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Notes

Manually keyboarded and submitted by Robert Stauffer, 1997.

In a note, Stauffer explains: "The Beasleys were an elderly Bahá'í couple from Spokane, Washington. The original mimeograph notes were extremely faded and some words were unfortunately not decipherable from the Seattle copy. I'll have to check the Beasley notes from the Spokane Archives to see if its possible to decipher some of those words. The other notes they mentioned in these notes dealing with details of travel and stats have not been discovered to date. I edited this in 1979. - R.S." - J.W.

Our Pilgrimage to Haifa

Elmer and Gladys Beasley

1957

On the eve of March 15th we received the unexpected telegram, telling us that Shoghi Effendi would welcome us as pilgrims the second week in May. We only knew one thing and that was that we would make the trip not even thinking of the ways and means necessary for such a long journey. We immediately set about the next day to obtain passports, vaccinations, itineraries and all the details needed. After days of this procedure and all was in readiness we waited the slowly passing time when we could take our departure.

On the eve of May 1st we boarded our plane at Geiger Airport (Spokane, Washington) which was to take us on our journey. Needless to say we were excited, thrilled and a little concerned.

The details of our wonderful journey, other than the Pilgrimage, I have written in a separate account. We feel that we can tell you of the places we saw, the things that were said, but we cannot give you the spiritual experience that each

of us had. That part of the Pilgrimage belongs to the individual, and no doubt each experiences it in a different way.

We arrived in Tel-Aviv, Israel at 11:30 PM, May 7th. Being so late we decided to stay the night there and go to Haifa in the morning. Then Tuesday morning we got what is known as a collective taxi (sherut) to travel the 90 miles to Haifa, arriving there at about 11 o'clock AM. We took a taxi and drove to the Pilgrim House and were met by Fujita. He welcomed us with outstretched arms and immediately served tea. Fujita is the little Japanese with a great big sense of humor. He was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's houseboy and has served the Faith well all these years. {{p2}} After a hard struggle in Japan, Shoghi Effendi asked him to come and be part of the household in Haifa, so Fujita is happy in his new home. He takes care of the gardens at the Western Pilgrim House and at the Guardian's home as well as serving dinner at night.

Everyone was up at the Shrine as they were having a fair in Haifa and all hands were necessary to help with guiding. So after tea, Fujita called a taxi and we all went up to the Shrine. It is several blocks from the headquarters and up towards the top of Mount Carmel. One can see the dome for miles as you ride towards the city, and naturally that is the first thing the pilgrim wants to see. We went first to the Báb's Shrine and then to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Shrine. Both are so beautiful that it is hard to visualize it to be the burial place of anyone.

As you know, the shrine itself consists of rooms of equal size, the Báb's Shrine in the middle and the Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the north and the Archives to the south of the building. The Shrine is open from 9AM to 12 noon each day, and we are told they conducted 600 persons through that morning. No one except the Bahá'ís are allowed to go in where 'Abdu'l-Bahá is buried. The visitors are given a short talk on the outline of the place and asked to remove their shoes before they enter also asked not to talk as it is a place of meditation and no one should be disturbed. I cannot possibly record in these notes the reactions of those who go there, but one thought comes to mind: A lady and her two small children went in, and when they came out the little girl, about six years old, said "I feel this is a Holy Place." A great many ask questions and one hears very few who make adverse statements. {{p3}} As the Guardian does not allow any teaching in Haifa and only Holy Days are observed, one cannot go into the Teachings. Shoghi Effendi says the Jews are building a new nation and he does not want the fulfillment of their religious teachings to be disturbed at this time. So there are no Bahá'ís in Haifa except the ones in the household. The Jews are very proud of the Bahá'ís and have a great regard for Shoghi Effendi as he has done much to beautify their city.

When we returned to the Pilgrim House we met Mason Remey, Millie Collins, the Revell sisters and the pilgrim from New York, Marie Nadler. All were on hand for lunch which is served every day at 1:30 PM. Rúḥíyyih Khánúm always has lunch with the friends and a very pleasant lunch it is. She is kind and gracious and yet makes you feel right at home as if you were all one big family. Most of the food served in the household is Persian, and so much of it, such

as sweets, are sent from the Persian friends. Our first meal consisted of a soup made from yogurt, raw, whole cucumbers, cheese and Arab bread then cakes and salted nuts for dessert. The bread is a flat loaf made from whole wheat and made by the cook then taken to a central oven here it is baked. It is very delicious and no doubt very nutritional. During the afternoon we visited the Guardian. He has dinner with the friends every night. Dinner is always served at 7PM. The newest pilgrim always goes first so you feel a little self-conscious. When you enter the dining room, which is in the basement, the Guardian is already seated at the table, and he gets up and shakes hands with you and then each one in turn shakes hands with him and then takes their place at the table.

Before I go on with the conversation at the table, I would like to describe the Guardian the best that I can. I think he must be a lot like ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and walks like Him. {{p4}} He was shorter than I had expected him to be, olive complexion and a small moustache. His eyes, of course, are brown and very expressive and one has the feeling the Guardian sees everything. His hands are small, and without any doubt, the most beautiful hands I have ever seen. He is dressed in a black aba which fits more closely than those we have seen in pictures, and he wears a small cap about 3 inches in height rather tipped over one eye very striking and his hair is gray over the temples. As the Guardian does not have private audiences, and all work is done at the table, the friends say they have never seen him any different than we see him. Rúhíyyih Khánúm is the liaison officer, and any problems as to the work or questions concerning their activities is first taken up with her and she in turn relays it to the Guardian.

The Guardian greets you like this: “Did you have a nice trip and how is your health?” then I think his first question was: “Did you go to the Convention?” We had not, and he seemed disappointed, as I believe the U.S. was the only report he had not received. He was anxious to know how many Assemblies were lost and how many formed, and he seemed disturbed that we hadn’t heard. He had just received the report of the African believers and he was so happy. So his first conversation with us was to relate the progress in Africa. They had just elected 3 National Assemblies and the one already formed in Egypt, making four in that continent. He gave us statistics and figures that one wonders how he could remember so many.

He said that when the Báb was martyred there were [undecipherable] in Africa and since he opened that continent to the Faith [undecipherable] there are over 3000. In fact the 7 have complete their Ten Year Plan, and he said: “Do you know what I did? I gave them another Seven Year Plan!” He said then ‘we do not need any more white pioneers there, and he thought he would let the friends come to the United States to teach us! They definitely can stand on their own feet.’

He spoke of the many Ḥaẓíras that we have and the money appropriated for them as well as the finances for the Temples. {{p5}} These notes we find in our [undecipherable] so I won’t repeat them here.

‘There are 3 places remaining to be settled plus the [undecipherable] ten.

A lady from one of the Scandinavian countries has gone to Spitzbergen and one of the islands is a leper colony and the other a penal institution.’ The Guardian says ‘the Soviet countries will be open before too long.’

‘The Local Spiritual Assemblies are the foundation of the new World Order, the National Spiritual Assemblies are the pillars and the International House of Justice will be the dome. Everything is representative of an institution, and we cannot put the dome on until the foundation is strong enough to support it. So it is up to the Assemblies to support it.’

‘Blood will run in the streets of America from racial prejudice.’ He says ‘the Bahá’ís have failed on this subject.’ We said that we were having some racial trouble here now and he said ‘Yes, but it will get worse.’

The Western Pilgrim House can accommodate 5 pilgrims at a time, the Eastern House 8, and the Pilgrim lasts 9 nights.

You strain so hard when the Guardian is speaking, trying to get every word and remembering it until you can jot it down in notes, that it tires you out. You can’t possibly remember all the figures and statistics as they seem to roll from his lips like water from a fountain.

He says ‘the Jews are expecting the return of Elijah but you cannot tell them now that He has returned in the Báb. Their destiny is to return to their homeland. They are natural administrators and when they see the Bahá’í Faith they will become the upholders of the Administrative Order.’ {{p6}} Freddie Schopflocher and Musa Banání were the only two Hands of the Cause who received their appointment face to face with Shoghi Effendi. All the others received their appointment by mail, except Rúhíyyih Khánúm, and she said, ‘the Guardian had to tell her because she was right there.’ The first Hands were appointed by Bahá’u’lláh.

No one knows whose names are on the pilgrim list. The Guardian attends to that personally and very often the friends do not know who is coming until they arrive. We were told that he has over 500 Persians waiting to be called.

Occasionally someone asks about some of the mystical questions. He does not answer only when he has the exact Writings in front of him. He says ‘he is not the Guardian of the mysteries but of the Administration, and if we cannot understand that, how could we understand the mysteries. No doubt a future Guardian will answer these questions.

He had just received 2 cartons from Bill Sears in Africa and he was much amused by them.

Rúhíyyih told these stories at lunch:

‘Two Bahá’ís who had pioneered to a desert island, both very bedraggled under their one lone palm tree, with their feet hanging in the water... A bottle comes

floating by and as one grabbed at it they found a note it said “stick to your posts”.

‘Also, two Bahá’ís walking down the street in a middle-eastern town when they saw a skull hanging from the eaves of one of the shops, said one to the other: “I told you Sam didn’t know enough about administration”.

The Guardian has a wonderful sense of humor, and it probably provided a chuckle in his very busy life.

On our next afternoon Dr. Ḥakím took the 3 western pilgrims through the Archives. It takes about 3 hours and they have so many precious relics. All of the Writings of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. {{p7}} The Writings have all been illumined which makes them very beautiful, and they are all in beautiful frames.

In the afternoon when there are Persian believers there, Rúḥíyyih Khánum has tea for the ladies at 4 PM, and Shoghi Effendi goes to the Shrine to be with the Persian men. While at tea you talk informally about most anything and if there is any work to be done you help with that. My first day we all cleaned little berries, very much like our currents, which they use in making [undecipherable]..some days it might be mending or serving something for the household. Then the Guardian returns at 5 PM and he talks to the Persian ladies and the western ladies go home to get ready for dinner.

Shoghi Effendi has three aunts still living in Haifa. In fact one of them lives just across the street from the Western Pilgrim House and they and their families are all Covenant breakers. Also he has two sisters and a brother living there and they too are Covenant breakers. This again proves the power of the Faith, as he has had no help with those who should have been firm.

The friends who are able to make the pilgrimage are now very privileged because in the future the shrine of the Báb will not be opened, even to the Bahá’ís. Also the pilgrims will not be allowed to eat with the Guardian.

‘There are four steps for service to the Faith..prayer, meditation, studying and serving. Prayer without action is not good. We need deeper concentration, closer association and then the body of the believers will grow.’

‘There are two duties in the Faith. The Faith comes first and we should think of ourselves last. If we have the means to take care of ourselves then we must omit the last duty.’

He is very unhappy with the American believers because they do not respond. ‘They are all tainted with materialism. We should study more because we work the administration backwards. We all want to be captains in America and that proves our immaturity.’ He said ‘we would never ask for that position for ourselves if we knew the [undecipherable] {{p8}}

There are 3 Covenant-breakers left at Bahjí. Perhaps you wonder, as I did, how this could be, but in the early days, [‘Abdu’l-Bahá] urged the friends to

buy property, and they took it out in their names. Bahjí is like what you would call an estate, a large mansion and several other buildings. and in one of these buildings these people live. They are [undecipherable] and have allowed their property to become run down. The day after we arrived, Leroy Ioas returned from Jerusalem where he had just finished signing the necessary papers to oust them. He was elated when he related the details to Shoghi Effendi at dinner. But the Guardian said, ‘now Leroy we must be generous and we must be patient.’ When this property is finally restored to the Bahá’ís they will restore the building and this part will be beautiful too. The gardens at Bahjí defy all description as to their beauty and the immense amount of work that has been done there.

We visited the Monumental gardens [The Arc of Carmel] where the Greatest Holy Leaf is buried as well as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s wife and mother and brother; a most wonderful place to rest for those who served so long and so well.

‘One day each city will have 3 Institutions: The Local Spiritual Assembly, Ḥaẓíra and Archives.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was the Center of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant as well as the Shield for Bahá’u’lláh.’

‘There are two distinct copies of the Bayán in the Archives, one in Persian and the other in Arabic.

Their [undecipherable...].

‘Bahjí is the Greatest Holy Place in the world; The Shrine of the Báb is the second. At the present time the Báb is the most ornate, but no doubt Bahá’u’lláh’s will exceed it in the future.’ {{p9}} ‘When Bahá’u’lláh left the confines of ‘Akká to go to Bahjí, all of His wives, children, sisters and in-laws, as well as the relatives of the Báb, went with Him. His wife, Navváb, the Greatest Holy Leaf and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed in ‘Akká. It is said that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was broken hearted because He wanted to be with His father, but the ones who went with Bahá’u’lláh became the Covenant-breakers and only those who stayed behind were firm in the Faith. No doubt Bahá’u’lláh was aware of this and took those He had to keep His eye on. Most of the ones who went with Him to Bahjí died from strange diseases.’

‘Most Bahá’ís pray and jump to do things or go to work. This is not good, as one must meditate. We are so busy that we don’t hear the answer when it comes. The Americans do not know how to meditate, but we must learn.’

‘The center of the Temple is for worship, the alcoves for meditation.’

The question was asked: “What do the Bahá’ís observe as the sabbath?” Shoghi Effendi says ‘that in the days of your Bahá’í life all days are worship days, but in all the Holy Books it is said we must work 6 days and rest one, so the Bahá’ís observe whatever day is the sabbath in the country in which he lives.’ It presents quite a problem in the Holy Land, as there are so many religions. The Moslems

observe Friday, the Jews Saturday and the Christians Sunday, so those who want to take advantage of all of them do so.

There are so many ways to show respect to the Faith: some wear long sleeves, head coverings, veils, kneeling, standing and many methods of display. He does not want to set ritual, but pray in the way your heart tells you. This is respect for the Faith. The Persians all prostrate themselves when entering the Shrines and are revoked that the Westerner doesn't. The Guardian says 'that if they are offended, that is good.' In that way they can develop their own spirituality. He doesn't want the Persians to think that this is a Persian Faith. {{p10}} Bahá'u'lláh once said in a poem that He wrote that He was God's shadow and He hoped this shadow would illumine the world.

Isaiah has said that Carmel is the mountain of the Lord to which all nations shall flow.

Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent in the vicinity of the Carmelite Monastery and visited Mount Carmel 4 different times, one time staying 4 months. As He sat in the grove of cypress trees He pointed to the Spot and said to 'Abdu'l-Bahá: "This is where the Báb must be buried."

Mt Carmel is unique in that it is quite a large mountain and steep. About half-way down from the top there is a shelf, and that is where the Shrine sits. Certainly it was destined that way by the hand of God, for no setting could be more perfect. The Shrine is illumined every night for a half hour, and it reminds one of a jewel in a ring.

'We must encourage minority groups.' He wants the white race to be the minority, as a minority group should not be the majority in a major religion. He wants more interracial marriages, and wants more Assembly representation.

'Jews must be attracted and they are very receptive.' {{p11}} [undecipherable sentences follow] 'The cradle of Western Civilization (Europe) is declining and America is worried about it. America is greatly exposed to danger. The time of destruction can happen anytime. It will come fast and no one knows just when this can happen.'

'When people oppose the Faith they purify it, for eventually they leave it. When they are inside they act like poison. Those who reject administration lose their judgement. They act hastily and make mistakes.'

'Many pioneers chose places they can live comfortably and pleasantly.' He chuckled over this and said "I wonder why the [undecipherable] choose Brazil."

'The Bahá'í property in Israel is the only property that is exempt from taxes.'

A man from Chicago was the only Westerner present when the Báb was interred. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked that no photographs be taken, but this party sneaked a camera in and took a picture. Shoghi Effendi helped bury the Báb. He was a very little boy and was down in the grave when they lowered the coffin. The Báb is in a marble sarcophagus.

Shoghi Effendi does not say what the nature of the catastrophe will be, but he says 'it will be more disastrous than the fall of the Roman Empire.' Says he 'has done everything to wake people up but they still sleep.'

'The persecutions in Írán have practically stopped with the exceptions of some isolated areas.' He says that 'during the Ramaḍán fast period the Moslems work themselves up into a frenzy and then their cruel nature comes out and they must kill. [undecipherable] the Bahá'ís are a real threat to them now, that is where they struck. While it is too bad for the believers, the Faith received more publicity than it could have had if we had to buy it. Regardless of what happens it is good for the Faith.'

You know that while you are in the household of Shoghi Effendi you are protected by his love, and one can feel it, because you feel utmost peace of mind; but the minute you step your foot from there you have a very great responsibility. {{p12}} You won't know until you pray and meditate upon it then the door will be opened.

Everything the Guardian does denotes unity. For instance, in one of the gardens next to the Shrine, one sees cactus growing from the tropical countries and red roses from the cold countries. If the flowers can grow and flourish from different parts of the world then surely humans can.

The Guardian tells you at dinner at night when you go to Bahjí. He says 'it is the culmination of your Pilgrimage no matter what time during your stay you might go.' The pilgrim from New York, Millie Collins, Mason Remey, Elmer and myself went. We arrived there about 5 in the afternoon and went first to the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. It is similar inside to that of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In one of the rooms there are beautiful live ferns growing and at last one knows that even the Shrines have life. You eat your meals in the house of 'Abdu'l-Bahá lived in when He used to visit His father, I think it must be a lot like those days for when the windows are open the birds fly in and out. It seems strange to us with such beautiful Persian rugs on the floor, but I am sure 'Abdu'l-Bahá must have welcomed them after His many years of confinement. It is in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh that I felt I wanted to say prayers for the many different ones who had asked to be remembered. And for myself, I could not ask for anything other than understanding and tolerance to be able to live. To ask for material things does not enter into your mind.

In the evening we visited the Mansion. The room where Bahá'u'lláh passed away is the same one Professor Browne visited Him in. It is exactly as Bahá'u'lláh left it, even to His slippers being placed beside the bed.

There are many beautiful things at Bahjí along with priceless relics belonging to the different members of the family. Here, I think, where one feels the individuality of your Pilgrimage. Needless to say, I did not sleep the first night. A thousand questions went through my mind, and I pictured many things back through the years. Then too, the nightingales sang so loud all night, that sleep was impossible. {{p13}} I remembered the passage in God Passes by, where

Bahá'u'lláh made that statement. I would have thought that I imagined it if the pilgrim from New York had not mentioned it too. One wonders if they are greeting you or issuing a warning. This I cannot answer.

The second night the birds did not sign, and I did not sleep either. Elmer being very tired, slept like a babe. So I will still wonder. The questions were all gone in the morning. The House reeks with great power and it seems to descend upon you.

The second day we visited 'Akká, first to the prison. The government is now using it for a mental hospital and no doubt has fixed it up, but it is most distressing. I know that all I needed to see was the prison room where Bahá'u'lláh spent two years of His life, to convince me that the Bahá'í Faith is God's bounty for today. No one but a Holy One would have given up a life of luxury to spend His life in this place. It was here the Purest Branch fell through the roof and the family was confined in two adjoining cells. The room is bare with the exception of a pallet on the floor.

From there we went to the House of Abbúd, so named because Abbúd was the man who owned it. Here again, one sees many things belonging to the family also the room where the Aqdas was revealed and the room where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was married.

Selah took us on a tour of the ancient walled city, and the air is so foul that it makes one sick. It is an Arab city with many strange habits; veiled women and turbaned men. The streets are narrow and dirt. We measured one street and found it to be five feet wide. We saw the great thick gates that clanged shut when Bahá'u'lláh entered the city. Here also we saw the mosque of Esker [?], meaning the butcher. It was so named because the Governor who built it was so called and caused so many people to be put to death. It was here we heard the call to prayer at 6:30 PM from the minaret. {{p14}} The Arabs come in their garbs and wash their hands and face in the fountain and then wash their feet. they take their shoes and place them in front of the mosque and go into pray. We saw several of the houses Bahá'u'lláh lived in for short periods of time when first released from prison along with the house where Shoghi Effendi was born.

From 'Akká we went to Mazarih, the first house Bahá'u'lláh lived in after He left the prison-city. One is greeted with such hospitality by the lady who lives there! She shows you through the house and the rooms occupied by the Holy family. Fresh flowers are kept by the bed at all times. she served us a delicious lunch including a pudding she makes, which looks and tastes something like corn starch pudding. She put the Greatest Name on top in chocolate.

Then, we next went to the Garden of Riḍván. Again, perhaps you wondered why they spoke of the garden in different ways. The Garden of Riḍván where He spent 12 days with His family is in Baghdád. This Garden of Riḍván is about a mile from 'Akká, and where He used to [undecipherable] and sit in the shade of

the trees. A nice stream runs through the place and no doubt it was cool and pleasant to sit in.

Then back to Bahjí..the second morning at Bahjí we all visited the Shrine by ourselves. One can stay as long as one likes. This is a great privilege because Shoghi Effendi says 'the time will come when even Bahá'ís cannot go there.' I hope I shall always keep the high ideals I realized at these Holy Places.

About smoking: The Báb forbade it...Bahá'u'lláh revoked the law and never spoke of it again..The Tablet of Purity was written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and it [non-smoking] was His wish. However, He was not the Lawgiver. the Guardian says 'if you want to smoke, go ahead and smoke. No one is going to stop you. However it is still a dirty and expensive habit and it is better if we quit. The Greatest Holy Leaf, who is the highest symbol of purity, smoked until she died at about 85 years old. 'Abu'l-Faḍl was a chain smoker. It is not forbidden.' {{p15}} They were tearing down an old building at Bahjí that was owned by the Covenant breakers that the Bahá'ís had been trying to buy. It was finally condemned by the officials and torn down. They found in a small room at one end of the building a grave and a Christian altar. Built by the man who built Bahjí, Shoghi Effendi says this must be preserved.

The first night back at the Pilgrim house, Shoghi Effendi explains things connected with the Shrines. 'The Most Great Prison is at 'Akká. The remote prison spoken of in the Tablet of Aḥmad is at Adrianople.'

'The catastrophe is inevitable and needs be to purge the world. It will be something the world has never seen and will effect every nation, country, class and creed. The world has high blood pressure and this will be the blood letting. Blood will run everywhere. It will purge the world and then cement the remnants together. The Administration is the embryo of the new World Order. The new World Order is the child and it will mature into the world civilization. There will be no decline in the future. It will be like a spiral, ever upwards. There may be moments that stop, but no decline. This is the Day that is not followed by night.'

There are many ways that people pray. He wants no set ritual. 'Pray according to your heart, this is not a Persian religion, but Divine in origin, world embracing in scope and spiritual in character.'

'Once materialism is wiped away it will not return, but a more spiritual world will exist.'

'There will always be evil but it will be more restricted. Man will always have the opportunity to use his will. The next Prophet will be persecuted and will bring His own Book and laws. There will always be tests.'

'We are approaching the darkest [hour] before dawn. No one knows when this can happen. but anytime. {{p16}} It will come fast. Anything that happens, even to the destruction of the Temples and Shrines, will be for the good of the Faith.'

‘The Prophets did not mind Their suffering in this world for They knew Their reward was greater in the next world.’

‘God always gives us our just dues, if not in this world, then in the next, but suffering is our greatest development. It gives us the greatest chance to develop our greatest opportunity the life God gave us to live.’

‘In the future there will be no white race.’

The New York pilgrim came last night and Shoghi Effendi told her that the first part of her Pilgrimage was over and the second part would begin. The first part was to absorb and the second part was to impart.

‘Go back to New York and tell the people to get out, and particularly to pioneer to France. Stay out of Paris. It is the only way to save the individual and the Faith.’

‘Regardless what the government does it cannot prevent the catastrophe. One million people in New York cannot be saved. It will come swift and sudden and whole cities will be leveled to the ground.’

‘New York is named the City of the Covenant because it is the most corrupt city in the world. Therefore it needs the greatest transformation.’

‘Persia is the cradle of the Faith, America the cradle of the Administration. America is named because it is the most corrupt nation. Bahá’ís are wasting their time in cities. They must go out into small towns. Cities will not respond until after destruction.’

‘America and Persia must suffer.’

‘Bahá’ís must learn to sacrifice because this materialism is hindering our progress in the next world. Life in this world does not matter.’

‘Lack of love in communities hinders our growth.’

‘Bahá’ís cannot belong to the Masons because it is a secret organization and there can be no secret meetings in Bahá’í. Also, their policy is not universal; it is different in the East than in the West. Even if your old age depends on it you must give it up. In no way can you sacrifice spiritual principles. {{p17}} A member of any organization must first ask the Local Spiritual Assembly if they can belong. Even though they are not political in character, the implications may be political. If the Local Spiritual Assemblies cannot answer, contact the National Spiritual Assembly and they must investigate and report back.’

I had been noticing the non-use of the pronoun “I” .. Shoghi Effendi has used it twice, both time in referring to “I have incorporated that in God Passes By.”

‘If a believer should be forced to quit his job and is destitute because of an organization, the Local Spiritual Assembly must see that he is taken care of, even to raising special funds. This is good for the Faith. So many organizations

today are corrupt but only the top authority knows the full extent of their principles.'

'The Faith should always come first, regardless of what hardship it entails. We must remember all world forces are against the Bahá'í Faith, so the Bahá'ís must learn to lean on one another and show forth such love that people will be attracted.' 'There is too much lethargy in American communities. Too much committee activity which hampers teaching work and kills the spirit. Teaching is the most important and it is the duty of each believer to teach.'

The Guardian says he 'feels things' and no doubt but that he knows everything going on in the Cause.

The new pilgrims from New York: Bob and Keith Quigley. Once again the Guardian talked of the catastrophe.

'America is the most corrupt nation in the world and is contaminating the other nations, therefore it will suffer the worst.'

I asked if this was war, he said 'yes, and other things too; the most fiery ordeal the world has ever known. The whole world will be like a convulsion. The flame will clean and also weld.'

'The Báb gave the mandate to scatter, assistance was promised by Bahá'u'lláh, the desire of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and now the Administration says we must disperse. The foundation of this Cause was laid by God, the Administration by the Institutions {{p18}} and the teachings by individuals.'

He says 'maintain the heroes, increase the saints and lessen the administrators.'

'The islands in the Pacific are the most important, and the brown race.'

He wants young people to go to these places, they will be difficult.'

'Go and tell the people to disperse.'

He says 'it is not enough to [be] converted to the Faith. You must have the desire to serve and teach.'

The first night after we returned from Bahjí, Shoghi Effendi said 'now that you have been to 'Akká, read the two chapters in God Passes By about 'Akká, and before you go to Baghdád read the chapter referring to Baghdád.'

The friends told us afterward that they had not heard him make that remark to any other pilgrim. So now we wonder if ours will be the privilege to make that journey.

When the Guardian realizes you have absorbed to capacity he makes a humorous remark which breaks the tension. One listens so closely.

On the Shrine of the Báb over the Arcade there are blocks designed with a green border and spots of red denotes blood. In the future there may be inscriptions in these blocks.

Finally the last night of our Pilgrimage came and I felt a little nervous because I was wondering what our duty would be. The Guardian talked at what seemed lengths about the latitudes and longitudes where the Faith was now established. One wonders how he had all the figures at his finger tips.

He said ‘to take our filled sup back to Spokane and let it spill over. A Plan without an organization is not good; and an organization without a plan is not good.’

Then quickly he turned to us and said ‘now tell me your plans for pioneering.’ We told him we had thought of going to Central America, and as far as we had gotten with plan, and he said ‘that is good, that is what I want you to do. You have the special blessing of Bahá’u’lláh and I will say special prayers for you. Life will be different and there will be many hardships. But do not get discouraged, and be patient and you will be very successful.’ {{p19}} We both knew that this is what we must do and we are proceeding with our plans hoping they materialize quickly.

He gave us each a vial of attar of rose and asked that we anoint the friends with his love. The pilgrims from New York wept uncontrollably as did the rest. Rúhíyyih Khánum said later ‘that sometimes the Guardian got her down.’

It is a very tense moment and one realizes that the first part of the Pilgrimage is over and you dread to leave, but one sure feels better prepared to face the next task.

Rúhíyyih Khánum gave me a pair of prayer beads that had been in the Shrine, and Elmer a key ring made from an old Persian coin of the Guardian’s and also a picture of the Guardian when he was a baby.

A FEW AFTER NOTES

While in Haifa we visited the cemetery where Esslemont is buried.

We went shopping one afternoon with Rúhíyyih Khánum. When Shoghi Effendi was a little boy he used to say to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá he wished he had a name, as people in that part of the world were known by the name of the place that they lived. Shoghi Effendi wished it so hard that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave him the name of Rabbání.

Shoghi Effendi spoke one night at the dinner table that ‘the Faith progressed like an automobile. It needs a motor and a battery; and Rúhíyyih Khánum said ‘but Shoghi Effendi, it must have a driver too,’ and he said ‘yes, that is the finger of Bahá’u’lláh!’ No glory for himself. He is truly humble. {{p20}} I do not feel my notes would be complete without telling you of Athens. As we were planning to stop there anyway, we delivered some books to the friends there. It is so difficult to mail anything as mail is censored in Greece. The evening of the Declaration of the Báb, the first Bahá’í in Greece was enrolled. A young man of

about 25 yrs old, and as he did not speak English and they did not speak Greek, he was taught thru a paid translator. Note: This translator is now studying the Faith for enrollment. This enrollment completed the 1st virgin territory in Europe. It was a thrilling evening for all.

When we arrived in England, we were so tired of large cities, castles, palaces and churches, we decided to go to Southampton, where we would stay for four days until time to embark on the Queen Mary. We had been there about an hour when a man spoke to us and offer to direct us to any place we might want to see. Said he was just walking around and recognized us as strangers. One does not pick up with strangers in strange countries but he looked so kind that we talked a long while with him. He finally invited us to his house for tea. So after calling his wife we called a cab and went. She was just as lovely and while drinking tea they asked the reason for our trip. So the conversation turned towards telling them of the Faith. They were most receptive, and to make things brief we spent all of our time with them. They got special permit to board the Queen Mary so they might be with us and brought bouquet of roses for our cabin. As they went up the gang plank their last words were, "you are the first Bahá'ís we have met but you won't be the last for we will hunt them up."

As our boat sailed received a telegram from them. We feel that this visit was a wonderful part of our Pilgrimage and hope that the first two Bahá'ís in Southampton will be the lovely friends we met in England.

It is our wish that each one of the friends can someday make the Pilgrimage and we know that no sacrifice is too great, in order to make it.

Gladys and Elmer Beasley

[END]