said, “This is what I am thinking of, but the Municipality opposes, because some of its members do not love the Faith and are linked to the Christian Missionaries, and some are avaricious, but the terraces shall continue to the sea. In the Tablets, it is revealed that the terraces will be a spot of light and in the Bible: “The excellency of Carmel and Sharon.” (i.e. Isaiah 35:2). The translators of the Bible say: “Excellency” which is wrong.” I said, “Is that an intentional bad action?” He said, “No. It is out of ignorance. Here is a text which they cannot change.”

Here, the Guardian in his walking arrived at the gate of the Blessed House and said to us, “Yes, today I received parts of ‘The Bahá’í World’, Volume Eight and I am busy reading them.” He smiled and bid us farewell.

### **The Fifth Day in His Presence on Friday 1st March**

We came back from our visit to Bahjí and The Most Great Prison in ‘Akká.

We went to the Blessed House of the Guardian and we sat in the Guest-Room where the Father of the Guardian and his youngest brother, Mr Riyad, were sitting. Then Mr ‘Alí Asghar came and told us that the Beloved Guardian had come.

We hurried to be in his presence.

With his smile and shining face, he said, “Welcome! Have you been to the Most Great Prison? Did you have a good day?” We said, “Yes, Beloved Guardian, we had, through your bounty.” He said, “Which hour did you visit the Most Great Prison?” We said, “About twelve o’clock.”

The day before, the Guardian gave us a letter written in his own handwriting and signed by him. On the envelope he had written:

To The Superintendent of Prisons ‘AKKÁ

The letter was dated Feb. 29th, 1940 and on top of the letter the shining red stamp:

I said, “Beloved Guardian! In the Room of the Prison we recited the Tablet of Wisdom where He revealed: “Cast into a prison built of unyielding stone.” Does this verse mean this Room?” He said, “It means the City of ‘Akká, which is surrounded by an enclosing wall built of stone and not this room only. ‘Akká is the ‘prison’. It was in ruins, but now it is being reconstructed. Haifa also, where the ship of the Blessed Beauty stopped for two or three hours, is being reconstructed and has been reconstructed to the extent you see. ‘Akká’s ignorant people, who were against the Faith, are being changed. Adíb said, “They will be loving the Faith.”

The Guardian said, “They have changed the place of the martyrdom of The Purest Branch. Had it been in our hand, we shouldn’t have changed it.” (i.e. The

prison authority closed the skylight through which the Purest Branch had fallen while he was on the barracks's roof reciting Tablets at the instruction of the Blessed Beauty.)

Then the Guardian said, "The wisdom behind this Most Great Prison is the fulfilment of the Prophecies and the Traditions (i.e. the Traditions of Muḥammad), such as the Tradition: "Blessed is he who visits 'Akká", and the Tradition: "Blessed is he who visits the visitor of 'Akká", and the Tradition: "Blessed is he who drinks from the 'Spring of the Cow'." (The Guardian mentioned these Traditions which are in the 'Epistle to the Son of the Wolf'.)

Then the Guardian said, "The Christian Friars have built schools and monasteries here." We said, "Beloved Guardian! They also built schools and monasteries in 'Iráq." He said, "But they are busy with politics and with building the Pope's Government. The Pope is disturbed and is receiving blows from the politicians, but he will suffer his downfall." We asked, "When will he fall?" He said, "This is not known, but it is connected with events inside the Cause and the movements of the politicians, as it happened to the Caliphate when it attacked the Faith afflictively. Bahá'u'lláh revealed, "O concourse of Muslim divines! By your deeds the exalted station of the people hath been abased, the standard of Islám hath been reversed, and its mighty throne hath fallen." (i.e. from the Tablet of Proof.) The Guardian was reciting these verses with a ringing voice. A young man passing along the street turned to listen and passed.

Then, the Guardian said, "The Muslims ignore the Faith. The Jews praise. We are dispensing with both. The editor of the Egyptian newspaper, called Al-Muqattam, did not publish his correspondent's letter about the transfer of the Purest Branch. He is prejudiced against the Faith."

Then the Guardian, referring to the Most Great Prison, said, "The history of the arrival of the Blessed Beauty at the Most Great Prison is registered in the volumes of 'The Bahá'í World'. The Friends should not be satisfied with looking at its photographs, but they should study the eloquent articles, the detailed reports, and the translations therein."

Then he said, "Did you send the Annual Report?" Adíb replied, "Yes, Beloved Guardian! We sent the Annual Report 1939-1940, to America (which compiles the Volumes of 'The Bahá'í World') in the Summer." The Guardian said, "I am reading. I have not arrived at it yet. This is important and it is not like an ordinary letter. Its English language should be very eloquent. If you do not have someone proficient in English, seek the help of an efficient non-Bahá'í who should be good natured and unprejudiced.

Can you find such a person?" Adíb replied, "There may be such a person." The Guardian said, "In America, the Friends seek the help of efficient engineers and artists, but not in very private matters in the Cause. In Ṭihrán, they send their Bahá'í news in Persian." We said, "Mr Samimi and Mr Na'ímí are there." He said, "They are not efficient."

Then the Beloved Guardian stopped and looked up to Mount Carmel and said, "That is a pleasant view! The top of the mountain is there and there you see a land which belongs to the Cause. In the middle there is a piece of land which belongs to a German and a house on top of the mountain belongs to a Christian who has no land except the house and he tries to sell it to us. There, the government is opening a street. Our lands are exempt from tax."

Then the Beloved Guardian, pointing with his arm, said, "From here to here belongs to the Catholics. They pay tax. They sold some pieces of their lands to pay tax. They pay tax, because they purchase and sell lands and build houses. The Bahá'ís gave a pledge that they would not build houses and do not trade with their lands, which are eternal endowments, and they do not sell the fruit of their trees, but give it freely, as a gift. Others do not give pledges. They seek personal benefit from their endowments. They became polluted. They are not like the people of Bahá."

I asked, "Please, when shall the Cause rise?" He said, "You have haste! Unless rains fall heavily, no floods happen and no Spring comes. Calamities and trials are necessary for spreading the Cause and unless they happen the Cause will not spread. The material upheavals must precede the establishment of the Divine Civilization. Írán is the Cradle of the Cause. America is the Cradle of the Divine Civilization." Adíb said, "And Haifa and 'Akká are the Spirit of the Cause." The Guardian did not comment.

Adíb asked, "Shall the Divine Civilization be established in the year 1963?" The Guardian said, "This date is its beginning. The Americans spread the Cause everywhere." I asked, "Is this the effect of the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to America?" He said, "This is one of its effects and the effects of the 'Tablets of The Divine Plan'. Have you read 'The Divine Plan'? The Americans opened North America, South America, South Africa, Australia, France, Germany, Sweden and Balkan. They are energetic and attracted. The German Friends are meticulous. The present political condition shall change and they will open their neighbouring countries: Sweden, Norway, Balkan, France, England, Russia, Italy and Spain."

Adíb said, "My brother, 'Abbás, is in Germany." The Guardian said, "Yes, Mr Leena praises him highly." Salmán said, Beloved Guardian! Do the German believers have communication with the American believers?" The Guardian said, "This is difficult now, but they may have. I have received a letter from the German believers through Írán and I write to them through the Geneva Bureau. They are steadfast." Salmán said, "This is a fact, nobody doubts it."

We asked about the Japanese. The Guardian said, "The Japanese are negligent, but they have capacity. The Jews have capacity, but are indulged in materialism." Here, the Guardian arrived at the gate of the Blessed House and smiled. He said, "I have much work to do, I beg your pardon. KhudáHáfiz!"

### **The Sixth Day in His Presence on Saturday, 2nd March:**

We returned to the guest-house from our visit to the monastery on top of Mount Carmel with the brother of the Guardian, Mr Ḥusayn, whom the Guardian had kindly sent to us to take us to the monastery in the Guardian's car.

On our arrival back at the guest-house, the gardener told us that the Guardian was in the gardens of the Shrine. We hurried to meet the Beloved Guardian. We saw him not far away from the gate. He said to us, "Welcome! I have been waiting for you. Did you have a nice time?" We replied, "Through the bounty of the Beloved Guardian." He said, "Today I have been communicating with America and Írán, when the news of the passing of Mrs Maxwell in Argentina arrived." I noticed the face of the Guardian became pale with sorrow. He said, "She taught the Faith to Mrs Keith Ransom Kehler, to Mr Dreyfus, to Mrs Barney. Keith is her spiritual daughter." Salmán said, "Beloved Guardian! Many important persons have passed." The Guardian said, "No doubt; they shall be replaced." Then he said, "Forty years ago the Americans established the Faith in Europe and now they are establishing it in America! Men and women, young and old are serving the Faith in the South. The lights are shining from America. The Friends should be waiting for the glad tidings from America in order that they increase their own courage and follow the model of their services. All these are the fulfilment of the promises of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Mr & Mrs Maxwell were both invalid. Doctors told Mrs Maxwell that she was ill and should rest, but she did not heed to this advice. She travelled to Argentina and crossed twelve thousand miles. This is something hard. She had the hope of visiting the Blessed House of the Báb in Shíráz. General Jack was another handmaid of Bahá'u'lláh. She also, forty years ago travelled from Canada to North Europe and to the Balkans. She was detached, firm, sincere and of utmost contentedness. Both Mrs Maxwell and Mrs Jack were like the disciples of Christ. They dispersed far and wide and attained the Rank of Martyrdom. "The near became far and the far became near". Both established the Faith with utmost purity and glorification. It is a pride to visit their graves. All these are the effects of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets of 'The Divine Plan' in souls and in horizons. "They are men whom neither trade nor sale can divert them from the remembrance of God"" (i.e. Qur'án 24:37).

Then the Guardian addressed the caretaker of The Shrine, saying, "Bring the flowers from the Sacred Threshold." He said to us, "I am sending these flowers to South America to be laid on the grave of Mrs Maxwell. She has attained the Rank of Martyrdom. I sent flowers to be laid in Írán, on the grave of Rahmatu'lla'h 'Alá'í. No doubt around the graves of these people there will be built great institutions in Írán and in other places."

Then he came to the car. He smiled and bid us farewell.

On our way to the Monastery today, before our being in His presence, we had seen in the hand of his brother, Mr Ḥusayn, the telegram written in the Guardian's handwriting, about Mrs Maxwell's passing. The following is an au-

thorised translation of the text of this cable, written in Persian, announcing the passing of May Maxwell:

Adīb Baghdádí, Post Office Box 5, Baghdád

Notify Ṭīhrán: Mrs Maxwell, the selfless teacher, flame of the love of God and diffuser of His fragrances, left her home and hastened to distant regions, fired alike by love for her Master and by her yearning to proclaim the Cause of her Lord and her Inspirer, until at last, in the capital of Argentina, that distant clime, she ascended to the realm on attaining the rank of martyrdom. The Maids of Paradise now seek blessing from her in the mid-most heart of heaven. May she drink with healthy relish from the cup filled to overflowing with the wine of Divine bestowals: for such a recompense let all who labour in His Vineyard strive! Impart to all the friends news of this mighty victory.

Shoghi Rabbání, 2/3/1940

### **The Seventh Day in His Presence on Sunday 3rd March:**

From the Guest-house door, at half past four, we saw the Beloved Guardian far away in the “Monuments Garden” overlooking the public street. He was walking around the Purest Branch with his hands behind his back. Then he stepped down the three marble steps to the public street and, after quarter of an hour, we saw him coming towards us along the street in front of the guest-house. We bent forward. Mr ‘Alí Asghar was today standing with us today.”

The Guardian approached and greeted us in Arabic: “Marhabah! (i.e. Welcome!) What did you do today?” I said, “Beloved Guardian! We were reading Volume Seven of ‘The Bahá’í World.’” He said, “Yes, in the guest-house there is a library, but it is small. In the Mansions, the Pilgrims are busy communicating with abroad, and in the guest-house they are busy reading.”

Then he said, “Today, I was busy sending cablegrams and receiving answers. The telegram officials are surprised. They do not know where is ‘Guatemala’ and ‘Puerto Rico’. They look for the names in their books and ask ‘Alí Asghar (i.e. his telegram carrier). The telegrams cost £30. The telegram’s language is very frank and they may know how far the Cause of God has extended.

I said, “The words of the telegram are moving.” He said, “My telegram to Ḥusayn Iqbál in Beirut is very frank. In Beirut, the Muftí (i.e. the Islámic Law Expounder) is very prejudiced against the Faith, and he had stopped ‘The Book of Certitude’ from entering Beirut.”

Then he said, “Ḥusayn Iqbál is the scion of the honoured Muḥammad Mustafá Baghdádí in Beirut and he has ignited the lamp of his father like the grand children in Baghdád.”

Then he said, "At the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the newspapers of Palestine published the news of His ascension. No doubt, you heard that his honourable friend, the High Commissioner of Palestine had come from Jerusalem to attend the funeral and, with utmost respect, he took off his shoes outside and entered, to visit the Shrine. Now he has written the introduction to Lady Blomfield's book about 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Soon you shall see it published."

Then the Guardian said, "Today I was reading the Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed in honour of Mrs Maxwell. I shall give you them to read and so that you will know her great station. Forty years ago she attained the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akká, with Mrs Lua Getsinger, in the first group of the early Pilgrims from the West who attained His presence. She, who established the Faith in Paris, had taught Mrs Scott in Paris. Forty years she worked, teaching the Faith and now, after she crossed twelve thousand miles around the earth's sphere, has passed in Argentina. Kehler (K. Ransom-Kehler) came to rest in Isfahán and Martha Root in Honolulu. Mrs Maxwell has attained the station of Martyrdom. This is a triumph and the spread of its news is a triumph. The Americans are very energetic and are performing great achievements."

Then the Guardian turned his shining face to me and said, "What about your passport?" I said, "It is in your power." He said, "Your leave has expired and they will punish you." I said, "Yes, they will, but I hope for the protection of my Guardian." He said, "Yes, caution should be taken towards the government officials."

[NOTE: Indeed, they did punish me for being one week late. They dismissed me from my job for four years. The Shí'í General Director of Education seized this opportunity. I immediately fulfilled the Guardian's wish on my third day in his presence, and pioneered to Kirkuk and established the new Centre.]

Then the Guardian said, "Tomorrow I shall send you for the last visit in order that you will achieve actions. You must establish Bahá'í Centres in the North and in the South: in Basrah, in the Persian Gulf; in Arabia; in Ahsá', the birthplace of Shaykh Aḥmad Ahsá'í. The Friends in 'Iráq and Írán are responsible for this task, but especially the Friends in 'Iráq. We have given the Friends in Egypt the task of opening the Sudan and, after that, opening Ethiopia." Adíb said, "Beloved Guardian! in Ethiopia there are some Bahá'ís, but the government refuses to grant legal acknowledgement to their Centre." Salmán said, "The Italians are very prejudiced." I said, "Alyas Sabri has done a great job." The Guardian said, "Have you seen the Ethiopian translation of Esslemont? An American believer was here. She heard that Negus (i.e. the Emperor of Ethiopia) was in Jerusalem. She travelled to Jerusalem and gave him a copy of the Ethiopian translation of Esslemont, before he travelled to London." Salmán said, "It is said that he is very troubled." The Guardian said, "Yes, he is distressed and has no hopes." Adíb said, "This is the punishment for his oppression." The Guardian said, "No. He was oppressed. He might have caused some oppression, because oppression has engulfed all the earth. The greater the oppression, the sooner will be the time of the establishment of the

Universal House of Justice.” Salman said, “Turkey is disturbed.” The Guardian said, “All the East is disturbed from Japan to Palestine.” Adíb said, “Shall the Lesser Peace be established before the establishment of the Universal House of Justice or after?” The Guardian said, “Today my eyes are tired. My mind is tired. The National Assemblies should be my co-sharers.” I said, “Beloved Guardian! As you have given us directives for the building of our Ḥazíratu’l-Quds, we need your directives about teaching the Faith.” He said, “Yes, now as long as it isn’t the time for your government to recognise the Faithor for you to establish a Cemetery, it is the time now for teaching the Faith with caution and courage: ‘quiet but active’, with determination and eagerness.” Adíb said, “Beloved Guardian! Teaching is very difficult!” The Guardian said, “I know that.” Adíb said, “It needs the Friends to pioneer.” The Guardian said, “The Friends should not only do that, but they should sacrifice their comfort, their wealth and even their lives. Martyrdom shall happen in ‘Iráq.” Adíb said, “Shall we attain this?” I said, “I hope that we shall have this bounty.” The Guardians said, “How great is the effect of the blood! It attracts non-Bahá’ís and increases the steadfastness of the believers. In Írán the believers are ready for martyrdom, but the government is cowardly (i.e. afraid of the spread of martyrdom in Írán.). Adíb said, “In ‘Iráq they are more savage than in Írán.” The Guardian said, “They are less civilized, although the present civilization is savagery itself. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke and spoke, but they didn’t heed until the present second World War took place. This civilization can never meet with the Divine Civilization, as water can’t mix with oil. They always remain separate. The Friends and especially the Spiritual Assemblies should not imitate the politicians. They should serve the Faith bravely and with sublimity, with exaltation and with cleverness. Their criterion is to behave in an opposite way to the behaviour of the politicians, who can tell lies and make false promises. The Friends and the Spiritual Assemblies should maintain justice even with the enemies of the Faith. Before publishing Nabíl’s Narrative, I said that Áwára’s history was comprehensive in spite of its many mistakes. We promote justice. In Írán the believers prohibited teaching children according to Áwára’s history. I wrote to tell them that their decision had the smell of bigotry, while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá says, “Beware fanaticism!”, and if Áwára has anything, give him his due and do not encroach upon the rights of those who leave the Faith. Now Fádil Mázindarání is writing a comprehensive history. He has finished five volumes and the other four will follow. We are promoters of justice.”

Walking in the gardens of The Shrine near the gate’s marble steps, he said, “How beautiful are these circles of flowers. They have trees mingled with flowers. Have you such beauty and such a spot in ‘Iráq?” Adíb said, “When the Ridván comes to our hands it shall be a paradise.” The Guardian said, “No doubt it shall be.”

Then the Guardian asked the gardener Gushtásb: “Is there water enough?” and then he spoke about the lawn over the cement platform overlooking the sea and said, “This is a sea of green lawn!”

Then he ordered the door of the Shrine to be opened. He entered and we followed.

He prostrated on the Threshold and rose up to chant the Tablet of Visitation. Then he drew back to the road. When he came out he asked us, "Which way will you travel back to 'Iráq?" We replied, "The way you order." He said, "Go via Beirut and visit Ḥusayn Iqbál. He is my representative in Beirut." Then he asked Adíb, "Have you sent a letter to Baghdád mentioning the telegram? Let Baghdád send a telegram to Ṭíhrán about their acknowledgement." Then the Beloved Guardian bid us farewell and got into the car.

### **The Eighth Day in His Presence on Monday 4th March:**

He greeted us and asked about our health, then he said, "When you go back to Baghdád, you shall be carrying great glad tidings that indicate the progress of the Faith and the rising of its institutions." Adíb said, "This is through the Rabbání arm." He said, "It is through the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty. We are in need of His confirmations. What is achieved is what He is achieving. What could we do? We are acquiring from the overflowing stream of both His Holiness The Exalted Lord and The Blessed Beauty. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said, "If you know what will happen after me, you will wish my passing sooner"."

Then the Guardian said, "The Station of The Báb is the Station of a Manifestation of God. Never before had it happened that a Forerunner was a Manifestation of God, but it happened in this Dispensation. The Báb is a Manifestation and a law-Maker. He revealed a special Law. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained the station of the Báb in His Will and Testament. The Friends should read the Will and Testament. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was not satisfied to proclaim this truth of the station of the Báb, but he practically built His Shrine. The followers of Azal accuse the Bahá'ís of being enemies of His Holiness The Báb. This Shrine is a proof against their accusations. His holiness Bahá'u'lláh, fifty years earlier, had chosen the spot in which the throne of the Báb was to settle. This Shrine is a practical proof and it is stronger than traditional prophecies. 'Abdu'l-Bahá built six rooms of the Shrine and after him the three rooms were built. Haj Maḥmúd Oassabachi has shared with me in the building of the three rooms. This is one of his eternal services which I never forget. The Shrine is not completely built yet. Nine terraces will be built below The Shrine and nine terraces will be built above The Shrine, on this spot which the Cause possesses. Each one of the terraces will be called after the name of one of the Letters of the Living while The Shrine itself will be called after the name of the Báb himself. 'Abdu'l-Bahá will be transferred to another spot. I have informed the believers of his future transfer, but it is not known to which spot he will be transferred. Even the non-Bahá'ís know that it is The Shrine of the Báb. They call it "The Exalted Shrine" Did you hear this? Some of them call it 'Abbásiyyih'."

I said, "Beloved Guardian! In Baghdád my teacher, Mr Maḥmúd al-Alusi, said in the class: "The street from The Shrine of the Báb to the sea is unique and has no similar." The Guardian said, "When was that?" I said, "Ten years ago." He said, "And what did he praise?" I said, "He doesn't love the Faith. He is a member of the Muslim Youth League and when we rescued the Kurdish

translation of Esslemont from the clutch of the Home Office, the enemies of the Faith lamented.” The Guardian said, “Yes, I had heard that. Not only ‘Iráq lamented, but Írán before ‘Iráq, had lamented and then was lulled and extinguished. Írán is nothing compared to China. China, in the Far East, will rise against the Faith according to the explicit promises of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. India will rise. The Hindu are two hundred millions and Muslims and Zoroastrians are minorities there.” I asked, “Why will they rise against us?” He said, “They have traditions and because the Bahá’í Faith effaces their traditions, they start opposition and their fate will be the same as the others’ fate.”

I said, “All these victories happened in the first Bahá’í Century!” He said. “Yes, wait and see what glorious victories shall happen in the future centuries. When you go back to Baghdád, write in the Bahá’í News the present victories and publish them all over the world.”

Then He added, “You are youth. You should arise for the service of the Faith. Don’t be satisfied with prayers. Prayers and supplication alone give no results. You have to take the initiative and be enterprising.”

Then he said, “Today I have received a telegram from Paraguay telling me that they are travelling to the capital of Argentina to attend the funeral of Mrs Maxwell.” I asked “When will the funeral be?” He said, “Probably tomorrow. Were it not for telegrams, the news wouldn’t have arrived in less than two months. It is a long way. The distance between Canada and Argentina is like the distance between Canada and Haifa. Mrs Maxwell set out to teach the Faith although she was weak and 75 years old.” I said, “This shows the power of her belief.” He said, “It is the influence of the ‘The Tablets of The Divine Plan’ and their promises. In Germany also the Friends arose with great zeal and sent three teachers to different countries in Europe. One of them was Mr Spring from Leipzig. He opened Sofia and worked with Mrs Jack and died there and the Bahá’ís visit his grave. The government was afraid of the progress of the Faith and banned their activities, but they did not extinguish.” The Guardian smiled in the last sentence.

Adíb said, “Beloved Guardian! In Stuttgart there are many believers.” The Guardian said, “Yes, it is the oldest Bahá’í Centre in Germany and the most in number.” Adíb said, “When my brother [i.e. Dr ‘Abbás Baghdádí] was in Germany, we used to send the Bahá’í News through him to Germany.” The Guardian said, “Where is he now?” He replied, “In Baghdád.” The Guardian said, “They praise him very much in their letters to me, especially Mr Elena, and now what does he do in Baghdád?” Adíb replied, “Beloved Guardian! He is in the Ministry of Economics, a geologist.” The Guardian said, “Very good. An official.”

Here, we arrived at The Shrine. He went in to visit and we followed. When he came out he asked me, “What about your passport?” I quietly replied, “It arrived.” He said, “When did it arrive?” I replied, “Today.” He said, “I shall let you travel after you all go on your last visit to Bahjí. These are your last days.”

Then he said to me, "You are late going back to work. Rely on God!" I said, "I have, my Beloved Guardian, and it doesn't matter what they will do against me." He said, "Don't be late for the appointed time and don't give them a pretext in their hands against you. Attract the hearts of your superiors."

Then he said, "Today I have received the Bahá'í News of 'Iráq. Who is its editor?" Adíb replied, "This servant!" The Guardian said, "Its Arabic part is eloquent and its English part correct." Adíb said, "It is through your bounty!" The Guardian said, "I shall also pray for you." The Guardian asked, "How many copies do you send to me?" He replied, "Two copies." The Guardian said, "They are not sufficient. Send five and I shall distribute them." I said, "Beloved Guardian! The Sacred Relics in the rooms next to The Shrine are numerous. We request to visit them again." He said, "You shall visit them after you return from 'Akká. I have set the Sacred Relics in order that Pilgrims may visit them."

Then the Guardian asked Mr Gushtásb, the gardener, "Do you pick tangerines for the guests? Pick for them, from the trees in the gardens of the Shrine and also from the garden of the Greatest Holy Leaf."

Arriving at the car, the Guardian smiles and bid us farewell.

### **The Ninth Day in His Presence on Tuesday 5th March:**

Before the arrival of the Beloved Guardian, we were, as he promised us the previous day, visiting the Sacred Relics with the help of his brother, Mr Riyád, in the third room of Archives next to The Shrine. We saw the shirt of the Purest Branch stained with his blood and we saw the shirt of His Holiness The Báb stained with his blood and we saw a piece of His green turban and we saw the ring of His Holiness Quddús and we heard Mr Riyád reading to us The Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to His Sister, The Greatest Holy Leaf, written in tender and gracious words. We were overcome with grief while we were visiting the Sacred Relics of the Wronged. Then we hurried to stand at the door of the Guest-House. The Guardian came walking along the street leading to the Guest-House. He greeted us and asked Salmán, who came back from his visit to an eye doctor, if he had faced any difficulty on his journey. He replied, "Beloved Guardian! I have seen a miracle. When I arrived at Tel Aviv, the police prevented me from going to Jerusalem, saying "You cannot go to Jerusalem" I said to him, "I am an Iraqi Bahá'í. I am neither a Jew nor a Palestinian. I am going to Jerusalem to see my doctor and to see my brother." He said, "Which doctor do you want to see?" I replied, "I want Dr Teekhu." He said, "He is here in Tel Aviv. Go and see him." The Guardian said, "You did say you are Iraqi Bahá'í. There is difference between Iraqi Jew and Iraqi Bahá'í." Then the Guardian said, "What did the doctor say?" he said, "The doctor said there was no difference." The Guardian said, "No need for an operation?" He replied, "No need for an operation." Then the Guardian said, "I shall also pray for you. You must see proficient doctors: 'Hold ye fast onto the Cord of means and place your trust on God, The Provider of all means', Bahá'u'lláh has revealed." [i.e. Aqdas 33]. I asked, "Is this different

from Spiritual healing?" The Guardian said, "Bahá'u'lláh ordered us to go to material means when He revealed 'Hold ye fast onto the Cord of means and place your trust to God'."

Then the Guardian said, "Today you have visited the Sacred Relics for the second time. The Pilgrims visit them once. You visited them twice." We replied, "It was through your benevolent generosity." He said, "Tomorrow morning you go to Bahjí and you come back in the afternoon." Then he asked us, "When you go back to 'Iráq, do you travel via Beirut?" Salmán replied, "As your order will be, it shall be". The Guardian said, "You can go via Beirut and give my greetings to Ḥusayn Iqbal, but do not stay long in Beirut. Go straight to Damascus." I asked, "Can I travel back via Aleppo?" He said, "It is your way. There are believers in Aleppo. You can meet them, but don't let that delay you."

Then the Guardian said, "I hope that a chain of Local Spiritual Assemblies will be established between Haifa and India, to Calcutta and Burma and Rangoon. From Haifa to Damascus to Baghdád to Afghánistán, East Írán, and to Baluchistan. Baghdád will be joined to Haifa by the railway." Adíb asked, "Straight, all together?" The Guardian said, "Yes, Haifa will greatly develop commercially, industrially, in literature and in agriculture. It is the 'Key of the East', but I say 'Haifa is the Key of the Hearts'. It has the Exalted Shrine."

Here, the Guardian arrived, in his walk in the gardens of The Shrine, at the side overlooking The Shrine. He saw the Caretaker of the Guest-House Isfandiyár, working in the garden. He asked him, "Where is your namesake, Isfandiyár?" He replied Beloved Guardian! He is working there."

Then the Guardian said to us, "'Iráq is not joined to Írán by the railways. Its railways are only up to the frontiers, aren't they?" Adíb said, "Beloved Guardian! Every time the British wanted to extend the railways, the people of 'Iráq started opposition. Thus the problem remained protracted." The Guardian said, "Our hope is for the future, but why is this situation now?" Adíb replied, "The people of 'Iráq are afraid for their independence." The Guardian said, "They think that they are independent while they are captive and their rulers are captive. So they are captives in the hands of the captives. This is also the situation in Egypt and Syria. Írán has extended its railways." Salmán said, "Beloved Guardian! It cost Írán forty million pounds, but it is not lucrative. It doesn't give sufficient revenue to the government, because it only works during winter." The Guardian said, "It is also very slow." Salmán said, "In summer, motor cars work, because they are faster than railways." The Guardian said, "Írán extended the railways in order to say 'We are independent'."

Salmán, who is a banker, told the Guardian what he knew about Írán's currency and the Guardian said, "The people in Írán are not satisfied with their government. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that the people should be satisfied with their government and if the government does not serve the interests of the people, there will not be inter-blending, as honey and milk, and there will be no JUS-

TICE. With the people of Bahá it is the Spiritual Assemblies which serve the interests of the Bahá'í communities which had elected them to represent them."

Then the Guardian added: "The members of Assemblies should serve the interests of the Cause and not their own interests. They should be accurate, faithful and punctual. The Bahá'ís resemble the nations while the National Assemblies, the Secondary Houses of Justice, (i.e. mentioned in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá) resemble the governments of the world. The Spiritual Assemblies should be elected through general, confidential, and free election so that the politicians of the World will adopt the institution of the National Assemblies. In the Faith we have 'The Great Law, Námús-i-Akbar', 'The Secondary Houses of Justice' and we have 'The Greatest Law, Námús-i-A'zam', The Universal House of Justice."

Here, the Beloved Guardian, in his walk in the high gardens of The Shrine, arrived at the spot overlooking The Shrine where Bahá'u'lláh had rested. Behind that spot was a large green circle with only one big tangerine tree in the centre. The Guardian stepped into the circle to that tree and said to us with a smile, "Do you eat tangerines?" I replied, "Yes, every day." He gently said to us, "Come forward, please" and he picked, for each one of us, a tangerine and said, "Look at this spot. It is a wonderful spot: a tree full of fruit and at the same time its branches are covered with red flowers and white flowers and jasmine. It is a unique spot." I said, "Beloved Guardian! That tall tree with horizontal straight branches is a very beautiful tree." He said, "It was planted around the Mansion at the time of the Blessed Beauty. They were increased in number when I brought one here."

Adíb said, "We have taken two small trees for Baghdád Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds." He said, "Yes, take them and plant them there." Salmán said, "We brought flower-trees from Baghdád to Damascus Ḥaẓírat'ul-Quds." The Guardian said, "Indeed, the Friends in Baghdád have extended a great help to the Friends in Damascus for the building of their Ḥaẓírat'ul-Quds. It is not for the believers of Damascus only, but for all Syrian believers."

When the Guardian, in his walking, arrived at the square lawn overlooking the two entrances: the private and the general, he asked the gardener, Isfandiyár, "When did you come?" He replied, telling the hour of his coming. The Guardian said to him, "Your brother has gone."

Then the Guardian said to us, "Isfandiyár was serving The Holiest Shrine and I have brought him today to serve The Exalted Shrine, so that he will have both honours." Adíb said, "Beloved Guardian! These youth are ablaze in their love for the Faith." The Guardian said, "They are loyal. They guard The Shrines and The Shrines protect them. During the present disturbances, they are safe and The Shrines are safe."

Coming down from the high gardens to The Shrine, the Guardian told the caretaker to open the door. He entered and we followed. He prostrated himself on the Threshold and rose up to chant the Tablet of Visitation. We listened to

his Persian accents and wished to retain his melody in our life. When he came back out, he said to us, “Come forward. Don’t remain behind, please.” Then he asked Rustam Bimán if he had brought the car. Then he addressed Isfandiyár, “You are the Trustee of the International Archives.”

After a few steps, the caretaker of The Shrine came forward and said, “Beloved Guardian! Tonight we have no electricity.” The Guardian said, “What is the reason?” He replied, “In that electrometer.” The Guardian said, “There and not here?”, pointing with his arm. Then he asked, “How long will its repair take?” He replied, “The official did not appoint the time, but he said tomorrow he would repair it.” The Guardian said, “Very good.”

Then the Guardian said to us, “Pilgrims see the lights of The Shrine every night, shining brightly to the east and to the west. When His Holiness the Báb was in Máhku, he did not even have a single candle. Now he has a hundred thousand shining lamps. Did anybody believe that the Throne of the Báb would be brought from Tabríz to the top of Mount Carmel? Today there are people who say that his body was scattered and vanished after He was thrown on the edge of the moat of Tabríz. Nabíl wrote of the event and, of course, you have read it. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has written that all the body of His Holiness the Báb has been brought to this Shrine. The historic transfer from Írán to Mount Carmel has not been recorded yet, but it will be recorded.”

Arriving at the car, the Guardian asked Rustam Bimán, “Where is Isfandiyár [Sháh Kawoos]?” He replied, “In the Guest-House.” The Guardian said, “Call him.” When he came out the Guardian told him to get into the car. Greeting us with a smile, he said “KhudáHáfiz”. (NOTE: Isfandiyár Sháh Kawoos accompanied the Guardian in order to come back, bringing to us the Guardian’s token of His kindness — our meal at dawn, as we were fasting during the remaining four days in His presence for the beginning of the month ‘Alá’. The Guardian had gently told us that we were travellers and we needn’t fast.)

### **The Tenth Day in His Presence on Wednesday 6th March:**

We were returning from our visit to the Holiest Shrine at Bahjí. We arrived at the guest-house at five o’clock. We saw the Beloved Guardian, afar, standing near the Resting Place of The Purest Branch. When he came, he greeted us and said, “Have you just arrived from Bahjí?” Then he said “These Monumental Resting Places have a great beauty over the street below.” I said, “Beloved Guardian! Their beauty is greater at night!” He said, “The land [of the Resting Place of The Purest Branch and His Mother] did not belong to the Cause, but I have bought it recently. The Friends in ‘Iráq have shared in its purchase. It was the property of Faríd [i.e. the Covenant-breaker, Dr Faríd]. Although he knew our need for it, he sold it to the Jews with that land. The Jews built those houses which you see, over them.”

Here, the Guardian turned to look at those houses with majesty and authority and said, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá ordered them to purchase these lands. Had they known

the majesty of what we have built on this Spot, they wouldn't have sold it. But now, after they have seen what we have built, they became repentant. And although I informed nobody of my intention to transfer The Purest Branch and His Mother, they understood and started their machinations to stop the transfer, but they failed and were disappointed."

Then the Guardian told us about the building of the 'Women's Guest-House'. He said, "I have built the Women's Guest-House with the stones of the church of the missionaries, which they sold to us with the Cross. They also had a house about which they threatened us if we tried to purchase, but at last they sold it to us. I have registered them both in the name of 'The Bank of the National Assembly of America in Palestine.'"

In his walking, the Guardian stopped on the green overlooking the site of that church. He said, "This is the sight of that church. It is below The Shrine. They thought that it was an insult to the church to be below The Shrine. What insult is it for the Cross of His Holiness Jesus Christ to be in the shadow of The Exalted Shrine? Now on its site we planted olive trees."

Then the Guardian said, "The official registrations were done by the official Músá, son of the Arch-Covenant-Breaker. Now he is paralysed like his father, 'The Great Firewood', who is now burning in the Under Hell."

Here the Beloved Guardian stopped to talk to the gardener, Isfandiyár. He said to him, "Was the rain sufficient?", because yesterday he complained saying "Irrigation is difficult" and today he was satisfied with the rain!

Then the Guardian continued his kind information about registrations. He said, "This official Músá Bahá'í, as he calls himself has officially registered thirty land-transactions in his own hand and then transferred them from my name to the names of the National Assemblies of America and India, because these two National Assemblies are officially registered in their countries. I shall register the remaining lands in the future in the names of other National Assemblies, like Germany, 'Iráq, Egypt, Australia and England, when I receive their official registrations in their own countries, and I shall send them to Jerusalem to make Banks for the National Assemblies in their names. I have consulted an efficient lawyer and discussed with him all the points of view. The National Assembly in 'Iráq hasn't got the official recognition of the Government yet, but they will get it in the future."

Then the Guardian said to us, "Today you have visited the Holiest Shrine and the Mansion for the third time. This is very good." I said, "Beloved Guardian! We have copied the Tablet of His Holiness the Báb to Muḥammad Sháh." The Guardian said, "His Holiness the Báb had invited Muḥammad Sháh to the Cause of God and His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh invited his son, Násiri'd-Dín Sháh. The Friends should understand the station of the Báb exactly, and they should not be satisfied during teaching the Faith by saying He is the Forerunner. The Bahá'í schools in Írán were all closed by the Government at the Celebration of the Martyrdom of the Báb, because they said, "Why do you close today,

while the Báb is merely the forerunner of your Faith?" The Government had no objection to the Ridván Celebration. The Friends in Írán insisted on closing the schools at the Celebration of the Martyrdom and so the Government closed all the schools."

I asked, "Why do the enemies make such a difference between our celebrations?" The Guardian said, "Just for an insult."

Adíb asked, "Please, for how long will the Celebration of the Martyrdom continue following Hijrí calendar?" The Guardian said, "Until The Universal House of Justice shall be established, the East will celebrate it according to Hijrí calendar and the West according to the Gregorian calendar."

While the Guardian was walking in the high gardens overlooking The Shrine, he arrived at an oblong spot of lawn and said, "Look at the beauty of this spot with these small palm trees. It is at the same time a beautiful green lawn and a beautiful palm trees spot. Have you in Baghdád such a spot which combines these beauties together with these tall, evergreen cypresses which gave dignity to the spot? Yes, there isn't such a spot. This spot is adjacent to the Spot where His Holiness Bahá'u'lláh often sat and His tent was pitched." Adíb asked, "Did He stay here long?" The Guardian said, "Two or three days and nights."

Then the Guardian said, "Bahá'u'lláh ordered Badí'u'lláh to purchase this land from the Germans, but he failed. Then Bahá'u'lláh said to him 'You do not have the ability to do this job; it is the job of the Master.' Bahá'u'lláh fixed the Spot and 'Abdu'l-Bahá purchased it."

Then the Guardian continued walking as far as the wall bordering the public street on top of Mount Carmel and said, "Now from this street downwards belongs to The Shrine. At the beginning, the lower spot was purchased, then the upper spot was purchased, then this spot was purchased."

The Guardian walked back towards The Shrine and arrived at the edge of the circle spot to his right hand side, overlooking the far Guest-House and said, "The late MírzáJa'far Shírází purchased that far spot and built the Guest-House on it. Then the Pársí Friends purchased the spot between the Guest-House and The Shrine. They all bought them from the German Missionaries who had come here to wait for His Holiness Jesus-Christ."

Then the Guardian added, "It is the missionary, Henry Jessup, who spread the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh to the West. Do you know him?"

Adíb said, "Yes, Beloved Guardian! He was at Beirut University."

Then the Guardian said, "I purchased the lands for ten pence a metre and now it is two pounds; and down in Haifa it is six or seven pounds." We said, "We bought the land of Baghdád Ḥaẓíratu'l-Quds for one hundred Fils per metre and now it is one Dinar." The Guardian said, "The Friends in Írán have purchased about one million metres for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Tíhrán and its accessory buildings."

Then the Guardian said, “‘Abdu’l-Bahá started the purchase of lands and after Him the believers made sacrifices for the purchase of the remaining lands. Then these lands were registered in the names of the National Assemblies. These lands are exempt from the Revenue Tax. If these lands had not been purchased, the street below the Shrine wouldn’t have been extended. It shall extend to the sea.”

Then the Guardian added, “The Covenant-breakers told the Turkish Government that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was building a fortress to fight the Government. They sent Investigation Commissions (i.e. the two in 1904 and 1907). The result was the immediate downfall of the Government.”

I said, “Some of the members of the Commission went to Alexandria begging.” The Guardian said, “The grandson of Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-‘Azíz, called Seifid’Dín, came to me begging twice, introducing his personal card. The first time I spoke to him about the Faith and gave him the book of Esslemont in the Turkish language. The second time I saw that he is not in these worlds. I did not speak to him about the Faith, but only gave him money. When he came to Haifa, he stayed in the Muslim houses.”

I said, “Beloved Guardian! It didn’t happen in the past Dispensations, that they had the Victories that we have in the first Century.” The Guardian said, “In this Dispensation, the Manifestation of God did not come with the sword, but with twenty thousand martyrs. Notwithstanding this, such Victories have happened in the first century. So in future, the Friends should not be distressed when tests, ordeals and upheavals happen, because these tests happen for the sake of the exaltation of the Cause and for cleansing the Sacred Hem of the Cause from weak-natured elements. These tests shall never cause any schism in the ranks of the believers.”

When the Guardian arrived at the Shrine, he told the caretaker to open the door of the Shrine of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He entered and we followed. When he came out he said to us, “Your Pilgrimage was elaborate. For the third time you visited the Holiest Shrine and the Mansion and ‘Akká. In future the distances will be crossed in a short time through fast communications. His Holiness Bahá’u’lláh travelled from ‘Akká to Haifa in a boat and it was slow, but now this journey is done in half an hour or twenty minutes. The believers in Írán and ‘Íráq are longing for Pilgrimage. You have to know the value of your pilgrimage through exerting efforts in the teaching field and in establishing administrative centres. These two tasks are important now.”

Then the Guardian said, “Tomorrow morning you will take my present to Baghdád Ḥazíratu’l-Quds: the collection of books.” He bid us farewell and got into the car and look at us with his smile.

### **The Eleventh Day in His Presence on Thursday 7th March; The Farewell Hour:**

We sat in the Guest-room with the Guardian's father. His brother, Mr Ḥusayn, brought the Guardian's Valuable gift: Esslemont's book in twenty four languages. Salmán was telling the father of the Guardian about his journey to Jerusalem.

Our hearts were throbbing with the love of the Guardian. When he came, we rose up and his father sat in front of us near the door. The Guardian had his orange woollen robe on. His face was shining with happiness. He said, "Please, sit down. Today you are intending to depart. Yes, you will go with a new spirit. Give the Friends of God in 'Iráq my greetings and best wishes. Thanks be to God they are united and the disputes have completely vanished. They are now serving the Cause with utmost love and loyalty. Give my greeting to Háj Maḥmúd Qassábachí. I never forget his services and my greeting to Mr Dawood Toeg, who is serving the Cause with great love and loyalty. I have prepared for you these books as my gift to the library of Baghdád Ḥazíratu'l-Quds."

Then he added, "This is also the photograph from inside the Shrine. It was on my writing desk and it was not sent to the other Spiritual Assemblies. You will place it in a suitable place in your Archives room. God willing, you will continue collecting the Sacred Relics that ends at the repossession of the Great House of Bahá'u'lláh and building a Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár in Baghdád. Now there is a Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár in 'Ishqábád built on the plain. There is the Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár of America built on the shore of the lake. There will be a Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár on the slope of the mountain in Ṭihrán. There will be a Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár on top of Mount Carmel. There will be a Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár in Baghdád."

Then he added, "This is also my gift to your Assembly, the photograph of the Bahá'í Centre in Chicago of the American National Assembly."

Then he said, "In Írán, they stopped the building of the Ḥazíratu'l-Quds in Ṭihrán and closed its door. Didn't they do that? Now there are many Ḥazíratu'l-Quds that are being built in 'Iráq, Syria and Egypt."

Then the Beloved Guardian gave each one of us two photographs of the Mashriqu'l-'Adhkár in America; one of them has the glitter of the water of the lake. He said to us, "These are new photographs," and he said to me "show them to the Kurds."

Then he said, "God willing, I shall hear from you glad tidings. I am very pleased with the Friends in 'Iráq, especially in Baghdád. You will visit the Friends in 'Awáshíq and Huwaydir. I shall inform Ḥusayn Iqbál in Beirut to welcome you."

Then he rose up and said to us, "God willing you will arrive at 'Iráq safely," and he embraced us. Then he said to Adíb, give my greetings to your family." Here Adíb requested the Guardian's permission for the Pilgrimage of his mother, and

the Guardian granted his permission.

When Salmán sobbed in his weeping, the Guardian said to him, “Don’t be sad! I hope you will go to America.”

Thus was our last look at our Beloved Guardian. When we came out to the street, we embraced Mr ‘Ináyatu’lláh Işfahání, whom the Guardian told to accompany us during our four journeys to Bahjí and ‘Akká. He was standing by the car which took us to Beirut at quarter to nine.

End

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‘Azíz Sabour Ashton Court 507 Blackpool Road PRESTON PR1 1EQ England

To The Shelter of the World The Universal House of Justice The Archives Office

I humbly submit my gratitude for your kind appreciation of the translation of my pilgrimage, in your letter of 27th August, 1997.

I humbly enclose a typewritten copy of it processed through the kindness of Mrs Patricia Parker, Vice-Chairman of our Local Assembly, in order to replace my hand written copy.

I am really honoured by your good pleasure and hope for your prayers.

Yours thankfully

‘Azíz Sabour