**Maḥmúd’s Diary**

[Image]

The ship’s manifest on the *Cedric* on its voyage to New York

in April 1912, listing the names of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and

those travelling with Him.

**Maḥmúd’s Diary**

***The diary of Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání***

***chronicling ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s journey***

***to America***

translated by

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**George Ronald**

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A note from the publisher

In the spring of 1912 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá set off from Alexan-

dria on His historic journey to America. Among his small

entourage was Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání, who became, in

the words of Shoghi Effendi, ‘the chronicler of His travels’.

Mírzá Maḥmúd had made a number of teaching trips

through Iran and in 1903 began to teach the Bahá’í Faith

in India. He was, therefore, already a seasoned traveler by

the time ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked him to journey with Him to

the West. Mírzá Maḥmúd went everywhere with ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, making extensive notes not only of the Master’s

many public talks and conversations with individuals but

also of the new sights and experiences they found in Amer-

ica as well as the daily routines of eating, writing letters and

traveling. Maḥmúd remarks on the novelty of the New York

skyscrapers, electric lights and American foods and customs

for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s party as well as the picturesque spectacle

provided to the Americans by His entourage in their *‘abás*

and Persian hats.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s journey across America was remarkable.

He was 68 years old and had been a prisoner most of His

life. When He set out from Egypt He was unwell and

planned only to travel to the American East coast and to

Chicago. However, the American Bahá’ís begged Him to

visit to their communities and He undertook the strenuous

three thousand-mile journey across the continent by train,

sitting up most nights in a chair rather than spending

money on a sleeping, compartment. He spoke at public

meetings nearly every day, sometimes three times a day,

and gave hundreds of private interviews. His hectic and

exhausting schedule is well-documented by Mírzá Maḥmúd,

who frequently alludes to the anxiety of the Master’s comp-

anions over His health. Maḥmúd’s telling references to

the simplicity of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s lifestyle—‘For dinner

‘Abdu’l-Bahá ate only a little bread and cheese and went

to bed’—contrast with the opulent lives lived by many of

the Americans who visited Him.

The present work is a translation of the first volume of

Maḥmúd’s *Badáyi‘u’l-Átha’r*, an impressive documentary

which he appears to have written from his notes on his

return to the Middle East in 1913. Maḥmúd made exten-

sive notes of many of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s major talks and various

private conversations. The translationS of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

words recorded in the present volume were read and

revised at the Bahá’í World Centre. The publisher is grate-

ful to Kalimát Press, who undertook the original transla-

tions of these passages, for their kind permission to use

these translations in the present volume.

The Universal House of Justice, in a letter of April 30,

1984 to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of

the United States, stated that it

… attaches great importance to this work which, as you

may know, is regarded as a reliable account of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s travels in the West and an authentic record of His

utterances, whether in the form of formal talks, table talks

or random oral statements. Mírzá Maḥmúd was a careful

and faithful chronicler and engaged in assembling and

publishing his work with the permission of the beloved

Master, as he states in the Introduction. Indeed, Shoghi

Effendi drew upon it for details about the Master’s visit to

the West in writing *God Passes By* …

Maḥmúd wrote in Persian in an ornate style not often used

for English prose. Certain phrases common in Persian are

inelegant when translated into English and these have, for

the most part, been omitted, for example, ‘His Luminous

Presence’, ‘His Blessed Person’ and so on. The Universal

House of Justice itself, in a letter of July 24, 1987, to a

publisher advised that the word ‘Ḥaḍrat’, meaning ‘His

Holiness’, ‘should not be used in this translation, especially

when referring to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’. However, without burden-

ing the work with many of the flowery descriptions that may

seem peculiar to a reader of English, the translator has

tried to retain the flavor of the original Persian. Mírzá

Maḥmúd was, after all, a Persian and brought his own

culture to bear on his American experience.

To assist the reader, the publisher has added explana-

tory endnotes and biographical notes on many of the

people mentioned in the diary. These do not form part of

the original text.

The names of some of the people mentioned in the text

are unclear. Maḥmúd recorded in Persian the names of

Americans as he heard them pronounced. As not all vowels

are written in Persian, it is not always possible to be sure

which name is meant. For example, the name of Mr and

Mrs Killius when written in Persian script could also be

read as Clives and it is only by careful research that the

correct spelling has been found. Some of the people men-

tioned are not named in English-language Bahá’í histories

and we cannot therefore be certain how their names should

be rendered.

Maḥmúd occasionally mistakes the date of a particular

event or talk by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. This may be due to his

unfamiliarity with the Gregorian calendar or that he was

apparently writing some time after his return from the

West.

The sheer volume of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s activities and the

pace He set Himself as He traveled made Mírzá Maḥmúd’s

work more difficult than that of most diarists. That he

wrote so comprehensively and so accurately under such

circumstances is a tribute to his devotion to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

and to his skill as a chronicler.

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**Maḥmúd’s Diary**

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Preface

*In the Name of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Glorious*

Praise and gratitude be to the Lord of the Kingdom of

attributes and names for the Manifestation of His Greatest

Name [Bahá’u’lláh], through whom the principles of peace

and the tranquillity of humankind have been revealed and

the foundation for the salvation of the peoples of the world

has been laid; and for the appearance of the Mystery

of God [‘Abdu’l-Bahá],[[1]](#endnote-1) who has raised the standard of

universal peace and pitched the tabernacle of unity for all

humankind. He has delivered the people of Bahá from the

darkness of prejudice and blind imitation and illumined

them with the light of divine knowledge and unity. He has

safeguarded them from the idle fancies of the people of

negation and discord and protected them from the mis-

chief and rancor of the Covenant-breakers. Thus under

the banner of His mighty Covenant, diverse peoples have

become united and with the utmost zeal have arisen to

spread abroad the light of unity and love. They are a spread-

ing the principle of the unity of religions and discovering

the secrets of harmony and fellowship. They have become

the lovers of humankind and the propagators of peace and

tranquillity in the world of humanity. They have burned

the veils of vain imaginings and of religious, political,

national and gender prejudices, and with heart and soul

are serving the children of men, who are all citizens of one

country and members of one family.

The people of Bahá have unveiled the shortcomings of

the material world, knowing a divine civilization to be the

highest honor and best mantle for humankind. With God’s

assistance and through the power of His Covenant, they

have made extraordinary progress and in this enlightened

age have transformed the thoughts and caused the uplift-

ment of human character. May God increase their power,

might, perfection and grandeur and assist them through

the Concourse on High and the Hosts of the Abhá King-

dom! Verily, He is mighty over all things. Light and glory,

salutation and praise be upon the Dawning-Places of His

Cause among His people and the Day-Springs of the

revelation of His grace to His creation, through whom the

sovereignty of God is manifested in this world and His

guidance provided by One through whose exalted efforts

the signs of glory and might have been spread and the

banners of power and grandeur have been raised; the

Greatest Branch of God, the Ancient Mystery, the Will of

God, who has branched out from the Ancient Root; He

whom God has chosen for His Cause in this century of light,

appointed to protect the world and succor all who are on

earth and in heaven. O God, cause us to circle round His

desire, to be obedient to His will, to hold fast to the robe

of His bestowals and to remain steadfast in His Covenant

and Testament. Verily, He is Victorious, the Self-Subsistent,

the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

This humble servant [Maḥmúd Zarqání] was the recipi-

ent of such great bounty and love from the One round

whom circle all Names, the Source of all generosity and

grace—‘Abdu’l-Bahá (may my life be a ransom for His

friends who are steadfast and firm in His Covenant)—in

whose company he traveled in Europe and America as part

of His entourage. As I wrote to share the glad tidings of the

Master’s talks with the friends in the East, to inform them

of the great events taking place—the spread of the teach-

ings of God, the majesty of God’s Covenant in both Amer-

ica and Europe, the onrush of many highly respected

people, men and women alike, the reverence shown to Him

by the clergy of all denominations and the praise of many

philosophers—I was overwhelmed. I felt compelled to

speak and my pen trembled in my hand. Although brief

and inadequate, this chronicle attempts to describe the

majesty and grandeur of the Center of God’s Covenant and

the power and authority of the words of God He uttered in

both public and private gatherings. Recently, the most

great Mystery of God, with complete and perfect joy and

enthusiasm, returned to Port Said. Once again the emana-

tions of His light illumined the horizon of the East. The

hearts of the Eastern friends were filled with joy and ela-

tion. A few of the believers, especially Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar

‘Alí (may my life be a ransom for his humility before the

presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá) asked me to collect and organize

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks, to describe the events related to His

journey in the West and to publish this for the delight of

the believers and as an aid for those who seek truth. After

obtaining permission from the Center of the Covenant, I

began collecting and organizing all the papers and notes

so that the readers might obtain a clear understanding of

the importance and significance of this journey and, in

particular, that the people of the East might pay due

respect for this great event and be everlastingly thankful

for this heavenly blessing and honor. At the present time,

the peoples and governments of America and Europe, who

are extremely proud of their material and technological

progress and civilization, look upon the inhabitants of the

East with disdain and prejudice and consider them to be

a most uncivilized and ignorant people, as demonstrated

by the imposition of their unjust rule over them. At such

a time has a majestic Sun shed its light from the horizon

of the East and a brilliant Star appeared over the Eastern

horizon in such wise that these proud and so-called civi-

lized peoples have become humble and been inspired to

pay homage to the Light from the East.

The first point to consider is the effect that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

had when He traveled from the East and directed His

attention towords the thousands of eminent men and

women of the West, clergy of all denominations and highly

regarded philosophers of America and Europe who paid

the highest respect to Him at the many gatherings in

churches, synagogues and large halls, and who praised Him

and acknowledged the greatness and the excellence of His

character.

Second is to observe the wisdom, perfection and style of

His speech and discourse as He answered questions,

whether from individuals or at public gatherings. The

manner of His response was so flawless and His reasoning

so profound that inquirers were completely satisfied, with-

out a hint of objection.

Third is the transformation that occurred in the hearts

of the people who were attracted by the penetrating power

of His utterance. In every meeting, both public and private,

there was great exhilaration in people’s hearts. How many

eyes wept through joy and happiness, and how many lips,

wreathed in smiles, praised Him most highly!

Fourth is the large number of clergymen and presidents

of societies who felt highly honored to have Him in their

midst and who openly acknowledged His high station, His

vast knowledge and the greatness of His teachings.

Fifth is the recognition of the greatness of the Cause of

God and loftiness of the station of God’s Covenant as

published in several journals, newspapers, books and

articles written by scholars and philosophers of both Amer-

ica and Europe. Because the translations of these articles

and publications are by themselves sufficient to fill a book,

they will be published separately.

Sixth is His courage, the potency of His utterances and

the power of reasoning in His talks, talks which demon-

strated the validity of the Christian teachings in Jewish

synagogues and the reality of Islam in Christian churches;

His elucidation of the proofs of the existence of God and

the immortality of the human soul to the materialists and

agnostics; and the offering of solutions to the complex

economic problems of the world to gatherings of socialists,

the promulgation of the teachings and principles of this

new Dispensation with the glad tidings of the appearance

of the promised Manifestation of God and the establish-

ment of His dominion in the world and His command to

spread this Cause throughout the world. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

talks and discourses will eventually make an enormous

collection. Now they are being gradually compiled and will

be presented to Him for His approval, after which they will

be published.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Seventh is the Master’s renunciation of all comfort, rest

and concern for His own health in spreading the teachings

of God. How many nights He could not sleep despite His

overwhelming exhaustion and how many days He found

not a moment’s rest owing to the rush of people, the gath-

ering of such large numbers and His continuous discussions

with them about the Cause of God! His travels over long

distances across land and sea left Him no rest or comfort.

Each day a new physical weakness and suffering appeared.

Nevertheless, He always preferred servitude to the thresh-

old of the Abhá Beauty above His own comfort and health.

His constant joy and enthusiasm amazed us. These qualities

are not attainable except through the power of the Holy

Spirit and assistance from on High.

Eighth is the progress of the Cause and the increase in

the numbers of new believers in both Europe and America

resulting from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s journey. Many prominent

people became aware of the need to investigate the Cause

of God and were willing to accept its independent nature.

And ninth is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s selflessness, His refusal to

accept assistance, gifts, funds or recompense from anyone;

rather, He bestowed aid on the poor and needy in the cities

He visited. This had a powerful impact on many souls and

amazed them. Before setting out on this journey, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá often admonished His entourage that ‘In these

travels, we shall conform to the saying of Christ that when

you leave a city you should be so detached as not to allow

even the dust of that place to settle on your garment.’[[3]](#endnote-3)

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá accepted the invitations from the

organizers of the peace congresses to travel to America,

believers from all parts of the country offered to contribute

towards His expenses. They collected a large sum [$16,000]

and sent it to Him in two separate drafts. When the first

draft arrived, He immediately returned it to its sender.

From Alexandria, Egypt, He wrote to Mírzá Ahmad Sohrab,

who was then in Washington dc, and firmly instructed him

to return the funds immediately to the contributors, telling

them that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had sufficient money for the jour-

ney, otherwise He would have accepted their offer. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá later revealed many Tablets on this subject which He

sent to the friends in America. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s action was

widely publicized in various newspapers in Egypt and many

non-Bahá’ís were witness to His selflessness and detach-

ment from material wealth.

What follows are some of the great and important results

of this historic and blessed journey, the contemplation of

which brings great joy and happiness to those who wit-

nessed them. For the sake of brevity, the less important

events and daily routine are omitted (even though their

sweet savor is greatly appreciated by the friends). The

major events of the Master’s journey are being recorded

daily and will be presented in two volumes. The first vol-

ume concerns ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s journey to America [this

volume]; the other will describe His journeys in Europe.[[4]](#endnote-4)

I beseech the Omnipotent God to protect me from errors

and omissions, to assist me to elevate His great Cause and

to expound His everlasting, mighty Covenant. Verily, He

is the Merciful, the Loving and the Most Kind.

Introduction

Following the Turkish Revolution in 1909, which, among

other things, resulted in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s release from the

Most Great Prison in ‘Akká, Palestine [then a part of the

Ottoman Empire], and after He had received many letters

from the friends in America, including a booklet with notes

and signatures from the believers entreating Him to visit

America, He consented to take this momentous journey.

When a number of leaders of churches, synagogues and

societies became aware that the Bahá’ís had asked ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá to visit America, they too sent invitations to Him to

attend peace congresses and to meet their congregations.

Owing to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s physical condition and health,

caused by His long years of imprisonment, He remained

in Haifa for some eleven months. Then, exhausted and

with many difficulties, He traveled to Egypt and resided in

Port Said, Alexandria and Zaytoun for eleven more months.

His health improved and He gained His physical strength

but still He did not specifically promise to travel to Amer-

ica. Instead, He decided to take a short journey to Switzer-

land to teach the Cause and for a change of climate. While

the Master was there, the Bahá’ís in Paris and London

pleaded with Him to visit them. For a period of four

months He traveled throughout Europe, bringing the glad

tidings of the Cause, and raised the call of Yá Bahá’u’l-

Abhá in various gatherings in halls, churches and syna-

gogues.[[5]](#endnote-5)

When the American believers learned of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

travels in Europe, they felt sure He would also come to

America. Many believers joyfully went to London to be in

His presence. They pleaded with Him to continue His

journey to America. He did not consent to their request at

that time but instead returned to Egypt. During the five

months of His stay in Alexandria, each week brought many

more invitations from America, until, at last, He said that

He would accept. This announcement brought a new spirit

to those anxious souls. He often mentioned that, ‘This

journey is a long one and my body is very weak. We shall

remain at sea for more than two weeks; it will be difficult

for my body to bear. But as it is for the sake of diffusing the

divine fragrances, I shall undertake it, trusting in God and

severing myself from all else save Him.’

Some believers suggested that if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá traveled

to England, His arrival would coincide with the maiden

voyage of the *Titanic*, which was believed to be the finest

and largest English vessel in the world, and that if He

would make His journey on that ship, He would arrive in

New York in only five days in comfort and ease. Most of the

friends approved of this suggestion. But after brief reflec-

tion, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘No, we will go direct, trusting in

the assistance and protection of the Blessed Beauty. He is

the true Protector and the divine Keeper.’ Later, when the

tragic news of the sinking of the *Titanic* reached the friends

and believers, they were exceedingly grateful that He had

not accepted their suggestion.

The Diary

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Monday, March 25, 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s departure from Ramleh, Alexandria

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was saying farewell amid the tears,

lamentations and sadness of the friends and members of

the Holy Family who watched their beloved’s departure,

one of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s daughters, Rúḥá Khánum, was seri-

ously ill. It was evident that this deeply affected the Master.

It was in these circumstances that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Alexan-

dria on the morning of Monday, March 25, 1912. Although

He had already bidden the friends farewell and had em-

braced most of them, many accompanied Him to the ship,

expressing their sadness and anguish at their impending

separation from Him. After visiting, walking about the ship

and receiving His cabin assignment, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went

to the main hall where He bestowed His love, affection

and assurance on each of the friends. After an hour, the

friends left the ship in tears. Then the SS *Cedric*, an

Italian liner from the White Star Line,[[6]](#endnote-6) set sail, honored

to be the means of transporting the Most Holy Being and

becoming the focus of the envy of the whole earth.

The ship left the port of Alexandria with a burst of steam

and great fanfare. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s companions numbered

six: Shoghi Effendi, Siyyid Asadu’lláh-i-Qumí, Dr Amínu-

’lláh Faríd, Mírzá Munír-i-Zayn, Áqá Khusraw and this

servant, Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání. After the ship left, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá went to the first class dining room and gave permis-

sion to His companions to have lunch with Him. Although

our cabins were in second class, arrangements had been

made for us to dine in the first class dining room with Him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá remarked at lunch:

The doctor of this ship is an Italian and, as Italians are at

war with the Turks, the doctor, imagining us to be Turks

and wanting to go to war with us, says that Khusraw’s eyes

are affected with a disease which will make him unfit to

land in America. He wished to examine the eyes of all, but

Dr Faríd prevented him.

Then He told Khusraw not to worry, that He would try to

intercede on his behalf and not allow them to prevent his

travel. He said, ‘Don’t worry; to the extent possible I will

not allow you to be sent back. We are ready to give our lives

for one another.’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then went to His cabin in

the upper deck and rested for awhile. Afternoon tea was

served in the main salon of the ship. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

about the excessive drinking and eating habits of the

Europeans. ‘It is hardly two hours since they took their

lunch and now they are having a full meal with their tea.’

Then He spoke about the Italians, saying that at the time

of the Romans they were famous for their knowledge and

virtues but now their character seems to have declined like

the Greeks. And similarly the Egyptians. He said:

During the last days of our stay in Egypt, we went to Tanta

for the repair of the tomb of Ḥájí Abu’l Qásim and from

there went to Mansurih. In Tanta one of the English

officials was our friend, who held us in great honor and

showed us great respect everywhere. Observing this, the

natives were more respectful and polite to us than even to

the said officer, and throughout the town, everyone, young

and old, even the policemen in the street, saluted us. But,

at another time when we went alone to Mansurih, because

the people did not observe outward riches, they did not

pay any attention to us. This is the condition of hypocriti-

cal people who only look to outward appearances.

This evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not dine in the main hall

but instead the waiter brought His dinner to the cabin.

After eating He went to the lounge, rested on a comfortable

couch for a short time and then returned to His cabin to

sleep.

Tuesday, March 26, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

On the morning of March 26 when I was close by His cabin,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá came out and said: ‘Last night I slept comfort-

ably. For a long time I could not sleep well on account of

the ache in my bones but now it is gone altogether.’ I

mentioned that the humidity in Port Alexandria was very

high and that it must not have been good for His health.

‘Yes,’ He said, ‘the climate here is better because at sea the

humidity ascends and thus is not harmful, whereas there

is more humidity in coastal regions and this is harmful to

health. Besides, an electro-magnetic force is produced by

the moving and surging of the water which is very beneficial

to health.’ Then He added, ‘Despite the sea and weather

being a bit rough, the rolling of the ship is slight owing to

its huge size. Vibration is caused by its being powered by

steam and one feels the vibration of the engine more than

the movement of the ship.’

When we had all gathered the Master asked Shoghi

Effendi to chant a prayer. After the prayer, He went to the

dining room for morning tea. He commented, ‘This is a

divine table. Outwardly it is well adorned. Náṣiri’d-Dín

Sháh did not have such a table. Praise be to God that divine

confirmations are with us. Those who were hated by the

nations of the world are now seated at such a table. One

must be grateful.’

One of the servants asked why man is not thankful when

in comfort. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied, ‘It is due to negligence.

Otherwise one must be aware and thankful when immersed

in the sea of bounties.’ Then He said, ‘I have not had a

good bath for several months.’ The ship’s attendant was

then asked to prepare a warm fresh water bath for Him.

Afterwards, He said, ‘I am much better now. For a long

time I have not had leisure to take a real bath.’

When Mírzá Munír stated that one of the Arab travelers

had spoken to him about Mirza Kheiralla’s arrogance and

heedlessness, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

The poor man has become nameless and debased both in

this world and in the Kingdom. What a high honor he had!

But as he did not appreciate the fact, it all came to naught.

He wished to be made the leader of America and wrote

plainly to me to this effect. One of the answers I gave him

was, ‘Cast aside all mention of the ruler and the ruled, the

governor and the governed.’

Siyyid Asadu’lláh remarked that ‘leadership must be

wielded with obedience to the Cause of God’. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said: ‘If a man considers himself humble and lowly in the

Cause of God, he becomes glorified in all eyes. On the

other hand, the moment he aspires to personal greatness,

he falls into disgrace and oblivion.’

At this point a refined lady approached ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

and with the aid of an interpreter said that she lived in

New York City and had heard something about the Bahá’í

teachings. ‘I knew you were in Egypt,’ she said, ‘and when

from a distance I saw your august personage on this ship,

it occurred to me that you might be ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.’ ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá said, ‘The heart, when pure and free, becomes in-

spired. It is evident from your having been transformed in

such a short time that there is a spiritual link between pure

hearts.’ The woman told the Master that she was a Unitar-

ian and requested Him to send a message through her to

the Unitarian congregation. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

The most important of all intentions is to spread the love

of God, to establish harmony and oneness among the

people. This is what distinguishes man from animals.

Hence, tell your community in America:

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the Sun of love has dawned.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the table of fellowship is spread.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the standard of the Kingdom is hoisted.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the divine springtime has appeared.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the clouds of mercy have rained.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the trees of the garden of humanity have

become green and verdant.

Glad tidings, glad tidings,

the Herald of the Kingdom has raised His voice.

The woman was so impressed and moved that she came

into His presence every day and shared with many passen-

gers the teachings and principles of the Bahá’í Faith.

Lunch was usually served at 1:00 p.m. At the table,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá showered His love and blessings on His

companions. In the afternoon, the same lady again entered

His presence and heard from Him a detailed explanation

of the extraordinary forces which govern the material

world, although the human kingdom, He explained, is

above the laws of nature.

Afternoon tea was served in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s cabin but

owing to the extreme motion of the ship, He had no

appetite.

Wednesday, March 27, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

The following morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited the cabins of

His companions while some were still asleep. He stopped

at each cabin for a few minutes to inquire about its occu-

pant’s health and condition, bestowing upon each His

love and affection. When we were all gathered at the table

in the dining room on the upper deck, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá di-

rected Shoghi Effendi to chant a prayer. During the prayer,

many passengers became interested in the gathering and

watched ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as He sat with His companions.

They listened to the chanting of prayers with complete

concentration, respect and courtesy. Observing this scene

and the manner in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would rise, sit and

speak, they became interested and all their attention was

directed towards the majesty and beauty of the Center of

the Covenant.

At lunchtime the Master came to the table and said,

‘Your cabins below are not good, you must move up.’ We

explained that although there were better cabins on the

second deck, because we were from the East, they had not

given them to us. ‘They treat us as poorly as they can

because they do not believe in God or in salvation.’ ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá replied: ‘If some of them appear to behave with

trustworthiness and honesty, it is merely for personal

esteem, in order to be held in favorable regard, and for

name and fame, rather than for the sake of promoting

humane values, righteousness, the fear of God and love of

truth.’

The Russian Consul, who was on the ship, came into

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence while He was speaking about

Sufism and how the leaders of the Ishraq doctrine believed

they could discover the reality of the material world

through spiritual inspiration whereas the Peripatetics

believed that comprehension of the reality of the material

world depends on education and training.[[7]](#endnote-7) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

gave a description of Sufism, explaining that the Sufis

believe the world of existence to be like the sea and all

creation the waves of that sea. When the Russian Consul

asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about the soul, He gave a description

of its nature and progress, explaining that the abstract is

not comprehended by the senses and that the lesser king-

doms can never understand the higher ones. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

then described the signs and indications of the existence

of the soul. The Consul was quite fascinated. As he was

traveling only as far as Naples, he said his farewells with

extreme courtesy and sincerity.

An American came to see the Master in the late after-

noon and spoke to Him about his travels around the world.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá told him, ‘You have traveled in this world; I

hope you will now traverse the world of the Kingdom and

become a wayfarer in the realms of the spirit.’ The Ameri-

can asked whether the Bahá’í Faith accepted the Bible.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

This Cause acknowledges the truth of all the Books and

all the Manifestations of God. The heavenly teachings are

composed of two kinds of commandments. One kind is

concerned with spiritual verities, with the perfections and

virtues of the world of humanity. These commandments

never change or alter. Each of the Books and the Prophets

was the promulgator of these principles upon which all the

religions are based, hence the foundation of all the divine

religions is one. The second category of commandments

is concerned with material principles and social issues.

These are altered according to the exigencies of the age.

For example, at the time of Christ the social laws of the

Torah were changed.

The American then asked about reincarnation. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá answered:

It is not as people have understood. What is intended is

the return of pre-existent attributes and perfections in new

forms. Moreover, in all realms of existence the spirits are

in a state of development; for instance, the mineral spirit

ascends and progresses to the vegetable kingdom, and the

vegetable spirit to the animal kingdom, and the animal

spirit to the human kingdom. In like manner, the human

spirit ascends into the divine worlds and the exalted

realms.

On another occasion this same person came to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá and brought with him some Chinese and Japanese

idol figurines to show Him. The Master remarked:

What a great difference exists between men. One person

degrades himself to such a degree that he idolizes and

worships stones, lifeless images, motionless effigies, not-

withstanding that God has given him understanding and

favored him with the honored robe of humanity! Another

person reaches such a pinnacle of perfection that he

becomes a sign of God and an educator of the world of

humanity! Consider what a great distance there is between

the one and the other. Although the object of both Buddha

and Krishna was the one God and they proclaimed the

unity of God, yet now their followers cling to and believe

in idols and images.

During ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s conversation many others joined us

and were moved by His words. Several visitors asked for

permission to arrange a large meeting where He could

speak. They prepared a poster and placed it on the main

bulletin board of the ship: ‘His Honor, ‘Abbás Effendi, will

speak on the subject of the Bahá’í Faith in the first class

main auditorium.’ This announcement attracted many

passengers, men and women alike.

After dinner, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a comprehensive talk

to an audience of well over five hundred people. First He

described the potential of the human race and the high

station and virtues of the human kingdom. ‘In spite of

these potentialities,’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘humanity has not

attained maturity, and human beings, depriving themselves

of these divine favors, seek glory in war and bloodshed.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then spoke about the new Manifestation

of God, the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and His spiritual

influence on the world. After His talk everyone was happy.

Many shook the Master’s hand, all, with the exception of

a few priests and prejudiced Italians, delighted to be in His

presence. From then on, more and more people came to

see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in both public and private gatherings and

His talks were translated sentence by sentence.

In the afternoon the ship approached the Strait of

Messina and volcanoes could be seen in the distance.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá remarked:

The real volcanoes which lay waste the cities and towns are

the battleships which are aptly named in Arabic

‘Mudammir’, that is, ‘destroyer’. Without doubt these are

the destroyers of the edifice of humanity. When will the

time come that these battleships will be diverted from

performing such ruinous tasks and become vessels for the

transportation of people?

When the city of Messina appeared on the horizon, nestling

in the bosom of the mountain, illuminated by lights, that

piece of earth appeared to be a heaven with stars shining

brightly. It was a majestic sight, the more so because it was

being observed and enjoyed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Thursday morning, March 28, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Naples, one of Italy’s most important cities, appeared on

the horizon and was seen by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The ship

docked. At this time Italy and Turkey were at war; the

hatred between them was so intense that if the enemy were

observed in one country, he would be harmed and abused

by its inhabitants without question. Because of this, the

friends urged the Master and His companions not to

disembark at Naples because their Eastern attire and

Turkish fezes would incite the hatred of the local people.

Thus ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not leave the ship at Naples but

instead looked at the city, its gardens and buildings from

the deck of the ship. He spoke much that day about the

hardworking laborers and workers’ rights, about how hard

they work and how desperate and needy their lives are:

What hardship these coal miners have to suffer, how poor

and needy they are! It is necessary for the directors of

companies and the owners of factories to allot a certain

share, however small it may be, to their laborers so that

their condition may be improved and they may be de-

terred from striking.

Friday, March 29, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Some American Bahá’ís who were waiting for the steamer

boarded the ship to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Among them were

Mr and Mrs [Percy] Woodcock and their daughter from

Canada, Mr and Mrs Austin from Denver, Colorado, and

Miss [Louisa] Mathew, a friend from London, who made

the rest of the journey with them to New York.

It became known that a group of physicians from Naples

was to board the ship to examine the eyes of the passen-

gers. The ship’s doctor had already given his opinion about

the infection of Áqá Khusraw’s eyes. When these physicians

examined the passengers’ eyes they said that the eyes of

Shoghi Effendi and Mírzá Munír-i-Zayn were also infected

and that they must leave the ship. The efforts of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, His companions and the American friends were of

no avail and apparently were not in accord with God’s

mysterious will and plan. The physicians insisted that even

if these friends continued their journey to New York, they

would not be allowed to disembark and would have to

return. Therefore ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked the three to obey.

Saturday, March 30, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá bestowed upon those three souls His utmost

kindness and blessings and bade them farewell. With great

sadness and dejection they left the ship. The Master’s heart

was broken and all of the companions were very sad.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘There is a wisdom in this matter which

will become known later.’ Much of His time that day was

spent on this issue until the steamer left Naples for New

York in the afternoon.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s companions were now three Persians—

Siyyid Asadu’lláh-i-Qumí, Dr Faríd and myself—and the

six Americans—Mr and Mrs Woodcock, Miss Woodcock,

Mr and Mrs Austin and Miss Mathew, who with great joy

remained in the presence of their beloved Lord. We were

all of us now in first class near ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

In the afternoon the Master invited us to His cabin for

tea. He later took His dinner in the main salon and said,

‘I have come to the table tonight out of regard for you and

have even taken a hearty meal.’ Then He remarked:

These Italians took us for Turks. They sent a report to this

effect and stopped three of our party from proceeding.

One was a secretary, the other a cook. If they had stopped

only these two it would have mattered little. But why

should they treat that tender youth Shoghi Effendi so

harshly? They have treated us with injustice; nevertheless

I have always helped and am still helping them, whether

at Alexandria or at Haifa. It has invariably happened that

the friends of God have been afflicted. How sorely the

disciples of Christ were persecuted on the ship and with

what great affliction they were carried to Rome.

That evening the Master and His company of friends and

believers presented a very unusual and beautiful sight, the

intermingling of the Eastern and Western friends attracting

all eyes.

Sunday, March 31, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

The Master visited the cabins of His companions and

inquired about each person’s health. He then took tea in

His cabin. When He came out, the American friends re-

marked that today was Sunday and that every Sunday

morning the salon was converted into a church for prayers.

He replied, ‘You should also go and join in.’ Therefore the

friends attended the prayer services. Afterwards ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá spoke to us about Mrs [Phoebe] Hearst and said that

she had contributed £500 to repair the road to the Shrine

of the Báb. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, in turn, had sent her a very

valuable ring that He had been able to purchase for a

modest price. However, as she was very wealthy, the ene-

mies of the Cause [the Covenant-Breakers] imagined that

she had helped the Cause, although, as a matter of fact, she

had received much more than she had given.

Today ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took His meal in His cabin. After

taking a little rest, He invited the American friends to His

cabin and spoke to them about His journey from Ṭihrán

to Baghdád made during the severe winter without proper

accommodation or clothing.[[8]](#endnote-8) ‘There was so much snow and

it was so cold’, He said, ‘that my feet were frostbitten. To

this day my toes are affected by cold weather.’ Later He

gave an account of Mírzá Yaḥyá and his followers and of the

complaints they made to Edward G. Browne:

They tampered with the contents of the history of Ḥájí

Mírzá Jání by removing some of its passages and inserting

others. They sent it to the libraries of London and Paris

and through such falsehood induced him [Browne] to

translate and publish the document. In order to achieve

his own selfish desires, he had it printed.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá invited all the believers to

His cabin for tea. He then sent a cable to Ramleh in Alex-

andria informing them of His good health and inquiring

after the well-being of the Greatest Holy Leaf [Bahíyyih

Khánum]. At the dinner table in the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

conversation centered around the point that every created

thing is subject to change. ‘All created things’, He said, ‘are

subject to change and transformation. Every youth will grow

old and every sapling will become an old tree and every-

thing old will decay and perish.’ Similarly, He said, each

one of the religions of the world has at one time been the

cause of progress but each has become like an old tree,

devoid of truth. The people of this age hope that these

trees will again bear flowers and fruits but this is impossible.

Thus, for instance, the Hindu and Buddhist expect to

regain the progress of the times of Brahma and Buddha.

Monday, April 1, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

A narrow-minded clergyman on board came to visit the

Master. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke extensively to this visitor

according to his capacity and discussed in detail the prob-

lems of people who veil themselves from reality. The visitor

left Him most reverently.

The health of the Master is improving daily. The sea has

become even more calm and the winds more favorable and

the friends and companions are even more honored and

thankful to be in His court of bounty and favor.

In the afternoon, as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was walking in front

of His cabin, Mr and Mrs Austin joined Him. They told

Him about the founder of the famous school in Rome, Mrs

Montessori. The majority of the students are orphans whose

parents perished in the earthquake in Messina. She has

managed the school in such a way that now most of the

schools in Europe and America are following her standards.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

The more the Catholics showed prejudice, the more they

were debased. Only now have they shown willingness to

accept the new measures. Otherwise, these persons are the

most prejudiced of all religions. At present, in every

quarter of Paris, the Catholic clergymen observe only

trifling religious rituals. Officially they are engaged in

attending to funerals and other ceremonies and have

nothing at all to do with other matters. God has disgraced

the ministers of religions. Whatever they do debases them

more and more. The decay of the nations and the degra-

dation of the people have always proceeded from the

ministers of religion.

Tuesday, April 2, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

The Master again spoke on the subject of the spiritual

illness and self-serving motives of the heads of various

religions. One of the friends asked Him about the leaders

and Hands of the Cause in this Dispensation. He said:

The Blessed Perfection has extirpated superstitions, root

and branch. The Hands of the Cause in this dispensation

are not heirs to any name or title; rather, they are sancti-

fied souls, the rays of whose holiness and spirituality throw

light on the hearts of all. Hearts are attracted by the

beauty of their morals, the sincerity of their intentions, and

their sense of equity and justice. Souls are involuntarily

enamored of their praiseworthy morals and laudable

attributes. Faces turn in spontaneous attraction to their

outstanding qualities and actions. ‘Hand of the Cause’ is

not a title that may be awarded to whomever it may please

to have it, nor is it a chair of honor upon which whoever

wishes may sit. The Hands of the Cause are the hands of

God. Therefore, whomsoever is the servant and promoter

of the Word of God, he is the hand of God. The object is

a matter of the spirit and not one of letters or words. The

more self-effacing one is, the more assisted he is in the

Cause of God; and the more meek and humble, the nearer

he is to God.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá took His midday meal in His cabin. In the

afternoon He invited the believers and the Western ladies

for tea in the library, serving them tea and sweets. He then

spoke to them about various types of transportation such

as ships, trains, carriages and so on. ‘They are’, He said,

‘good for long and tedious journeys; but for recreation and

holiday trips, horseback riding in the spring season in the

country, which is full of flowers and green foliage and

sparkling waters, is the best of all, and gives a unique

pleasure.’ The friends also spoke about dirigibles and

airplanes. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

Those who have provided the means for transporting arms

and ammunition and the instruments of wars and massa-

cres on earth will do so in the air. There will come to exist

such instruments as to cause all the means of destruction

in the past to be looked upon as children’s playthings.

At the table that night Mr Woodcock asked about the

difference between the soul and the spirit. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said:

The soul is a link between the body and the spirit. It

receives bounties and virtues from the spirit and gives

them to the body just as the outward senses carry to the

inward senses what they receive from the outer world in

order that it may remain deposited in the memory and

may be made serviceable by man through his power.

Wednesday, April 3, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Gibraltar, an important naval center for the European

powers, came into view and the steamer entered the straits.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá looked towards the left with field glasses. He

then spoke about Gibraltar, Spain, Algiers and about the

Muslim victories, giving an account of their sincere reli-

gious leaders. ‘What a magnificent honor’, He said, ‘God

bestowed on the Muslims in the beginning, and what a

disgrace they accepted for themselves in the end.’

Our American friends requested that the Master ask us,

the Persians, to alter our attire to suit the circumstances of

the time and place, changing everything except our Persian

hats and coats. He replied, ‘What harm is there in it? I do

not care much about what is unimportant and what is not

harmful to the Cause. They are trifles.’ Then He began to

stroll back and forth, as was His custom every morning and

evening on the deck, and continued to speak:

In past ages crossing the ocean was not as easy as it is now.

Up to the present time no one has traveled, with a purpose

like ours, from Persia to America. Some have made the

journey but it was for their personal gain or for trivial

motives. Ours may be said to be the first voyage of East-

erners to America. I have strong hopes of divine assistance

—that He will open the doors of victory and conquest on

all sides. Today, all the nations of the world are van-

quished, and victory and glory revolve around the servants

of the Blessed Perfection. All aims will come to naught

except this mighty aim. Hardship and debasement in this

path are, therefore, comfort and honor, and affliction a

blessing.

Thursday, April 4, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

The Master was slightly indisposed today. He took a little

mineral water. Later in the day the conversation was mainly

about Columbus, who, intending to reach India, traveled

by sea in a straight line from east to west, and, on reaching

land, found himself on the shores of the American conti-

nent. ‘Really,’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘how much trouble these

people undergo merely for outward benefits. How many

lives have been lost only in an effort to explore the North

Pole and for worldly renown.’ He related a story:

Once one of the Europeans fell overboard in a storm at sea

and his fellow passengers saved him. However, he la-

mented to himself, ‘Oh, why wasn’t I drowned so that the

publications of the incident in the newspapers would have

spread my name in all countries?’ These people accept

death for trifling affairs but they never take a step in the

path of the Cause of God.

Then the Master spoke about Nabíl-i-Zarandí, saying, ‘The

true worth of such personages will be appreciated in the

future.’ He described the disloyalty of the Covenant-break-

ers and the people of sedition. Later that afternoon, He

revealed a long Tablet in honor of Afnán-i-Yazdí.

For dinner a little soup especially prepared for ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá was brought to the table. His general condition

improved after dinner and He sat on the deck for a long

time. That night He praised the music, which is always

heard after breakfast and dinner, and He sent the musi-

cians four pounds as a tip.

Friday, April 5, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Very early in the morning the Master called some of us to

His cabin and said that He was tired. After taking a bath

and drinking some tea He felt better and came out of His

cabin. The weather was fine and the sea very calm. In the

distance one could see the Atlantic islands. The Master

strolled up and down the deck observing the islands

through field glasses. He breakfasted in His cabin on

chicken cooked especially for Him.

In the afternoon some of the friends and other passen-

gers gathered around Him in the salon. Among them was

an American gentlemen, a newspaper publisher. The

conversation with him was first about Persia and then he

inquired about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s journey. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá re-

plied:

I am going to America at the invitation of peace con-

gresses, as the fundamental principles of this Cause are

universal peace, the oneness of the world of humanity and

the equality of the rights of men. As this age is the age of

lights and the century of mysteries, this lofty purpose is

sure to be universally acknowledged and this Most Mighty

Cause is certain to embrace the East and the West.

The Master’s talk was very expressive and the listeners were

delighted, especially the newspaper publisher, who said

farewell to the Master with the utmost reverence. He even

wanted to kiss the Master’s hand but ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stopped

him and instead gave him His own prayer beads.[[9]](#endnote-9)

Day by day the admiration of the passengers and the

ship’s personnel for the Master increases. Whenever they

pass by Him, they bow, removing their hats in respect. After

supper the Master sat for awhile and spoke about a univer-

sal language.

Saturday, April 6, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

While having tea in His cabin ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave instruc-

tions concerning our arrival in New York City: ‘We shall

reach New York in a few days. We shall stay in hotels at

each place and not trouble the believers. However, if

meetings are arranged in their homes, it will not matter.’

He continued, ‘Go to the table and have your tea.’

The Master spent the morning writing Tablets until

noon and then went to the dining room table. He was

asked for guidance about food. He said, ‘We shall not

interfere with their bodily food. Our concern is with spiri-

tual food.’

In the afternoon He invited the Western friends to His

presence and related a history of the Cause and the difficul-

ties and persecutions of the early days. One the Tablets

revealed today was a long prayer, a Tablet of visitation in

honor of Ḥájí Muḥammad-Taqí, the Afnán, and another

was a Tablet in His own hand. Regarding this Tablet He

summoned us, saying:

Come here and consider this important question. A person

from Ṭihrán has written that the Universal Will is always

manifest; that is to say, God is always manifest in human

form. I have sent him an emphatic reply and urge you also

to remember that between two Manifestations there are

days of concealment. There is no doubt that for the Sun

of Reality there is no rising or setting in its own sanctified

center but, owing to the exigencies of the contingent

world, it rises and sets. Those persons who say in the days

of concealment and interval that God is manifest in human

form and that ‘He always shows Himself in different forms

like an artful beloved’[[10]](#endnote-10) are the sources of difference in the

Cause and create discord among the people. All these

evasive statements of theirs are mere pretensions. Their

only object is to get themselves known as persons in whom

divine signs are centered. We must, therefore, adhere to

the explicit text, to the literal meaning of what is written

in the Tablets, and must not deviate from this even to a

hair’s breadth.

While walking in the stern of the ship in the afternoon

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: ‘It is the twelfth day of our voyage. We

have traveled a quarter of the way around the globe and

have traversed six degrees of longitude. Here it is after-

noon, while in Egypt it is the middle of the night at this

time.’

In the evening some clergymen announced a meeting

to observe the crucifixion of Christ. The Master remarked,

‘Their speeches in the meeting will be to the effect that

Christ sacrificed Himself in order to redeem us from our

sins. But they do not understand the inner meaning.’ After

the meeting He spoke extensively on this subject. ‘The

redemption of sins’, He said, ‘depends on our acting upon

the admonitions of Christ, and the martyrdom of Christ

was to cause us to attain praiseworthy morals and supreme

stations.’

Sunday, April 7, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Before His morning tea ‘Abdu’l-Bahá requested that

prayers be chanted. He offered thanks for the protection

and assistance of the Abhá Beauty. When all of the Western

and Persian friends were seated at the table for tea, He

reverently expressed His thanks and gratitude for the

divine favors. Each one of the friends was honored to be in

His presence and asked themselves, ‘What am I seeing? Is

it a dream or reality?’

In the afternoon some of the Western friends and a few

passengers came to meet Him. He spoke in detail about the

Bahá’í teachings of the oneness of humanity, universal

peace and the raising of the tent of brotherhood and

union. Everyone was interested and their hearts filled with

joy and happiness to an even greater extent than before.

Monday, April 8, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

Although tired from the sea voyage, the Master wrote

Tablets to the Bahá’ís in Ṭihrán. He took no food except

milk until midday.

Wireless telegrams were received from the Bahá’ís in

California and Chicago, expressing their joy at the Master’s

journey and conveying their happiness and devotion to the

Cause.

Some of the passengers brought their children to visit

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He showered them with His blessings and

loving-kindness, so much so that the children did not want

to leave Him. ‘The Blessed Beauty’, He said, ‘has taught us

to love children and to be the lovers of the whole human

race.’

The Master’s discourse today was mainly on the advan-

tages and benefits of love and unity among humankind and

the harm and terrible results of prejudice, blind imitation

and disunity.

Tuesday, April 9, 1912

[aboard the *Cedric*]

While having His morning tea the Master remarked:

We shall be at sea for another day. Steam power is truly

a wonderful thing. If there were no such power, how would

the vast oceans have been crossed? What wonderful means

God has supplied and what confirmations the Blessed

Beauty has conferred. Otherwise, how could we be here?

What have we in common with these places?[[11]](#endnote-11)

As the post was being readied to send ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s letters

to the friends in the East from New York, a wireless arrived

from the friends in New York congratulating Him on His

arrival and welcoming Him.

An American doctor came to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The

Master spoke with him for about an hour on the history of

the Faith, the persecutions and afflictions suffered by the

Ancient Beauty, His imprisonment, the teachings and other

subjects.

At the breakfast table the Master said, ‘I will take only

a little soup. I have no appetite for the shipboard food.’

In the afternoon the believers and some Western ladies

found great spiritual joy in the Master’s presence as He told

them of the influence of the Cause in promoting unity, love

and fellowship among the peoples of the world.

The Italian physician, mentioned above, noticing the

devotion of those surrounding the Master, became more

respectful and even bowed when passing Him; in the

evening He came into ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence with the

utmost reverence. When the Master mentioned Shoghi

Effendi, Mírzá Munír and Áqá Khusraw, the doctor said

that he did not know anything about Shoghi Effendi’s eyes,

that he had only examined Khusraw’s eyes and that the

fault lay with the group of doctors from Naples. He begged

the Master’s pardon.

Later in the evening the Italian Consul and other pas-

sengers, group by group, visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. They were

pleased with the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and expressed

their hope that these principles and doctrines would make

great progress in America. Some expressed their faith and

asked for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address in New York. As this was

the last night of the voyage, one by one they bade farewell

to the Master and took their leave. At 9:00 p.m. the lights

of New York appeared shimmering in the distance and the

steamer anchored offshore near the breakwater to enter the

harbor the next morning.

Wednesday, April 10, 1912

[Thursday, April 11, 1912][[12]](#endnote-12)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival in New York City

After morning tea, the Master instructed that telegrams be

sent to the Assemblies in both the East and the West in-

forming the believers of His safe arrival. Then He said:

No one thought at the time of our departure from Ramleh

that this voyage would be so enjoyable, that the great

ocean would be crossed so easily and that my health would

withstand the voyage in such manner!

One of the companions remarked that the confirmation of

the Abhá Kingdom is ever with the Supporter of the Cove-

nant and that all the people on the ship had remarked that

the great ocean had never been so calm at this time of the

year.

While the Master was having breakfast in the dining

room, telegrams were pouring in from the American Bahá’í

Assemblies expressing their great joy and congratulating

Him upon the safe arrival of the steamer. The Statue of

Liberty, standing majestically in mid-water, came into the

Master’s view.[[13]](#endnote-13) He ordered the luggage to be kept in

readiness. As the ship came alongside the wharf, many tall

buildings, including two enormous buildings 45 and 35

stories high, loomed into view.[[14]](#endnote-14)

Many Bahá’í friends from New York and surrounding

areas were waiting in line on the jetty, waving their hats

and handkerchiefs in happiness. The Master, however, did

not come out from His cabin.

When the boat anchored, some newspaper reporters

came on board to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to ask Him about the

purpose of His journey. He replied:

Our object is universal peace and the unity of humankind.

I have traveled to Paris and London and now I have come

to America to meet with those who seek universal peace

and I hope that the peace societies of America will take the

lead in promoting this end.

They asked, ‘How can universal peace be achieved?’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered:

Its realization is through the attraction and support of

world public opinion. Today universal peace is the pana-

cea for all human life.

They questioned, ‘What are these ills?’ He answered:

One of these ills is the people’s restlessness and discontent

under the yoke of the war expenditures of the world’s

governments. What the people earn through hard labor

is extorted from them by the governments and spent for

purposes of war. And every day they increase these expen-

ditures. Thus the burden on men becomes more and more

unbearable and the tribulations of the people become

more and more severe. This is one of the great ills of the

day. What a great tribulation there is in the countries of

Italy and Turkey in these days! The fathers hear of the

death of their sons and the sons are distressed on hearing

the news of the death of their fathers. What cities are laid

to ruin and what rising fortunes are thrown to the winds!

The antidote for this great ill is world peace, which is the

source of universal tranquillity.

They then asked: ‘Is it not possible that peace can become

the cause of trouble and war the means of progress?’ He

replied:

No. It is war which is today the cause of all trouble. If all

would lay down their arms, they would be freed from all

difficulties and every misery would be changed into relief.

However, this cannot be brought about except through

education and the development of people’s thoughts and

ideas.

This sort of exchange continued, the Master giving full and

thorough answers to their questions. The reporters then

asked for permission to take photographs of the Master for

their newspapers, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá agreed.

The friends were waiting impatiently to see the Master

but He instructed them to go to Mr [Edward] Kinney’s

house where He would see them in the afternoon. Thus the

friends departed, except for a few who had already come

on board and were honored to meet Him.[[15]](#endnote-15)

After distributing gifts among the crew, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

disembarked, thereby blessing American soil, the recipient

of everlasting honor, with the footsteps of the Beauty of the

Divine Covenant. I wrote an ode in tribute to this blessed

voyage:

The Beloved of the East and the Supreme Spirit of Persia

crossed the Atlantic Ocean,

Each second replete with joyful acclamations

exclaiming from the *Cedric*

That the King of Kings of the Covenant and the Monarch

of Devotion

had consented to come to America.

He was welcomed with open arms

and the earth became the envy of heaven.

Existence itself nudged the world of being.

The sea raised its ceaseless voice

that the King of Kings of the Covenant

had consented to come to America.

On the tenth of April 1912 the illustrious and

beauteous Beloved

reached New York to a great and wondrous welcome,

While heavenly angels proclaimed the glad tidings

that the King of Kings of the Covenant

had consented to come to America.

The first meeting between the believers and the Master was

that afternoon at Mr Kinney’s home.

After leaving the ship the Master went to the Hotel

Ansonia. After some tea, He went to the meeting with the

friends. And what a wonderful meeting it was![[16]](#endnote-16) The friends

were so full of joy and happiness that it seemed the very

walls were immersed in rapture and ecstasy. Because it was

so crowded, many had to stand. When the initial excite-

ment abated, the Master gave thanks and gratitude to the

Blessed Beauty for His assistance and then spoke about the

power and influence of the holy utterances to attract and

cement the hearts, unifying the East and West.

Because of the crowded conditions and excessive heat,

the Master left the meeting and returned to His hotel. As

He left the gathering, each believer approached Him,

greeted Him with ‘Alláh-u-Abhá’, shook His hand and took

hold of His *‘abá* [cloak], requesting prayers for assistance

and confirmation.

They continued to surround Him until He entered His

carriage and left for the hotel. Upon His arrival, He again

offered thanks for the assistance of the Blessed Beauty and

gratitude for the help and protection of the Abhá King-

dom.

The Hotel Ansonia is one of the landmark buildings in

New York and is 17 stories high. The Master’s suite was on

the seventh floor and had two bedrooms, a drawing room,

a kitchen and a bathroom, all completely furnished. The

rent for the Master’s apartment was £4 per day, exclusive

of board and incidental expenses.

Thursday, April 11, 1912[[17]](#endnote-17)

[New York]

Some friends came to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. A newspaper

reporter came and asked about the purpose of the Master’s

journey. He replied:

I have come to visit the peace societies of America because

the fundamental principles of our Cause are universal

peace and the promotion of the basic doctrine of the

oneness and truth of all the divine religions. Differences

between religions are due to misunderstanding and imita-

tion. If these imitations were to be eliminated, all religions

would be united.

The Master gave many such eloquent responses to the

reporter’s questions and ended with a discussion about the

rights of women, the discouragement of polygamy and

other social ills.

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had been mentioned in the newspapers

as ‘The Prophet of the East’, He said to the correspondent,

‘I am not a prophet; I am a servant of God. My name is

‘Abdu’l-Bahá [the servant of Bahá].’ Although the Master

disclaimed the station of a Prophet, many newspapers, in

describing His many qualities and attributes, continued to

refer to Him as the ‘Prophet of the East’ and the ‘Messen-

ger of Peace’.

After He had revealed several Tablets in honor of some

of the assemblies in America and had given instructions

regarding the arrangement of meetings, He granted an

audience to other representatives of the press who had

earlier telephoned asking permission for an interview. He

spoke at length about the unity of the principles of reli-

gions, the necessity for universal peace, the importance of

a spiritual civilization, as well as the importance of educa-

tion and the progress of women. The reporters took down

all of His statements and published them in the news-

papers. Representatives from other magazines and journals

took more photographs of the Master and printed them

in their publications. As a result, there were continuous

calls requesting public and private meetings with Him. The

friends also telephoned inquiring about the Master’s health

and well-being.

There was a public meeting in the afternoon at the home

of Mr Howard MacNutt[[18]](#endnote-18) and another meeting that eve-

ning at the home of Miss Phillips.[[19]](#endnote-19) The Master expressed

His happiness at meeting with the friends, exhorting them

to be obedient to the Will and Testament of Bahá’u’lláh

and to distinguish themselves among the peoples and

nations of the world. Hundreds of people attended each

meeting, all standing as the Master entered and calling out

‘Alláh-u-Abhá’. When the time came for Him to leave, each

went forward with great joy and happiness to shake His

hand and to beg confirmation from Him. When ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá went to the waiting carriage, they stood surrounding

it until He drove away.

Friday, April 12, 1912[[20]](#endnote-20)

[New York]

Group after group of believers from New York and the

surrounding areas came to visit. There were also many

seekers who were interested and desired to visit the Master.

Some clergymen also visited. The Master spoke to them,

saying:

Material and spiritual matters have always advanced hand

in hand but at the present time the material side is pre-

dominant and the divine principles have been neglected

and thrown aside and forgotten. One of the chief reasons

for this growing apathy is that the ministers of religion

have taught that religion is opposed to science and reason

and have thus enforced imitation. You must, therefore,

relate religious verities to science.

Then He added:

The appearance of the divine Manifestations is like the

coming of springtime. It is self-evident that spring does

not remain forever. We pray that the divine Spring may

again be the cause of the rejuvenation of the garden of

existence.

At the end of His talk ‘Abdu’l-Bahá discouraged everyone

from war and disunity and urged all to peace and unity.

The clergymen were so transformed that they remarked as

with one voice, ‘We have attempted for many years to

portray and promote the spiritual teachings with such

pleasing and tangible proofs.’ They then requested the

Master to come to their churches to speak. The Master

replied, ‘I have already promised others and I shall stay

here only a week for the present. I may speak on my return

from Chicago.’

In the afternoon there was a public meeting at the home

of Mrs [Alexander] Morten.[[21]](#endnote-21) Because the Master had

spoken so much today, He was tired and rested for a little

while in an upstairs bedroom before the meeting. When He

came down the staircase to face the crowd below, He gave

a wonderful, compassionate talk in an eloquent and melo-

dious voice on the subject of the spiritual springtime. Apart

from the many believers, there were also about a hundred

newcomers present who shook His hand and expressed

their joy and happiness. When He started to go upstairs,

the crowd pleaded with Him to stay for a few more minutes.

They approached Him, group by group, and then left,

extremely happy and with great devotion. Some believers

requested blessings for their children. The Master has a

great love and affection for children. Some of the friends

showed Him Tablets that He had written for them, over-

joyed to have been so honored by Him. It is surprising to

see how much the Cause of God has influenced them and

the power of God’s Covenant. The believers in America are

extremely devoted to the Center of the Covenant and are

obedient to His words and commands.

On the return to the hotel the carriage drove through

the park roads. The Master remarked, ‘America will make

rapid progress in the future but I am fearful of the effects

of these high buildings and such densely populated cities;

these are not good for the public health.’

Saturday, April 13, 1912[[22]](#endnote-22)

[New York]

Among the prominent people who called upon the Master

were the President of the New York Peace Society [Mr W.

H. Short][[23]](#endnote-23) and an important inventor of armaments [Mr

Hudson Maxim].[[24]](#endnote-24) It happened that both were visiting

‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the same time. It was interesting to see the

power and majesty with which the Master spoke to these

two about serving the world of humanity and public welfare.

Both left His presence with joy and devotion.

In the afternoon the public meeting was at the home of

Mr [Mountfort] Mills.[[25]](#endnote-25) Several clergymen, professors and

dignitaries were present. The Master first spoke on the

superior power of the human kingdom over nature. Then

in another room He spoke to the clergymen about the

necessity of a power that will cause spirituality to be victori-

ous over materialism. ‘This power’, He said, ‘is the power

of Bahá’u’lláh. We used that power and thus have suc-

ceeded in this great Cause.’ The meeting and the attention

and joyful devotion of those present gave ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

much satisfaction. In the carriage returning to His hotel,

He said:

I have made the subject of my talks here only one of the

principles of the Blessed Beauty. I have not as yet touched

upon others of greater importance. It is because I perceive

the pulse of the people and the needs of the present

circumstances that the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty

successively rain down and assist me. These effects that

you see are not only the result of addresses but are due to

the assistance of the Blessed Beauty. Of course, everyone

says that peace is desirable but the power to influence and

conform is what is required. The Blessed Beauty is indeed

my helper and protector, to the degree that were I, for

example, even to make war the subject of my talks, the

same effects would become apparent. It is indeed the

confirmations of the Blessed Beauty that aid us. Otherwise

how would Westerners show such consideration to us

Easterners?

The Persian servants and American believers were with

‘Abdu’l-Bahá when He was at His hotel. A photographer

with a movie camera received permission to photograph

Him, together with His companions.

We also received news today of the disaster of the

*Titanic*.[[26]](#endnote-26) The believers said prayers in gratitude that the

Master had not acceded to their request that He travel on

the ship.

Sunday, April 14, 1912

[New York]

The Master went to the Church of the Ascension.[[27]](#endnote-27) This was

the first church in America to be honored by the presence

of the Master. He had previously received an invitation to

visit this great edifice.

He entered the church from a special side door opening

into a room in the church and rested for a while. The

clergymen came in and expressed their warm gratitude for

His presence. After prayers, the Master went to the podium

from the upper door. At the insistence of the minister, the

Master sat on the tall chair especially reserved for the

Viceroy of Christ. After more prayers, the minister spoke

about the history and teachings of the Cause and, with

great courtesy and respect, introduced the Master. The

believers attending the services were elated. The Master

rose from His seat and gave a comprehensive talk on the

meaning of divine civilization. He presented the Bahá’í

teachings and spoke about the Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh

and the unification of humankind. The audience sat spell-

bound like iguanas sitting in the sun,[[28]](#endnote-28) overwhelmed by the

Master’s talk, especially at the end when the Master

chanted a prayer in a most melodious voice. The prayer

greatly affected the hearts of the listeners. As He left the

church, group after group rushed towards Him. The

Bahá’ís sang ‘Alláh-u-Abhá’ and many asked for His bless-

ings. From among the crowd a woman’s voice was heard.

Tears poured from her eyes as she held fast to the hem of

the Master’s robe. She was so overcome she could not

speak. The Master showered her with His love and kind-

ness and calmed her with loving words of assurance. It was

a great day and a most impressive meeting. Not one of the

two thousand people was disappointed and everyone left

smiling in warm appreciation.

That afternoon the Master spoke at the Advanced

Thought Center.[[29]](#endnote-29) His talk was on the unity of God, the

unity of the world of humanity and the need for greater

capacity to receive the divine blessings. As He left the

meeting hall, many people surrounded Him and asked

what they could do to become united. The Master showered

them with His love and kindness. They asked to see Him

again and left Him with great courtesy and humility.

Monday, April 15, 1912

[New York]

The Master was shown several newspapers that had pub-

lished His picture and articles about His talks and yester-

day’s meetings. So great is the influence of the Cause of

God that a zealous clergyman has made objections to Dr

[Percy Stickney] Grant, the minister of the Church of the

Ascension who had invited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to sit in the chair

reserved for the Viceroy of Christ. He asked why the min-

ister had permitted ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to sit on the chair.

Although he objected to the Master’s talk, he could find no

justification for his complaint. Other clergymen replied to

his objections in a newspaper article, referring to his dis-

courteous attitude. Thus he was obliged to write an article

himself in which he stated that he had no doubt about the

knowledge and importance of the teachings of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá and that his intention had been only to point out that

the church’s rules and regulations had been broken.

The bishop of the church was introduced to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá by Mr Mills. The bishop expressed his gratitude and

appreciation for the Master’s visit to the Church of the

Ascension, saying, ‘I am very optimistic and pleased about

the teachings of this Cause. You are the first great visitor

from the East who has brought such important tidings to

the West. Until now no one could imagine that such a great

cause could exist in the East. This blessed journey is the

cause of praise and gratitude.’

As the bishop listened to the Master’s remarks about the

dangers of blind imitation and prejudice, and on the

fundamental unity of all religions, the necessity for univer-

sal peace, the agreement between science and religion, and

a divine civilization, and so on, he became very respectful,

and left with gratitude and humility.

In thanking the Master the bishop said, ‘You are the first

great traveler from the East to the West to come with such

noble principles.’ I then recalled the statement of the

Master on the ship when He said, ‘Up to the present time

no one has traveled, with a purpose like ours, from Persia

to America … Ours may be said to be the first voyage of

Easterners to America.’

Tuesday, April 16, 1912

[New York]

From early morning until late afternoon many believers

and seekers came by requesting permission to see ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá. Many sat on the porch waiting their turn and were

extremely grateful if they could see Him for just a few

minutes and be personally addressed by Him.

The public meeting today was held at the home of Mr

[Arthur Pillsbury] Dodge. After lunch, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

on the subject of the unity of nations brought about by the

power of God, the influence of the words of Bahá’u’lláh and

the ascendancy of His Cause. Because a large number of

people were present, they entered through one door and,

after greeting the Master, shaking His hand and seeking

His blessings, left by another. Some were tearful while

others were smiling and elated, asking for His assistance

that they might be successful in teaching and in serving the

Cause. This was the state of the people at all the public

meetings. If I were to write about this in detail, it would

take many volumes.

Wednesday, April 17, 1912

[New York]

Among the dignitaries visiting the Master were several New

York clergymen who invited Him to speak to their congre-

gations. The Master told them, ‘I am going to Chicago in

two days and therefore am unable to accept your invitation.’

Owing to the prejudice and hatred that has existed

between blacks and whites, it has been impossible for white

people to invite black people to their homes. Therefore

‘Abdu’l-Bahá has repeatedly encouraged the believers to

promote fellowship and unity among these two races.

An important meeting was held today at the home of Mr

Kinney.[[30]](#endnote-30) It was attended by many Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís

and demonstrated a strong bond of unity between whites

and blacks. The Master said that the East has always been

the dawning place of light, that this gathering of blacks and

whites is like the gathering of many colored flowers and

that the variety of colors enhances the beauty of the garden

and brings about the loveliness of each.

In the evening the Master invited everyone to dinner,

which He Himself prepared. He spoke about unity and love

and demonstrated to everyone how to serve at the thresh-

old of the Blessed Beauty. Indeed, it was a blessed evening

and a wonderful example of generosity and bestowal in the

highest degree.

Thursday, April 18, 1912

[New York]

Besides the individual meetings of the friends with ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, there were two public meetings held today. One was

at the home of Mrs [Marshall] Emery,[[31]](#endnote-31) where He spoke

about the life of the Blessed Beauty, His glory, His many

afflictions and hardships and the triumph of the Cause of

God despite His imprisonment by His enemies. This ac-

count brought tears to the eyes of the listeners and caused

them to ponder deeply. Many asked that they might be

assisted to serve the Cause.

The other meeting was held at the Bowery Mission

Hall[[32]](#endnote-32) to help and assist the poor and destitute. First

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on the subject of the station of poverty

and gave the men hope for the future. His words were so

penetrating that even those who were not poor became

envious at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s description of the station of

poverty. The report of this meeting was publicized in many

newspapers. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá finished His talk, He said

He wished to serve the poor. The chairman announced that

‘Abdu’l-Bahá would stand near the door so that they could

come to Him from one side and then leave from the other.

It was an impressive sight. The Master showered His kind-

ness on each one and gave each of them some coins. Be-

cause there were about four hundred people, some said

that the Master’s money would not suffice; there would not

be enough for all of them. Instead, some money was left

over, which was given to other destitute people and chil-

dren outside the Bowery.

Friday, April 19, 1912

[New York]

It was the last day of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in New York. From

early morning until noon there were the usual comings and

goings of numerous friends and believers at the Master’s

hotel. In the evening a large meeting was arranged for the

Master’s talk at Earl Hall at Columbia University.[[33]](#endnote-33) In

addition to students and professors, there were many other

interested people, as well as the Bahá’ís. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk

was most penetrating and dealt with the supernatural

powers of human nature and the results achieved from

education and knowledge, and gave an explanation of

peace and so on. After the meeting, those who had already

met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá brought other seekers to meet Him in

another room. These meetings were so long that the profes-

sors’ plan to give the Master a tour of the university had to

be abandoned.

From both the friends and inquirers was frequently

heard the remark, ‘Oh, that this meeting would never end,

for we do not want to leave Him.’

As it was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s last night in the city, many

believers remained longer than usual in His company. Each

was a Majnún,[[34]](#endnote-34) enchanted with the beauty of the Center

of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant and attracted to the divine

fragrances.

The friends continued to arrive until late at night.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá bade farewell to all and promised to be back

among them when He returned.

Saturday, April 20, 1912

[en route to Washington dc]

In the early morning after prayers, meditations, morning

tea and receiving some of the believers, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left

the Hotel Ansonia for the railway station [Grand Central

Station]. A large group of friends and well-wishers were

there to bid Him farewell. One by one they came to Him

and in their own ways expressed their respect, attraction

and humility.

When He arrived at the station, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walked

around the building, praising its beauty and construction.

We were informed that it is one of the finest in the world,

its construction costing about six million dollars. The train

began its journey and for the first few miles it traveled by

the great river. As well as His usual companions, two Ameri-

can Bahá’ís traveled with the Master. One was Mr John

Bosch from California, who had come to New York specifi-

cally to see Him. He had asked for a Persian name and was

given the name Núrání [‘the Luminous’] by the Master.

The other American was Dr Edward Getsinger, who begged

‘Abdu’l-Bahá that he be allowed to be a part of His entou-

rage. As most American trains have but one class of travel,

except for sleeping compartments, we were all accommo-

dated in one cabin.

After a journey of about five hours the train reached

Washington dc. Before the journey the Master had sent a

telegram to the friends in Washington requesting that a

house be rented for Him. Mrs [Agnes] Parsons had invited

the Master to stay at her home but He did not at first

accept her invitation. However, after He was told by the

friends that her home had been especially prepared for His

visit, for which she had been anxiously waiting, He agreed

to her request; for had her invitation not been accepted,

she would have been heartbroken and deeply saddened.

The Master and a translator went to Mrs Parsons’ home

and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instructed the other members of His

entourage to stay at the house rented for Him. Thus Mrs

Parsons’ house was the first home in America in which the

Master resided; He stayed there for several days.[[35]](#endnote-35)

That evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá attended the annual meeting

of the Orient-Occident Unity Conference at the public

library.[[36]](#endnote-36) It was a vast gathering and the hall was filled to

capacity. As the Master entered the hall, the audience was

awe-struck. All stood and remained standing until He bade

them be seated. It was amazing to witness how spontaneous-

ly these people paid Him their respect, even though most

were not Bahá’ís. He spoke on the importance of the

relationship between the East and the West, the unity of

people and about the Revelation of the Greatest Name. His

talk was so moving and inspiring that afterwards everyone

wanted to meet Him but because He was too tired to greet

everyone, He decided to return home.

Sunday, April 21, 1912

[Washington dc]

The highlight of the day was a very important and well-

attended meeting at the Universalist Church.[[37]](#endnote-37) The minis-

ter of the church introduced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with a most

glowing tribute to His life and teachings. Then the Master

rose from His seat and delivered an address on the need

for cooperation, love, friendship and universal peace. He

stressed Christ’s statement that ‘I have yet many things to

say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when

he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all

truth’ [John 16:12–13], and added, ‘And now that time has

come and the Divine Spirit has spoken, revealing all truth.’

I have reproduced here the whole of that address:[[38]](#endnote-38)

What the minister of the Church delineated before us just

now testifies to his high sense of morality and his efforts

to serve the world of humanity. It is truly praiseworthy and

deserves commendation for it opposes the ingrained

prejudices of man. These prejudices have kept the human

world in a state of chaos for the past six thousand years.

How many wars have taken place; how many battles have

been fought; how much discord has been caused by them!

Inasmuch as this century is the century of the manifesta-

tion of truth—praise be to God!—the thoughts of men are

turned to truth and the souls are prepared for the oneness

of humanity. The ocean of reality is surging more tumultu-

ously and the mirage of imitation is daily passing away. All

the existing religions have had one foundation of truth.

This foundation has led humanity to love, accord and

progress. However, after each of the divine Manifestations,

that light of reality was gradually beclouded and the

darkness of superstitions and imitations came in its place.

The world of humanity was encircled in that darkness. Day

by day, enmity waxed great until it reached such a pitch

that each nation rose against the other. Were it not for

political obstructions, the nations would have completely

destroyed and overthrown one another. Now it is enough!

We must investigate the truth. We must pass by these vain

imaginings. Praise be to God that we are all the servants

of one God. We are all under the protection of His favors

and are recipients of His bestowals. God is kind to all. Why

should we be unkind? God is at peace with all; why should

we war with one another? At most it is this: that some are

ignorant; they must be educated. Some are as children;

they must be trained. Some are sick and infirm; they must

be healed. But the ill patient must not be detested. The

child must not be considered bad. We must strive to rem-

edy and heal. All the Prophets of God came for the educa-

tion of humanity in order that the immature souls might

become mature and to establish love and amity among

mankind. The Prophets have not come to this world to

cause discord and enmity. For God wants good for all His

servants, not ill; and he who wishes the servants of God ill

is opposed to God. He is not on the right path; rather, he

has followed the footsteps of Satan, inasmuch as the attrib-

ute of God is mercy and that of Satan is rancor. Therefore,

every man who is merciful and kind to his fellow man is

following God’s way and every man who bears hatred

toward his fellow man is opposing Him. God is absolute

mercy and pure love, and Satan is absolute enmity and

utter hatred. Therefore, in whatever meeting you see love,

know that it is a manifestation of God’s mercy; and wher-

ever you see enmity, know that it is the outcome of the evil

suggestions of Satan. The Prophets of God have come to

this world to make human souls the expressions of the All-

Merciful and to instill friendship and love in the hearts of

men. The animal is a captive of nature and does what its

nature prompts it to do. It has not consideration for good

or evil. But the Prophets have come to teach man that

which is good, not evil, so that he may act in conformity

with justice and equity and not follow the demands of his

natural instincts. He should act in accord with reason and

justice, even though that be against his natural inclination.

Whatever he should find contrary to reason and equity,

that should be considered unworthy, even though it be

propitious to his natural impulse. Therefore, man must

follow the attributes of the All-Merciful. However, the

imperfect members of society follow their natural instincts.

They obey these instincts. They are captives of physical

susceptibilities. They are not aware of the spiritual boun-

ties. Man is possessed of two aspects, the physical and the

divine. The divine aspect consists of reconciliation, purity,

love and faithfulness but the animal aspect consists of war,

contention, bloodshed and massacre. If the animal side in

man should overcome, he becomes more degraded than

animals. If the divine side should triumph, he becomes an

angel. The teachings of the Prophets were solely directed

to educate humanity in order to subdue the animal side

so that persons under the yoke of nature may find salva-

tion and the heavenly aspect may rule victorious. This

divine aspect is the bounty of the Holy Spirit, it is the

second birth. He who possesses the divine aspect is a well-

wisher of mankind and is most kind to all. He will enter-

tain no enmity toward any Faith and will not belittle any

religion, for the foundations of the religions of God are

one. If we refer back to these foundations, we shall become

united. But if we turn toward imitations, we shall be at

variance, for imitations differ but the foundations of the

divine religions are one and the same. Imitation leads to

differences and trouble but the foundations of the divine

religions cause love and union.

Christ once said, ‘When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come,

he will guide you into all truth.’ He also said, ‘There are

many things which you cannot bear hearing now, but when

the Spirit of Truth is come, he will expound all truth unto

you.’ Now is the century in which the Spirit of Truth has

spoken and has revealed the whole truth. He has laid bare

the truth of the religion of Christ and has redeemed

people from superstitions so that the edifice of ignorance

and enmity may be destroyed and the foundation of love

may be established. We must all endeavor with heart and

soul in order that this enmity and spite may disappear

entirely from the midst of humanity, that this hatred and

strife may pass away absolutely. The Holy Spirit admon-

ishes us to follow the example of Christ, to read the Gos-

pels and to see that Christ was pure love. He even prayed

for His executioners when He was on the cross. He prayed,

‘O Lord, pardon them, for they know not what they do. If

they knew, they would not perform such deeds.’ See how

loving the divine Manifestations are that even on the cross

they pray for the forgiveness of their oppressors. There

fore we must emulate the Prophets of God; we must follow

in Their footsteps; we must free ourselves from the dark-

ness of dogmatic imitations. I ask you, did God create us

for love or for enmity? Surely He has created us for love

and friendship. Therefore, we must be aware because self-

interest prompts people to shut their eyes to the truth.

They want to pursue their own self-interest and they move

but in the darkness of desire. Consider what hardships

Christ suffered when He appeared. In spite of all this He

in the end united diverse people and different religions.

The Romans, Greeks, Assyrians and Egyptians were most

hostile toward each other. Christ, through the breath of

the Holy Spirit, united them all, established fellowship

among them all, so that differences were cast aside and

strife and disputes were forgotten. They were united under

His standard and lived in peace through His teaching.

Which was preferable? To have followed Christ or to have

followed satanic and hostile instincts? I hope that the

people of the East and the West shall be quickened by the

breath of the Holy Spirit, in this, the blessed century of

Bahá’u’lláh, and become united, that all may cling to the

essential reality of the divine religions—that truth is one

and that it is indivisible and not multiple. When all investi-

gate the truth, all will be united, the light of the oneness

of humanity will shine and universal peace will come into

being. I will now pray on your behalf:

O Lord! These Thy servants have assembled here

out of pure love. They have gathered together in

perfect accord and harmony. O God! Illumine their

faces, make joyous their souls with Thy most great

glad tidings. Brighten their eyes with the verses of

Thy guidance and delight their ears with the melody

of Thy sweet voice.

O Lord, we are wrongdoers; forgive us. We are

sinners; grant us Thy pardon. Shelter us in Thy

refuge. Satisfy the needy through Thy forgiveness.

Free us from the world of vain imaginings and guide

us to the Truth, that we may seek the divine reality,

shun the mortal world, approach the divine king-

dom and, withdrawn from the world of darkness,

enter the realm of light.

Deliver us from the darkness of material exis-

tence and illumine us with the rays of the infinite

realm. Make us the manifestations of Thy light

and the dawning places of Thy signs. Turn us from

all else save Thee and cause us to become the

recipients of Thy mysteries. Thou, O God, art the

Compassionate, the Wise, the Forgiving, the Mighty.

After this wonderful talk, the minister rose to thank the

Master and said to the congregation, ‘If anyone wishes to

shake hands with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he should come from one

side of the podium and leave by the other.’ The Master

stood near the pulpit and members of the audience ap-

proached Him with great respect and reverence. They

bowed, shook His hand and offered their thanks to Him.

Later the Master said, ‘The people in the church pressed

my hand to such a degree that it is now aching.’ In addition

to these public gatherings, from morning to evening people

from all walks of life came to the Master’s residence to visit

Him.

Monday, April 22, 1912

[Washington dc]

A meeting was held with the Bahá’ís.[[39]](#endnote-39) When the Master

arrived, the friends greeted Him with poems and songs

written in His praise. He spoke about the events during His

long travels, the union of peoples from the East and the

West, the greatness of this century and the appearance of

the Greatest Name. He concluded the meeting by chanting

a beautiful and moving prayer. The friends rushed to His

side; one shaking His hand, another holding onto the hem

of His robe and yet another shedding tears of joy and in

the utmost happiness. When the Master left the gathering,

the friends formed two rows as He passed through their

midst. He approached His automobile and again the

friends rushed towards Him like moths circling around the

candle of the Covenant.

In the afternoon, the Master spoke at another gathering

about the sinking of the *Titanic*.[[40]](#endnote-40) He prayed for the souls

of the passengers and expressed His condolences to their

survivors. In the evening, Mrs Parsons held a dinner in His

honor to which all the friends were invited.[[41]](#endnote-41) At the table,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

Consider the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty, what

He has done, how He has brought us to the house of such

a personage, who in the utmost love has prepared such a

feast in our honor. The power and influence of the Word

of God have united the East and the West! How perfect are

His heavenly favors and how all-embracing His divine

bounties!

Tuesday, April 23, 1912

[Washington dc]

Today the Master went to Howard University, an educa-

tional institution for blacks.[[42]](#endnote-42) The hosts (mostly black with

a few whites) had made special arrangements so that when

the Master arrived He was welcomed by music from a band

while the audience applauded with excitement and exuber-

ance. It is difficult to describe the scene adequately. The

president of the university was very cordial and introduced

‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the Prophet of Peace and the harbinger

of unity and salvation. Then the Master rose from His seat

and spoke on the subject of the harmony between blacks

and whites and the unity of humankind.[[43]](#endnote-43) The audience

repeatedly applauded Him during the talk, delighted at

His words. At the conclusion, the president of the university

thanked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on behalf of all those gathered. As

He left the auditorium, group after group formed two lines,

one on each side, all showing their highest respect by

bowing and waving their hats and handkerchiefs in farewell

to the beloved Master.[[44]](#endnote-44)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had lunch at the home of Ali Kuli Khan.

Several believers were present, including ourselves.[[45]](#endnote-45)

There was a public meeting in the afternoon at the same

house.[[46]](#endnote-46) The majority attending the meeting were ladies

from high society. At this meeting the Master spoke about

the education and improvement of women and the promo-

tion of unity and peace in the world of humanity.[[47]](#endnote-47) After

the meeting several new people arrived[[48]](#endnote-48) and sat for a brief

time in the Master’s presence. They so enjoyed His com-

pany they did not want to leave.

In the evening, close to bedtime, when the Master was

alone and extremely tired from the day’s activities, He

prayed, praising and thanking the Blessed Beauty. On one

occasion He said:

We must offer thanks to the Blessed Beauty because it is

His help that has stirred the people; it is His grace that has

changed the hearts. The assistance of the Abhá Kingdom

has transformed a drop into a mighty ocean. The aid of

the Most High has turned a gnat into an eagle, has in-

vested an ant with the power of a Solomon and has caused

the debased one to become a source of eternal honor.

A third meeting was held this evening in a black church.[[49]](#endnote-49)

All those present paid Him the highest respect and were

delighted to hear about the new teachings. The Master’s

talk, they felt, gave them honor and would cause them to

progress. As is customary at churches, there was a collection

and the Master made a contribution.

Wednesday, April 24, 1912

[Washington dc]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to a Bahá’í children’s

conference.[[50]](#endnote-50) As He entered the hall, the children sang

songs in praise of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in unison, accompanied by

the piano. When the Master saw the children, He said,

‘Praise be to God. These children, like flowers, are in a

state of utmost purity, freshness and delicacy!’ After He

spoke and recited prayers for the children, the Master

kissed and embraced each child and gave them some

sweets. The immensity of His love and affection for the

children was clearly obvious.

A second meeting[[51]](#endnote-51) was held that evening at the home

of Mr and Mrs Andrew J. Dyer, a mixed race couple.[[52]](#endnote-52)

Those present were in such unity and love that the Master

remarked:

Before I arrived, I felt too tired to speak at this meeting

but at the sight of such genuine love and attraction be-

tween the white and the black friends, I was so moved that

I spoke with great love and likened this union of different

colored races to a string of gleaming pearls and rubies.

After He spoke and showered His love on each one, He left

in His carriage for a third meeting.[[53]](#endnote-53)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was so filled with joy and happiness and

His voice resonated so loudly that even the people walking

along the street could hear Him:

O Bahá’u’lláh! What hast Thou done? O Bahá’u’lláh! May

my life be sacrificed for Thee! O Bahá’u’lláh! May my soul

be offered up for Thy sake! How full were Thy days with

trials and tribulations! How severe the ordeals Thou didst

endure! How solid the foundation Thou hast finally laid,

and how glorious the banner Thou didst hoist![[54]](#endnote-54)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá continued in this manner until the carriage

reached the home of Mr [Alexander Graham] Bell. This

great individual is the inventor of the telephone and the

head of a scientific society. The day before, this venerable

and inventive old gentleman had visited the Master and

invited Him to attend the meeting of the scientific society.

When the Master entered, all rose and each in turn shook

His hand. Those who had met the Master previously intro-

duced Him to the others with the greatest respect and

honor. After the Master was seated, discussion of scientific

issues continued. Each spoke of his experiences and dis-

cussed his discoveries. After several people had spoken, Mr

Bell asked Ali Kuli Khan, the Persian ambassador,[[55]](#endnote-55) to

relate the history of the Faith. Then Mr Bell thanked the

Master for coming to his home and asked Him to address

the guests.

The Master began His talk by praising their good man-

ners and praiseworthy qualities. He then spoke of the

importance and the results of science, the greatness of this

age and the interdependence of society, and paid a glori-

ous tribute to the new Dispensation. Mr Bell was extremely

delighted and rose to thank the Master for His talk. The

hearts of those present were so moved that when the next

member arose to give his talk, he could only say, ‘The talk

of the Master from the East was so wonderful that I find

myself inadequate to say anything’ and sat down. A few

others spoke briefly and the meeting ended.

Mr Bell invited the Master and his guests to go into the

dining hall. It was midnight, and as it is customary for

people in the West to eat late at night before going to bed,

the table was spread with bread, meat, candies, cookies,

fruit and beverages. Although the Master had not yet had

dinner, He spoke through Mr Bell to his wife and daugh-

ter. Mrs Bell is deaf and mute and communicates through

sign language. Sign language is similar to writing, with

lines, points and stops, just as in telegraph technology, and

is now so well developed that people can speak easily with

the deaf.

As is well known, Mr Bell’s main purpose was to invent

an instrument that would enable the deaf to communicate.

Out of his deep love for his wife, he devoted himself to this

day and night and in the end invented the telephone. But

this did not fulfill his intended purpose. The Master said:

Yes, most of the great inventions were made in a similar

way. For instance, the search for alchemy has brought into

being thousands of useful medicines and the desire of

finding a direct route to India from Europe became the

cause of the discovery of America.

Thursday, April 25, 1912

[Washington dc]

There was a special meeting for the Theosophists[[56]](#endnote-56) in the

morning. The Master spoke on the distinction and superi-

ority of human beings to the rest of creation, the various

faculties of the soul, the unity of God, the need for spiritual

progress and divine civilization. There were many guests

and after the Master’s talk some went into a private room

to ask Him personal questions. Another meeting was held

in the afternoon at the Master’s residence.[[57]](#endnote-57) As with the

other meetings, it was attended by the public. The living

room on the ground floor was filled to capacity. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá spoke on the importance and necessity of spiritual

teachings and their renewal in every age. He also discussed

the principles of this great Cause. After the talk, many

received permission to ask Him questions in an adjoining

room. Most of them first apologized, aware that He was

extremely tired, but said that just being in His presence was

for them their greatest joy and that to listen to Him was a

source of happiness and honor.

Today the Master said to Mrs Parsons:

Such a traveler and guest is the cause of much bother. You

need to leave the house and run away. The usual guest in

a city meets certain people at specific times but you have

had to host the public from morning until evening.

In the evening the Turkish Ambassador, his honor Ḍíyá

Páshá, invited the Master to a royal feast.[[58]](#endnote-58) Most of us were

also invited, as were many dignitaries, all of whom were

dressed in formal attire. The Master gave a short talk at the

table with the utmost majesty and beauty on the subject of

the influence of the words of the Manifestations of God and

their all-conquering power. The Ambassador then read

from a prepared statement written in praise of the Master

and presented it to Him:

The light of His honor’s quality and knowledge in this new

land and new world is now shining upon all peoples,

showering them with His encouragement and enlighten-

ment. He has suffered and sacrificed everything for the

purpose of disseminating good qualities for humanity. He

has now honored us by His presence. His Honor, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, is unique in our age and is highly esteemed and

treasured by all of us. With prayer to the Lord of the

worlds, I wish Him a long life and good health.

Ḍíyá Páshá

When the Ambassador completed his statement, the Master

spoke:

This night is a very blessed night, worthy of the utmost

praise and joy for many reasons. First, praise be to God,

we are in a country which is famous for its prosperity and

freedom. Second, we are in a house which is connected to

the great Ottoman Power. Third, we are the guests of His

Excellency the Ambassador who shines like the sun in the

world of morality. Fourth, this meeting provides a tangible

demonstration of the love and unity that is possible be-

tween the East and the West.

His Excellency the Ambassador is from the East, while

his wife is an American. Similarly, His Excellency the

Ambassador of Persia is from the nobility of the Orient,

while his wife is also an American. This is a proof that the

Orient and Occident can meet, love and unite. The great-

est wish of people of thought and broad vision and sound

understanding is the oneness and unity of humanity. This

reality was not so apparent in former times but in this

enlightened age which is the age of science and the prog-

ress of the world of humanity, this important fact has

become manifest through the help and assistance of God:

that all peoples are related, that all are from one family,

citizens of one country and one world. This is the century

of the oneness of the world of humanity and of the decline

and abrogation of the superstitions of past ages. Every

learned person is persuaded that this is the century for

oneness and unity and the time for fanciful prejudices to

fade away. We pray that misunderstandings among nations

may disappear completely so that it may be evident that

the foundation of all divine principles is the oneness of

mankind and that the real purpose of all divine Manifesta-

tions has been to educate humanity. Divine religions are

not the cause of dissension, nor do they beget enmity and

hatred, for the foundation of all of them is truth and truth

is one, it has no plurality.

The differences which we find are the results of imita-

tions. As the imitations vary one from another, they be-

come the cause of animosity and difference. The gloom

of these imitations has wholly obscured the Sun of Reality.

But, praise be to God, day by day these clouds are being

dispersed and dissipated; ere long, they shall be wholly

removed and the Sun of Reality shall be seen to shine most

brilliantly. The standard of the oneness of humanity will

be unfurled, the tabernacle of the universal peace will be

raised, and this world will become another world.

I thank His Excellency the Ambassador who brought

about this meeting of people of different nationalities in

his home. Such meetings, in truth, deserve much praise

and commendation.

At the close of the meeting the Ambassador again arose

to show his respect and appreciation. He accompanied

the Master to His carriage with the utmost humility and

esteem.

During these days, many dignitaries and important

people visited the Master. Even President [Theodore]

Roosevelt[[59]](#endnote-59) came, with humility and respect, especially to

see the Master.

Friday, April 26, 1912

[Washington dc]

In addition to the usual receptions at the home of Mrs

Parsons, there were three public meetings: one in the

morning, another in the afternoon and one in the evening.

At the first gathering, at the All Saints Unitarian Church,

the Master spoke on the subject of the varieties of light, the

effulgence of the Sun of Reality in its original essence, and

of the waiting souls with pure hearts who are like unto clear

spotless mirrors, whose eyes and ears become enlightened

by the appearance of the Sun of Reality.[[60]](#endnote-60) So great was the

respect and devotion of the audience that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

wrote in a cable He sent to the Orient: ‘Today three thou-

sand persons visited with the utmost harmony.’

At every gathering, whether for Bahá’ís or non-Bahá’ís,

several stenographers, as well as the Persian secretaries,

were in attendance. The English translations were pub-

lished soon after the address itself but the Persian originals

taken down by us verbatim had to be submitted to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá for correction. Because of His heavy schedule, He had

little time for this, so the originals were often delayed in

their publication.

The afternoon meeting was held at the home of Mrs

Parsons.[[61]](#endnote-61) The subject of the talk was the interpretation of

the Old Testament statement concerning the creation of

man in the image of God. At the conclusion ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

took His leave of the friends, promising to return to

Washington dc from Chicago. On hearing this, the friends

hastened to shake hands with Him and showed great

reverence and humility to Him, joyful that soon He would

return to their midst. After the meeting, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went

for a stroll in a park to recuperate.

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to a third gathering,

held in a very large building, to speak to a group of young

women from the suffrage movement.[[62]](#endnote-62) This was the largest

meeting held thus far and the most spacious and majestic

hall. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered a most impressive address

which He began by saying:

One of the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh is equality of rights for

men and women. When He promulgated this principle in

the Orient, the people were astonished.

One of the proofs of the advancement of women is

this magnificent and imposing building and this large

gathering.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk centered on the subject of equality of

men and women and the necessity of giving women the

same training as men. Many praised Him, both before and

after His talk. The meeting closed with a song of praise.

The chairman of the meeting, Mr Hoover from New

York, introduced the Master most eloquently. When

‘Abdu’l-Bahá came to the pulpit, He was received with a

standing ovation and a burst of enthusiasm. Then, with a

motion of His hand, all seated themselves.

As the Master arose to give His talk, everyone began to

clap so loudly that the sound echoed around the great hall.

Everyone was thrilled as the beloved Master stood and the

hearts of the believers were relieved of all grief and anxiety.

Indeed, the appearance of the Center of God’s Covenant

in these meetings is worthy of the highest praise and will

undoubtedly be of the greatest benefit to all. Instead of the

harsh treatment meted out to the Manifestations of God,

here was the advancement and elevation of the Cause of

God. To listen to the melodious, resonant voice of the

Center of the Covenant in such auditoriums fills one with

excitement and raises the banner of everlasting honor. The

presence of the Eastern friends was sorely missed.

At the end of the meeting, people again filled the room

to capacity so they could glimpse ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s beautiful

face and shake His hand.

Saturday, April 27, 1912

[Washington dc]

Mrs Parsons offered the Master a sum of money but He said

that she should distribute it among the poor. No matter

how much she supplicated, He would not accept it, saying,

‘If we had not had the money necessary for the expenses

of the voyage, we would have accepted your offer.’

The Treasurer of the United States had lunch with the

Master.[[63]](#endnote-63) This gentleman was very happy and smiling as

he bade farewell to the Master. Later, the Master went to

the home of an official to say goodbye. The man embraced

Him, weeping with joy. When I saw the smile of the Treas-

urer and the tears of the official, I recited this poem: ‘The

smiles and tears of the lovers are from another world.’

The Bahá’í meetings and the outstanding qualities of the

Master have received such acclaim that today, out of jeal-

ousy, some narrow-minded Christian clergymen spoke out

against the Cause.

Since this was the last night of the Master’s stay in the

this city, Mrs Parsons held an elegant reception for digni-

taries and city officials in honor of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and on

behalf of the Orient-Occident Unity Society.[[64]](#endnote-64) Three

hundred people in formal attire assembled in the spacious

rooms, which were beautifully decorated with flowers and

ornaments. When the Master came downstairs, each guest,

man and woman alike, approached Him with the utmost

reverence to shake His hand. They introduced one another

and paid Him their respects. The guests then went into the

dining room to partake of the repast prepared for them,

including beverages, cakes, ice cream and coffee.

After they had eaten the guests were ushered into the

music hall while the Master sat in another room to receive

those who wished to see Him. He answered all their ques-

tions. To a Washington judge He said: ‘It is possible to

establish among the powers of the whole world the unity

which is found among the states of the United States of

America.’ To some doctors He stated, ‘I hope that you will

raise the standard of universal peace.’ To a mathematician

He said, ‘I hope that you will try to teach the truth and

principles of divine religions to different nations just as you

are teaching mathematics to different persons in your

school.’ To Admiral Peary, the explorer of the North Pole,

He said, ‘I hope you will discover the mysteries of the

Kingdom of God.’[[65]](#endnote-65) The Master spoke to a bishop, saying,

‘My hope is that you will abandon harmful imitations,

spread the truth of the teachings of Christ and remove all

those dogmas that are against science and reality.’ To the

*chargé d’affaires* of Switzerland, the Master described His

sojourn in that country. To some relatives of the President

of the United States [William Howard Taft] He spoke about

divine civilization. To a member of Congress, He said, ‘Just

as you are exerting yourself for the good of America, so

must you expend your energy for the benefit of all the

nations of the world.’ He also spoke to the head of the

United States Patent Office and the General Consul, the

President of the Peace Congress and other well-known

personages.

When this magnificent meeting ended, the guests came

to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá one by one to shake His hand and to

say goodbye. The night was one of the most blessed nights

and that meeting one of the most great and important

meetings.

Sunday, April 28, 1912

[Washington dc, en route to Chicago]

The Master prepared to leave for Chicago. Among those

who came to see Him was the ambassador of Great Brit-

ain,[[66]](#endnote-66) who was very humble and reverent while in His

presence. Many friends, believers and seekers were with

‘Abdu’l-Bahá until His departure at 5:30 p.m. As He was

leaving He said to Mrs Parsons:

This was the springtime; we had good meetings at your

home; I shall never forget them. I shall pray for divine

confirmation for you that you may be assisted both materi-

ally and spiritually. This material world has an outward

appearance, as it has also an inner reality. All created

things are interlinked in a chain leading to spirituality and

ultimately ending in abstract realities. I hope that these

spiritual links will become stronger day by day and that

this communication of hearts, which is termed inspiration,

will continue. When this connection exists, bodily separa-

tion is not important; this condition is beyond the world

of words and above all description.

To others He said, ‘I hope these meetings of ours will bring

forth everlasting results. The greatest of all benefits is the

oneness of humanity and universal peace.’

Some friends came to the railway station to see ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá off and to gaze once more at the Master’s beautiful

countenance.[[67]](#endnote-67) Some were to accompany Him to Chicago.

Among them was Mrs Moss, a stenographer, who had

requested a Persian name and was given the name Marzieh

Khánum.

After crossing the Potomac River, the train entered the

state of Virginia, which is exceedingly fertile and green.

The scenery on both sides was charming, with a verdant

expanse of land as far as the eye could see. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

praised the scenery and said it was most beautiful but His

face showed signs of an inner sorrow. After a few minutes

He said, ‘Whenever I see such scenes, I feel great sorrow,

for the Blessed Beauty liked verdure and greenery very

much. God shall never pardon those who imprisoned Him

in that place.’[[68]](#endnote-68)

The conversation then turned to the train. The Master

praised the sleeping car room, the cleanliness of the com-

partments and the electric lights in them; however, owing

to the speed of the train, the Master was not able to sleep.

Monday, April 29, 1912

[Chicago]

In the morning the Master again praised the beauty and

fertility of the countryside; a more fertile land had never

before been seen. He had breakfast in the dining car.

Today He spoke mostly about the days of the Blessed

Beauty and had Him constantly in mind.

The train reached Chicago at night.[[69]](#endnote-69) The city was so

bright with lights it was as though it were the Feast of

Lights. When the friends saw the Master at the train sta-

tion, they were filled with excitement, crying out ‘Alláh-u-

Abhá’ and ‘Yá ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’, their voices resounding

throughout the station.

The Master went to the Plaza Hotel. After a brief rest,

He was visited by some of the Bahá’ís, to whom He said:

You have a good city. The call of God was first raised in

this city. I hope that in Chicago the Cause of God will

progress greatly and that it may be illumined by the light

of the Kingdom just as it is brightened by electricity.

In Washington we always had audiences of one to two

thousand in large meetings. Day and night I had no rest.

A close friendship was created between the black and white

people. Many came to the Faith. Even those who are not

believers drew much closer. Notwithstanding all this, I like

Chicago more because the call of Bahá’u’lláh was first

raised in this city. I hope you will be assisted to do great

service and to live together in the utmost love and har-

mony.

When the believers begged for protection from tests and

trials, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to them:

The severest tests were in Persia where properties were

pillaged and the friends were martyred. They had not a

moment’s security. In short, I had a great desire to see you.

If I hadn’t this desire, the assistance of Bahá’u’lláh would

not have encompassed me. It is His assistance that has

brought me here, for, at the time of leaving Alexandria,

when I boarded the ship, I was not well at all.

Some newspaper reporters telephoned, asking permission

to interview the Master. He agreed that they could inter-

view Him the following morning. After dinner, He looked

out at the park and, gazing at the scenery before Him, said,

‘This building commands a good view; most of the parks,

streets and the city’s lights can be seen.’

Tuesday, April 30, 1912

[Chicago]

Several friends and inquirers gathered in one of the rooms

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s suite and went in two or three at a time

to speak with Him through an interpreter. Each returned

transformed, soaring high in the atmosphere of happiness

and joy. A few newspaper reporters were announced and

He addressed them:

We believe Bahá’u’lláh to be the supreme educator of

humanity. When the gloom of contention was spread over

the Orient; when the nations of the East were steeped in

enmity and hatred; when its religious sects shunned one

another, denouncing one another as impure, and the

people were ever engaged in war and the shedding of

blood, Bahá’u’lláh appeared as the sun from the horizon

of the East and summoned all to fellowship and harmony.

He devoted Himself to their education and upliftment. He

guided people from all nations and religions, cemented

different denominations and united diverse nationalities

to such an extent that if you attend their meetings you

cannot say who is a Jew, who is a Muslim, who is a Parsi

or who is a Christian. The despotic king of Persia with the

legions of his ‘ulamá [Muslim clergymen] arose against

Him and inflicted the severest persecution upon Him.

They imprisoned Bahá’u’lláh and killed His followers. The

oppression intensified to such a degree that all those who

dared obey Bahá’u’lláh would lose life and property. But

with all this, they could not resist Him; His teachings

spread more and more. Then His persecutors exiled Him

to Baghdád, whence He was sent to Rumelia[[70]](#endnote-70) and finally

to the penal city of ‘Akká. He passed away in that city. I

myself was in the same prison until the declaration of

liberty by the Committee of Union and Progress when all

prisoners were set free.

As to the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, they are, first, the

investigation of truth. The fundamental principle of all the

Prophets is Truth. Truth is one. Abraham was the promul-

gator of truth; Moses was the servant of truth; Christ laid

down the cornerstone of truth; Muḥammad was the propa-

gator of truth; the Báb was the herald of truth; and

Bahá’u’lláh was the light of truth. Truth is the foundation

of all the divine religions and is one. In truth there is no

dissension. Imitations are different and are a cause of

dissension and division. If people investigate truth and set

aside imitations, all the nations will unite, for there exists

no difference in religious truth; the differences lie in

imitations only.

The second principle of Bahá’u’lláh is the unity of

mankind. Bahá’u’lláh proclaims that all are the servants

of one God; He has created all and provides for and

sustains all. All are immersed in the ocean of His mercy

and God is kind to all. Why should we be unkind to one

another? We must follow the polity of God. Can we con-

ceive a better polity than that of God?

The third principle He gave us is the harmony of

science and religion. Both science and religion are truth.

If religion is against reality and truth it is mere supersti-

tion. Every religious tenet that conflicts with true knowl-

edge and sound reasoning is not worthy of belief. Thus the

dogmas and imitations that stand in the way of science and

progress must be removed.

The fourth principle is that religion must be the cause

of unity, it must connect hearts to one another. Christ and

all the other divine messengers came to create unity and

love. Therefore, if religion becomes the cause of differ-

ences, its nonexistence is preferable.

The fifth principle is that all religious, racial, patriotic

and political prejudices are the causes of war and the

destroyers of the edifice of humanity. All these must be

discarded and abolished.

The sixth principle is Universal Peace. Humanity must

achieve this peace. Until its light illumines the decisions

of the leaders and governments of the world, humanity will

find no rest.

The seventh principle is the equality of rights for men

and women. The education of women must be equal to

that of men so that they may advance and achieve the

same status as men. Teachings of this kind are numerous.

In addition to the visits of large numbers of people at the

hotel both day and night, three large meetings were held,

attended by almost three thousand people, all of whom

were honored to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The first meeting was

held at Hull House and was attended by both blacks and

whites.[[71]](#endnote-71) The Master spoke on the subject of the unity and

oneness of humanity; that God has given faculties and

powers equally to all and that the different colors of hu-

mankind are like the various colors of the flowers of a

garden, which increases the beauty and charm of the

garden. His eloquent and impressive talk thrilled His

listeners.

There exists among the whites in America a marked

animosity for the blacks, who are held in such low esteem

that the whites do not allow them to attend their public

functions and think it beneath their dignity to mix with

them in some of the public buildings and hotels. One day,

Dr Zia Bagdadi invited Mr [Louis] Gregory, a black Bahá’í,

to his home. When his landlord heard about this, he gave

notice to Dr Bagdadi to vacate his residence because he had

had a black man in his home. Although such prejudice was

intense, the influence of the Cause of God and the power

of God’s Covenant is so great that in many cities in America

hundreds of black and white Bahá’ís mingle together and

associate with each other as brothers and sisters.

Another meeting was held at Handel Hall especially to

bring together the blacks and the whites.[[72]](#endnote-72) The Master

offered a commentary on a verse from the Old Testament,

‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’: ‘By

“image and likeness”’, He said, ‘is meant human virtues

and perfections and not the black or white color of the

skin.’ The Master’s impressive talk transformed and deeply

affected the gathering.

The Master then went to a third meeting, addressing

some two thousand people at the Convention of the Bahá’í

Temple Unity[[73]](#endnote-73) held at the spacious Drill Hall. The entire

audience stood when the Master entered, even though not

all were Bahá’ís. The friends were full of excitement and

cried ‘Alláh-u-Abhá’ so loudly that the hall resounded with

their voices.

After a song of praise and glorification, the Master gave

a detailed and eloquent talk on the purpose of the Temple

and the unification of all under one standard. He con-

cluded His talk by chanting a prayer in Persian in a most

melodious voice. Some of those attending the convention

met Him outside and asked whether they could visit Him

at His residence. The crowd gathered around Him until He

got into His carriage.

Wednesday, May 1, 1912

[Chicago]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá looked at some buildings

from His balcony and enjoyed the lovely view of the park.

He spoke to us, until visitors arrived, about the early days

of the Most Great Prison and the sufferings of the Blessed

Beauty. He sent several telegrams today to the assemblies

of the East, sharing with them the glad tidings of the

assistance of Bahá’u’lláh.

He spoke with the friends for a time and bestowed upon

them His love. About an hour later He went to the pro-

posed site of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár[[74]](#endnote-74) located outside the

city, where property had been purchased for the construc-

tion of this great building. By the time He arrived the

friends had already assembled and had pitched a large tent

for the meeting.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá first drove around the site, inspecting its

boundaries, and then entered the tent. The friends stood

all about Him, their eyes intently fixed on His luminous

face. It was in these circumstances that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave

His talk on the power of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh to unite

the people of the East and the West beneath the shadow

of the Word of God. He also spoke about the Mashriqu’l-

Adhkárs of ‘Ishqábád and America.[[75]](#endnote-75) He then went to the

spot where He was to lay the cornerstone with His own

hands. Miss Holmes presented Him with a golden trowel

especially prepared for the occasion. He took it in His hand

and dug the earth for the foundation stone.[[76]](#endnote-76) Then the

delegates from the American assemblies, followed by

representatives of the Eastern friends, each took the trowel

and continued digging the foundation. Among them were

Mihtar Ardishír Bahrám Surúsh representing the Bahá’ís

of Pársí background,[[77]](#endnote-77) Siyyid Asadu’lláh representing the

Bahá’ís of Muslim origin, Zia Bagdadi representing the

Arabian friends and Ghodsieh (Qudsíyyih) Khánum Ashraf

representing the Bahá’í women of the East. When the

digging was completed, the Master set the stone in place

with His own hand.[[78]](#endnote-78) He then showered His love and

affection on the friends and left the site. Most of the friends

remained and had lunch inside the tent.

There was a reception at the Plaza Hotel later that

afternoon at which the Master spoke on divine civilization

and spiritual qualities.[[79]](#endnote-79) Both before and after the meeting

friends and inquirers requested interviews and asked Him

questions on several subjects.

Thursday, May 2, 1912

[Chicago]

From morning until noon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá received successive

waves of visitors, both friends and inquirers, in His private

room. When the numbers grew too large, He went into the

outer room and spoke to the visitors about unity, fellowship

and the importance of overcoming hatred and enmity. He

began by saying:

The object of my undertaking such a long journey with all

its inconveniences has been to bring about spiritual illumi-

nation in the Occident, for the Occident has great capacity

and its people are less fettered by vain imaginings and

imitations. Lofty ideals find a quick acceptance among

them and today the loftiest ideal of all is devotion to the

unity of mankind and universal peace.

In the afternoon there were two public meetings at the

LaSalle Hotel. One was for the Federation of Women’s

Clubs[[80]](#endnote-80) and the other for the Unitarian congregation.[[81]](#endnote-81)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s first talk was on education and the rights of

women and in the latter He spoke about human powers

and gave proofs of the existence of God. Both talks were

so impressive, charming and attractive that all the friends

from the East and West offered thanks and glorification to

the Abhá Kingdom, with smiles on their faces that were like

roses in bloom.

Back at the Plaza Hotel, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá responded to

questions about the differences in capacities and talents

among people, saying:

Souls possess two types of capacity: one is derived from

innate powers and the other is acquired through the

education imparted by the Teacher of the world of human-

ity. The development of innate capacity is completely

dependent on education and on man’s own exertions. In

other words, innate capacity is not realized without educa-

tion and exertion on the part of man and its perfection

demands effort and training.

Question: ‘How should one associate with people of bad

character?’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

This, too, has two aspects. There are certain evils whose

consequences affect the doer only and do not extend to

others. Of course, with discretion and tact, we must try to

warn and educate wrongdoers. They are sick; we must

bring healing to them. But there are actions which are

injurious to others. Association with persons who commit

such deeds leads to a deterioration of morals and therefore

to mingle with them is not advisable, except for persons

of perfect integrity, who can also impart education. They

should be exhorted to exert themselves to modify their

morals and refine their behavior. The public should be

protected from such harmful conduct by the institutions

which administer justice. Thus, in the Tablets of the

Blessed Beauty, although He commends association with

people of all religions and races, He also forbids fellow-

ship with the wicked, admonishing us to shun the people

of negation and denial.

Several learned men, scientists, engineers and government

officials visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá today.

Friday, May 3, 1912

[Chicago]

From early morning friends and inquirers visited ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá in twos and threes, all profusely offering their thanks

and praise for the favors they had received from Him.

Today the members of an association of Indians residing

in Chicago, who had previously attended ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

receptions, arrived as one body and after obtaining His

permission, read Him an address of welcome:

From the Society of Indians Residing in Chicago to His

Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás. In the Name of God!

We, the members of the Society of Indians Residing in

Chicago welcome you to this country. The Cause that has

brought your Excellency to this country is most surely a

source of honor and grace to us. Asia has always been the

dawning-place of religions: Muḥammad, Christ, Buddha

and Confucius were born in that enlightened continent;

and we confidently believe that at this time, too, Asia will

again usher in the universal principles of accord. The

Bahá’í Cause, like the Cause of the Buddha, will be a

source of uniting nations and will be a fulfillment of the

teachings of our forefathers. Although Asia presently is in

a state of backwardness, we console ourselves with the

thought that although we are lacking in material progress,

yet, concerning spirituality, we are the pride of the world.

We feel happy when we realize that through your

Excellency, the means for the acquisition of Western arts

and sciences will become available for those in the East

and that the youth of Persia will come to these parts to

acquire material knowledge and broaden their thinking

and will return to their homes to benefit their brothers and

sisters in the East on the road to progress.

Further, we believe that our country, India, will greatly

benefit from a visit from your Excellency. The lack of unity

between the Hindus and Muslims has kept them in the

utmost contention and strife. As your Excellency’s teach-

ings are very much like the teachings of our religious

leaders, they will undoubtedly unite them and make these

contending nations one. We are certain that you will

receive the same warmth and honor in India as here in

America.

We pray to God to give your Excellency long life so that

you may be enabled to convey your message to all man-

kind.

We are, most beloved Master, your sincere friends, the

members of the Society of Indians Residing in Chicago.

More people gathered, forming a large group. The Master

gave a public talk at the hotel on the gradual weakening

of man’s physical and material powers and the effect on

man of divine civilization and spiritual education. All were

struck with the charm of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s expression and the

power of His argument. They openly expressed their

conviction that the true salvation of the world of humanity

lay in following the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. The address

by the Society of Indians and the testimony of others are

examples for the fair-minded of the degree of attachment

and attraction of the people, just as ‘a drop expresses

oceans’.

In the evening the Bahá’ís consulted. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent

us there and later joined us. He spoke briefly to the meet-

ing but on the subject of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár, the Master

said, ‘I will not discuss this matter. It is the business of the

consultative assembly.’ Later He added: ‘If I were to speak

about the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár, it would have to be built at

once.’

In the early evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a very eloquent

and impressive address to the Theosophical Society,[[82]](#endnote-82)

which fascinated the audience, especially the members of

the society.

Some of the friends had asked whether they could take

photographs of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Several photographs were

therefore taken in the park across from the hotel by Mr

[Albert C.] and Mrs Killius, two of the devoted believers.

In one of the photographs ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is standing with

a flower in His hand. In another He is with His entourage

and in the third He is standing among the believers. Al-

though photographs of the Master had been taken in other

cities, these are better and more lifelike.

Saturday, May 4, 1912

[Chicago]

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in Chicago was drawing to a close,

there were numerous meetings and receptions. In the

morning some clergymen visited Him in His hotel room.

At the usual daily reception, He spoke about the three

kingdoms of nature and the need for comprehensive

education. He then went to the Plymouth Congregational

Church, which was magnificent and most beautifully deco-

rated. Its rector, Dr [Joseph A.] Milburn,[[83]](#endnote-83) had seen the

Master several times and was greatly attracted to Him. After

the customary service, the rector introduced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

Having heard of the teachings and the peerless qualities

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, I arranged to leave for ‘Akká. Then I was

informed that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Himself, was coming to

America. Now God has endowed us with a great blessing

that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has graced us with His presence here.

He then went on to give a detailed history and teachings

of the Cause and introduced the Master as the Herald of

Peace and the Son of God, ‘Abbás Effendi.

As the Master approached the pulpit, the congregation

rose to their feet, and although they were in church, they

greeted Him with prolonged applause and cheers of joy.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá called them to order then spoke about the

manifestation of the center of illumination and the Sun of

Truth which appears at different times at different points

of the zodiac, thus illustrating the renewal of religions and

the unity of the Messengers and the Holy Books. At the end

of His talk He chanted a prayer in Persian in a melodious

voice.

The hearts of the listeners were so attracted that the

church seemed to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The people

crowded around ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the extent such that it

became difficult for the Master and His companions to

leave. Groups of people surrounded Him to shake His

hand and to ask for His blessing. The most surprising thing

about these meetings was that although most of the people

had never before heard of the Bahá’í teachings, they were

so attracted and fascinated that they would follow the

Master in their cars from one meeting to another.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had lunch at the home of Dr Forde and

after meeting with a few people, He left for the hotel,

saying, ‘Let us walk for a while, and then take the tram.’

Our host and some of us suggested that the distance was

great and pointed out that Mr Forde’s car was available. At

our insistence, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rode in the car but as it twice

punctured its tires, He took the tram.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived at the hotel, many people

were already waiting for Him. He answered their questions,

for which they were filled with gratitude. One person asked

him about the future affairs of Asia and the countries in the

East. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a detailed answer:

No progress is possible except through the power of the

Holy Spirit and the Cause of God. Each of the Manifesta-

tions of God appeared amongst a nation and in a country

which outwardly had no means of salvation or progress.

But no sooner had those nations come under the shelter

of the Cause of God than they excelled all the civilized

countries of the world. Today, whichever nation raises the

standard of the oneness of humanity and comes under the

shelter of this divine power will ultimately lead the whole

world.

Question: ‘What is the difference between the Bahá’í reli-

gion and the other religions of the world?’

The foundation of all the religions is one and this founda-

tion is truth. In this respect there is no difference between

either the divine religions or their Founders. The subsid-

iary laws that pertain to the affairs of society differ. These

social laws are subject to the demands of time and place,

so they are modified in each age.

Question: ‘What are evil and bad qualities?’

There is no evil in the world of existence; rather, evil is the

absence of goodness just as darkness is the absence of

light.

Speaking of the exigencies of the material world and its

creation, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

It [the world of creation] calls for change and transforma-

tion. Without change there can be no composition or

development. Change and transformation, decomposition

and composition produce opposites. In the realm of

reality, however, there are no opposites. Consider the

world of the sun, which has neither darkness nor east and

west. But owing to the exigencies of this world, there is

night and day, light and darkness.

After answering these questions, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went with

Mrs [Corinne] True and other friends to a Chicago ceme-

tery to offer prayers for the departed.[[84]](#endnote-84)

In the early evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the All-Souls

Church.[[85]](#endnote-85) A great excitement was also created among the

people of this church. His eloquent address, given in sweet

and melodious tones, concerned the missions of the Divine

Manifestations of God and the peace and unity of human-

ity. He concluded His talk with a detailed account of the

Most Great Manifestation, Bahá’u’lláh, and the influence

of His exalted Word.

After members of the audience came to Him to shake

His hand and express their thanks and devotion, He went

to the home of Dr Milburn, the rector of the Congrega-

tional Church. There He gave a most impressive and

eloquent talk on the benefits of peace and harmony and

the harm caused by war and strife. He discussed the requi-

sites for prosperity and the unity of humankind. It was the

last night of His stay and the effect of His words was so

deep and far-reaching that it is beyond description.

Sunday, May 5, 1912

[Chicago]

As it was the last day of the Master’s stay, there was much

commotion among the friends visiting the Master’s apart-

ment. A large number of Bahá’ís and their children had

gathered in the hotel’s salon.[[86]](#endnote-86) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá embraced and

kissed each child with love and kindness. Giving them

flowers and sweets, He said to them:

According to Christ you are the children of the Kingdom

and according to Bahá’u’lláh, the candles of the world of

man, for your hearts are in the utmost purity and your

spirits are sanctified. You are not soiled with the things of

this world. Your hearts are pure and clean like the mirror.

Your parents must bring you up with great kindness and

must educate you in morals and praiseworthy attributes

so that the virtues of the world of man may be exemplified

perfectly in your characters and conduct, that you may

progress in all fields of endeavor, may acquire knowledge

of the arts and sciences, and may become the cause of the

manifestation of eternal bounties and universal advance-

ment.

Then addressing the entire assembly, He said:

I am going, but you must rise up to serve the Cause of

God. Endeavor to keep your hearts sanctified and your

intentions pure so that you may attract divine bounties.

Remember, although the sun shines equally on all things,

yet in the mirror its effulgence is intense, and not in the

dark stone. The cause of this intensity and heat in the glass

is its purity; without purity and cleanliness, these effects

would never appear in it. Similarly, if rain fall on barren

land, it produces nothing, but if it fall on pure fertile land,

it makes it verdant and causes it to yield a harvest. This

is the day in which only pure and chaste hearts can derive

benefit from the eternal bounties and only pious souls can

receive light from the ever-existent splendors. Praise be

to God that ye believe in God, have faith in His words and

are turned to His Kingdom. You have heard the voice of

God and your hearts are delighted with the breezes of the

Abhá paradise. Your intentions are good; your object is the

will of God; and your desire is to render service to the

Kingdom of God.

Therefore, you must gird up your loins with unswerving

determination, you must be united among yourselves and

you must not be irritated by one another. Your eyes must

be turned always to the kingdom of God and not to the

world of man. You must love His creation for His sake and

not for your own. When you love one another for the sake

of God you shall never be perturbed. No human being is

perfect, every person has some flaw. If you look to your

fellowman you will always be upset; but if you look to God

it shall not be so, because the world of God is a world of

perfection and endless mercy; therefore, you will love and

show kindness to all for His sake. You must not look to the

faults of others; you must look with the eye of forgiveness

and pardon. The eye that regards faults sees nothing but

faults and the eye that overlooks faults is fixed on the

Creator of the souls. It is He Who has created all, has

nurtured all, has endowed all with life and spirit and has

given to all eyes and ears. Thus all are the signs of His

power and for His sake we must love all, and show kind-

ness to all, assist the poor, render help to the weak, heal

the sick and educate the ignorant.

It is my desire that the union and harmony of the

friends of Chicago may be an example for all the friends

in America and that all creation may derive benefit from

their behavior; that they may lead all. Then and only then

shall the confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom and the

bounties of the Sun of Reality encircle you.

Monday, May 6, 1912

[Chicago – Cleveland]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Chicago for Cleveland in the morning.

As He was leaving, Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís surrounded

Him like moths around a light, their hearts burning with

thoughts of separation and tears flowing from their eyes.

The train reached Cleveland in the afternoon.[[87]](#endnote-87) Many

friends and newspaper reporters were at the station to

welcome Him. The reporters photographed Him with His

companions and asked for an interview.

After making arrangements at the Euclid Hotel for His

stay, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave the reporters permission to visit.

He gave them an account of the history and teachings of

the Cause. One of them questioned Him about His mission.

He replied:

My message is the oneness of humanity and universal

peace; the harmony of true science and religion; the

equality of rights; the elimination of religious, racial and

political prejudices; the truth of all the divine religions;

the removal of religious imitations and superstitions; the

education of women to such a degree that they may have

equal rights with men; the adjustment of the economic

condition of all people so that if a rich man enjoys honor

and affluence, the poor man may also have a mat to lie on

and a house to dwell in; the establishment of spiritual

civilization; the reformation of human morals; the unity

of all religions, so that when the people of the world

recognize the truth of all religions, they may become

united since truth is one—if they follow imitation, war and

dissension shall remain, because imitations are the cause

of differences.

After an hour, He left the hotel for Dr Swingle’s home for

a meeting with the Bahá’ís.[[88]](#endnote-88) After He had some tea, He

entered a room that was filled to capacity. He spoke to the

friends about the prosperity of America and the perfecting

of material civilization with spiritual refinement, the rising

of the Sun of Truth, the raising of the divine call and

spreading the teachings of God. The friends were deeply

moved and full of admiration. Through their meeting with

Him, they had found new life. At the beginning of the

meeting, a photograph was taken of Him with His compan-

ions and some of the friends.

In the evening, the auditorium of the Euclid Hotel was

full and there was standing room only.[[89]](#endnote-89) About five hun-

dred Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís were enchanted by His

charm and speech. The meeting began and ended with

music. The audience was most appreciative of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s talk on the necessity of religion, the dangers of war

and the benefits of love, unity and harmony.

Tuesday, May 7, 1912

[Cleveland – Pittsburgh]

Early in the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá received newspapers

giving news of His arrival, His addresses and the meetings

of the Bahá’ís, and describing the respect shown to Him,

each report having a photograph of Him taken with us.

Shortly afterwards He received a letter from a dignitary

of the city, who stated that after reading the newspapers

and reflecting on the teachings of the Cause, he was con-

vinced of its truth and greatness and wished to submit to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá a statement of his conviction and recognition

of the Faith.

We left Cleveland at 8:00 a.m., arriving in Pittsburgh

around noon. The friends in Pittsburgh, who had been

informed by telegram of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival, were wait-

ing at the station. When the train pulled in, they were

overjoyed to see Him and followed Him to the Hotel

Schenley where He was staying.

After an hour’s brief rest, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá received many

people who had been invited by the friends to meet Him.

Some were leaders of the Jewish community who invited

Him to address their congregations. However, owing to a

previous commitment at the Peace Congress in New York

City, He was not able to accept their invitation.

There was a large meeting in the evening at the hotel

for the friends in Pittsburgh.[[90]](#endnote-90) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on the

teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, His address ending with these

words: ‘The East must acquire material civilization from the

West and the West must learn divine civilization from the

East.’ Everyone expressed their appreciation of the teach-

ings with the utmost sincerity.

A little later a group of philosophers, doctors and jour-

nalists met with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He spoke to them in detail

about composition and decomposition and the diagnosis

of disease:

If one is fully cognizant of the reason for the incursion of

disease and can determine the balance of elements, he can

cure diseases by administering the food that can restore

the normal level of the deficient element. In this way there

will be no need for medicines and other difficulties will not

arise.

After a detailed discussion of this subject, He asked them,

‘Although animals do not know the science of medicine,

why, when they are sick, do they abstain instinctively from

what is injurious to them and eat foods that are beneficial,

while man, when ailing, inclines more to that which is

injurious to him?’ They had no answer to this question and

stated that the Master knew the answer better than they.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then gave a description of the extraordi-

nary power of the world of humanity and the freedom of

man from the limitations of nature:

Since man’s attention is not confined to one interest, his

negligence is greater; while his comprehension is greater

than that of all other creatures when it is focused and fixed

on one subject.

Thus did the Master speak to the group of journalists,

philosophers and doctors, who thanked Him for His dis-

course.

Wednesday, May 8, 1912

[Pittsburgh – Washington dc]

Early in the morning, as the Master was having tea, prepa-

rations were underway to continue our journey. We

received copies of some of the newspapers carrying ac-

counts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit and His explanations of the

most intricate problems of life and the influence that the

Cause had had in that city. Every day the call of the Cause

of God was awakening the inhabitants of Cleveland and

Pittsburgh who had been asleep on the bed of negligence

and this was increasingly reported.

The time for the Peace Congress, which the Master had

promised to attend, was fast approaching. He moved like

lightning from place to place and at each He tore asunder

the veils of vain imaginings. In a very short time He accom-

plished many great tasks. Because the meetings in these

cities had been scheduled in advance, several were held in

one day and thousands of people were attracted and trans-

formed by Him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Pittsburgh at 9:00 a.m. and at 9:00

p.m. the friends in Washington dc, who were anxiously

awaiting His arrival at the railway station, were overjoyed

to see Him.[[91]](#endnote-91) At every stop He had been shown such great

respect that it was like the bowing and bending of the

cypress trees, demonstrating the power of the spiritual

springtime and the tranquillity and flourishing of the

garden of humanity. After lunch on the train, some of the

friends pleaded with Him to secure a cabin that He might

sleep and get some rest. He replied: ‘I make certain expen-

ditures only to help people and to serve the Cause of God;

and since my childhood I have never liked distinctions.’ He

spoke for some time on this subject and warned us against

making such personal distinctions.

When the Master arrived in Washington dc He was

driven to a house especially rented for Him at 14 Harvard

Street,[[92]](#endnote-92) which was near Mrs Parsons’ home. Joining us

today were Dr Zia Bagdadi of Chicago, the son of Muham-

mad Mustafa Bagdadi, and Mírzá Ahmad Sohrab of Wash-

ington dc, both of whom were given the tasks of translating

and writing.

The Master spoke today about the meaning of the

prophecies and signs of the Day of the Manifestation of

God:

Through their ignorance of these meanings people have

always remained veiled from the manifestations of the

bounties of Him Who is the Causer of Causes. Although

in the divine scriptures mention is made of a heaven and

an earth other than the physical heaven and earth, yet they

have interpreted these signs literally and have deprived

themselves of spiritual worlds and divine knowledge.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then went to Mrs Parsons’ home where He

spoke about the teachings on economics to the friends, who

were extremely pleased with His explanation.

Thursday, May 9, 1912

[Washington dc]

There was a continuous going and coming of visitors at the

Master’s house from morning until noon. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had

lunch at Mrs Parsons’, where in the afternoon He received

many people. In the evening He addressed a well-attended

meeting, speaking on the principles and tenets of the Faith

and counseling the friends to pay no attention to those who

objected to the Cause. As the fame of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the

Cause spread, certain narrow-minded ministers had, out

of jealously, raised their voices in opposition. At the end

of the meeting the Master said:

Although I pay great respect to the feelings of people

in order that they may not run away or make the least

objection, yet the religious ministers of Washington have

denounced us.

Then He said:

The denunciation by the leaders of religion is a proof of

the greatness and influence of the Cause because no one

pays any attention to something insignificant.

Today various clergymen invited the Master to honor their

churches by addressing their congregations. He told them

that He was unable to accept because He had limited time

but that He would be returning to Washington dc.

Friday, May 10, 1912

[Washington dc]

Several distinguished people came to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in

the morning. After a private interview involving lengthy

questions and answers, He spoke in detail on the preemi-

nence and progress of this century and the decrease in the

tendency of people to blindly follow tradition.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to a gathering of

distinguished women on the rights and education of

women. Later, after a drive in the park, He visited a home

for the poor which had been established through the efforts

of Mrs [Alice Barney-] Hemmick. In the evening, He spoke

about the influence of the Cause of God, the spiritual power

of Bahá’u’lláh, ending His talk with loving exhortations to

the Bahá’ís.

The Master dined at the home of Mrs Hemmick and

Mme Dreyfus-Barney. Everyone was delighted to be in His

presence and floated in a sea of happiness until late at

night listening to His loving admonitions and exhorta-

tions.[[93]](#endnote-93)

Saturday, May 11, 1912

[Washington dc – New York]

The Master made preparations to leave for New York.

Some people who had not been able to see Him previously

came to visit and He spoke to them about His journey and

the spreading of universal peace, which is one of the

commandments of Bahá’u’lláh.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left for the railway station, where several

believers were waiting to bid Him farewell. They were

down-hearted at being separated from their Beloved, who

had showered them with such kindness and blessings.[[94]](#endnote-94)

In New York, the friends who were waiting for the

Master took Him to the Hudson building on Riverside

Drive where He was to stay.[[95]](#endnote-95) He said to them:

We went to Chicago and Washington and now we have

come back again. Time passed very pleasantly. The people

of America are highly accomplished. They desire to ac-

quire understanding and they wish to make progress.

When one sees a tree growing, one should feel hopeful

that it will give flowers and bring forth fruits. People asked

questions and on hearing the answers they contended no

more. Most of the ministers who came would express

agreement. Those who asked us questions on important

topics were delighted on hearing the answers. The reli-

gious leaders of other countries are not so inclined but are

more bent on contention. We met very good ministers in

Chicago. Some invited us to their churches and we had

lengthy conversations with them. One of them, Dr

Milburn, invited us to supper at his home. My purpose in

mentioning all this is to convey that all showed agreement

and acceptance.

Just yesterday we spoke in Washington with a number

of notable persons, judges, and also a friend of Roose-

velt.[[96]](#endnote-96) As we were talking about the unifying influence of

different religions, and concord among nations, this friend

said that Christ was a source of differences. But when we

explained to him the coming together of different nations

under the canopy of the word of Christ, he smiled and

accepted the point. Others, too, expressed great delight.

When I asked him if he had any other question or objec-

tion, he replied that he had none at all. When asked if he

accepted all these statements, he said, ‘All right.’[[97]](#endnote-97)

When the Master spoke the words ‘all right’ in English, the

friends were amused and a ripple of laughter went around

the room. He then spoke about the unification of the blacks

and whites of America.[[98]](#endnote-98)

That evening at a public reception at His home, ‘Abdu’l

Bahá spoke about the divine favors bestowed on the people

of Bahá and encouraged the friends to be grateful for such

bestowals and blessings.

Sunday, May 12, 1912

[New York – New Jersey – New York]

In the morning, after prayers, the Master had tea and

remarked that ‘Although we have not had sufficient rest yet

we have to go to Montclair today to speak at the Unity

Church there.’

He left with His companions, took a ferry for New Jersey

and later boarded a train for Montclair. After an hour’s

journey, we arrived at the home of Mr [Charles] Edsall,

through whom the rector of the church had invited the

Master. After greeting the friends, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the

church where the rector, Dr Edgar S. Wiers, was waiting for

Him at the entrance. He took the Master’s hand most

reverently and accompanied Him to the pulpit, as well as

showing us to our seats. After the service, he introduced the

‘Great Mystery of God’ saying, ‘Today we shall read from

the New Gospel, that is, from the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh

instead of the Bible.’ The minister then read a few selec-

tions from previously translated Tablets and said:

A few years ago a monument was erected in Genoa, Italy.

Its purpose was to commemorate the memory of a

Protestant martyred by the Catholics through religious

prejudice. On the statue was engraved these wise words,

‘The greatest achievements of the last centuries have been

the elimination of religious prejudice and the extension

of human thought.’ But now I say that these words have

not been fully realized and prejudice continues to hold its

sway to a degree.

Now there comes a matchless Cause which does away

with all prejudices. It is the new teaching of the Bahá’í

Faith, which has stirred the religions of the world and has

sacrificed some twenty thousand persons to root out preju-

dice. The East has always been the dawning-point of divine

religions. That land is the mother of all religions. The

West is in extreme need of such peace because of its

excessive armaments and its many wars.

Although it has spread only recently to the West, the

Bahá’í Cause will erelong encompass the entire hemi-

sphere. And now from the leader of this mighty Cause you

will hear an important message. It is truly our good for-

tune that this holy man is journeying in many parts of the

world and has now come to this church to deliver the news

of the great peace to us. I am greatly honored to introduce

His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás and to say that He is one

of the great prophets of the world and one of the chosen

ones of God.[[99]](#endnote-99)

After this introduction the Master stood up and the entire

congregation, out of respect, immediately rose and re-

mained standing until He bade them be seated with a wave

of His hand. He spoke in a melodious and eloquent voice,

beginning His speech by discussing the oneness of God and

His Holy Manifestations and concluding with the statement

that in every age the Sun of Truth appears within a sign of

the zodiac. At the end He chanted a very touching prayer.

As at every such meeting, the effect of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk

had to be seen, for it is difficult to describe.[[100]](#endnote-100)

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left the church, many surrounded Him

and shook His hand, each one attracted, each heart full of

eagerness, each soul inclined towards the Master and every

eye turned towards Him, each supplicating and yearning

for the confirmations of the Kingdom. Not one mind was

bereft of eagerness and no heart failed to be immersed in

the sea of joy.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned to Mr Edsall’s home where

several Bahá’ís and seekers had gathered, including the

minister and his wife, to have lunch with Him. All were

overjoyed to be with Him. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was exceedingly

happy and the gathering became the envy of heaven.

After lunch and a little rest, another group came to visit

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and another meeting was held with eagerness

and excitement. The Master spoke with animation, encour-

aging the friends and guiding the true seekers. Before He

left, the minister brought out the church’s guest book,

requesting that the Master write a prayer in His own hand.

He did so at once:

He is God! O Lord! O Pure One! Thanks be to Thee that,

traversing mountains and deserts and crossing the great

ocean we were enabled to reach this country and utter Thy

Name and manifest Thy signs in these regions. Even in

this church we have raised our voice to Thy Kingdom like

unto Elijah. O God! Attract the members of this church to

Thy beauty, protect and shield them in Thine own shelter

and bless them.

Signed ‘A ‘A[[101]](#endnote-101)

Time passed so happily that the Master promised the

friends in Montclair a second visit. He then returned to

New York.

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the Grace Method-

ist Church in New York to speak to the public meeting of

the Peace Forum.[[102]](#endnote-102) He spoke on the purpose of the Proph-

ets of God, the peace and unity of humankind and the

coming of Bahá’u’lláh who would establish and promote

these divinely-ordained teachings. His talk ignited such a

fire in the listeners’ hearts that all became as moths with

scorched wings. In this meeting, too, the members of the

audience, with one accord, stood when the Master ap-

peared before them, which seemed extraordinary to every-

one. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave this address:

If we look at history, we find that from the beginning to

the present day strife and warfare have existed among

mankind. It has either been religious warfare, warfare of

races, warfare among nations or a war between two coun-

tries. All these wars were due to the ignorance of human-

ity, were the product of misunderstandings or were the

results of the lack of the education of humankind.

The greatest wars and massacres were perpetrated in

the name of religion. Yet the sole purpose for which the

divine Prophets appeared was none other than the estab-

lishment of love and goodwill among mankind. These

Prophets were shepherds and not wolves. Shepherds are

to protect and collect their flocks and not to scatter them.

Every divine shepherd has gathered together a certain

flock which had been scattered. Moses was one of them.

He assembled the various tribes of Israel and created love

among them and led them on their way to the Holy Land.

From their scattered state, He drew them together, united

them and caused their development. Hence their degrada-

tion was transformed into glory, their poverty changed

into wealth, their vices were replaced by virtues and finally

they established the Kingdom of Solomon and the fame

of their glory reached the East and the West. Therefore,

it is obvious that Moses was a divine shepherd, for He

assembled the scattered tribes of Israel and united them.

When Christ appeared, He too became the cause of the

gathering of the scattered sheep. He united the dispersed

flock of Israel with those of the Greeks, Romans,

Chaldeans, Syrians and Egyptians. These nations were in

a state of war and strife with one another, shedding one

another’s blood and tearing one another apart like fero-

cious animals.

But Christ united, assembled and cemented them

together by creating affinity among them so that strife

and warfare were entirely extirpated. Therefore, it is

manifest that the divine religions were the cause of love

and affection. Divine religion is never a cause of discord

and disagreement. If religion be the cause of strife, its

nonexistence is preferable because religion must be the

source of life. If it be the cause of death, its absence is

desirable and irreligion is preferable. Religious teachings

are like unto remedies. If a remedy be the cause of disease,

the absence of such a remedy is desirable.

Likewise, when the Arabian tribes were in a state of

rancor and strife, engaged in shedding one another’s

blood, plundering one another’s property, imprisoning

one another’s wives and children and leading a warlike life

in the peninsula of Arabia, and when no solitary soul

enjoyed composure nor a single tribe was at ease, at such

a time Muḥammad appeared. He gathered, reconciled,

united and cemented the different tribes so that all strife

and warfare vanished from among them. The Arabian

nation developed to such a degree that they founded the

sovereignty of Andalusia [Spain] and established the

mighty Caliphate.

From these evidences we must infer that the basic

purpose of divine religion is to promote peace and not

war. The foundation of the religions of God is one reality.

It is love; it is truth; it is the promotion of fellowship and

amity. These wars are the outcome of imitations which

crept in subsequently. The essence of religion is one reality

which constitutes the foundation Truth of the religions of

God. There is no difference in the essence; the difference

lies in imitations. Due to this difference in imitations,

discord and strife take place. If imitations are eliminated

from religions and the foundation Truth alone is followed,

all of them would agree, and strife and discord would

disappear, for religion is reality and reality is one and does

not admit of plurality.

Racial distinctions and national differences are purely

imaginary. Humanity is one in essence; it is one progeny

of a common ancestor inhabiting the same globe; and

there is no difference in the original genesis and creation

of God. God has created all humanity. He has not created

Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans or Persians. There

is no difference in regard to race. All are the leaves of one

tree, the waves of the same sea, the fruit of one tree and

the flowers of the same garden. Let us turn to the animal

kingdom, where there is no distinction among them with

regard to kind. The sheep of the East and the West graze

together; no sheep of the East will regard a sheep of the

West as a stranger and an alien. They graze together in the

same pasture most harmoniously and affectionately. There

are no racial dissensions or disputes regarding kind

among them. Likewise the oriental and occidental birds,

for example, the pigeons, will be found to live together in

genuine love and amity. There is absolutely no racial

distinction among them. Such fanciful concepts do not

exist among animals, although they lack the faculty of

reason. Is it becoming for man to observe such vain

thoughts, notwithstanding the fact that he is endowed with

reason, perceptive faculty and thinking power and is the

repository of the divine trust? With all these bestowals how

does he permit himself to yield to these erroneous super-

stitions by saying ‘I am a German’, ‘I am a Frenchman’,

‘I am an Englishman’ or ‘I am an Italian’? Through these

superstitions they wage war against one another. Is this

becoming? God forbid! It is not. If the animal does not

condescend to follow such superstitions, why should man

be willing to stoop to such low ideas which are nothing but

superstition and pure imagination?

Is it proper to foster wars and feuds on account of

nativity—such as Eastern and Western, Northern or South-

ern? No, by God! These, too, are sheer superstitions and

mere fanciful imaginations. The whole earth is but one

land and one home. Therefore, man must not allow him-

self to adhere to these superstitions.

God be praised! I have come from the East and find the

American continent is prosperous, its climate is most

delightful, its inhabitants are extremely courteous and its

government is fair and just. Is it becoming for me to say,

‘This land is not my country and therefore it does not

deserve any consideration?’ This would be utter prejudice

to which man must not yield. He must, instead, investigate

reality, which consists in that all humanity is one in kind

and the whole earth is one home. Hence it is proven that

the cause of every warfare and bloodshed is purely imagin-

ary and has absolutely no foundation.

Consider what is taking place in Tripoli owing to Italy’s

disregard for law. Many of the helpless are being killed,

thousands of men are being slain every day on both sides.

How many are the children who become fatherless, the

fathers who become childless and the mothers who be-

moan the loss of their dear children. What is the result

after all? Nothing. Is it just that man should be so reckless?

Consider how animals with a blessed disposition are

entirely free from war and strife. Although thousands of

sheep graze together and thousands of flocks of pigeons

fly together, war never takes place among them. But

ferocious animals, such as wolves and dogs, are always

fighting and attacking one another. However, these fero-

cious animals are necessarily compelled to hunt for food,

whereas man does not stand in such need. He is capable

of earning his livelihood. Men shed blood from greed, love

for self-glory and desire for fame. The leaders of the

nations enjoy delightful luxuries in their palatial buildings

and only the poor are sent to bear the brunt in the battle-

field. Every day new instruments are invented for destruc-

tion of the very foundation of the human race. The leaders

are utterly devoid of all feelings of mercy toward those

helpless ones and show no pity to the mothers who have

tended their children so lovingly, having passed many

sleepless nights and spent many laborious days in nurtur-

ing and bringing their children to maturity. Is it becoming

that parents should be made to see thousands of the dear

young ones torn to pieces in one day in the battlefield?

What savagery! What heedlessness! What ignorance! What

hostility! What animosity!

Ferocious animals rend only that which is necessary to

meet their requirements; for instance, the wolf kills only

one sheep a day. But an unjust man slaughters one hun-

dred thousand of his kind in a day and glorifies in this

action, saying, ‘How brave I am! What a feat of courage I

have shown! I have killed in one day one hundred thou-

sand of my kind and have destroyed a whole country.’

Consider to what extent man is ignorant and heedless! If

a man kills another person—one single soul—he is called

a murderer and he receives capital punishment or life

imprisonment. But the man who kills one hundred thou-

sand of his kind in one day is extolled as the greatest

general and the greatest hero of the world. If a man steals

a single dollar, he is called a cruel thief, whereas if a

general ransacks the whole country, he is pronounced a

conqueror of the world. What ignorance! What heedless-

ness!

Among the various religions and denominations in

Persia there existed animosity, envy and hatred. In Asia

religions were hostile toward one another, the sects sought

to murder one another, the races were filled with hatred

and the tribes were constantly at war. They considered that

the greatest glory for man was to be able to kill, to slaugh-

ter many of his kind. If one religion succeeded in prevail-

ing over another religion and in killing the adherents

thereof, the first took pride in such deeds. This was the

time when Bahá’u’lláh appeared in Persia. He founded the

oneness of the world of humanity and established the

foundations of universal peace. He declared that all men

are the servants of God Who created all and provides for

all. He is kind to all. Why should we be unkind? God is

compassionate and merciful to all His creatures. Why

should we entertain animosity or spite? God loves all. God

provides for all. He trains us all and He is kind to all. Our

duty is to be kind and loving to all. This is the divine

polity. We must follow the polity of God. Is it possible that

the human polity should be better than the divine polity?

Certainly, it is not. Therefore we must emulate the divine

polity. As God deals with all humanity affectionately and

kindly, so must we deal with each and every one.

Bahá’u’lláh laid the foundation of universal peace and

proclaimed the oneness of mankind. He preached

throughout the East the lessons of peace and goodwill. On

this subject He sent to all the kings epistles encouraging

and admonishing them. He made it evident that the glory

of humanity lies in peace and reconciliation. This occurred

about sixty years ago. Because He promulgated universal

peace, the kings of the Orient rose against Him, as they

regarded such teachings to be in conflict with their per-

sonal ambitions and interests. They arose to persecute and

molest Him in divers ways, exiled Him and eventually

confined Him to a fortress. They arose against His follow-

ers as well. For the sake of this teaching, which sought the

abandonment of superstitions and imitations and pro-

moted the establishment of the unity of mankind, the

blood of twenty thousand Bahá’ís was spilled. How many

homes were destroyed! How many persons were slaugh-

tered and killed! Yet the friends of Bahá’u’lláh stood firm

and steady, and up to this date they have endeavored with

head and heart to promulgate peace and harmony, having

shown their adherence to this principle by their actions.

Men of all denominations who have accepted the

teaching of Bahá’u’lláh invariably support the cause of

international peace and practice the principle of unity of

mankind. They have the utmost love for all men because

they know that all are the servants of God, that they belong

to one kind and that they have a common descent. At the

utmost, those who are ignorant must be educated, those

who are sick must be treated, those who are children must

be educated and trained. We must not regard children as

enemies, we must not be annoyed with patients but we

must treat the sick and must teach and educate those who

are ignorant. Therefore the essentials of the foundation

of the religions of God are love and amity among all

humanity. If a divine religion should be productive of

discord and hatred, it is not divine; for religion must be

the cause of binding together and the means of infusing

love and amity. Mere knowledge of anything is not suffi-

cient. We all know that justice is good but there is the need

for volition and executive power to carry it out. For exam-

ple, we know it is good to construct a place of worship but

the mere knowledge will not bring about its existence. We

should exercise our will to build it. Wealth is needed for

its erection; knowledge alone will not suffice. All of us

know that peace is good, that it is conducive to the exis-

tence of humanity but this needs to be put into effect, it

needs action. As this is the century of light which has the

capacity for peace, these ideals will necessarily spread and

attain the status of fulfillment and action. Time, itself, will

raise up those who will promote the cause of peace. Within

all countries peace exists. When I came to America I found

its people supporters of peace and possessing great capac-

ity, its government just, and equality established among

its people. I desire that the light of peace be first shed

abroad from America to the rest of the world. The people

of America have greater competence to perform this task;

that country is not like others. If Great Britain should

come forward in support of this cause, it is apt to be inter-

preted that she is doing so for the preservation of her own

interests. If France should stand up in its support, it may

be said that she has done so in order to ensure the safety

of her colonies. If Russia should proclaim it, she would be

supposed to have done so in pursuance of the interests of

her sovereignty. But the American nation, it is admitted,

does not have such colonial possessions, is not anxious to

extend its dominion and is not designing the invasion of

other countries. Therefore, if America takes steps in this

direction, all are certain to acknowledge that this is solely

the outcome of her moral courage, her zeal and sense of

honor, and that she has no ulterior motives.

Therefore, it is my desire that you may hold aloft this

banner because you are preeminently fit for it. All coun-

tries are in readiness for this and the demand for interna-

tional peace is very high everywhere because the people

are in distress. Every year the powers increase the expen-

diture of war and so the people are tired. At this moment

the subterranean storehouses of Europe are full of arms

and ammunition and hellish armaments are about to

exterminate the foundation of mankind.

The basic foundations for peace and amity are found

in the principles of divine religions. If misunderstandings

among religions disappear you will see that all work for

peace and promulgate the oneness of humankind, for the

foundation of all is one; it is truth, and truth is neither

multiple nor divisible. The light of this reality shone forth

in all the Prophets. For example, Moses promulgated this

reality, Jesus established this reality, Muḥammad advo-

cated this reality, the Báb proclaimed this reality,

Bahá’u’lláh upheld the standard of this reality and He

promulgated universal peace and the unity of mankind.

In the prison He rested not until He planted the banner

of peace in the East. All the people who have accepted the

teachings of Bahá’u’lláh are peace-lovers and are ever

ready to sacrifice their lives and properties for it. As

America is renowned for her material progress and for her

scientific inventions and colossal undertakings, may she

also exert noble efforts for the realization of universal

peace, so that she may receive Divine help in this under-

taking. May this great principle spread from her to other

countries. I pray that all of you may succeed and be con-

firmed.[[103]](#endnote-103)

Monday, May 13, 1912

[New York]

From morning until the afternoon there was a constant

stream of visitors and friends. Then the Master went to

another meeting of the New York Peace Society.[[104]](#endnote-104) The

moment He entered the spacious hall of the Hotel Astor,

the audience broke into such hearty cheers that the very

walls of the building echoed. There were some two thou-

sand people in the audience and when Mírzá Valíyu’lláh

Khán-i-Varqá and I wished to enter, there was no room.

However, the Persian fezes we wore were like crowns of

honor and signs of respect. Whoever saw us knew at once

that we were the servants of His threshold and assisted us

to pass through the crowd until we reached ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

so that we could record His words.

Many people welcomed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with beautiful

flowers of varying hues. The beauty of this great peace

congress and the eloquence of all the speakers are tributes

to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Mrs [Anna Garland] Spencer introduced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,

describing Him as the Prophet of the East and the Messen-

ger of Peace. Dr Grant spoke of the calamities that had

befallen the Master and His imprisonment for the sake of

establishing peace among the peoples of the world. The

Consul General of Persia [Mr Topakyan] referred to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the Beauty of God and the Glory of the

East. Professor [William] Jackson, who had visited Persia,

said that peace, prosperity and security would only be

attained through this blessed Cause. The president of the

society [Dr Stephen S. Wise] then gave an explanation of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s name and welcomed Him most warmly. The

Master stood and a great excitement rippled through the

audience. Although the Master was tired owing to His many

speaking engagements and the difficulties of the journey,

and His voice was hoarse, He delivered an incomparable

speech. First He thanked the audience for its great love

and kindness. He then spoke about the problems associated

with peace, giving an explanation of some of the verses and

commandments of Bahá’u’lláh regarding unity and the

oneness of humanity. The audience was deeply moved.

Every eye beheld that gathering as a court of power and

majesty where all, like poets, praised in the most beautiful

words and verses the Temple of Servitude. Verily, no desire

remained unmet for us, the servants of His threshold. We

witnessed with our own eyes the victory and confirmation

of the Abhá Kingdom. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá repeatedly said, ‘Al-

though I say always that I am ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, a servant of

God, still people refer to me as a messenger and a prophet.

It would be better if they would not attribute such titles to

me.’

In the evening there was a meeting at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

residence with people from India and Japan. He spoke to

them in detail, saying:

India had a great civilization in former times. That civiliza-

tion spread from that part of Asia to Syria and Egypt; from

Syria it was extended to Greece from whence it found its

way to Arabia and Spain. Again, from Spain it spread over

most of Europe. The world of man, however, has not yet

reached its maturity. The time will come when this mate-

rial civilization will be infused with divine civilization.

Universal peace will be realized and people will become

angelic. That will be the time of the world’s maturity.

Tuesday, May 14, 1912

[New York]

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was invited to Lake Mohonk, the venue for

the conference of the International Peace Society, He made

preparations to leave. This conference was the greatest of

all the peace conferences in America. It was held in a most

ideal location and many dignitaries and delegates from

various countries had been invited to attend. Lake Mohonk

is four hours away from New York by train. At the train

station special landaus[[105]](#endnote-105) were waiting to take the guests to

the conference site. The Master took one of these and went

to the Hotel Lake Mohonk. He praised the beauty of the

place and the scenic grandeur of the route as His carriage

drove for about an hour amidst green valleys, wooded hills,

woodlands, waterfalls and natural springs. The conference

was to last for three days. Each day two long sessions were

held in the spacious hall of the hotel facing the lake, the

hall having been especially built for the conference.

On the first evening, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s name was at the

head of the program. All the members and delegates were

anxious to hear His address. The president [of the Interna-

tional Peace Society, Mr Smiley] introduced the Master with

the utmost respect and glowing words of praise. Then

‘Abdu’l-Bahá stood and spoke. A new spirit and a new

excitement seemed to prevail over the gathering. During

the day most of the delegates had been engaged in materi-

alistic issues. The highest level that their discussions had

reached was the issue of the internal unity of countries and

the problems of the United States of America. In the

evening, however, they found themselves puzzled when

they heard the eloquent, elegant address of the Master

concerning the unity of all people, the reformation of the

whole world and the Manifestation of the Greatest Name

which would bring about the oneness of the world of hu-

manity and the promulgation of the teachings of universal

peace. He spoke for about 20 minutes, the time allotted to

Him in the program. According to the custom of the West,

the audience applauded for a long time when He ceased

speaking. They requested that He continue but because He

was tired He apologized and with a gesture of His hand

bestowed kindness on all. One by one, dignitaries and

delegates from many countries came to shake His hand.

Some of them embraced Him and expressed their thanks.

The president again stood, offered thanks and spoke with

great reverence on the importance of the teachings, prais-

ing and commending ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on behalf of the audi-

ence. Mr Smiley’s wife then gave the Master a pendant

especially made for the peace conference and thanked Him

most joyfully.

Wednesday, May 15, 1912

[Lake Mohonk]

The Master remained at Lake Mohonk. Many came into

His presence and to each He taught the Cause of God,

answering their questions in the way best suited to the

understanding of the listener. Concerning the peace con-

ference, He related a story:

Once I wrote to the Persian friends that if the workers of

peace conferences do not apply in their own lives what

they advocate, they are like those wine sellers who convene

and make emphatic speeches regarding the harmfulness

of wine and proposing its prohibition. But when they go

out of the meeting, they begin again to sell wine and to do

what they were doing in the past. Therefore it is necessary

for the power of execution and effect to spiritually pene-

trate the body of the world.

The Master gave two addresses at this conference. At the

request of the president, He wrote in detail explanations

of the divine questions, which were to be published in a

book recording the proceedings of the conference. A copy

of the other address which He gave on the first evening was

written by us.

Thursday, May 16, 1912

[Lake Mohonk – New York]

Photographs of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His party were taken.

Many dignitaries visited Him and were attracted and

ignited by His love. He then expressed His intention to

return to New York. The president of the conference was

reluctant for Him to leave. The Master replied, ‘As I have

to see numerous people and speak to many audiences, I

must leave.’ The president remained in the presence of the

Master with great reverence until He left. The Beloved

presented the president with a good quality Persian carpet,

for which he was very thankful.[[106]](#endnote-106)

When the Master returned to New York, the friends

came to see Him. They were delighted to hear that so many

at the conference were attracted and paid attention to the

Master’s address. A few days later the talks He had given

at the conference were published in a New York newspaper

and thus provided guidance to many.

Friday, May 17, 1912

[New York]

Many friends came to visit Him and when their numbers

increased, the Master went into the assembly room and

gave a lengthy talk that began with a description of the

Lake Mohonk conference. He said that the influence and

practice of peace and the unity of nations could only be

accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit.

When He was tired during these days He would often

go alone in the afternoon to the park near Riverside Drive.

He explained: ‘When I sleep on the grass, I obtain relief

from exhaustion and am freed from cares. If I am not

alone, I will talk and perspire and will not become relaxed

and free of cares.’ As always, people were continually

coming and going both day and night. Everyone was anx-

ious to see Him and He spoke to them continuously. It was

impossible for Him to get any rest except when He went

out alone.

Saturday, May 18, 1912

[New York]

Among those visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá were some New York

clergymen. One of them, Dr John H. Randall, had, while

the Master and His retinue had been absent, spoken to his

congregation about the life and teachings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

He expressed the hope that he would follow in the foot-

steps of the Master. So effective was his talk that many of

his listeners burst into tears. He came with great humility

to ask ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to deliver an address in his church.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied that since He had been invited to

speak that week at several gatherings in Boston, He was not

able to accept the invitation until after He returned.

This morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the people in the

Church of the Divine Paternity.[[107]](#endnote-107) The minister of the

church, Dr [Frank Oliver] Hall, spoke at length on the

manifestation of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh, giving a detailed

account of the appointed successor and the Covenant of

God. He explained that the meaning of the name of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was that He was under the canopy of the

Cause of Bahá’u’lláh and concluded by saying that this

Cause is the same reality that underlies all the religions of

God and will become the cause of brotherhood, concord

and universal peace.

The beloved Master stood and delivered an address

about the unity of religions and the teachings of the new

Manifestation in such a way that all were attracted to the

divine fragrances. After His talk the audience pleaded with

Him to allow them to line up on one side of the podium in

order to shake His hand and then leave from the other

side. Although they were permitted to do this, there was

still such a crowd around the Master’s carriage that it was

difficult to proceed.

Sunday, May 19, 1912

[New York – New Jersey]

The landlord [of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s house] had complained

about the excessive comings and goings of the visitors,

therefore the Master chose the house of Mr and Mrs

Kinney for the gatherings of the friends. Among the new

people visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá were some Jewish rabbis.

That evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the Brotherhood

Church in New Jersey. At the opening of the service, Dr

[Howard Colby] Ives,[[108]](#endnote-108) who was greatly respected and

sincere, highly praised ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He stated that this

great teacher and proclaimer of the Cause of God, since

His arrival in America, had stayed at the Hotel Ansonia and

had not accepted any assistance from anyone, bearing all

of His expenses personally. Indeed, He had even liberally

contributed to institutions and churches serving the poor.

When Dr Ives finished speaking on the bounties of the

Cause of God and the majesty of God’s Covenant, the

Master rose and delivered an address on spiritual brother-

hood and the unity of the world of humanity. His talk

increased the interest and yearning in the hearts of the

listeners. Although all came to Him, one by one, to shake

hands and depart, afterwards when He went into an inner

room of the church, a crowd of people, after receiving

permission, came to see Him and were delighted to hear

the Master’s explanations in response to their questions.

All offered Him thanks and praise.

Monday, May 20, 1912

[New York]

Among those visiting the Master at the Kinney’s home were

some narrow-minded Christian ministers. He spoke to

them about the misunderstandings among Christians about

Islam. After the Master spoke emphatically with reasoning

and proofs to establish the reality of Islam, the ministers

left humbly and joyfully, impressed by His explanations.

In the evening an enthusiastic gathering of women

suffragists gathered to hear the Master’s address.[[109]](#endnote-109) While

riding in Mr Mills’ automobile, the Master said: ‘You will

learn of the value of this automobile later because it will be

said that the servants of the Blessed Beauty sat in it.’

When He entered the gathering, the entire audience

stood with great joy and excitement. The chairman of the

meeting [Mrs Penfield] first gave an introductory account

of the persecutions and imprisonment of the Master and

explained the meaning of the name ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The

Master then spoke at length about the education and rights

of women. There was great excitement in the audience,

and, as in other gatherings, the people were deeply moved

and both men and women shook His hand, supplicating

for assistance.

Tuesday, May 21, 1912

[New York]

In the morning and afternoon the Master delivered ad-

dresses at two public meetings.[[110]](#endnote-110) One consisted of admoni-

tions from the Abhá Beauty, and the other, owing to His

impending journey to Boston, was a farewell address to the

friends, promising them a speedy return.

This afternoon many of the believers’ children came to

visit. He embraced them all with the utmost kindness and

affection. He exhorted the friends to provide Bahá’í educa-

tion and spirituality for these newborn trees of the Garden

of Favor. To witness such meetings is a real joy. With great

devotion, the young and old circled around ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

like moths.

Wednesday, May 22, 1912

[New York – Boston]

At 10:00 a.m. the Master left New York for Boston, arriving

at the Hotel Charles at 4:30 p.m. Many delegates from

organizations and groups had gathered at the railway

station to greet and welcome Him. The believers had

decorated a house with colorful flowers, having made all

necessary preparations to receive Him.

That evening the first meeting in Boston was held at

8:00 p.m. for the American Unitarian Association Confer-

ence at the Tremont Temple, the largest of all of the

churches in the region. The President of the Republic, Mr

Taft, is also a member of this important association. Present

at the conference were some 800 Unitarian ministers

representing the Unitarian churches in America and

Canada. In addition, there were nearly two thousand others

assembled. The presiding officer of the meeting was the

Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts [Robert Luce], who

introduced the Master to the audience, saying:

Tonight we express our highest respect and heartfelt

gratitude in this great gathering for this highly revered

and peace-loving personage who has come from the East

to the West to promote the principles of the oneness of

humanity and universal peace. Indeed, it is a great joy and

supreme honor that this esteemed personage has graced

our meeting with His presence. It is my great honor to

introduce to you His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

When the Master stood up, the entire audience gave Him

a prolonged standing ovation. Although in all meetings the

audience has risen when the Master appeared, this gather-

ing had a particular importance. The group was composed

of elected representatives and leaders of many congrega-

tions from several countries and it was they who stood,

demonstrating their reverence and to honor Him. The

Master spoke about the progress and evolution of creation.

It was so impressive that the audience applauded with

elation and joy.

Thursday, May 23, 1912

[Boston]

Many Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís came group by group to visit

the Master. His bestowals and favors revived their souls and

brought joy to their hearts. In but five minutes one of the

journalists was so impressed that he accepted the Cause

and decided to write and publish articles on the Faith. As

he left the gathering, he wept at the feet of the Beloved and

most reverently supplicated to be confirmed in dedicating

the rest of his life in service to the Cause.

At noon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited the house [Denison House]

maintained for the poor of Syria and Greece [the Greek-

Syrian Relief Society]. Members of this association had

prepared lunch for Him with great care. The lady who was

the president of the association had been busy making

preparations for His reception. In one of the large rooms

there was a table laden with various Eastern dishes. The

Master was given the seat of honor to the right of the

hostess, which, according to Western etiquette, is a sign of

respect. Many association members were also present.

Among the Master’s comments at the table was this: ‘Happy

are you who are engaged in serving the poor. My greatest

happiness is this, that I may be counted among the poor.’

After lunch the Master gave an elegant address about

poverty and detachment, filling the hearts of all those

present with hope and delight. All, both young and old,

expressed their heartfelt gratitude.

Upon leaving the meeting, He gave ten pounds for the

poor. Later, sitting in Professor Blacks’[[111]](#endnote-111) home sur-

rounded by admirers, He showered kindness upon all. The

professor accompanied the Master to the town of Worces-

ter, located about 50 miles from Boston.

Passing through green and verdant plains and breathing

the invigorating and pleasant air, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

sorrowfully in remembrance of the Blessed Beauty and the

Greatest Name, saying: ‘Would that the Blessed Beauty

could have come to these regions! He loved such scenery

very much.’ Whenever He saw the green and fragrant

countryside, He asked the driver to stop. At one place, near

the shore of a lake, the greenness of the landscape, the

translucence of the water and the purity of the air so

pleased Him that He instructed the driver to stop for a

long time. The entire group stood and waited. No one

dared say anything about the delay.

The Master spoke of the Blessed Beauty in mournful

terms, which deeply moved us all. In two hours we reached

Worcester. The Master accepted the professor’s invitation

to rest for a while in his home. After tea ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went

to the meeting at the university, which had been arranged

especially for His visit. More than one thousand students,

faculty and others had assembled. Professor Hall thanked

‘Abdu’l-Bahá for coming to the meeting.

The Master spoke on the value and importance of

science. The hearts of those present were attracted and

their souls enkindled with the fire of love to such a degree

that they soared in the heaven of knowledge, their minds

indelibly engraved with the words of the Master.

After His address, some distinguished individuals and

seekers were invited to a magnificent reception prepared

for the Master. As the chancellor of the university had

himself invited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he himself served the Master.

A number of Japanese, Chinese and Turkish students came

into His presence and greatly appreciated His words.

When it was time to leave, the Master took both the

president’s hands in His and said:

I am very pleased with you and delighted to see your

university. You are, indeed, serving the world of humanity

and expending your life for mankind. Above all, I wish for

you the blessings of the Kingdom and desire that you will

be a cause of the spread of sciences and arts. I will pray

on your behalf that God may make you a standard of

guidance and that the love of God may shine upon your

heart. I have seen a great love and affection in you, as well

as in the professors and scholars. I shall never forget this

meeting, and I shall always remember and mention your

services.

Later He returned to Boston in the automobile especially

provided for Him by the chancellor. The Master went

directly to the home of Mrs Alice Breed. As that evening

was the commemoration of the Declaration of the Báb as

well as the birthday of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,[[112]](#endnote-112) the Bahá’ís, with the

utmost happiness and joy, had arranged a magnificent

feast. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived, He rested for a while and

then joined the gathering of the friends, illuminating the

meeting with His presence. With joyful and shining faces,

all eyes were directed towards the Master. The freshness

and verdure of that gathering was like a flower garden and

was proof that the Tree of the Cause of God has been firmly

rooted in American soil and that it has produced leaves and

blossoms of the utmost beauty.

The Master spoke briefly about the greenery of the

surrounding countryside, the magnificence of the city of

Boston, as well as the university. He then gave an account

of the life of the Báb that gladdened the hearts and

cheered the souls.

Tea, drinks and sweets were served in another room.

Mrs Breed brought before the Master a birthday cake with

68 candles, representing His age. At her request, He lit the

first candle and then each of the friends in turn lit a candle,

each person like a moth burning with the fire of love. When

the cake was cut, each guest took a slice as a sacred relic.

Mrs Breed, indeed, lit the candle of servitude and stead-

fastness that evening and, in doing so, became the recipient

of bounty from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence.[[113]](#endnote-113)

Friday, May 24, 1912

[Boston – Brookline – Boston]

Both believers and non-Bahá’ís came in groups to visit the

Master. Among them were journalists who asked various

questions and received specific answers from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The Master had been invited to a conference sponsored by

the Free Religious Association.[[114]](#endnote-114) He quickly left for the

meeting at Ford Hall. More than a thousand people were

in the audience. The subject of His talk was the unity of the

teachings of the Messengers of God and the oneness of

religions.

Because another lecturer had spoken just before the

Master criticizing religion, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk seemed

extraordinary and produced a great effect. Another

speaker, a zealous minister, had announced that a false

Christ, a denier of Christ, had come to America. But when

the people heard the Master’s address establishing the

truth of all the Prophets and especially that of Christ, they

were surprised, astonished and extremely interested.

Moreover, the dignity of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as He left the meet-

ing became a further cause of attracting the hearts. The

members of the association, as well as the Association of

Unitarians, had offered to pay the expenses of the Master’s

journey but the offer was not accepted.

As they left the conference, the chairman held the

Master’s hand while the audience applauded. He expressed

his gratitude and appreciation to the Master. As ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá left the hall He bestowed His favors upon all.

From that conference ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to Brookline,

at the request of Mrs White, Mrs Jackson’s sister. A banquet

was held in a magnificent palace surrounded by re-

splendent gardens, situated on the summit of a hill and

overlooking a large lake, the beauty of which is beyond

description. Here a great number of visitors came to see the

Master. He was pleased with the meeting and the surround-

ings. After a delightful talk, attracting all to Him, He

returned to Boston to accept a previous invitation. After an

hour’s journey in an automobile especially sent for Him,

He arrived at the hotel [the Boston Hotel] for a brief rest.

He then went to the meeting which was held at the home

of Mrs Nichols, who had sent an automobile for Him. A

group of learned and eminent scholars and philosophers

was waiting for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to ask Him many important

questions, the comprehensive answers to which impressed

and satisfied all. The discussion lasted about two hours.

Their hearts were transformed by His explanations about

universal peace among nations, the equality of rights of

men and women and the education of girls. Then, after tea,

punch and sweets, the meeting ended.

Saturday, May 25, 1912

[Boston]

Among the visitors this morning was a group of Unitarian

ministers who asked many questions and who received

important answers. They took their leave with great humil-

ity. Another visitor, Rabbi Fletcher, remained for over an

hour in the Master’s presence, asking various questions and

receiving answers. He was so grateful and enthralled that

it is difficult to describe his attraction. Dr Jack, the editor

of an important London journal, also came for an inter-

view. With great fervor and interest, he wrote down the

answers to his questions for his journal. Besides the visits

of these interested people, the Bahá’ís, who were in spiri-

tual ecstacy and excitement, continuously begged for

admission to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence.

At a meeting in the afternoon at the Master’s residence

with philosophers and learned men of Boston, one visitor

asked about the immortality of the soul. In response,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered a most unique discourse on the

subject, which left everyone astonished. Those leaders of

science and knowledge were captivated with the beauty

of the Covenant. The talk was so impressive that the Master

Himself remarked as He left the meeting: ‘Until now there

has never been such a discourse about the immortality of

the soul.’ This was purely the result of His authority

and power. He had had no intention of speaking on this

subject but when He was questioned, He answered without

hesitation.

After the meeting He went to a public park in Boston.

Later that evening, in the Huntington Chambers, the

Bahá’ís held a farewell gathering with over one thousand

in attendance. The Master spoke on the signs of progress

in the 20th century. He then chanted a prayer in such an

imploring manner that tears sprang to all eyes. The meet-

ing ended with the utmost beauty and dignity.[[115]](#endnote-115)

Sunday, May 26, 1912

[Boston New York]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Boston today but before leaving He

attended a meeting of the Golden Circle [al-Ḥalqatadh-

Dhahabíyyah], the largest Syrian society in America. One

of the learned men, Dr Georgi, introduced the Master and

praised Him in the most beautiful words. Another gentle-

man, a poet of the Arabic language, read, with great rever-

ence and respect, an ode he had written in praise of the

Cause of God and the Master. Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose and

delivered a most eloquent address, which made the Syrians

very happy. No one could have imagined that they would

have been so attracted and moved to such a degree. When

‘Abdu’l-Bahá stepped from the pulpit, all rushed towards

Him to shake His hand. An Arab woman struggled out of

the crowd with great difficulty and threw herself at His feet,

saying, ‘I testify that in Thee is the spirit of God and the

spirit of Christ.’

The meetings in Boston pleased the Master, especially

the meeting with the Syrians, which He mentioned in

particular, saying: ‘What a meeting it was! How the con-

firmations of the Blessed Beauty transformed the people!’

This was the last meeting in Boston. He left the hotel at

noon, reaching New York by 6:00 p.m. Without any rest He

went directly from Mr Kinney’s home to the Mount Morris

Baptist Church. Standing under the arch of the church and

leaning exhausted against a pillar, He addressed the

meeting. He spoke of baptism and of the need for the soul

to be ready to receive the breaths of the Holy Spirit. At the

close of His talk He chanted a prayer.[[116]](#endnote-116) That night all saw

with their own eyes the spirituality and innocence of Christ

and the influence of the Holy Spirit. Let no one think that

these are mere words; rather they are the expressions and

feelings of all those who witnessed this. My premise is this:

that in all the gatherings in America, the non-Bahá’ís look

upon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a Prophet of God. Even though they

are not Bahá’ís, their manners and conversations with Him

are the same as they might use for their own Prophet and

leader. All who come into His presence are seen in this

condition. They all refer to the Blessed Being as the Mes-

senger of Peace and the Prophet of the East in their

speeches and writings. Although there are a few narrow-

minded clergy who burn with the fire of jealousy, a large

number of just ministers in every city have accorded Him

the utmost reverence. Among them is the translator of

those who spoke in praise of the Master. Their words

indicate the quality of the audience and societies addressed

by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and are a clear proof of the grandeur and

power of the Greatest Branch.

Monday, May 27, 1912

[New York]

More than a thousand people assembled at the Metropoli-

tan Temple in the afternoon to hear the Master.[[117]](#endnote-117) Dr Hill,

one of the ministers previously mentioned, stood and said:

We are honored at this occasion by the presence of a

distinguished guest who is the representative of universal

peace. His fame has spread throughout the East and the

West. Humanity has reaped great benefits from His teach-

ings. Such an august personage deserves a genuine and

sincere reception. Past ages necessitated the formation of

nations but the present time requires a unity among the

existing nations. I am greatly honored to introduce you

to the founder and promoter of this universal peace and

harmony.

Mr Frederick Lynch, the author of the book *International*

*Peace* and an active member of the peace movement, stood

and said:

Since the arrival of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in America, I have had

the honor of hearing and meeting Him several times; I

have read with great interest His speeches and addresses

in the newspapers. My ardent wish is that I may see here,

too, the great impact of His teachings and the influence

of His manifest signs. I was present at the Peace Confer-

ence at Lake Mohonk and had the pleasure of listening

to the most remarkable address given there. The princi-

ples of His teachings, as given in that address, are the

oneness of humanity, universal peace and the unity of

religions. All His talks vibrate with the spirit of these

principles and their influence is felt by all. How I welcome

this dear person, whose presence has inspired the minds

and hearts of the Americans! He receives inspiration from

the breaths of the Holy Spirit. His spirit is infinite, unlim-

ited and eternal. I am delighted to have been invited to

this great occasion and to have the opportunity publicly

to express my heartfelt testimony.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then stood and spoke on the subject of the

Fatherhood of God and the oneness of humanity. The

greatest proof of the majesty and power of the Covenant

of God was the talk given by Rabbi Silverman, which fol-

lowed the Master’s talk. Previously he had been opposed

to the Cause and argued against it. But from the moment

he came into the presence of the Master he was trans-

formed and became entirely humble. Rabbi Silverman said:

We have seen today the light with our own eyes. We are

accustomed to seeing the sun rise from the East so we no

longer regard it as a miracle. Spiritual light, too, has

always shone from the East upon the West. The world is

in need of this light, and we, too, are in need of this life-

giving light. The fountainhead of this light has today

spoken to us. This great personage, with a pure heart and

chaste spirit, has attracted the hearts of the Americans and

has made them His captivating lovers. His love and teach-

ings have made a great impression upon the hearts and

minds. The outward forms of religions are like shells,

while the teachings and love are like unto the kernel. We

need the shell so that the kernel may be protected. O

people, distinguish between the shell and the kernel, the

reality and the form. As stated by this respected prophet,

‘We must not err in distinguishing the light from the

lamp.’[[118]](#endnote-118)

Tuesday, May 28, 1912

[New York]

At a gathering of Bahá’ís, the Master recounted His journey

to Boston, speaking on the capacity of souls and the need

for divine education. Friends and inquirers were also

continuously coming and going to visit Him in His room.

Today He moved from the house facing the Hudson River

to Mrs Kinney’s home. He had instructed us to rent a house

for Him because the owner of the apartment hotel consid-

ered that the comings and goings of so many diverse

people was unusual and felt that the additional work and

difficulty [for the staff] was too great. There had been so

many people visiting from morning to night that the hotel

management had been obliged to respond to incessant

inquiries. However, when the staff saw the Master’s great

kindness as He left the hotel they became ashamed of their

conduct and begged Him to stay longer, but He did not

accept.

Wednesday, May 29, 1912[[119]](#endnote-119)

[New York]

A public meeting was held today by the Theosophical

Society where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on matters relating to

the spirit and its passage through the world of existence.[[120]](#endnote-120)

The effect of His address was such that the president of the

society said, in the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, that his

greatest desire was to bring about a perfect harmony be-

tween the Bahá’ís and the Theosophists. The happiness of

Master increased day by day through the influence of the

Cause of God. Whenever He was asked about His health,

He said with the utmost happiness, ‘My health and happi-

ness depend on the progress of the Cause of God. Nothing

else merits attention. This happiness is eternal, and this life

is life everlasting.’

Thursday, May 30, 1912

[New York]

After meeting with some of the friends and a few seekers,

the Master went to a hall at the University of New York and

gave an address on scientific questions and divine philoso-

phy. His talk influenced many prominent people, all of

whom were deeply moved and fascinated. Seeing the

influence of the Cause in these sorts of large gatherings, the

Bahá’ís offered thanks and gratitude for the confirmations

of the Abhá Kingdom.

During this time the Master occupied Himself by writing

Tablets in response to questions from both the Eastern and

the Western friends. Today He gave an account of the lives

of Varqá and Rúḥu’lláh. He showed His great kindness to

the sons of this martyr in the path of God, Mírzá Azíz’u’lláh

Khán and Mírzá Valíyu’lláh Khán. The Master then told

the friends about some of the precepts of the Cause. During

these discourses, He said often:

I am the interpreter of the Writings of the Blessed Beauty,

as explicitly designated by the Supreme Pen. All must

obey. All matters pertaining to the Faith must be referred

to the authorized interpreter. In the future all must turn

to the divine House of Justice.

Friday, May 31, 1912

[New Jersey]

At the request of Mr [William H.] Hoar, the Master visited

a sanatorium,[[121]](#endnote-121) visiting with the friends and holding two

meetings, one in the morning and the other in the after-

noon. In both meetings He proclaimed the Word of God

and spoke of the teachings of the Blessed Beauty.[[122]](#endnote-122) Many

were attracted to the Divine Voice. As the village of

Fanwood is a summer resort and its fields and countryside

very green and refreshing, it was very much enjoyed by the

Master. But when they pleaded with Him to prolong His

stay for a few days, because of the excessive heat and soot

in New York, He said: ‘We have no time for amusement

and fresh air. We must engage ourselves in service to the

Threshold of Oneness.’ The services and devotion of Mr

Hoar and his family were much appreciated by the Master

and were spoken of frequently at the Holy Threshold.

Saturday, June 1, 1912

[New Jersey – New York]

In great humility a group of Bahá’ís came to the railway

station to bid farewell to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Everyone was weep-

ing as the train left. When He left, the Master was in a

devout and meditative mood.

Upon His return to New York, He spoke to a gathering

of friends about the harm of intoxicating beverages and

also related some historical stories to the friends. In the

afternoon some Bahá’ís and inquirers visited Him in His

room, one after the other. Among them was a socialist.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said in part:

Tell the socialists that sharing of property and land in this

mortal world is the source of strife and warfare but sharing

and inheritance in the Kingdom is the cause of love and

unity. If you put your efforts into understanding the

precepts of the Kingdom instead of into acquiring worldly

shares and rights, you will gain perpetual joy and happi-

ness. The Kingdom of God is vast. He will give you what-

ever you desire and there will be no place for strife and

conflict. Is this not preferable and more pleasing?

Each visitor with a particular interest was addressed simi-

larly and each departed in joy.

Sunday, June 2, 1912

[New York]

At a large and beautiful gathering at the Church of the

Ascension, many were honored with the bounty of hearing

the addresses and explanations of the Master and were thus

turned towards the Kingdom of God. This was the second

time this church was graced by Him around Whom all

names revolve. He said:

At the time of my arrival at the church I was in no condi-

tion to speak; but when I stood before this great gathering

I found the atmosphere of the church filled with the Holy

Spirit and so a state of wonderful happiness and joy came

over me.

He began His address by saying:

In the terminology of the Holy Books, the church is a

symbol of the Covenant, in other words it is a gathering

place for different peoples and races so that it may become

a sign and token of the true Temple and the Divine Law.[[123]](#endnote-123)

It was an exposition about the Cause of God as the collec-

tive center, the manifestation of the Prophets and the

coming of Bahá’u’lláh.

Through the pastor, Dr Grant, some in the audience

requested permission to ask some questions, which was

granted. Everyone who wished wrote a question on a piece

of paper and submitted it through an usher. Through an

interpreter, the questions were translated and the answers

given to the inquirers. Oh, that the Eastern friends could

have been in these churches and gatherings in the West to

see with their own eyes the beauty and glory of their Mas-

ter! They would have rejoiced in perceiving that which no

spoken or written words can adequately describe.

Monday, June 3, 1912[[124]](#endnote-124)

[New York]

Mr Penshoe, a cabinet member of the United States gov-

ernment, invited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to Milford [his estate outside

the city]. For a day and a night many prominent statesmen

and dignitaries of the Republic were enraptured, fascinated

by the Master. His address to one of the meetings has been

recorded separately.[[125]](#endnote-125) A compendium of the addresses and

His answers made during that time would be in itself a

complete book.

In response to a question about the war among nations,

the Master said:

It will certainly come about but America will not partici-

pate in it. This war will be staged in Europe. You are in a

corner and have nothing to do with others. You have no

desire to gain territories in Europe, and no one lusts after

your land. You are safe because the Atlantic Ocean serves

as a great natural protection for you. Europe and most

other areas will be forced to follow your system. Tremen-

dous changes will take place in Europe. The great central-

ized powers will break up into smaller independent states.

In reality it is not just that vast countries should be gov-

erned from a single center, for no matter how great the

ability and wisdom of the statesmen of that center, or how

developed their sense of justice, they will still not be fully

informed of the needs of every town and village and

cannot exert themselves justly for the betterment of their

surrounding dependencies. For example, all parts of

Germany concentrate their efforts to serve a single center,

namely Berlin; and the whole of France is to serve Paris.

Similarly, each of the colonial countries serves to adorn

one great capital. But your government has a good system.

Tuesday, June 4, 1912

[New York]

When the Master left Milford, as well as the influence of His

explanations, His kindness and gifts to the servants of the

household made a great impression. Calling them before

Him, He thanked them and gave each two gold coins.[[126]](#endnote-126)

Much affected, all bowed their heads then turned their

faces towards ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as He left with majesty and

grace. As He turned to observe the lush greenery of that

place, tears suddenly poured from His eyes. He was think-

ing about the Blessed Beauty and was grieved and sad-

dened, recalling the afflictions and sufferings of the Pre-

Existent Face.

When the Master returned to New York in the evening,

He went to a house built on the shore of the Hudson River

which had been rented at His request.[[127]](#endnote-127) Here, at a gather-

ing of the friends, He spoke about the achievements of

American civilization in education, agriculture and com-

merce and the high standard of its government and people,

saying:

Their material civilization resembles a glass of the utmost

transparency and purity but divine civilization is like a

shining lamp. When these two combine, the utmost perfec-

tion will be realized. The light of the oneness of humanity,

of universal peace, of equality of human rights and of

divine morals will emanate from this country to all the

regions of the world and will illumine them all.

Someone asked whether, with all these worldly occupations

and physical labors, it is possible that such a spiritual

condition can be realized. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

Provided they behave moderately, the more people ad-

vance in the material realm, the more their capacity for

attaining spirituality is augmented. The sounder the body,

the greater is the resplendency and manifestation of the

spirit. Truly, what impedes spirituality are the dogmas and

imitations that are contrary to true science and a sound

mind.

Wednesday, June 5, 1912

[New York]

In the morning, the Master, together with some of His

servants, went to Brooklyn to attend a children’s event

given by the Unity Club. The gathering included dignitar-

ies, civic leaders and national statesmen. After exchanging

greetings in the drawing room, the Master went to the

dining room. All of the rooms, as well as the salon, were

exquisitely decorated with flowers of various hues. Many

kinds of dishes were brought, most of which the Master did

not touch. At the table some of the eminent people spoke

to Him. Among them was Admiral Peary, the famous

explorer of the North Pole, who gave an account of the

voyage he undertook to further his exploration. Admiral

Peary then praised the Master and spoke of his good

fortune in meeting Him and the importance of the

teachings. He asked the Master to make a short speech.

Although ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had not planned to speak, He

delivered a discourse on the perfection of creation, its

present defects and the need for education capable of

producing great results by removing these imperfections.

He also spoke on the importance of the education of chil-

dren. Although there had been many speeches, this address

created a great excitement, capturing everyone’s attention.

When it was time for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to leave, He was per-

suaded to have His photograph taken with His retinue.

In the evening there was a meeting at the Women’s

Union. A number of men were also present. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

spoke on the education of women, service to humanity and

the freeing of oneself from ego and desire. His address

strongly impressed the audience, giving wings to both their

hearts and minds.

Thursday, June 6, 1912

[New York – Brooklyn – New York]

In the morning, a group of the friends gathered in the

Master’s residence. He spoke to them about the Unity

Club’s children’s event, explaining divine education and

morals. He then went to Mrs Newton’s home in Brooklyn.

The servants of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá were also invited to accom-

pany Him for lunch at the home of Mrs Newton and Mrs

Rivers.

Today a new guest came from the East to see the Master

and to be in His presence, Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar Nakhjavání.

At the table the Master asked him about conditions in the

East. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a brief discourse at the table:

Nothing in the world of existence is greater than such

gatherings as these because they have been called solely

for the love of God. Observe with what love people from

the East are seated at the same table with people from the

West. Such love and unity were previously impossible. The

power of Bahá’u’lláh has created an affinity in these hearts

and has drawn these souls under the canopy of one Word.

No family ever gathers with such love and associates with

such happiness and joy. It is through the divine power and

through the potency of the Word of God that we are

assembled here with such gladness and delight. We are

turned towards the Abhá Kingdom and like the plants of

the flower garden we are swayed by the breezes of His

kindness and favor. Today is a day which shall never be

forgotten, for we are under the shadow of the Blessed

Beauty. Our hearts are joyous with His glad tidings; we

breathe the fragrant breezes of the Abhá Kingdom; our

ears are delighted with the divine summons, and our

spirits are alive through heavenly bounties. Such a day

shall never be forgotten.

In the afternoon, after a short ride in Brooklyn’s large

public park, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned to New York. A group

of people had assembled at His residence to see Him.

Saying that He wanted to be alone for a while, He went to

a small garden by the bank of the river near His residence.

After a few minutes He returned and spoke to the friends

of the heavenly melodies.

Friday, June 7, 1912

[New York – Philadelphia]

One of our companions showed such grave negligence and

impudence that the heart of the beloved Master as well as

our own hearts were saddened.[[128]](#endnote-128) However, observing his

behavior and the forbearance of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, we have not

written about his actions, which were often the source of

grief to the Master.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had accepted an invitation from church

leaders in Philadelphia and left New York, even though He

was exhausted and greatly grieved.[[129]](#endnote-129) Nevertheless, He

gave two talks to the friends in Philadelphia, one during

the day and the other in the evening.[[130]](#endnote-130) He spoke on the

importance of the steadfastness of the friends and their

devotion and sincerity to the Cause and acceptance of

afflictions in the path of God. He stated that the purpose

of the Supreme Manifestation of Abhá in enduring the

severest persecutions and afflictions, and the troubles and

martyrdoms suffered by so many innocent souls, was for the

purification of the souls, the detachment of the hearts, the

happiness of the spirits and the spirituality of the friends.

Because of His extreme exhaustion, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did

not attend some of the meetings and gave His apologies.

But the friends, with increasing fervor and ardor, resem-

bling moths in the court of union, sang His praises and

glories like unto enchanted nightingales, desiring neither

sleep nor rest.

Saturday, June 8, 1912

[Philadelphia]

There were two large public meetings held in two

churches.[[131]](#endnote-131) In the morning, at the Unitarian Church,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on the reality of divine existence and

the meaning of the words of Christ that ‘the Father is in the

Son’. He gave the glad tidings of the Manifestation of the

Greatest Name and explained some of the new teachings,

concluding with a prayer chanted in Persian. The audience

was so transformed that everyone wanted to be near Him,

if only for a moment. But it was impossible for all.

The second meeting was held in the evening at the

Baptist Temple. As the distinguished pastor had previously

announced the visit of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the address He

was to deliver, and had also invited dignitaries and states-

men from Washington dc and vicinity, this meeting was of

great significance. The Master delivered a detailed address

on the methods of natural philosophy and of divine reli-

gion and then explained the teachings of the Supreme Pen.

His explanations made a great impression, attracting all

to His presence, such that everyone expressed humility and

sincerity. They appeared to be very happy and honored to

be in His presence. The Master’s heart was elated with the

meetings in Philadelphia and often made mention of them.

Sunday, June 9, 1912

[Philadelphia – New York][[132]](#endnote-132)

As the Master intended to leave Philadelphia for New York

in the morning, many friends were saddened at their

imminent separation from Him. They came to the railway

station in great sorrow to see Him off and all along the way

supplicated assistance and guidance from Him.

In the evening in New York, the Master gave the friends

a poignant account of His journey to Philadelphia, outlin-

ing the objective of His visit. He also spoke on spiritual

stations and the inner progress of the soul, which are the

ultimate fruits of human life.

Today the Master revealed many important Tablets.

One of them was to Monsieur Dreyfus:

O thou kind Friend,

I visited Philadelphia, for a few days, at the invitation

of two ministers and at the request of the friends of God.

Two large congregations gathered in the two churches and

I spoke within the measure of my incapacity. But the

confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom, as evident as the sun,

descended and enfolded us. Although we are powerless,

He is Mighty. Although we are poor, He is All-Sufficient.

The importance of this blessed verse became truly mani-

fest: ‘We … shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of

Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and

a company of Our favored angels.’[[133]](#endnote-133)

I hope that both you and the maidservant of Bahá will

be able to render important services on this journey and

will become the cause of proclaiming the Word of God.

Convey my respectful greetings to the maidservant of

Bahá. I pray God for confirmations and assistance for her.

May the Glory of the All-Glorious rest upon thee.

During this time, both day and night, many people besides

these servants were present at the table and enjoyed the

presence of the Master.

This evening He spoke of the days in Baghdád, saying:

The Blessed Beauty did not make any more public

speeches after leaving Baghdád and Adrianople. The

mode of His discourse and the style of His utterances were

a cause of wonder and were without peer or likeness.

However, out of respect, I do not wish to give my speeches

in that manner.

Monday, June 10, 1912[[134]](#endnote-134)

[New York]

After prayers and meditations in the morning, the Master

called us into His presence and requested that we chant

some prayers. Later He was occupied managing His affairs.

In the meeting with the friends today He spoke about

differences that arise within religions after the ascension

of their Founders, the Manifestations, to the heavenly

abode.[[135]](#endnote-135) But the Blessed Beauty has shut the door on such

differences and has referred all affairs to the House of

Justice so that whatever the House of Justice commands,

all must obey and submit to it. He said that if the Bahá’ís

should become divided into two branches, each establishing

a House of Justice of its own in opposition to the other,

both would be false. Bahá’u’lláh wrote His Covenant with

His own Pen and, prior to the establishment of the House

of Justice, He appointed and confirmed the Center of the

Covenant, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, directing that ‘whatever He does

is correct’.

The Master spoke with great emotion at the meetings

of the Bahá’ís, His exhortations accompanied by sighs of

grief. His condition during this time was such as to cause

great sadness.

In the afternoon He went to the house of the Persian

Consul, Mr Topakyan. When He returned home, one of the

friends questioned Him about the influence of dreams,

saying that it has frequently occurred that two people from

widely different places would call out to each other, recog-

nizing each other’s voices in the state of sleep. The Master

responded:

It is obvious that a very deep relationship exists between

the spirit of man and the world of existence. It often

happens that what we see in a dream comes to pass in

wakefulness; indeed, even in wakefulness when the soul

is unfettered, matters come to mind which later appear in

visible form. This shows that between the reasoning power

of man and that visible appearance there is a spiritual

connection. Furthermore, the spirit of man has the power

of discovering facts. When this power is realized, problems

become easily resolved. Amusingly, while materialists are

engaged in making discoveries concerning the strata of the

earth, they are immersed in the very spiritual power whose

potency and influence they deny. They also claim to

forecast coming events.

Such themes were frequently discussed in the Holy Presence.

Tuesday, June 11, 1912[[136]](#endnote-136)

[New York]

After the morning obligatory prayers and meditation, many

came to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Seekers and those with special

petitions visited Him in His room. He then went into the

sitting room and spoke to the visitors regarding the insin-

cere faith and blind imitation of people of various religions

and their branches, about the ultimate purpose of the

Prophets and the penetrating influence of the Cause of

Bahá’u’lláh.[[137]](#endnote-137) Before the meeting ended He was asked

how to reconcile two contradictory statements in the writ-

ings: that detachment from worldly affairs is enjoined and

that it is incumbent upon all to engage in a trade or profes-

sion. ‘Are not these commandments contradictory?’ The

Master replied:

In the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh it is obligatory for the individ-

ual to engage in a trade or profession. For instance, I know

mat weaving and you know another trade. The service we

perform is equivalent to worship if we perform it with truth

and trustworthiness; it is a cause of human advancement.

If the heart is not bound and attached to the world, if it is

unaffected by the vicissitudes of life, unhampered by

worldly wealth from serving humanity and not dejected

because of poverty, then this is a human perfection. Other-

wise, to profess generosity if one is poor, or justice when

one is powerless to extend it, is easy enough, but this will

not establish one’s spiritual education and awareness.

Another asked that if, after the Master left, some of the

believers considered themselves superior to others, how

they could be known. The Master replied:

I have already spoken about this matter. You should,

according to the saying of Christ, recognize them by their

deeds. Those who relate themselves to me will be known

by their deeds.

Wednesday, June 12, 1912[[138]](#endnote-138)

[New York]

As so many people come every day requesting to see

‘Abdu’l-Bahá alone, it is more than the Master can bear in

His state of fatigue and exhaustion. Therefore, He in-

structed us in the morning:

If anyone has not yet met me, or if anyone has some

urgent business, call them. All others I will meet in the

public gatherings because I have no time and it is impossi-

ble to see everyone individually.

After seeing a few seekers and settling the affairs of some

friends, He came downstairs and delivered a public address

on one of the great teachings of Bahá’u’lláh not found in

previous dispensations, which is the prohibition of cursing

enemies and to pray for their forgiveness.

At another meeting in the afternoon, one of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s discourses was on the importance of spiritual

relationship, intellectual affinity and sincere affection.

‘Although the nations and tribes’, He said, ‘have material

bonds between them, yet in the world of the heart and soul

they are in conflict. But those souls that have close spiritual

ties and affinities of the heart are always ready to sacrifice

their lives for one another, though they are not outwardly

related.’

He also spoke of the greatness of this dispensation:

In the Shí‘í tradition concerning this dispensation it is

recorded that knowledge is composed of twenty-seven

letters and that the divine messengers of the past from first

to last have revealed but two letters; however, when the

promised Qá’im comes, He will appear with all twenty-

seven.

Aside from the true meaning of this passage which

pertains to the power and might of the Cause of God, to

the revelation of verses and signs, to the solution of divine

problems, to the disclosure of the mysteries of the Holy

Book and to the spread of knowledge—each of which is

a hundred times greater in this mighty revelation than in

any previous one—materially, too, all the learned men of

this age agree that the advancements in knowledge, the

arts, industries and inventions of this century are equal to

those of the last fifty centuries, indeed, even greater than

that.

Thursday, June 13, 1912[[139]](#endnote-139)

[New York]

In the morning and afternoon several prominent ministers

visited the Master to invite Him to their churches. They left

happy and submissive after receiving the bounty of being

in His presence and witnessing the effulgence of His coun-

tenance. After they left, the Master spoke to the friends and

newcomers about the power and majesty of the Blessed

Beauty. With great power and dignity He related the story

of the last days of ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd[[140]](#endnote-140) and the malicious

accusations of the enemies and adversaries:

In spite of all these persecutions and afflictions, the Cause

of God triumphed and the Covenant of God gained influ-

ence. In fact, even members of the Commission of

Inquiry,[[141]](#endnote-141) who every hour ordered a more severe persecu-

tion and spread a fresh calumny and who had joined our

enemies and adversaries at ‘Akká with the aim of destroy-

ing and effacing us, were overtaken by the wrath of God

while returning to Constantinople. Affairs changed; all the

tyrants were debased; some of the members of this very

commission were killed or murdered; and some fled away.

Finally, one of them went to the believers in Egypt and

begged for minimum subsistence.

The Master gave two talks in the afternoon to the gather-

ings of the friends. The first was about the differences

among the Bahá’ís. ‘Bahá’u’lláh’, He said, ‘declared that

should Bahá’ís dispute, even if it be regarding Bahá’u’lláh

Himself, both are wrong. He has enjoined all to turn to the

House of Justice. But prior to its being established, all

matters should be referred to the Center of the Covenant

whom all are commanded to obey.’

After a brief rest, the Master went to another meeting

where He spoke on the distinguishing characteristics of the

world of humanity.[[142]](#endnote-142) His introductory words were as

follows:

I was tired and so I slept. While I was sleeping, I was

conversing with you as though speaking at the top of my

voice. Then through the effect of my own voice I awoke.

As I awoke, one word was upon my lips—the word *imtiyáz*

(‘distinction’). So I will speak to you upon that subject.

Friday, June 14, 1912[[143]](#endnote-143)

[New York]

The beloved Master called these Servants of His Threshold

into His presence, served us tea with His own hand and

showered us with great kindness. After a prayer was

chanted, He described the devotion, servitude, sincerity

and trustworthiness of some of the early believers and

expressed great kindness for Siyyid Muḥammad-Taqí

Manshádí.[[144]](#endnote-144) ‘His station and worth’, He said, ‘will be

appreciated in the future.’

In the afternoon at a public meeting He explained the

first verse of the Bible and spoke on the reality of the

Manifestations of God and the effulgence of the Sun of

Supreme Oneness. In the evening He spoke with majesty

and grandeur about the days of the Blessed Beauty:

Although He was a prisoner, He pitched His tent with

glory on Mount Carmel. Even outwardly His power and

majesty were such that for five years the governor of ‘Akká

wished to attain His presence but was not permitted to do

so by Him; indeed, He took no notice of him.

Later He gave an account of His many addresses in

churches and public gatherings in America, saying, ‘What

I have spoken is according to the capacity of the people

and the exigency of the time. “The father makes gurgling

sounds for the newborn infant, although his wisdom can

measure the universe.”’[[145]](#endnote-145) The Master gave a detailed

account of the signs of the Báb and of the Tablets of the

Abhá Beauty, relating them to the exigencies of the time.

Saturday, June 15, 1912[[146]](#endnote-146)

[New York – Brooklyn]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had been invited to two large churches in

Brooklyn and left New York at 10:00 a.m. Some of the

Persian and American friends accompanied Him. At 11:00

a.m. the Unitarian Church was graced with His presence.[[147]](#endnote-147)

As the carriage approached, we saw outside the church an

announcement in large letters saying ‘The Great Persian

Prophet, His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, will speak at 11:00

a.m. in this church on the 15th [sic] of June.’ What created

in us such a sense of wonder was that the pastor of the

church had placed the sign announcing the prophethood

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the door of his church! The moment the

Master arrived, the pastor came out, and taking ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s arm with great reverence, accompanied Him to the

pulpit. The Master’s address was on the degrees of oneness

and unity. At the close of His talk, He chanted, with His

hands uplifted and in a melodious tone, a prayer in elo-

quent Arabic that was translated sentence by sentence.[[148]](#endnote-148)

Afterwards, at the request of the pastor, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

visited the school, which is conducted in connection with

the same church. Here, after the children sang and paid

their respects to the Master, He encouraged them and

spoke to them regarding their education.[[149]](#endnote-149)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had lunch in Brooklyn at the home of Mr

MacNutt.[[150]](#endnote-150) There He spoke to a gathering of the friends

about the admonitions and exhortations [of Bahá’u’lláh],

saying that they should be thankful for the bestowals and

favors of God.

Later that day He went to the Congregational Church

in Brooklyn.[[151]](#endnote-151) The gathering and setting of the church

were impressive and magnificent and the breaths of the

Holy Spirit were felt by all. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left nothing

undone in conveying the teachings of the Cause of God. He

delivered a comprehensive address, speaking with authority

and majesty on the freedom of conscience, the unity of

religions, dogmatic imitations, the deprivation of people

and the reality of Islam. He concluded by declaring the

appearance of the Greatest Name and by explaining the

teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. Notwithstanding that the address

was primarily about the truth of Islam, everyone came to

Him to express their gratitude and thankfulness. Each

person, pastors and professors, rich and poor, men and

women, and especially representatives from the press,

praised Him. No one offered a single objection. The pastor

of the church was so earnest and overwhelmed by the love

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that he repeatedly requested the promise

of another visit. Owing to the Master’s many engagements

and little time, the invitation could not be accepted. On the

following day, the *Brooklyn Eagle* newspaper published

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address and a description of the gathering.

Sunday, June 16, 1912[[152]](#endnote-152)

[New York]

In the morning the Master spoke about the meeting held

the previous evening at the church in Brooklyn. ‘This is

how we establish the truth of Islam in synagogues, churches

and great temples. And see what the Muslims say about us?’

He gave a detailed account of the new teachings to an

eminent American author, who was to write about them and

who had requested permission from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to pub-

lish the work.

The subject of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk in a public meeting

today was, ‘However the material world may advance, it is

still in need of the teachings of the Holy Spirit’.

These days He often encourages the friends to teach the

Cause of God and to travel to neighboring countries. ‘You

must teach the Cause of God’, He said, ‘with great humility.

Just as I feel myself humble before all, even before children,

so must you be.’ He then spoke about the various degrees

of devotion.

In the days of the Blessed Beauty, I never had a desire to

write. The friends even complained about it. In reply I

finally wrote to Varqá[[153]](#endnote-153) saying, ‘When the shrill of the

Supreme Pen can be heard, what is the need of my writ-

ing?’ However, in the days of the Most Great Luminary

others wrote, referring to themselves, as the great sun of

God.

Monday, June 17, 1912[[154]](#endnote-154)

[New York – Brooklyn – New York]

At the request of the friends to take a motion picture of

Him, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to Mr MacNutt’s home in Brook-

lyn.[[155]](#endnote-155) The first scene is a hurried one, showing a ride in

an automobile and the respectful reception of the friends.

The second scene shows the Master walking, moving grace-

fully about and talking with His servants, saying:

Observe the power of the Ancient Beauty and the influence

of the Greatest Name through which He has united us with

the people of America in this way. If all the powers of the

world had joined forces, still it would have been impossible

that hearts could be attracted to such a degree and that we

should be assembled in a meeting such as this with so

much love, loving one another heart and soul. See what

the power of Bahá’u’lláh has done! He has made the

people of the East and of the West love one another. But

for His power, the holding of such an assembly would have

been impossible. Praise be to God that we are united and

that we are of one heart and soul.

In the third scene ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is shown walking alone,

speaking in a melodious voice, saying: ‘His signs are mani-

fest, His might is established, His bounty encompasses all

and His mercy is infinite.’

A fourth scene shows the beloved Master sitting among

the children of the American friends, both black and white,

while the Persian friends stand near Him.

The fifth scene shows a public meeting as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

moves about addressing the audience. Then follows a scene

of farewell, with the friends shaking His hand.

The friends were very happy at this large meeting.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address was this:

Rejoice! Rejoice! The Sun of Reality has dawned.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The New Jerusalem has descended from

heaven.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The glad tidings of God have been

revealed.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The mysteries of the Holy Books have

been fulfilled.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The Great Day has come.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The banner of the oneness of humanity

is hoisted.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The tent of universal peace is pitched.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The Divine Lamp is illumined.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The breezes of the Merciful are wafting.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The joyful tidings and promises of the

Prophets have come to pass.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The Glory of Carmel has shed its efful-

gence on the world.

Rejoice! Rejoice! The East and the West have embraced.

Rejoice! Rejoice! America and Asia like unto two lovers

have joined hands.

After the meeting the Master went to visit a Jewish friend,

a believer, who was ill at his home 40 miles from Brooklyn.

He returned to New York at night exhausted.

Tuesday, June 18, 1912[[156]](#endnote-156)

[New York]

At a public meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again spoke on the

Tablet of the Branch,[[157]](#endnote-157) His talk centering around the

Covenant and its promise. After the meeting, many

pleaded for a private interview and continued visiting Him

until noon.

Today He received the manuscript of *The Brilliant Proof*

written by Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl, which had been written in

answer to the objections of a minister in London. Being

pleased with the book, the Master instructed that it be

translated and published.

He also spoke of the malice, mischief and misdeeds of

the Azalís.[[158]](#endnote-158)

In the afternoon several friends visited and described

the picturesque scenery and interesting places of America.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

We love meetings of fidelity and not picturesque scenes.

We must first be faithful to God, to His ordinances and

Covenant and to His servants. If we wish to see places of

interest and picturesque scenes, we do so when we go

visiting or when we pass through such places and scenes.

Sometimes during these days ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would evince

a mood similar to that He had when He was staying in

Egypt, when He wished for martyrdom, desiring to be

sacrificed at the Threshold of God. Among the many

Tablets revealed at this time was one in honor of Áqá

Riḍáy-i-Shírází, Qannád, who had recently ascended to the

Abhá Kingdom.[[159]](#endnote-159) Some of the verses of the Tablet were

on this same theme:

Fidelity demands roaming over deserts and mountains.

True fidelity is attained when a wanderer, nameless and

traceless, becomes a target for the arrows of oppression on

the plain of martyrdom. O Lord! Ordain for Thy servant

the realization of his utmost wish, this bounty which shines

resplendent upon the horizon of fidelity, like unto the sun

arisen at dawn. One request I have to put to the loved ones

of Bahá, that they prostrate themselves before the holy

threshold, lay their heads on the ground and ask that the

sinful ‘Abdu’l-Bahá be granted the cup of immolation, so

that he may, in servitude to the threshold of Bahá, taste

the sweet savor of a drop from the ocean of fidelity.

Wednesday, June 19, 1912[[160]](#endnote-160)

[New York]

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is to go to Montclair tomorrow, He bade

farewell to the friends. Today He admonished and encour-

aged the friends, exhorting them to love and unity and to

refrain from differences and disagreements.[[161]](#endnote-161) Then, at the

request of Miss Juliet Thompson, He went to a photogra-

phy studio where several photographs were taken. As she

is an artist herself, she drew ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s likeness with

her own hands in a few days.

Many people were present in the afternoon. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá spoke with a minister about the prosperity of human-

kind and the oneness of the world of humanity.

Mrs Smith, a member of one of the distinguished fami-

lies in Philadelphia, had recently embraced the Cause and

had requested a Persian name. She was given the name

Tábandih [Light-giver] by the Master. As she had a head-

ache, He prescribed some medication for her, saying:

You must always be happy. You must associate with joyous

and happy people and be adorned with divine morals.

Happiness has a direct influence in preserving our health

while being upset causes illness. The basis of eternal

happiness is spirituality and divine virtue, which is not

followed by sorrow. But physical happiness is subject to a

thousand changes and vicissitudes.

Have you heard the story of the emperor who looked

into the mirror and became very sad and despondent? He

said, ‘Oh! What a healthy and vigorous body I had but how

worn it has become now! What a handsome face I had but

how ugly it has become now! What graceful stature I had

but how bent my body has become with age!’ Thus he

spoke one by one of the physical conditions of his youth

and expressed his sadness at their loss. Such is the end of

the physical happiness.

Another friend asked about tribulations and unexpected

accidents. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

The chain of creation is interwoven in a natural law and

divine order. Everything is interlinked. A link cannot be

broken without affecting that natural order. Everything

that happens is in conformity with this order and is

based on consummate wisdom. Because it is decreed by

God that every plant that grows must wither, all flourish-

ing vegetation must fade away, every combination must

disperse and all compositions must disintegrate. These are

the necessary consequences of that universal law and of all

relationships and is interpreted as divine decree.

In every meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gives this kind of philosoph-

ical explanation to complex problems, thus illuminating

the hearts.

Thursday, June 20, 1912[[162]](#endnote-162)

[Montclair]

The Master went to a house rented for Him in Montclair.

Since the weather in New York was hot and humid at this

time, the Montclair friends had begged Him to visit. Mr

Edsall’s relatives were elated and grateful for the beloved

Master’s visit. This servant told the Eastern friends that

there was a possibility that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would remain

there to rest from His arduous journey and overcome His

fatigue, which would alleviate the many troubles and hard-

ships of the past.

That night the Master spoke of the Blessed Beauty’s stay

in Baghdád and of His Declaration, about His teaching and

educating the servants of God.

Friday, June 21, 1912[[163]](#endnote-163)

[Montclair]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the Bahá’ís and

seekers of Montclair about the difference between the

kingdom of the Manifestation of God and the kingdom of

the material world. In the afternoon many believers from

near and far were honored to visit Him. He spoke about

some spiritual matters and counseled the friends that it is

forbidden to interfere in political matters and that they

should obey the laws of their country. Later, several friends

arrived with the minister of the Unity Church, who invited

the Master for a ride that they might receive His love and

bestowals. Today a courier arrived with a special invitation

from the Society of the Annual American Celebration

[Independence Day, the 4th of July]. However, the Master

did not promise to attend and deferred the matter depend-

ing on His schedule.

Saturday, June 22, 1912[[164]](#endnote-164)

[Montclair]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about the followers of

Yaḥyá, saying:

These people are following their false imaginings. They

say that the letter from the Báb to Yaḥyá begins thus:

‘From God, the Mighty, the Beloved, to God, the Mighty,

the Beloved.’ But this passage is also written at the begin-

ning of the letter to Dayyán[[165]](#endnote-165) and to others. In Tablets

revealed by the Blessed Beauty there are also many such

passages. The intent is an address from the Manifestation

to Himself. What does this have to do with Yaḥyá? In a

Tablet from the Báb to Yaḥyá and written in Yaḥyá’s own

handwriting, he is directed by the Báb to ascertain God’s

intention by asking Siyyid Ḥusayn, the amanuensis.

The Master then gave various accounts of their vain imag-

inings and the mischief they caused in both the spiritual

and material affairs of Persia. He also spoke about their

malicious calumnies against the sincere and trustworthy

Bahá’ís of the East and the West. He ended His talk with

an exposition on the erroneous notion prevailing among

some religious leaders that science is opposed to religion,

a belief that leads people to false dogmas and to adhere to

vain imaginings.

In the afternoon the Master gave an exposition on the

words of Christ: ‘He that desireth to follow Me, must bear

his own cross.’ He then mentioned the martyrs of this great

Cause and, referring to ‘Abdu’l-Vahháb-i-Shírází, said:

Before he left the prison to go to the altar of divine sacri-

fice, he came first and placed his head on Bahá’u’lláh’s

feet and kissed them. Having embraced all the friends, he

hastened to the plain of sacrifice, dancing and snapping

his fingers in ecstasy.[[166]](#endnote-166)

As the Master recounted this event, His voice became so

resonant and powerful that it caused the friends to tremble,

and then His mood changed. His body dancing and His

fingers snapping, He made such ecstatic cries it seemed

that the scene of martyrdom had been reenacted before our

very eyes.[[167]](#endnote-167) Afterwards, He said: ‘Compare the condition

and firmness of the martyrs of this Revelation with those

of the disciples of Christ, taking into account the station

attained. How great is the difference between this Day and

the past. How far the one is from the other.’

Friends and seekers gathered in the evening. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s response to Mr Edsall’s father-in-law was very

inspiring and impressive.[[168]](#endnote-168)

Sunday, June 23, 1912

[Montclair]

After morning prayers of thanksgiving, the Master, with

some of these servants, went to the market to purchase food

and utensils. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself supervised arrange-

ments in the kitchen. During this journey He often cooked

and prepared the meals, especially when there were special

guests. When there were no guests, He would not permit

us to go to the trouble of preparing special meals but

instead was satisfied with a piece of bread and some cheese.

With all this, His glory and majesty caused many to bow

humbly before Him. In fact, it was seldom that many did

not sit at His table both mornings and evenings to receive

the blessings and honor of His presence. After returning

from the market and completing His chores in the kitchen,

He spoke of the development of Europe:

The material progress of Europe is approaching its zenith.

Everything that reaches its zenith undoubtedly begins to

decline. I hope that spiritual progress will be bestowed on

them and that they will be protected.

It is obvious that whatever is growing, like a tree, is in

the process of development. When we were going from

Ṭihrán to Baghdád, there was not a friend to be found on

the way but as the tree of the Cause of God was in its

infancy and growing, it was apparent that the divine Cause

would surround the East and the West and the reign of

Náṣiri’d-Dín Sháh would come to naught. Observe what

has become of his sovereignty and consider where we are.

In the afternoon the hall of the building was full of people.

Many were standing in adjacent rooms to hear ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá. He began by saying:

It is not the place that should be looked at but the illu-

mined faces and hearts of the friends. In Baghdád there

was a small room, about one-third the size of this one, in

which a number of the believers were living—but under

the shade of the kindness of Bahá’u’lláh and they were

very happy.

Monday, June 24, 1912

[Montclair]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to us:

After the Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh I did everything within

my power to promote the Cause of God. I clung to

spiritual methods and rendered such servitude at the

Threshold of God so that the divine Cause might advance

throughout the world. And my correspondence was

so heavy that, at the time of the death of an American

maidservant of God, my letters to her were counted and

numbered sixty-seven; so you can imagine the situation!

When asked about His health at a gathering of the friends,

He replied:

Bodily health is not important. What is more important

is spiritual health which gives eternal pleasure and has

everlasting effect. The more the body is cared for, the

worse it becomes. Thus denial is preferable for the body.

I took only a cup of milk today and I feel much better.

Why should man undergo so much trouble and hardship

merely for the purpose of eating?

In the afternoon He gave detailed answers to questions

relating to His talks at Green Acre. He then spoke on the

blind imitations and prejudices of people.

Tuesday, June 25, 1912[[169]](#endnote-169)

[Montclair]

The Master was invited to breakfast at Mr Edsall’s home.

When He returned home, He found a number of Bahá’í

women, who had come from New York, wearing aprons and

cleaning the house. These elegant ladies were washing

dishes, sweeping, dusting the furniture and arranging the

carpets. They did this with such love and zeal that it is

beyond description. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

See what the power of the Blessed Beauty does! What

might and sway, what bounty and favor is this! He has

inspired these persons to serve with such sincerity and

love! They are washing dishes and sweeping the room.

They are serving with heart and soul.

He bestowed great favor on one of the ladies by inquiring

about her husband, Dr Krug, a prominent physician in New

York. She said to the Master, ‘From the moment He met

you, he has not only ceased his opposition but is now

helping me to serve the Cause.’

Later ‘Abdu’l-Bahá narrated the story of the conquest

of Islam in Persia and spoke about the prohibition of the

drinking of wine in the Qur’án. He said:

When the Muslims arrested the leader of the Zoroastrians

and flogged him for drinking wine, under the whip he

cried, ‘O Muḥammad of Arabia, what have you done! What

an influence you have shown!’ Now they must say, ‘O

Bahá’u’lláh, what have you done! With what power You

have made the proud ones the captives of love and have

united the East with the West!’

At a meeting at His home that afternoon, the Master

answered many questions. Among His pronouncements was

the prohibition of self-mortification. He directed that the

health and strength of the body be preserved, saying that

the more the physical body improves, the more it is capable

of making spiritual progress.

In the evening the drawing room and adjacent rooms

were filled with people. Because the friends opened the

gathering with singing and playing the piano in praise of

the Master, He spoke about spiritual music which can

enrapture the spirit and influence spirituality.

Wednesday, June 26, 1912

[Montclair – Newark]

To some people visiting the Master for the first time, He

spoke about Christ’s words to His disciples:

‘Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in

heaven’ [Matt. 16:19]. The Christians have not understood

its meaning. They imagine that it means the redemption

of sins through the Christian leaders. The intention of

Christ was to permit His disciples to elaborate or abrogate

the laws of the Torah, as He had altered only two, those

of the Sabbath and divorce. But, alas! The spiritual leaders

of the Christians did not grasp His meaning, so that when

the Greeks and Romans became Christians, some of the

idolatrous customs were incorporated into Christianity.

For example, the adornment of churches with images, self-

mortification, abstinence, monks’ habits, the lighting of

candles in church, the ringing of the bell in the steeple

and others. These are all from idolaters.

Another group came into ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence asking

about the mysteries of Sufism and reincarnation. Receiving

satisfactory answers, they left happy and pleased.

In the afternoon in Newark, near Montclair, both new

and old friends gathered at the home of Mrs Kerry.[[170]](#endnote-170) The

Master spoke to them on the life of the spirit and its effect

on the world of humanity and set aglow the fire of the love

of God in their hearts. He then went to the Military Park

and gardens, which is the best public place in the town. His

walk with His companions presented a magnificent sight.

Attired in our Persian *kuláhs*[[171]](#endnote-171) and Eastern dress, and

accompanying the Master and the several American men

and women who followed Him with great reverence and

humility, we formed a unique scene. All eyes turned to-

wards the dignity, beauty and glory of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to

that gathering of the East and West.

The Master then went to Mr Harris’ home where the

friends had gathered before dinner. The Master urged and

encouraged the friends to associate in love and unity with

all the peoples and nations of the world. After dinner,

because it was late and the distance was great, He rested

there for the night.

Thursday, June 27, 1912

[Newark – Montclair]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned to Montclair today and was in the

best of health and happiness. He was engaged all morning

explaining religion, dispensing the glad tidings of the Most

Great Manifestation and expounding on the veils that

envelop the people. Group after group came to Him, and

each left with the utmost devotion and humility.

In the afternoon, at the request of Mr Edsall and other

friends, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the park to rest for a while.

He said, as He left the tram at the entrance of the park,

‘What great changes have occurred! What waves have swept

over us and brought us here! Let us see what waves are still

to come.’

A gazebo was set on a small rise in the center of the park.

There the Master sat on a bench, inviting Mr Edsall, his

son-in-law and us to sit near Him. He stated, ‘The Commit-

tee of Union and Progress in Constantinople is very good

but both internal and external enemies are laying plans to

imprison me again on my return to the Holy Land.’ When

we said that it might have been better had He remained

in Egypt, He replied:

My beginning and my end, the place from which I start

and the place to which I return is the Holy Threshold.

What I have is from that Threshold and to it I shall return.

Had it not been for His aid and assistance, would these

people sitting on your right and left have any concern

about you and me? We must be just and speak the truth.

Who are we that we should be showered with these favors?

Compare the position of Persia with that of America.

Later He spoke about certain verses in the Qur’án, saying:

In reality these verses are the most convincing proof of the

all-sufficing greatness and nobility of the Prophet of God

[Muḥammad], Who, triumphant and powerful, yet sets

forth God’s address to Him with the words: ‘Thou didst

not understand, ere this, what “the Book” was, nor what

the faith was’ [Qur’án 83:52]. And, ‘Unless we had con-

firmed thee, thou hadst certainly been very near inclining

unto them [the unbelievers] a little. They would have taken

thee for a friend’ [Qur’án 17:73–4]. All such verses are

proofs of the truth and greatness of Muḥammad. An

imposter does not express weakness and ignorance when

in a state of power and majesty. However, the people of

desire interpret these verses otherwise.

Again, He said:

Once I said to Mírzá Muḥammad Qulí, ‘Do you remember

the days in Baghdád when we had not even fifteen paras[[172]](#endnote-172)

to have a hot bath? We must now appreciate the favors of

the Blessed Beauty and, in thankfulness, gird up our loins

to serve Him. He has guided, assisted and made us victori-

ous in this world as well as in His Kingdom.’

The Master spoke at length about the withdrawal of the

Blessed Beauty from Baghdád.[[173]](#endnote-173) He told of the prayers of

the friends of God who recited, ‘Yá Alláh-ul-Mustagháth’,[[174]](#endnote-174)

the receipt of the news of the bequest of Áqá Abu’l-Qásim-i-

Hamadání,[[175]](#endnote-175) their eventual tracing of Bahá’u’lláh to the

place in Sulaymáníyyih where He had taken abode, and

then their dispatching a petition to the Blessed Beauty for

His return.

The Master then got up and went towards the hotel.

When He entered it, two wealthy ladies, guests at the hotel,

were seated in the lobby. As soon as they saw Him they

requested permission to be introduced to Him. The Master

returned to the lobby a littler later and took a seat near

them. They asked His purpose and He related to them a

brief history of the Cause, something of the prison of ‘Akká

and the spread of the fragrances of God. They remarked

that He appeared to be very wealthy. He replied, ‘My riches

are of the Kingdom and not of this world.’ They said that

the signs of wealth were very evident. The Master then said,

‘Although I have nothing, yet I am richer than all the

world.’ Then He spoke about true wealth and the transient

nature of worldly affairs, citing passages from the Bible.

During this discourse an elegant couple passed by and,

hearing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s voice, stopped to listen to His

explanations. The two ladies and the couple were so aston-

ished and charmed that the believers were spellbound by

their transformation. The ladies gave their names and

addresses to Mr Edsall so that they might meet with the

friends and be counted among the people of Bahá.

What can I say? Every morning and evening hearts are

fascinated and souls attracted to the Abhá Kingdom by

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. This is accomplished even though He had

neither rest nor relaxation. He used to say, ‘If my happi-

ness and spirituality could come to the fore and my mind

be at rest, then you would see how hearts could be attracted

and souls set ablaze.’

When He returned home, He found a multitude waiting

for Him. The gathering was even larger than before, with

both new and old friends coming from New York, Newark

and Montclair. As it was the last evening of the Master’s

stay, the hearts were especially attracted and the minds full

of a unique spirit. He spoke on the need for the breaths of

the Holy Spirit in the material world and about the educa-

tion of humanity through divine power.

Friday, June 28, 1912[[176]](#endnote-176)

[Montclair – West Englewood]

As the Master had previously invited the friends in New

York to a Unity Feast in Englewood, He prepared to leave

Montclair in the morning. Although most Americans do not

awaken until after sunrise, some of the friends and their

children were waiting an hour before dawn to see Him and

to receive His blessings. Then another group arrived and

received His bestowals.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Montclair at half past eight in the

morning, passed through New York, and after changing

trams four times and passing twice by the river, He reached

Englewood. Tired from the journey and the warm weather,

having traveled from morning to noon, He briefly rested

at the home of Mr [Roy] Wilhelm.[[177]](#endnote-177) Meanwhile, the friends

began to arrive from the surrounding areas and gathered

on the lawn adjoining the house. The meeting was ar-

ranged in a circle under the trees, with almost two hundred

people seated at the table and being served by the Bahá’ís.

Everyone enjoyed the delicacies and was extremely happy.

The green lawn under the shade trees was strewn with

flowers so that it seemed as if an embroidered carpet had

been spread, every design indicative of the power of the

Covenant of the Ancient Beauty. To see the Master walking

in this green, flower-covered garden, with a gentle breeze

blowing, the purity of the air, the cleanliness of the

surroundings and the rejoicing of the friends, was most

pleasing; all seemed to vie with one another to please the

Master.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá entered the circle, He delivered a

very eloquent address on the greatness of the Cause, the

influence of the Word of God, the importance of the meet-

ings of the friends and the need for unity among the

friends of God. He counseled them to be truthful and

faithful.[[178]](#endnote-178) Afterwards He strolled in the rose garden.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave His permission for His photograph to

be taken and was photographed with two groups. In one

He is seated in the garden with His Persian servants stand-

ing around Him and in the other He is seen with the

friends, some of whom are seated while others are standing.

A minister and another important personage came to

visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He invited them into Mr Wilhelm’s

house and spoke with them until dinner was ready. He later

left the house to take a brief stroll. When the friends were

seated at the table, He took vials of attar of rose in His

hand and anointed, perfumed and blessed them all, one

by one. He thus made them the anointed of the Court of

Servitude and the recipients of the spirit of devotion to the

Threshold of God, for the bounties of the Holy Spirit had

descended and the favors of God encompassed all. Stand-

ing in the center of this assemblage of lovers, He spoke to

them in a voice that was sweeter than honey then returned

to Mr Wilhelm’s house.

That the friends were ecstatic today need not be stated,

since their Host was the Beloved of the Covenant, their

meeting was an assembly of love and amity, and the sur-

roundings were green and verdant with trees in full bloom

perfuming the air. There was a pilaf, a very delicious

Persian dish that had been prepared for the occasion,

sherbet, a Persian drink and many sweets. Everyone was

happy at the unity of the gathering. The Master said:

This meeting will be productive of great results. It will be

the cause of attracting a new bounty. This day in which we

have come together is a new day, and this hour a new

hour. These meetings will be mentioned in the future and

their results will be everlasting in all the divine worlds.

There were two more meetings: one in the afternoon and

the other in the evening in Englewood for some of the

friends who were not able to take part in the first meeting.

They took their seats in the garden adjoining Mr Wilhelm’s

house, sitting on chairs and benches in rows. After a short

walk, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá joined the visitors, sat down among

them and requested the chanting of a prayer. He then

spoke eloquently, encouraging the friends to spread the

fragrances of God. As He was about to leave, one of the

seekers asked Him, ‘What are the new teachings of this

Cause that are not to be found in the other great religions?’

The Master stood in the center of the garden and sum-

moned all to come near. They came and stood in two rows.

The Master walked between the rows and spoke. His expla-

nation was so magnificent that everyone was astonished.

During His discourse a carriage and automobile passed

near by. As they neared the gathering and saw ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, the carriage passengers stopped, alighted and they,

too, heard His speech and were attracted to the teachings.

The Master described, one by one, the teachings of the

Manifestation: the unity of humankind, universal peace,

association with all religions, forgiveness of enemies, the

prohibition of cursing foes, the equality of rights of men

and women, the establishment of the House of Justice and

the International Tribunal, compulsory education for both

boys and girls, the prohibition of wars between nations and

governments, and the harm of all forms of prejudice, be

they racial, religious, sectarian, patriotic, political and so

on. He spoke on these teachings extensively and in detail.

At the end, He asked the audience whether these principles

had been brought by past religious dispensations and

recorded in their books. They all responded ‘No’. The

inquirer was so overwhelmed that he clapped his hands in

delight, expressing his joy and gratitude.

Because it was a moonlit night, this talk was given in the

garden, so it was not recorded but these explanations can

be found in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s other addresses. After the

meeting, He remarked, ‘If these persons were to be con-

fronted with the question, what new teachings did Christ

bring other than changing the laws of the Sabbath and

divorce, they would be utterly confounded.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed in Englewood for the night.

Saturday, June 29, 1912[[179]](#endnote-179)

[West Englewood]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and we were invited to the home of the

Persian Consul General, Mr Topakyan.[[180]](#endnote-180) On the way the

Master stopped by the home of the minister who had

visited Him the previous day. When he saw the Master

approaching from the distance, he rushed out of his house

and with great humility and reverence thanked the Master

for gracing his home. His zeal and joy increased minute by

minute as he listened to the Master’s encouraging words.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then continued the journey by automobile

through the wooded countryside and went directly to the

home of the Persian Consul General in Morristown, which

is one of the most delightful places in the region. One of

its charming features is the creek that runs through the

green-clad hills whose trees and verdure face the Consul

General’s house. This beautiful setting appealed both to the

heart and the soul. After the arrival of the Master, who was

welcomed by the Consul General and his staff, several

important people were invited to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. A

number of reporters also interviewed Him and expressed

their delight in His answers to their questions. Around

lunch time, a photographer arrived and took two photo-

graphs of the Master, one before lunch was served and the

other while He was seated at the table. In brief, the Consul

General was most courteous and humble in the Master’s

presence, to such an extent that he refused to sit without

permission. He recorded ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk and conversa-

tions for publication in the newspapers and was honored

to host the Master.

After the Master had a brief rest and a stroll in the

afternoon, another reporter came to the house. As he

listened to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s explanations about the teachings,

he recorded them for publication. Then with great majesty,

dignity and grandeur, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left for New York.

When He arrived home, He did not permit us to prepare

dinner for Him. Instead, He ate some watermelon and

bread and retired for the night.

Sunday, June 30, 1912[[181]](#endnote-181)

[New York]

In the morning, after His obligatory prayer and supplica-

tions, the Master invited us into His presence and served

us tea with His own hand. He spoke of the blessings and

confirmations of the Ancient Beauty, the Greatest Name:

This help and assistance are from Him and these confir-

mations are through His bounty and favor; otherwise, we

are nothing but weak servants. We are as reeds and all

these melodies are from Him. We are ants and this dignity

of Solomon is from Him. We are servants and this heav-

enly dominion is from Him. We must, therefore, offer our

constant gratitude to Him for His favors and must join

heart and soul to praise Him for His blessings.

As His home[[182]](#endnote-182) is always filled with a continuous stream of

visitors, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not accept invitations from

societies or organizations to speak at public meetings.

Instead He spoke to the people gathered in the evenings,

gave special audiences during the day and attended to

other tasks. This evening He spoke about His long stay in

New York. ‘As it is the meeting place of the East and the

West,’ He said, ‘I desire to make it a center of signs, and

pray that the friends may advance and gain precedence in

spirituality.’[[183]](#endnote-183)

Apart from these gatherings and meetings, the Master’s

walks outdoors attract everyone and His graciousness cap-

tivates all.

Monday, July 1, 1912[[184]](#endnote-184)

[New York]

During the Master’s stroll in the park near the house, a

person of Greek descent walked by. When he saw ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, he was attracted and approached Him. The passerby

immediately summoned his friends, who were in the park,

to gather round. In those green surroundings the Master

spoke to them about Greek philosophers and about the

progress and civilization of their country in ancient times.

He then exhorted and encouraged them to acquire the

virtues of the world of humanity. He was so compelling that

they were immediately influenced. That evening they came

to the Bahá’í gathering and became yet more links in the

chain of lovers.[[185]](#endnote-185)

Every night after the public meeting, seekers are invited

to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His own room. As they listen to His

solutions to complex spiritual problems, to His convincing

arguments and to answers to their questions, they are

drawn towards the Kingdom of God and attracted to the

Abhá horizon. Although it is summer and intensely hot,

every day and night a new group of inquirers is introduced.

Tuesday, July 2, 1912[[186]](#endnote-186)

[New York]

After the usual morning prayers and thanksgiving to God,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent for us and offered thanks and praise to

the Most Great Name for the assistance and protection

vouchsafed by the Ancient Beauty.

The Master spoke with seekers and visited with friends

until noon. After some milk and bread for lunch, He rested

for a while but the friends and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s companions

remained to enjoy the generous lunch.

In the afternoon, a prominent gentlemen invited the

Master to the Plaza Hotel, which is one of the most elegant

hotels and a gathering place for the American elite. We

went there to see the building. The Master sat in one of the

small rooms. When the manager of the hotel offered to

show Him the rest of the hotel, He did not accept. After-

wards the Master said to the friends: ‘When I see magnifi-

cent buildings and beautiful scenery, I contrast them with

memories of the prison and of the persecutions suffered by

the Blessed Beauty and my heart is deeply moved and I

seek to avoid such sightseeing excursions.’

Tonight He spoke about God and creation: ‘The King-

dom of God’, He said, ‘is pre-existent and, since He is the

Creator, without doubt He has always had a creation.’

Wednesday, July 3, 1912[[187]](#endnote-187)

[New York]

Today was the anniversary of the independence of the

United States from England. There were celebrations

everywhere. The Master was invited to attend the Fourth

of July parade to which the mayor was also invited. A

special messenger had been sent to the Master at Montclair

with the invitation. He replied then that He would come

if His schedule would permit. As it was not a spiritual

occasion, the Master did not go but in order to show His

interest, He sent us, His companions, wearing our Persian

hats and *‘abás*. We arrived before the mayor, were received

with great honor as representatives of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and

were given seats near the mayor’s chair. There were people

there from many nations including China, Japan, Turkey

and India, as well as members of the American military and

businesses carrying flags and decorations for the celebra-

tion. All of these passed before the mayor and were fol-

lowed by parades of men, women, boys and girls in gala

dress and singing sweetly. As they passed by the mayor’s

stand, he spoke to all gracefully and kindly. After the

parade it was the turn of the poets and speech-makers.

When we returned from the event to the Master, we

described all that had taken place. It was well that He did

not go because the excessive heat and crowds would have

been a strain to His strength and health. Whenever it is

beneficial to the interests of the Cause, He endures every

kind of hardship. For example, on certain days during this

journey, in spite of exhaustion and fatigue, He went to

faraway places and attended many gatherings in the course

of one day. He said, ‘I am continually speaking from morn-

ing until evening. Not even the strongest person would

have such patience and fortitude.’

In the afternoon, at the request of friends, He went for

an automobile ride into town. In the evening He spoke at

length in His home about the coming of the Promised

one.[[188]](#endnote-188)

Thursday, July 4, 1912[[189]](#endnote-189)

[New York]

A number of people met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the morning. He

spoke to them about divine knowledge and the spiritual

stations which lead to eternal life—the ultimate goal of

human existence. A black youth was there, to whom the

Master gave the name ‘Mubárak’ [‘happy’], and to a black

woman He gave the name ‘Khush Ghadam’ [a person who

brings good fortune, welcome news, good omen]. He spoke

to them about the importance of harmony between the

white and black races of America and described the various

meetings attended by both blacks and whites and the talks

given at them which dealt with this question.

Mrs Kaufman asked about the influence of heavenly

bodies on human affairs. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

The words of the astrologers are for the most part doubtful

and unreliable. But the whole of creation is interrelated

like the different parts of the human body which have a

complete affinity from the toenail to the hair on the head.

Every part is perfectly connected with the other. Similarly,

the whole of creation forms a chain composed, as it were,

of many links connected with each other. It is therefore

obvious that they all greatly influence each other and are

part of organized, regular cycles.

He was then asked about the connection between the soul

and the body. He replied, ‘It has the same connection as

the sun has with the mirror. Death consists of the severance

of this connection.’

‘Some say that your prayers and promises for us have

come true and are being completely fulfilled.’

‘I always pray with complete self-effacement and humbly

implore confirmations from the Kingdom of Abhá.’

‘Do you feel the excessive heat? Does it affect your

health?’

‘I am so absorbed that I feel neither the heat nor the

cold. It is all the same to me.’

Today the Master was occupied in revealing Tablets for

the Eastern friends. Notwithstanding the heavy pressure

of work, He does not delay answering important questions.

There was a large crowd in the evening to whom He

spoke about the various kingdoms of creation and the

virtues of the world of existence. After the meeting several

seekers visited the Master in His room. He answered their

questions regarding the stations of divinity and the journey

in the path of knowledge and servitude. Everyone was

pleased and delighted and joined us in offering praise and

glory to God.

Friday, July 5, 1912

[New York]

Some Tablets were revealed for friends in California,

consoling them because of their separation from Him since

He was not traveling to that state at the present time. Most

of the friends on the West Coast of America had not yet had

the honor to see Him. When they learned of His intention,

they were saddened and sent telegrams begging Him to

visit their state.

Today, at the invitation of Juliet Thompson, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá went to a museum near His house.[[190]](#endnote-190) On the first

floor there were statues, figures of animals and a collection

of relics of early American civilization. On observing these

objects, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘From these things it appears

that America had a great civilization in ancient times.’

In the evening, He spoke to a large number of friends

and seekers at His home about detachment from physical

desires and the attainment of everlasting life. Everyone was

delighted.[[191]](#endnote-191)

Saturday, July 6, 1912

[New York]

After morning prayers and visits with some Bahá’ís and

non-Bahá’ís, the Master went for a long walk. It was His

custom to go out for a walk before lunch and dinner.

A person of Greek ancestry invited the Master to go to

a park outside of the city where a number of his friends,

who desired to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, had gathered. The

Master went to the park. While traveling on the subway, He

said:

In man’s nature there must be a desire to ascend and not

to descend. The underground air is suffocating. It would

have been better if we had gone by road above. The

Blessed Beauty used to say that it is even a pity that the

dead body of man should be buried under the ground.

When the Master entered the park, He sat on the grass and

those who wished to meet Him came to Him.

Much of the time was spent listening to a translation of

a long article that appeared in today’s issue of *The Sun*

concerning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at a church. The reporter

had been present when the address was given and had

published the translation, adding a brief history of the

Cause. In his article, he emphasized the force of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s reasoning in establishing the truth of all of the

Manifestations of God, and in particular of Islam and this

mighty Cause.

The newspaper was sent to the Assemblies in the East

so they would be informed of the influence of the Cause

and the prestige of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. In addition to such

articles and comments in the newspapers of many cities,

both Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís wrote eulogies and poems in

praise of the Master. Everyone was full of praise for Him,

which demonstrates the influence of the Cause in the West.

There were even short, sweet poems written in English

about His manners and mode of speech. Foremost among

such poets was Mr [Frank K.] Moxey. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

was staying in New York, Mr Moxey had written a booklet

eloquently praising Him, which he intends to publish in the

near future.

This evening the Master explained that the distinction

of the world of humanity is due to its relationship to the

world of the spirit.[[192]](#endnote-192)

For some time the Master had repeatedly instructed Lua

Getsinger to return to California. She delayed her journey

and then became ill. When the doctor’s medications proved

of no avail, the Master gave her pomegranate preserve with

an apple and she recovered.[[193]](#endnote-193)

Sunday, July 7, 1912

[New York]

Lua Getsinger was again instructed by the Master to leave

for California. His words to her were very emphatic and

clear; among them was this admonition:

The Blessed Beauty entered into this Covenant for obedi-

ence and not for opposition. I say this merely for the

protection of the Cause of God and for the purpose of

safeguarding unity among the friends. Were it not for the

removal of vain imaginings and the eradication of differ-

ences, I should not have asserted that I am ‘the Center of

the Covenant’. We must obey the Blessed Beauty. We must

never forget His favors and exhortations. If even a breath

of egotism is found in us, we shall perish at once. The

friends must be alert. Everyone who expresses a word not

from the texts sows discord among the believers. The

Blessed Beauty entered into this Covenant for obedience;

that is, that no one should utter a word from his own self

or cause any conflict. If it were not so, everyone would

open a way for himself and expound the Words of God in

his own manner. One would say, for instance, ‘As I have

the power of the Holy Spirit, I have a greater capacity for

understanding.’ Others, even these old ladies, would at

once retort, ‘We, too, have the power of the Holy Spirit.’

The power of the Holy Spirit is limited to the Blessed

Beauty and the interpretation thereof to none but me. If

it is so, then there will be no differences. We must occupy

ourselves with thoughts of spreading the Cause. Know that

whoever has any thought other than this will become the

cause of discord among the friends.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent Lua with Mrs [Georgia] Ralston, a new

believer who had been very much welcomed by the Master.

He gave Mrs Ralston a beautiful small Persian carpet.

In the evening at a public meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

of the animosity shown by a Catholic priest towards the

Cause of God. The Master called the friends to His pres-

ence and emphatically exhorted them to associate with one

another with love and unity.

Monday, July 8, 1912

[New York]

After His prayers, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá called to Him, one by one,

the friends, old and new, who had assembled at His house.

Each had a particular request or question. They came into

His presence and each had a portion of this bounty. Mr

Hoar’s family was invited to dine at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s home.

As it was very warm and because of His heavy schedule, the

Master did not get any rest until the afternoon when He

went for a walk in a park adjacent to His house. He walks

in the park, situated on the bank of the river, every day. Mr

Moxey described ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s walks in that park in a

beautiful poem.

Several friends came to see the Master in the afternoon.

The name of Mr Barakatu’lláh of India was mentioned.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

This man culls the teachings of the blessed Cause and

publishes them in the name of Islam in the illusive hope

of building an imaginary castle and of deriving some profit

by deceiving the Muslims. But in the long run he will see

nothing but manifest loss.

At the public meeting this evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk was

on the dual nature of man. He said: ‘There are two natures

in man. The realization of human virtues and perfections

depends on the ascendancy of the spiritual over the animal

nature in him.’

Tuesday, July 9, 1912

[New York]

A number of friends were waiting for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá when

He arrived with a paper from Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl in His

hand. He gave it to us and said, ‘Read it. It is very interest-

ing.’ It was an answer to criticisms of one Siyyid ‘Abdu’lláh,

an enemy of the Cause. These criticisms are themselves

more proof of the greatness of the Center of the Covenant

than are the praises of the friends. Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl has

recorded the very words of this critic in his book.[[194]](#endnote-194)

Although that Siyyid had embraced Christianity, thus

retrogressing, he appeals in his pamphlet to the peoples

of the world, even the Zoroastrians and Jews, to cooperate

with him in his opposition to the Bahá’í Faith. The English

press of Cairo published his pamphlet in the month of

Naysán[[195]](#endnote-195) 1912. In his pamphlet, he attributes the success

of the Cause to the virtues and perfections of the Center

of the Covenant. Below is a passage from the second chap-

ter of his pamphlet:

And when we reflect upon his [the Master’s] work and the

work of his father, we find a great difference between the

two. The foundation laid down by Bahá’u’lláh did not rise

except very little. It was not even apparent to the eyes of

outsiders. But what has been built upon it by ‘Abbás

[‘Abdu’l-Bahá] since the time of the passing of his father,

which does not exceed twenty years, is really striking. We

see millions of people of various religions and diverse

denominations such as Muslims, Christians, heathens,

Buddhists and Hindus drawn and attracted to His Cause

from such remote countries as America, Caucasia, Russia,

Great Britain and the shores of India.

In the fifth chapter, he wrote:

What vast genius, striking intelligence, consummate

opulence and tried virtue has enabled ‘Abbás Effendi to

attract multitudes of people from diverse denominations

and languages? Even this month he received hundreds of

letters from his American friends, supplicating him to visit

them. They sent 1,000 guineas[[196]](#endnote-196) to defray the expenses

of his journey. He granted their request as he had prom-

ised them last year, but sent back their guineas with thanks

and apology, saying that it was not his custom to accept

such things. Consider this great opulence which was

related to me by one of his followers and also spoken of

by some Egyptian papers. Look to this virtue and piety

which is the cause of love and affection as is said by our

ancestor, the author of Islamic law: ‘Be indifferent to what

the people possess and the people will love you.’

At the table the Master read this paper and smiled. He

remarked that according to the words of the Qur’án, the

deniers said to the Messenger of God, ‘Verily, Thou art an

insane one.’ But now, according to the words of the deniers

of the Cause, ‘vast genius, striking intelligence, consum-

mate opulence, tried virtue’ and the majesty of the Center

of the Covenant have become a cause for the attraction of

hearts. The preeminence and power of the Cause is estab-

lished even by the words of its enemies. Today the services

of Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl were mentioned repeatedly by ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá.

Wednesday, July 10, 1912

[New York]

People from many different backgrounds continuously

visited the Master. It seemed He was not silent for a mo-

ment. At one time He spoke of the discord among the

various branches of Christianity, and at another, the de-

grees of divine oneness. He spoke of the despair of the

material world and advanced decisive proofs of the neces-

sity for divine power. The next moment He discussed the

tribulations and persecutions suffered by the Ancient

Beauty and the eventual victory of the Cause of God over

all the powers of the world. At yet another moment He

spoke of the veils which obscure the people at the time of

the appearance of the Manifestation of the Preexistent

Beauty. One of the explanations given today concerned the

meaning of the Tablets of chrysolite mentioned in the

*Hidden Words*,[[197]](#endnote-197) about which one of the friends had asked.

The Master replied:

What is meant is one of the holy Tablets. But it also alludes

to the fact that the divine Tablets should be engraved on

precious stones. In addition, there is a saying in the East

by which the color white symbolizes divine will; red, divine

decree and martyrdom; green, predestination; and yellow,

execution of the decree.

The day was cloudy and rainy. The weather in New York

is like the rainy season in India. The evening was cooler,

and when the rain stopped, a large number of friends and

seekers came to visit the Master. He spoke to them about

the outpouring of the showers of mercy and divine bounty

and the fact that the bounties of the All-Bounteous God will

never cease.

Today Mr and Mrs Clark said they wished to visit the

Master and to obtain permission to go to Tabríz in Persia.

The Master asked Valíyu’lláh Khán-i-Varqá to write and ask

them to wait a little while. But as they came so eagerly and

quickly to New York to secure permission, saying that they

had been invited by the people of Tabríz, He permitted

them to leave for Persia.

Thursday, July 11, 1912[[198]](#endnote-198)

[New York]

After morning prayers and meditation, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

bestowed His favors upon the friends and well-wishers,

especially on Mrs Goodall and Mrs Cooper and other

friends from California, confirming and assisting them.

While He conversed with the friends, He also wrote Tablets

in response to petitions from the believers.

Among those who visited Him today were two eminent

clergymen: one was Dr Grant, the minister of the Church

of the Ascension, and the other Dr Ives of the Brotherhood

Church of New Jersey. They have frequently visited the

Master, showing Him the utmost respect and reverence.

In the afternoon there was a meeting of the friends at

the home of Miss Juliet Thompson.[[199]](#endnote-199) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá encour-

aged them to hold as many meetings as possible. ‘Promise

each other’, He said, ‘to visit one another’s homes so that

it may be the cause of promoting love and happiness.’ After

His eloquent discourse, sherbet and sweets were served and

then He left the meeting.

At the evening gathering at His house ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

spoke on the degrees and station of creation, the maturity

of the world and the magnitude of the Dispensation of the

Ancient Beauty. The meeting lasted until dinner was ready.

He sat at the table and invited all the friends from America

to dine with Him. At this point a lady asked, ‘Up to the

present time, not a single woman has appeared as a Mess-

enger from God. Why have all the Manifestations of God

been men?’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied:

Although women are equal to men in abilities and capaci-

ties, there is no doubt that men are bolder and physically

more powerful. This distinction is also apparent in the

animal kingdom, for example among pigeons, sparrows,

peacocks and others.

Friday, July 12, 1912

[New York]

As the heat was excessive and because He had been reveal-

ing Tablets and visiting with the friends, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was

tired. We said that there was a bath in the house and that

the Master could have His bath every day. He said: ‘We are

like soldiers; we must not form any habits or have a care for

anything.’

At another time He was asked how He liked the tall

buildings in America. He replied:

I have not come to see very tall buildings or places of

interest in America. I look always for the foundation of the

love of God in the realm of the hearts. I have no inclina-

tion to see other sights.

At a meeting with the friends in the afternoon He ex-

plained the uniqueness of the divine teachings of this great

Cause. Among them are the establishment of the Covenant

and the Expounder of the Book [‘Abdu’l-Bahá], thereby

closing the door on the differences that have arisen at the

inception of past Dispensations; association with all reli-

gions; the prohibition of cursing or execrating other sects;

the commandment to forgive enemies; the oneness of

humanity and universal brotherhood; the giving and taking

in marriage from all nationalities; the injunctions to par-

ents to educate their children, whether boys or girls; the

equality of the rights of men and women; the establishment

of the supreme House of Justice as the center of authority;

and finally the relinquishing of religious, patriotic, racial

and political prejudices. His talk was long and very de-

tailed.

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was invited to Brooklyn and

we accompanied Him. On the way He spoke about New

York’s large population and the occupations of the people:

This city with its suburbs has about half the population of

Persia. If Persia had a population and an affluence like

this, and had she turned herself to progress, she would

have far excelled this country in all respects. There can be

no comparison whatsoever between these people and the

manners, love, hospitality, intuition and sagacity of the

Persians.

He then described the days of the Blessed Beauty’s sojourn

in Constantinople, the self-subsistence and grandeur of the

Ancient Beauty and the testimony of Mírzá Ḥusayn Khán,

who had said in Ṭihrán that there was only one person,

Bahá’u’lláh, who had been the cause of glory and exaltation

of the Persians in foreign lands and who did not court

anyone’s favor in that city.

After approximately an hour’s drive, the carriage

stopped at the home of Mrs Newton and Mrs Rivers. After

a short rest, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the table for dinner.

Afterwards, He thanked the hostesses, spoke briefly and

then returned home. On the way back He spoke about the

difference in time between the East and the West. ‘Here it

is almost midnight,’ He said, ‘while in the East it is midday

and in other countries it is afternoon. Here we are going

to sleep, while in the East they are busy doing work.’

While the carriage was in motion it felt less hot but the

long distance and the exceedingly hot weather took their

toll on ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The carriage crossed the Hudson

River, passing through the length of the city, which was

bedecked with gas and electric lamps of red, yellow and

green and colorful advertisements along its wide streets

and in the shops. The light emanating from them threw

a luster on the greatness of this mighty century. Then the

carriage reached home.

Saturday, July 13, 1912[[200]](#endnote-200)

[New York – West Englewood]

Today was a very happy day. The Master had been invited

to speak at the Unitarian Church of New York. The pastor

of the church [Rev Leon A. Harvey] advertised the talk in

the newspapers and also posted announcements outside the

church to the effect that the ‘Great Persian Prophet will

speak at 11:00 a.m. on July 13, 1912 [sic]’.[[201]](#endnote-201) A large

multitude assembled. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was welcomed by the

pastor, who escorted Him into his office. When the music

and singing began, the Master came out. The pastor gave

a short and interesting account of the history of the Cause

and spoke of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s incarceration in the Most

Great Prison in ‘Akká, after which he introduced the Mas-

ter to the audience.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá stood and spoke on the oneness of the

world of humanity and the principles of divine religion. His

talk gave everyone fresh insight, opened new vistas before

every eye and engendered a new spirit in every heart. At

the end of His talk He chanted a prayer in a melodious

voice, which stirred the souls and made everyone long to

offer their prayers and supplications to the Kingdom of

God. Not wishing to greet the audience one by one owing

to the excessive heat and the strain of His exertions, the

Master went into the pastor’s office and waited. The pastor

told ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that people from the audience were

waiting outside to shake hands with Him and to thank Him

so the Master came out and stood on the platform. In great

humility and reverence the people came one by one in a

file from one side, shook His hand and left from the other

side. Those who had not known of His presence in America

asked for His address so they could visit Him.

On the way home from the church, the carriage passed

through the spacious parks and gardens of the city. While

the carriage was crushing the flowers and grass under its

wheels, it seemed as if it were exacting tribute from the

kings and bestowing crowns and thrones upon the poor.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about the distribu-

tion of wealth and the means of livelihood, thus correcting

some of the erroneous notions of the socialists.

At night ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to Mr Wilhelm’s home in

Englewood where a group of seekers, after hearing His talk,

stated that they had been longing for such teachings for

years. He then went to the home of Mr [Louis] Bourgeois

for dinner.

Sunday, July 14, 1912[[202]](#endnote-202)

[West Englewood – New York]

The Master returned to New York in the morning and went

directly to Mrs Sieglar’s home to see her mother; who was

unable to walk because of a foot ailment but who longed to

see the beloved Master and attain His presence. When her

desire was made known to the Master, He immediately

decided to visit her. The ailing woman was very pleased

and happy and found in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the fruit of her life

and a feeling that she had been newly born.

When He returned to His residence the Master con-

versed until noon with the many seekers who had come to

visit Him. Several distinguished ladies met with Him later

in the afternoon at Mrs Krug’s home. He spoke to them

about the education and training of women and after a

period of questions and answers He left the gathering.[[203]](#endnote-203)

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the meeting at His

home centered on two groups—the materialists and theists.

He spoke about divine power and demonstrated its outward

influence on human souls in every cycle. After the meeting

other seekers arrived and remained for some time before

departing.

Being greatly exhausted and fatigued, the beloved

Master did not take dinner but instead went directly to bed.

Monday, July 15, 1912

[New York – Brooklyn]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá held in His hand a copy of the address He

delivered at the Baptist Church in Philadelphia. He said:

‘I present my subjects and explanations in such a way that

no one can refute or argue with them. They are accepted

by people of understanding and wisdom.’ Later He went

downstairs where several people were waiting to see Him.

Among them were some friends from California. He

stressed the fact that all activities should be undertaken

only with His permission so that no breach of the love and

unity of the believers might occur.

There was a cheerful and animated gathering at Mr

MacNutt’s home in Brooklyn during the afternoon and

evening. The greatest blessing and bounty at the meeting

was the manifestation of fellowship and unity among the

Bahá’ís under the shadow of the banner of the Covenant

of God. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s great joy was reflected in His face

and all the friends were enthralled and enraptured. The

Master spoke several times. After He had explained some

spiritual matters, He would leave the house to take a short

walk and then return to speak to them again. He encour-

aged the friends to serve the Faith, then explained the

meaning of the signs of the fulfillment of prophecies. He

expressed His joy at the unity and harmony of the Bahá’ís

and bestowed His blessings on them. His stay in New York

brought about great results and effected the fellowship and

unity of the friends.

Tuesday, July 16, 1912[[204]](#endnote-204)

[Brooklyn – New York]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned to New York to find a large group

gathered at His home, waiting for Him. At the meeting the

Master shone as a lamp and burnt away the veils of super-

stition. One eminent woman, a doctor, asked him: ‘What

is the cause of all these calamities and troubles in the world

of creation?’ He replied:

Calamities are of two kinds. One kind results from bad

morals and misconduct such as falsehood, dishonesty,

treachery, cruelty and the like. Surely, misdeeds bring

forth evil consequences. The other kind is the result of the

exigencies of the contingent world, of consummate divine

law, and of universal relationships, and is that which is

bound to happen, as, for instance, changes, alterations, life

and death. It is impossible that a tree should not wither

or that life should not end in death.

Answering questions from the audience, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

explained that God is holy beyond comprehension, appear-

ance, ascent and descent, ingress and egress, thereby

correcting the erroneous notions of some philosophers and

ascetics. The Master’s explanations were long and very

convincing.

A wonderful meeting was held in the evening. Two very

dear friends, Mr Harlan Ober and Miss Grace Robarts were

married.[[205]](#endnote-205) Besides the many friends, many others were

present, including a very devoted Christian minister

[Howard Colby Ives]. The Master had instructed that the

wedding be performed according to the law of Christianity

and it was performed by the minister. After the ceremony,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose and chanted a prayer, blessing the

marriage of the two devoted believers. Congratulations

were given and everyone praised the ceremony.

Wednesday, July 17, 1912[[206]](#endnote-206)

[New York]

In the morning, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

The holding of last night’s meeting was done with wisdom

and it produced great love. The marriage of the Bahá’ís

was also performed according to Christian rites, so that the

world may know that the people of Bahá are not confined

by trivial customs, that they respect all nations and their

peoples, that they are free from all prejudices and associ-

ate with all religions with utmost peace and happiness.

He then said:

My discourses in various gatherings have been founded

on principles that are in conformity with reality as well as

with the utmost wisdom. For instance, I say that the foun-

dation of all divine religions is the same and that the

Prophets are the dawning places of truth. No one can take

exception or say that the principles of the Prophets and

the truth of their teachings are different. Then I state that

the basic teachings of Bahá’u’lláh are universal peace; the

oneness of humanity; prohibition of execration and cal-

umny; association with the followers of all religions in

harmony and unity of nations, of races and of govern-

ments; and such like. I ask, did any of these principles

exist in former books and religions? At the end of the talk

I say that the laws of the divine religions are of two kinds:

the first deals with spiritual verities which are one and the

same in all religions; the other with laws which change

according to the exigency of the time. For example, it is

written in the Torah that if one breaks the teeth of an-

other, his teeth must also be broken; and if one blinds the

eyes of another, his eyes must also be blinded. For the sake

of one dollar the thief’s hand was to be cut off. Now, can

such laws be permitted and enforced in this age? Surely,

no one can say it is permissible. In this way, all answers to

important questions have been elucidated perfectly and

none can deny them or protest against them.

Thursday, July 18, 1912[[207]](#endnote-207)

[New York]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk today centered on the persecutions and

tribulations of the Blessed Beauty and the triumph of the

Cause of God in the face of opposition from the most

powerful enemies.

When the Master later expressed His intention to move

from New York to Dublin [in New Hampshire], the friends

were stirred by emotion and excitement. He said:

My weakened condition and excessive work hamper me,

otherwise many extraordinary souls would have arisen

among these friends. As long as such souls do not arise,

the real object will not have been accomplished. A certain

amount of enthusiasm and ability can be discerned among

them, it is other persons who are to arise.

He then mentioned the names of Mullá Ḥasan and Mullá

‘Abdu’l-Laṭíf,[[208]](#endnote-208) saying:

They were deputized by the mujtahid[[209]](#endnote-209) to see the Blessed

Beauty in Mázandarán. The moment they approached

Him, they were transformed and became a new creation,

not seeking rest for a moment whether by day or night.

After undergoing great suffering and persecutions in

Mashhad, Mullá ‘Abdu’l-Laṭíf sacrificed his life in the field

of martyrdom and hastened to the Abhá Kingdom. Simi-

larly, a blind Indian Shaykh[[210]](#endnote-210) attained the presence of

Bahá’u’lláh in Mázindarán and danced and sang ecstati-

cally from night till morn. Thus are people required to

arise for the Cause of God. Such are the people who are

worthy of the field of service and sacrifice.

In the evening the Master spoke on the importance of unity

and amity among the friends, on the composition and

decomposition of elements, and on the existence and

disappearance of matter.

Friday, July 19, 1912

[New York]

A letter was received from Mrs Parsons in Dublin, New

Hampshire, begging Him to go there to meet some seekers

after truth as well as for a change of surroundings and

climate. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, although very tired and weak, spent

the afternoon receiving friends and revealing Tablets for

the believers. At the evening meeting He spoke about the

martyrs of the Faith and visited the son of Varqá, the

martyr, Mírzá Valíyu’lláh Khán, who was the recipient of

the Master’s loving kindness. He then spoke of the martyr-

dom of Varqá and his son Rúḥu’lláh in a most impressive

and dignified manner, paying tribute to and demonstrating

His great loyalty to these servants of the threshold of the

Blessed Beauty. He then said, ‘It is my last night with you

and I exhort you to be loving and united.’[[211]](#endnote-211) When He

finished His talk, all the friends demonstrated their great

joy and happiness.

Saturday, July 20, 1912[[212]](#endnote-212)

[New York – New Jersey]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá received an invitation from the Consul Gen-

eral of Turkey. After meeting with the friends and express-

ing His happiness at their devotion and unity, He left for

the Consul’s home. He took the ferry across the water, then

a tram and arrived at the Consul General’s house. The

Consul himself had gone to meet the Master by another

route but his wife and relatives received Him with the

utmost respect and reverence until the Consul General

returned.

A number of prominent men and statesmen, as well as

the Consul General, were present. The Master rested for

a short time in one of the rooms. Then the Consul General,

praising ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, introduced Him to the audience.

The Master came to the table and spoke on the danger of

wine and alcohol. He then considered some philosophical

subjects and answered questions from the Consul’s wife

about misconduct and its harmful consequences. She was

pleased and when He was about to depart expressed her

gratitude by kissing His hand. Everyone begged His pardon

for any lack in their service to Him.[[213]](#endnote-213)

The Consul General’s brother-in-law requested and

obtained permission to take the Master’s photograph. The

Consul General then accompanied the Master to the

railway station to see Him off, even though ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

had asked him not to do so.

At a gathering of Armenians in the evening the Master

gave a stirring and impressive talk concerning the attrib-

utes of the world of humanity, spiritual courage and valor.

His talk was not recorded because we arrived at the meet-

ing late.

Sunday, July 21, 1912

[New York]

The esteemed Bahá’í Monsieur Dreyfus of Paris came to

visit the Master. One of the Master’s talks at the meeting

of the friends was about services beneficial to the world of

humanity. ‘Universality is of God,’ He said, ‘while every

limitation is human.’ Continuing, He said, ‘The Sun of

Truth has risen always in the East and yet it has shone with

greater luster in the West.’ Mr Kaufman remarked that he

had read in the newspapers about the Master’s journey to

the West and understood that the purpose of His journey

was for the upliftment and education of the West as well as

of the East. Mr Kaufman then asked, ‘Will the East regain

its former glory?’ The Master replied, ‘It will be greater

than before.’ The Master then spoke about eternal life and

everlasting honor and said:

How many great men have come into the world! What

wealth they have owned! What kings have sat on the

thrones of glory and riches! What beautiful and comely

people have adorned the world of man! But what has been

the outcome? Honor, life, luxury and pleasure have all

perished. But the fame of the beauty of Joseph is still

universal and the honor of the disciples of Christ still

endures; their sufferings are the cause of life everlasting.

At dinner a number of the Eastern and Western friends

were at the Master’s table. Mrs True and some other friends

asked His permission to serve the guests, which He gave.

Monday, July 22, 1912

[New York]

At the morning gathering of the friends one asked about

the longevity of life in ancient times. The Master replied:

Some think that is a third motion of the earth which is the

cause of the length or shortness of life. This motion, they

say, is different from the diurnal and annual motions and

is the cause of change in the condition of the globe. But

the long lives mentioned in certain books and narratives

have a different basis. For instance, it was a custom in

former times to mention a dynasty or family by the name

of one person only. However, the people in the following

ages thought that the length of time that a family survived

was the length of the life of that family’s founder.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had planned to leave for Boston and Dublin

today but because of the arrival of the brother of the Khe-

dive of Egypt,[[214]](#endnote-214) the great Amír, Prince Muḥammad-‘Alí

Páshá, the Master’s departure was delayed. The Master

paid him a visit which was returned by the prince. On each

visit this eminent, enlightened man received the utmost

love and showed great interest. When the prince returned

to Egypt he published an account of his journey, describing

his visit with the Master, which is available everywhere in

Egypt and elsewhere. On page 414 of his account he de-

scribes his visit with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

Monday morning, July 22. I was informed that His excel-

lency, the venerable oriental sage, ‘Abbás Effendi, the

head of the Bahá’í Movement, wished to see me. I there-

fore set 3:00 p.m. today for a conversation with him.

‘Abbás Effendi arrived at the appointed hour. I received

him with respect and regard for his reverence and honor.

Age has not altered his extraordinary sagacity and

infinite intelligence. He stayed with me for an hour and

conversed on diverse subjects of great importance and

usefulness, which amply testified to his vast knowledge and

wide experience. Truly, he is a man of science and knowl-

edge and is one of the exalted personages of the East. We

paid ‘Abbás Effendi a return visit. He was living in a small

but well-furnished house. Everything to insure his comfort

was available. He had a suite of ten persons with him

wearing Persian kuláhs on their heads. From this orderly

and well-organized reception, I understood that this

revered personage, because of the weakness of the Ameri-

cans, had brought such a large number of Persians with

him so that he might draw attention to himself. I do not

mean this to lower the dignity of this great man, nay, on

the other hand, it shows his great intelligence and indi-

cates his vast knowledge of the way by which he may

impress the minds of the people so they may turn towards

him. His numerous, most impressive speeches have found

a wide circulation in America. Indeed, the newspapers and

periodicals are still publishing them with commentaries

by the learned men of their religion. His influence has

reached to such a prominence that bigoted and jealous

people are protesting vigorously against him. I stayed with

him for a long time and we talked with each other on

various subjects. He made me happy by his delightful

talks. I departed from his presence with his love and

reverence preserved in my heart.

From such writings those with perception can see that

although the Khedive’s brother was not a Bahá’í, he was

drawn to and affected by the Master. His words are a

brilliant testimony to the effectiveness of the Master’s talks,

the impressiveness of His addresses and the vigour with

which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá promulgates the teachings of God.

Tuesday, July 23, 1912

[New York – Boston]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left New York at 8:00 a.m. for Boston and

Dublin, reaching Boston at 3:30 p.m. A number of friends

were at the train station to receive Him. As soon as they saw

Him, they hovered around Him like moths around a

candle, anxious to sacrifice themselves before Him. As He

did not plan to stay in Boston for more than two nights, He

instructed everyone in His entourage except an interpreter

and a secretary to go directly to Dublin.

He then went to the Hotel Victoria where the public

meeting was held at 6:00 p.m.[[215]](#endnote-215) There were both Bahá’ís

and non-Bahá’ís present as well as some journalists who

questioned Him about His purpose in coming to America.

The Master replied:

I came for the peace gatherings in America. They are

good. But their efforts must not end in words alone. I pray

that they may receive confirmation so that this country

may become the center of efforts for peace.

His address was on economic problems.

In the evening He was invited to dine at the home of

Mrs [Alice Ives] Breed. As the Master left the hotel, crowds

of people stood in rows as He passed through them. That

evening He spoke about the persecutions and tribulations

of the Manifestations of God, the reconciliation of the

hearts and the victory of this blessed Cause of God. After

dinner He made the long and tedious journey back to the

hotel.

Wednesday, July 24, 1912

[Boston]

From 8:00 a.m. until noon, the Master spoke to friends and

seekers who came to visit. Newspapers carrying accounts

of the previous day’s meeting were brought to Him. Both

His talk and the questions and answers were published.

In the afternoon He gave a public address about the

beauty and perfection of the world of being.

He was invited later to the Golden Circle Club where He

was asked whether Arabic might become the universal

language. He said that it would not. He was then asked

about Esperanto. He replied:

A few weeks ago, I wrote a letter from New York to one of

the promoters of Esperanto telling him that this language

could become universal if a council of delegates chosen

from among the nations and rulers were established which

would discuss Esperanto and consider the means to pro-

mote it.

He gave a public address on the subject of the relationship

between the East and the West. The president of the club

and its members were enchanted and reverently and

humbly bid Him farewell. Some even continued to listen

to His explanations in the automobile as it traveled for one

and a half hours through parks, gardens and green fields,

all beautifully landscaped. When He reached the hotel, He

found another group waiting. After greeting the members

of the Bahá’í Assembly, He spoke with the group at length.

Later that day the president of the Boston Theosophical

Society invited the Master to speak to his association that

evening. Although He was tired, seeing that the meeting

place was not too far away, He accepted and gave a detailed

and comprehensive talk on the immortality of the spirit of

man.[[216]](#endnote-216) When the meeting ended, the people ran to the

door to shake hands with the Master and to express their

joy and devotion. Some were in ecstasy.

Thursday, July 25, 1912

[Boston]

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had said He intended to leave Boston for

Dublin, the friends and seekers gathered at the hotel. He

encouraged them to lead fruitful lives and to overcome self

and desire.[[217]](#endnote-217)

Consenting to a request of Mr Kinney, the Master paid

a visit to Green Acre. When He got there, two Arab seekers

fell at His feet crying, ‘O Thou the Prophet of God’.218[[218]](#endnote-218) He

lifted them with His own hand, saying: ‘I am ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

[the Servant of Bahá].’

At 4:00 in the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Boston and

by 7:00 p.m. He was gracing the gardens of Dublin.[[219]](#endnote-219) The

Master took up residence in one of the two houses Mrs

Parsons had especially prepared for Him, which was fur-

nished with every comfort; however, the Master said that

we must bear our own expenses. Mrs Parsons had hoped

that the arrival of the Master would remain private so that

He might rest a little. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá learned of this

He said:

We have come for work and service and not for leisure. We

must render service to the Threshold of the Blessed

Beauty and must make such servitude the cause of our

solace and the joy of our souls. As this place is a summer

resort and many prominent people are present, therefore,

unless they should themselves ask, the friends should not

teach openly. They must deal with them with perfect

dignity and honor.

Continuing, He said:

Consider where we came from and where we are now in

Dublin here in America. We must offer thanks for the

assistance and protection of the Abhá Beauty that we may

breathe a breath in the path of servitude.

He then gave an account of the life of Ḥájí Abu’l-Qásim,

an indigo merchant, and the restoration of his grave. ‘He

was’, He said, ‘one of the servants of the Blessed Beauty.

My first thought on my arrival in Egypt was to repair his

tomb.’ Similarly, He spoke of the good intentions and

sincerity of Áqá Muḥammad Taqí Iṣfahání, who is residing

in Egypt. In the evening he enjoyed His dinner and ate in

good health and happiness.

Friday, July 26, 1912

[Dublin]

Early in the morning, while having tea, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

about the Tablet of the Báb to Náṣiri’d-Dín Sháh when he

was the Crown Prince and the answer of the ‘ulamá.[[220]](#endnote-220) ‘It

must be compared’, He said, ‘with the Lawḥ-i-Sulṭán[[221]](#endnote-221)

which issued from the Supreme Pen so that the injustices

of the followers of Mírzá Yaḥyá might be exposed.’

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke of Ḥájí Muḥam-

mad-Taqí Vakíl’ud Dawlih, the Afnán. He also showed

great kindness to some of the American Bahá’ís. About one

of them He said:

Write this in the margin of the book: The time will come

when her whole family will be proud of Mrs Krug and her

faith. Her husband is still distant and heedless; the time

will come when he will feel himself exalted on account of

Mrs Krug’s faith. I see what they do not see. Ere long the

whole of her family will consider the faith of that lady as

the crown of honor on their heads.

That evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke of the days of the Blessed

Beauty and of His kindness towards Shaykh Salmán. He

praised the sincerity and constancy of that messenger of the

Merciful and described some of the events in his life.

This day was also a blessed day and passed in the utmost

joy and happiness.

Saturday, July 27, 1912

[Dublin]

In the early morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went out onto the

balcony. On one side was a view of an extensive field of

some 40 miles and on the other a vista of green plains and

verdant mountains ranging for some 16 miles. He re-

marked:

If there is any justice, then what I have done for the friends

will become apparent. I have done all this through the

bounty and assistance of the Blessed Beauty. Otherwise,

what have we Persians in common with the Americans on

top of this mountain and valley in Dublin?

A likeness of Ṭáhirih which had been published by one of

the Germans was shown to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who said, ‘This

picture is not at all authentic.’ He then spoke of the life of

Ṭáhirih.

At the invitation of Mrs Parsons, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to

her home for lunch. In the afternoon, several of Mrs Par-

sons’ friends came by and were deeply impressed by the

Master’s talk. From this day forward, visitors began to come

in great numbers. In the afternoon Mr Parsons brought his

carriage to take the Master for a ride. They drove to Lake

Dublin where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the members of the

club about spirituality and the progress of this new age.

When He returned He instructed that cables be sent to the

Assemblies of the East.

In the evening Mr [W. W.] Harmon, a leader of the

Theosophists, came from Boston to see the Master, who

spoke to him about divine civilization, the influence of the

Word of God and about this great Bahá’í Dispensation:

One of the martyrs of this Cause, at the time of his martyr-

dom exclaimed, ‘Christ said that the spirit is willing but

the flesh is weak; but I say that my flesh is as happy as my

spirit.’

He spoke of the spread of civilization from the East to the

West, saying:

What a blessing God bestowed upon the Persians but they

could not appreciate it! Had they not been ungrateful, the

government of Persia would have ranked first in the world.

I wrote to Muḥammad ‘Alí Mírzá[[222]](#endnote-222) that if he would com-

pensate for the spilled blood of the Bahá’ís and govern

with justice, he would receive confirmation; otherwise, God

doeth what He pleaseth. He did not listen to me. Again

I wrote to Persia that so long as the nation and the govern-

ment do not combine like milk and honey, prosperity and

happiness are impossible. Persia will become desolate and

the end result will be intervention by neighboring powers.

Sunday, July 28, 1912

[Dublin]

After prayers the Master revealed several Tablets. A lengthy

one was addressed to Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl (may my life be a

sacrifice to him). The Master’s affection and love for him

was such that when Mr MacNutt presented Him with a

picture of Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl, He took it at once and kissed

it with such love and warmth that all saw how dear he was

to the Master.

The Master sat in the drawing room and spoke to Mr

Harmon about the sanctity of God, who is beyond emana-

tion and appearance, ascent and descent, ingress and

egress, and about the reflection of His attributes on the

mirrors of the hearts of the Manifestations. His talk was

brief but comprehensive and impressive. He also explained

the meanings of the holy books and discussed the saying

that ‘everything is contained in everything’, that is, every

atom of creation passes through infinite forms and every

molecule is transformed and passes through everything

else. He then said:

The Theosophists are educating a boy in the schools of

Europe and say that he will become the promised one of

all nations. How ignorant this is! God must select the

Promised One, not men. The lamp that men ignite will be

put out; but the Lamp of God is ever bright. He who is

educated by men is always dependent on men. How can

he give eternal prosperity? It is as if a person wishes to

make a sun out of oil and wick.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was asked about the conditions in Turkey. He

replied, ‘Do not expect good news from that spot. But we

have nothing to do with political affairs. Our work concerns

spirituality, the knowledge of God and the acquisition of

spiritual bounties.’

A group of prominent persons came to see Him in the

afternoon at Mrs Parsons’ home. The subjects concerned

telepathy, the immortality of the spirit and related subjects.

The guests were so impressed that they attended every

meeting. After each day’s meeting Mr and Mrs Parsons

come with their carriage to take the Master out riding with

them. Today He said He would rather go for a walk and

instead sent some of His servants for a ride.

This evening Mr Harmon read to the Master passages

from a book he had written on Theosophy and Buddhist

teachings. He showed Him the illustrations he had drawn.

He had illustrated truth as a circle, with God at its center,

and divided the circle into seven segments representing the

world of creation. The Master listened to him with love and

patience while at the same time removing his superstitions

with quotations from philosophers and sages in such a way

that Mr Harmon was astonished. The Master explained the

seven segments so beautifully that he cried, ‘Oh, your

explanations have opened the doors of understanding

before me!’ The Master then said, ‘I have had no educa-

tion. I have not even been to elementary school. These

people know it.’ Mr Harmon said, ‘I feel that whatever you

say comes from innate knowledge.’

Monday, July 29, 1912

[Dublin]

Sitting on the carpet, the Master spoke about Mr Harmon,

saying:

What captives of superstitions people are! What troubles

they endure for the sake of name and fame! What fruit will

these superstitions bear? All are transitory and perishable

and no trace of them will remain. It will be as though they

had never existed. They are sowing seeds in a barren land.

Man ought to sow pure seeds in a fertile soil.

Later in the day He spoke with Mr Harmon for a consider-

able time. Afterwards He reviewed some letters and pre-

pared them for mailing.

He went to Mrs Parsons’ home in the afternoon. He was

asked about His health and the climate, to which He re-

plied:

The air of this place is good. But we are happy wherever

we go; our happiness consists in service to the Most Holy

Threshold. We have not come to America on a pleasure

trip; we are here to serve the Court of the Blessed Beauty.

Whenever we succeed in this purpose, that place is good.

A merchant is happy whenever his goods find a market,

wherever it may be.

Then He sat in the gazebo facing the garden and related

the afflictions and trials of Bahá’u’lláh in Baghdád:

In spite of all these troubles we were happy beyond de-

scription because under His shadow we were favored with

the blessing of attainment to His presence.

Afterwards He went into the house. The drawing room was

filled. His address to the visitors concerned both spiritual

and material matters, including questions of economics

which corrected some of the false ideas of the socialists. The

audience was pleased. Each day a new spirit is seen in the

meetings. It is difficult to believe that in this mountainous

and scenic countryside, meetings that diffuse the fragrances

of God can be held. All this is due to the power of the

Center of the Covenant. ‘Wherever our king is, it is Para-

dise, even if it is as small as the eye of a needle.’[[223]](#endnote-223)

Tuesday, July 30, 1912

[Dublin]

Mírzá ‘Alí Akbar Nakhjavání remarked that the enthusiasm

of the people was due to the power of the Covenant and the

influence of the Master’s words. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá replied: ‘It

is not due to my power but to my Father’s; it is all His

work.’ Today He invited both Eastern and Western friends

to be His guests.[[224]](#endnote-224) Some stayed in His house while others

were given accommodation at the hotel located in the

warmer climate at the bottom of the mountain. The guests

came to the hotel every morning to visit Him. Meetings

were held in the afternoon at the home of Mr and Mrs

Parsons. The audience of prominent persons was fascinated

by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His qualities. Several people invited

the Master to their homes.

In His talk in the afternoon at Mrs Parsons’ home He

made clear that:

Confirmation is not dependent on talent, knowledge or

wisdom. Many unimportant persons have made significant

discoveries. Many people labored for years to explore the

North Pole but Admiral Peary reached it. One’s efforts

should be focussed on the object of one’s quest. Because

Columbus found confirmation, he discovered America with

a minimum of difficulty. The disciples of Christ were

apparently abased, yet they achieved something which

Napoleon never did: they changed the whole aspect of the

world. So it is evident that everything comes about through

the assistance of God.

Wednesday, July 31, 1912[[225]](#endnote-225)

[Dublin]

In the morning the Master went to the summer school that

had been established by Mr Henderson 20 years ago. It is

located some 25 miles from Dublin and classes are held in

tents in a clear, open field. As soon as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

automobile arrived, the students, between the ages of 12

and 18, surrounded it and enthusiastically welcomed Him.

They wore uniforms with knickerbockers and moved about

busily but courteously. The headmaster then took ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá to the school hall and remained standing while the

Master spoke to the students and teachers, praising the

school and the good manners of its students. Later He

visited each of the student’s tents. Some of the children had

cameras and requested permission to take the Master’s

photograph. Dr Henderson said that when he had estab-

lished the school 20 years ago there was not a summer

school in the whole of America and now there are hundreds

of them. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá remarked: ‘Everything praiseworthy

spreads rapidly. But the children must first be taught

religion so that they may be sincere and trustworthy.’

After tea and refreshments, the pupils asked the Master’s

permission to show Him their gymnastic exercises. The

Master remained there a long while and spoke at length

about education. When it was time to leave, the headmaster

and school staff expressed their heartfelt gratitude to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

At the public meeting in the afternoon at Mr and Mrs

Parsons’ home, the Master spoke on spirituality and

eternal happiness.

Thursday, August 1, 1912

[Dublin]

The Master related to us that ‘One hundred years ago there

was a school in Baghdád which was held during the sum-

mer but it was for the children of the wealthy only. The

people of the West have adopted and perfected the customs

of the East.’ He also said:

As charitable works become praiseworthy, people often

perform them merely for the sake of fame and to gain

benefit for themselves, as well as to attract people’s admir-

ation. But this does not render needless the teachings of

the Prophets because it is spiritual morals that are the

cause of training one’s innate nature and of personal

progress. Thus will people offer service to one another

with all their hearts for the sake of God and in order to

fulfill the duties of devotion to Him and service to human-

ity and not for the purpose of acquiring praise and fame.

Then He spoke of Mashhadí Amír Ghafghazí, a rich man

from the Caucasus:

Prior to his embracing this Faith, he was so dauntless and

merciless that he had killed countless persons but after

embracing this Faith he was entirely transformed, so much

so that when once he was fired at by a pistol he did not

even raise his arm in self-defense. Such people become

educated under the shadow of belief. Similarly, the Bahá’ís

of ‘Ishqábád interceded on behalf of a man who had killed

one of their members.[[226]](#endnote-226)

At a gathering in the afternoon the Master spoke on the

equality of the rights of men and women, the greatness of

this cycle, the oneness of the world of humanity and God’s

creation. After the meeting several ministers spoke to Him.

One was the pastor from the Dublin Unitarian Church who

invited the Master to speak at his church.

Friday, August 2, 1912[[227]](#endnote-227)

[Dublin]

A meeting for blacks was held near Lake Dublin. At this

gathering the Master delivered an eloquent address re-

garding unity and amity between blacks and whites. He

spoke of the approaching wedding of Miss [Louisa]

Mathew, a white woman, and Mr [Louis] Gregory, a black

man, which is to take place shortly in Washington dc. The

white people in the audience were astonished to see the

influence of the Cause and the blacks were pleased.

Incidents like these are little less than miracles; in fact,

‘splitting the moon in half’[[228]](#endnote-228) would be an easier accom-

plishment in the eyes of the Americans. This meeting was

full of joy.

The guests rejoiced when the Master returned to Mr and

Mrs Parsons’ home. His words made a deep impression.

He spoke on the oneness of the basic principles of the

religions of God and the unity of His Manifestations. When

questioned about Muḥammad, the Prophet of God, His

proofs were clear and persuasive and his arguments deci-

sive, uplifting every downcast heart. Everyone testified to

the convincing nature of His argument and the greatness

of this Cause. Some seemed to be disturbed at His refer-

ence to Islam but no one said a word.

Saturday, August 3, 1912

[Dublin]

While a few of us were discussing the Master’s explanations

and the simplicity and decisiveness of His talks, He said to

us:

The explanations must be adapted to the capacity of the

hearers and suited to the exigency of the time. Beauty of

style, moderation in delivery and suitability of words and

meanings are necessary. It is not only a matter of uttering

words. In ‘Akká, Mírzá Muḥammad-‘Alí[[229]](#endnote-229) would hear me

speak and would repeat my words exactly on other occa-

sions but he did not understand that a thousand wisdoms

and ingredients other than speech are necessary. In the

days of Baghdád and Sulaymáníyyih, Shaykh ‘Abdu’l-

Ḥusayn[[230]](#endnote-230) was told that the Blessed Beauty was attracting

the Kurds to Himself by quoting Ṣúfí and gnostic terms.

This poor Shaykh obtained a copy of the Futúḥát-i-

Makkíyyih [Conquests of Mecca][[231]](#endnote-231) and committed its

passages to memory. But wherever he quoted them, he saw

that none lent an ear to him. He was greatly puzzled as to

why people did not listen to him. The Blessed Beauty said,

‘Tell the Shaykh that We are not in the habit of reading

the Conquests of Mecca (Futúḥát-i-Makkíyyih) but We

impart to them the verses of True Civilization. We are not

propounding the writings of the Shaykh [Ibn al-‘Arabí],

we are propounding the Holy Writ.’

In the afternoon He spoke about how the secondary laws

of religions change in every age according to the exigencies

of the time and the harmfulness of the materialistic world

and the benefit of religion. The meeting ended with a

series of sincere questions and answers.

Sunday, August 4, 1912

[Dublin]

When He had finished writing Tablets in response to

petitions from the friends in the East and the West, the

Master had a little time to rest. He then went for lunch at

the home of Miss [Fanny] Knobloch. Her friends and

relatives were fascinated with His explanations and en-

chanted by His manner.

In the afternoon He spoke in Mr and Mrs Parsons’

drawing room about the power of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh

and the assistance and confirmations of the Greatest Name.

Mírzá ‘Alí Akbar [Nakhjavání] related that during the

troubled times in ‘Akká the Master used to say that a great

event would take place in the very near future: it would be

as though this lamp would go away and then come back to

its original place. Now we understand that this assertion of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was a reference to His travels and His return

to the Holy Land. The Master then said:

The assistance of the Blessed Beauty brings about extraor-

dinary things. Every act of the Blessed Beauty constitutes

in itself a consummate proof. In one of my early writings

I wrote that in the eyes of the possessors of insight the

doings of Him Who is the Sovereign Truth have no equal.

For instance, if the Blessed Beauty asked after someone’s

health, although outwardly a common expression, it could

give to a person who was perceptive hints as to the wisdom

and mystery hidden in the words spoken on that occasion.

Thus it is that God in all His actions is distinct from all

others, just as a wise man displays in all his actions the

signs of wisdom.

There were several people waiting to see Him. Two ladies,

both of whom were hard of hearing, requested permission

to sit near Him so that they might listen to His words

through their hearing aids. He said, ‘Yes, the nearer they

come, the better they will hear the Words of God. They

must hear the Voice of the Lord in whatever way possible

or by whatever means.’

Today, the Master’s talk on the immortality of the soul

so impressed the hearts that from then on He was asked

to speak on this subject at most of the meetings.

Monday, August 5, 1912[[232]](#endnote-232)

[Dublin]

Standing on the lawn and facing the green and verdant

hills and valleys, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

How calm it is. No disturbing sound is heard. When a man

observes the wafting of the breeze among these trees, he

hears the rustling of the leaves and sees the swaying of the

trees, it is as though all are praising and acknowledging

the one true God.

Before the afternoon meeting a devoted lady told the

Master that one of her friends, when informed that she was

planning to attend the meeting, strongly advised her not

to go lest she fall into a trap. He said to her:

It has always been the practice of the heedless to hold back

the sincere ones from the Cause of God. As for a trap,

praise be to God that we have been trapped happily for

sixty years and we have no desire to escape. It is a trap that

frees people from the shackles of prejudice and supersti-

tions and delivers them from the prison of self and desire.

It makes them the captives of the love of God and of

service to the Cause of the oneness of humanity.

After delivering the message of God and explaining the

divine teachings, the Master spoke humorously about the

philosophers.

They say that had there been a spiritual world they would

have sensed it. But, as a matter of fact, inability to sense

a thing is not a proof of the nonexistence of that thing. If

inability to sense constitutes proof of perfection, the cow

must be the greatest philosopher, for she does not realize

anything beyond the animal world.

This amusing statement that the cow is the greatest of all

philosophers caused everyone to laugh. After the meeting,

some men and women invited Him to go for a ride in their

automobile. While driving, a herd of cows passed in front

of the automobile and, becoming frightened, began to run

about every which way. The ladies in the car cried out, ‘Oh

Master, see the crowd of philosophers. How frightened they

are running away from us.’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá laughed so heart-

ily that He tired Himself. As the Americans like such jests,

it became an oft-repeated remark.

Tuesday, August 6, 1912

[Dublin]

In the morning while pacing back and forth in the drawing

room of His residence, the Master said:

When Persians want to record any important matter, they

say, ‘Write this down in the twenty-ninth section.’ Now, as

the Persians say, write this in the twenty-ninth section of

your book. Whatever occurs is the cause of the elevation

of the Word of God and the victory of the divine Cause,

even though outwardly it may appear to be a great afflic-

tion and hardship. What hardship, grief or affliction could

be greater than that which occurred at the time when the

Blessed Beauty was exiled from Ṭihrán? Hearts of stone

were melted. All the relatives were weeping and lament-

ing. All were in utter despair. But that exile became the

cause of the raising of the Call and exalting the Word of

God, of fulfilling the prophecies of the Prophets and of

guiding the people of the world. Had it not been for this

exile, these things would not have appeared and these

great events would not have occurred.

Consider the case of Abraham. Had He not been

exiled, He would not have received that greatest blessing;

neither a Jacob nor an Isaac would have risen; the fame

of the beauty of Joseph would not have been spread

throughout the world. He would not have become the

ruler of Egypt; no Moses would have appeared; no

Muḥammad, the divine Messenger, would have come. All

these are a result of the blessings of that exile. It is the

same now.

Later He spoke about the harmful effects of disunity and

discord:

For example, the separation between the eastern and

western empires and the disagreement between the east-

ern and western churches in Christianity caused a great

weakness. Notwithstanding this, the people still do not

take heed.

In the afternoon He gave a talk on the oneness of the

foundation of religion.[[233]](#endnote-233)

Wednesday, August 7, 1912

[Dublin]

I shall content myself today with recording just one of the

Master’s addresses. He delivered this talk in the afternoon

in home of Mr and Mrs Parsons. The audience was greatly

moved and a wonderful spirit of sincerity spread through-

out the gathering. The following is the transcription of His

address as well as the questions and answers on the immor-

tality of the soul.

He is God! We must first prove that there is no annihila-

tion in creation. Annihilation is only the decomposition

of elements. For example, all these things we see in exis-

tence are made up of elements; that is, single atoms have

combined and have formed infinite patterns. Every combi-

nation produces an entity. For example, through the

combination of certain elements this flower has come into

existence. Its annihilation means only the decomposition

of this combination, it does not mean the destruction of

the individual atoms or principal elements because these

remain and will not be destroyed. When we say that this

flower is destroyed we mean that its combination is decom-

posed but the principal elements remain; only their combi-

nation is destroyed.

In the same way, man has come into existence as the

result of the combination of certain elements. Although

his death is the disintegration of these elements, the

elements are not annihilated. Therefore, life consists of

the combination of elements and death of their dissolution

or transference from one state to another. The transfer-

ence of the vegetable to the animal world is the death of

the former. Draw your own conclusions from this. Simi-

larly, the transference of man from this world of matter

and the dissolution of his elements constitute human

death. Thus, it should be known that for existence there

is no death. At most there is a transfer from one state to

another. As the soul of man is not the result of composition

and does not come into being through the affinity of

molecular elements, it is not subject to disintegration. If

it were, then we would say the soul has died. But because

it is not composed, therefore it cannot be decomposed.

And it is clear that even the basic elements are not subject

to decomposition as they are not a compound composition.

No doubt remains regarding this matter.

Second, the transference of the body from one condi-

tion to another brings about no change or alteration in the

soul. For instance, the body is young but it grows old, while

the soul remains unaffected; the body becomes weak but

the soul does not; the body becomes diseased or paralyzed

but the soul remains unchanged. It has often come to pass

that one of the limbs of the body has been amputated; the

soul, however, remains the same and is not affected at all.

Therefore, it is clear that the changes experienced by the

body do not affect the soul. As long as it is unchanged, it

will remain eternal. The pivot of mortality is change and

alteration.

Third, in the world of sleep, man’s body is powerless

and his faculties inactive. The eye does not see, the ear

does not hear, the body does not move; but the soul sees,

hears, moves and discovers realities. Therefore, it is

proven that the soul is not destroyed with the death of the

body; it does not perish after the death of the body; it does

not sleep when the body is asleep; rather, it has percep-

tion, it discovers, it flies and it travels.

Fourth, the body is here but the soul is present in the

East or the West. While in the West, it puts the affairs of

the East in order; while in the East, it explores the affairs

of the West. It manages and regulates the momentous

affairs of the world. The body is in one single place but the

soul is present in various places and countries. It discovers

America while in Spain. Thus, the soul has a control and

influence which the body has not. The body cannot see but

the soul can see and has perception. Therefore, it follows

that its existence is not dependent on the body.

Fifth, no effect occurs without a cause. It is impossible

for a cause to be non-existent when its light and radiance

are manifest, for fire not to exist when its heat is sensed,

for light not to exist when illumined objects are witnessed,

mind not to exist when the power of thought is present.

Briefly, there can be no effect without a cause, for as long

as there is an effect there must be a cause. Therefore,

though Christ appeared one thousand nine hundred and

twelve years ago, His signs still exist today and His sover-

eignty and influence are manifest. Is it possible for that

divine Spirit to be non-existent and these great signs still

to be present? Therefore it is established that the Cause

of these signs is He Who is the source of eternal light and

everlasting bounties.

Sixth, everything can have only one shape, whether it

be triangular, square or pentagonal. An object cannot have

different shapes at the same time. For instance, this carpet

is rectangular; is it possible that it can have a circular

shape as well? It cannot. That is possible only if it loses its

first form and takes a new one. Nevertheless, while it is

impossible for an object to possess diverse forms at one

and the same time, the spirit of man possesses all forms

and has manifold shapes simultaneously. It has no need

to change from one form to another. As it is beyond

change and forms, it is non-material and eternal.

Seventh, when a man looks at creation, he sees two

things: that which is perceptible to the senses and that

which is abstract. The things that are perceptible to the

senses, such as vegetables, minerals and animals, that can

be seen by the eyes, heard by the ears, smelled, touched

or tasted, are subject to change. But rational powers are

not perceived by the physical senses. The power of the

mind and knowledge are intellectual realities and are not

subject to change or alteration. The eye cannot see them;

the ear cannot hear them. It is impossible that knowledge,

which is an intellectual reality, be changed into ignorance.

The soul, too, is one of the intellectual realities: it is

unalterable and is not subject to annihilation.

A person who is endowed with perception has spiritual-

ity and heavenly attributes; he can recognize that the

human soul has never been subject to annihilation and will

never become so. He sees that all created beings are in

harmony with the spirit and are under its influence. He

knows himself to be eternal, everlasting, constant, imper-

ishable and encompassed by the lights of God, the Lord

of glory. For he has spiritual susceptibilities and is affected

by conscience and spiritual impulses. He is not limited by

rational constraints or human emotions and sentiments.

However, the man who has no perception or inner sight

finds himself always dejected and lifeless; every time he

thinks of death, he is afraid, because he considers himself

to be mortal.

Blessed souls are not of this category. They sense that

they are eternal, luminous and imperishable like the

disciples of Christ. It is for this reason that at the time of

death or martyrdom Bahá’ís rejoice, because they know

there is no death or annihilation for them. At most, the

body disintegrates but the soul exists in the divine world

and has everlasting life.

The audience was deeply moved by this address and all

expressed their satisfaction and became devoted to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá.

Tuesday, August 8, 1912

[Dublin]

One of the devoted friends asked the Master about imper-

fect realities and their immortality. He replied:

All realities and spirits are immortal, even the spirits

of non-believers and imperfect persons. But they cannot

be compared in any way with the spirits of the sanctified

souls and holy personages. Although this wood has exis-

tence, yet in comparison with the existence of man, it is as

nothing.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at a public gathering.

He touched on various aspects of love and unity among

people and the necessity for cooperation and mutual

assistance in human society. In answer to a question regard-

ing vengeance, He replied that man has no right to seek

vengeance but that the community is responsible for the

protection of all life, property and honor. He then went on

to say:

The more material education advances, the more competi-

tive is the race in aggression and injustice. But spiritual

education is the cause of competition in praiseworthy

actions and the acquisition of human perfections. We hope

that day by day these injustices will diminish and the

spiritual virtues increase.

The Master went into another room where a young man

with a striking personality and pleasing appearance asked

Him in what school He had studied philosophy. The

Master answered: ‘In the same school where Christ stud-

ied.’ He then asked the Master, ‘What is the relationship

between God and nature?’ The Master replied:

Some of the philosophers believe that God is the Supreme

Reality and that every human being has a spark of this

divine reality within him; that He Himself is in a state of

utmost power and that all things manifest Him according

to their different capacities. Therefore they hold that the

Supreme Being is dispersed into infinite forms. This is the

position of Plato. But we say that existence as conceived

by man or comprehended through human reason or

intellect is a characteristic of matter. Matter is like unto

essence, while existence is its manifestation. The body of

man is essence and existence is dependent upon it. This

human body is matter while existence is a power condi-

tioned on matter.

But it is not so with the Essential Self-Existent One. His

existence is true existence which is self-subsistent, not an

intellectually perceived and comprehended existence; it

is an Existence by which all created things come into

being. All things are like unto His handiwork and are

dependent upon Him. We refer to Him as Self-Existent

because we need to make use of a term but we do not

mean that that Being can be contained within our compre-

hension. What is intended is the Reality from Whom all

things emanate, the Reality through Whom all things exist.

Not only was the questioner grateful and satisfied with this

response but everyone else was also pleased.

Friday, August 9, 1912

[Dublin]

A number of the friends, both old and new, were present

at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s house. One of their questions was whether

the existence of evil proceeds from God. He replied:

There is no evil in existence. Evil is non-existence. All

that is created is good. Ignorance is evil and it is the

non-existence of knowledge; it has no existence of its

own. Hence, evil is the non-existence of good. Want

of wealth is poverty; absence of justice is oppression;

want of perfection is deficiency. All of these opposites

imply non-existence and not existence.

At the public meeting in the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

exhorted the audience to refrain from blind imitation,

reminding them that the distinction of man lies in his

ability to investigate reality and ascertain the truth. He

spoke of the coming of Bahá’u’lláh and explained some of

the teachings of the Supreme Pen.

After lovingly shaking hands with those present, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá came into the room where we were and asked about

our health, saying to us, ‘Come here, be seated. Mrs Par-

sons has sent tea, sweets and some fruit for you. Eat and

drink.’ Then with a merry twinkle in His eyes, He contin-

ued:

Oh! You are very badly off here! May God hear your

complaint! Oh! It is so difficult to live in this manner, to

dwell in such a house, to breathe such air! And to stay with

such servants and respected friends is, of course, very hard

for you! May God come to your help!

Then He said:

Joking aside, what a wonderful table the Blessed Perfec-

tion has spread for His friends! Had kings come here they

would have been served but this fervor and zeal of the

friends would not have appeared for any one of them.

These noble people who serve you love you with heart and

soul and serve you without any fear, hope or expectation

of reward. The poet spoke truly when he said that three

things are scarce, namely, the demon, the phoenix and the

faithful friend. Yes, like the demon and the phoenix, the

true friend is rare. But under the shadow of the Word of

God, the Blessed Beauty has produced such friends for

you.

Saturday, August 10, 1912

[Dublin]

In the morning the Master explained and illustrated some

of the verses of Bahá’u’lláh for the friends who had come

from the surrounding area to see Him. The explanations

ended with the statement that contentment in poverty is

better than happiness in wealth but happiness in poverty

is more praiseworthy than mere contentment. Above all is

the rich man who, having sacrificed, emerges pure from

tests and trials and becomes the cause of tranquillity to

mankind. Gratitude is the cause of multiple blessings but

the apex of gratitude is sacrifice. The station of sacrifice is

the highest of all. For this reason it is said, ‘You will never

attain unto righteousness until ye sacrifice that which ye

love.’ The Master then narrated a story:

At the time of his death a king longed for the station of a

poor man, saying, ‘Would that I were a poor man so that

I would neither have practiced oppression nor have had

any regrets at the time of death.’ A poor man heard this,

and said, ‘Praise be to God that at the hour of death kings

desire to be poor. We poor people at the hour of death

have no desire to be kings.’

Conversation of this kind continued for some time.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed a meeting and

spoke on the principles of the Cause, emphasizing univer-

sal peace among the nations. After the meeting a person

in the audience said: ‘The Bahá’ís do not believe in any one

person but believe in the good teachings of all the Prophets

and religions.’ The implication of his statement was that

believing in the Manifestation of God was of no conse-

quence. But note the Master’s reply to this remark:

The basic principles of all religions are the same and the

Sun of Truth is one, yet every day it appears from a differ-

ent dawning point. Hence, the Bahá’ís believe in the

fundamental truth of all the religions and turn to the Sun

of Truth. From whatever dawning point it may appear they

turn toward it. At one time, it appeared from the dawning

point of Moses, then from that of Jesus and again from

that of Muḥammad. But if all had looked only at the

dawning points, they would have remained veiled like the

Jews when the Sun of Truth appeared from another place.

Today the Bahá’ís look at the Sun of Truth and not at the

dawning point. From whatever place it may appear, they

turn to it. You have rightly understood that the Bahá’ís do

not believe in a person; rather they believe in the truth

which shines from the divine dawning points.

Sunday, August 11, 1912

[Dublin]

A glorious meeting was held at the Unitarian Church in

Dublin.[[234]](#endnote-234) He went to the church at 11:00 a.m. and as He

entered the entire audience rose to its feet. The pastor sang

a beautiful song in praise of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. After the prelim-

inary ceremonies, the Master was introduced by the pastor

with the utmost reverence and esteem. He then stood and

gave a detailed address on the necessity of true education

and spiritual power and spoke of the coming of Bahá’u’lláh

and His teachings. At the end of His talk He chanted a

prayer, His life-giving melodies penetrating the souls and

attracting the hearts. A wonderful spirit of humility seemed

to permeate the building and the voice of acceptance

seemed to issue from all sides.

Many who had not already had the honor of visiting

‘Abdu’l-Bahá came to Him with such eagerness that the

Master said, ‘The Call of God has been raised here and the

work is finished.’

He was invited for lunch at the home of Mr and Mrs

Pumpelly. There He was asked about the Cause of God and

about the new principles. Although He responded to the

questions of those present, still they thought that the talk

had been prepared beforehand and that the interpreter

had committed it to memory. They felt no one would have

been able to speak extemporaneously with such clarity and

perception. The vastness of His knowledge is even more

evident. My point is that His talk and explanations seemed

extraordinary in the eyes of the people and that the unseen

confirmations of Bahá’u’lláh assisted the Center of the

Covenant.

After this meeting the people’s spirits were raised. In the

afternoon a multitude gathered at the home of Mr and Mrs

Parsons. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke, encouraging everyone to

think about His words, to meditate on the holy verses, to

investigate truth and to gain a full knowledge of divine

realities. It is merely owing to a lack of understanding

among the leaders of religions, He said, and to their blind

imitations and superstitions that statements contrary to

science and common sense have crept in and caused intel-

lectuals and scientists to deny religion and disputes to arise

among the people, obscuring the true meaning of the laws

of God.

Monday, August 12, 1912

[Dublin]

A group of Dublin residents had a picnic on the shore of

Lake Dublin and invited the Master and His entourage to

join them. After sitting awhile viewing the surroundings,

the Master went for a short walk. Upon His return He went

to the table and ate sweets and sherbet with the friends. He

was pleased to see the simplicity of the repast and to feel

the sincerity and warmth of the people.

In the afternoon a large gathering of people came to

hear Him. They asked Him to speak on the immortality of

the spirit. Everyone was so pleased, happy and filled with

admiration that one by one each came to shake His hand

and to express his or her gratitude. The Master’s talk was

so much appreciated that for many days afterwards He was

asked to speak on the immortality of the spirit, economics

and the new teachings. At each meeting He spoke on

subjects He had already elucidated and on new topics,

which greatly increased the admiration of the audience.

Tuesday, August 13, 1912

[Dublin]

Because some of the people who met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá today

were musicians, He gave an explanation of the science of

music:

Music is produced by vibrations of air which affect the

tympanum of the ear. Although music or an ordinary

pleasing voice is of the physical realm, yet it has an effect

upon the spirit. In the same manner, freshness and purity

of the air, the atmosphere, the scenery and sweet fra-

grances impart joy, spirituality and comfort to the heart.

Even though these are physical phenomena they have a

great spiritual influence.

He then narrated stories of the great masters of music, gave

an account of the famous Rúdakí[[235]](#endnote-235) and read his famous

poem which had caused Amír Náṣir Sámání to change his

course from Herat to Bokhara:[[236]](#endnote-236)

The Júy-i-Múliyán[[237]](#endnote-237) we call to mind

We long for those dear friends long left behind.

The sands of Oxus, toilsome though they be,

Beneath my feet were soft as silk to me.[[238]](#endnote-238)

The Master ended His explanations with beautiful songs

and these verses:

From whence comes this minstrel

Who sings the name of my Beloved,

That I lay down this life and soul

For a message from my Loved One?

To hear the message from the City of the Beloved

Resuscitates the heart.

The soul dances

On hearing the Word of the Beloved.[[239]](#endnote-239)

In the afternoon the Master spoke on the immortality of

the soul and the teachings of the new Manifestation. After-

wards, many were eager to see Him alone. He said to them:

My desire is greater than yours. Some of the disciples went

to Rumelia and said, ‘We had a desire to see you so we

have come from Jerusalem to this place.’ Now, behold

what a desire I had to see you, that I traveled from the East

to the West!

Wednesday, August 14, 1912

[Dublin]

All the friends had been informed that the Master would

soon leave Dublin for Green Acre in Eliot, Maine, and that

time was running out. They asked Him to speak on econ-

omics and to correct certain false ideas of the socialists. His

explanations were so impressive that after He left they

implored Him to reveal a Tablet on this subject and send

it through Mrs Parsons so that it might remove doubts from

the minds of the people. The following is a transcription

of that Tablet:

Dublin: To the maidservant of God, Mrs Parsons.

Upon her be Bahá’u’lláhu’l-Abhá.

He is God.

O thou, my spiritual daughter,

I am on a train on my way to San Francisco. I recalled

your praiseworthy qualities and the dear face of little

Master Jeffrey, so I wanted to write this letter. Know that

my greatest pleasure will be when I shall see you, my dear

daughter, enraptured and completely charmed by the

paradise of Abhá, and aflame with the fire of the love of

God. May my dear daughter burn and melt like a candle

to enlighten all people. It is my hope that thou mayest be

so.

Regarding the question of economics according to the

new teachings, as this caused some difficulty for you

because the report you received did not reflect what I said,

I shall outline the essence of this matter so that it will be

clearly proven that there is no complete solution for the

economic question apart from that offered in the new

teachings. It is absolutely impossible to resolve the prob-

lem by other means.

In solving this problem we must start with the farmer

and end with other trades, because there are twice as many

farmers, if not more, as there are people engaged in other

trades. Thus it is right that we begin with them. The

farmer is the primary factor in society.

In every village a council of wise men of the village

should be established and the whole village should be

placed under its jurisdiction. In addition, a public treasury

should be established with its own administrator. At har-

vest time a specific quantity of the general produce of the

village should be appropriated for the treasury. This

treasury will have seven sources of income, namely: tithes,

taxes on livestock, unclaimed inheritance, property that

has been found but that has no owner, buried treasure (if

found, one third of it should be paid to the council), mines

(one-third of the natural resources taken should be levied

by the council) and donations. Likewise, there are to be

seven categories of expenditure: first, moderate public

expenditures such as the expenses of the council and

maintenance of public health; second, payment of govern-

ment taxes; third, payment of taxes on livestock to the

government; fourth, care of orphans; fifth, providing for

the disabled; sixth, management of schools; and seventh,

providing the necessary means of livelihood for the poor.

The first means of income is the tithe, which must be

administered as follows: If a person’s average income is

$500 and his necessary expenses amount to the same sum,

no tithe will be collected from him. If another person has

an income of $1,000 and his necessary expenses amount

to $500, he will be able to pay the tithe because he will

have more than he needs. If he pays the tithe there will be

no decline in his standard of living. Another has an in-

come of $5,000 and his expenses are only $1,000, so he

will have to pay one and one-half times the tithe because

he has an even greater amount than he needs. Another has

an income of $10,000 and his necessary expenses amount

to $1,000; therefore he will have to pay two times the tithe

because his surplus is larger. Another person has an

income of $100,000 and expenses amounting to $4,000

or $5,000; he will have to pay one-fourth of his income.

Another has an income of $200 but the expenses he

requires to live at subsistence level amount to $500. He

spares no pains in working and laboring for his livelihood

but the fruit of his labor is inadequate. He must be helped

from the treasury so that he may not be in want and may

live in comfort.

In every village a certain amount should be allocated

for the orphans there. The disabled must be provided for.

The treasury must also provide for the needy who are

unable to work. The council will also allocate a certain

amount for the department of education and for public

health. If there is a surplus, it will be transferred to the

national treasury for general expenses. If it be thus ar-

ranged, every individual in society will live comfortably

and pass his days happily.

Differences in station will also remain and no breach

will occur in this respect. Gradations of rank are without

doubt one of the essentials of society. Society is like an

army. An army requires field marshals, generals, colonels,

captains and privates. It is utterly impossible for all profes-

sions to be equal. Preservation of rank is necessary. But

each individual in the army must live in perfect peace and

comfort. Likewise, a town requires a mayor, judges, mer-

chants, men of means, craftsmen and farmers. Of course,

these ranks must be observed, otherwise the general order

would be disrupted.

Convey my heartfelt love to Mr Parsons. I shall never

forget him. If possible, have this letter published in one

of the newspapers, as others are proclaiming these princi-

ples in their own names. Convey wondrous Abhá greetings

to Qudsíyyih.[[240]](#endnote-240)

Upon you be Bahá’u’l-Abhá.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá Abbás.

Thursday, August 15, 1912

[Dublin]

Today was the Master’s last day in Dublin. Mrs Parsons had

asked a large number to attend and had invited the best

musicians to play the piano and sing at the beginning of

the meeting. The Master sat in an adjoining room enjoying

the music. There was such a crowd in the large drawing

room that although rows of chairs had been arranged, no

seating was available. The Master entered the room to give

His last talk in Dublin:

I have explained every question for you, delivered to you

the message of God, expounded the mysteries of the

divine Books for you, proved the immortality of the spirit

and oneness of truth and expounded for you economic

questions and divine teachings.

As this was His last address everyone came to shake His

hand and offer his or her thanks before leaving His pres-

ence. Mrs Parsons said that the people were usually happy

but because they knew ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was leaving they were

sad and wanted to prolong His stay.

He replied, ‘I, too, wished to stay longer but I must go

to Green Acre and other places. I must raise the call of the

Kingdom in all places. The days of my life in this world are

limited, so I must pass through all regions and announce

the glad tidings of the Kingdom of Abhá.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent the day saying farewell to many

eminent people. After the afternoon meeting, one of the

believers, Miss Knobloch, with His permission took several

photographs of Him with His servants.

The automobile was ready and He was driven to the

home of a friend where a meeting was held. The people

were very enthusiastic and inebriated with love and affec-

tion. After speaking to them briefly and narrating a few

stories, He left.

Friday, August 16, 1912

[Dublin – Green Acre]

At dawn, while we were still in bed, we heard the Master

sweetly chanting a prayer. We at once got up, went to Him

and were served tea and refreshments from the all-bounti-

ful Sághí.[[241]](#endnote-241) He instructed us to collect our belongings and

prepare to leave. Around 10:00 a.m. Mr [Alfred E.] Lunt’s

automobile arrived and the Master left Dublin. En route

He had lunch at Nashua, New Hampshire, and after a little

rest continued on His journey. We reached Green Acre[[242]](#endnote-242)

in the afternoon where more than five hundred people

were waiting for Him. Both sides of the entrance had been

decorated with multicolored lanterns and a festive recep-

tion awaited His arrival.

After a short rest, the Master entered the main room of

the Inn and gave a brief talk about the investigation of

truth. From there He went to the home of Miss Farmer, the

founder of the Green Acre Society.[[243]](#endnote-243) This distinguished

lady was revived by His visit and although she was not

feeling well, she accompanied the Master back to the Inn.

In the evening at the hotel,[[244]](#endnote-244) in response to questions

from the audience, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered a most impres-

sive address on the love of God, the immortality of the

spirit and the divine teachings. Everyone was deeply moved

and their hearts were transformed.[[245]](#endnote-245)

Monday, August 17, 1912

[Green Acre]

The beloved Master’s health was better and He was happy.

He spoke of the pleasant climate of Green Acre and visited

with friends and seekers until He left for a walk. On the way

to Mr [Charles Mason] Remey’s house the Master was

accompanied by a group to whom He spoke about many

spiritual truths. When He arrived, Mr Remey offered Him

a cup of water, saying that he had longed for many years

to invite the Master and that he thanked God for being

given the honor to offer Him a cup of water. The Master

said:

Your home is simple and furnished plainly. People are

captivated by the superfluities of the present generation.

It is impossible for a man to furnish his house in utmost

perfection. The more he tries the more he finds it lacking

because every day new products are manufactured. People

have filled their lives with difficulties.

Later the Master went to the home of Mrs [Carrie] Kinney.

There He spoke about material progress and the philoso-

phers’ lack of feeling for the spiritual kingdom, saying that

‘This is befitting of animals. Truth must be sought and laid

bare. No one should endeavor to force upon people what

he conceives. The brilliant reality, which is the spirit of the

world today, is one. It can never be multiple.’[[246]](#endnote-246) He uttered

such statements on numerous occasions and in various

ways. Because Green Acre is known as a center for religious

freedom and advanced liberal views, many fortune-tellers,

spiritualists and ascetics come here every year to spread

their superstitious views. The discourse of the Center of the

Covenant completely swept away the cobwebs of their

superstitions. They were checked to such a degree that

some of the impostors, who in previous years had delivered

lectures contrary to the Cause of God, now came to see

Him, bowing before Him and repenting. Some of them

begged Him to heal them, saying, ‘You have healed many.’

The Master replied:

We pray but God bestows healing. We do not make claims

for ourselves. We are only the expounders of the Word. We

are all promulgating the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh. I am

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Bahá’u’lláh is the Dawning Place of Holi-

ness. Address your needs to Him. I am only the expounder

and promulgator of the Word. Bahá’u’lláh is the Source,

the One Who has illumined this dark world, made corpo-

real into spiritual, quickened the dormant minds, changed

the earthly souls into heavenly ones and given life to the

dead and sight to the blind.

That night He delivered an address on the unity of man-

kind in the east hall of the Eirenion.[[247]](#endnote-247) On His return to

the Inn He spoke with the audience in jests which never-

theless touched on many important subjects. He offered

sweets to some visitors who, following the superstitious ideas

of the ascetics, did not eat certain foods. He dispelled their

beliefs by saying, ‘Food has nothing to do with faith.

Rather, you should eat things to gain strength and you

should acquire spirituality.’

Sunday, August 18, 1912

[Green Acre]

It was a rainy day. The Master was occupied until noon

counseling the friends to devote their time in teaching the

Cause of God and advising them not to interfere in the

affairs of the Green Acre Fellowship. Lunch was prepared

by Mrs Kinney. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: ‘A little soup would have

sufficed me. A variety of foods makes me ill.’

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave an impressive talk

to a gathering of liberal-minded visitors concerning the

renewal of religious laws and the oneness of the Manifesta-

tions of God.[[248]](#endnote-248) A wonderful impression was produced on

the whole audience as His melodious voice rang with

majestic tones, moving the chairman of the conference to

tears. As the Master was offering a prayer, one lady stood

up and then fainted. When she regained consciousness she

said that the power of the meeting overwhelmed her. It

seemed to her that everyone in the audience was flying in

heaven.

When the Master left this gathering, He met some

people who were singing. He said to them, ‘We listen always

to your terrestrial music, now it would be well for you to

give ear to our celestial songs.’ After seeing to things in the

kitchen, He came out to meet a number of the friends who

had come to seek His advice on personal matters. He gave

each His special attention. When Miss Edna McKinney, who

had transcribed His addresses in English, came into His

presence, He said to her, ‘Thou art a maidservant who in

the Kingdom of God is among the near ones. I desire the

confirmation and protection of the Abhá Kingdom for you.’

He also expressed extraordinary kindness for Mrs Parsons,

Mrs Goodall, Mrs Cooper, Mrs Krug and Miss Juliet

Thompson, who were not present. He advised Mrs Kinney

not to wish for too rapid progress at once in the emancipa-

tion of women.

Monday, August 19, 1912

[Green Acre]

Among the friends was a lady who had come from Brooklyn

to ask ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s permission to go to Utica. He kindly

said to her:

Put your trust in the Blessed Beauty. Every momentous

work that one undertakes has difficulties in the beginning.

One should withstand such difficulties with the utmost

steadfastness. We who wish to raise this magnificent edifice

must be as brave as the soldiers who are intent on conquer-

ing strong fortresses.

Later He walked to Miss Taylor’s home. Resting in the

foyer, He praised the climate and beauty of the surround-

ings, saying:

Here on a moonlit night, when the moon is in its full

brilliance, when the stars are shining and the air is pure

and a sweet breeze is wafting, at such a time to pray and

weep before the Court of God has a delight of its own.

As He left there He encountered some women who were

fortune tellers. Some read palms and others interpreted

dreams. They all voiced their opinion that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

possessed divine spirit and heavenly power. He showered

kindness on all of them then returned to the Inn and gave

a talk about superstitious beliefs and the severe discipline

and asceticism of the Hindus.

He also visited a residence known as the Bahá’í

House.[[249]](#endnote-249) He praised it, saying, ‘It would have been good

if we had stayed here.’ The Master then gave instructions

for the Nineteen Day Feast to be held the following day,

saying, ‘Tomorrow I will host the festivity.’

In the afternoon He was invited to a summer school for

girls held on the Green Acre common. Mrs Tatum drove

Him in her automobile. There He sat on the grass near the

bank of the river as the students pitched their tents and

began their exercises. The principal and a teacher gave

Him information about the school. A group had assembled

under the trees to hear the Master’s address. With great

reverence, the superintendent of the school introduced the

Master. He then gave an eloquent talk on both spiritual

and material education which drew much admiration from

the audience. Afterwards the chairman and school mistress

thanked the Master and expressed everyone’s appreciation

for His talk. The students then stood and sang in praise of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in such sweet tones that everyone was en-

chanted. When the Master left everyone went to the auto-

mobile to shake His hand and to express their gratitude.

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on the everlasting

dominion of God and His Holy Manifestations. After the

talk He answered questions.

Tuesday, August 20, 1912

[Green Acre]

Among the friends visiting the Master was Fred Mortensen,

a youth who, prior to embracing the Cause, had been a

fugitive from justice but was now very humble and

tranquil.[[250]](#endnote-250) Despairing of seeing the Master, who had not

made known His plans to visit the West, he traveled from

Minneapolis to visit Him. Because he could not afford to

pay the price of a ticket from Minneapolis to Green Acre,

he had ridden the rods under the train and in this way

reached Chicago and Green Acre. He explained everything

about his journey to the Master, who then told him, ‘You

are my guest.’ Each day the Master bestowed kindness upon

him and a few days later He gave him money to pay for his

journey home. Unknown to anyone, the Master paid for

many such expenses. Twice He sent a speaker from New

York to Chicago and adjacent cities and on each occasion,

although the person was rich, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave him more

than enough money to defray the expenses of his journey.

In addition, He liberally contributed to the poor and to the

churches [in which He spoke] in every city.

After speaking with the friends, He went to Miss

Farmer’s temporary residence [in Portsmouth]. When she

saw ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, she fell into such a state of rapture that

every heart was moved. After comforting her and the

others, at Dr Leroy’s request He went to see places of

historic interest, including a yard where battleships were

being built [the Navy Yard in Kittery]. This activity did not

please the Master. On His return He said:

While the Manifestations of God are still alive, the people

do not appreciate their value, they curse and execrate

them; but after their ascension they worship them. Such

is the case with these tent-dwellers who live outside Green

Acre. Even Columbus and some ancient philosophers like

Socrates were made to suffer but after a time the people

took pride in praising them.

This afternoon, under the Persian pines and cypresses of

that lovely plain, three hundred people heard ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

draw a picture of the vista of everlasting life, its spiritual

stations and eternal blessings. He then went to the ‘Bahá’í

House’ where we were all His guests. Following His walk

after supper, the Master stood at the front hall of the house

and spoke. People were even standing in the street to listen

to Him. He spoke so beautifully about the relationship of

the East and the West that passersby stopped to hear what

He had to say.[[251]](#endnote-251)

In the evening there was musical entertainment and

dancing in the hall of the Inn. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said, ‘Such

gatherings and practices are the cause of the corruption of

morals.’ He also said this evening, ‘My thoughts are wholly

absorbed by this journey. I can think of nothing else be-

cause the outcome of this journey is so great. Up to now in

the Cause of the Blessed Beauty a development as great as

this has not occurred.’

Wednesday, August 21, 1912

[Green Acre]

During the visit of a group of Bahá’ís with the Master, a

young girl came in and said, ‘I have come to ask for your

assistance. Please tell me what I am fitted to do so that I

may occupy myself with it.’ The Master asked, ‘Do you have

trust in me?’ She replied, ‘Yes.’ He then said to her, ‘Be a

perfect Bahá’í. Associate with Bahá’ís. Study the teachings

of Bahá’u’lláh. Then you will be assisted in whatever you

undertake to do.’ She then said, ‘I am a good Jewess.’ The

Master then said:

A good Jew can also become a Bahá’í. The truth of the

religion of Moses and of Bahá’u’lláh is one. Turn toward

Bahá’u’lláh and you will acquire peace and tranquillity,

you will hear the melody of the Kingdom, you will stir

people’s souls and you will attain the highest degree of

perfection. Be assured of this.

When she heard the Master’s words she was so impressed

that she threw herself at His feet and wept.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá explained some aspects of the divine

philosophy and teachings to the pastor of the Portsmouth

church. The pastor said that he had included some of these

teachings in his pamphlets and some people had taken

offence. The Master said, ‘Constancy in all things brings

forth fruitful results.’

Mrs Tatum said, ‘I feel so dejected today. I am unhappy

with myself.’ The Master replied:

This is a sign of progress. The person who is satisfied with

himself is the manifestation of Satan and the one who is

not satisfied is the manifestation of the Merciful One. An

egotist does not progress but the one who thinks himself

imperfect will seek perfection for himself and will pro-

gress. If a man has a thousand good qualities, he must not

look at them. He must search always for his shortcomings.

For example, if a man has a building which is well-con-

structed and fully decorated but which has a small crack

in one of its walls, he will, no doubt, forget the rest and

turn his whole attention to repairing that crack. Further-

more, the attainment of absolute perfection for a human

being is impossible; thus, however much he may progress

he is still imperfect and has above him a point higher than

himself. And the instant he sees this point he will not be

satisfied with himself. It is for this reason that when some-

one called Christ ‘Good Master’, He replied that there is

only One who is good and that is God.

Another lady told ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that she had lectured in

America on universal brotherhood and unity. She was

pleased to see the Master in America promulgating these

high ideals and that she was going to continue to spread

these teachings in the Western states of America. The

Master said to her:

We must endeavor as much as we can to exterminate spite

and perversity so that people may be delivered from the

shackles of superstition. You must serve in this way and

become the cause of the unity of the world of men.

He spoke in the same vein with everyone. There were two

people, Dr and Mrs Moore, who had been antagonistic

towards the Cause of God from the very beginning. How-

ever, they had become so attracted and transformed that

they came into the Master’s presence with great humility

and pledged themselves to the service of the truth. The

transformation of such people is a momentous task which

will produce great results.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went by automobile to the

home of Mrs [Kate] Ives and sat next to the driver, which

is where members of His entourage usually sit. He sat there

until the party arrived. When a number of the friends had

gathered, He went with them to the hill of Monsalvat.[[252]](#endnote-252)

As soon as He arrived about four hundred people sang

songs of praise to Him in unison. He addressed this gather-

ing on the necessity of founding the school for the

investigation of religions which Miss Farmer wished to

establish on that mountain. A moving picture of this gath-

ering was taken.[[253]](#endnote-253)

The gathering was also characterized by a renewed

enthusiasm, ardor and love, which seemed to draw all

hearts. It was an auspicious day.

He then went to Mrs [Esther Annie] Magee’s home

where He dined with a group of friends.[[254]](#endnote-254) He spoke to

them about the proofs and evidences of the existence of

God and the composition of elements according to the will

of the Almighty.

Thursday, August 22, 1912

[Green Acre]

So many assembled this morning in the Master’s home that

there was no room to stand. The Master said that it was not

possible to speak to each individually, therefore He stood

in front of the group and spoke about the teachings and

divine exhortations. At one point He said, ‘I hope that

harvests will be reaped from the seed-sowing and that it will

receive heavenly blessings.’

After the meeting the Master gave permission to some

earnest seekers to see Him privately. Afterwards, He went

to visit the homes of some of the friends.

Today a lady who had survived the *Titanic* disaster came

to see Him. ‘I am told,’ she said, ‘that you advised not to

travel by that ship.’

The Master replied in the affirmative. She questioned,

‘Did you know that this would happen?’ The Master said,

‘God inspires man’s heart.’

When He returned to the Inn, some prominent people

came to see Him. In the course of the conversation they

said, ‘We have always understood that religion is opposed

to science but we are now indebted to your discourses and

teachings for throwing a new light on our thinking.’

The Master gave another talk on these issues for their

enlightenment. Another group of people came to visit Him,

expressing their heartfelt sorrow that He intended to leave

Green Acre. They begged Him to write them a few words

in His own handwriting and He wrote brief prayers for

them in His exquisite script.

In the afternoon He paid farewell visits to some of the

friends at their homes. At each gathering He offered life-

giving words and in each home He was as the beloved one

who steals hearts. He then returned home extremely

exhausted, to the point that He could not even sit down.

‘Our condition’, He said, ‘is like that of the exhausted iron

worker’s apprentice whose master said to him, “Die, but

pump.”’

After a brief rest He went to the hall at Eirenion and

gave a talk on unity among the races, the elimination of

prejudice amongst the peoples and nations, and the

necessity for the oneness of the world of humanity in this

enlightened age. At the end He chanted a prayer in such

melodious and sweet tones that every heart was attracted

to the divine kingdom and every soul turned to the Beauty

of the Beloved.

Friday, August 23, 1912

[Green Acre]

In the morning, while the Master was preparing to leave,

He said:

We have finished our work here. We have sown a seed.

Many souls have been attracted and transformed. Every

day we have seen gifts such as fruit, flowers, honey and

sweets which have been placed here anonymously and

without show. This is a proof of the sincerity of their

hearts.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was delighted to witness the influence of the

Word of God on Green Acre. Indeed, it has become a

second paradise on earth and had been transformed into

verdancy and freshness.

At His instructions, the suitcases were packed and the

carriage readied. The believers and seekers were burning

with the fire of love, lamenting and shedding tears. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá sat in the carriage while the friends lined both sides

of the road. For as long as the carriage remained in sight,

they continued to wave their hats and handkerchiefs in

farewell. On the way He stopped to visit Miss Farmer, who

fell at His feet weeping and received from the Master His

infinite favor and utmost kindness.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Green Acre at 10:00 a.m. and reached

Malden, Massachusetts, at 1:00 p.m. He arrived at the

home of Miss [Marie P.] Wilson, whose invitation to stay at

checkher house He had accepted.[[255]](#endnote-255) A new spirit was breathed

into the bodies and a divine happiness was shed upon the

hearts.

As He was tired, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not eat but instead

rested for a while.

In the afternoon and evening many friends were hon-

ored with meeting Him.

Saturday, August 24, 1912

[Malden]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was engaged in writing letters to the new

Bahá’ís in Dublin and bestowing His favors on them. He

also wrote to the friends in the Western states. Later,

several visitors arrived from Malden and Dublin to see

Him. One was the president of the New Thought Forum

who had come from Boston to invite the Master to speak

to his society. Two people from Ṭihrán, Persia, who had

come to America on business, also came to see Him. He

told them:

The Persians destroyed their home with their own hands

in the hope of building another one; but now they are left

in the desert without a home or shelter. We wrote and

exhorted them, pointing out that the union of government

and the people is like combining milk and honey; other-

wise, the neighboring governments will encroach upon the

country. In spite of all this they malevolently made false

accusations against us. But God protected us because we

were not involved in shedding the blood of even one

Persian.

The newspaper *‘Fikr*’ [Thought] was mentioned, and He

continued:

In this newspaper our letter speaks for itself. We are far

from taking part in any seditious movement and we hold

fast to the will of the Lord.

In the afternoon another group came to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

One was a minister from Chicago, who asked about the sins

of men and the forgiveness of the Manifestations of the

Merciful One. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a detailed explanation,

which fascinated the minister. The Master stated that

forgiveness depends upon our obedience to the admoni-

tions of the Prophets of God and not on the mere verbal

statement of belief or on following the words of the minis-

ters of religion.

That evening the friends and seekers of Malden were

treated to a talk about the power of the Greatest Name and

the unity of nations and peoples. Each day and night

witnesses a stream of new inquirers wishing to come into

His holy presence.

Sunday, August 25, 1912

[Malden]

The superintendent of a girls’ school in Boston came with

several people to invite the Master to speak to their stu-

dents. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá invited another group of friends from

Boston and Green Acre who had come to visit Him to stay

for lunch.

In the afternoon He went to the New Thought Forum.

On the way He stopped by the home of one of the friends

whose wife was ill with consumption [tuberculosis]. After

comforting and consoling her, He proceeded to the

meeting of the society mentioned above. When He entered,

the entire audience stood in His honor. After a cordial

introduction of welcome, the president of the society an-

nounced, without the Master’s prior consent, that ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá would speak on the subject of ‘Captivating the Souls’.

Not to embarrass the president, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke first

about the conquest of the cities and towns of the physical

world by the kings and then described the conquest of the

dominion of the hearts and souls of men by the Manifesta-

tions of God. He concluded His talk on the influence and

expansion of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh in this contingent

world. He then chanted a prayer in His sweet, melodious

voice.[[256]](#endnote-256)

As the Master went to the automobile, crowds of excited

and joyful people lined the outside of the hall to express

their gratitude, entreating Him to come the next day to

speak to them again. The automobile drove through

Boston and two other towns and passed several historic

landmarks on the way back to Malden.

There was unusual excitement and happiness among the

friends who came to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s home that evening. The

Master spoke about 21 of the teachings of this Great Mani-

festation of God which are needed by the people of the

world.

Monday, August 26, 1912

[Malden]

At the invitation of Mrs Breed, the Master went for an

automobile ride along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean

through a wide thoroughfare about nine miles long and

guarded on the ocean side with iron rails. It is a recreation

spot, very green and clean, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá praised it

highly.

Some of the firm believers came to visit the Master. He

spoke to them about love and faithfulness:

This visit is a proof of faithfulness, proof that we have not

forgotten one another. In the world of existence nothing

is greater than faithfulness, for it allows love to remain

unimpaired in spite of the length of time. Behold how

faithful were those blessed souls in Persia who, when under

the sword, praised the Blessed Beauty. No affliction or

persecution could turn them from faithfulness. On the

altar of sacrifice they raised cries of ‘Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá’

from their hearts and souls. This is real faithfulness.

In the evening at the girls’ school He spoke about the rights

and education of women. At the conclusion, everyone came

to shake His hand with sincerity and gratitude.[[257]](#endnote-257)

Because ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was tired and it was too far to go

back to Malden, He stayed at a hotel in Boston and went

to sleep without supper.

Tuesday, August 27, 1912

[Malden]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned to Malden in the morning. He was

occupied chiefly in writing letters to the American friends.

Believers and seekers came by ones and twos and He

lovingly received them.

In the evening there was a well attended meeting at the

Theosophical Society.[[258]](#endnote-258) The gathering became the dawn-

ing place of the confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom. The

chairman of the meeting introduced the Master to an

audience of some five hundred saying:

Several months ago I attended a convention on the eman-

cipation of religions in this city. Many people of different

religions and sects spoke, each one praising the beliefs

of his own sect. But a very august personage then stood.

By His bearing and by the first few words of His address,

everyone felt that this person was spiritual and divinely

inspired; that His explanations were heavenly; that He

was speaking from God; that He could transform the souls;

that He was with God and was the herald of peace and

love; that what He said was first practiced by Himself;

and that He was a flame from the Kingdom which bright-

ened and illuminated the minds and hearts of all. That

august person was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. I am not worthy to intro-

duce His Holiness to you. You will yourselves know Him

better than I.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then stood and gave a stirring address con-

cerning the movement of atoms and the infinite forms that

compose this contingent world and gave an explanation of

the new teachings of the Cause. During the address, every

heart and soul was enthralled. After the meeting everyone

spoke of feeling the bounties of the Holy Spirit and of the

need for these teachings of love and unity.

Wednesday, August 28, 1912[[259]](#endnote-259)

[Malden]

The president of the Theosophical Society begged the

Master that at least one of the friends of the Cause be asked

to present these new teachings and principles to his society

again. The Master replied, ‘I will appoint a person who will

talk to you at several meetings.’

When the enthusiasm of the people at yesterday eve-

ning’s meeting was mentioned to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, He said:

‘Yes, it was a good meeting. The souls were stirred. The

Blessed Beauty sent His confirmations and strong assis-

tance.’

Today a new group of people came to see the Master

and to be refreshed. On seeing the spirit which filled the

air, their hearts were exhilarated, their souls grateful and

heads bowed in respect.

This evening a meeting filled with joy and enthusiasm

was held in the home of Mrs Morey in Malden.[[260]](#endnote-260) ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá spoke about the divine teachings and kindly admon-

ished the audience, setting aglow a new fire of love in their

hearts. When He had finished speaking, a woman asked

about the purpose and value of the creation of the world.

He spoke first of the virtues of the world of humanity and

then about nearness to God, which uplifted the audience.

But the questioner was preoccupied, she said that she did

not understand His explanation. Therefore the Master

spoke in parables, explaining that the greatest result of any

perfect creation is the love of the Creator for His creation

and that the essential nature of the life-giving God is to

create and to spread His bounties and in doing so, God

enjoys His creation.

Thursday, August 29, 1912

[Malden]

Today was the last day of the Master’s stay in Malden. In

addition to receiving visitors every minute to bid them

farewell, He was busy correcting letters to be posted.

In the evening a joyful meeting was held at His resi-

dence. The friends were encouraged as He exhorted them

to exert their utmost to promulgate the Word of God. At

the end of the meeting He said to Mrs Wilson, ‘Since my

arrival in America I have stayed in but two homes, Mrs

Parsons’ and yours. God be praised that the divine confir-

mations have descended on you and that you are assisted

in serving the Cause of the Blessed Beauty. You must

appreciate the value of this blessing.’ Then turning to Miss

Englehorn, He said: ‘I am very pleased with your services.

Were you worldly, you would have received your wages but

as you are heavenly and divine, your reward is with

Bahá’u’lláh.’

Friday, August 30, 1912

[Malden – Montreal]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left today for Montreal. The only servants He

took with Him were Mirza Ahmad Sohrab and myself.

Because He had decided to travel to the Western part of

America at the pressing invitation of the friends in Califor-

nia, He said, ‘We have a long distance to go and must

therefore leave as soon as possible.’ For this reason, He

instructed Mírzá Valíyu’lláh Khán-i-Varqá, Áqá Mírzá ‘Alí-

Akbar Nakhjavání, Áqá Siyyid Asadu’lláh and Dr Getsinger

to remain until His return.

As soon as the friends and a group of Arabs saw ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá at the railway station in Boston, they surrounded

Him, their faces beaming with joy and enthusiasm. At 9:00

a.m. the train left Boston and reached Montreal at 8:00

p.m. On the way, a Canadian was privileged to speak with

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master pointed out to him the straight

path of truth, and even though this individual had known

nothing about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá before this encounter, he was

attracted to Him.

When we arrived at the station, we saw Mr [Sutherland]

Maxwell hurrying forward to greet the Master. He had two

carriages to convey the Master and His companions to his

home.[[261]](#endnote-261) There a group of friends and a newspaper pub-

lisher[[262]](#endnote-262) were waiting to see the Master. At the table, Mrs

[May] Maxwell said, ‘So many people have telephoned and

sent letters about your arrival and I have replied to all. I

have become very tired but I consider this fatigue the

greatest comfort of my life.’ A pastor had telephoned to ask

the Master to address his congregation the day after tomor-

row. The editor of the newspaper said that he would pub-

lish the announcement the next day. When Mrs Maxwell

informed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá of this, He said, ‘Very well. You

were tired, having undergone such trouble today. You must

rest for the time being.’

Saturday, August 31, 1912

[Montreal]

In the morning, the pastor of the Unitarian Church came

with several others to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master dis-

cussed with them the elimination of religious superstitions

and prejudices, which are contrary to science and common

sense and which are obstacles to the attainment of the

foundation of truth of the divine religions.

A newspaper reporter was then announced. He had

come to interview the Master about His life and the history

of the Cause. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a detailed account, which

was recorded by the reporter.

The Master went to the dinner table. Mr Maxwell had

come from the customs house and said that when the

inspector opened the first suitcase and saw a picture of the

Master, he asked, ‘Is this the picture of the prophet of

Persia?’ When he received an affirmative reply, the inspec-

tor said, ‘There is no need to inspect these goods’ and

released all the luggage.

Some of the newspapers accounts about the visit of the

Master are full of reverence and praise.

In the afternoon, at the invitation of Mr Maxwell, the

Master went for ride in the town. While in the carriage He

remarked:

Every city in which the remembrance of God is raised is

a divine city. ‘Akká was a despised city but when it became

the center of the mention of God and the dawning place

of His Light, it illumined the world.

When He saw some of the college buildings, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said:

As only material education is imparted and only natural

philosophy is taught, these universities do not produce

highly talented scholars. When both the natural and the

divine philosophies are expounded, they will bring forth

outstanding souls and evince great advancement. The

reason for the success of the Greek schools was that they

combined both natural and divine philosophies.

As His carriage passed by the Unitarian Church, He said,

‘Tomorrow we will raise the Call of God in this place.’

The carriage reached the Roman Catholic Cathedral of

Notre Dame. Everything was quiet and no one was in sight.

The Master alighted and went in to see the huge building.

With rapt attention, He gazed at the vast cathedral, its

ornamentation and numerous statues and spoke of its

grandeur and embellishments. Standing in an open space

at the entrance, He addressed us saying:

Behold what eleven disciples of Christ have accomplished,

how they sacrificed themselves! I exhort you to walk in

their footsteps. When a person is detached, he is capable

of revolutionizing the whole world. The disciples of Christ

met together in consultation on top of a mountain. They

pledged themselves to undergo all manner of hardships,

to accept every affliction as a bounty and to consider all

difficulties easy to overcome. ‘He who is tied to a family,

let him arrange to leave it; he who is not should remain

single. He should forgo his comfort and his life.’ Consult-

ing thus, they descended from the mountain and each one

went a different way and never returned. It is for this

reason that they were able to leave behind such achieve-

ments. After Christ, the disciples truly forgot themselves,

and not merely in word. Hence, the Blessed Beauty cited:

Either be like women and indulge in adorn-

ment and pleasure

Or like men, come out and throw down the

gauntlet.[[263]](#endnote-263)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá took His seat in the carriage again and told

us:

On our way to Baghdád we had to put up with unbearable

hardships. At one time a Turkish soldier of the Ottoman

army appeared before us. Mírzá Yaḥyá, on seeing the

soldier sitting on the horse with majesty and dignity, cried

out with great grief and despair, ‘Oh! Where were we?

Where are we now going? They say that all heads will bow.

When shall it be?’ I said to him in reply, ‘When the divine

bounty attains perfection, persons greater than this soldier

will bow their heads under the shadow of the Word of

God.’ Where is Mírzá Yaḥyá now? Let him come and see

how the power of Bahá’u’lláh has so inspired humility in

these Americans, who consider the Turks as nothing, that

a person like Mr Maxwell, an American, is with deference

serving Mírzá Aḥmad,[[264]](#endnote-264) a Persian.

In the evening there was a well-attended meeting at

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s residence. He spoke, with good effect, about

spiritual progress and the manifestation of divine virtues

in human realities. Afterwards many requested private

interviews. On receiving satisfactory answers to their ques-

tions, they expressed their heartfelt gratitude. Among them

was the president of a socialist organization who invited the

Master to his group. His request was granted. As it grew

late in the evening and other people were waiting for

private interviews, we suggested that since the Master might

be weary, it would be better if the rest of those waiting came

back in the morning. He replied, ‘No, this is the time to

work. We must not think of our fatigue. Everyone is to be

met.’

Sunday, September 1, 1912

[Montreal]

This was a momentous day. From the pulpit of the Unitar-

ian Church, the voice of the Center of the Covenant was

broadcast afar. As He prepared to leave for the church, He

asked me to sit by Him in the carriage. I said that there was

room on the other seat. He replied, ‘Come and sit here.

When I see someone who is ambitious and selfish, I observe

these formalities merely for his correction. Otherwise,

everyone may sit wherever he wishes. These things are

entirely unimportant.’ When the carriage arrived, the

pastor, who had been waiting at the entrance, came for-

ward, took the Master’s arm with the utmost reverence and

courtesy, led him to the pulpit and offered Him his own

chair. After the music, the pastor stood and read verses

from the Book of Isaiah which allude to the appearance of

a promised one from the East. Everyone listened with rapt

attention to these verses and felt that they had been specifi-

cally written for this day.

In introducing the Master, the pastor said:

We are honored today with the presence of the Prophet

of Peace whose message is the Message of God. God has

raised Him to exterminate war and bloodshed. His pres-

ence in this church is the cause of eternal honor and the

fulfillment of our long-cherished hopes and desires. He

is the sign of love among the people and the promoter of

oneness and brotherhood among the sons of men. His

object is to free people from the shackles of imitation and

to unfurl the banner of the oneness of humanity. He is the

temple of kindness, the possessor of the greatest news, the

inspirer of the new thoughts and the expounder of the

happiness of this great cycle. Although He has suffered

violence and affliction for many years and has seen perse-

cutions, His spiritual power is still flowing like the water

of life. Although His body has felt the cross, yet His spirit,

which is life-giving, has not been crucified. He has jour-

neyed by land and sea to come to these western countries.

We extend Him a sincere welcome and offer the incense

of gratitude for His teachings which are the cause of the

recovery of hearts and are the source of eternal blessings

and happiness. Now His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá will speak

to you.

The Master rose and, pacing the stage, gave the following

address:

God the Almighty has created all humanity from dust,

from the same elements. All are descended from one race

and all are created to live on the same earth, under the

canopy of the same heaven. As members of humanity He

created them sharing the same susceptibilities. As created

by Him all are one, without discrimination. He provides

for all; He trains all; He protects all; He is kind to all. He

has left no difference in His bounties and favors to men.

He raised prophets and sent divine teachings. These

teachings unite all and generate love in human hearts. He

has proclaimed the unity of the world of man. He depre-

cates all obstacles to unity and commends everything that

is conducive to harmony and unity. He admonishes all to

establish unity at all levels. All the Prophets of God were

raised up to deliver the message of love and unity to the

sons of men. All the Books of God were revealed to estab-

lish fellowship and union. All the Prophets of God were

the servants of truth. All their teachings were the essence

of truth. Truth is one; it does not accept multiplicity.

Therefore, the foundation of truth of all the religions of

God is one.

Yet, alas, blind imitations, which have nothing to do

with this truth, have crept in. As these vain practices vary,

contention, warfare and bloodshed became rampant and

strife prevailed. These are the destroyers of the divine

foundation. Men kill one another like beasts and bring

desolation to one another’s families. God has created man

for love. He made love the illumination of the world of

man. Love is the cause of the unity of creation. All the

prophets were promulgators of love. Man, however, arose

against the decree of God and acted contrary to the divine

will. For this reason, since the beginning of present his-

tory, man has never experienced harmony. Bloodshed and

massacre have been rampant among them. The hearts

have been suspicious of one another. Man has acted

against God’s good pleasure. All the wars and massacres

of the past have been induced either by religious or racial

prejudices or by political and patriotic bias which have

made this world a place of constant agony for the sons of

man.

These prejudices were intense in the Orient, for there

was no freedom.

The gloom of blind imitations had darkened the entire

Orient and all the nations and religions were on terms of

extreme hostility and at war with each other. At such a

time Bahá’u’lláh appeared and proclaimed the oneness

of the world of man, saying that all men are created by

God and all the religions are under the shadow of the

mercy of God. God is kind to all; He loves all. All the

prophets loved one another. The holy books confirm one

another. Why then should there be strife and contention

among men? When all are the creatures of one God, and

like sheep all are under the protection of one shepherd

who helps each one, why should not the sheep live in

perfect harmony with one another? If one has gone astray,

the others must bring it back and guide it. At the most, if

a person is ignorant, he must be informed; if he is imper-

fect, he must be made perfect; if he is sick, he must be

cured; if he is blind, he must be healed and not be made

a target of enmity and hatred.

Second, Bahá’u’lláh proclaimed that religion must be

the means of love and fellowship. If religion is the cause

of hatred, it has no meaning. Irreligion is preferable to

such a religion, for it produces enmity and hatred. That

which produces enmity is odious to God and that which

brings forth love and harmony is acceptable to Him and

praised by Him. If religion becomes the cause of blood-

shed and rapacity, it is not religion. Irreligion is better

than that. Religion is like a remedy. If the remedy pro-

duces sickness, it is better not to have it at all. Thus if

religion is the cause of warfare and massacre, irreligion is

preferable.

Third, religion must be in accord with reason and

science. If religion is not consistent with science and

reason, it is superstition. God has given us reason so that

we may comprehend the realities of things and become

lovers of truth. If religion is inconsistent with science and

reason, it cannot produce confidence. When confidence

is not generated, it is but superstition. Religious issues

must therefore conform with reason and science so that

hearts may derive assurance, and happiness may prevail.

Fourth, all prejudices—religious, racial, patriotic and

political—are destroyers of the human edifice. The reli-

gion of God is but one for all. All religions are founded on

truth. Abraham summoned the people to reality; Moses

proclaimed reality; Christ founded reality; and Muḥam-

mad promoted reality. All the prophets were the servants

of reality. All were founders and enforcers of reality.

Religious prejudice, therefore, is vain and false, for it

negates the truth.

As to racial prejudice: all humanity is one progeny. All

are servants of one God. All are of one essence. There is

no plurality in race because all are the sons of Adam.

Plurality in race is an unfounded belief. Before God there

is no England, France, Turkey or Persia. All these people

are regarded as one before God. God did not made these

divisions. They are made by man; hence, they are false

and contrary to reality. Everyone has two eyes, two ears,

one head and two feet. There is no racial prejudice among

animals, no such prejudice among pigeons. A pigeon of

the East will mingle with a pigeon of the West harmoni-

ously. A sheep of the West will not say to a sheep of the

East: ‘You are of the East and I am of the West.’ Instead

they mix together. If a pigeon comes from the East, it will

mix with the pigeons of the West. It will not say, ‘I am of

the East while you are of the West.’ Is it worthy of man to

entertain an attitude which animals do not allow?

Patriotic prejudice prevails although the whole earth

is one globe, one country. God has made no divisions in

it. He has created all as one. Before Him there are no

differences. How can man lay down divisions which God

has not created? Europe is one continent. We have created

imaginary lines. We fix a boundary and say that on this

side of the river is France and on that side Germany,

although the river exists for both sides. What idle fancy is

this? What ignorance! A thing not purposed by God is

made by man, through his own imagination, a cause of

bloodshed and strife. Hence, all these prejudices have no

valid basis and are odious before God. God has created

love, amity and affection which He has desired for His

servants. Enmity is reprobated by Him, while love and

harmony are accepted in His presence.

Fifth, one of the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh is that every

human being must acquire knowledge, so that misunder-

standings which are rampant among the people of differ-

ent nations may be removed. All differences are begotten

of misunderstandings. If these are removed, all humanity

will become united. Misunderstandings can be removed

only when knowledge is universally diffused. It is incum-

bent on every father to educate his children. If the father

is incapable, the community must help so that knowledge

may prevail and misunderstandings disappear.

Sixth, Bahá’u’lláh proclaimed the equality of the sexes,

because women were not free. Men and women belong to

the human race and are the servants of the same God.

Before God there is no difference of gender. Whosoever

has a purer heart and performs a better deed is nearer to

God, irrespective of sex. The differences that exist at the

present time are due only to the various degrees of educa-

tion because women have not had the same opportunity

as men. If women were given the same education, they

would become equal in all degrees because both are

human beings and share the same faculties and in this God

has created no differences.

Seventh, a universal language is necessary. A language

should be adopted which can be acquired by all. Every

person will have to learn two languages—one, his own,

and the other, universal, so that all persons will have a

means of communication. This will cause the removal of

misunderstandings among the various nations. All worship

one God and all are the servants of the one God. Differ-

ences occur when people cannot understand one another.

When they can talk in the same language, differences due

to misunderstandings will melt away, while love and

harmony will have their sway. The East and the West will

then join hands and unite with each other in bonds of

union.

Eighth, the world is in sore need of universal peace. As

long as universal peace is not established, the world will

find no rest. The nations and powers will be forced to form

a Supreme Tribunal to which all differences will be re-

ferred for decision. As the differences of individuals are

settled in the courts of law, so must the differences of

nations and peoples be settled, so that they may not lead

to wars as at the present time. Fifty years ago Bahá’u’lláh

sent epistles to the ruling monarchs of the time. All these

teachings were recorded in the Tablets to the Kings and

Rulers and to others and were printed and published forty

years ago in India, so that prejudices between men might

vanish. All those who adopted His teachings have lived in

perfect harmony and love. If one goes to their meetings,

one sees Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians and Muslims

associated together with utmost love and amity. All their

talk and effort are concentrated on the removal of misun-

derstandings among nations.

When I came to America, I found the people noble and

high-minded and the government just. I pray to God that

this just government and this respected nation may be the

cause of proclaiming universal peace and the oneness of

humanity. May it become the means of uniting all the

nations of the world. May it light a lamp which will give

light to the world—the lamp of the oneness of humanity.

My hope is that you will all be instrumental in raising aloft

the standard of universal peace, that is, that the American

nation and government will further the cause of interna-

tional peace and thus bring security to the whole world.

They would win thereby the good-pleasure of God and

divine favors would surround the East and the West.

O Thou kind Lord! These people have turned to Thee

in prayer. With utmost humility and sincerity they have

raised their voices to Thy Kingdom to beg Thy forgiveness.

O God! Make this assemblage noble and these persons

holy. Enkindle the lights of guidance, illumine the hearts,

bring joy to the souls, admit them into Thy Kingdom and

enable them to attain felicity in both worlds.

O God! We are abased, glorify us; we are poor, make

us rich from the treasury of Thy Kingdom; we are sick,

grant us health; we are weak, give us power. O God, guide

us to Thy good-pleasure and make us free from self and

desire. O God, make us firm in Thy love and assist us to

be kind to all creatures. Help us to render service to

humanity so that we may serve all Thy servants, love all

Thy creatures, be kind to all mankind. O God, verily Thou

art the Powerful, the Merciful, the Forgiving and the

Omnipotent.[[265]](#endnote-265)

The Master’s address on the unity of humanity and the

oneness of the Manifestations of God, together with an

explanation of the new teachings, was so enthusiastically

received by the audience that it is difficult to describe

adequately, especially the effect of the prayer He chanted.

As well as the local residents, some Turks and Arabs came

to the church to pay their respects to the Master.

A wonderful change came over the hearts of the people

of the city and a new excitement was felt in the public

meetings. One person asserted that the only religion which

was worthy to be acknowledged today was the Bahá’í reli-

gion while another thanked God that he was granted life

to hear the great message.

In the afternoon a number of people of different nation-

alities, having obtained permission by telephone, came to

visit the Master. Some of the Turks became so attracted to

Him that they were continually to be found in His presence,

both day and night.

This evening a great multitude assembled to hear

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He unfolded the mysteries of the evolution

of humanity, the divine civilization and the new birth so

impressively and with such majesty that His taj fell from His

head and His hair tumbled down. He continued to speak

in this state for more than half an hour and at last He

passed through the crowd to His room. The longing souls

in that meeting did not let the Master rest. Out of respect

for the people’s wishes, He came out into the crowd and

again spoke on spiritual subjects, including the immortality

of the spirit, His words diffusing joy and happiness to all.[[266]](#endnote-266)

As He left for His room, some asked for a private inter-

view with Him. Everyone had a request to make and ex-

pressed his sincerity and humility and each received His

bounties. One of the ladies said that her young son places

the Master’s picture in front of him and cries out, ‘O Thou,

my Beloved.’ The Master replied, ‘It is a proof of your own

love.’

Later the Master said to us, ‘Tomorrow we should move

to a hotel. A traveler should stay in a hotel.’ Mr and Mrs

Maxwell tried their utmost to dissuade Him but did not

succeed.

Monday, September 2, 1912

[Montreal]

After the morning obligatory prayer Mrs Maxwell came to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and said that the people were changing and

becoming interested. Her neighbor, who had previously

reproached her, was so enchanted after visiting ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá that she telephoned to request that He visit her

home. She also suggested that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá use her car-

riage every day.

After the Master visited and encouraged this neighbor,

He went to the hotel [the Hotel Windsor] and rented three

rooms. On the way back to the Maxwell home, the Master

bought some valuable rings to give as gifts. A large number

of people were waiting for Him and attained new spiritual

heights and powers through His discourses.

One of His talks concerned the abandonment of blind

imitation and the elimination of those customs and dogmas

that are contrary to the fundamental truth of the religion

of God. He said:

When educated people see the priests taking bread and

wine in their hands, blowing a few breaths over them and

saying that the bread and wine are now changed into the

flesh and blood of Christ, or hear them saying that by

making a confession before a priest their sins are par-

doned, they will begin to despair of their religion and

become totally irreligious.

At lunch time the Master invited a number of people to the

table, saying: ‘Come! We are in Montreal, Canada, in this

home, eating Persian rice which has been cooked by Mírzá

Aḥmad. This has a relish all its own; what a tale it makes!’

Continuing, He said:

To be grateful for the blessings of God in time of want and

trouble is necessary. In the abundance of blessings every-

one can be grateful. It is said that Sulṭán Maḥmúd cut a

melon and gave a portion of it to Ayáz who ate it cheerfully

and expressed gratitude. When the Sulṭán ate a little of the

same melon, he found it bitter. He asked, ‘How did you

eat such a bitter melon and show no sign of disliking it?’

Ayáz answered, ‘I had eaten many sweet and palatable

things from the hands of the Sulṭán and I thought it very

unworthy of me to express dislike on eating a slightly

bitter thing today.’ Thus man, who is immersed in the

blessings of God, should not be grieved if he experiences

a little trouble. He should not forget the manifold divine

bounties.

In the afternoon, professors, clergy and press representa-

tives came one after another to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The

samovar was steaming and fruits and sweets were served to

all. That His Persian servants in their Eastern attire served

the guests was considered a social novelty and was reported

in the press.

One of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá talks was this:

Because of material civilization, industry has progressed

and sciences and arts have burgeoned but at the same time

weapons of war and bloodshed designed for the destruc-

tion of the edifice of humanity have multiplied and politi-

cal problems have vastly increased. Hence, this material

civilization cannot become the means of comfort and ease

for all until it acquires spiritual power and the attributes

of a divine civilization. Rather, the difficulties will increase

and the troubles will multiply.

Continuing, He said:

The government of the United States of America has

recently provided fifteen million dollars toward the cost

of building new battleships. Before international peace is

established, a great war will in all certainty take place.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá made many such important addresses and all

who heard Him were eloquent in their praise and adora-

tion of Him.

Today ‘Abdu’l-Bahá moved into the Hotel Windsor. As

He was leaving for a meeting at Mr and Mrs Maxwell’s

home, he took the tram. We asked whether we could call

for a carriage. He said: ‘Oh, it matters little. This saves

expense. There is a difference of one dollar in the fare.’ He

was very careful over this type of personal expense but

when He reached the home of Mr and Mrs Maxwell, He

gave one pound to each of their servants.

Although two adjoining rooms had been set with chairs

in rows, there was still not enough space. We all felt the

absence of the Eastern friends. Everyone wished they were

present so they too could witness the excitement and joy

that was engendered by the talk of the Master, who spoke

on the inherent imperfection of the world of nature and

its ultimate perfection through divine education.[[267]](#endnote-267) After

the Master’s talk each guest came to shake His hand and

received His blessing yet when He went upstairs, the major-

ity followed Him, especially the new seekers.

Tuesday, September 3, 1912

[Montreal]

The morning was cloudy and rainy. At the hotel the Master

was presented with some newspaper articles reporting last

night’s meeting and giving an account of His talk. Dr Faríd

arrived today from Boston to join us. As some professors

and clergymen had come by to visit the Master, He spoke

to them on the relationship of human souls, universal peace

and the harm caused by prejudices. His words were particu-

larly enjoyed by the professors from the university and the

ministers showed their humility. After giving a detailed

description of the teachings of the Supreme Pen, He said:

This is the purpose of the people of Bahá. Would you not

like to serve such an ideal? I hope you will put forth effort

in this direction so that the world of men may find real

unity, become released from prejudice and be freed from

war and bloodshed. Our efforts are for this. Bahá’u’lláh

has opened a broad vista to humanity. For instance, when

the people of different religions, races and nations were

reviling each other, He addressed the people of the world

saying, ‘O people! Ye are the fruits of one tree and the

leaves of one branch.’

The minister from the black church extended an invitation

to the Master to speak at his church. Because of the lack of

time, the Master gave His apologies. Although the Master

had intended to stay in Montreal for only two or three days,

His visit had lengthened into a week. The fame of the

Master had spread throughout the vicinity. Newspapers

printed accounts of the meetings and many of the tributes

to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master had requested copies of the

news stories to be sent to the friends in the East. The

response was so generous that one room was completely

filled.

During the afternoon, while cheering the friends, He

also attended to the mail and read petitions from the

friends of the East and the West. At one moment He was

answering important questions and the next He was dictat-

ing words conducive to the betterment of the social status

of women and their confirmation in the Kingdom of God.

When the guests had left and the Master was completely

exhausted, He went out alone for a walk to refresh Himself.

He then boarded a tram which took Him far out of the city,

then another tram which went out of the city by another

route and finally took a taxi. The driver asked for the name

of the hotel but ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not know. He indicated

to the driver to go straight ahead and, suddenly, there was

the hotel. With His hair dishevelled and His smiling face,

He told us how He had gotten lost. ‘Once in the Holy

Land,’ He said,

Áqá Faraj[[268]](#endnote-268) lost the way to Yirkih. I advised him to loosen

the reins of the animal. When the ass was left to itself it

went straight to its destination. Today I pointed to the

chauffeur to go straight on and by chance I reached my

hotel among all these hotels.

That evening He spoke to a meeting of the Socialist Club

with majesty and dignity. The audience lined His way and

the chairman, who was speaking as the Master arrived,

stepped forward, grasped His hand and led Him to the

podium. The president introduced the Master in most

glowing terms, concluding, ‘Now, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá will teach

us the principles of brotherhood, prosperity and the uplift-

ment of the poor.’

As the Master was delivering His address on economics

and the adjustment of society according to the principle of

moderation, the audience broke into spontaneous ap-

plause, clapping their hands with joy and excitement. At

the end, the chairman sought ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s permission

for those who had questions to ask them. Every answer

evoked further applause and admiration to such an extent

that the walls of the building seemed to vibrate to their

foundations.

The meeting continued to such a late hour that the

audience itself began to realize that to continue would not

only be impolite but might also be injurious to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s health. As the Master moved towards His carriage,

the people surrounded Him, demonstrating their heartfelt

reverence and humility. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, often moved to

express His thankfulness for the help and assistance of the

Blessed Beauty, said, ‘Praise be to God that the confirma-

tions of the Kingdom of Abhá are descending continually.

Mr Woodcock used to say that Montreal was a city of Catho-

lics and the center of intolerance. Now let him come and

see what has transpired here. Not a sound can be heard

from the Catholics.’

Wednesday, September 4, 1912

[Montreal]

An account of the Master’s talk at the Socialist Club and its

influence was published in glowing terms in the newspa-

pers. The force of His explanations and the persuasiveness

of His proofs were the talk of the day. Many newcomers.

came to visit Him. The friends told the Master how happy

they were to see the extent to which the Cause of God had

penetrated the hearts. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said in reply:

The greatness of the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh will be

known when they are acted upon and practiced. Not

one of a hundred has as yet come into force. All of

your thoughts should be turned toward bringing

these blessed teachings into practice.

When the translations of some of the newspaper articles

were read to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, He said, again, ‘This is all

through the confirmations of the Blessed Beauty. Other-

wise, even if the king of Persia had come here he would not

have been able to bring about even one such meeting.’

In the afternoon, for a change of routine, the Master

took the elevator down from the seventh floor and went for

an automobile ride to the foot of a mountain outside the

city limits. It is a fine place where people go for recreation.

It has a cable car, which took the Master and His compan-

ions up the mountain. The side of the mountain was per-

pendicular like a wall. The Master said, ‘This cable car is

like a balloon flying in the air.’ It made one nervous to look

down. When we reached the top, the Master walked

around. It was a magnificent sight, with a view of the whole

city stretched before us. The canals, streets and orchards

of the town were below. It appeared as if a beautifully

painted picture had been spread before one’s eyes.

While we were here, translations of other accounts of the

meetings that had been published in the evening newspa-

pers were read to Him. Suddenly He cried out:

O Bahá’u’lláh! May I be a sacrifice for Thee. O

Bahá’u’lláh! May my life be offered up for Thee. Thou

hast spoken the Word which cannot be refuted. What a

wonderful Cause Thou hast founded! It satisfies every

assemblage! Each group testifies to its greatness. In the

churches it shakes the souls; it excites the Theosophists;

it imparts spirituality to the spiritualists; it makes the

Unitarians aware of the reality of unity; it makes the

socialists contented and grateful and inspires joy and

happiness in the peace meetings. There is no refuge for

any denomination except in submission to it. It is a mira-

cle! It is the greatest force in the world of existence. This

is all through the assistance of the Blessed Beauty. If

healing the lame and crippled is a miracle, it can also

be produced by a dose of medicine. This is no great

achievement.

From here the Master and His companions went to the

home of Mr and Mrs Maxwell where letters from the East

were given to Him. He read the petitions of the friends.

Among them was a letter from Mírzá Ḥaydar-‘Alí, in which

he dwelt on the greatness and significance of the journey

of the Master. The Master said:

Yes, the value and greatness of these travels are not known

now but will be apparent later on. As we had no other

intention except to offer devotion to the Threshold of the

One True God, we were assisted and the brightness of

divine favor and grace appeared.

Continuing, He said:

At the time of Muḥammad’s migration to Medina under

divine protection, Abú Bakr,[[269]](#endnote-269) was with Him. He said to

Abú Bakr, ‘Be not afraid, God is with us.’ These very words

became afterwards the cause of his succession to the Ca-

liphate because the word ‘with us’ included him also. Many

proofs and arguments based on these words have been

advanced. The value of this bounty, too, is not known now.

At a meeting in the evening at Mrs Maxwell’s home,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave an address on spiritual brotherhood and

the economic principles upheld by the teachings of

Bahá’u’lláh which will be the cause of the salvation, pros-

perity and liberation of the nations of the world. This

meeting was very special because the Master’s talk was so

influential. The audience was invited to light refreshments

of sweets and beverages. Among the guests were Americans,

as well as Turks and Arabs clothed in their splendid robes,

all of whom were attracted to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and fascinated

by His demeanor and words.

Thursday, September 5, 1912

[Montreal]

The Bishop of Montreal came to visit the Master to express

his admiration and gratitude for the Master’s address

concerning the purpose of the appearance of Christ and

the other Manifestations. He was pleased to learn about

other meetings and talks. The Master said to him, ‘Tonight

I shall speak at the Methodist church. You may come if you

wish.’

The editor of an illustrated Toronto magazine was

announced. He happily recorded a detailed account of the

history and teachings of the Cause. Another visitor was a

Jewish rabbi who became very enthusiastic when he heard

the Master’s explanations.

One of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks today was this:

The degree to which these different denominations testify

to the greatness of the Cause of God has never been seen

in past history. Even socialists say that although so many

philosophers have written books on economic questions,

the Bahá’í Cause has the solution.

When we arrived at the Methodist Church in the evening,

we saw an electric illumined sign reading: ‘This evening the

Prophet of the East will speak on the principles of the

Bahá’í Faith and the salvation of the world of humanity.’

When the translation of this announcement was read to the

Master, He said, ‘So, people are calling me a prophet. Oh,

would that they had omitted that word!’ In order to correct

this impression, in the course of His address He empha-

sized His devotion to Bahá’u’lláh.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the vestry where a number of

ministers came to greet Him with such reverence and

humility that it was really something to be seen. He then

went into the auditorium and took a seat on the platform.

The minister welcomed Him by motioning the audience

to rise, which they immediately did to show their respect.

The minister then made an introductory speech about the

world’s apathy to the commandments of the Gospel and the

urgent need for laws of peace and harmony among the

peoples of the West. Finally he urged the audience to listen

carefully to the address and the new teachings given by

‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The Master stood before the audience and spoke about

the continuity of the Divine Bounties, the power and maj-

esty of the Kingdom of God and these wonderful teachings.

The audience was awakened to the Faith to such a degree

that a judge named Mr Riger, who had previously heard

of the Master and had come for the first time this evening

to hear Him speak, stood and said, ‘Some have imagined

that the succession of the Prophets and the bounties of God

were limited. But tonight we have heard with our own ears

these divinely ordained teachings from an Eastern prophet

who is the successor of the Prophets of God. We will never

forget his message. There is no doubt that these teachings

of universal peace, the oneness of humanity and the distri-

bution of wealth are in complete accord with the principles

of economic law, the equality of rights and the adoption of

one universal language. These are the basic principles for

the progress of the world of humanity.’ The minister then

stood and said, ‘It is an error to think that the West has

attained perfection and that the East has no bounties or

teachings to offer to the West. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has said many

things which we have not heard before or understood.’[[270]](#endnote-270)

The Master then chanted a prayer and publicly thanked

the judge. Later, in the vestry, the clergymen were so

deferential in His presence, they could not find words to

express their gratitude. Of particular note was the judge,

who repeatedly expressed his desire to become a Bahá’í.

Friday, September 6, 1912

[Montreal]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá came into our room. When

He saw the pile of newspapers which had been collected to

send to the friends in the East, He asked, with surprise,

‘What have you done? What are all these newspapers for?’

We replied that they were the signs of the power and

influence of the Cause of God.

After leaving the church last night, the Master had

caught a cold and His voice was hoarse, so even though He

had planned to leave Montreal, His departure was delayed

for a few days. During this time He went nowhere except

to the home of Mr and Mrs Maxwell. However, many came

to visit Him at the hotel.

Mrs Maxwell said to Him, ‘At the time that I visited

‘Akká I despaired of ever having the blessing of children.

Praise be to God! My supplications and your prayers at the

Holy Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh were accepted and I was blessed

with a dear baby.’[[271]](#endnote-271) Bestowing His grace and kindness

upon her and the child, the Master said, ‘Children are the

ornaments of the home. A home which has no children is

like one without light.’

Mrs Maxwell said that her husband used to say to her:

‘You have become a Bahá’í. Very well, you are responsible

for this yourself. I have no hand in it. You must not speak

to me about it anymore.’ But now, she added, he was so

proud of the Master’s visit that if kings had come to their

home he would not have felt so exalted. The room in which

the Master stayed was considered by him to be holy and he

would not allow anyone to enter it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s advice to Mr Maxwell and others was this:

You must cling to those things which prove to be the cause

of happiness for the world of man. You must show kind-

ness to the orphans, give food to the hungry, clothe the

naked and offer help to the poor so that you may be

accepted in the Court of God.

Here is a quotation from one of the Tablets that was re-

vealed today:

It is because the friends of California, and particularly

those of San Francisco, have so frequently called and

pleaded, expressed despair and wept and sent incessant

supplications, that I have determined to go to California.

Saturday, September 7, 1912

[Montreal]

Today ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to a group of people who came

to visit Him at the hotel. Here is some of what He ex-

plained:

As in the physical world there are four seasons, so in the

realm of religion there is the season of heavenly and

spiritual springtime. When its outpourings gradually

diminish, the trees of existence cease to be verdant and

creeping torpor spreads, it will become like winter. The

souls will become withered and distressed and the soil of

the hearts will become full of thorns and thistles. There

will be no flowers, no hyacinths, no greenery, no pleasure,

no freshness and no cheer. Then, once again, the divine

spring will raise its tabernacle. The gardens of the world

of humanity will become green and verdant, full of fresh-

ness and purity. The flowers of reality will open and the

trees of existence will bring forth enduring fruit. This is

the law of God and is in accord with the world of creation

and this is the cause for the reappearance of holy Manifes-

tations Who effect renewal and change in religious laws

and commandments.

In the afternoon the Master spoke about the oneness of the

fundamental truths of the religions of God and the vain

imaginings and beliefs of various peoples, saying:

The foundation of all religions is one and the aim of all

creeds of the world is also one. All are believers in the

oneness of God. All believe that a mediator between the

Creator and the creatures is needed. The question is that

to the Jews Moses is the last, to the Christians it is Christ,

to the Muslims it is Muḥammad and to the Parsis it is

Zoroaster. But their differences are only those of names.

If these names are set aside, it is evident that their aim is

one. Every divine religious law was complete for its time.

The renewal of the laws of God and the appearance of the

Manifestations of the bounties of the Lord in each cycle

are necessary. Thus the people who seek truth and inner

meanings can discover the divine mysteries and become

aware of the secrets of the Books of God. They know God

to be the Supreme, His bounties infinite and the doors of

His mercy unbarred. They believe in all the Prophets and

affirm ‘No difference do we make between any of them’

[Qur’án 2:130]. But those who adhere to outer meanings

only, who worship outer form, cling to imitations and

follow their superstitions. They use the allegories set forth

in the verses of God to deny the Cause of the Lord of

Signs. Therefore, offer thanks to God that you have at-

tained unto reality, have responded affirmatively to the

Call of God, have given up dogmatic imitations and have

become cognizant of the mystery of oneness. Offer thanks

to God. Be grateful to your Lord.

Sunday, September 8, 1912

[Montreal]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s discourses today consisted of divine exhorta-

tions, admonitions and expressions of farewell to the

friends. ‘I have sown the seed,’ He said. ‘You must water

it. You must educate the souls in divine morals, make them

spiritual and lead them to the oneness of humanity and to

universal peace.’

In the afternoon He gave an account of His imprison-

ment in the Most Great Prison and of His return to the

Holy Land. Someone suggested that His return to ‘Akká

might bring trouble to Him and again cause His imprison-

ment. ‘Oh no,’ He replied,

that organization has been rolled up; that system has been

rendered null. Those days were so hard that all had be-

lieved that when the Commission of Investigation returned

to Constantinople ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s life and name would be

effaced. But God did not will it. As we were imprisoned for

the Cause of God and not for political reasons, while in

prison we were not perturbed and had no worries. How-

ever, the others thought that after I was set free I would

raise the banner of independence among the Arabs and

unite them with me! See, how ill-informed was such a

judgment!

As this was the last day of His stay in Montreal, all the

friends, both old and new, expressed their sorrow. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá consoled them with the glad tidings of certitude,

spiritual nearness, assistance and heavenly grace.

Monday, September 9, 1912

[Montreal – Toronto – Buffalo]

In the morning the bill for $700 for the week’s stay at the

hotel was paid. As usual, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá directed me to take

personal charge of His bags and move them myself. I fell

short of my duty as the hotel stewards carried His bags with

the other luggage. When He saw that His bags were not

with me, He said: ‘In spite of these repeated reminders, you

were neglectful. I would not have asked you to be so careful

had it not contained valuable documents and writings

which I wish to present to the libraries of London and

Paris. Otherwise, material things are not important to me.’

All luggage sent through the railway station had to be

examined by the Customs officers; but the chief officer at

the Customs and his assistants passed our baggage, indicat-

ing that they were perfectly satisfied and had no reason to

examine the effects of the Bahá’ís! When the Master was

told this, His face opened up like a rose and He expounded

on the stations of truthfulness and trustworthiness, which

are the sources of the prosperity and assurance of the

people of the world.

The enthusiasm and ardor of the friends knew no

bounds. They surrounded ‘Abdu’l-Bahá like moths. Until

the train pulled out of the station at nine o’clock, the

friends continued to sigh and express their sorrow at His

departure.

It is astonishing to see that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá does not want

any comfort and will not take any rest, even while traveling

on the train. When translations of the newspaper articles

and letters from the friends were read to Him, He immedi-

ately answered and bestowed His bounties upon them. To

some He wrote in His own hand. When He was tired of

writing, the Master spoke about the coming of Christ from

the heaven of holiness:

The Gospel expressly records that in His first coming,

although Christ was born to Mary, He Himself said that

He came from heaven. Thus, the meaning of ‘heaven’ is

the greatness of the Cause and eminence and might of the

Manifestation of God Who spreads this divine Cause by

His heavenly power and divine strength and not through

material means.

Whenever His eyes fell on the luxuriant beauty of the lakes

and rivers along the route He would remember the Blessed

Perfection.

At noon He said to us: ‘You have lunch. I will not eat

anything until I am hungry.’

The air in the coach was stifling and, owing to the speed

of the train, even though the windows and doors were

closed, the dust was heavy. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá felt tired. When

the train reached Toronto to change tracks, He walked a

little on the platform, saying that He was exhausted. ‘We

have not gone far,’ He said, ‘yet we feel tired. How will the

great distance to California be traversed? We have no

choice, as in the path of God we must regard troubles as

blessings and discomforts as greatest bounties.’ We reached

Buffalo late at night but, in obedience to His request, the

friends were not informed.

Tuesday, September 10, 1912

[Buffalo]

The moment the news of the Master’s arrival in Buffalo

became known, the friends eagerly hastened to meet Him,

grateful that their city had been blessed with His presence.

Journalists came one after the other and left happy and

satisfied, which surprised everyone. Owing to articles about

the Cause in the city’s newspapers, a great number of

people came to visit on the morning of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

arrival. The teachings so touched the hearts of the people

that when the Master went out in the afternoon, passersby

who saw Him pointed to Him, saying: ‘Look! There goes

the Messenger of Peace, the Prophet from the East!’

At the request of some of His companions, after a short

walk He took the trolley to Niagara Falls. It was far away

and the round trip fare cost 50 cents per person. We had

never seen or heard such huge, magnificent waterfalls. It

was a beautiful sight. The great river feeding the falls is

flanked on both sides by lakes, fields, mountains and

woods. At some places the river falls from a height of a

hundred meters. Because of the height of the falls and the

crash of the water, small droplets of water form sprays

which appear like a great sand storm. Below is a very large

lake where people entertain themselves in barges and

sailboats.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the edge, admired the great falls

and recalled the days of the Blessed Perfection:

There were small waterfalls in Mázindarán which Bahá-

’u’lláh liked so much that He used to camp near them for

several days.

Continuing, He said:

So much electricity can be generated from this water that

it will suffice the whole town and it is also very good for

the health.

While sitting on the bank of the river He ate some pears

and grapes and then walked for some time in the park. We

suggested that He should stay here a few days but He

replied, ‘Even half a day is not possible. We have no time

for amusement. We must keep ourselves engaged in our

work.’ He sat down on a bench in the center of the park

and said, ‘I washed my hair with warm water without apply-

ing soap. It is much cleaner and takes longer to become

dirty. Come and see how clean and soft it is.’ We touched

His hair, which was like silk, very soft and absolutely clean.

On this occasion ‘the place of His lovers was noticeably

vacant’.[[272]](#endnote-272)

On the trolley ride back to the hotel, newspaper articles

about His arrival in Buffalo were read to Him. The head-

line read: ‘‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the Prophet of Peace, has arrived

in Buffalo. The Bahá’ís are very happy to see Him among

them in their homes. Their great longing for His arrival

is fulfilled. Our hearty congratulations to the Bahá’ís.’

When the Master reached the hotel He met a number of

journalists who were waiting for Him.

This evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk was about unity and

amity among the peoples of the East and the West and also

about the degrees of love which bring the whole creation

into existence. His message breathed a new spirit of love

and joy into friends and seekers alike. They all gathered

around Him, shook His hand and expressed their humble

appreciation. He then went into another room, followed

by some journalists who made a note of His words.

Later in the evening He strolled along the store fronts

with us. The gas and electric street lamps, as well as the

brightly lit theaters and coffee shops, were picturesque. We

reached a spot where several poor people had gathered.

He gave a sum of money to each. Seeing the grandeur,

nobility, generosity and grace of the Master, a huge crowd,

with the utmost courtesy, lined up near Him and He show-

ered kindness on all. It was a strange sight for them to see

Him walking in the street accompanied by His Persian

servants in Eastern attire. Everyone said, ‘This is the same

Prophet of Peace who has been acclaimed in the newspa-

pers!’

For dinner ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ate a little bread and cheese

and went to bed for the night.

Wednesday, September 11, 1912

[Buffalo]

People from all walks of life came to visit Him, including

friends from Spokane and Mr Collins from Ottawa, who

said that there were two thousand people in his city who

believed in this golden age and in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and who

wanted to have a glimpse of the Master. The Master en-

trusted him with a special Tablet and sent him, now ablaze

like a ball of fire, back to his home.

Today the newspapers appeared with a new title for the

Master, ‘The Prince of the East’, which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did

not welcome. He spoke with the reporters about the begin-

ning and end of creation:

If we determine a beginning and an end for creation, it is

as if we determine a beginning and an end for God. There

can be no creator without a creation. The sun without light

and a king without subjects and a country are simply

inconceivable.

Here are some of His words to the friends:

I am exceedingly pleased because I see you firm and

unwavering in the Cause of God. Some individuals are like

rootless plants, they are pulled out by the slightest breeze.

But those who are steadfast are like trees that have strong

roots and foundations. Storms cannot shake them; rather,

they add to their freshness.

The minister of the Church of the Messiah was greatly

pleased to hear the Master’s teachings. He stated that they

could not be contradicted by anyone. After thanking the

Master for accepting his invitation to come to his church,

the minister left.

In the afternoon the Master went to see two of the

friends who were ill. When he arrived at their home, the

neighborhood children crowded around Him, gazing at

Him with reverence. Some asked about His native country

and why He had come here. The friends explained it to

them. The Master asked one of the friends to get change

for a five dollar bill. He then distributed the coins among

the children, who rushed to receive them, causing the

Master to drop the rest of the coins. He then went into the

home of Mr Mills where a number of friends had assem-

bled. Refreshments had been prepared. The friends enthu-

siastically listened until the early evening hours as the

Master unfolded the divine mysteries and encouraged

them. Everyone begged His assistance and blessings and

the desire of each for a few words from His own pen was

granted. He then said, ‘Tomorrow we leave for Chicago.’

As soon as these words were uttered, the friends became

downcast. Men and women, young and old, surrounded

Him, supplicating Him for His blessings and confirmations

in His absence.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived at the Church of the Mes-

siah, the minister received Him at the entrance and led

Him to a study where he humbly expressed his gratitude.

He presented the Master with the official church newsletter

in which he had published an extensive article about the

history and teachings of the Cause. It had been written in

a scholarly style and concluded with words in praise of the

Master. When the article was translated for the Master, He

turned to the minister and said, ‘You have left nothing for

me to say here tonight. You have published everything in

this booklet.’ We remarked that there could be no miracle

greater than this, that clergymen were testifying to the

greatness of the Cause of God with their own tongues and

pens. The Master replied, ‘I have told you repeatedly that

the Blessed Perfection is assisting us. All these confirma-

tions which descend continually are from Him.’ He then

went to the stage, stood before the audience and became

the center of attraction for friends and seekers alike.

The minister introduced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in these words:

It is my great honor to present to you the prophet of

peace, the leader of the Bahá’í Cause. A short history and

teachings of this Cause were published in today’s issue of

the church newsletter and distributed this evening. I need

not therefore dwell on these subjects. I propose to give as

much time as possible to this eminent speaker. This great

personage has traveled to many parts of the world and has

delivered innumerable talks on the question of interna-

tional peace. In Washington He gave a unique address in

a church of our creed. The essential principles of this

religion are the same as ours. I feel it an honor that I have

been given the privilege of introducing to you the prophet

of peace, His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The Master stood and spoke on the divine teachings and

the unity of the diverse nations under the canopy of the

Word of God. The audience was so fascinated that although

‘Abdu’l-Bahá wished to leave the church early, it was not

possible. The people came one after the other to meet Him

and to give Him their regards. In return each received

illumination from the Branch of the Ancient Root.[[273]](#endnote-273)

An unusual and outstanding feature of this evening’s

experience was that at the conclusion of the meeting, the

minister encouraged the congregation to go to the Bahá’í

meetings to investigate and discover truth. This caused

‘Abdu’l-Bahá to express gratitude for the assistance of the

Blessed Beauty and He continued to speak about the

importance of this great journey until about 2:00 a.m. when

He finally rested.

Thursday, September 12, 1912

[Buffalo – Chicago]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá called us before dawn. He had already packed

and readied His bags. We packed our belongings in readi-

ness for our departure. Because the chambermaid for His

room was not there, He left a dollar for her with the hotel

manager. When He reached the railway station, the driver

wanted more money than the usual fare. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá paid

no heed to him, saying, ‘A man may give $1,000 without

minding it but he should not yield even a dollar to the

person who wishes to take it wrongfully, for such wrongful

behavior flouts justice and disrupts the order of the world.’

As articles from the Buffalo newspapers were being

translated for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the train, He again offered

thanks for the assistance and protection of the Abhá King-

dom. He said:

The confirmation and assistance of the Abhá Kingdom are

more manifest than the sun. No eye or ear has seen or

heard of such confirmations. Christ went into the Temple

of the Jews where He spoke on the teachings of the Torah

prohibiting buying and selling in the house of God. Up

to the present time Christians glory in this and rejoice over

it. But today through the assistance of the Abhá Beauty the

Cause of God is proclaimed with the utmost openness in

the churches and assemblies of the West.

The train passed by Niagara Falls. Beautiful villages and

factories nestled in green fields and wooded mountain

valleys came into view. As midday approached, and as the

number of passengers increased at every station, the heat

grew more and more intense, causing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to

become tired and weary. He commented that, ‘The friends

in America expect me to visit each city. How would this be

possible? It is impossible to sit in a train every day from

morning until afternoon; the body cannot stand it.’

Today the train traveled through several states. At 8:00

p.m. the lights from Chicago appeared in the distance like

brilliant stars and the train pulled into the station.

The Master waited until all the passengers had left

the train and then He slowly disembarked. The spacious

train station was crowded with His friends. As soon as His

feet touched the ground their hearts were stirred. One

person hurried forward to shake His hand; another ran

to kiss the hem of His robe; another held a bouquet of

flowers to present to Him; and yet another raised his

voice in praise and gratitude on attaining the bounty of

meeting Him. It was an impressive sight, a field of yearning

lovers canopied by heavens resounding with songs of joy.

The friends formed two lines and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walked

majestically between them showering His blessings on each

one. He then went by automobile to the home of Mrs True,

the maidservant of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár.[[274]](#endnote-274) There one

of the Japanese friends bowed at His feet and received His

blessings.

After a brief rest, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá appeared before the

gathering. His eyes fell on Mr [Saichiro] Fujita, the Japa-

nese gentleman. He remarked:

So, how is our Japanese Effendi? Recently the government

of Japan has undergone a change. A new emperor has

come to the throne. The sovereignty of the former Mikado

has come to an end; all the hue and cry have ceased, a

handful of dust was thrown over him and covered all his

imperial regalia. Such was the kingdom of the Mikado.

The same is true of all the other kings.

But as you are a believer in God, you have a kingdom

which will never collapse and will be everlasting. Offer

thanks to God, Who has bestowed upon you such a king-

dom, greater than that of the Mikado. The first Bonaparte

was a famous man and a great general who conquered

most of the countries of Europe and became the emperor

of France. The whole of Europe trembled before his

command. The star of his prosperity set and it shall never

rise again. At last a trifling incident obliterated his domin-

ion and he became a prisoner in a state of extreme hard-

ship in St Helena where he lamented until his death. One

day as he was talking with his generals, they said that

Christ, too, was a wise man like Napoleon. He replied,

‘No, you are mistaken. There is a vast difference between

Him and me.’

The sovereignty of Napoleon ceased as soon as he died

but the Kingdom of Christ is eternal. The former estab-

lished his mortal kingdom with bloodshed and the sword

while Christ established the Kingdom of God with the life-

giving breaths of the Holy Spirit. Napoleon established his

kingdom through the power of oppression while Christ

established His through the power of the love of God. A

hundred thousand Napoleons may be effaced but the

Kingdom of Christ will remain forever. Such is the King-

dom of God.

Friday, September 13, 1912

[Chicago]

Mrs True prepared tea for us. When some of the Persian

friends remarked to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that ‘there was better tea’

than this, the Master replied, ‘This tea is very good because

it has been prepared with love.’ Referring to His expenses,

He said:

Sometimes I give away as much as $1,000, if I have it, but

at another time I do not spend even a single dollar. This

is so that affairs are regulated. Thus it is that I say that I

want the friends to become divine and godly under the

shadow of the favor of the Abhá Beauty. Through the

teachings and bestowals of the Blessed Perfection happi-

ness and prosperity can be gained. I swear by God, besides

Whom there is no other God, that although we might have

traversed America from the east to the west, had not His

confirmations and favors been with us, no one would have

paid any heed to us. It is all through His aid and assistance

that these doors have been opened. It is with the power of

faith that we ascend to the highest apex and attain honor

in the all-glorious Kingdom. So it is that these honorable

souls serve us with such love and sincerity.

Visitors began to arrive. The friends from surrounding

communities pleaded with Him to come to their cities. But

because of the limited time and His plan to journey to the

West, He did not accept their invitations. Reporters also

came. He spoke on various subjects relating to the Cause

and they took notes for publication in their newspapers.

At the meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about the establish-

ment of the divine civilization through the power of

Bahá’u’lláh and about the world’s need for the divine

teachings:

Without divine civilization the mysteries of the Kingdom

are not revealed and the bounties of heaven are not ascer-

tained; supernatural wisdom and power do not manifest

themselves; the intelligence of humanity does not reach

maturity; the world of humanity does not become the

mirror of the world above; spiritual powers fail to over-

come animal influences of nature. These perfections are

attained through divine civilization of which the world of

man is in need.

After the meeting one of the friends who came to see Him

was Mr Jackson of Kenosha, Wisconsin.[[275]](#endnote-275) He told ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá that the believers and seekers were anxiously awaiting

His visit and that a minister had asked Him to promise to

speak in his church.

Since the friends were allowed to visit *en masse*, each

morning there was such a crowd that there was no way up

or down the stairs. When the Master got tired, He would

take a walk outside and then return to the house.

Today another group, including some of the black

believers, visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Here are some of His words

to them:

If a man has spiritual characteristics, be he white or black,

he is near to God. Some have protested to me, asking why

I seek to cultivate love between the whites and the blacks.

Yet what a great error they make. You see people who love

their dogs because of their faithfulness and the protection

they provide. If but one good trait endears a dog to a

human, why shouldn’t praiseworthy qualities cause a man

to be loved and respected? Why should fellowship with an

upright person be avoided? When people are prepared to

fondle an animal day and night, why should they shun

association with an intelligent human being?

My hope is that you will rid and purify yourselves of

imitations so that your thoughts and minds will be broad-

ened and elevated, that you will be seekers of the truth,

the lovers of the servants of God and the cause of the

oneness of humanity.

Today an important philosopher together with the presi-

dent of the Workers’ Union, a socialist, visited the Master.

They were so moved by the Master’s explanations and

proofs of the existence of God and His divine laws that the

friends’ hearts were overjoyed to see their sincerity and

humility before Him.

This evening the three large rooms on the ground floor

of Mrs True’s home were filled with so many visitors that

people were standing in the hallways. The Master walked

among the crowd and spoke about the assistance of the

Blessed Beauty, the spread of the Cause of God and the

impact of the Word of God on the churches and meetings.

The gist of His talk was this:

Look at the history of the world and try to find a parallel

instance in which a native of the East has come to the

countries of the West, particularly America, and called out

to them in the churches and meetings there, raised the

divine call in many of the large cities and invited everyone

to the Abhá Kingdom, with no one taking exception. Nay,

on the contrary, those present at the gatherings have

heard him with patience and unbounded joy. These things

have been achieved solely through the confirmations of

the Abhá Kingdom.

Saturday, September 14, 1912

[Chicago]

Among ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s words were these:

If the Blessed Perfection had not exerted Himself to raise

up the Cause of God, the Cause of the Primal Point [the

Báb] would have been completely effaced. Similarly, had

it not been for the power of the Covenant after the ascen-

sion of the Ancient Beauty, it is evident what the people

would have done, how they would have spent their time,

like Mírzá Yaḥyá, taking many wives and satisfying their

lusts and desires. They would have destroyed the divine

standard.

He then gave an account of the fruitless Kheiralla.

When someone remarked that the Tablet of Ishráqát

[Splendors][[276]](#endnote-276) had been translated and published in Ger-

man, the Master said:

All the affairs and conditions of the world serve the Cause

of God. If they had driven me out of the United States or

had refused me entry, it would have been a good thing.

Opposition serves to promote the Cause of God, how much

more helping the Cause accomplishes!

Then He said, ‘Let us go for a walk before everybody

arrives.’

He walked along the shore [of Lake Michigan] and

spoke about the sacrifice of a Japanese admiral:

With this type of sacrifice they attained success. But re-

member, if he had lived, it would have been better for his

nation and government. Observe, a general sacrificed

himself and his children for the emperor and became

renowned for sincerity and faithfulness. From this example

it becomes obvious what we should do in the path of the

Abhá Beauty. If you view it in the light of justice, you will

see that the emperor did not bestow upon his general a

thousandth portion of the grace that the Blessed Beauty

bestows upon us.

Returning to the house, He found several believers and

seekers from Chicago and surrounding communities. All

were grateful to hear His divine words and teachings.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was invited to speak at the

Theosophical Society where He ignited a fire of spirituality

in the minds of the audience. The president of the society

introduced the Master with great respect, saying:

Gentlemen, today it is a great bounty and high honor for

us to be in the presence of a person who is the greatest

prophet of peace and harmony. There is no doubt—and

I feel and say on behalf of the audience—that to the

present time we have not had the honor of hearing the

life-giving words from the tongue of a living prophet.

Therefore, with unbounded happiness and heartfelt honor

I present to you His Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the prophet

of peace and the founder of universal brotherhood.

The Master rose and spoke brilliantly about the distinction

between spiritual realities and the animal nature of man,

and the appearance of the perfection of man in the image

of God. He explained some of the teachings of the new

Manifestation. The audience applauded with so much

excitement and joy that it felt as though there were an

earthquake in the auditorium.

The president thanked the Master and acknowledged

the truth and greatness of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. To show their

concurrence with the words of their president, the members

of the audience rose together in great excitement, a clear

proof of the extraordinary powers of the Center of the

Covenant. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again arose and spoke:

I am very happy with your warmth and consideration. God

be praised that there exist in America such societies

founded on human principles, the appreciation of spiritual

values and the investigation of truth. I am most grateful

to this society and hope that your inner perception may

increase and that the bounties of God will be with you.

When the Master went into another room the people

rushed into it. Most of them wished to tell Him, ‘We testify

to the truth of this Cause.’ The degree of excitement in the

hearts of such a large gathering cannot be imagined. That

such a transformation can occur in such a country is beyond

belief.

Sunday, September 15, 1912

[Chicago – Kenosha]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to Dr [William Freder-

ick] Nutt about Kheiralla in such majestic and forcible tones

that both the hearer and the translator trembled with fear.

Finally, He said:

He wants me to send for him. As a visitor to this country,

the great and lowly of this land come to see me. If his

intention be good, he also should come with utmost sincer-

ity.[[277]](#endnote-277)

The Blessed Being was very tired after His talk.

The Master had an appointment in Kenosha and was

preparing to go there. He was accompanied by Dr Nutt, a

Japanese believer and His companions. On the way we had

to change trains. Although we hurried, we missed the

second train. The friends were saddened but ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said, ‘Oh, it matters not. There is a wisdom in this.’ We left

by the next train and found that the train we had missed

was wrecked and some of the passengers injured. It was

clear that it had collided with another train. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said, ‘This, too, was the protection of the Blessed Beauty.’

He then narrated the episode of His leaving Alexandria for

America:

Some proposed that we leave via London by the S. S.

*Titanic*, which sank on the same voyage. The Blessed

Beauty guided us to come direct.

The friends were waiting with their automobiles at the

railway station to take the Beloved to the hall of the

Mashriqu’l-Adhkár.[[278]](#endnote-278) The Master went onto the stage of

the auditorium and sat on a chair. It was a divine and

joyous festival, the people like heavenly angels of the

utmost spirituality, prayerfulness and gratitude. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá spoke briefly but effectively about the victorious power

and penetrating influence of the Cause of the Blessed

Beauty. He then went to a long table that extended the

length of the hall which was covered with a variety of

multicolored flowers.

As lunch was being served, the young friends, having

received ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s permission, sang songs of praise

to Him, accompanied by a piano. The Master then gave an

account of the persecutions and hardships of Bahá’u’lláh,

the time spent in the Most Great Prison, the Turkish

revolution and the changes that took place after the estab-

lishment of a constitutional form of government in Turkey.

‘God removed all obstacles’, He said, ‘and provided all the

necessities, thus enabling ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to reach this place

and have the pleasure of seeing you.’

The friends then brought their children to Him to be

blessed. He took the children onto His lap one by one and

gave them flowers, fruits and sweets. Mr Jackson said:

Every time we have held a public entertainment for the

friends we have left two seats vacant at each end of the

table, one in the name of Bahá’u’lláh and the other in that

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. We constantly longed to witness a day

such as this. We have now attained our highest hopes and

our eyes have seen the light of the Master.

Another person said, ‘When the clergymen were informed

of your arrival, they announced in the churches that this

evening the prophet of the East will speak at the Kenosha

Congregational Church.’

After lunch ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left the hall of the ‘Mashriqu’l-

Adhkár’ and went to Mrs [Henry] Goodale’s home, where

the friends were overjoyed and uplifted to hear Him speak.

He said to them, in part:

The Cause of God has always appeared from the East but

it has been more effective in the West. Once Badrí Páshá[[279]](#endnote-279)

said in an address, ‘Gentlemen, Westerners have taken

everything from us: the sciences, the arts and the laws they

took from the East. Now we fear that they may wrest from

us the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh, as well.’ Those were his words.

But Bahá’u’lláh is neither of the East nor of the West,

neither of the South nor of the North. He is holy above all

these directions. He is heavenly and godly.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address in the evening at the Congrega-

tional Church was on the unity of the Manifestations of

God, that they are one in essence and that the differences

among their followers is due to obsolete imitations. His

explanation of the divine teachings gave new life and

insights to the audience. After His talk, everyone came to

Him to pay Him their respects.

Monday, September 16, 1912

[Kenosha – Chicago]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá prepared to leave for Chi-

cago. The believers, ‘like iguanas’, gazed at Him with eyes

like those of parting lovers. He remarked:

See what the power and influence of Bahá’u’lláh have

wrought. Consider how He has brought the Japanese, the

Americans and the Persians all under the shadow of one

word and caused them to love one another.

Along the way He spoke of the steadfastness of the believers

of the East. He arrived in Chicago in the evening and a

continuous stream of friends came to see Him. Some of

them wanted to give Him some money but, despite their

pleading and entreaties, He would not accept it and instead

requested that the money be distributed among the poor.

Some reporters had published their articles in the newspa-

pers, which the Master appreciated.

At a gathering of the believers in the afternoon, some

of the friends had arranged a musical program at which

poems written by Mrs [Louise] Waite (who had been given

the Persian name Sháhnaz Khánum by the Master) were

sung to piano accompaniment as the Master descended the

stairs. The Master walked among the friends in such a

manner that everyone was moved, overcame their reserve

and shed tears of joy and love. A clergyman came forward

and supplicated ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: ‘O Thou Prophet of God,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, pray thou for me.’ The Master bestowed His

blessings upon him.

The Master spoke to the friends about the bonds of love

which unite the hearts.[[280]](#endnote-280) At the conclusion of the meeting,

He called to Mrs True, saying, ‘Because of your desire and

insistence we came to this house but now we must go to a

hotel.’

In the evening He exhorted the friends in sweet and

expressive words to spread the fragrances of God, to pro-

claim the Words of their Lord and to show kindness to His

friends. Afterwards, some were privileged to have private

interviews with Him. After dinner He told us to pack our

things to move to the hotel. In the automobile, He seemed

to be depressed. He said:

I am bearing the discomforts of this journey with stop-

overs so that the Cause of God may be protected from any

breach. For I am still not sure about what is going to

happen after me. If I could be sure, then I would sit com-

fortably in some corner, I would not leave the Holy Land

and travel far away from the Most Holy Tomb. Once, after

the martyrdom of the Báb, the Cause of God was dealt a

hard blow through Yaḥyá. Again, after the ascension of the

Blessed Beauty, it received another blow. And I fear that

self-seeking persons may again disrupt the love and unity

of the friends. If the time were right and the House of

Justice were established, the House of Justice would pro-

tect the friends.

He then spoke about how disunity began in the Islamic

cycle, saying, ‘Because of certain people who sought to

fulfill their personal desires and who yet counted them-

selves among the supporters of the religion, the foundation

of Islam was completely uprooted.’ He continued in this

vein until the automobile arrived at the hotel.

Tuesday, September 17, 1912

[Chicago – Minneapolis]

The Master bade farewell to the friends and promised to

come back to Chicago on His return from California. Here

are a few of His remarks to the friends:

I ask the Blessed Beauty to assist you and confirm you.

Wherever I go, you will be in my thoughts. I shall not

forget any one of you. I beg of God that you may become

more enlightened, more severed, more spiritual, more

aflame and that you may be humble and submissive, for

as long as man does not consider himself to be good but

regards himself as weak and deficient, he progresses; but

the moment he considers himself good and says, ‘I am

perfect’, he falls into pride and retrogresses.

To another gathering, He spoke about socialism:

The principles of socialism are outstripped in the religions

of God. For instance, God commands, ‘But [they] prefer

them [the poor] before themselves, although there be

indigence among them’ [Qur’án 59:9]. That is, the believ-

ers spend of their substance and share their possessions

and prefer others to themselves willingly and with utmost

spirituality. Socialists, however, desire to enforce equality

and association by compulsion. Although the preference

for others which is the exhortation of God is more difficult

because the rich are enjoined to prefer others to them-

selves, this will become common and will be the cause of

tranquillity and an aid to the order of the world, because

it depends upon the inclination and willingness of the

giver. But socialism and egalitarianism, although easier,

as those who have are made equal with others, yet such a

system will not become widespread and is the cause of

disturbance and tumult because it rests on compulsion and

coercion.

In the Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh it is mentioned that if a

rich man neglects the duty of educating his children, the

House of Justice is authorized to compel him to assist

financially and to educate them. But this is a matter for the

family of that wealthy man and comes under the jurisdic-

tion of the House of Justice. The point is that there are

matters greater than equality and socialism in divine

religions. In the Cause of God there were persons like the

King of Martyrs [Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥasan][[281]](#endnote-281) who, in the

days of tribulation, expended all their wealth and property

to relieve the sufferings of the poor and the weak. In

Persia the Bahá’ís were willing to sacrifice themselves for

one another to such a degree that once when one of the

Bahá’ís was a guest in the home of another believer, and

the authorities demanded the arrest of the guest, the host

gave the guest’s name as his own and surrendered himself

to them, was martyred in his place, thus sacrificing his life

for his guest and brother.

Turning to the editor of the Police Journal, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said,

A newspaper must in the first instance be the means of

creating harmony among the people. This is the prime

duty of the proprietors of newspapers, to eradicate misun-

derstandings between religions and races and nationalities

and promote the oneness of mankind.

Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar Nakhjavání, who had been granted per-

mission to accompany ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on His journey to

California, arrived from Malden, joining Mr Fujita, the

Japanese, and the other servants. The train left Chicago

at 10:00 a.m. Many of the friends had gathered at the

railway station and surrounded the Master, begging for

divine confirmations, blessings and assistance to render

services to the Cause of God.

Although the air was cool and the train was clean and

free of dust, still ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was tired and weak. In the

afternoon we observed a strange phenomenon. We heard

moaning from the seat on which the Master was reclining.

When we came close to Him we saw that His eyes, like

beautiful tulips, were open and that He was chanting a

prayer in mournful tones. As we drew even closer, He paid

no attention nor looked at us. Although He was awake, He

appeared to be sleeping. We tried to understand what He

was saying but it was impossible. Meanwhile the train

stopped and one of us had the audacity to ask the Master

whether He would like to step outside and take a little walk.

He came out of His state of reverie and said, ‘No, we won’t

go out.’

During this time ‘Abdu’l-Bahá appeared to be sad and

uneasy. At one time He said, ‘I did not sleep at all last

night. The ark of the Cause is beset by tempests and storms

on all sides. But the confirmations of the Ancient Beauty

are with us.’

At 9:00 in the evening, when the train was but a few

stations away from Minneapolis, we were joined by Mr

[Albert Heath] Hall and some friends. When we reached

Minneapolis another group of friends and journalists

received the bounty of seeing the Master. He told them that

He was very tired and would see them the following morn-

ing to answer their questions and to give them material for

their newspaper articles.

He went to the Hotel Plaza which faces a lovely park with

a beautiful lake. The friends said that many ministers and

other prominent people of the city had tendered invita-

tions to the Master. He said:

We cannot stay more than two days. We come and in each

city we create a stir, scatter some seeds, awaken the people,

inform them of the Most Great Call and then leave. In this

short space of time our work is to proclaim the Cause of

God and, praise be to God, the results are evident day by

day and accompanied by great confirmations.

Wednesday, September 18, 1912

[Minneapolis]

The assembly hall of the hotel became a joyous meeting

place for the friends. With great happiness and excitement

the friends eagerly listened to the Master’s words.

Praise be to God that He has given you a prosperous

country. Towns are flourishing, commerce is progressing

and the outward evidences of prosperity are displayed with

utmost beauty and perfection. But all these things are as

nothing when compared to the bounties of God. The

whole globe is nothing before one ray of the Sun of Truth.

Thus it is said in the Gospel that Satan took Christ to the

top of a high mountain, showed Him the world outspread

and told Him that he would give Him all these things if

he would follow him. But Christ refused.

He then answered questions from the audience about

socialism and gave interviews to some newspaper reporters

about various subjects, such as the necessity for a spiritual

civilization, spiritual guidance and the principles and life

history of Bahá’u’lláh.

Later, a Jewish rabbi visited the Master and requested

that He speak in his synagogue. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke with

him, saying, ‘I have come from your original homeland,

Jerusalem. I passed forty-five years in Palestine, but I was

in prison.’ The rabbi said, ‘We are all prisoners in this

world.’ The Master added, ‘But I was imprisoned in two

prisons. Even then I was contented and was completely

happy and grateful.’ The rabbi then said, ‘The Prophets

of God have always been imprisoned and now His Holiness

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the chosen one of God, is imprisoned.’ The

Master stated, ‘I am but the servant of God; but the practice

of people has always been to persecute all the Prophets and

the holy ones and then later to prostrate themselves at the

mention of their names.’ When they finished their conver-

sation, the rabbi expressed his sincere thanks and re-

quested permission to leave. The Master embraced Him

and said, ‘We desire that all religions unite in bonds of

brotherhood, to love one another. May they join hands and

embrace each other, and honor and respect one another’s

masters.’

The Master was invited to the Commercial Club this

morning. As He drove through the city’s parks and boule-

vards on the way, He remarked:

Tonight when we speak in the Jewish synagogue we shall

bring proofs and arguments in support of the Spirit

[Christ]. This is the wish and confirmation of the Blessed

Beauty. It is as if the Abhá Beauty were present in the

Mansion at ‘Akká and I went into His presence and said

that I wished to speak in a Jewish synagogue. It is clear

that His wish would be that the truth of Jesus should be

demonstrated.

Several newspaper reporters asked Him questions about

the principles of the Faith. He told them:

The laws and commandments of God are of two kinds: one

set is composed of those essential spiritual principles which

are the basis for human prosperity, praiseworthy morals

and the acquisition of the virtues and perfections of man.

These never change. The other kind are subsidiary laws

related to our material life. These are revealed to regulate

transactions and to meet the exigencies of the time. These

change in keeping with the requirements of the age.

While He was giving a detailed explanation of the laws of

God, prominent members of the Club gathered around

Him. They listened with rapt attention to His words con-

cerning the failure of the four criteria [for establishing

reality]—namely, the senses, the intellect, tradition and

inspiration—to arrive at the correct conclusions and the

efficacy of the all-encompassing power of the command of

God. They expressed their sincere admiration for His

blessings and kindness, particularly for His talk.

Today a billboard outside a building announced:

‘‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the venerable Prophet of the East and the

Leader of the Bahá’ís, will speak here at noon today.’

In the evening the Master delivered a brilliant address

at the Jewish synagogue, providing decisive proofs of the

validity and truth of Christ and the Cause of Muḥammad.

It was so persuasive that men and women came to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá with the utmost humility and admiration. One of

them said openly that he would no longer be a Jew.

Thursday, September 19, 1912

[Minneapolis – St Paul]

It was reported to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that the proceedings of the

Bahá’í meeting the night before had been published in

today’s newspapers. He said:

Notwithstanding this, the Muslims and the Christians alike

are not satisfied with us. They are engaged in pleasurable

diversions and enjoyable pastimes in their homes while we

are laboring to prove the truths of the divine Manifesta-

tions in these great temples. So it is with the mischief-

makers and Covenant-breakers. Behold how they are

preoccupied with themselves and with the satisfaction of

their selfish desires, while I am so wholly occupied with

spreading the Cause of God in America that I have not had

a moment’s rest.

After a visit with friends and seekers, the Master went to a

museum.[[282]](#endnote-282) Among its many antique objects were some

small tear vials from ancient Phoenicia in which people had

preserved their tears at the time of the death of their loved

ones and then buried with the dead bodies. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said, ‘See how these bottles have outlasted the bodies of

men under the earth.’ He continued:

When people of the West become wealthy, they begin to

collect antique objects in order to render a service to the

world of art. But when Persians become wealthy, they keep

one hundred horses in their stables, give themselves up

to pomp and show, engage themselves in satiating their

selfish desires. But in comparison with service to the

Cause, both attitudes are barren, producing no result. For

example, if the effort these people put into gathering these

objects, and the millions of dollars spent acquiring them,

were employed for the Cause of God, their stars of happi-

ness and prosperity would shine evermore from the hori-

zon of both worlds. If in this city they brought ten persons

into the Cause of God, it would gain momentum and

would become the cause of eternal honor and happiness

as well as the source of everlasting life.

After returning to the hotel, telegrams reporting the good

news were prepared and dispatched to the Assemblies of

the East.

Among the friends assembled to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá were

several philosophers and clergymen. The Master spoke

about the oneness of mankind, universal brotherhood and

the teachings of God. Everyone expressed their admiration

and sincere appreciation. The friends were delighted to see

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s influence and power and pleaded with Him

to prolong His stay. He replied, ‘We have little time. We

must go everywhere to announce the Cause of God. We

have called the people here and now we must hasten to

other places until we reach California.’

There was a splendid meeting in the afternoon at the

home of Mr Hall. Several people were there, including

some philosophers, professors, clergymen and women, all

of whom listened to the Master’s words with great pleasure.

The Master spoke about the oneness and unity of mankind

and the increased capacity of this enlightened century.

After He spoke, a number of the guests requested the

privilege of having a private interview with Him.

Dr [Clement] Woolson brought his automobile to take

the Master to a meeting in St Paul, some 15 miles from

Minneapolis. The distance was covered in comfort and at

a good speed. The Master praised the cleanliness and

beauty of the Mississippi River and the greenness of the

hills, plains and gardens along the way. He arrived at Dr

Woolson’s home and there addressed the assembled friends

who were very taken with His words. His explanation of

nature’s lack of perfection and its recreation through divine

education gave the audience a new perspective.[[283]](#endnote-283)

The Master took a walk in the garden. Several children

approached Him and politely asked Him about His country

and the purpose of His visit. He spoke with them kindly.

They then followed Him in respectful silence and when He

approached the house, they asked permission to come

inside. To each He gave some coins and showered them

with kindness. One tiny child slipped off his father’s lap

and ran to the Master, saying. ‘I love you first and then my

father.’

When it was time to leave two automobiles were at the

door. One belonged to some enthusiastic women who were

new to the Cause. The Master sat in their automobile. Then

Dr Woolson came out to say that the automobile meant for

the Master was the other one. The Master then went to that

automobile and they drove to Minneapolis at full speed to

attend the meeting being held in the evening at Mr Hall’s

home.[[284]](#endnote-284) The other automobile did not reach its destina-

tion and it was later learned than it had broken down on

the way and that the women had had to make other

arrangements. Because they arrived late, they had the

honor of having dinner with the Master.

Friday, September 20, 1912

[Minneapolis – Omaha]

Today we departed from Minneapolis. In the morning

friends and seekers surrounded ‘Abdu’l-Bahá like moths.

He spoke to them in these words:

You must have deep love for one another. Go to see each

other and be consoling friends to all. If a friend lives a

little distance from the town, go to see him. Do not content

yourselves with words only but act according to the com-

mandments of God. Hold weekly meetings and give feasts.

Put forth your efforts to acquire spiritual perfections and

to spread the knowledge of God. These are the attributes

of the Bahá’ís. Otherwise, what use is there in being a

Bahá’í in word alone.

At 8:00 a.m., after packing the parcels to be sent to the

East, the Master left the hotel for the train station. The

assembled friends were sad and dejected owing to His

departure from their midst. He consoled them until the

train left the station, saying:

I shall never forget you. You are always in my mind.

Convey to all the friends my kind regards. I love all. I

exhort you to be kind to the poor and love them. Help

them, for the poor are broken-hearted. If you sacrifice

yourself for the rich, they think you do it because you are

obliged to. But if you love the poor, they feel joy and are

sincerely grateful. To help the poor is essential. May you

be under the protection of God.

When the train reached St Paul station, Dr Woolson came

to say goodbye and received the Master’s blessing. He was

showered with bounty.

On the way ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about teaching the

Cause of God in America and remarked:

In this country it is essential to have teachers who are

attracted, wholly severed and learned like some of the self-

sacrificing Persian teachers. The Cause of God must

become firmly established in these regions. The teachers

must move continually, one after another, from one place

to another to raise the divine call. Then will the confirma-

tions of the Abhá Kingdom envelop these nations and

wonders will be achieved. This desire of mine has not yet

come about. It depends on the confirmations of the all-

glorious Kingdom and on the sanctified breaths of the

friends. The one true God is my witness! If a person draws

only one pure breath in a state of severance, it will be

effective for a thousand years.

Later He related many stories about the days in Baghdád.

In the afternoon He spoke about Mr [Edward Granville]

Browne and said:

I wrote to him, saying, ‘You are the first European teacher

and author to have attained His Blessed Presence. Do not

lose this distinction.’ He did not understand me and his

loss will be known when the lights of guidance shine in

England with supreme brilliancy.

Two hours after midnight the train reached Omaha. As the

Master was extremely tired, as soon as He arrived at the

hotel He retired immediately, without eating.

Saturday, September 21, 1912

[Omaha – Lincoln]

In the morning, as we were having tea served by ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, the latest news from the Balkan war was relayed to

Him. He commented, in part:

Our own ‘war’ is good because it conquers all. When a

crown of thorns was placed on the head of Christ, He saw

with His own eyes the crowns of kings under His feet.

Now, when I look, I see all the powers and nations de-

feated, scattered and lost in the wilderness while the Cause

of God is victorious over all and subdues all. All future

events are evident and visible to the eyes of the holy

Manifestations.

He illustrated this by narrating the historical events from

the digging of ditches[[285]](#endnote-285) to the victory of Islam over the

treasuries of Anushírván and Khusraw.[[286]](#endnote-286) The hypocrites,

who disbelieved in the promises of Muḥammad in their

hearts, saw these victories and cried out: ‘This is that which

God and His Messenger have promised us.’

The translation of an article regarding universal peace

was read to the Master. He said:

If the republics of the Americas assembled and agreed on

the question of peace, and if all of them would turn to the

[Peace] Assembly[[287]](#endnote-287) at the Hague, most of the powers of

Europe would follow suit. But looking at it from another

point of view, if an international war breaks out in Europe,

international peace will be established more quickly. Also,

if these ideas regarding peace spread among the public,

the financiers will refuse to give loans for wars and the

manufacture of armaments, the railway companies will

abstain from transporting instruments of destruction and

the armed forces will not engage in carnage and the

spilling of blood. Also the boundaries should be estab-

lished.

Later the Master was interviewed by two journalists and

spoke to them about the pernicious attitudes of politicians,

the destructiveness of war, the validity of the divine teach-

ings regarding universal peace, the unity of religions and

the oneness of mankind.

In one of the Tablets revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in honor

of a friend in Mázindarán, these words were recorded:

The light of Bahá’u’lláh has shone to such a degree on the

continent of America that in every city where a number of

believers reside, the call of ‘Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá’ has been

raised. In great churches and meetings ‘Abdu’l-Bahá cries

out and proves the truth of the Prophet of God

[Muḥammad] and of the Báb and of the rising sun of

Bahá’u’lláh. Most of the newspapers express praise in

glowing articles. Where are the Persians, that they may

behold the splendors of the Luminary of the World

[Bahá’u’lláh] Whose light has shone forth from the horizon

of Mount Awrang[[288]](#endnote-288) and now illumines the mountains and

plains of America? In spite of all this, the people of Núr

are still asleep and do not know what an honor has been

showered upon that region.

For lunch ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had soup prepared especially for

Him. The Master instructed us to have lunch at the hotel.

In the afternoon after tea, the Master left for Lincoln to

visit Mr [William Jennings] Bryan, the [future] Secretary

of State of the United States, and said:

During Mr and Mrs Bryan’s last visit to Haifa, we were,

while in ‘Akká, in great danger, and the enemies were

rebellious and increasingly perverse in those last days, thus

he was unable to see us. So now we are going to see him.

The train had left just as the Master reached the station.

He decided to wait for the next train. A few minutes later,

a man who had seen our Persian dress and *kuláhs* came to

us and said, ‘We received a telegram from the friends in

Minneapolis and have been looking for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.’ He

immediately ran to give the news to the other friends and

brought them to Him. They were extremely grateful that

He had not left by the first train. The Master spoke to them

about the major calamities that had befallen the Cause of

God, saying:

Up to now, whatever has occurred has had the effect of

spreading the Cause of God. When the Blessed Beauty left

Ṭihrán and when He departed from Baghdád for the Holy

Land, it was so devastating that the friends shed tears of

blood. Now it has become evident what mysteries were

concealed in that event and what victories lay in store;

even the prophecies of the holy books regarding the Holy

Land and the promised Manifestation were fulfilled

through that banishment.

A professor who had heard of some of the principles of the

Bahá’í Cause was very happy and grateful to have visited

the Master. At midnight the Master left Omaha and three

hours later arrived in Lincoln.

Sunday, September 22, 1912

[Lincoln]

In the morning the Master spoke about the animosity of

the enemies and their evil intentions towards the Blessed

Beauty. Then the conversation turned to the corruption

and iniquity of the Covenant-breakers. He said:

Shu‘á‘ of darkness[[289]](#endnote-289) wrote to his father quite openly that

his purpose was to amass wealth and worldly property.

With reference to me he stated that he was waiting for the

fulfillment of the promise in the verse, ‘God will assuredly

send down one who will deal mercilessly with him.’[[290]](#endnote-290)

Two newspaper reporters came to interview Him and

recorded the interview with the utmost courtesy and re-

spect. The Master instructed us to telephone and inquire

about Mr Bryan and his wife. Expressing regret that Mr

Bryan was not at home, Mrs Bryan said she and her daugh-

ter would be pleased to receive ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in their home.

The Master and His entourage hired a large automobile

and drove a long distance outside of the city until they

reached a large estate which is located in one of the finest

places in the region. Mrs Bryan hurried towards the auto-

mobile to greet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. She and her daughter ex-

pressed their joy and happiness for His blessings. After they

had had tea and listened to Him, they begged Him to visit

some of the rooms of the house, particularly the library and

Mr Bryan’s study. They showed Him a book compiled by

Mr Bryan and asked Him to pray for the success of his

endeavors. Mr Bryan was currently on a campaign tour on

behalf of [the future] President Wilson and was to lecture

in many cities. In honor of the occasion, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took

a notebook and in His own hand wrote a prayer for assis-

tance. He then said a few words which increased their

happiness, devotion, assurance and honor. With that He

departed.

Among those visiting the Master at the hotel in the

afternoon were some Arabs. They had read about His

arrival and His speeches in the newspapers and wished to

see Him. The newspaper articles about His arrival and the

Manifestations of God were translated and read to Him.

It made Him happy to know that a stay in the city of only

12 hours had become the cause of spreading the teachings

of God.

At 8:00 p.m., just before leaving the city, the Master

came and sat in the lobby of the hotel. A number of people

who had read about the new teachings in the newspapers

approached and were introduced to Him. They all listened

carefully to His explanations and expressed their pleasure.

At 11:00 p.m. the train left Lincoln. His companions tried

to persuade Him to take Pullman accommodation for

Himself but He would not allow it, saying:

We must all be together. The only purpose of this journey

is to serve the Cause of God. We have no other aim. We

will all sleep in our coach seats.

He spent the night resting in the chair, sometimes sleep-

ing, and sometimes awake. And in this way His time passed.

Monday, September 23, 1912

[Denver]

The Master reached Denver around two o’clock in the

afternoon. Mr and Mrs Ashton and some friends came to

the station to meet Him. The moment they saw Him they

became excited and full of joy. They took Him to the Hotel

Shirley where we had made reservations on the third floor

of this lovely building. He said to some newspaper report-

ers who had come for an interview: ‘I had no rest last night

and am very tired. Give me a little time.’ They returned at

5:00 p.m. and were permitted to take His photograph and

to ask questions. At eight in the evening He went to the

home of Mrs [Sidney] Roberts where friends both old and

new had gathered.[[291]](#endnote-291) There were so many people that they

were seen standing as far as the front entrance. He spoke

to them about the power of the Abhá Kingdom which had

enabled Him to travel far in spite of His weak constitution

and which had gathered the friends in the assemblies of the

love of God. After His talk He bestowed His special blessing

on each person. As the Master was leaving the meeting, the

pastor of the Church of Divine Science approached Him

with the utmost humility and invited Him to speak at his

church. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá accepted. Since so many people

wished to have an interview with Him, He announced that

during the few days He would be in Denver, He would see

anyone who would call upon Him at the hotel between nine

and twelve in the morning.

Regarding His health, He said:

In the early stages of our long journey to California my

health was affected. But as the journey was made for God

and to diffuse the divine fragrances, my longstanding

indisposition has been cured without any medicine. The

confirmations of Abhá are descending from all sides.

He added:

It is written in the Ḥadíth [Islamic traditions] that cities

shall draw nearer to each other. Besides spiritual nearness

and communications between the cities of the hearts and

friendships between diverse people in the promised Day,

how physically close have the cities and countries also

become. Truly, if not for railroads and the power of steam,

how could these long distances be traversed with such

ease? This is one of the miracles of this promised century

of our current age.

Tuesday, September 24, 1912

[Denver]

There was a rush of people from early morning until noon.

Friends, seekers, professors, clergymen and philosophers

all came to see Him. They each raised questions and were

filled with joy on hearing the Master’s words.

He was invited by some clergymen to speak in their

churches. He tendered His regrets, saying, ‘My stay here

is brief.’

Today the newspapers published ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s picture

along with those of His companions, as well as articles

describing His talks.

After the meeting He went for a walk and strolled

through parks and boulevards. As the Master passed by the

government buildings, monuments and statutes of Ameri-

can heroes, He remarked: ‘Their victories are trifling in

comparison with the first victories of Islam, yet they are

famous and a source of honor to all who know them. But

these great victories have been completely forgotten.’ All

eyes were attracted to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to His glory, dignity

and grandeur, as He walked with His companions dressed

in their *kuláhs* and Persian clothes. One of the Master’s

companions remarked that the people viewed this pictur-

esque sight as an amusing comedy. He replied, ‘Yes, it is

a heavenly act, a performance of the Kingdom, a wonderful

pageant.’

Those who had read the newspapers about the arrival

of the Master were heard saying to each other, ‘He is the

Prophet of the East, the Messenger of Peace.’ Those who

had cameras took the Master’s photograph as He walked

by.

In the afternoon He was invited to the suburban home

of Mrs Clark. As we rode on the train some passengers were

seen to be whispering about us. He said, ‘Tell them we are

neither Turks nor Arabs, neither of the East nor of the

West, rather we are of heaven and of God.’ One of the

companions said, ‘Being of that is good but being of God

is better.’

When the Master arrived at Mrs Clark’s home, several

of the friends had already gathered to see Him. He spoke

to them about the confirmations of the Abhá Beauty and

the power and influence of the Word of God. ‘See how He

has made the Easterner and the Westerner friends’, He

said, ‘and has bestowed sincere love and true friendship.

Otherwise, what connection would there be between us and

Americans, between this Japanese youth[[292]](#endnote-292) and Mírzá

Maḥmúd-i-Zarqání?’ Mrs Clark said: ‘I have frequently

dreamt that my home would become honored with the

footsteps of the Beloved Master. I am extremely thankful

and grateful that my dreams have come true. My heart is

now freed from ego, whereas before I used to consider

myself better than anyone else.’ The Master said:

Thank God, because the first self-conceited one was Satan.

A man must never consider himself greater than others.

Rather, he must always be humble and self-effacing. The

bird, as long as it sees itself at a low level, is given impetus

to soar and progress; but the moment it fancies itself high

in the air, it begins to descend.

Someone in the audience asked, ‘What shall I do to become

a true servant?’ He replied:

Act in accordance with the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. Do not

only read His teachings but put into practice in your lives

the Hidden Words and the other holy writings. Whatever

I say is not even a drop from the ocean of the Supreme

Pen and the treasure-filled sea of the bounty and favor of

the Abhá Beauty.

I have brought the message of Bahá’u’lláh to this

country in order to teach people to investigate truth, to

render service to humanity, to endeavor to bring about

international peace, to exert every effort to guide human-

ity, to show kindness to all creatures and to raise the Call

of the Kingdom. Man must be endowed with divine attri-

butes and must enter the concourse of the exalted ones.

These teachings are only a drop from the sea concealed

in the *Hidden Words*. We must pray for each other. If we

act according to the divine teachings, by God besides

Whom there is none other God, we shall shine like lamps.

But woe betide those people who are aware of the teach-

ings of Bahá’u’lláh and know them to be the cause of

eternal salvation and divine nearness but still do not bring

their actions into conformity with them. Such is a source

of great distress. Thus it is incumbent upon us to endeavor

day and night to follow the teachings of God. This is the

cause of eternal esteem, this is divine favor, this is the

honor of mankind and this is everlasting life.

Another person asked about telepathy or communication

from mind to mind. He replied:

It is evident. If a lover holds the hand of a beloved, it is

obvious what feelings ensue. They communicate face to

face and speak heart to heart, as this light is communicat-

ing now with human eyes, the sun with the earth, the cloud

with the land and the breeze with the tree. This process

is found in all things.

The Master was asked about His health and comfort, to

which He replied:

I have not come for rest and diversion. I have come to

raise the call of the Abhá Kingdom in order to diffuse the

divine fragrances. Had I desired rest, I would have secured

it more easily in the East. Now I must journey to various

cities and countries and call people to the divine Kingdom.

Suppose I had rested for a few years, what results would

it have had?

Early in the evening when He returned to the hotel the

Master discovered that the editor of *The Post* had placed an

automobile at His disposal. On the way to the Church of

Divine Science, He remarked:

Behold the power and confirmation of the Blessed Beauty:

The pastor comes in person with all humility to invite us

and the proprietor of a leading journal sends his automo-

bile for our use, so that we may raise the call of God in the

church. Truly, such confirmations have never been seen

in other dispensations and in no age have the Manifesta-

tions of the Cause of God met with such reverence and

honor. But these things should be the cause of humility

and self-effacement. We must not consider that they are

due to our addresses or our eloquence. These shining

lights which you see will instantly darken if the origin of

their bounty is severed from them.

When the Master’s automobile reached the church, a crowd

of people was seen standing outside. Immediately the

pastor came forward, and taking the Master’s arm, led Him

to the pulpit. The pastor reverently introduced the Master

to the audience. Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stood and delivered

an address on the reality and condition of the Manifesta-

tions of God.[[293]](#endnote-293) After His talk, the people came to the

pulpit to see Him and shake His hand, surrounding Him

like moths. Another clergyman, with the utmost humility,

asked the Master to speak at his church. He was so persua-

sive that every tongue was forced to say, ‘All heads are

bowed before Him.’ With great courtesy, the Master ten-

dered His apologies because of His limited time but prom-

ised to return.

As the Master left the church He was perspiring so much

that His companions were concerned about His health and

tried to keep Him warm with His *‘abá*, shawl and blanket.

Indeed, the guidance and protection of the Abhá Beauty

prevailed and His assistance bestowed. Everything relating

to this journey has been the cause of joy and a sign of the

power of the King of Manifestations.

Wednesday, September 25, 1912

[Denver]

Most of the people coming today to see the Master were

prominent and well-known. Because they so were attracted

and transformed by His talks on the divine teachings of the

oneness of humanity, universal peace and the principles

of the religions, today I wrote to the friends in the East

inviting them to come and see how people who had previ-

ously had no appreciation for those from the East, espec-

ially the Persians, now come in groups to the threshold of

the Master and stand waiting their turn to become the

recipients of His favor. They consider an interview with

Him a source of pride and glory. Many philosophers,

professors, clergymen and lecturers come with bowed heads

to show their sincere humility. The people from churches

and other organizations are also attracted and fascinated,

happy to see His life-giving countenance. The Center of the

Covenant has caused the Persians to be renowned for their

respectability and has crowned the peoples of the East with

eternal honor and glory. And how the newspapers of this

region praise the Master and the learned and literary

people of the West emphasize the importance of these

teachings! Notwithstanding this, most of the Persians are

asleep and do not understand the cause of their greatness

and honor. They are asleep on the bed of negligence and

resting in the lap of pride.

After the meeting the Master took a walk. His heart was

filled with joy as He said:

Did you see what a fire was set aglow in the hearts? A

person must first be happy and attracted himself to be in

a position to transform others. He himself must be im-

pressed in order to impress others. You must act in a way

that will make me happy, then you will see what will

happen.

To one who visited Him at the hotel, He remarked:

I have come to your city and found tall buildings and

advancement in material civilization. Now I will lead you

to my own city which is the world above. Its administration

is the oneness of humanity, its law is international peace,

its palaces are ever shining with the lights of the Kingdom,

its season is always spring, its trees are ever green, its fruits

are fresh and sweet, its sun is ever ascending, its moon is

always full, its stars are ever brilliant and its planets are

ever circling. That is our city and the Founder is

Bahá’u’lláh. We have enjoyed the pleasures of this city and

now I invite you to that city. I hope that you will accept this

invitation.

To another He said:

Man must take flight from the cage of the body and be-

come pure spirit, for the body is a cage which causes

difficulties for man and makes him the captive of nature

and involves him in all types of misfortunes. But when a

person discards all his physical habits, he is freed from all

fetters. As physical powers attract the world of nature, so

spiritual powers must break these chains. This condition

is not realized by thought alone. The powers of nature are

ever alert to allure man. The eye is fascinated by beautiful

scenery; the ear is entranced by music; the heart is at-

tracted by delights and human passions. A man may be

rich but still he wants more because he is attracted by the

world of nature; he has means of livelihood yet he desires

more. Therefore, the spiritual powers must dominate so

that he may be freed from these fetters and attain salva-

tion. Man is like a bird in a cage. A bird cannot attain

freedom merely by knowing that in the free world there

are pure breezes, spacious skies, beautiful gardens, pleas-

ant parks and fountains; rather, the bird must find a power

to break the cage and soar into the wide firmament.

He then narrated a story about detachment:

The Persian friends travel mostly on foot. They sleep

whenever they get tired. They rest wherever they see a

shady tree. Once a person came to an Amír. The Amír

wished to present him with a gift and with insistence gave

him a robe. Later, when he became tired, he lay down

under a tree in the forest with the robe folded under his

head. But he could not sleep as he repeatedly imagined

that a thief was crouching nearby to take away the robe.

At last he rose, threw the robe away and said, ‘As long as

this robe is with me, I shall not find rest. To find rest I

must give it up.’ How long will you desire a robe for your

body? Release your body that you may have no need for

a robe.[[294]](#endnote-294)

A public meeting was held in the afternoon at the home of

Mrs Roberts. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá walked a while in the garden

outside the house. Although most of the friends watched

Him respectfully from a distance, when several ladies from

Washington dc saw Him, they ran towards Him, expressing

their faith and happiness in the divine teachings which they

had heard from His own lips in Washington.

In brief, the Master’s talk that afternoon was to say

farewell to the friends, to encourage them in their endeav-

ors to diffuse the fragrances of God and to explain issues

related to teaching. They were all set ablaze by His words.

In the evening the proprietor of the Hotel Shirley and

the publisher of a newspaper announced that there would

be a public meeting in the large hall of the hotel. The

spacious room was filled to capacity. I will never forget the

joy and excitement of the audience. At times the audience

was plunged into a state of sadness and wonder and then

into a state of such happiness and joy that peals of laughter

could be heard outside the building. It is not possible to

describe the excitement and attraction of the people. They

all expressed their sadness that the Master was leaving the

city. Those men and women staying at the hotel who be-

cause of their wealth and pride had previously not deigned

to look at us, now sought us out. Everyone was fascinated

by the majesty and grandeur of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and gave their

hearts to Him.

Thursday, September 26, 1912

[Denver]

As He intended to leave Denver, His talks with the believers

became exhortations. He said:

I hope that you will be under the protection of God, will

succeed in rendering service to humanity and will always

be a source of happiness to every heart. The best person

is he who wins all hearts and is not the cause of grief to

anyone. The worst of souls is he who causes hearts to be

agitated and who becomes the cause of sadness. Always

endeavor to make people happy and their hearts joyful so

that you may become the cause of guidance to mankind.

Proclaim the Word of God and diffuse the divine fra-

grances.

Someone asked Him about eating meat. He replied:

God has appointed provision for every living creature. To

birds He has given beaks so that they may pick up seeds.

To animals such as cows and goats He has given teeth like

scythes in order that they may eat grass. To carnivores He

has given claws like forks and canine teeth so that they

may prey because they cannot eat grass. Their food is

meat. But man’s food is not meat for he has not been

created with means to eat flesh. God has given him beauty

of form and has created him blessed and not rapacious

and bloodthirsty.

The Master’s train left Denver at 9:00 a.m. Some of the

articles that had been published in the Denver newspapers

were translated for Him. They made His heart very happy

as they described the spread of the teachings of God in that

city and contained translations of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s words.

Among them was the translation of these words:

The contingent world is like the human body that has

grown from the embryonic state and reached maturity and

perfection. It may be said that the development of the

human being from the beginning of life to the age of

maturity is but a preparation for the appearance of the

power of reason. This is the age of maturity and the time

of the manifestation of the Most Great Intellect and the

Most Ancient Bounty so that divine and material civiliza-

tions may be joined and the perfection of the human world

may dawn.

Around midnight ‘Abdu’l-Bahá became fatigued owing to

the speed and motion of the train. We proposed that

because California was still some distance away, if He would

consent, it might be a good idea to stop for two or three

days. At 2:00 a.m. the train reached Glenwood Springs,

beautifully situated near many hot springs. We stayed at the

Hotel Colorado, which is a fine hotel overlooking the river,

nestled among green parks and wooded mountains.

Friday, September 27, 1912

[Glenwood Springs]

After morning tea, the Master left the hotel for a walk.

Three magnificent mountains stood in the distance on

three sides, each crowned with trees and adorned with

flowers of many hues. They were like peacock feathers and

had a unique beauty from every viewpoint. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

strolled in the spacious garden and boulevard adjacent to

the hotel until He reached the river where there were bath

houses and hot springs. On the other side of the river,

spanned by a two-story bridge, the tall buildings of the city

could be seen rising high on the horizon.

At the insistence of His companions the Master went to

the baths with the entire party, thus bestowing upon us

everlasting honor. The rooms and bathing facilities were

magnificent. In a special room hot water gushed from a

natural cave. It was so hot that a person could not stay more

than 15 minutes. Coming out of the bath, the Master said:

Today I am relieved of fatigue. We have been to many

lovely places during this journey but because of our work

we had no time to look at the scenery. We did not even

think of a moment’s rest. Today, however, we have had a

little respite.

As the Master viewed the clear, transparent waters of the

river shining like pure pearls and the majestic mountains

and parks, He said, ‘May God not have mercy on the

tyrants who kept the Blessed Beauty imprisoned between

four walls in ‘Akká. How such scenes were loved by Him!

Once He said that He had not seen greenery for several

years.’

When He returned to the hotel He stood outside in the

garden and said, ‘It would be good to eat here.’ The garden

was adjacent to a large pond with fish of various colors and

was enclosed on three sides by the hotel structure. Having

seen the Denver newspapers, the hotel manager recognized

the Master and us from photographs. Without waiting for

the Master’s request, the manager instructed the waiters

to serve lunch in the garden. A large table was erected and

beautiful chairs set out. The Master sat down and instructed

His companions to do the same. Both before and after

lunch the Master generously tipped the waiters. When the

residents of the hotel saw the majesty and glory of the

Master they told others. Groups of people approached

Him. Others watched from their rooms and balconies.

Many were heard to say, ‘How nice to dine this way. It is

evident that this is a very prominent person.’ Gradually the

purpose of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s mission dawned upon the hotel

guests as they were informed of the Cause of God.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took a walk in the garden

and to some shops. While we were crossing a bridge, a

messenger approached with some telegrams for us. One of

them informed the Master that Mr [Thornton] Chase was

seriously ill in a Los Angeles hospital. This made the Mas-

ter and us very sad. He repeatedly mentioned the faithful-

ness of Mr Chase. Later He said:

To turn to the Covenant is to obey the Blessed Beauty

which is a cause of gathering together the people of Bahá.

Let me explain clearly. The command to the people of

Islam to prostrate before the black stone[[295]](#endnote-295) was simply a

command to obey the Prophet of God and to prove the

influence of the Cause of God. Now, were it not for the

Word of the Blessed Beauty, we would be like everyone

else and not different in the least.

The Master and His party left Glenwood Springs at about

midnight.

Saturday, September 28, 1912

[En route to Salt Lake City]

The train passed through the Rocky Mountains of Color-

ado. Some of these rose precipitously like walls from the

railway bed, formidable and immense. Gazing at their

summits one felt as if the mountains would fall down. There

were some special roofless observation cars on the train so

that passengers might have a full view of the majestic

mountains. In these observation cars the passengers could

see the mountains on the right and the serene river on the

left. As the train passed through these beautiful scenes, the

Master said:

Dear friends, the waves of the bounties of the Blessed

Beauty are surging. As I look I see the ocean of His favor

swelling and saying, ‘I am with you.’ Truly, were it not for

these glad tidings and His assistance, what could I have

done? Just one person alone in the east and west of Amer-

ica, in the mountains and wilderness—it is no light matter.

It is easy to say these things but it was unimaginable that

they would let us into these churches. See how His aid and

favor descend upon us. This trip fills us with wonder! Offer

thanks to the Blessed Beauty that He has bestowed such

confirmations upon us.

Later, the Master told stories about the time of

Muḥammad, the Messenger of God, and mentioned the

cave and His words, ‘God is indeed with us’.[[296]](#endnote-296)

The train reached Salt Lake City in the afternoon. The

Master decided to stay in the city for one night. By chance,

even as the city was being blessed by His footsteps, a large

national agricultural convention was being held and the

entire city was festively decorated.

Sunday, September 29, 1912

[Salt Lake City]

In the morning several newspaper reporters who had heard

of His arrival came to see the Master. They were fascinated

with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s words concerning the history and

teachings of the Cause of God. To one of them He said:

When I entered this city, I saw there was quite a stir. I

asked the reason and was told that an agricultural conven-

tion was being held. I remarked that Bahá’u’lláh, too,

organized a convention in Persia. The difference is that

your congress is of this world but Bahá’u’lláh’s is divine.

Great persons have come to the congress but their motive

is earthly as they have assembled to consider questions

concerning agriculture. But in that other congress holy

ones have gathered who irrigate the field of hearts with the

water of eternal life, as their motive is heavenly. This

congress is decorated with earthly lamps while that is

embellished with heavenly lights. The music of this is

terrestrial while the strains of that are celestial. This

convention meets in a private hall while that gathering is

held under the tent of the unity of mankind and interna-

tional peace. The queen of this congress is a lady bedecked

with ornaments and embellishments of this mortal world

but the king of that congress is the King of the Throne of

Eternity, Whose sovereignty is divine. When I compared

these two congresses I became extremely glad and prayed

that God may bless your farming and bestow upon you

spiritual strength and capacity for life everlasting.

Today many were attracted by the Master’s visit with us to

the State Fair.[[297]](#endnote-297) He had been invited to the hotel by some

delegates while others pleaded with Him to prolong His

stay. Because of the shortness of time, He could not accept

their invitation. ‘If we had time,’ He said, ‘some seeds

would have been sown in this city, too. But the people are

enjoying the celebration and we have no time at our dis-

posal.’

This city is called the City of the Mormons because the

majority of its inhabitants are of the Mormon denomina-

tion which allows polygamy and divorce.

In the afternoon the Master went to the place specifically

set out and decorated for the agricultural exhibition.

Alighting from the tram, He went to the exhibit of agricul-

tural machines for plowing, planting and harvesting. He

asked about their usage and cost. He then went to the

vegetable and grain section and the fruit section. The

Master praised the agricultural progress of America. The

fruits and vegetables exhibited were among the finest

specimens of grapes, apples, pears, pomegranates, cab-

bages and very large pumpkins, all of many colors and of

varieties that we had not seen before.

The section manager saw the Master among the visitors

and came towards us and the interpreter, asking to be

introduced to Him. He accompanied the Master, offering

Him samples of many fruits (even though the purchase, sale

and consumption of these items was strictly prohibited). He

described to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the various methods of agricul-

ture and then concluded the tour at the grain and mineral

display. The Master told us to purchase seeds of some of

the fruits and flowers so they could be sent to the Holy

Land to be planted at the Most Holy Shrine.

As He was returning to the hotel, the Master saw a

Cardinal walking proudly with people on his way to dedi-

cate a church. This Cardinal had heard about the Master

and had spoken about the false Christ, thus he was often

mentioned by the Master in His meetings.

Monday, September 30, 1912

[Salt Lake City, en route to California]

The Master left the Keynon Hotel in Salt Lake City to

continue His journey to California. He spoke on various

subjects. The following are some of His words:

The Cause of God is penetrating. It will encompass the

whole world. Now as I observe the wilderness of America,

I see it full of Bahá’ís. Formerly, when we asserted in the

East that international peace and unity of nations was a

necessity, the people laughed at us. Now behold the

congresses of peace that have come into existence. The law

of God is the panacea for all ills because it is in accordance

with the needs of the realities of creation. Legislators have

devoted considerable discussion to this point. The most

distinguished of them concluded that the laws must be

derived from the necessary relations inherent in the reality

of things. But the divine Manifestation asserted that to

institute such laws is beyond human capacity, for human

intelligence cannot encompass the realities of things, nor

can it comprehend the essential relationships of such

realities. Therefore, divine law is necessary, as it embraces

the realities and penetrates all things.

Today the Master was in the best of health and happiness.

In spite of all the hardships of the long journey, He was as

charmingly fresh as a flower. With unmitigated joy He

mentioned the Ancient Beauty, Bahá’u’lláh.

In the afternoon He spoke about spiritual education and

intellectual training:

Peter was devoid of all schooling and so untrained that he

could not remember the days of the week. He would tie

up seven loaves of bread and open one each day. When

he opened the seventh parcel he would know that it was

the seventh day and that he had to go to the synagogue.

However, under Christ his spiritual education was such

that he became the cause of the enlightenment of the

world. Indeed, what holy beings are raised up under the

shadow of the Word of God!

I remember once in Ṭihrán when I was a child, I was

sitting by Áqá Siyyid Yaḥyá Vaḥíd[[298]](#endnote-298) when Mírzá ‘Alíy-i-

Sayyáḥ[[299]](#endnote-299) came in wearing the táj and carrying the rod of

a dervish and with his bare feet covered with mud. Some-

one asked him where he was coming from. He replied that

he had come from the fortress of Máh-Kú, from the august

presence of the Báb. Vaḥíd arose immediately and threw

himself at the feet of Sayyáḥ, and with tears streaming

down his face he rubbed his beard on Sayyáḥ’s feet saying,

‘He has come from the court of the Beloved.’ Although

Vaḥíd was a renowned and illustrious person, still he was

humble before the servants of the Threshold of God.[[300]](#endnote-300)

Among the interesting things we saw along the way were

the wooden covers over the railroad tracks. For a distance

of some 50 miles deep passes are snow bound during the

entire winter and become almost impassable for trains.

Now, owing to these covers, the difficulties are removed

and the train can pass easily through the area. In English,

these covers are called snow sheds. The history of Califor-

nia records that in olden times many people became snow-

bound and perished in these parts. One example is the

Donner party, the story of whose demise is very sad.

Monday night, eve of 1 October 1912[[301]](#endnote-301)

[San Francisco]

Tonight the train carrying the beloved Master reached the

shores of the Pacific Ocean. Dr [Frederick] D’Evelyn, a

devoted Bahá’í, came running as soon as he saw the Master

and prostrated himself at His feet. On the way to the city

Dr D’Evelyn described for about 15 minutes the yearning

of the friends and how they longed to see the Center of the

Covenant. When we reached the house especially prepared

for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the waiting friends came out to welcome

Him. Mr and Mrs Ralston, Mrs Goodall, Mrs Cooper and

the other friends were ecstatically happy to have the honor

and bounty of being in His presence and to have supper

with Him.

Tuesday, October 1, 1912

[San Francisco]

From early morning the enthusiasm, eagerness, excite-

ment, joy and singing of the believers surrounded ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, just as in the stories of the iguana and the sun and

the moth and the candle. It was the ultimate example of

a joyful reunion among the lovers of God. These ecstatic

friends offered thanks for the bounty of attaining His

presence and being near to Him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá continuously gave thanks for the confirma-

tions of the Abhá Kingdom and for the power and influ-

ence of the Cause of God and encouraged the believers to

proclaim the Cause of God. At noon He went for a walk and

then took a little rest.

I will describe ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s residence, as He saw it,

because it is unique among all the homes in America which

have been graced by Him. It is situated on an elevated plot

of land on a wide street surrounded by a spacious garden.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá would approach the house, climb a few steps

and stand on the porch where He would see fragrant

flowers and plants set in pots around the veranda and

porch. When the Master entered the house, He would see

on His right three large rooms, decorated with fine furni-

ture and many varieties of flowers. Each room opens on the

other by means of wide doors covered with velvet curtains,

which, when drawn, create one large hall.

Every morning and afternoon the hall is filled with so

many friends and seekers that there is standing room only.

Many who seek private interviews meet Him on the second

floor. On this second floor, accessible by a carpeted stair-

case, there is a large room occupied by some of His servants

and to the left a small tea room. Across the hall is another

room occupied by the Master. Attached to this room is a tea

room and a bathroom. Situated in a corner of the house,

the room commands a view of a large part of the city. At

night the lights of the city appear like twinkling stars. Here

many Americans, Japanese and Indians come into ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s presence one after another. Each one has a question

or statement to make. Many of the friends bring their

children, supplicating His blessings and requesting Persian

names for them. One of the Japanese friends at Mrs

Goodall’s home in Oakland asked the Master for Persian

names for his two sons and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave them the

names Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.[[302]](#endnote-302)

The third floor, where we have our rooms, is identical

to the second floor. We each have our own room and are

able to be close to the Master. The kitchen and dining

room are on the first floor where some of the friends have

the honor of dining with the Master at His table.

At each dawn, after offering prayers of gratitude, the

Master calls His servants and serves us tea with His own

hands. Using stories and narratives, He explains issues

relating to the blessings of God and expresses gratitude for

His divine confirmations. Later the friends arrive to experi-

ence the bounty of being with Him and to give praise.

Whenever a group assembles, the Master comes downstairs

to speak to them about great and lofty matters.

Before both lunch and dinner the Master takes a walk

or goes for a ride. Mrs Goodall, Mrs Cooper and Mr and

Mrs Ralston send two automobiles every day for His use.

Whenever He goes out, the friends watch Him from the

doors and windows of their houses. Even among the seekers

there is much excitement.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá is reverently received at the churches by

the clergymen. Each respectfully accompanies Him to the

pulpit and introduces Him to their congregations with

glowing praise. They speak of Him as the Prophet of the

East, the messenger of peace and tranquillity and attest to

His great station and the importance of the teachings.

Following His addresses at the meetings, crowds of people

continually surround Him, begging for blessings and

confirmations. When He returns to His home afterwards

He offers praise and gratitude for the confirmations of the

Abhá Beauty.

Wednesday, October 2, 1912

[San Francisco – Oakland]

Among some of the prominent people visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

was the president of Stanford University at Palo Alto.[[303]](#endnote-303) He

was so attracted to the teachings that he begged the Master

to come to his university and speak. Some newspaper

reporters also visited the Master and were permitted to

record His words about the teachings and history of the

Cause. They too were showered with His special bestowals.

The Master gave a short address at a public meeting on

the subject of spiritual life:

We aspire to find true human beings in this world. Man

becomes human only through spiritual life, and the foun-

dation of such a life is made up of heavenly perfections,

divine attributes, service to humanity, eagerness to receive

eternal bounties, praiseworthy morals, unity, love of God,

wisdom and knowledge of God. If the aim were this physi-

cal life only, then this creation would be in vain and men

would not have more honor or be nobler than other

creatures. The greatest of sensual pleasures, beauty of

appearance and freedom are found among the animals.

Birds excel all in sensual pleasures, for they build nests on

the loftiest branches and breathe the purest air. All seeds

and fruit are their property. Limpid streams, charming

plains, beautiful fields, verdant hills, green valleys, exqui-

site gardens and lovely flowers are all for their pleasure

and happiness. They have no grief, regrets, aspirations,

ambitions, quarrels, contentions, wars or massacres. If the

purpose of existence is sensual life and pleasures, then

animal and man are equal. Happiness and pleasure are

rather the possession of the bird and not those of dis-

tressed and sorrowful men.

There was a gathering in the afternoon at the home of Mrs

Goodall and Mrs Cooper in Oakland. The friends of Oak-

land and San Francisco rejoiced at meeting Him and the

seekers were grateful and appreciative of His guidance. A

large crowd filled the spacious house. Both before and after

the meeting, those who had not had the honor of meeting

‘Abdu’l-Bahá came in groups to the second floor and were

honored to receive His bounty. The Oakland friends

brought their children to be blessed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. His

talk to the gathering was on the power of the Word of God,

the influence of the Supreme Cause and the union of the

people of the East and the West. The audience became

increasingly humble as the people listened to the Master.

There is a bay between San Francisco and Oakland

which can be crossed in 15 minutes by boat. The Master’s

automobile was being ferried across the channel at night.

When it reached midway, we saw a magnificent sight:

lighted boats traveling back and forth against the shimmer-

ing lights of San Francisco. The splendid buildings and

towers adorned with brilliant lights seemed to be golden

palaces set with colored jewels. Lights from the homes

crowning the high hills appeared like a string of pearls.

The Master enjoyed the scene and whenever He went that

way He praised it highly.

Thursday, October 3, 1912

[San Francisco]

Many friends, both old and new, had the honor of visiting

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and receiving enlightenment from Him.

Some of His words to the gathering of the friends were

these:

As there are four seasons in this material world, so it is in

the spiritual world. When the divine spring is over and the

heavenly bounty ceases, the trees of being lie dormant.

Lifelessness and stillness prevail over the world of man.

People become spiritless and withered. Autumn and winter

set in. There exists no flower or greenery, no cheerfulness

or mirth, no happiness or joy. Then the spiritual spring

spreads its tent once more. The gardens of the hearts

regain their freshness, charm and verdure. The buds of

knowledge open and the anemones of reality appear. The

world of man becomes another world. This is the divine

law and is a requirement of the world of creation. This is

the cause of the appearance of the many Manifestations

of God.[[304]](#endnote-304)

In the afternoon, after seeing many visitors and answering

questions from some reporters,[[305]](#endnote-305) at the invitation of Mrs

Goodall the Master went to see the beautiful and tranquil

Golden Gate Park located outside of the city. In the auto-

mobile on the way to the park the Master spoke about the

grandeur of the Revelation of the Blessed Beauty:

No one was a denier of His virtues. All the wise men of the

East considered Him the greatest person in the world. But

they said, ‘Alas, that He has claimed divinity for Himself.’

Many of the people of the East said and wrote about me,

too, ‘all agree that he excels in knowledge, learning,

speech and explanation, but, alas! he is the propagator of

a new law’. They expected us to be servants and propaga-

tors of their old dogmas and customs, not knowing that we

are obliged to serve humanity and spread universal love

and harmony.

He concluded, ‘If all others have a few daughters and sons,

I have thousands of spiritual offspring and heavenly chil-

dren like you.’

When He returned, and after seeing the friends and

bestowing His favors upon them, He sent telegrams to the

Assemblies in the East. Among them was this: ‘Rejoicing

among friends of God in San Francisco. Truly confirma-

tions are overwhelming and happiness complete. ‘Abbás.’

Friday, October 4, 1912

[San Francisco]

After morning prayers, two Japanese Bahá’ís came to see

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master expressed His happiness on

seeing their faith and sincerity in the Cause, saying:

This is an historic event. It is out of the ordinary that an

Iranian should meet Japanese people in San Francisco

with such love and harmony. This is through the power of

Bahá’u’lláh and calls for our thankfulness and happiness.

If it be said that Bahá’u’lláh brought a man from heaven

and another from earth and caused them to meet midway

between the earth and heaven, do not be surprised. The

power of Bahá’u’lláh makes all difficulties simple. I like

the Japanese greatly because they are audacious and

intelligent. Whatever they turn their attention to, it be-

comes a success.

The visitors invited the Master to come to Japan to realize

the potential of the Japanese people and asked His permis-

sion to contribute articles on the Faith to the Japanese

newspapers. He readily granted their request and showed

them great kindness.

In the afternoon a representative from the [San Fran-

cisco] *Post* came to interview the Master, who said to him:

In this enlightened age everything has been renewed—

sciences have been renewed, new arts have come into

being, new skills have appeared, new thoughts have been

expressed, new inventions have come to light and new

discoveries have been made. In reality, the world of being

has become a new world. Thus, the principles of religion

also must be renewed.

To a journalist from the [San Francisco] *Bulletin* He said:

God created man after His own image and likeness … but

now, behaving contrarily, man has become more merciless

and fearless than rapacious beasts. A beast kills only one

animal each day for his food, while merciless man tears

apart a hundred thousand people in a day merely for fame

and dominion. Should a wolf tear a sheep apart, they

would kill it; but if a man massacres a hundred thousand

men in blood and dust, he is given an ovation and is

pronounced a marshall or a general. If a man kills another

or sets fire to a house, he is condemned as a murderer; but

if he annihilates an army and overturns a country, he is

called a conqueror and is admired. If a man steals a dollar

he is thrown into prison but if he plunders the homes of

people and lays waste a city he is called a commander and

is praised.

Saturday, October 5, 1912

[San Francisco]

Some clergymen and professors came to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

in the morning in His second-floor room. Some of the

Master’s words to the pastor of the First Congregational

Church in Oakland were these: ‘If a man is not a clergyman

and is unprejudiced, it is not a cause for wonder. But if a

man is a clergyman and is not prejudiced, he certainly

deserves praise and glory.’

At the public meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about the

material progress of the world:

These countries have reached the apex of material prog-

ress. They are like bodies in the utmost health and form

which are, however, devoid of spirit. A spiritless body is

a dead one. Indeed, its perfection depends on the acquisi-

tion of spiritual capacity and divine civilization.

The Master remarked repeatedly:

The people of America have a great capacity for the

acquisition of spiritual qualities but they are immersed in

material affairs. They are like machines which move

uncontrollably; they move but are devoid of spirit. They

will attain perfection when the spirit of divine civilization

is breathed into them and this material civilization be-

comes infused with spiritual refinement.

The Master went to the public park in the afternoon, which

He appreciated very much, especially when He went near

the lake and saw the remnants of a few marble pillars left

over from the destruction caused by the great earthquake

of 1906. He remarked, ‘The world and its condition will

change to such a degree and the Bahá’í Cause will prevail

to such an extent that nothing but a remnant—like these

pillars—will remain of the previous order.’ Sitting on a

bench, the Master spoke about the sensitivity of the vegeta-

ble kingdom:

Although sensitivity in plants is slight as compared with

that manifested in animals, within their own kingdom they

have sensitivity and vegetable spirit. Cut across a conical

shape, sprinkle a little sulphate of copper on it, add a little

water and then observe it with a magnifier. You will find

its components rushing toward the center. Their sensitivity

is apparent in their effort to reach the center until they

form a cylinder.

In the evening the Master spoke to the assembled friends

at His residence about the ascendancy of spiritual power

and the divine life of humanity. The friends, both new and

old, were deeply impressed and attracted to Him. At the

end of each meeting the friends, one by one, came into His

presence to beg His assistance and blessings. Their state

was such that it cannot be described.

Sunday, October 6, 1912

[San Francisco]

The Master was invited to deliver an address at the First

Unitarian Church of San Francisco. The moment He

entered the church the audience stood respectfully. When

the music ended, the Master was introduced by the pastor

of the church, who dwelt on His 40 years of imprisonment,

the martyrdom of the Eastern Bahá’ís, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

release from prison and His journey to spread the teach-

ings of the Ancient Beauty. He also mentioned the teach-

ings of universal peace and the unity of nations and peoples

under the shadow of the Greatest Name. The pastor then

read a translated passage from the *Hidden Words*.

The Master stood and delivered a comprehensive talk

on the degrees of love, amity, peace and the oneness of

mankind; the universality of the Manifestations of God; the

truth of Islam; and the news of the appearance of

Bahá’u’lláh. He concluded by chanting an inspiring prayer

in Persian. Again the pastor stood, praised the Master’s talk

and thanked Him for His address. At the conclusion of the

meeting, a crowd of people came to the Master to shake His

hand, expressing their sincerity and heartfelt appreciation.

Those who had not yet had the honor of visiting Him took

His address so they might meet Him at His home.

In the afternoon a number of Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís

gathered to meet Him. In answer to a question from an

Indian regarding Sufism and the Trinity, He stated:

The reality of divinity is holy beyond descent and incarna-

tion but the divine Manifestations are expressive of the

attributes and perfections of God, the All-Praised, the

Exalted. They are like mirrors placed before the Sun of

Truth, so if they claim that the Sun of Truth is in them,

they speak the truth. However, they mean that the signs

and light of the Sun of Truth are in them, and not the Sun

itself.

In the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the First Congrega-

tional Church in Oakland. The influence of the Cause and

the majesty of the Covenant made such an impression and

was so widespread that during his introduction the pastor

of the church said: ‘Tonight the messenger of God will

speak in the church of God and you will hear with your own

ears.’

The Master spoke magnificently on the fundamental

oneness of the principles of religions and the truth of

Islam. His words moved and deeply affected everyone,

increasing their joy and eagerness and raising the status of

the Cause of God.

Monday, October 7, 1912

[San Francisco]

While tea was being served in the morning, the Master

recalled the events of last night, saying:

The pastor said: ‘The messenger of God will speak in the

church of God.’ No one will believe it unless they see it

themselves. No matter to whom you may write these words,

they will think it an exaggeration and will not believe it to

be true.

Among those visiting the Master today was the Mayor of

Berkeley. He questioned the Master about economic issues

and received useful answers. In conclusion ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

said:

We must strive until mankind achieves everlasting felicity.

Laws are needed which can both preserve the ranks of

individuals and secure peace and stability for them be-

cause society is like an army, which needs a general,

captains, lieutenants and privates. Not all can be captains

nor can all be soldiers. The grades of responsibility are

essential and the differences of rank a necessity. Just as a

family needs old and young, master and mistress, servants

and attendants, likewise society needs organization and

structure. However, all must be part of an order which will

ensure that each lives in complete comfort within his own

station. It should not be that the master lives in comfort

while the servant is in pain; that is injustice. Similarly, it

is impossible that all be either servants or masters; then

there would be no order.

The mayor asked, ‘Will these things be realized soon?’ The

Master replied:

As these laws are in conformity with the demands of the

time, they will unfailingly prevail, although they will be

implemented gradually. Everything can be prevented or

resisted except the demands of the time. The time is ripe

for the governments to remedy these ills. Relief must be

brought to the toiling masses. Otherwise, if these ills are

allowed to become chronic, their cure will be difficult and

they will precipitate a great revolution.

The Master then gave an account of the unity and self-

sacrifice of the friends of the East and expounded on

various aspects of the true economic laws, which He had

written while in Dublin. The mayor was so impressed that

he could not help expressing his sincere admiration. He

then invited the Master to an important meeting to be held

in the city that evening. Because this meeting had political

aims as its objective, the Master tendered His apologies.

This evening the Master spoke to a Bahá’í gathering at

a hall on the subjects of divine civilization, spiritual capacity

and heavenly power.[[306]](#endnote-306) The fragrances of the bounties of

God subdued every heart, particularly those of the friends

visiting from Honolulu and those from the vicinity. After

the meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá remarked: ‘I love the friends of

Honolulu very much. I wish that I could go to that area and

to Japan to see how much capacity for the Cause of God

they possess.’

At the request of a Jewish friend, the Master spoke to

some Jews who had come, saying:

The day and age promised by the divine Prophets has

appeared. This is the day in which Zion dances with joy.

The day has come in which Carmel is revived and is

rejoicing. That day has come for you to return to Palestine

and see how it is flourishing.

Tuesday, October 8, 1912

[San Francisco – Palo Alto]

Today was one of the most significant days. At the invita-

tion of Dr David Starr Jordan, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to Leland

Stanford Junior University in Palo Alto. The teachings of

the Cause of God were given to a large, illustrious audience

at this important educational center. Apart from some

1,800 students and 180 professors from the university,

many civic leaders and prominent people from the area

were also assembled in the auditorium; its satellite rooms

and hallways were full and many people were standing

outside the entrance as well.

The president stood and made his introductory

remarks:[[307]](#endnote-307)

It is our privilege to have with us, through the kindness

and courtesy of our Persian friends, one of the great

religious teachers of the world, one of the natural success-

ors of the old Hebrew prophets. He is said sometimes to

be the founder of a new religion. He has upward of three

millions of people following along the lines in which He

leads. It is not exactly a new religion, however. The reli-

gion of brotherhood, of good will, of friendship between

men and nations is as old as good thinking and good

living may be. It may be said in some sense to be the oldest

of religions … I have now the pleasure, the great honor

of presenting to you ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The Master then spoke about the unity of all phenomena,

man’s predominance over nature, universal peace and

divine civilization in such a way that the entire audience

was overcome with admiration.[[308]](#endnote-308) The applause shook the

building to its very foundation. The president closed this

memorable occasion with these remarks:

We are all under very great obligation to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for

this illuminating expression of the brotherhood of man

and the value of international peace. I think we can best

show our appreciation by simply a rising vote of thanks.

The audience immediately rose and showed their respect

by clapping and stomping their feet.

The Master had lunch with Dr Jordan at his home. Later

that evening the Master spoke at the Unitarian Church of

Palo Alto. His theme was the reality of divinity. The people

were told the mysteries of the Kingdom and learned of

spiritual matters. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá then went to the home of

Mrs Isabel Merriman for dinner. The group present at the

table was honored to be in His presence and were en-

chanted by His words.

Wednesday, October 9, 1912

[Palo Alto – San Francisco]

Before He left Palo Alto several people gathered around

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He spoke of the differences in various reli-

gions, with special reference to Christianity, saying:

Some called Christ God, some the Word of God, some

others the Prophet of God, and through these differences

disputes arose so that instead of spirituality there was

hatred and amity was replaced by enmity. But Bahá’u’lláh

has closed all the doors to such differences by appointing

the interpreter of the Book and by establishing the Univer-

sal House of Justice—that is, the People’s Parliament. And

by commanding an end to interference in people’s beliefs

and consciences, He has barred the way to these divisions.

He has even said that if two persons differ in a matter and

that difference ends in discord, then both are wrong and

their position unacceptable.

After many similar talks, the Master returned to San Fran-

cisco. A meeting was especially called in the evening at the

Japanese Club to hear Him speak.[[309]](#endnote-309) As the meeting began,

a Japanese scholar stood up, and after obtaining permis-

sion from the Master, recited in English an ode about the

attributes of the Cause of God and praising ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The chairman then introduced the Master with great

respect.

The Master then gave a fascinating talk on the dangers

of prejudice, the validity and proofs of the Prophets and

the truth of Islam and Christianity. He also spoke on the

spread of the Cause of God, the influence of the divine

teachings and spiritual education, as well as explaining the

teachings and writings of Bahá’u’lláh. Even though the talk

was first translated from Persian into English and then

from English into Japanese, the audience was awed and

excited to hear His powerful reasoning and was anxious to

hear the translation of the talk.

From this day forward multitudes came every day in

great humility to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to offer praise and

thanks for the teachings.

Thursday, October 10, 1912

[San Francisco]

In addition to the gatherings of the friends at the Master’s

residence, there were also meetings outside, which demon-

strates the grandeur and power of the Centre of the Cov-

enant. One took place at a high school in Berkeley where

the Master spoke on the reality of God and the proofs of

the revelation of the Manifestations and their teachings.

Many from the area were enthused with His talk and came

afterwards to receive illumination from Him.

Another meeting was held at the Open Forum in San

Francisco.[[310]](#endnote-310) Although the audience was composed mostly

of philosophers and professors, they were all humbled by

the talk. The Master’s profound words contrasted the

philosophy of the East with that of the West, elucidated the

power beyond nature and explained the inherent distinc-

tion between mankind and other creatures. He concluded

with the assertion that if philosophers believed that the

highest perfection was not to believe in intellectual and

spiritual truth, it would be preferable to go to the cow, who,

without any formal training, already had this attribute.[[311]](#endnote-311)

When the Master uttered these words, everyone burst into

laughter. This kind of humor, delivered in such a light-

hearted manner, is popular and accepted by the Americans

and so brought smiles and joy to the audience. At the

conclusion of the Master’s talk, when a philosopher stood

up, several were heard to say to one another that the cow

takes the lead in not believing in intellectual thought. The

result was that everyone, even the philosophers, bore

witness to the might of the divine teachings and influence

of the words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Indeed, the Master’s address

provided a perfect and decisive proof for such people.[[312]](#endnote-312)

Friday, October 11, 1912

[San Francisco]

Some physicians were in His presence today. The Master

spoke with them about the use of diet to heal diseases. He

then dealt with the spiritual remedy for the intellectual

diseases of the people and nations:

Today, the greatest and speediest remedy and the sole

effective antidote that the Divine Physician has prescribed

for the world’s ills is the oneness of humanity, universal

peace, the explanation of the principles of the divine

religions and the removal of dogmatic imitations and

customs which are contrary to science and reason. Indeed,

one of the chief reasons for irreligion among people is that

the leaders of religion, such as the Catholic priests, take

a little bread and wine, blow a breath over it and then say

that the bread is the flesh of Christ and the wine is the

blood of Christ. Of course, a man of understanding would

not accept these dogmas and would say that if this bread

and wine is turned into the flesh and blood of Christ by

the breath of a priest, then the priest must be superior to

Christ. Thus Bahá’u’lláh has said, ‘Every matter that is

contrary to sound reason and science and is opposed to the

fundamental principles of the divine religions is an obsta-

cle to progress and a cause of people avoiding and reject-

ing the laws of God.’

A Bahá’í children’s meeting was held in the afternoon at

the home of Mrs Goodall and Mrs Cooper. When the

Master saw the children, He remarked: ‘Praise be to God!

What radiant children they are!’ He spoke briefly, encour-

aging and praising them for their courtesy and upbringing.

Kissing them one by one, He greeted each child in short

English sentences and each received from Him some

flowers and sweets.

He then went upstairs to meet with some Indians who

had come to visit Him. His conversation with them was this:

Man must irrigate the Blessed Tree which has eternal

fruits and is the cause of life for all on earth. This goodly

Tree, though hidden at first, will erelong envelop the

whole world, and its leaves and branches will reach

the heavens. It is like the Tree which Buddha planted:

although at first it was a small sapling, it eventually envel-

oped the countries of Asia.

The Master left Mrs Goodall’s home to go for a walk. He

stopped at a neighbor’s door. The lady of the house

brought a chair for Him. He sat for a while, pleased with

the woman’s reverence and thoughtfulness, and bestowed

His loving kindness upon her.

In the evening the Master spoke before a joyful gather-

ing of the Theosophical Society. The president of the

society introduced ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in glowing terms, referring

to the appearance of perfect souls and divine manifesta-

tions, saying:

Each of those teachers was an educator of the world of

humanity and each brought a Book for the training of the

souls. This evening we have the exalted honor to have one

of these educators among us. He has brought a new Mes-

sage for the evolution of humanity and will speak to us this

evening. I have the utmost honor to introduce to you His

Holiness ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, whom you know well.

The Master then spoke about the rising of the Sun of

Reality from different signs of the zodiac, the immortality

of the spirit and the universality of the new Revelation. The

audience was very interested and requested His permission

to ask questions. Their enthusiasm and admiration was

heightened when they heard His persuasive answers.

Saturday, October 12, 1912

[San Francisco]

The Master’s address at the Jewish Temple was unique and

magnificent.[[313]](#endnote-313) His talk, which was delivered to some two

thousand Jews, concerned the truth of Christ, the reality

of Islam, the oneness of humanity and universal peace. This

gathering was clear evidence of the power and majesty of

the Center of the Covenant. Indeed, it can be counted as

a miracle. The proofs supporting the truth of the reality of

Christ and Muḥammad, the Messengers of God, flowed

from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s lips with such majesty and authority

that all were dumbfounded. After His talk, many humbly

came to see Him to express their gratitude, except for a

few narrow-minded ones who turned their heads away and

left in scorn. The chairman of the meeting, considered to

be an eminent and learned Jew, introduced the Master:

It is our privilege to welcome in our midst ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,

a great teacher of our age and generation. The heart of the

Orient seems to be essentially religious, and now and then,

out of the heart of the Orient, the fundamental religious

message for the world is stated and restated. This century

is very great and this age is the age of the maturity of the

world. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is the representative of one of the

religious systems which appeals to us Jews, because we feel

that we have fathered that idea throughout the centuries.

This morning He will speak to us, the followers and the

children of Israel, in His native tongue through an inter-

preter, on ‘The Fundamental Unity of Religious Thought’.

I am certain that whatever He says will be of great signifi-

cance to us.

*Address by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*[[314]](#endnote-314)

The first bestowal of God to the world of humanity is

religion because religion consists of divine teachings.

Certainly divine teachings are preferable to all other

sources of instructions.

Religion confers upon man life everlasting. Religion

is a service to the world of morality. Religion guides

humanity to eternal happiness. Religion is the cause of

everlasting honor to the world of man. Religion has ever

helped humanity towards progress.

But the proof must be established. To achieve this end,

we should investigate religion as seekers of truth. When

we do so, we find that religion is the cause of progress and

development. Let us see, then, whether or not religion is

the cause of illumination; whether or not religion is the

impetus which enables man to make extraordinary strides.

Let us investigate in search of truth, without being

bound by blind imitations or dogmas. If we are bound by

blind imitations, some will believe that religion is the cause

of happiness and others will say that religion has been the

cause of degradation. Hence, we must investigate whether

religion is the cause of human advancement or of retro-

gression, so that no doubt shall linger in our minds.

We shall therefore investigate the Prophets and review

the episodes of their lives. We shall avoid traditions that

some will find it possible to repudiate and shall cite histor-

ical facts provable to all and which are irrefutable. They

are these:

Among the Prophets was Abraham, who prohibited

idolatry and was a herald of the oneness of God, conse-

quently He was banished by the people from His native

land.

Let us observe how religion became an impetus towards

progress. Abraham founded a family which God did bless.

Owing to its religious basis the Abrahamic house pro-

gressed. Through divine benediction, Prophets issued

forth from His lineage. There appeared Isaac, Ishmael,

Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon. The

Holy Land was ruled by them and a glorious civilization

was established. All this was due to the religion which was

founded.

Hence, religion is the cause of honor and the happiness

of mankind. Unto the present time Abraham’s household

is spread over the whole world.

Let us consider even a greater reality. The children of

Israel were in captivity in the land of Egypt. Being subject

to the tyranny and oppression of the Egyptians, they were

in the utmost state of degradation and slavery. The Egyp-

tians were so antagonistic towards the Israelites that they

were assigned the most arduous and servile tasks.

The children of Israel were in abject poverty, abase-

ment, ignorance and barbarism when Moses appeared

among them. Outwardly Moses was no other than a shep-

herd but through the power of religion He exhibited

extraordinary grandeur and efficacy. His prophethood was

spread throughout the land and His law became renowned

throughout all regions.

Although Moses was single and alone, through the

power of religion He rescued all the children of Israel

from bondage. He conducted them to the Holy Land and

founded a civilization for the world of humanity. He

educated the children of Israel and enabled them to attain

to the highest degree of honor and glory. Releasing them

from their bondage, He caused them to reach the zenith

of freedom. They progressed in the acquisition of human

perfections and advanced in culture, in the arts and sci-

ences, in philosophy and in craftsmanship. In brief, their

growth and progress reached such an exalted state that

even the Greek philosophers took journeys to the Holy

Land in order to study philosophy with the children of

Israel. It is an established historical fact that even Socrates,

the Greek philosopher, came to the Holy Land and con-

sorted with Jewish leaders, studying wisdom with them.

When he returned to Greece, he formulated his basis for

divine unity and advanced his belief regarding the immor-

tality of the spirit after the dissolution of the body. These

verities Socrates learned from the children of Israel.

Likewise Hippocrates and many other philosophers

went to the Holy Land and acquired lessons from the

Jewish prophets about the basis of philosophy and re-

turned to their country to spread such verities.

A Cause which changed such a weak people into a

powerful nation, rescued them from captivity, caused them

to attain to sovereignty, transformed their ignorance into

knowledge and philosophy, granted them prosperity and

endowed them with an impetus to advance along all paths

of attainment, such a Cause makes it evident that religion

is a source of honor and progress for humanity, a founda-

tion for eternal happiness.

But blind imitations and dogmas which crept in later,

those are ever a destructive force and the cause of the

retrogression of nations. It is written in the Torah and in

historical records that when the Jews were fettered by

forms and imitations the wrath of God became manifest.

When the foundation of the law of God was ignored,

God sent Nebuchadnezzar. He killed the men, enslaved

the children, laid waste the Holy Temple, took seventy

thousand Jews into captivity to Babylon and caused the

Torah to be burned.

We see that the foundation of the divine religions has

been the cause of progress and blind imitations have led

to abasement and humiliation. Thus, the Greeks and the

Romans conquered the Jews and were able to oppress

them. Under Titus, the Roman emperor and commander

of the army, the Holy Land was attacked. The Israelites

were scattered and became fugitives. He killed their men,

pillaged their possessions and destroyed Jerusalem. The

dispersion of the Jews has continued ever since.

Hence, the foundation of the religion of God which was

laid by Moses was the cause of eternal honor, the advance-

ment and development of the nation and the life of the

Hebrew people. The dogmas and blind imitations which

crept in later debased the Israelites and caused them to be

expelled from the Holy Land and to be scattered through-

out the earth.

In short, the mission of the Prophets is no other than

the advancement and education of the world of humanity.

The Prophets are universal Educators.

Should we desire to determine whether these messen-

gers were Prophets, we should investigate the truth. If they

have been Educators of the people, enabled them to attain

knowledge after having been in the abyss of ignorance,

then we are sure that they were Prophets. Such evidence

is irrefutable. We do not need to cite other matters which

may be denied by some.

The deeds of Moses are conclusive proofs. No other

proof is needed. If a man be unbiased and fair in investi-

gating reality, he will undoubtedly bear testimony to the

fact that Moses was verily a great Educator.

Let us not digress from the subject. But I ask you to be

fair in your judgment, setting aside all prejudice.

We should all be seekers of truth. We should be aware

that the purpose of the religion of God has been to pro-

mote amity and fellowship among men. Therefore, the

foundation of the religions of God is one. Reality does not

accept multiplicity. Every religion is divided into two parts.

One part is concerned with the world of morality, the

upliftment and advancement of the world of humanity, the

knowledge of God and the discovery of the realities of

things. This part of religion is spiritual and is its essential

and fundamental part. It is the foundation of all the

religions of God. Therefore, all religions are one and the

same.

The second part has to do with social relationships.

This part is not essential; it is subject to change according

to the requirements of the time. In the time of Noah

certain conditions required that all sea foods be made

lawful. Because of certain exigencies at the time of Abra-

ham, it was lawful for a man to marry his sister, even as

Abel and Cain had done, but in the Torah this practice was

prohibited.

Moses lived in the wilderness. There were no prisons

for the punishment of criminals. Hence, according to the

exigency of the time, the law was an eye for an eye and a

tooth for a tooth. Is it possible to follow such a law now?

In the Torah there are ten commandments concerning

murder. These ten ordinances, concerning the treatment

of murderers, cannot be enforced now.

Even regarding capital punishment, wise men are

studying this question, as they maintain that capital pun-

ishment should be abolished.

The laws of the Torah were from God but they were

suited for that time. If a man committed theft to the extent

of a dollar, the exigency of that time demanded that they

cut off his hand but now you cannot cut off a man’s hand

for stealing one thousand dollars. Such laws were laid

down in every Dispensation in accordance with the needs

of the age and are subject to change; they are non-essen-

tial. The essentials are spiritual in character and have to

do with morality. They are the one foundation of religions

and are subject to neither change or multiplicity.

The basis of the law was promulgated by Christ. That

same foundation of religion was promulgated by Muḥam-

mad. Since all the Prophets called on the people to accept

this reality, the purpose of all the Prophets has been the

same. They upheld the honor and advancement of human-

ity and instituted the divine civilization of man. The proofs

of the validity of a Prophet and the signs of the divine

revelation received by Him are in the deeds of that

Prophet. If His deeds have led to the advancement of

humanity, beyond any doubt He is of God.

Be fair in your judgment! At the time when the Israel-

ites had been taken into captivity, when the Roman Em-

pire had effected the dispersion of the Hebrew nation and

when the law of God had passed from among them and

the foundation of the religion of God had been destroyed,

at such a time Christ appeared. The first thing He did was

to proclaim the validity of the Mosaic mission. He declared

that the Torah was the book of God and all the prophets

of Israel were valid and true. He promulgated the

prophethood of Moses and proclaimed His name through-

out the world.

In Persia, India and Europe the name of Moses had not

been heard of before the appearance of Christ. Through-

out these regions there was not a copy of the Torah. It was

through the instrumentality of Christ that the Torah was

translated into six hundred languages. It was Christ who

raised aloft the standard of the Prophets of Israel, so that

most nations of the world believed that the children of

Israel were verily the chosen people of God, that that

nation was a holy nation, blessed by God, and that all the

prophets of Israel were dawning points of divine inspira-

tion, day springs of divine revelation and shining stars

from the eternal Realm.

Hence, Christ promulgated Judaism. He did not deny

the prophetic validity of Moses but rather promoted it. He

did not efface the Torah but rather published it. The

portion of that Dispensation which concerned social

transactions underwent changes in accordance with the

conditions of the time. This is of no significance. The

essential teaching of Moses was promulgated by Christ.

With the superlative power and efficacy of the Word of

God, He gathered most of the nations of the East and the

West. This achievement was effected at a time when these

nations were in the utmost contention and strife. He

ushered them into the overshadowing tent of the oneness

of humanity. He educated them to become united so that

the Roman, the Greek, the Assyrian, the Chaldean and

other foreign nations were united and blended into a

heavenly civilization. This efficacy of the Word and divine

power, which are extraordinary, prove conclusively the

validity of the revelation of Christ. Observe how His

heavenly sovereignty has endured. This is indeed conclu-

sive proof and manifest evidence.

Now, consider again! When Muḥammad appeared, in

His first address to His people He said that Moses was a

Prophet of God and the Torah was the Book of God. He

called on His people to believe in Moses, in the Torah and

the Prophets; and also to accept Christ and the Gospel. In

His Book the story of Moses is described seven times and

in all these passages Moses is praised. Muḥammad states

that Moses was one of the Prophets endowed with con-

stancy and established a new Law; that He heard God’s

voice in the wilderness of Mount Sinai; that He was the

Interlocutor of God; that He was the bearer of divine

Tablets. Although the Arabian tribes opposed Muḥammad,

eventually He conquered all of them, because falsehood

is defeated by truth.

You should consider that Muḥammad was born among

the barbarous tribes of Arabia and He lived among them.

Outwardly He was illiterate and uninformed of the holy

books of God. The Arabian nations were in ignorance and

barbarism, to the extent that they buried their daughters

alive. This act was considered to be the expression of valor

and sublimity of nature. They lived under the yoke of the

Persian and Roman governments, were scattered through-

out the Arabian desert and were subjected to continuous

internecine strife and bloodshed.

When the light of Muḥammad dawned, the darkness

of ignorance was dispelled from the Arabian desert. In a

short space of time those barbarous tribes reached a

degree of civilization which extended to Spain and was

established in Baghdád and influenced the people of

Europe. What proof is there concerning His prophethood

greater than this? The evidence is clear, unless one ignores

impartiality and adheres to unwarranted discrimination.

The Christians believe in Moses as a Prophet of God.

The Muslims are believers in Moses and praise Him

highly. Has any harm come to Christians and Muslims

because they have admitted the validity of Moses? No, on

the contrary, their acceptance of Moses and confirmation

of the Torah prove that they have been fair-minded.

Why should not the children of Israel praise now Christ

and Muḥammad? This will do away forever with enmity

and hatred which have lasted for two thousand years, so

that differences and animosities may pass away forever.

The Muslims admit that Moses was the Interlocutor of

God. What harm is there if the Jews would say that Christ

was the Spirit of God and Muḥammad was the Messenger

of God? Thus there will be no hatred, no disputation, no

warfare and no bloodshed.

I now declare to you that Moses was the Interlocutor of

God; that Moses was the Prophet of God; that Moses

brought the fundamental law of God; that Moses was the

founder of a basis for the happiness of humanity.

What harm is there is this declaration? Do I lose by

saying this to you and believing it as a Bahá’í? No! By God!

On the contrary, as a Bahá’í it benefits me. Bahá’u’lláh

becomes well-pleased with me and will confirm me. He

says, ‘Well done; you have been fair in your judgment; you

have impartially investigated the truth; you have believed

in a Prophet of God and you have accepted the Book of

God.’

As it is possible to do away with warfare and massacre

with a small measure of liberalism in the world, why not

do it? Thus bonds are established which can unite the

hearts of men. What harm is there in this? Inasmuch as the

other nations praise Moses, why should the Jews not also

praise the other Prophets?

The followers of each religion should praise the Found-

ers of the other religions so that the welfare of mankind,

the happiness of the world of humanity, the eternal honor

of man and universal fellowship may ensue.

God is One and He has created all of us. He provides

for all; He protects all; He is kind to all. Why should we

be so unkind? Why should we engage in strife?

This century is the century of science, it is the century

of the discovery of the mysteries of nature; it is the century

of service to the world of humanity. It is the century of the

manifestation of the reality of things, the century for the

oneness of mankind. Does it behoove us in this century to

linger in our fanaticism and tarry in our prejudice? Does

it behoove us to still be bound by old superstitions and be

handicapped by superannuated and empty beliefs and

regard these as grounds for waging war, shedding blood

and shunning and anathematizing one another?

Is it not better for us to be loving to one another? Is it

not preferable for us to enjoy fellowship, raise our voices

to the heavens in tune with the melody of the Concourse

on High and in glorification of the oneness of mankind?

Is it not more praiseworthy to celebrate the unity of God

and laud His Prophets in glorious assemblages and public

meetings? On such a day, the world will become the

paradise of the All-Glorious.

What does this mean?

It means that contending nations which have been

characterized by these qualities and religions which have

been formerly as wolves and sheep, with divergent creeds,

will associate with each other in the utmost affection and

amity and unite with each other in fellowship and love.

This is the meaning of the prophecy of Isaiah. Other-

wise it will never come to pass literally, for the wolf will

never live peacefully with the sheep, and the lion and the

deer will never associate together, inasmuch as the deer

is food for the lion and the sheep will ever be the prey of

the wolf. As you know, the teeth of the lion are carniv-

orous. It has no molars to eat grass; hence it must eat flesh.

Therefore, this prophecy is symbolic of the state of

affairs when nations and races, symbolized by wolves and

sheep, among whom there is a bond of fellowship and

association, will be unified and will treat each other kindly

and liberally in that promised day.

In a word, the century is upon us when fellowship is to

be established!

The century has come when all the religions are to be

at peace with each other!

The century has come when all the nations shall be-

come one nation!

The century has come when all mankind shall live

under the tabernacle of the oneness of mankind.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave this address in the afternoon at the

home of Mrs Goodall and Mrs Cooper:

Today we spoke in the Jewish temple. You saw how it was

proven that Christ was the Word of God and Muḥammad

the Messenger of God. From the beginning of Christianity

and Islam up to the present day, no one has spoken thus,

proving the validity of Christ and Muḥammad in a Jewish

temple and in a manner to which no one took exception.

Rather, most were appreciative and content. This is none

other than the assistance of Bahá’u’lláh.

The effect and influence of the address were such that from

then on there was evidence of unity and communication

between the Christians and Jews. They even made plans

to visit each other’s places of worship to give talks about the

unity of peoples and religions. Whenever they met ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá or attended Bahá’í gatherings, they expressed their

gratitude from the depths of their hearts for this great

Cause and its new teachings.

Sunday, October 13, 1912

[San Francisco – Pleasanton]

In the morning one of the Japanese friends came with a

group of people to visit the Master. This Japanese friend

said that he had studied most religions but found none as

useful and effective in bringing tranquillity to the people

as this Faith. The Master replied:

I hope that you will become heavenly and not just be a

Japanese, an Arab, an Englishman or a Persian, Turk or

American; that you will become divine and bring your life

into accord with the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh. Observe: I

am one of the servants of Bahá’u’lláh, helpless and weak

but as I am under the shadow of His teachings you see

what confirmations descend upon me.

The fame, grandeur and beauty of the Master were such

that many civic, educational and social leaders of the area

visited Him, considering it an honor to be in His presence.

His noble mission and talks about the Cause of God, to-

gether with the enthusiasm of the people, seemed to fulfill

the verse from the Qur’án: ‘The day when the people shall

stand before the Lord of creation.’ Mrs [Phoebe] Hearst,

a wealthy and prominent person who had visited the

Master a few years ago in the Holy Land[[315]](#endnote-315) but who had

become disaffected through the influence of unspiritual

people, suddenly requested permission to visit Him. Realiz-

ing the privilege of His presence, she invited Him and His

companions to her home. Because her invitation was

sincere, it was accepted. In the afternoon, the Master and

His servants went with Mrs Hearst to her home. After

traveling inland, through the streets of Oakland and

Berkeley, the automobile passed through verdant hills,

green valleys and lovely towns and villages until it reached

Mrs Hearst’s large, regal mansion. It is situated on a beauti-

ful hillside on the outskirts of Pleasanton, surrounded by

luxuriant gardens, green lawns and pathways overflowing

with flowers. Some of Mrs Hearst’s relatives were also

present among her guests.

In keeping with the circumstances of the occasion, for

there were people of different backgrounds present, the

Master’s talks were brief yet full of wisdom. Many important

ideas were couched in short sentences, giving the maximum

effect with a minimum of words. The guests asked questions

of each other about the Cause.

After dinner, the Master went into the outer hall and

spoke briefly:

Every universal matter is from God; and limitations are

from man. Therefore, if people’s services and efforts are

undertaken for the benefit of all, they are acceptable to

God and leave lasting traces. Otherwise, every other effort

is limited and transitory.

After obtaining the Master’s permission to have music, the

guests sang songs accompanied by the piano. The meeting

ended with great joy and happiness.

Monday, October 14, 1912

[Pleasanton]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about the election of

the president of the republic. He said:

The president must be a man who does not insistently seek

the presidency. He should be a person free from all

thoughts of name and rank; rather, he should say, ‘I am

unworthy and incapable of this position and cannot bear

this great burden.’ Such persons deserve the presidency.

If the object is to promote the public good, then the presi-

dent must be a well-wisher of all and not a self-seeking

person. If the object, however, is to promote personal

interests, then such a position will be injurious to humanity

and not beneficial to the public.

He then went to lunch. At the request of those present at

the table the Master chanted the following prayer:

He is God! Thou seest us, O my God, gathered around this

table, praising Thy bounty, with our gaze set upon Thy

Kingdom. O Lord! Send down upon us Thy heavenly food

and confer upon us Thy blessing. Thou art verily the

Bestower, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The Master then spoke extensively on the history of some

famous people.

In the afternoon He went for an automobile ride

through valleys, hills and meadows as far as the breakwater.

When He returned to the house, the Master rested in the

garden on special chairs brought for Him and the others

and gave a detailed history of the life and teachings of the

Blessed Beauty.

At the dinner table He spoke of His gratitude for the

blessings of God and the importance of assisting the weak

and poor. He was asked, ‘How is it that the desires of some

people are achieved while others are not?’ The gist of the

Master’s response was:

What conforms with divine decree will be realized. In

addition, good intentions and sound thoughts attract

confirmations. The desires of human beings are endless.

No matter what level a human being reaches, he can still

attain higher ones, so he is always making effort and

desiring more. He can never find peace but through effort

and resignation, so that, notwithstanding all efforts in

worldly affairs, the human heart remains free and happy.

He neither becomes proud on attaining wealth and posi-

tion nor becomes dejected on losing them. This station can

be attained only through the power of faith.

Such explanations and exhortations repeated at every

meeting were warnings and reminders for these prominent

people. Day by day their humility and sincerity increased

owing to His presence.

Tuesday, October 15, 1912

[Pleasanton]

Early in the morning Mrs Phoebe Hearst presented the

Master with flowers of various hues and perfumes. She

suggested that, if He wished, He could stroll through the

surrounding gardens and nursery. He first toured the

house and then went to the nursery which had many beau-

tiful flowers. A few rare specimens attracted His particular

attention. He said that the seeds of those flowers should be

sent to the Holy Land for cultivation in the gardens adjoin-

ing the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh. Continuing, He

said: ‘The real flowers are those in the garden of the hearts.

The flowers of the love of God which are grown with the

warmth of the Sun of Truth perfume the peoples of the

world and never wither.’

At the table during lunch His discourse concerned the

greatness of this time, the dignity of the world of humanity

and the importance of acquiring eternal virtues and

perfections. Turning to the grandchildren of Mrs Hearst

He said:

In reality, children are the ornaments at the table, espec-

ially these children, who are very sweet! The hearts of

children are extremely pure and simple. A person’s heart

must be like a child’s, pure and free from all contamina-

tion.

His prayer at the dinner table was this:

He is God! How can we render Thee thanks, O Lord? Thy

bounties are endless and our gratitude cannot equal them.

How can the finite utter praise of the Infinite? Unable are

we to voice our thanks for Thy favors and in utter power-

lessness we turn wholly to Thy Kingdom beseeching the

increase of Thy bestowals and bounties. Thou are the

Giver, the Bestower, the Almighty.

He then gave an account of the history of the kings of the

world and concluded with remarks about the death of

Alexander.

When in the city of Zor[[316]](#endnote-316) the lamp of his life was extin-

guished and the last morn had dawned upon him, the wise

men assembled by his corpse. One of them said, ‘Gracious

God! The whole world could not contain this ambitious

man yesterday but today a small plot of earth is sufficient

to hold him.’ Another remarked, ‘With all his greatness,

glory and eloquence of speech, Alexander never advised

us in such a manner as he is instructing us today with this

silence.’ Another said, ‘A few hours ago this man consid-

ered himself the sovereign of the whole world but now it

has become evident that he was a servant and a subject.’

After dinner, He went into the salon. Mrs Hearst and her

guests were so attracted by His words and actions that

although she had not spoken openly to her relatives about

the Faith and had been cautious about it, without hesitation

she invited the Master to speak about the teachings of the

Cause of God. He spoke of devotion to the Cause, the

appearance of the lights of the Kingdom, universal peace

and the oneness of humanity. After an exposition of the

teachings, He spoke briefly on the variety and diversity in

human capacities, adding: ‘Christ likened divine words to

seeds, and the hearts and capacities of his listeners to soil

of different kinds.’ Mrs Hearst related her experiences of

her days in ‘Akká and told of her joy on hearing a prayer

chanted in the Holy Land. At her request the Master, in a

melodious voice, read a prayer in eloquent Arabic. Al-

though the listeners did not understand Arabic, most of

them said that the beauty of the Tablet and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

voice caused them to draw nearer to God. Some of those

present this evening expressed their desire to accept the

Faith. They said that although they had been aware of the

Cause and had associated with the believers, by listening

to the Master they now understood more.

Wednesday, October 16, 1912

[Pleasanton – San Francisco – Oakland]

Although some of Mrs Hearst’s relatives had previously

been narrow-minded and aloof, they were now humbled

and transformed. This was most notable when it came time

for the Master to depart and He was bidding them farewell.

The Master called all of the servants and attendants of the

house and the maids, orderlies, cooks and butler stood in

a line before Him. He encouraged them to be truthful,

honest and devoted to their work. Thanking them for their

services, He said: ‘As I am like a father to you, I wish to

leave a memento with you.’ He gave each two guineas[[317]](#endnote-317)

and left. The grand and illustrious guests stood by humbly,

astonished and impressed with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s generosity,

grandeur and majesty.

Mrs Hearst begged ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to allow her to accom-

pany Him to San Francisco. Her wish was granted and she

traveled with the Master. Some of His words to her were

these:

The Cause of God is sanctified from all political power

and worldly affairs. Among the divine teachings are trust-

worthiness, detachment and sanctity. So if you should see

a man coveting property and evincing greed toward the

wealth of others, know that he is not of the people of Bahá.

The people of Bahá are they who, should they happen to

come upon a valley of gold and silver, would pass by it like

lightning in utter disregard.

The Master encouraged her especially to protect and train

her youngest grandchild. ‘This child’, He said, ‘has a well-

proportioned forehead and an open, pleasant face and if

given heavenly instruction will be the cause of the eternal

happiness of this family.’

When the eminent men of America and the liberal-

minded people of its cities see such behavior, wisdom,

majesty and power exemplified by the Master, even though

they are prominent themselves, they are fascinated by His

unique character and fall in love with Him.

This afternoon the Master gave an address at the Cen-

tury Club in San Francisco on the rights and education of

women before an audience of women and their husbands.

They were captivated and so overcome with joy that they

begged to be introduced to Him and to attain His presence.

This was a gathering of wealthy people and there was an

abundance of food and refreshments. The Master had some

tea and sweets and then left. When He was outside the

building, crowds of people surrounded Him, demonstrating

their joy, love and respect.

After the meeting, the Master remarked:

I speak according to the demands of the time and the

capacity of my listeners. ‘The father makes gurgling

sounds for the newborn infant, although his wisdom be

capable of measuring the universe.’[[318]](#endnote-318)

Later in the evening the Master and some of the friends

and His servants went to Oakland to attend the Nineteen

Day Feast. On the way He spoke of the sadness of the

friends in Seattle, saying:

They are upset that I am not going there. However, in

spite of the great distance, they have come to see us,

notwithstanding the effort involved. Had it been but a one-

or two-day trip, I would have gone to Portland and Seattle

but the distance is great. I would not visit Los Angeles were

it not for the purpose of visiting the tomb of Mr Chase.[[319]](#endnote-319)

The friends all have expectations but if I should want to

go to all these places, the journey would become too long

and that is impossible. However, in my heart there is such

love for the heavenly friends that I do not wish even a

speck of dust to touch them. God forbid! If I see harm

coming to one of you, I will throw myself in its path to

shield you.

When the Master reached the home of Mrs Goodall and

Mrs Cooper He took a walk before the Feast on the shores

of the lake.[[320]](#endnote-320) He returned for the meeting and spoke to

the friends and seekers, saying:

On the way here we were saying that it never occurred to

us that we would come to California and meet with the

friends in this manner or that we would proclaim the

Cause of God in great assemblies. How Bahá’u’lláh suf-

fered, what persecutions and hardships He endured! He

saw His property plundered and carried off. He was

chained and imprisoned so that hearts would be con-

nected, that the East and the West would find harmony,

that the oneness of humanity would come about and that

universal peace may reign.

The friends had gathered to play the piano and sing songs

of praise while awaiting the arrival of the Master. When

their melodious voices reached His ears from the lower

hall, He wrote a letter to Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar-‘Alí (the ‘Angel

of Carmel’), beginning:

O thou who art partner and co-sharer with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

in servitude to the Threshold of Bahá! It is evening and

these wandering birds are nestled in the home of the

maidservant of God, Mrs Helen Goodall, in Oakland,

California. It is the Nineteen Day Feast. A number of the

faithful friends and the pure and illumined leaves of God

are supplicating the all-glorious Kingdom. All the delica-

cies are spread and ready and the table is exquisitely

arranged. Oh, how thou art missed! Severed from all else,

they sing a new song and with a new voice repeat spiritual

notes. They are in a state of absolute love and supplica-

tion. Oh, how thou art missed! Oh, how thou art missed!

‘Abdu’l-Bahá joined the gathering, invited the friends to

sit at the table and began to serve them, anointing each

with perfume and serving delicacies while circulating

amongst them, saying:

Praise be to God! We are assembled in the home of Mrs

Goodall and Mrs Cooper in utmost love and affection.

Every delicacy is provided. All hearts are in utmost love

and serenity. All eyes are turned to the Abhá Kingdom. It

is a good gathering, it cannot be surpassed. The Supreme

Concourse is now beholding this assemblage and crying

out, ‘Blessed are ye! Blessed are ye! O ye servants of the

Blessed Beauty! Blessed are ye; blessed are ye with your

radiant countenances! Blessed are ye; blessed are ye with

hearts like unto rose gardens! Observe, what a favor is

conferred upon you, what a bounty is bestowed upon you

that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is in your midst, makes mention of you

and congratulates and compliments you.’

He then said, ‘Go on with your supper. I shall go upstairs

and then come back.’

After supper ‘Abdu’l-Bahá returned and spoke engag-

ingly about spiritual susceptibilities, spiritual relationships,

brotherhood and the heavenly supper of the friends. The

meeting concluded after a prayer in Persian chanted by the

Master. The friends, full of enthusiasm and joy, came one

by one to shake His hand and to beg His blessings and

assistance.[[321]](#endnote-321)

There was such heavenly joy and happiness among the

friends that this meeting shall never be forgotten and shall

bring forth wonderful results. The Master stayed there for

the night.[[322]](#endnote-322)

Thursday, October 17, 1912

[Oakland – San Francisco]

The Master left for San Francisco early in the morning. He

had lost His seal, so all of His Tablets and writings made

during this time were signed by Him with His own pen.

Mail from the Eastern friends was brought to Him. I

read a letter from Ḥájí Mírzá Ḥaydar-‘Alí and, on his

behalf, prostrated myself at the feet of the Master. He

raised me up with His hands and said, ‘I embrace you on

behalf of Ḥájí.’ He did this with a smile and such kindness

that it will never be forgotten.

In today’s gathering ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave an account of the

martyrs of Jahrum,[[323]](#endnote-323) testifying to the firmness and stead-

fastness of the friends in the East. The services and sincerity

of Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl were highly praised by the Master. He

also gave accounts of the last days of His imprisonment in

‘Akká, the oppression of Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd and the

conduct of the Commission of Investigation.

This commission of investigation and oppression was on

its way back to Istanbul from ‘Akká when the majesty of the

justice of God revolutionized all matters. Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-

Ḥamíd was deposed and one member of the commission

was murdered, another died and two of them absconded.

One of these two begged for his daily expenses from the

friends in Egypt.

Some philosophers, religionists and civic leaders of the

town came one by one to see the Master. They were at-

tracted by His words on spiritual matters and left with the

utmost sincerity. One questioned Him about spirit and

matter. The Master replied:

This question may be answered in two ways, philosophi-

cally as well as spiritually. Philosophically, the answer is

easy because in philosophy the spirit is energy and all

matter is endowed with energy; and this power is insepar-

able from matter, as in electricity. In other words, matter

is a vehicle for spirit but the transformation of matter does

not involve the extinction of that power because transform-

ation and transference are in the properties of matter.

Immaterial beings or realities, however, are protected

and preserved and their essential power remains unal-

tered. The manifestation or appearance of the spirit varies

due to changes in matter and bodies. This, however, does

not mean that spirit itself is subject to extinction.

The listeners were pleased to hear ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explain

this subject in detail and testified to His divine knowledge

and to the cogency of His explanation and argument.

Today the Master spoke twice at public gatherings at His

residence. In the first of His addresses He exhorted the

audience to keep the soil of their hearts pure and holy so

that the flowers of the virtues of humanity might grow and

that the blessings of God might descend upon them. In His

other address (given after He had taken a short walk), He

explained that heat and motion are essential for the contin-

gent world.

Friday, October 18, 1912

[San Francisco – Los Angeles]

At the time of His departure for Los Angeles, He said to the

friends from Portland and Seattle who had begged Him to

come to their cities:

Send my love and good wishes to all the friends in Port-

land and Seattle and tell them that I am always with them.

Meeting physically is as nothing compared with spiritual

bonds. What is important is spiritual nearness.

When the message of the Master reached those eager

friends, they telegraphed their acquiescence and instead

requested permission to visit Him. They arrived during the

last days of His stay in San Francisco and attained the

blessing of His presence, their eyes ever filled with tears

and their hearts burning with the fire of love at their

nearness to the Master.

At the railway station several believers asked to be per-

mitted to accompany ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to Los Angeles. Among

them was Mrs Goodall. The Master had a very pleasant

journey on the train. When various newspaper accounts

were read to Him, He said, ‘These revolutions in Turkey

are the preliminary stages for my return.’ In the afternoon

a resident of Los Angeles received permission to visit the

Master in the train and entered His presence with the

utmost sincerity and reverence.

Early in the evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived at the Hotel

Lankershim and the friends from that city, in transports

of joy and happiness, gathered around Him. Several church

and society leaders invited Him to speak at their meetings

but He replied: ‘I have absolutely no time. I have come

here to visit Mr Chase’s grave and to meet the friends. I will

stay here one or two days and then I must leave.’

Saturday, October 19, 1912

[Los Angeles]

After prayer and meditation, the beloved Master, accom-

panied by several of the friends, went to Mr Chase’s

grave.[[324]](#endnote-324) The tram stopped near the cemetery, which is

located a few miles from the city. The Master alighted and

walked towards the grave with dignified solemnity and

serenity. He went directly to the grave site without asking

directions from anyone. He praised the site and the lush-

ness of the trees and grass. He stood there for a few min-

utes leaning against a nearby tree. He then stood near the

grave of that distinguished man and spread over it bou-

quets of flowers, adorning that sanctified soil with such love

and affection that bystanders were astonished. Facing in

the direction of the Holy Land, the Master chanted

Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablet of Visitation. All stood in solemn

reverence behind Him. After chanting the Tablet of Visita-

tion, He recited a prayer in Arabic for the forgiveness of the

departed soul. He then gave a short account of this faithful

believer’s services, steadfastness and forbearance. Before

He left, He placed His forehead on the grave and kissed

it. Tears flowed from the eyes of the believers as they bowed

before that sacred spot, each one longing to attain to that

sublime and exalted station. The spot became an abode of

lovers.

When we returned to the hotel, we found a multitude

of people waiting for the Master. Some representatives of

the press were also present and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to them

on various subjects. One of His statements to a newspaper

reporter was this:

In the world of existence, civilization is found to be of two

kinds: material civilization and spiritual civilization.

Philosophers founded the former while the divine Proph-

ets established the latter. For instance, the philosophers

of Greece established a material civilization whereas Christ

established a spiritual civilization. Material civilization is

the cause of worldly prosperity but divine civilization is the

means of eternal prosperity. If divine civilization, which

is all-encompassing, is established, then material civiliza-

tion will also attain perfection. When spiritual perfection

is attained, then physical perfection is a certainty. Material

civilization alone does not suffice and does not become the

means of acquiring spiritual virtues. Rather, it leads to an

increase in wars and disputes and becomes the cause of

bloodshed and ruin. Despite all this, it is surprising that

divine civilization has been completely forgotten and the

people are constantly submerged in a sea of materialism.

This is why night and day they have no peace and are

engaged in war and killing. Every day there is bloodshed

and ruin, suffering and distress, preparation for a univer-

sal war and the destruction of mankind.

In the afternoon He spoke to a larger crowd about the

teachings of the Supreme Pen and the greatness of the

Bahá’í Cause. In the course of His talk, He said:

If you desire the nearness of God, you must sever yourself

from everything and become purified and sanctified from

the dross of this transitory world. You must become sub-

merged in the sea of the love of God. You must occupy

your time with His mention and praise. Bahá’u’lláh alone

must be the Beloved of the world. Observe: until the

disciples of Christ renounced themselves they did not

resuscitate the world. Thus, you must always be occupied

with the mention of God and in spreading the teachings

of Bahá’u’lláh.

Later some of the elite and wealthy came to see Him. They

were fascinated and attracted to Him and immensely

pleased to be in His presence.

At the evening meeting He spoke on the eternal benefits

resulting from the gatherings of the friends, encouraged

them to render service to the Cause of God and to turn

themselves to the Kingdom of the Almighty Lord. At the

conclusion of the meeting the Master was so exhausted that

He could not even take supper. We left a little cheese and

bread in His room so that He could have it if He got hun-

gry during the night. (Often His food was as simple as this.)

He usually took His meals in the dining room of the hotel

but they would sometimes be brought to His room.

Sunday, October 20, 1912

[Los Angeles]

Today more than the usual number of friends and seekers,

from all strata of society, came to see Him. There were so

many that it was impossible to see them individually, except

for a very few who were granted private interviews. There-

fore, a public meeting was arranged and one of the many

topics, which was a warning to people of insight, was the

disgrace and ignominy of the son of the arch Covenant-

breaker, the lightless Shu‘á‘u’lláh.[[325]](#endnote-325)

This man, who is wholly severed from God, is engaged

in pursuing worldly desires and deception. When the fame

of the Center of the Covenant spread through the city,

Shu‘á‘u’lláh spoke about Bahá’u’lláh and his blood relation-

ship with Him. He persuaded a newspaper editor to write

two misleading articles in which he tried to show that

because of his biological relationship, he was bound to

inherit the station of the Prophets. The Master paid no

attention to such nonsensical writings and attached no

importance to Shu‘á‘s pretensions. When a newspaper

editor asked the Master about this man’s relationship, He

said:

I will tell you one thing and it will suffice once and for all.

Beyond this neither question me nor will I reply. And that

is the words of Christ when told that ‘your brothers have

come to see you’. He said, ‘They are not my brethren but

you are my brethren and kindred.’[[326]](#endnote-326) Christ attached no

importance to the original relationship with His brethren.

Notwithstanding this, my house is open to all. He who

wishes may enter and he who wishes to go out may leave.

The editor published the Master’s exact words in his news-

paper.

The son of the arch Covenant-breaker, who had boasted

that he would speak out ‘in the court of the King of the

Covenant’ and make his wishes known, was from that time

on not heard from again. He had wanted to introduce

himself around and to raise himself in the estimation of

those who did not know the story but he failed like

Kheiralla, who, in Chicago, had sent a message asking to

be summoned to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master had an-

swered him in similar terms: ‘Since my arrival in this city,’

He said, ‘I have not requested to see anybody. But should

anyone come to me, I will meet him with utmost kindness

and regard.’

Despite this, these unjust people have spread various

false rumors. They have gone so far in their careers of

untruth to say that although the Master had given His word

that He would see them, He had broken His promise. God

protect us from the wickedness of the envious! All their

impostures and connivings have been shattered, for their

only hope was to create doubt and disbelief in the hearts

of the people; instead they have become the means of

warning them.

The Master repeatedly said: ‘These two persons have

disgraced themselves once again. Otherwise, I would not

have mentioned their names but it is not good for the

Cause nor are they worthy of mention or attention.’ He also

said:

If they have good intentions for the Cause of God, they

must render some service and they must go out to teach

the Cause. If they are able, they should raise the cry of ‘Yá

Bahá’u’l-Abhá’ in churches and gatherings. What will they

reap by sowing doubt and disbelief? They will get nothing

but manifest loss in this world and the next. The Blessed

Beauty has promised explicitly that the servants and

sincere ones who devote themselves to the Cause of God

after His ascension shall achieve success and be made

victorious. Now see which of the servants are firm and

serving and which ones hinder and damage the Cause.

One of their misgivings is that the true One has always

been oppressed and wronged. What has this to do with the

matter? Yes, initially the Cause of God has always been

denied but with utmost divine aid and assistance the Lord

has ever been the protector and savior of the righteous.

The reward of eternity will belong to the God-fearing and

honor will belong to the sincere servants of God. Thus He

says in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, ‘Let not your hearts be per-

turbed, O people, when the glory of My presence is with-

drawn, and the ocean of My utterance is stilled. In My

presence amongst you there is a wisdom, and in My ab-

sence there is yet another, inscrutable to all but God, the

Incomparable, the All-Knowing. Verily, We behold you

from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise

for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Con-

course on high and a company of our favored angels.’[[327]](#endnote-327)

This evening in a large auditorium the Master gave a

detailed address to a group of the friends about many issues

pertaining to the Cause. He spoke about the tribulations

and afflictions of the Blessed Beauty and encouraged the

friends to be obedient to the verses of the Supreme Pen,

to be firm in the Covenant of God and to live in harmony

with one another. He spoke in such explicit terms that

those present were made firmly aware of their duties. He

also told them about those things which are the means of

preserving unity and harmony among the Bahá’ís.

Monday, October 21, 1912

[Los Angeles]

From morning until noon all the rooms in the Master’s

suite were filled with people. Even the corridor was filled.

The Master moved among the crowd, sometimes in the

rooms and sometimes in the corridor, instructing the

assemblage in the divine teachings, persuading them to

serve the cause of universal peace and encouraging them

to develop divine virtues and heavenly perfections in

themselves.

When the people were told the Master was leaving, they

became saddened and expressed their deep sorrow. Some

churches and clubs sent messages inviting the Master to

prolong His stay and to speak before their audiences. He

was unable to accept their invitations and responded: ‘I

have no time, as I must return soon to the East. Nonethe-

less, I have great love and attachment for each one of you.’

With great eagerness, friends both old and new brought

their children to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to receive His

blessings and protection.

As the time of departure grew near, the friends in Los

Angeles were in a spiritual and prayerful mood. The Master

spoke to them:

Thank the Lord that you have attained His eternal favors

and have been blessed with seeing eyes. All are blind but

you are endowed with sight. All are earthly but you are

heavenly. Although you live on earth, you soar high in

heaven. It is my hope that day by day you will seek assis-

tance and will rise to promote the Word of God. Go every

year to visit the grave of Mr Chase on my behalf, for he

was a sanctified soul; his station will be known later.

I have come a long distance to see you; I have traveled

12,000 miles. Praise be to God that I have found you in

spiritual joy and happiness. I pray that you may live under

the care and protection of God and be assisted by Him in

rendering greater service to His mighty Cause, so that

each of you may become a fruit-bearing tree in the garden

of His favor, full of freshness and life. May you acquire

more bounties of the Kingdom and engage yourselves in

guiding souls, so that Los Angeles may become a divine

city and a center of the lights of the Kingdom. If the

friends of God act according to the teachings of

Bahá’u’lláh, they will succeed in guiding the people, will

promote the unity of mankind and will strive for universal

peace. Heavenly confirmations will descend upon them

and they shall attain that station which is the desire of the

holy ones and near ones.

When the Master reached the railway station, it was learned

that Mrs Goodall, without telling us, had secured pullman

reservations for everyone. Although the Master had a

comfortable berth in the train, He was so tired He could

not sleep.

Tuesday, October 22, 1912

[San Francisco]

In the morning the Master remarked, ‘I did not sleep at

all last night but was deep in thought.’ When the train

arrived at the station a group of friends greeted the Master

with joy and happiness. The Master spoke repeatedly today

about the steadfastness and enthusiasm of the friends in

Los Angeles. He had been elated to witness their constancy

in the Cause.

The believers from San Francisco and surrounding areas

gathered group by group at the Master’s residence, where

He received them in His room. He strongly encouraged

them to spread the divine fragrances and teach the Cause

of God. To the seekers He gave the glad tidings of the

dawning of the Morn of Guidance and the coming of the

era of peace, tranquillity, amity and unity among the

nations of the world.

His address in the morning at the public meeting cen-

tered around the days of the Blessed Beauty, the exaltation

of the Word of the God and the vain imaginings of the

followers of Yaḥyá. In the afternoon He spoke particularly

on the duty of teaching the Cause of God and gave a de-

tailed account of the Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh revealed to the

kings and rulers of the world.

After an evening stroll, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá showed special

kindness to the friends from Portland and Seattle, who had

arrived today to visit their beloved Master. He spoke with

them on several subjects, saying, among other things:

Until now it never happened that someone from the East,

impelled by the promptings of his conscience, should come

to the West to see the friends of God and to associate with

respected individuals with such sincere love and friendship

and without any political or commercial motive or the

desire of sightseeing. It is without precedent and is not

recorded in any history. If others have come, it has been

to sightsee or for commercial or other reasons.

In response to some questions, He said:

A great war and commotion shall inevitably take place in

the world. Things will come to such a pass that the gener-

ality of mankind will rise against the statesmen of the

world and say, ‘You sit in your palaces in perfect comfort;

you eat and drink sumptuously; you sleep blissfully; you

eat delicious food and relax in gardens with beautiful

views. But for the sake of your name and worldly fame, you

throw us, your subjects, into war, shed our blood and tear

our bodies to pieces. But no thorn ever pricks your hands

and not for a moment do you leave your rest and

comfort.’[[328]](#endnote-328)

Wednesday, October 23, 1912

[San Francisco – Oakland]

Today there was a public meeting in Oakland at the home

of Mrs Cooper and Mrs Goodall. The Master spoke kindly

about the devotion and steadfastness of His hostesses and

praised the firmness and enthusiasm of the California

Bahá’ís.[[329]](#endnote-329) As these were the last days of His stay, the

friends’ hearts were moved and their enthusiasm and

affection increased. He had lunch and dinner there.

In the evening the Master spoke of the retirement of the

Blessed Beauty[[330]](#endnote-330) and the distress of the believers, speaking

at length of Áqá Abu’l-Qásim-i-Hamadání.[[331]](#endnote-331) ‘From the

circumstances, as reported,’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá continued,

we surmised that because Áqá Abu’l-Qásim-i-Hamadání

had previously been with Bahá’u’lláh and had also set out

on a journey when the Blessed Beauty disappeared, then

Darvísh Muḥammad was really the Blessed Beauty and

must be in the vicinity of Sulaymáníyyih. Thus it was that

we sent the friends to petition Him, implore and suppli-

cate Him to return to Baghdád.

After the meeting the Master went to His room but the

friends implored His presence among them. He then

returned to the gathering, saying, among other things:

I have now been for some time in these regions. In any city

I have entered I have met with the friends and other

people. In all the gatherings and most of the churches I

have called out to the Abhá Kingdom and invited people

to the Cause of the Blessed Beauty. At night I have im-

plored and supplicated and prayed and asked for assis-

tance, so that the rays of the Sun of Reality may shine on

this country, illumine all the regions of America, bestow

everlasting life; that its citizens may acquire heavenly

civilization and that they may be bountifully favored

through the teachings of the Blessed Beauty.

Praise be to God! This has come to pass through the

grace of the Blessed Beauty and the assistance of the Abhá

Kingdom. The call of God has been raised in all the cities

of America. Accounts of the greatness of the Cause have

been published even in the newspapers.

He also spoke with joy and happiness about the establish-

ment of the Cause in the countries of the East and the

firmness and steadfastness of the Persian friends.

One day, as He was strolling, He called to remembrance

the days of the Blessed Beauty, referring with sadness to

His sojourn in Sulaymáníyyih, to His loneliness and to the

wrongs inflicted upon Him. Though He had often re-

counted that episode, that day He was so overcome with

emotion that He sobbed aloud in His grief … All His

attendants wept with Him, and were plunged into sorrow

as they heard the tale of the woeful trials endured by the

Ancient Beauty, and witnessed the tenderness of heart

manifested by His Son.[[332]](#endnote-332)

The Master remained in Oakland for the night.

Thursday, October 24, 1912

[San Francisco]

A group of believers from Oakland and the vicinity arrived.

Some brought their children, supplicating the Master to

give them His blessings and protection and requesting

Persian names for them. All were honored and delighted

to have seen the One around whom all names revolve and

their eyes overflowed with tears of joy. He encouraged them

to make every effort to bring about universal peace and the

unity of mankind. He also spoke about His address at the

Jewish temple.

On the way back to San Francisco He spoke to a group

of young Bahá’ís who were teaching the Cause of God and

were dedicated to diffusing the divine fragrances:

Thank God that the divine bounty has reached you, that

the Sun of Truth is shining upon you and that the water

of everlasting life has been provided for you. If a man

drinks from a sweet spring, he ought to guide others to the

same sweet water.

You have asked me to speak about how to teach the

Cause of God. I have spoken at length on this but I repeat

that the teacher himself must be detached and devoted so

that his breath may affect others. Whoever has taken a step

in this field has succeeded. The doors of knowledge are

opened before him, his eyes become seeing and he is

assisted with the breaths of the Holy Spirit. He is guided

himself and becomes the cause of guidance of others. Of

course, a person sings a joyous song only when he himself

is delighted and rapturous. Thus when one begins to guide

others and adduces proofs, then his taste becomes sweeter

and his heart more joyful.

Moreover, everything is limited except the bounty of

God and this bounty descends upon man through teaching

the Cause of God; then divine inspiration will assist him.

It is for this reason that Christ said that whenever you wish

to talk do not think about it, the Holy Spirit will inspire

you. If you desire eternal honor, everlasting life and

heavenly exaltation, then teach the Cause. Divine confir-

mations shall attend you; this has been experienced. But

it calls for firmness and steadfastness. Consider the disci-

ples of Christ and observe with what firmness they arose

until the Cause of God advanced. They even sacrificed

their lives for this.

In response to a question about purchasing land for a

Mashriqu’l-Adhkár, He said: ‘It is very good but for the

present it is better to help with the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in

Chicago.’

The Master went to visit some schools and interesting

places. Among them was a technical school, whose students

stood respectfully in His presence. He was pleased with

them and bestowed kindness upon them. He then went to

see a purpose-built auditorium constructed in a circular

shape with stairs and seating on three sides. Looking

towards the stage, one could see the entire audience. At the

other end was a large podium with a platform designed in

such a way that when a lecturer spoke, his voice could reach

the audience without an echo. The building was very large

and had been built for special occasions and public events;

it had no roof. It was much admired by the Master.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at a gathering of

the believers on the importance of teaching the Cause:

Every day confirmations surround some specific pursuit

and every hour has a purpose decreed for it. Today,

teaching the Cause of God and spreading the divine

teachings are what attract heavenly assistance. It is the

season of seed-sowing and of propagating the Word of

God.

In the evening He spoke about the imprisonment and

persecution of the Blessed Beauty and of the power and

influence of the Greatest Name. As He bade farewell to the

friends, His words were powerful and impressive. The

hearts of the believers were in turmoil and their eyes

brimming over with tears. They were saddened because it

was the end of the Master’s stay among them and His lovers

were feeling the pain of separation from Him.[[333]](#endnote-333)

Friday, October 25, 1912

[San Francisco – Sacramento]

Today we were to depart from San Francisco. The Master’s

residence was full to capacity with a multitude of friends.

The power of the Cause, the influence of the Covenant of

God and the ardor of the friends were overwhelming. What

warmth and affection this gathering of true lovers gener-

ated in the early hours of the morning! When they heard

the Master coming downstairs, everyone rose reverently.

When they saw His feet on the stairs they raised the cry of

Alláh-u-Abhá, their eyes fixed intently on His face, like

sun-loving iguanas. Seeing the ardor and attraction of the

friends, the Master was deeply moved, His face trans-

formed. He anointed all with attar of rose and said to them:

Here I want to bid you farewell. This meeting and assem-

blage are very moving. This is the last draught in the

goblet! How thankful we must be to the Blessed Perfection

that He has brought the hearts so near to each other. This

attar that I give you is but a token of the fragrance of the

Abhá Paradise—the best of all fragrances. I am very sad

to be separated from you and I do not know how to ex-

press it. It is not possible to give tongue to the feelings of

the heart. I am greatly moved because I saw the love of

Bahá’u’lláh in you, I witnessed the light of Bahá’u’lláh in

your beings. I am so moved that I cannot speak. I leave it

to your hearts to feel what I feel. Although I am going

away from you, you have your place in my heart. I will

never forget you. When I reach the Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh,

I shall lay my head on the Sacred Threshold and beseech

confirmation for every one of the friends. These days of

our meeting were blissful days. They cannot be bettered.

I met you every day and I always found the hearts at-

tracted, the eyes turned unto the Abhá Kingdom. There

cannot be better days. Do you not forget them and I shall

not. I beg of God that the results of this amity shall become

evident, that it shall lead to spirituality in the world, to

impart guidance to all who dwell on this earth. I hope for

such results from this gathering that it will not be like

other gatherings of people who forget each other as soon

as they disperse. It is certain that because this gathering

has been a divine assemblage, it will never be forgotten

and whenever recollected it will produce fresh delight.

This is my wish.

He was sad as He left the house. Some of the friends

begged His permission to accompany Him to Sacramento,

the capital of California. Among them were Mrs Goodall,

Mrs Cooper and other wonderful handmaidens of God

such as Mrs Ralston, who are serving the Cause with heart

and soul.

As the train passed two or three stations beyond San

Francisco, it reached a bay where there are ferries on whose

decks are two railroad tracks that can be joined to the

tracks on the banks. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent His time visiting

with the friends and completing an article about the history

of Bahá’u’lláh’s time and His teachings. The train arrived

in Sacramento at noon.

An elegant woman, who had previously received a

promise from the Master, was at the station.[[334]](#endnote-334) She begged

Him to grace her home with His presence. He accepted

and we rode in her automobile to her home. Mrs Goodall

and Mrs Cooper enthusiastically assisted the other friends

accompanying the Master. En route the Master remarked

to us, ‘Let us consult together about staying at this lady’s

house.’ When we arrived at her home, the Master requested

that Mrs Goodall and Mrs Cooper be telephoned and asked

to come. When they arrived we could see that they too did

not wish Him to stay at the house. The Master then said,

‘We must act according to the consultation with the friends.’

After the Master bestowed His kindness on the hostess,

He said:

You desired greatly that we should come to your house.

We have come. We shall also take luncheon here. But at

night we will stay in the hotel, for in each city we have

stayed at hotels. Notwithstanding the supplications of the

friends to stay in their homes, we have not accepted these

invitations. But today we have come to your house.

The Master spoke in this vein until the woman finally

agreed. He then went to the Hotel Sacramento. On the way

He spoke and said, ‘I desire to act always according to the

counsel and wishes of the friends unless it is a very import-

ant matter which is not good for the Cause of God, then I

do hold tenaciously to whatever is advantageous to the

Cause.’ Continuing, He said: ‘The value of my conduct and

fellowship is not known yet, but it shall be known later.’

A meeting was held in the evening in the salon of the

hotel.[[335]](#endnote-335) A large number of friends and seekers were at-

tracted to the teachings and discourses of the Master. Since

it was evident that there was much interest among the

audience, the friends announced there would be a public

meeting the following morning in the same hall.[[336]](#endnote-336)

Saturday, October 26, 1912

[Sacramento]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address this morning[[337]](#endnote-337) concerned the

influence of the Divine Manifestations, together with a brief

history of the Cause and its teachings, which clearly had a

powerful effect on the audience. After the talk the people

came to Him in groups to express their sincere interest.

Journalists wrote several complimentary articles about His

exposition and the divine teachings.

The friends arranged a farewell luncheon in His honor

in the hotel’s dining room. The table was exquisitely decor-

ated. More than 50 friends were there, each grateful to be

present. This glorious meeting of the friends from the East

and the West in the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, so full of love

and harmony, astonished all who witnessed it and hastened

the spread of the Word of God. The manager of the hotel

came with the utmost respect and courtesy to see ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá and was given a seat. Later he said, ‘What I have seen

of the majesty of this holy being is that although no one

knew him in this city, yet in the course of one day and one

night he has created a stir in the city and a spiritual yearn-

ing in the hearts of its people.’

Thus did the power of the Covenant of God and the

grandeur of the Cause shine resplendently in the eyes of

the people.

After lunch ‘Abdu’l-Bahá bestowed kindness upon each

of the friends, exhorting and admonishing them. Every

soul offered praise and glory to the Lord of the Kingdom

until after midday, when the train left for Denver. When

it was time for Him to leave Sacramento, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was

heard to say: ‘A spiritual commotion has for the time being

been created in this city. Let us see what God desires.’

The Master passed the afternoon with His companions

in the train in a delightful manner. At times He told hu-

morous stories and at others praised the scenery of the

countryside, the pleasant air and the beauty and verdancy

of the surroundings. Some railway employees came to Him

saying that the Master had been on the same train with

them when they had traveled to California earlier. The

Master replied, ‘Yes, it was so destined that I should see you

once more on this trip. On this train there are many Greek

passengers. Do you know where they are going?’ They

informed the Master that they were going to their country

in response to a call to fight against Turkey. The Master

said:

God does not want war. These wars are against the divine

will. He desires peace and love for His servants. I pray that

this darkness may be dispelled and the light of the King-

dom may envelop the world. God is kind to all. We, too,

should be kind to one another. We should not fight for a

handful of dust. The earth is our endless tomb. Is it worthy

of us to wage war and shed blood for this tomb while God

has destined that we win the cities of men’s hearts and

bestowed upon us an eternal Kingdom? Is it worthy of us

to shut our eyes to such an everlasting honor and instead

make war over dust?

A salesman was selling pennants from different schools.

The Master said, ‘Tell him to bring the banner of universal

peace if he has it. We want such a flag under which the

whole world may find rest and peace.’

Several passengers who heard His discourses left their

seats and drew near Him. Among those who were moved

and impressed was a Jewish lady, who was very enthusiastic

and interested. The Master said to her:

It is obvious that you have a pure character, so I want you

to become aware of the truth of divine matters. At the time

of each Manifestation of God the people were heedless

and ignorant of the truth except for a few who investigated

and understood the divine words. The same is true today.

So thank God that you have been endowed with capacity

and desire to investigate the truth. Know this much: that

the treasury of God is replete; He will shower the same

bounties and gifts on those of this day as He showered on

those of previous generations. We must endeavor to gain

heavenly enlightenment, to understand the mysteries of

the holy books, to become the cause of guidance to others

and to illumine hearts. I pray that you may strive until you

are blessed with these favors.

During this conversation people were surrounding the

Master, eagerly and attentively listening to His words,

which they considered to be both weighty and the truth.

The same woman came to Him again in the evening,

saying that she wished to be educated so as to be able to

convey the teachings to others. As her words and spiritual

capacity were accepted by the Master, He gave her an

account of Bahá’u’lláh, explaining the reasons for the

opposition to His teachings and unfolding before her the

teachings of the Supreme Pen. Meanwhile, two people with

socialist views requested permission to be admitted into His

presence. He spoke with them on matters concerning

economics, universal peace, the unity of religions and the

common weal. Their happiness was boundless. As they

approached the railway station they asked ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to

give them His address and those of the Bahá’ís so they

could write to them. Their request was granted.

Sunday, October 27, 1912

[En route to Salt Lake City]

When the Master emerged from the Pullman section of the

train to take tea, the Jewish lady returned, saying that she

was convinced of the truth of this Cause and that she had

accepted the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh.

Today the Master spoke beautifully about the existence

of God and other subjects. During a conversation, an in-

dividual questioned Him about His purpose in traveling

to America. The Master replied:

I have come to America to raise the standard of universal

peace and to promote the unity of mankind. My aim is to

create love and harmony among the religions. But some

people ask me, ‘Is your country developed? Is it prosper-

ous and has it good trees, sweet fruits, beautiful animals

and swift Arabian horses?’ But I speak to them of the trees

of the world of existence, of the fruits of human virtues

and of heavenly morals and traits and call people to the

Kingdom of God.

Such explanations transformed the minds of the hearers

and created love and sincerity in their hearts.

In the afternoon we changed trains for Salt Lake City.

The Jewish lady was so attracted to the Cause that she tried

to change her ticket so that she could accompany the

Master from Denver to Chicago. However, she was unable

to do so, which made her unhappy as she was to be separ-

ated from the Master. The Master then gave her the ad-

dresses of some Bahá’ís she could contact.

The Master occupied Himself for about an hour reading

many letters from the friends. He later spoke about the

days of Baghdád and the apathy and ignorance of the

populace. He said:

How they reproached us, but they were ignorant of the

future of the Cause. They did not know that the Cause of

God can make an atom a brilliant sun, bestow the magnifi-

cence of Solomon on an ant, give eternal honor to debased

ones and endow the ignorant ones with divine knowledge.

We suggested that He obtain a Pullman berth but He would

not permit this, saying, ‘The seats are comfortable. We can

lean back and sleep.’

Monday, October 28, 1912

[En route to Denver]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá took tea in the dining car. Áqá ‘Alí-Akbar

Nakhjavání remarked that it seemed the Master was hap-

pier because He was going towards the East. The Master

replied, ‘Yes, my greatest happiness is to be near the Holy

Shrine.’ Looking out of the window, He continued: ‘I love

this plain because it is so much like the plain of ‘Akká.’

The Master then dictated replies to His letters. In the

afternoon, a vendor came by with various items for sale.

The Master was looking at some ore specimens from the

mines when a few children drew close and looked at Him

with curiosity. He beckoned to them and asked, ‘What shall

I buy you?’ He spoke to them with more love and kindness

than the most benevolent father and bought each child

various items costing about a dollar. More children ran to

Him. He said, ‘They, too, look poor’ and also bought them

a dollar’s worth of items.

When they saw this, the people were interested, curious

to know who this great personage was. When someone

asked the Master about His aims, He gave a detailed expla-

nation of the divine teachings. For a long period of time

the passengers gathered around His seat, some standing

and some sitting, listening to His sweet voice and sublime

words. We had never before seen or heard the Cause taught

in such a manner. It was characteristic of this journey that

the Master raised the call of Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá as the train

passed through the mountains, valleys, plains and rivers.

Some Turks came to see Him in the afternoon. They

said that there were more than 50 of them on their way

to Constantinople in response to a call to assist their gov-

ernment and people. They were impressed to hear the

Master’s explanation of universal peace and the unity of

mankind. The Master asked that tea and water be brought

from the train’s kitchen to another compartment where He

served them tea. They thanked Him for His kindness and

became attracted to His noble qualities and conduct.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá reached Denver at about midnight. As the

Master was very tired, He went to a hotel near the station

to rest.

Tuesday, October 29, 1912

[Denver]

When the friends were informed of the Master’s arrival,

they eagerly hastened to Him to gaze once more on His

face. He spoke to several newspaper reporters who had

come to interview Him about the Cause and who recorded

His statements for publication.

At a meeting He again spoke about the cardinal in

California, saying:

One day in California I saw a cardinal walking with pomp

and ceremony in front of a procession. Inquiring about the

occasion, I was told that a new church had been built and

the cardinal was to officially open its doors to the public.

I said, ‘This show and ceremony of the cardinal is like that

of Christ. However, there is a slight difference. Christ

opened the gate of heaven; this cardinal is going to open

that of a church. Christ had a crowd following Him but

they were there to hurl contempt and abuse at Him. This

cardinal had a crowd with him but they are there to help.

Christ had a crown but it was made of thorns, while this

cardinal wears a crown set with lustrous jewels. Christ had

clothes but they were made of old, coarse cloth, while this

man’s robe is made of the finest brocade of the day. Christ

spent His days in sorrow, while this cardinal’s days are

spent in security and comfort. Christ’s home was a desert,

while this cardinal’s home is a splendid building, like that

of a king. Christ’s throne was upon a cross, while this

man’s place of rest is a throne of ease and comfort. The

adornment of Christ’s banquet was the blood of that

beloved countenance, while the ornament of this man’s

court is the goblet of colored wine. So, this cardinal’s

display is similar to that of Christ, with only the slightest

differences.’

Although the Master told this story humorously in several

gatherings in different words, it was always a warning to the

people and the cause of their awakening.

Despite the Master’s exhaustion, He gave two public

talks: one in the afternoon at the home of Mrs Roberts and

the other in the evening at the Church of the Messiah. In

both gatherings He spoke of the similarity of the principles

of all religions as well as the revision of certain social laws

to meet the needs of the time. His explanations were

delivered so impressively that the audience was enlightened

as well as extremely interested.

As He was leaving the church, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said farewell

to all those who had gathered around Him. They pleaded

with Him to stay a little longer but He said, ‘I must return

soon to the East.’

Returning to the hotel, He instructed us to pack. We

hastened to obey His orders and caught the first train. With

a happy face, the Master said: ‘Now we are going again

toward the East. We have no more work to do in America.’

He did not take a sleeper on the train this evening, saying:

It is not a matter of our reluctance to pay one dollar but

of our unwillingness to be dependent on bodily comfort.

We must be equal to the hardships of traveling like a

soldier in the path of truth and not be slaves to bodily ease

and comfort. American trains especially are very clean and

comfortable and there isn’t great distinction between the

trains except for having sleepers.

Wednesday, October 30, 1912

[En route from Denver to Chicago]

While having tea in the morning, the Master said:

This journey has passed pleasantly. The three days from

California to Denver were comfortable and delightful. I

did not believe that my weak constitution could bear the

hardships and length of this journey.

At my request, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá wrote an account of His travels

in America to the friends in the East. This piece of writing

and another article about the history and teachings of the

Blessed Beauty are still among the papers of His personal

belongings and have not as yet been circulated.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá conversed with passengers

seated near Him, and after a few introductory remarks,

spoke to them about the teachings. As the call was raised

in the train, others clustered around Him and were de-

lighted to hear His discourse on the unity of mankind,

universal peace and divine civilization. Most of the passen-

gers were interested and wanted to know more.

A man of Sufi inclinations saw the others listening with

rapt attention, and spellbound by the words of the Master,

asked to come near. The Master had him sit close by. After

a few words, the man said, ‘All are from God.’ The Master

replied:

Yes, this is true, but one man is so exalted that others bow

down before Him and He is adored by them like Christ

or Moses, who called people to the oneness of divinity and

who became the cause of the education of a nation, while

another is so degraded that he bows down before dust and

worships ants and serpents. Are these two one and the

same? No, certainly not! Divine Manifestations are a

different creation. All humanity is created by God but how

they differ in intelligence. One is the wisest of the wise and

the founder of the laws of happiness and prosperity, while

the other is the most ignorant of the ignorant and a de-

stroyer of the edifice of peace and honor.

Prophets, therefore, have a station of their own. Many

people crossed the desert of Sinai but it was Moses who

heard the voice of God because the divine Manifestations

have a spiritual power peculiar to themselves. Mighty

nations existed at the time of the appearance of the divine

Manifestations but they were degraded and became oblit-

erated. But observe what a banner of unique being Christ

unfurled without friend or helper. All are from God but

all have different stations. Both men and animals are from

God but what a difference there is between them.

A minister visited Him. The Master advised him to ab-

stain from dogmatic imitation and described to him the

real meaning of baptism. Everyone was impressed by the

Master’s explanations and asked for addresses of the

friends from whom they could learn more about the Bahá’í

teachings.

In the evening He said, ‘Let us reserve sleepers for all

of us. We slept in our seats last night and that is enough.

Let us not suffer any more hardship.’ We suggested that we

would just get a sleeper for Him but He replied, ‘No, we

must share equally.’ Therefore, six sleepers were reserved

for the night.

Thursday, October 31, 1912

[En route from Denver to Chicago]

At daybreak the train was only one station from Chicago.

Here, one of the most sincere Bahá’ís, Mr [Albert] Windust,

who is the editor of the *Star of the West*, boarded the train

to welcome the Master and became the recipient of His

kindness and favors.

The Master remarked this morning:

It is now more than two years that I have been far from the

Holy Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh. Now I must return. If God

wills it, I shall make another journey in another direction

according to a special program which I have already

thought out, so that I can proclaim the Word of God in

another way. Let us see what is the will of God. Now we are

traveling from California to Chicago. Praise be to God that

this journey has passed most pleasantly. At the time of

leaving Haifa, I had several ailments and did not expect

to cross oceans and plains with such ease and comfort and

to make such a long journey.

When the train reached the station in Chicago, the friends

were transported with joy on seeing the Master’s face. The

Master went to the Hotel Plaza where He had stayed during

His first visit. People came in groups to see Him and re-

mained in His presence until late in the afternoon. Many

ministers invited Him to speak in their churches. He

accepted some invitations but had to send regrets to others

because of the lack of time. Some journalists were given

detailed interviews about the history and teachings of this

great Cause, which they took down for publication.

Some of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s comments to the friends were

these:

We went to California and a great commotion was set up

in the souls. A new spirit was breathed into people. In

universities, churches and gatherings people were stirred

and the blessed Cause was proclaimed. Decisive proofs

were advanced and the teachings of the Blessed Beauty

were explained. No one took exception; rather, all offered

praise and glory, even the clergymen.

Some engineers came to Him and He said to them:

This Cause has spread all over the world. It has brought

peace and tranquillity to different nations and religions,

has united diverse peoples and has laid the foundation for

the prosperity of mankind. Among its principles are the

establishment of universal peace among nations and

governments, the oneness of the world of humanity and

the uniting of sects and religions under the tabernacle of

unity.

Then turning towards some new inquirers, He said:

Behold the creative power of Bahá’u’lláh! He brought us

from the most remote countries of the East and acquainted

us with you. How He has connected our hearts and at-

tracted our spirits to each other and has drawn all under

the banner of peace and tranquillity! See how He has

delivered us from religious, political, national and racial

prejudices and saved us from the gloom of superstitions.

Behold what a power this is! Had all the powers of the

earth combined they could not have joined the hearts in

such a manner but Bahá’u’lláh has joined all with a single

word. Such is the power of Bahá’u’lláh! We must all turn

toward the Abhá Kingdom and pray for confirmation and

help so that His aid and assistance can support us from all

sides and that we may become the cause of proclaiming

the Word of God and of bringing peace and salvation to

the people of the world. We must render service to the

Kingdom of God so that divine grace may surround all and

the favors of Bahá’u’lláh may attain full expression.

To another group of the friends He said:

This is the third time that I am in Chicago. It is now your

turn to come and visit the Holy Shrine. Praise be to God

that divine grace has encircled you! He has chosen you

from among His creation and made you favorites of His

court. How many are the divines who have called on God

in their churches saying, ‘O our Lord! O our Lord!’ Yet

when their Lord appeared they remained veiled. You were

neither ministers nor monks and you have attained this

grace. This is what Christ meant when He said, ‘Many are

called but few are chosen’ [Matt. 20:16; 22:14]. Similarly,

He said, ‘The people are entering the Kingdom from all

directions but the sons of the Kingdom are leaving it.’[[338]](#endnote-338)

Although from distant lands, you have become enlight-

ened whereas most of the countrymen and neighbors of

Bahá’u’lláh have remained veiled. Be thankful unto God!

‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered a public address in the hotel’s salon,

giving decisive proofs of the greatness and power of the

Cause.[[339]](#endnote-339) As a result, many people learned of the divine

teachings and were attracted to the fragrances of God. After

dinner Mrs Waite sat at the piano and sang a song she had

written in praise of the Beauty of the Covenant.

Friday, November 1, 1912

[Chicago]

Among those visiting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for the first time was a

man from Russia. When he was admitted into the Master’s

room he began to complain about Russia. The Master said

to him:

Do not speak ill of Russia. Render good to friend and foe

alike. Say that you are one with all. Be a true well-wisher

of people. Give up your evil thoughts and pray for all. Be

at peace and make peace with all. Do not express hatred

or resentment toward anyone. Be a proclaimer of peace

and say, ‘Now I feel no enmity toward anyone.’ Praise all

and be mindful of the story of Christ. When everyone

expressed disgust on seeing the body of a dead dog, Christ

said, ‘What white teeth it has!’

The visitor was so overwhelmed that he cried out, ‘Today

I have found the way to salvation and safety.’ The Master

replied, ‘If you follow these teachings you will see things

greater than this.’

A minister came to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The Master spoke

with him about the sanctity of God. When a crowd had

gathered, the Master went into the hall of the hotel and

continued His conversation with the minister on the same

subject, explaining that God’s holiness is beyond imagina-

tion or likeness. Afterwards, after repeated invitations from

a prominent man, the Master went to a private museum.

This man had collected in a magnificent building speci-

mens of antique art, pictures, drawings and other relics of

past craftsmanship. When the Master returned to the hotel,

He said: ‘This man took us to his house to show pictures

and other objects. I was greatly surprised to find that

people go to view things which are nothing more than

children’s toys but they fail to examine this divine system.’

Dr Milburn, the minister of the Congregational Church,

with his wife and others came to see the Master with the

utmost humility. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: ‘I have not forgotten

our previous meeting or your talk in the church. There is

not a shadow of a doubt that it was inspired by the Holy

Spirit. It will remain for eternity in the history of this

Cause.’ He then told them about the zeal and enthusiasm

of the friends in California. Mrs Milburn begged Him to

come to their summer home. He replied, ‘It is impossible

because we must soon return to the East.’

On seeing their sincerity and interest, the Master said:

Chicago has great capacity. I hope that the banner of the

unity of mankind will be unfurled in this city and that the

believers here will be united and be as the different flowers

of one divine garden and become the adornment of the

world of humanity, so that the dormant pulse of this

country will beat vigorously.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about receiving assistance in the Cause

of God:

My health was absolutely not up to traveling but the

assistance of the Blessed Beauty helped me. All affairs

advance with His aid. Without His aid, all would come to

naught. When I left Syria I was ill and weak and also was

not used to traveling. All were astonished. But now I am

in Chicago and have other journeys ahead of me. You

must continue to follow these teachings and promote

universal peace and the unity of mankind so that misfor-

tunes and calamities such as the Balkan disaster may cease

and wars and massacres disappear completely. Observe:

it is the children who are orphaned and families which are

destroyed. The flames of the fire of war are day by day

becoming more intense. You must become the cause of

quenching this fire so that the light of love may enlighten

the world.

The Master addressed some socialists, saying:

Bahá’u’lláh delivered us from all prejudices. It is prejudice

that destroys the world. Every enmity, war, misunderstand-

ing and suffering that has ever occurred in this world has

been from either religious, patriotic, racial or political

prejudice. Prejudice is contemptible and injurious in

whatever form it may be. When these prejudices are

removed from the world then will the world of humanity

find salvation. We are striving for this mighty purpose.

Twenty thousand persons have been sacrificed for this

great Cause. With the utmost meekness they were mar-

tyred in order that these prejudices be eliminated and so

that brotherhood and unity would be established. Our

endeavors and self-sacrifice have been in order to unite

diverse nationalities and to bring the various denomina-

tions under the shade of the one Word. Some may speak

while others may even labor for good causes but they do

so to obtain personal benefits and to gain a name for

themselves. Even these works are of a limited nature. But

Bahá’ís strive day and night for the public weal and in

order to render service to humanity and to gain eternal

honor.

With a merry twinkle in His eyes, He continued:

If the socialists succeed they would seize the world’s wealth

and then divide it. But the Bahá’ís sacrifice their lives and

properties. Socialist principles would annul class differ-

ences and distinctions and thus cause disorder in the

system. But Bahá’u’lláh has laid down a great foundation

for a system which, although it advocates the oneness of

humanity and upholds the common weal, will preserve the

various ranks. Every rank should perform its duties. Rights

should be equal and all are the servants of one kind God.

He who performs righteous acts is nearer to God and he

whose efforts are more virtuous is more bountifully con-

firmed.

Turning towards the ladies He said with a smile:

I have said in America and Europe that there is only the

question of votes in which women have been held back and

claim equality with men. In California they even have this

right. In all other respects it is men who must demand

equality of rights. How many men in Europe and America

work from morning until evening and whatever they save

is spent on adornments and jewelry and colorful clothes

and the latest fashions for their wives who spend their time

in pleasure and enjoyment? In reality, these poor men are

servants of their wives.

Once a respectable gentleman came with his wife to see

me. A little dust had settled on the wife’s shoes. She in-

stantly asked her husband to clean them. As the poor man

was cleaning her shoes he glanced at me. I said, ‘Madam!

Do you also clean your husband’s shoes?’ She replied that

she cleaned his clothes. I said, ‘No, that is not equality.

You, too, must clean his shoes.’ Now then, it would be

better if you occasionally stand up for the rights of men.[[340]](#endnote-340)

One time an American woman had gone on a long trip

to Europe, all in great comfort, while her poor husband

was back in America, working hard and sending his earn-

ings to her. This is the case with most of the wealthy and

middle classes of the West, whereas there must be equality.

A condition must be realized in which the man and woman

sacrifice their rights for each other, serve each other with

heart and soul and not through force and violence. This

condition cannot be realized except through the power of

faith. Hearts must be attracted to the divine fragrances so

that each one prefers the other to himself and does not

consider himself above the other.

A Parsi Bahá’í came to ‘Akká to ask me to make honor-

able mention of his deceased wife. He was lamenting

piteously saying, ‘That woman worked hard for forty years

in my home but as I had no wealth she never had any

comfort.’ To put it briefly, spiritual susceptibilities must

reach this stage, they must become heavenly. Physical

susceptibilities are of an animal nature and it is heavenly

enlightenment which is worthy of man.

Such detailed explanations were given daily. They were so

numerous that if collected in a book, it would be a volume

of immense size.

A public meeting was held in the evening at the home

of Mrs True.[[341]](#endnote-341) The Master delivered an impressive address

concerning the majesty of the Manifestations of the Pre-

Existent Beauty, the opposition of the people of the world

and the final victory and influence of the Cause and the

Covenant of God.

Saturday, November 2, 1912

[Chicago]

Great numbers of people came to see the Master and each

in turn was ushered into His private room. Most of the

friends, both old and new, brought their children to be

blessed by Him. He embraced each of them with the utmost

kindness, anointed them with some attar of rose and gave

them fruit, sweets and flowers.

When the crowd became too large He went to the floor

below His in the hotel and spoke to the guests about the

aims and intentions of the Manifestations of God:

The divine religions were revealed for love and amity and

have brought about harmony among the different peoples

and nations. But as time passed dogmas and imitations

crept in and caused differences and enmity. Praise be to

God that now the doors of the Kingdom are open, the sun

of truth is resplendent and casting its rays upon all, the

cloud of mercy is bestowing the utmost favors and the sea

of bounty is surging. Know then the value of this bestowal

and the worth of these days.

He was invited to have lunch at the home of Mrs Russell.

Among the guests were some of Dr [Susan] Moody’s rela-

tives. Addressing them ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

Behold how the power of Bahá’u’lláh has connected the

hearts and has joined the East and the West. When Dr

Moody first went to Ṭihrán she did not know the Persians

and they, too, did not know her at all. But the moment

they heard of her intended journey from America to

Persia, hundreds prepared to receive her with utmost love.

With great esteem they welcomed her in Ṭihrán. All the

friends are now like brothers and sisters to her—even

more than that and kinder. She is well-known as a Bahá’í

in Ṭihrán and is respected and loved within and without

the community.

In the evening the Master gave an impressive talk at a

gathering of blacks. Many white people were also present.

He spoke on love and brotherhood among the different

races and nationalities. He talked about Isfandíyár, the

black servant of the Blessed Beauty, referring to his faith-

fulness, obedience and goodness of heart, saying: ‘If a

believer in God prays for piety, it does not matter whether

he is robed in black or white.’ Both black and white were

affected by His words and came one after the other to shake

His hand and express their gratitude for His blessings.

He then went to Mrs True’s home where the friends had

gathered for consultation. They asked Him about the duties

of a board of consultation. He said:

The first duty of the members is to be in harmony and

unity among themselves, for this will bear good results. If

there is no unity or—God forbid!—if it becomes the cause

of differences, then of course its non-existence is better

than its existence. If Assemblies of consultation or the

general meetings of the friends become the cause of ill

feelings, they must be abandoned.

How pleased I was with the believers in California who

said, ‘We do not want any board of consultation because

it would lead to striving for leadership and power and will

become the cause of differences. Now, praise be to God!,

we are serving as much as we can, having no other thought

than the diffusion of the divine fragrances.’

Then, when the unity of the members has been

achieved, their second duty is to recite verses and prayers

in a state of contriteness and spiritual awareness so that

they will feel themselves to be in the presence of God.

Third, their thoughts and discussions must be directed

to the teaching of the Cause of God in all areas and re-

gions. They must arise with all their strength for this great

matter and make the necessary arrangements and prepare

for the teaching of the Cause.

Fourth, they must be occupied and concerned with

rendering help to the poor, the needy and the sick.

Fifth, they must improve and administer the affairs of

the believers and other matters.

The Master spoke on similar topics and the meeting con-

cluded in an extraordinary spirit of happiness among the

friends.

Sunday, November 3, 1912

[Chicago]

Today was the last day of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in Chicago.

He was invited to speak at four gatherings. In each meeting

the power of His utterances and His explanations produced

great interest and enthusiasm in the audience.

In the morning, in the hotel’s main hall, the Master

encouraged the friends and others to be united and to

create within themselves the utmost love and harmony. He

ended His talk with praise and gratitude for the assistance

of the Abhá Kingdom and left for one of the churches.

The pastor of the church introduced the Master in

glowing terms and was full of praise and admiration. He

referred to Him as the Persian apostle and Prophet of the

East and described His 40 years of imprisonment and

hardship, His freedom, His travels to Europe and America,

His addresses in churches and large gatherings in both

continents and lastly his own conviction of the value of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s explanations and talks.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá stood and put forward decisive proofs and

arguments, describing the appearance of the Manifesta-

tions of God, the veils and opposition of the people, the

Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh to the kings and the influence of the

Cause of God among the people. His words were so pene-

trating that every soul was stirred and informed of the

circumstances prevailing in this day of the Manifestation.

There was a meeting in the afternoon at the Congrega-

tional Church. Its pastor, Dr Milburn, expressed his great

joy to the Master for blessing and honoring the church with

a second visit. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered a magnificent ad-

dress on the greatness of this age, the necessity of achieving

the oneness of humanity, universal peace, the oneness of

creation, and concluding with explanations of the teachings

of Bahá’u’lláh. His address was delivered with such majesty

and power that all hearts were quickened with the love of

humanity and became lovers of peace and harmony, aban-

doning prejudice and disunity. After the talk, people

rushed to the stage and surrounded the Master as He left

the pulpit for His automobile, supplicating His spiritual

blessings and assistance.

From there He went to Dr Milburn’s home where a

number of people met Him. Among them was an editor

who asked that a message from the Master be given

through his journal to the whole of humanity. The Master’s

message was this:

Praise be to God that the centuries of darkness have

passed and the age of enlightenment has arrived!

Praise be to God that all traces of superstition and

imitation have vanished and the minds and thoughts of

men have broadened, inventions have gained new life, the

arts and sciences have been revived, new plans have been

evolved, discoveries have increased, all things have been

revitalized, the rulings that regulate the world have been

renewed! Thus it was necessary that the laws of God also

be changed and the reality of divine religions be renewed,

for divine teachings had been forgotten and there was

nothing left but dogmatic imitation. The foundation of the

divine religions is one and that is the truth which gener-

ates love and affection and is the cause of the unity of

mankind. But imitations vary and they are the cause of

disagreements and are the destroyers of spiritual founda-

tions.

Glad tidings, glad tidings, that the Sun of Truth has

shed its radiance!

Glad tidings, glad tidings, that the heavenly light has

encompassed all regions!

Glad tidings, glad tidings, that the gates of the King-

dom have been opened!

Glad tidings, glad tidings, that the melody of the

Supreme Concourse has been raised.

Glad tidings, glad tidings, that the breaths of the Holy

Spirit are giving life and the world of humanity is reborn!

Awake, O people of the world, awake! Give heed, O

peoples and nations, give heed! Destroy the root of conflict

and strife; abandon imitations and prejudices which lead

to cruelty, so that you may acknowledge the Truth and the

light of the oneness of humanity may shine brilliant and

manifest as the sun; the standard of universal peace be

hoisted; perfect love and harmony may reign among the

races, religions and nations; and the world of man may

find peace and acquire a divine image and likeness. This

is my message.

That night He went from there to the home of Mrs Davies

where, through the generosity of whose daughter a splen-

did banquet had been arranged for the Nineteen Day

Feast. Several people visited the Master on the second floor

of the house, among them some engineers who wanted

His comments about the House of Worship. The Master

answered:

The Mashriqu’l-Adhkár is circular in shape. It has nine

paths, nine gardens, nine pools with fountains and nine

gates. Each path will lead to a center such as an orphan-

age, a hospital, a school, a university and other buildings

that are dependencies of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár. In the

building there will be an organ, balconies and a rostrum

especially for prayers and devotional programs but ad-

dresses may be given there as well.[[342]](#endnote-342)

Later the Master spoke of the importance of the House of

Justice and the significance of the laws of this Dispensation,

stating that each is a complete and powerful proof for the

unity of the peoples of the world.

He then went downstairs for a public meeting and gave

a farewell address to the believers in which He described

the harmfulness of imitations and superstitions.

‘Imitations’, He said, ‘destroy the edifice of human

prosperity and conflict with the religion of God. Beware lest

you occupy yourselves with such superstitions.’

It is not possible to describe the impact on the minds,

the exhilaration of the spirits and delight of the souls.

When His automobile left, everyone wept and expressed

their sorrow at their separation from their beloved.

Monday, November 4, 1912

[Chicago – Cincinnati]

The Master left for Cincinnati in the morning. At the

request of the friends there who longed for a glimpse of His

face, the Master sent a telegram informing them that He

would stay with them one night in order to visit the believ-

ers. At the Chicago train station the friends of God, both

men and women, wept as they saw their Master depart. It

was a grand occasion and a testimony to the greatness of

the Cause of God and the influence of His Covenant. Well-

respected people of the West have been attracted to the

Beloved of the East. They hovered like moths around the

divine lamp and wept at their friend’s departure. Among

those who accompanied ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the next station

was Mrs True with whom the Master spoke about the

Tarbíyat Schools in Ṭihrán.[[343]](#endnote-343)

In the evening Cincinnati was blessed by the arrival of

the Master. With eagerness and excitement, the believers

anxiously awaited a glimpse of His face. Mrs Farmer and

other believers had arranged a public meeting at the Grand

Hotel after which a beautiful banquet was given. Arriving

at the hotel, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá first went to the hall where some

five hundred had assembled to hear Him. He spoke a-

bout the sovereignty and endless bounties of God and

concluded with explanations of the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh

from the holy writings. His words captivated the hearts of

His listeners.

The Master then went into the dining room of the hotel

where He was delighted to see the beaming faces of the

friends, the brightness of the electric lights, the table

decorated with colorful flowers and the hearts immersed

in the love of God. More than 50 people were seated

around the table. The Master sat at the head of the table

while the Persian friends sat nearby. In great happiness

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke these heavenly words:

It is an excellent table for we have assembled here through

the love of Bahá’u’lláh. Tonight I am exceedingly happy

to be with you. You must be very happy and in a prayerful

attitude for no better meeting could be held. The holding

of meetings at which people from the East come to the far

West and sit together with you with such love and affection

was impossible but through His penetrative power

Bahá’u’lláh has made this easy and has joined the East and

the West. Would that the friends of Persia were here now

and could see this!

When the conversation turned to Los Angeles, the Master

spoke about Mr Chase and the nobility of his spirit. He

chanted a prayer in life-giving strains:

O Thou kind Lord, we render thanks unto Thee that Thou

has brought us from the farthest lands of the East to the

most distant lands of the West and gathered us at this table

arrayed with the finest, most diverse, sweetest and most

delicious material foods. We thank Thee especially for the

presence of those who have turned toward the Kingdom

of Thy favor and have fixed their eyes upon the horizon

of Thy kindness.

O Lord! These souls have turned toward Thee, they

desire Thy pleasure and are grateful for Thy blessings.

They walk in the ways of Thy will.

O Lord! Grant them heavenly food; enable them to

partake of the Lord’s supper. Exalt this noble lady in Thy

Kingdom, bestow everlasting life upon her and grant her

Thine eternal favor.[[344]](#endnote-344) As Thou hast given us these earthly

blessings so, too, give us heavenly food. Bestow upon us

Thine everlasting grace. Strengthen us to arise in praise

and gratitude to Thee that we may be aided and assisted

to do that which beseems Thy glorification.

Thou art the Mighty, the Generous, the Compassionate.

About 40 of the friends stayed at the hotel rather than

return to their homes that night.

Tuesday, November 5, 1912

[Cincinnati]

Early in the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá called His ardent lovers

to Him and bestowed kindness on everyone. Several repre-

sentatives of the press came to see Him and recorded His

words about the history of the Cause and the teachings of

the Abhá Beauty. Their reports appeared in various news-

papers and publications.

Although the Master had planned to leave in the morn-

ing, the crowd of seekers and the attraction of the friends

caused Him to prolong His stay until noon. Today He

spoke about the Universal House of Justice and the Inter-

national Parliament of man, where representatives from

all the parliaments of the world will resolve conflicts be-

tween nations, such as that in the Balkans. This organiza-

tion will cure the chronic diseases of the nations.[[345]](#endnote-345)

He then gave an account of how Constantine embraced

Christianity and came under the shelter of Christ. He said,

‘Although he wore a crown as a monarch, yet he had to

offer his all to the Son of Mary.’ He spoke at length on such

topics until He was tired. Then the friends invited Him for

a drive through the public parks.

At noon the Master left for Washington dc. At the time

of departure, the friends were happy as they recalled their

visit and reunion with Him but wept because of His depar-

ture from their midst. These opposites, happiness and

sorrow, like heat and cold, were both felt and seen.

A few stations beyond Cincinnati, a doctor sitting near

the Master asked permission to speak with Him and in-

quired about the object of His journey. The Master said to

the doctor:

My aim is to create harmony and concord among the

different groups and to eradicate prejudice, hatred and

enmity so that the peoples and nations of the world may

become brothers and well-wishers of mankind and not

engage in wars and massacres, and that catastrophes such

as that in the Balkans with their bloodshed and annihila-

tion of families may not occur again. Until such events

cease, humanity will find no rest, the tabernacle of univer-

sal peace will not be raised and the oneness of the world

of man will not be realized. We are all the flock of God,

members of the same human race and the creatures of one

Creator. God is kind to all and His bounties are equally

bestowed upon all.

Sixty years ago Bahá’u’lláh instituted the foundations

of such teachings in Persia. He advocated the establish-

ment of universal peace and the oneness of humanity. The

Sháh of Persia and the Sulṭán of Turkey threw us into

prison. They killed twenty thousand of us hoping that this

Cause would be annihilated and that these teachings of

Bahá’u’lláh would be forgotten. But in spite of these

obstacles the religion of Bahá’u’lláh progressed day by

day. Then there was a revolution and the constitution was

established and I was set free.[[346]](#endnote-346) Leaving the prison of

‘Akká, I traveled to countries in Africa, Europe and Amer-

ica, called people to these blessed teachings and invited

nations and religions to the oneness of the foundation of

all religions and the abandonment of prejudices, wars,

dogmatic imitations and superstitions.

The doctor was delighted and very impressed by the Mas-

ter’s words and thanked Him sincerely. The Master replied:

I, too, am very pleased to make your acquaintance. I, a

Persian, am delighted to meet an eminent Westerner like

you in utmost harmony and fellowship. This meeting of

ours is an example of the joining of the East and the West.

In the afternoon Washington was again blessed by the

arrival of the Master. The friends eagerly hastened to meet

Him and accompanied Him to a house rented especially

for Him. In the evening great numbers of friends gathered

around Him like moths around a brilliant candle. The

Master spoke about His journey to California, the influence

of the Word of God and the devotion of the friends to the

Abhá Beauty.

Wednesday, November 6, 1912

[Washington dc]

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed an assemblage of

friends concerning the spread of the Cause of God in both

the East and the West and the union of the various sects

and denominations under the shadow of the Word of God.

He stated:

Soon after the ascension of the Blessed Beauty I wrote:

Erelong ye shall see the banner of the Covenant

Hoisted over the world.

And again:

Shed splendors on the East,

In the West scatter perfumes,

Invest the Slav with life.

Carry light unto the world.[[347]](#endnote-347)

Some of the ignorant scorned us, saying, ‘How can the East

and the West be illumined with the light of the Cause and

the whole world be perfumed by the sweet fragrance of the

Word of God?’ Now behold how this great union has come

about and how the hearts of the people of the East and the

West have been enlightened with this manifest light. The

Blessed Tree has taken firm root in the earth and the signs

of its greatness have encompassed all regions.

He then gave an account of the appearance of the Manifes-

tations of God. ‘Outwardly’, He said,

the holy Manifestations of God were completely humili-

ated and despised. They were mocked by all. But in a short

space of time the penetrative influence of their words filled

the hearts and the sun of their greatness and majesty

illumined the world.

As news of the situation in the Balkans reached us, the

tenor of the Master’s speech inclined towards explanations

of the verses of the Manifest Book.[[348]](#endnote-348) At a public meeting

at Mrs Parsons’ home, He held the book in His hands and

explained Bahá’u’lláh’s admonition to Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-

Azíz[[349]](#endnote-349) and the prophecies about the change of circum-

stances in Adrianople, asserting that these prophecies were

certain to be fulfilled. He also explained the prophecies

about the change of circumstances in Ṭihrán and the

uprising of its inhabitants, saying that the fulfillment of

those prophecies was a clear proof of the vastness of knowl-

edge and the penetrating influence of the Word of God.[[350]](#endnote-350)

In the evening He spoke on the spread of the Cause of

God despite imprisonment by the enemies and the suprem-

acy of the divine Word notwithstanding endless afflictions

and troubles. He said:

Bahá’u’lláh, without earthly power and worldly means, laid

the foundations for eternal glory and promoted divine

teachings. Notwithstanding that all earthly powers and

antagonistic peoples and religions arose against Him in

order to thwart His efforts and executed twenty thousand

of His followers, yet with divine power and heavenly

majesty He made His Cause to be all-conquering and His

blessed Word to have pervasive influence. And today we

see diverse groups from different countries and of various

nationalities have found sincere love and true unity within

the refuge of His laws and teachings.[[351]](#endnote-351)

Thursday, November 7, 1912

[Washington dc]

Each hour people came to receive bounties from ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s presence. The Master answered many important

questions.[[352]](#endnote-352)

He had lunch at Mrs Parsons’ home. At the table, He

joyfully offered thanks for the confirmations and assistance

of the Abhá Kingdom. As well giving interviews at Mrs

Parsons’ home, He also spoke to a large gathering at the

Universalist Church.[[353]](#endnote-353) On behalf of the congregation the

pastor thanked the Master for coming and then reminded

the audience about the importance of knowing something

about all religions and abandoning prejudice, which would

broaden their horizons. He then gave an account of the

Cause, how it had become the target for the persecution

and sacrifice of so many souls in its path and concluded by

reading a few passages from the Book of Isaiah. The audi-

ence was thus prepared to hear the Master’s discourse.

The Master rose and delivered an impressive address,

at the beginning of which He said:

In truth, I have found much love and justice in the people

of America. I have observed that they have complete

freedom of thought in all matters, which is deserving of

praise. So I am greatly pleased with the pastor and thank

him for his expression of love for us. The leaders of reli-

gions must be like this so that people may become broad-

minded. They must be kind to all nationalities for God is

kind to all and His love is infinite. Therefore, the love of

His servants must also be universal and without limitation.

In His address He dealt with brotherhood and the oneness

of humanity, explaining some of the teachings and princi-

ples of Bahá’u’lláh. The audience was so impressed and

moved that the pastor again came to the pulpit to express

thanks and praise on their behalf. He was honored that this

was the second occasion on which the Master had given an

address in the church. He said that the Master’s words

would become the cause of honor and happiness to human-

ity, especially since we are all sheep of God’s flock, each

other’s brothers, and that God is our real shepherd and

protector. The pastor then requested a prayer which the

Beloved recited in Persian.

One by one members of the audience came to shake the

Master’s hand, begging for His assistance and blessings.

Such meetings in the churches of Washington and the

influence and impact of the Master’s talks have excited

envy in the hearts of certain ministers who have neither

interviewed nor heard Him and they distributed leaflets full

of calumny and criticism to the people coming out of the

churches.

Friday, November 8, 1912

[Washington dc]

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke in the morning to a gathering of the

friends:[[354]](#endnote-354)

I am very happy to have met you. I hope that through the

favors of the Blessed Beauty you shall become the instru-

ments for the glorification of the divine Cause and the

spread of the Word of God so that this city may take

precedence over all the other cities of America. As this city

is the capital of America, so shall it, God willing, become

the center of divine signs. When you arise to teach the

Cause of God it will soon be firmly established and will

spread because this city has capacity, as there is resistance

and some ministers are opposing the Cause. It has been

established by experience that when the cry of opposition

is raised by leaders of religion the Cause of God gains

strength. I always beg assistance for you and my heart is

ever with you. You must trust in the favors of the Blessed

Beauty which can change a gnat into a phoenix, a drop

into an ocean, a stone into a diamond and an atom into

a world-illuminating sun. You must not look to your own

capacities but to the bounties of the Abhá Kingdom.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took a stroll along the

boulevard and remarked that ‘The city of Washington is

better planned and laid out than the other cities of Amer-

ica.’ In His view the plan of this city was very pleasing

because in other cities the buildings were too high and the

population too congested. The buildings in Washington

were mostly of four to five stories and its boulevards

straight, well-proportioned and exquisitely landscaped.

Each house has a front yard with flowers and bushes so that

in the springtime the entire city becomes like a beautiful

garden. All of the squares there have beautiful parks and

gardens. In contrast, some of the streets and boulevards of

New York and Chicago, with their tall buildings looming

like steep mountain peaks, seem like narrow gorges or

deep mountain passes and the crowd of humanity like the

files of an army. It is difficult to pass through some of those

streets either on foot or in a vehicle.

To resume. The Master’s address at the Jewish syna-

gogue in Washington created a commotion among the

listeners and the force of His argument caused the hearts

of many to throb. On His arrival He said:

I shall repeat the same subjects I spoke on in the Jewish

synagogue of San Francisco, and I shall illustrate more

clearly the evidences to prove the reality of Christ and the

strength and truth of Islam. It is therefore not necessary

to repeat them here.[[355]](#endnote-355)

Such was the force of His explanations that both friends

and seekers felt that some might take exception and object.

‘If the Jews will not speak,’ they said, ‘the Christians, at

least, will not remain silent.’ Some of the Jews sitting near

the pulpit actually made signs to the interpreter that the

time was over. But the Master ignored this and went on to

give detailed, decisive proofs and plain arguments to prove

the truth of Christianity and Islam.

After the address, the chairman of the meeting, a person

of much integrity and one of the fair-minded rabbis, came

to the pulpit to thank the Master for His admonitions and

exhortations. He then asked the audience not to become

agitated or excited. ‘We must not’, he said, ‘be perplexed

at what goes against our own convictions and beliefs.

Rather, we must, with perfect composure and sincerity,

investigate the truth so that we may discover the reality of

everything.’

In brief, the firmness and courage of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and

the force of His argument were noted by everyone both

inside and outside the synagogue.

Saturday, November 9, 1912

[Washington dc]

The Master called on the Jewish rabbi, showered him with

kindness and countless blessings, and spoke to him regard-

ing peace and harmony among the Jews, Christians and

Muslims as well as the need for respect for the leaders of

each other’s religions. The Master said:

Whenever these people mention each other’s leaders with

due reverence then all sufferings and contentions shall

cease and instead of hatred there will be love and instead

of enmity and disunity there will be harmony and affec-

tion. This is my purpose.

The Master continued to speak in this vein with the rabbi,

who left His presence with humility and respect.

Several distinguished persons visited the Master on the

second floor of Mrs Parsons’ home, to whom He spoke

about various spiritual and important issues. The eternal

bounties poured forth like refreshing rain, beautifying the

gardens of the hearts and causing the world of the spirit

to triumph and to overflow with glad tidings.[[356]](#endnote-356)

In the evening the band of lovers observed the Feast of

the Covenant with a magnificent banquet in one of the

city’s largest halls. The sounds of their congratulations and

praises created a festive and beautiful celebration. Large

tables were arranged in the center of the hall in the shape

of the figure nine. At the head of the tables was the Master’s

chair, on two sides were the chairs of His companions, while

the remaining chairs were occupied by the friends. The

tables were decorated with flowers and other ornaments

and the doors and walls were decorated with screens, flags,

festoons, lanterns and banners. Above all of these was the

symbol of the Greatest Name. More than three hundred

guests were present, apart from those serving as hosts.

Almost everyone at the banquet was in formal attire and

their attention focused on the Master.

As soon as the Master arrived they all sang with one

voice a song in praise of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. When He had taken

His seat, Mr Remey stood in the center of the hall facing

the Master and devoutly read a paper, afterwards congratu-

lating the Master on behalf of the friends and assuring Him

of their obedience and renunciation of the world. Before

eating ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose and recited the following prayer:

He is God! O Lord! We are assembled here in the utmost

love and are turned toward Thy Kingdom. We seek none

other but Thee and desire not but Thy good pleasure.

O Lord! Make this food heavenly and make those

assembled here of the hosts of Thy Supreme Concourse

so that they may become life-giving and the cause of the

enlightenment of the world of man, that they may arise to

guide all the peoples of the world.

Thou art the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Forgiving

and the Kind.

He then invited everyone to begin their dinner, saying,

‘Tonight I myself wish to serve the friends of God.’ He

therefore made several rounds, distributing sweets and

flowers and anointing each person with attar of rose. When

the Master completed one round, the friends sang songs

of praise to the accompaniment of the piano. After supper,

the Master rose and spoke about the preeminence and

distinction of the gatherings of the friends of God, saying

that the actions and services of the people of Bahá would

be everlasting.[[357]](#endnote-357) This gave further encouragement to the

friends to burst enthusiastically into wonderful songs and

melodies, giving renewed joy to the hearts and to the souls

a new delight. This was one of those great gatherings that

demonstrate the majesty and power of the Center of the

Covenant.

The Master then went into another room where a num-

ber of people were granted private interviews. Among them

was a gentleman who had lost both legs in a railway colli-

sion and wore artificial limbs. To him the Master said:

Mutilation of the body brings no harm to the soul. This is

one of the proofs of the immortality of the soul, for death

consists of the change and dispersion of the members and

elements of the body. As a bodily change does not bring

about change in the soul, it is evident that the soul is

unchanging and imperishable.

When the Consul General of Turkey and others came to

see Him, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to them about the Universal

House of Justice.[[358]](#endnote-358)

Sunday, November 10, 1912

[Washington dc]

This was the last day of the Master’s stay in Washington. An

enthusiastic crowd assembled early at His residence. His

talk covered various subjects. He encouraged the friends

by assuring them that divine assistance and confirmations

would descend upon them; then He counseled them to

show firmness in the Cause of God. He also mentioned the

book written by Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl in answer to the objec-

tions of a Christian minister.[[359]](#endnote-359)

The friends and seekers continued to come to see Him

until noon, at which time Mrs Parsons invited a number of

them to dine with Him. Private interviews were granted in

the afternoon on the second floor. He responded to ques-

tions about the interpretation of dreams, firmness and

steadfastness in the Cause of God, the futility of opposition,

the teachings of the Abhá Beauty, economic issues and so

on

The Master then came downstairs to a public meeting

where He spoke on the oneness of the Divine Essence.[[360]](#endnote-360)

At the close of His address, He bade everyone farewell.

A spirit of longing spread over the audience and with

the utmost humility and reverence they begged His assis-

tance and blessings. The fire of love blazed within them.

After the meeting several people pleaded with Him to

grant them private interviews. They were overjoyed when

permission to ask a few questions was given. Some brought

their children to receive His blessings.

In the evening a meeting attended by both blacks and

whites was held at the home of Mr and Mrs Hannen.[[361]](#endnote-361) As

this was the last night of His stay, the meeting had a signifi-

cance of its own and more than ever the hearts were filled

with enthusiasm. When the Master arrived He was so tired

that He went upstairs to rest for a brief time. When He

heard the audience’s restlessness and impatience, He

allowed them to come to Him group by group. They came,

kissed His hand and requested His assistance and blessings.

Even though He was tired, each person received His kind-

ness and blessings. He counseled them to be firm in the

Cause of God and to hold fast to the mantle of love and

union.

When all these people concluded their visit, grateful for

His bestowals, the Master came downstairs and spoke about

unity and amity between the blacks and whites, expressing

His happiness at seeing both races present in the meeting.

During His talk He mentioned the sincerity, honesty and

services of Isfandíyár, the black servant of Bahá’u’lláh.

He took supper with a number of the friends. The host

and hostess, Mr and Mrs Hannen, were overjoyed beyond

measure because their services were accepted by ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá and He bestowed upon them His special favors.[[362]](#endnote-362)

Monday, November 11, 1912

[Washington dc – Baltimore]

The believers were so eager to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that they

began to arrive at His residence from early morning. Their

hearts were burning with the fire of separation and each

craved His assistance and bestowals.

The believers had already assembled when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

arrived at the railway station at 9:00 a.m. To the amaze-

ment of onlookers, they gathered around Him, their hearts

filled with sorrow and anguish. This happened in every city

of America when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá arrived and departed.

Onlookers were at a loss to understand how a person from

the East in Iranian dress had won the veneration and

respect of the men and women of America.[[363]](#endnote-363)

Some of the friends accompanied the Master to Balti-

more where He stayed at a hotel. Among the many visitors

who came to see Him was a newspaper reporter who was

given a detailed discourse on universal peace and the

ability of the American people and government to enforce

it. The Master’s words were noted down for publication.

Later, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Unitarian Church of

Baltimore regarding the oneness of the world of man, the

immutability of the principles of the divine religions and

the changing of the social laws according to the demands

of the time.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left the church He went to lunch at

the home of Mr [Howard] and Mrs [Hebe] Struven.[[364]](#endnote-364) The

Baltimore believers were overjoyed to see their Master. In

one of His talks to the friends He said:

Praise be to God! I have spent time with you in utmost

happiness. I am very pleased with you and will not forget

you. I pray that you may daily become more illumined and

more spiritual. When I reach the Holy Land, I shall lay my

head on the threshold of the Blessed Shrine and, weeping,

I shall supplicate on your behalf for assistance and heav-

enly favors, eternal honor and everlasting joy.

The Master and the friends then left for the station in two

automobiles. On the way ‘Abdu’l-Bahá embraced Mr

Struvens as a kind father embraces a son and with the

utmost kindness thanked him for his many services to the

Cause in such glowing terms that the others were aston-

ished.[[365]](#endnote-365)

A message from the friends in Philadelphia was relayed

to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá expressing their hope and expectation that

since it was on His way, He might be able stop in their city.

He replied, ‘We have been there once. Now we have neith-

er time nor possibility. Send them a telegram saying that

they may come to the station so that we can meet for a few

minutes.’

At 6:00 p.m. when the train reached the station, the

friends, both men and women, were on the platform. When

the train stopped, they immediately rushed towards the

Master’s seat and fell upon His feet, fulfilling their hearts’

desire. With great eagerness and enthusiasm, many of them

accompanied the Master to the next station, honored to be

in His presence. They begged His assistance that they

might render service to the Cause of God and then, weep-

ing, left Him. When the other passengers saw these 30 or

so friends from Philadelphia hovering near the Master with

such heartfelt emotions, their curiosity to know more was

aroused. Fascinated by His majesty and grandeur, they

surrounded the Master to hear explanations of the divine

teachings. They were transformed and attracted to the

teachings and asked for the addresses of the friends and

assemblies. Teaching the Cause of the God and guiding the

people along the road gives so much joy and excitement

that there are no words to describe it.

At about 1:00 a.m. the city of New York was once more

graced with the presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. He stayed at the

same house which had previously been rented at His in-

struction. Thus for the second time this house became the

court of the Center of the Covenant and the threshold of

bounty and favor. The owners of the house and their

relatives had joined the group of sincere and devoted

believers and were counted among the lovers of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá.[[366]](#endnote-366)

Tuesday, November 12, 1912

[New York]

Early in the morning, Mrs Champney, the owner of the

house, and her relatives came to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and to

receive His blessings. They were at a loss to know in what

language they could express their gratitude for the fact that

their home had become the residence of the Master and

the point of adoration for His lovers. The house is located

on Riverside Drive near the Hudson River. Each morning

and evening the Master walks in the gardens on the banks

of the river.

As there is a war raging between the Balkan states and

Turkey, it is the main topic in all the newspapers and

people look upon these visitors in their Persian garments

with eyes full of prejudice. We have even been refused

accommodation in some of the large hotels because they

thought we were Turks. The Master remarked, ‘Observe

how much enmity and hatred prejudices have produced

among various parties and peoples and what suffering and

hardship have been caused by them.’ But whenever those

who feel enmity towards us have been informed of the

Cause of God and entered ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence, they

become humble and are honored to meet Him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had been repeatedly asked by some of the

New York Bahá’ís to see some of the wealthy people who

wanted Him to visit them in their homes, but each time He

said:

I deal with the poor and visit them, not the rich. I love all,

especially the poor. All sorts of people come here and I

meet them all with sincere love, with heart and soul. Yet

I have no intention of visiting the homes of the rich.

On another occasion, a famous man, Mr Andrew Carnegie,

humbly requested an interview with the Master. Although

he was one of America’s millionaires, his request was

granted and is recorded in one of His writings.[[367]](#endnote-367)

In the afternoon was the usual weekly meeting of the

Bahá’í women at the home of Mrs Krug. When the Master

arrived, Mrs Krug was reciting a prayer. When she finished,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke:

He is God!

This is the assemblage of my daughters in the home of

my daughter, Mrs Krug. Therefore I am very happy with

this gathering. It is a good gathering, very illumined. It

is a spiritual assembly, a heavenly assemblage, the glances

of favor surround this meeting and the Supreme Con-

course looks down upon it. They heard the prayer that you

read and it made them joyous. They thank Bahá’u’lláh

saying, ‘We thank Thee, O Bahá’u’lláh, that these maidser-

vants are attracted to Thee and are turned to Thy King-

dom. They have no purpose but Thy Will; they wish for

no station but that of service to Thy Cause.’

O Bahá’u’lláh! Assist these noble maidservants; make

these worldly daughters heavenly; inspire their hearts and

gladden their souls.

O Bahá’u’lláh! Make these bodies as light-giving can-

dles, these beings the envy of flower gardens and fill their

souls with a melody which will enrapture the Supreme

Concourse and make them dance for joy. Make each of

them a brilliant star so that the world of existence may be

illumined with their light.

O Bahá’u’lláh! Give them heavenly power, bestow on

them the inspiration of the Kingdom and vouchsafe to

them divine assistance so that they may be enabled to

render service unto Thee.

Thou are the Compassionate, the Merciful and the

Lord of Bounty and Favor.

There was a gathering in the evening at the home of Mr

Kinney which was attended mostly by black people. At the

meeting the Master likened the faith of Mr [Arthur] Dodge

to that of Peter and expressed His admiration for that

sincere and true servant who was so firm in the Covenant.

The Master showed similar kindness to Mr [Hooper] Harris

who was permitted to speak to the public gathering before

the Master’s address. The Master’s talk was a confirmation

of Mr Harris’ speech, an explanation of the prophecies of

the Book of Daniel concerning the Most Great Manifesta-

tion and the statement in the New Testament about the

Promised One.[[368]](#endnote-368)

Wednesday, November 13, 1912

[New York]

The Master described for the friends His journey to Califor-

nia and His talks at the university and at gatherings in San

Francisco. He said:

As they were delivered in scientific terms and with rational

arguments, none could deny them and not a single voice

was raised in opposition. In fact, in the gatherings like that

at the university where one hundred and eighty professors

and teachers and eighteen hundred students were present

together with other notable people, if one had spoken

using religious terminology and expressing religious

opinions and imitations which are wholly contrary to

science and reason, none would have paid any attention;

rather, they would have scorned and mocked us.

One reason that people despair of the world of religion

is this very matter of superstitions and imitations practiced

by religious leaders. When intelligent and learned people

see these imitations and customs as being contrary to

reason and knowledge they forsake the divine religion and

are not aware that these are idle fancies of the leaders and

have nothing to do with divine principles. The foundations

of divine religion do not negate sound reason and true

science. The principles of divine religion do not contradict

knowledge and insight, except for some principles and

minutiae of the law which were given according to the

exigencies of the time and age. Of course, the second or

social laws suited to the Mosaic dispensation and useful for

the Jewish people at that time are now purposeless and

ineffective and seem futile, but they were pertinent and

useful at the time.

Now, praise be to God, Bahá’u’lláh has solved these

difficulties. All His teachings and laws are in keeping with

the spirit of this age and the needs of the people. And

greatest of all is the abandonment of religious supersti-

tions and dogmas and the conformity of spiritual matters

with scientific and rational arguments.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent the afternoon at the home of Mr

Kinney. As was His daily custom, the Master went for a walk

in the morning and afternoon in the gardens along the

bank of the river on Riverside Drive.

His public talk at Mr Kinney’s home concerned the

immersion of the friends in the sea of bounty and favor.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá encouraged them to remain firm and con-

stant in the Covenant of God. After the meeting another

group came to visit. He also encouraged them to arise,

teach and spread the fragrances of God and inspired them

to render service to the world of humanity so that others

might arise from among the friends, girding their loins to

bring about unity and harmony among the nations.

When some of the friends requested that the verses of

the holy writings and divine Tablets be translated into

English, He said: ‘A committee consisting of experts in

several languages is essential for the translation of the

Sacred Writings.’

Several friends brought their children to Him. He took

the little children in His arms and showered them with His

kindness and affection. Among them was the little daughter

of Mr Jones, who ran to the Master in all the meetings and

did not wish to leave His side. She was always sad when she

had to leave Him.

The Master spoke this evening on the importance of the

friends striving to detach themselves from earthly passions

and worldly desires and to remain aloof from the doubts

of selfish persons who outwardly appear faithful but who

are inwardly the cause of confusion to others. He gave a

lengthy discourse on firmness in the Covenant of God,

obedience to the Center of His Covenant, the unity of the

believers, the afflictions and tribulations of the Abhá Beauty

and the martyrdom of the Manifestations in order that

unity and harmony might be brought to the nations of the

world.

During this talk two large rooms at Mr Kinney’s were

filled to capacity. At first the Master sat on a chair between

the two rooms but He later arose in a majestic and digni-

fied manner, speaking with such forceful tones that every-

one was delighted and full of admiration.

Thursday, November 14, 1912

[New York]

After granting private interviews to some of the friends, the

Master came downstairs to the gathering. Among His

statements were these words:

The most blessed moments of my life are those which I

spend in the company of the friends of God. These are the

best times. Therefore, I am extremely happy to be with

you now. Praise be to God that your faces are illumined,

your hearts and souls are rejoicing and all are turned

toward the Abhá Kingdom. This is the utmost happiness

for me.

I pray to the threshold of Bahá’u’lláh that He may grant

all of you eternal happiness, honor you in His Kingdom

and bestow upon you everlasting life. Thus, the friends of

New York may be freed from all limitations and become

the cause of the enlightenment of the world of man. This

is my greatest wish and Bahá’u’lláh will assuredly assist

you.

Most of the evening meetings were at the home of Mrs

Kinney and the daytime meetings were at Mrs Krug’s

home. There was always a crowd of visitors at His residence

and, whether He was in or out, a multitude was always there

waiting.

At the meeting this afternoon at Mrs Krug’s home, He

spoke of the exalted station of the people of Bahá given

them through the bounties and confirmations of the Abhá

Kingdom, which can turn black dust into a brilliant ruby,

a grain into a harvest, a fisherman into a Peter and a village

woman into a Mary Magdalene, the pride of the people.

As they passed before Him one by one, they received His

bestowals and blessings. He returned to His residence on

foot. Near Central Park a gentleman approached Him and

said, ‘I have heard much about you and have been waiting

for the moment to see you. I am thankful that now I have

attained the honor of meeting your Excellency.’ He fol-

lowed the Master to His residence, greatly interested in His

explanations and the wonderful Bahá’í teachings.

This evening friends and seekers immensely enjoyed

and benefited from hearing the Master’s explanations of

the mysteries of the Books of God and other important

issues. He was asked about music and singing in the

Mashriqu’l-Adhkár. He replied, ‘Singing and chanting of

scripture and prayers in verse or in prose should be used

but I do not interfere in matters not expressly stated in the

Text. Whenever and whatever the Universal House of

Justice ordains, that will be the criterion.’

Later in the evening He spoke at length to a woman

Christian Scientist who was quite fanatical in her beliefs.

The Master explained to her the meaning of the assertion

that there is no evil in existence. He said:

By saying there is no evil in existence is meant that what

has come from the Origin of existence and being is good

and useful. It is good in its time and place and not evil.

For example, I can say that there is no darkness in the sun

because darkness is the absence of light and has no exist-

ence in itself. Oppression is the absence of justice and

ignorance is the lack of knowledge. Hence, the imperfec-

tions and defects of the world of creation, the contingent

world, are merely the absence of virtues and the lack of

perfections. These defects have not come from the Source;

rather, the essential properties of the world of matter

which are change and transformation cause the training

of all things and the manifestation of perfections of reali-

ties and spirits.

Saturday, November 15, 1912

[New York]

Mr Wilhelm and other friends heard these words from

‘Abdu’l-Bahá:

Education and training are the most important issues in

the world of existence. Without an educator, little progress

can be made in material affairs, still less in spiritual affairs

and divine morals. How can humanity find composure and

eternal happiness without an educator? Apart from the

human world observe the rest of creation, how each and

every created thing is in need of training by an educator.

Without education they will not attain perfection. For

instance, this flower cannot by itself reach this perfection

and attain this charm, color and loveliness. Thus, there are

two great blessings in the world of existence: one is innate

capacity which is bestowed by the Creator; and the other,

acquired perfections which depend upon training by a

teacher and educator.

The Master went downstairs to join the assembled friends.

Among His words were these: ‘The whole world is like a

physical body and the power of Bahá’u’lláh may be re-

garded as the main artery in the body of existence.’

Today He called on Mr MacNutt and spoke to him in

strong terms about his relationship with the Covenant-

breakers and showed him a letter Mr MacNutt had written

to Chicago offering help to and praising Dr Nutt, a friend

of Kheiralla. The Master asked, ‘Is this your writing?’ Mr

MacNutt replied, ‘Yes, but my intention was something

else.’ He tried to give a different angle to his purpose but

could not. The Master was saddened about Mr MacNutt but

His purpose was to admonish and warn him against his own

conduct.

In the afternoon, after seeing Mr Topakyan, the Persian

Consul General, and other prominent people, the Master

went to a meeting of the Divine Knowledge Club, whose

members are mostly women. The president of the club is

an educated woman who claims divine knowledge and

heavenly inspiration through Bahá’u’lláh. Spiritualists,

astrologers and Christian Scientists frequent her club

meetings. She spoke with closed eyes, as if she were sleep-

ing and receiving inspiration. She appeared to be in a

trance and in a state of total absorption. Because she is

known among the Bahá’ís for her sincerity and is a sup-

porter of the Cause of God, the Master was very kind to

her.

Today, at this lady’s request, the Master went to a meet-

ing of her club and delivered an address concerning the

circumstances of the time and the different seasons in the

contingent world. He said:

The day of the Manifestation of God is the divine and

spiritual springtime when the trees of human souls become

green and flourishing, new beauty and freshness are

brought to the gardens of the hearts and new inspiration

and fresh bounties are bestowed.

His talk commanded their complete attention and all

bowed their heads in humility and respect. On the way

home, He remarked, ‘Observe what idle fancies and vain

imaginings are still prevalent in America!’ The Master’s

guidance on removing the superstitions and vain imagin-

ings of these people is as follows:

Man explains things in two ways. One explanation orig-

inates from his personal feelings, thoughts and under-

standing. This cannot stand as proof or criterion for all

and does not satisfy the hearts. The other is a statement

supported by proofs. It produces significant results and

promulgates momentous matters which are necessary to

the world of man. It is like the explanations and proofs of

the Bahá’ís, who invite all to the oneness of humanity and

to universal peace. This explanation has proofs and is

effective.

The Master continued with a story of the Jewish rabbis:

In Jerusalem every now and then they broadcast a promise

giving a specific time based on the holy scriptures and say

that on such a date the Promised One will appear to

deliver the Jews. They say, ‘We have derived these from

the holy texts.’ But when that time and day approach they

cast a doubt over their promise and give another. Thus

they keep the Jews under the influence of their wish and

desires and deprive them of the truth. Now they refer to

the time of Daniel [Dan. 12:12] and hold out a promise

that the Promised One will appear in the year 1335 [ah,

i.e. 1963].

There was a public meeting in the evening at the home of

Miss Juliet Thompson. The Master spoke about the great-

ness of this cycle, the victory of the Cause and the influence

and importance of the teachings and laws of Bahá’u’lláh.

His talk was delivered in such awe-inspiring tones that the

minds were dazzled and the hearts captivated by the gran-

deur and majesty of the Center of the Covenant. Both

before and after the meeting many people were honored

to visit with Him in a separate room.[[369]](#endnote-369)

Saturday, November 16, 1912

[New York]

After morning prayers and meditation, the Master spoke

of the afflictions and persecutions of the believers in the

East and their perseverance and steadfastness in the Cause

of God. He spoke graciously of the family of Haḍrát

Samandarí[[370]](#endnote-370) and other old Persian friends. Later, at a

gathering of the friends, He spoke these words:

The holy Manifestations endured great afflictions and

persecutions and at every moment accepted torment and

oppression. Christ suffered violent persecutions, accepting

the suffering of the Cross and the most glorious martyr-

dom. The results of these persecutions were eleven disci-

ples who were truly blessed souls. They became luminous

and heavenly; they became the cause of the enlightenment

of the people of the world.

I hope that you, too, may reach such a station, that it

will be said that you are the fruit of the revelation of

Bahá’u’lláh; that it will be said, ‘It is these people who are

the aim of this new revelation; they are the jewels of

existence; they are illumined, divine, spiritual and heav-

enly.’ If someone asks what Bahá’u’lláh has done, they will

be told, ‘He has educated these people.’[[371]](#endnote-371)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá then spoke about the divine laws and reli-

gions:

Divine religions consist of two parts. One aspect is that of

spiritual laws which constitute the foundation of all divine

religions. They are immutable and unalterable. The

second aspect consists of social laws and relates to material

affairs, and changes according to the exigencies of the

time.

To a new group He said:

Gracious God! Although people see with their own eyes

that in the dispensation of Christ the eleven disciples were

ordinary men who, because of their faith in Him, found

eternal life and shone from the horizon of perpetual

honor; and that the Jews, with all their worldly honor,

became contemptible; and that Caiaphas, the greatest

enemy of Christ, was, together with his whole family,

obliterated from the face of the earth while a simple

fisherman, because of his belief in Christ, became the great

Peter, yet, despite all this, still they take no heed.

In the afternoon meeting His address on the reality of

God and the victory of the Manifestations of God threw

the entire audience into an extraordinary state of excite-

ment and attraction, especially the friends from New

Jersey, who with Mr Hoar, after the meeting went to the

Master’s room and became the recipients of His grace and

special bestowals.

Sunday, November 17, 1912

[New York]

Early in the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá voiced His thankfulness

to the Abhá Kingdom, saying:

Praise be to God! His divine help and assistance have

enveloped us and the confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom

have surrounded us. The Cause of God has reached every

ear and the divine fragrances have spread throughout all

regions. The East and the West are illumined with the light

of the most great guidance. The foundation of the Cause

of God is firmly and securely established. The friends of

the Blessed Beauty have risen in faithfulness and occupied

themselves in proclaiming the Word of God. The founda-

tion of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár is laid. I have no further

desire. I wish to reach Haifa and to settle again in the Holy

Land. It is now your turn to serve, to render your servitude

to the holy threshold. Occupy yourselves day and night in

the diffusion of the divine fragrances. All confirmations

encircle those who are engaged in rendering services to

the court of oneness. Nothing avails except servitude to

the Blessed Beauty. If, after the ascension of the Blessed

Beauty, I had not risen in servitude to Him, these confir-

mations would not have descended.

After a short pause, He continued:

Had there not been this servitude, constancy and confir-

mation the affairs would have fallen into the hands of the

ambitious and the standard of the Cause would have fallen

forever. Unseemly matters would have ensued. The story

of Yaḥyá would have been repeated. Had it not been for

the firmness and power of the Ancient Beauty, the main-

stay of the Cause would have fallen apart. Nothing would

have been witnessed but the propagation of selfish desires

and, apart from these, nothing would have remained but

some words and phrases.

Today He mentioned the passing of Áqá Riḍá Ghánad

Muhájir[[372]](#endnote-372) and spoke about the greatness of his station,

saying, ‘I must go myself to the Holy Land to build his

effulgent tomb with my own hands and read there a prayer

of visitation.’

From morning until the afternoon every room of the

Master’s residence was full of people. All were recipients

of His everlasting bounties and bathed in the surging waves

of the love of God.

This evening the Master spoke to a gathering of the

friends regarding the maturity and perfection of the world

and gave an account of Bahá’u’lláh. He concluded His

address with the chanting of a prayer in a melodious voice,

immersing the hearts in a sea of ecstasy and rapture. Many

new people attended the meeting and were impressed and

moved by the blessings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. They remained in

His presence until He left, expressing their sincerity and

reverence.[[373]](#endnote-373)

Monday, November 18, 1912

[New York]

In the morning the Master was occupied revealing Tablets

in answer to letters from the believers. He permitted some

friends and newcomers to interview Him in His own room.

When the visitors grew too numerous, He appeared in the

gathering and showered love and kindness upon all.

Whenever the Master became tired, He would go alone

to the nearby gardens along the bank of the river to rest.

He said, ‘When I am alone, I do not talk, my mind is not

busy and I can rest a little. But when I am not alone I must

speak; I perspire and feel exhausted.’

These were the final days of His stay in America and

there was a great rush of visitors. There was not one mo-

ment when people were not present.

In the afternoon, while talking to a group of the friends,

‘Abdu’l-Bahá suddenly said: ‘We wish to build a House of

Worship on that side of the water.’ Later He said: ‘This city

shall become good when the call of “Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá”

shall reach the highest heaven from it. If the believers arise

as they should erelong the word of God will envelop all

these regions.’ He also added, ‘As the United States of

America is far and free from the arena of the prevailing

political turmoil, this government and country can prevent

war between the nations and bring about peace and har-

mony among them.’

The Master was invited by the poet Mr Moxey and Mrs

Moxey for supper. The hosts were among the devoted

friends of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and they were eloquent in their

praise of Him. During the Master’s previous visit to New

York Mr Moxey had written a book of poetry, describing

the demeanor, majesty and power of the Master. Mrs

Moxey, who was a famous musician, opened the gathering

by playing the piano and singing a melodious song of

praise in His honor. The Master began His address with

these words:

I praise God that I am with you. Such an assembly would

be utterly impossible to hold through worldly power and

outward means because you are Westerners and we are

Easterners. There was nothing to connect us. We had

neither patriotic, racial, commercial nor political connec-

tions with you. But Bahá’u’lláh removed all these estrange-

ments and prejudices and invited all to divine love. He

joined all under the shade of the blessed Word. Hence, we

are united and assembled here in such love. This love is

the greatest of all means, as all other means and ties are

limited; but harmony that comes about through the love

of God is infinite and everlasting.

These impressive words transformed the hearts. After the

meeting several of the friends and His companions were

honored to have supper with Him. Everyone was grateful

and showed great devotion in that home.[[374]](#endnote-374)

Tuesday, November 19, 1912

[New York]

The Master spent the day at the home of Mrs Krug in the

utmost happiness. A number of the believers and His

companions were also very happy to witness the Master’s

joy, the influence of the Cause of God and the power of the

Covenant of God.

In the afternoon, at a public meeting attended chiefly

by women, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on the equality of the rights

of women and their education and progress through the

Manifestation of this supreme age. He encouraged them

to acquire the perfections and virtues of the world of hu-

manity.

Later, at the home of Mr and Mrs Kinney, He asked Mr

Harris to speak at the meeting of the friends.

As Mr MacNutt’s apparent equivocation and lack of

firmness seemed to be causing his degradation in the eyes

of the friends, he came to the Master and implored Him

to recommend him to them. The Master replied, ‘The

remedy depends upon your sincere repentance and your

open denouncement of the violators in the meetings of the

friends.’ In compliance, Mr MacNutt rose and gave an

account of his journey to Chicago and his meeting with

Kheiralla. Some felt that he spoke ambiguously. The Master

asked him to explain his actions in plain words so that the

friends might be satisfied and this blemish on his character

be removed. Again he testified in clear terms of his faith

in the Covenant and his rejection of the Covenant-break-

ers. The Master went to the podium and expressed His

pleasure at Mr Harris’ talk and for Mr MacNutt’s words

of repentance. The Master then went upstairs and called

Mr Hoar, Mr Harris, Mr Dodge and other friends to Him

and asked them to embrace Mr MacNutt and exhorted

them to have the utmost love and unity among themselves.

He encouraged and inspired them to spread the divine

word and to diffuse the fragrances of God. He told them

that they must sacrifice all other affairs for the accomplish-

ment of this great affair.[[375]](#endnote-375)

Despite this, the Master and the friends, in their inmost

hearts, were saddened by Mr MacNutt’s earlier actions.

Some felt that he was not trying hard enough to show his

humility and firmness in the Covenant. After the Master’s

departure from America, Mr MacNutt went to California

and other regions of America. The believers stayed away

from him. He wrote many letters of repentance to ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, who sent him many encouraging and kind words.

Wednesday, November 20, 1912

[New York]

The Master again called some of the friends and asked

them to show kindness and love to Mr MacNutt and to be

patient with him. Some of His words were these:

You must all arise in unison to serve the Cause of God.

You must work hand in hand to teach the Cause and know

that the confirmations of Bahá’u’lláh will descend upon

you. My hope is that New York will excel all other cities

because at the beginning it had precedence over them.

God willing, it shall be so again. The favors of the King-

dom of God are great, the attention and bounties of the

Blessed Beauty are fixed upon you and His hidden hosts

are assisting you. Arise in this arena and you shall see what

will transpire.

I am but one of His servants. After the ascension of the

Blessed Beauty, the Ottoman people and government

arose against me as did enemies of the area from different

nations and religions. In such a state everyone was attack-

ing me from outside and even my brothers from inside

opposed me. But in a short time the enemies were frus-

trated and brought low so that some of them cried, ‘Would

to God that Bahá’u’lláh had not ascended because this

Cause has become even greater, its fame has spread to

more places, and its support has become stronger.’ There-

fore, we must arise in servitude so that His confirmations

may surround us from all sides. Undoubtedly whenever

you arise to serve and proclaim the Cause you shall be

assisted and shall attain success. Rest assured.

In the afternoon the friends gathered at the home of Mr

Harris, each one eager and delighted to see the Master and

to listen to His words. While He was leaving His residence,

some school children saw the Master and rushed towards

Him. They asked, ‘Who is this man who looks like Christ?’

Miss Juliet Thompson spoke to them outside the house

about the Cause and the life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. They asked

to meet Him and they were invited to come to Mr Kinney’s

home, where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent most of His days, the

following Sunday.

Both private and public meetings were held in that

home. The first to third floors were filled with people, some

even standing on the stairs. From this day forward a spirit

of steadfastness in the Covenant of God, unity and faithful-

ness appeared among the friends as the Master burnt away

the veils and the hearts of the believers attained the highest

degree of love and union. This was the Master’s purpose

in staying so long in New York. Furthermore, many won-

derful friends became humble and sincere in His presence.

He spoke this evening to a large gathering about the

influence of the Cause and the victory of the Supreme

Word over the nations and powers of the world.

Thursday, November 21, 1912

[New York]

The Master was occupied revealing Tablets to the friends

until about noon when the crowd downstairs became too

large. He appeared in this gathering of eager souls, greet-

ing and extending His kindness to all, saying: ‘I have been

busy since early morning and am tired. I do not feel like

speaking at all and wish to go out for a walk.’ After a short

talk in which He encouraged the friends to establish love

and harmony among themselves and to make every effort

in the Cause of God, He walked to Broadway and then to

Central Park. He was not pleased with the dense popula-

tion and the height of the buildings, saying: ‘These are

injurious to the public’s health. This population should be

in two cities, the buildings should be lower and the streets

should be tree-lined as they are in Washington. How can

these two places compare?’

Indeed, the condition of New York City is strange and

its population so large that in addition to surface streets,

there are three railway lines running the entire length of

the city; one underground, another on the surface and a

third above the streets on bridges about two stories high.

These railway lines are continuously filled with people and

are their mode of transportation. On some of the streets,

automobiles and carriages have to stop for some 10 to 15

minutes because of the congestion until the traffic officers

give them permission to continue.

Most buildings are from 17 to 18 stories high and each

floor has some 20 to 30 apartments, most of which have

bedrooms, a living room, a dining room, bathrooms with

hot and cold running water and many comforts.

There was a large gathering this evening at Mr and Mrs

Kinney’s attended by both old and new friends. The Mas-

ter’s talk was mainly admonitions to the friends about love

and unity among themselves and the propagation of the

divine Cause. The hearts and souls were ignited by the fire

of the love of God and their tongues praised the Beloved.

Friday, November 22, 1912

[New York]

The Master spent the morning until noon at His residence.

In the afternoon He went to a gathering at the home of Mrs

Krug. The meeting with such eager friends was very enjoy-

able. A feature of the afternoon was the visit from a Chris-

tian minister. He was a just and fair-minded man who

visited with the Master before the meeting in a separate

room. His first question to the Master was, ‘What are the

new teachings in this Cause?’ The Master replied, ‘The

fundamental principles of all religions are one. They are

unchangeable and do not differ. This is what Christ meant

when He said, “I am not come to destroy the law of the

Torah but to promote it.”’[[376]](#endnote-376)

The minister: ‘Yes, I understand. Do you mean that at

the beginning the followers of all the religions were pure

and undefiled but grew polluted and negligent?’

The Master: ‘If there is no change or alteration, then

there is no renewal. Not until night falls will a new day

dawn. If the religion of Moses had not changed, Christ

would not have appeared.’

The minister: ‘Thank you, I understand this well. Now

tell me, will there be another cycle after this Bahá’í cycle?’

The Master: ‘The sovereignty of God has no beginning

and no end and the outpouring of His bounties is endless.’

The minister said, with relief, ‘Now my doubts are wholly

removed with nothing left but certainty.’

He was so sincere and humble that the Master was

pleased with him and said, ‘I wanted to give detailed

answers to each of your questions but you quickly realized

the outcome of each answer right from the beginning. Thus

must a person have aptitude and a pure motive.’

Appearing at the meeting, the Master held the minister’s

hand and praised him very highly as an example of justice.

To the friends He said: ‘Beware, beware lest you follow your

prejudices and selfish interests. You must always be just in

all matters and investigate the truth.’

This evening in similar language the Master vividly

described the harmfulness of prejudice, alienation and

disunity and the advantages of love and friendship, con-

cluding with strong appeals to the friends to propagate the

guidance given by God and to associate in a spirit of love

and kindness with all denominations and the servants of

God.

Saturday, November 23, 1912

[New York]

The friends arranged a banquet in commemoration of the

Day of the Covenant and the journey of the beloved of all

hearts. Today many came to the Master with bouquets of

flowers in their hands. The banquet was held in the ball-

room of New York’s Grand Northern Hotel. The hall was

decorated similarly to that in Washington with festoons,

banners, ornaments and exquisite screens, with the Great-

est Name suspended above all on the stage in its customary

calligraphy.

In the center of the ballroom were two rectangular

tables, between which was another large table exquisitely

set. Around these tables on both sides were placed small

circular tables bedecked with colorful flowers, a variety of

sweets and crystal glassware. The electric lighting reflected

the glassware and caused the whole room to shine bril-

liantly. More than three hundred guests, formally attired,

attended. Several friends and specifically Miss Lali Lloyd

served at the banquet.

When the Master appeared, all rose from their seats and

with smiling faces cried out, ‘Alláh-u-Abhá!’ Many of the

hotel guests saw the banquet and were astonished to see the

grandeur of the Master and the sincerity and enthusiasm

of the friends. After the Master took His seat, Mr Hoar, on

behalf of the Bahá’ís, read an address of welcome express-

ing obedience and firmness in the Covenant. The Master

rose and responded with an address about the divine

teachings and the oneness of humanity. He then walked

around the tables and perfumed the heads and faces of the

friends with attar of rose. When He returned to His chair,

the friends, accompanied by the piano, sang songs of praise

to Him.

Later the Master spoke about the wars and massacres of

the nations and the need for the teachings of the Greatest

Name. He encouraged all towards peace, harmony and

sincere love for all the people of the world.[[377]](#endnote-377) After His talk,

the Consul General, Mr Topakyan, and others gave short

speeches praising ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

This evening’s banquet was so grand that the hotel staff

were curious to know about the Cause. They came to see

the Master to ask about the banquet and why so many

distinguished Americans were praising and glorifying a

person from the East. Indeed, it was a banquet for a king

and a source of awakening to every person of insight.

Two photographs were taken with a good quality glass

and special lighting. Although the photographs do not

show the entire group, they tell much about the banquet.[[378]](#endnote-378)

Sunday, November 24, 1912

[New York]

A gathering of black Bahá’ís was held at the home of Mrs

Kinney. They had been invited by the New York Bahá’ís

to attend the banquet of the Covenant but when the propri-

etor of the hotel heard about it, he was not pleased. The

more the friends endeavored to persuade him, the more

vehement was his refusal. He said, ‘If the people see that

one colored person has entered my hotel, no respectable

person will ever set foot in it and my business will go to the

winds.’ Such is the depth of prejudice between blacks and

whites. Since it was impossible to invite the black Bahá’ís

to the banquet, the friends arranged today’s feast for their

black brothers. Many white women came forward to serve

their black guests, showering them with love. The Master

approved of this meeting very much and He said:

Today you have carried out the laws of the Blessed Beauty

and have truly acted according to the teachings of the

Supreme Pen. Behold what an influence and effect the

words of Bahá’u’lláh have had upon the hearts, that hating

and shunning have been forgotten and that prejudices

have been obliterated to such an extent that you arose to

serve one another with great sincerity.

The Master’s words made a great impression. The meeting

embodied the grandeur of the Covenant and demonstrated

the power and influence of the Cause in uniting, in sincer-

ity and love, two races of humanity.

In the afternoon the children who had earlier seen the

Master on the way from school, had been so attracted and

had asked to see Him, came to visit Him. He spoke to them

with deep affection and kindness, asking about their health

and welfare. To each He gave candies and flowers and then

sprinkled them with attar of rose. He then gave them

kindly counsels and encouraged them to acquire knowl-

edge, science, good morals and sincerity, saying:

I hope that you will be educated as you ought to be and

that each of you will become the pride of your family. May

God assist you to acquire divine knowledge in the school

of the world of humanity. I shall pray for you and beg

assistance for you. Truly, the hearts of the children are

very pure. This was why Christ said, ‘Be ye like chíl-

dren.’[[379]](#endnote-379) Praise be to God who created you illumined

children. Praise be to the Lord who hath created His

creatures perfectly. God has created you as human beings

so that you may daily acquire better morals and human

virtues. You must obey your parents so that they may be

pleased with you, and so that God will be pleased with you,

and that you may become the children of the Kingdom

and mirror forth the words of Christ.

Although these young visitors were children, they took their

leave in an attitude of sincerity, reverence and attraction

that astonished all.

This evening ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at a public meeting of

the friends on the underlying unity of creation and the

oneness of humanity. His sweet words and explanations

attracted the hearts and souls, as in other meetings, leaving

them much attached to the Center of the Covenant.

Monday, November 25, 1912

[New York]

Some of the friends came to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s residence early

this morning, asking that they be admitted into His pres-

ence during His prayers so they could be blessed and their

souls cleansed. As soon as they reached Him they fell into

transports of joy, awe-struck at the august spirit of that

moment.

Later a Christian minister came into His presence in the

utmost humility and, weeping, held the Master’s *‘abá* in his

hands and begged that his wife and children be healed.

The Master showered him with kindness, consoled him and

prayed for him. Although the minister was not a Bahá’í, he

showed the reverence and respect to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that is

usually reserved for Christ.

The Master’s fame, grandeur and holiness has spread

so far that in every city of the United States of America

prominent people become in His presence like humble

servants, while knowledgeable and well-known scholars

refer to Him as the Prophet of the East and the Messenger

of Peace, even though He has always forbidden the use of

such terms for Himself in writing or speech. He always

explains to them His servitude to the Threshold of the

Abhá Beauty.

As the multitude grew, and the Master could not easily

see everyone individually, He went downstairs to apologize

for not being able to see them owing to the volume of His

work, His preoccupation with other matters and His fatigue

and frailty. He prayed for all and inspired and encouraged

the friends to put all their energy into propagating and

spreading the fragrances of God.

In the afternoon, the Master was invited to two meetings.

The first was at the Women’s Club of New York where He

spoke on the education of women, their acquisition of good

morals and the equality of their rights. The audience was

interested and excited and everyone came to shake His

hand, begging confirmation that they might better serve

and acquire human perfections.

The Master then went to Mrs Cochran’s home where

most of the visitors were newcomers who had not previously

been in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s presence. He appealed to them to

abandon harmful prejudices and to acquire heavenly

virtues and eternal perfections through spiritual power.

The address appeared to breathe a new spirit into all those

present.[[380]](#endnote-380)

Tuesday, November 26, 1912

[New York]

In the morning, after revealing Tablets and granting

interviews, the Master joined the gathering of the friends

with these words:

I always derive great pleasure from being with you. I shall

always remember these gatherings. I shall never forget

them. If I cannot see each one of you individually every

day that should not undermine our real love. See how

much work I have to do! It is more than a week since I

received this letter from my sister, the Greatest Holy Leaf

[Bahíyyih Khánum], and other members of the household,

but I have not had the opportunity to open it yet. I was

looking for another letter when I came upon this un-

opened letter. Then I heard that you were waiting here

and I came downstairs to see you because I have no time

to see you individually. In spite of this, if anyone has an

urgent matter I will see them privately, even if only for a

few minutes. Had I time I would always be with you. My

happiness lies in seeing you, for in your faces are apparent

the glad tidings of the Abhá Kingdom and in your hearts

heavenly love and attraction. If outwardly we fail to meet,

it does not weaken our real love. God willing, you shall all

be assisted and immersed in the sea of bounty and the

favor of Bahá’u’lláh.

In the afternoon at a meeting of the friends, the Master

turned towards Mrs Krug and said:

A believer in Bahá’u’lláh is he who is firm in the Covenant.

He who is firm in the divine Covenant is a believer, a

servant of the believers, a seeker of Bahá’í harmony and

unity and a promoter of fellowship and amity among the

friends of God. Is it possible that one can accept a book

and refuse to accept him who teaches it? Is it possible to

accept the sun and to reject its rays? He who rejects the

rays is a rejector of the sun, too.

Furthermore, many say, ‘We have no need of divine

Manifestations; we ourselves have direct communication

with God.’ They do not know that the divine Manifesta-

tions are the bright rays of the Sun of Truth and a means

of educating the realities of man. Therefore, he who rejects

the bounty of the Sun of Truth and thinks himself not in

need of it is like the one who says he is not in need of God

and rejects both God and reality, in spite of the fact that

all creation is receiving incessant bounty from God and is

dependent on Him, as the body is dependent upon the

soul.

In the evening the Master spoke to the gathering on man’s

ability to understand the reality of certain things using his

intelligence because man’s intelligence is the discoverer of

reality. For instance, through the process of reasoning,

intelligence can comprehend the existence of God and

understand that this magnificent universe cannot exist

without a Creator. These works are not without a Maker

and this garden of creation cannot exist without a Gar-

dener.

Wednesday, November 27, 1912

[New York]

In the morning the Master gave several talks to the Bahá’ís,

one of which was the following:

The purpose of the divine Manifestations has been the

education of holy souls. Some have imagined that their

purpose was to found temples and churches or to establish

a new nation or to gain personal fame and that for these

considerations they accepted severe degradation and

became targets for the arrow of fate. These are idle fancies

because those holy Beings knew well that the dominion of

God existed when there was no trace of them and that it

shall continue to exist when no trace of them remains.

Thus fame or oblivion, honor or degradation are one and

the same to those Gems of existence. Indeed, their ulti-

mate desire is selfless devotion to the one true God and

absolute nothingness in His court. Their only motive has

been the education of blessed souls and sanctified beings

who are the foundation of divine education and promoters

of the most great guidance and the supreme favor.

The people of Bahá must endeavor day and night to

promulgate this lofty purpose. They must endeavor and

strive strenuously to educate themselves and other sancti-

fied souls. They must awaken the peoples and nations of

the world and free them from dogmas and imitations.

They must pass beyond the world of names and fix their

gaze on realities and inner meanings.

At the end of the meeting some friends gave Him written

petitions asking for spiritual assistance. He said, ‘We have

received so many letters that there is no time to read them;

how, then, is it possible to answer them?’

In the afternoon again the friends and seekers arrived

in groups. The Master’s talk mainly concerned the need

for both a spiritual and a material civilization. ‘The coming

of age and maturity of man’, He said, ‘will appear when

these two civilizations become entwined.’

The Master spoke to a leader of the socialists on econ-

omic issues, the brotherhood of humanity and the Bahá’í

teachings. The man was overwhelmed to hear such solu-

tions to questions upon which the well-being of the world

depends.

The Master spoke to a group of women about education,

training, virtues and the rights of women. In brief, every

day and night, to a greater and greater extent, the faces

shone with the fire of the love of God and the souls beamed

with the radiance of the beauty of the Beloved.

Thursday, November 28, 1912

[New York]

Several friends came at dawn to the Master’s residence,

begging admission into His presence and saying that

watching Him at prayer would be its own spiritual lesson.

We were astounded to see how eager they were, proof that

the power of the Word of God has dispelled old habits and

opened the gates of bounty such that at so early an hour

these souls had taken leave of their comfortable beds and

sought refuge at the majestic gate of the Center of the

Covenant.

These were the last few remaining days of the Master’s

sojourn in America as He planned to leave for England

soon. At dawn and in the evening a stream of believers and

prominent people, in a spiritual and prayerful attitude,

came into His presence. They came to offer supplications,

to turn to the Eternal Face, to look upon the Dawning Place

of the Divine Covenant and to cling to the mantle of His

grace and favor. At every moment the cries and ardor of

His lovers increased and the fire of love in their breasts

glowed more fiercely. There was not a moment’s rest day

or night for the Master. He was either delivering addresses

at various public and private gatherings or talking to a

friend in His private room. He gave joy to every sad one,

hope to the hopeless and was a flame of fire to the heedless

while guiding those who strive onto the right path.

Today the Master’s public address concerned the spiri-

tual capacity of the Americans. He said:

Although they are engrossed in material civilization and

physical pursuits, still, unlike people in some European

countries, they are not wholly devoid of spiritual suscepti-

bilities. They are seekers and desire to investigate reality.

They wish for peace and tranquillity and they desire

fellowship and love among humanity.

In the evening He expressed His happiness at the spiritual-

ity and services of the friends in their efforts to diffuse the

fragrances of God.

Friday, November 29, 1912

[New York]

At the request of Mrs Emery, the Master moved to her

home. The time of His departure was drawing near. On

reaching the house, He said, ‘Today I must rest for I am

extremely tired.’ Nevertheless, the friends and seekers

continued to come to visit Him at the homes of Mrs Emery

and Mrs Kinney. One of His discourses today was this:

One of the bounties of religion and faith is the attainment

of peace of the heart and soul and the joy of spirit and

conscience. This station can only be gained through faith

and understanding. Peace of mind is the soul’s delight, as

it is the means of acquiring that extraordinary state in

which man finds happiness in times of affliction and

tranquillity in trouble. In spite of poverty he acquires a

sense of affluence and in a state of riches and power he

offers help and protection to the weak because the well-

assured soul is like a tree which has strong roots and is not

shaken by any event. This cannot be attained except

through complete faith and understanding. How many are

the people who have all means of comfort, luxury, security

and wealth and every means of enjoyment and good living,

yet they have no peace of mind and are ever anxious and

uneasy! If outwardly they are happy one day, they become

depressed and anxious the next. If they find physical rest

at one moment, they face suffering and misfortune the

next, until the time comes to leave this world, then they

will do so with utmost regret and distress.

But those who have faith in God act according to the

divine teachings; even though they need a little food to

survive, they will pass their lives in the utmost happiness

and joy. This is one of the bounties of religion; this is

eternal happiness, life everlasting and real affluence.

Without this all riches lead to woe and all power and

strength are the cause of hardship and affliction. There-

fore, offer praise unto God that you are endowed with this

imperishable wealth and have attained this supreme

blessing.[[381]](#endnote-381)

Today some of the friends offered money to the Master but

He would not accept it despite their pleading. Instead He

told them, ‘Distribute it among the poor on my behalf. It

will be as though I have given it to them. But the most

acceptable gift to me is the unity of the believers, service

to the Cause of God, diffusion of the divine fragrances and

adherence to the counsels of the Abhá Beauty.’

The believers were saddened because He did not accept

their gifts. However, since these were the last days of His

visit and He was about to leave, the New York Bahá’ís

collected several gifts for the women of the holy household

and for the Greatest Holy Leaf.

Saturday, November 30, 1912

[New York]

Some of the believers agreed among themselves to go to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and cling to His robe until He accepted their

gifts. They came and begged He accept their offerings. The

Master called them, saying:

I am most grateful for your services; in truth you have

served me. You have extended hospitality. Night and day

you have been ready to serve and to diffuse the divine

fragrances. I shall never forget your services, for you have

no purpose but the will of God and you desire no station

but entry into the Kingdom of God. Now you have brought

presents for the members of my family. They are most

acceptable and excellent but better than all these are the

gifts of the love of God which remain preserved in the

treasuries of the heart. These gifts are evanescent but those

are eternal; these jewels must be kept in boxes and vaults

and they will eventually perish but those jewels remain in

the treasuries of the heart and will remain throughout the

world of God for eternity. Thus I will take to them your

love, which is the greatest of all gifts. In our house they do

not wear diamond rings nor do they keep rubies. That

house is sanctified above such adornments.

I, however, have accepted your gifts; but I entrust them

to you for you sell and send the proceeds to the fund for

the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in Chicago.

When the friends continued to plead with Him, He said:

‘I want to take from you a present which will endure in the

eternal world and a jewel which belongs to the treasuries

of the heart. This is better.’

No matter how much the friends supplicated and

pleaded, He would not accept their gifts and instead asked

them all to contribute towards the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár fund.

He did this everywhere He traveled.

Mrs Goodall and Mrs Cooper asked the Master, as He

had not accepted their gifts—which would have drawn

blessings and confirmations upon them—to give them

permission to render Him some service on His travels.

They even wrote letters to some of His companions, asking

them to intercede on their behalf that they might render

a service and share the Master’s travel expenses. However,

He would not accept their offer and refused all entreaties.

There was a public meeting at the home of Mrs Kinney.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke about love, loyalty, unity, the amity

of the believers, spreading the Word of God, the promo-

tion of universal peace and the brotherhood of humanity.

The excitement and joy of the believers were beyond

description.

Sunday, December 1, 1912

[New York]

Some of the friends came to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá very early in

the morning. They saw Him at prayer and heard from His

lips the prayers and verses of the Supreme Pen.

At the Master’s residence, streams of visitors were hon-

ored to attain His presence and grateful for His blessings

and favors. Aflame with the love of God, they showed

reverence towards His Cause.

The Master’s talk concerned the capacity of the Ameri-

cans to bring about universal peace. He said:

As Americans are removed from most political difficulties

they live at ease in isolation and, compared to most other

regions, are more desirous of peace and harmony, so they

can succeed in bringing about universal peace provided

they arise as they should and the nation and government

put forth strenuous efforts and, through spiritual power,

carry out the divine teachings and principles. The matter

of peace, in the religion of Bahá’u’lláh, is a firm command

and a religious obligation. It is not the resolution of a

congress or the edict of a committee of some nation or

country influenced by selfish desires and subject to amend-

ments. Because it is a fundamental principle, it will inevi-

tably come to pass. As the denial of Christ and opposition

to Him are considered infidelity in religious terminology,

the rejection of peace has the same status in the religion

of Bahá’u’lláh.

No affair in the world succeeds without sacrifice. Up to

now twenty thousand persons have been sacrificed for this

Cause. The Bahá’ís have accepted every affliction and

persecution. For forty years I was in a prison for promul-

gating universal peace and the oneness of humanity.

Because these teachings were contrary to the interests and

the despotism of the Sháh of Persia and the Sulṭán of

Turkey, they arose in opposition and oppression. With all

their power they girded their loins to uproot and efface the

Cause of God. But the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh was victorious

and the fame of His Revelation spread worldwide. Every

opponent was overthrown and humiliated because this

Cause was supported by the All-Powerful and because His

teachings answer the need of the age to promote human

happiness and provide supreme guidance.

In the afternoon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to a group of Chris-

tian ministers, saying:

The teachings of Christ are forgotten. Consider that Christ

commanded Peter to sheathe his sword. He also said,

‘Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to

him the other also’ [Matt. 5:39]. But now, contrary to these

teachings, see how Christians are killing one another.

Christian leaders considered the shedding of the blood of

each other a lawful act. What blood has been shed over the

conflict between Protestants and Catholics!

This evening the Master spoke at a public meeting at Mrs

Kinney’s home about superstitions, dogmas and the blind

imitation of the various religions, concluding with an

explanation of the teachings of the Abhá Beauty. As supper

was served, and as He had at other times, the Master

invited some of the friends to His table to enjoy the Persian

dishes. They were overjoyed to see their Master’s smile and

to hear His stories.

Monday, December 2, 1912

[New York]

After the Master had finished His morning prayers, the

friends began to come to visit Him such that by midday the

Master’s residence was filled with people. He went down-

stairs and spoke to them:

I have stayed a long time with you in New York. My stay

in other towns has not been a tenth as long. I have met

with you day and night, individually and collectively;

conveyed to you the admonitions of Bahá’u’lláh; delivered

to you the heavenly glad tidings; and explained the means

of human progress. I have elucidated the harmful effects

of prejudices and imitations and the impurity of selfish

desires, expounded the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and

clarified the meanings of the divine proofs and questions.

The time for my departure is near and I am making

arrangements for the voyage. Therefore I shall not be able

to attend every meeting, so I shall bid you farewell. I am

pleased with you and grateful for your services. Truly, you

have shown great kindness and extended to me the utmost

hospitality. I supplicate to the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh to

shower upon you His assistance and confirmations so that

day by day you may be more assisted to defend the rights

of Bahá’u’lláh, that your hearts may become more enlight-

ened, your morals heavenly, your souls transported with

joy and your conduct proof of your faith and certitude.

May you be in the utmost sanctity, be completely attracted

and turned to the Abhá Kingdom and become like brilliant

lights. May you become evident signs of the Blessed

Beauty and proofs of the reality of Bahá’u’lláh so that you

may illuminate the world. And when people look at your

deeds and conduct they will see the traces of holiness and

severance and will behold heavenly brightness in you and

all will testify that ‘these people are truly proofs of the

reality of Bahá’u’lláh’, and that ‘Bahá’u’lláh is undoubtedly

the Sun of Truth who has educated these people through

His power’. May they see divine lights in your behavior,

find the signs of the love of God, observe praiseworthy

conduct in you and seek the virtues of the world of man

within you. You must each become the proclaimer of truth

and shine from the horizon of the world of humanity like

brilliant stars. This is what is meant by defending the

rights of Bahá’u’lláh; this is the purpose of the Blessed

Beauty in suffering afflictions and accepting confinement

in the Most Great Prison. He bore all afflictions and

difficulties and ascended to the Kingdom of God a pris-

oner so that we would act according to His teachings and

arise and carry out that which is consistent with faithful-

ness; that we may act upon His exhortation and raise the

call of the Abhá Kingdom and proclaim the light of the

bounties of truth, so that the waves of the Most Great

Ocean may surge high, this world may become the mirror

of the world above, this bed of thorns may turn into a

flower garden and this region of dust may reflect the All-

Glorious Paradise.

In the afternoon He said:

We have sown some seeds and hope that the sun of favor

will shine upon them, the rain of mercy will pour down,

and the breezes of generosity will waft over them, because

America has receptivity.

In the evening, He spoke to a gathering of the friends and

said:

I supplicate and implore that the clouds of mercy may

shower upon you and the Sun of Truth may shine upon

you so that you may attain to the purpose of the holy

Manifestations of God. This is my supplication because

you are the beloved ones of the Blessed Beauty and the

servants of the Greatest Name. I undertook this voyage in

order to see you and, God willing, you will come to the

Holy Land and we shall meet there in that land which was

trodden by the sacred feet of the Prophets of God.[[382]](#endnote-382)

Tuesday, December 3, 1912

[New York]

Group after group of older and newer believers sadly and

tearfully came to see the Master, encircling Him and

weeping at His imminent departure. Their hearts were sad

and overcome with anguish. They confessed to Him their

negligence and shortcomings in serving the Cause and

their failure to obey His instructions and begged His assis-

tance and blessings, confirmations and favor.

Today the believers were so overcome by emotion that

even a stone would be affected. Their anguish would melt

any heart. Indeed, in His presence they bowed and knelt

so deeply that one could not distinguish between their

heads and their feet.

There were two large meetings this afternoon and

evening. One was at the home of Mrs Krug, which was filled

with many people who had come just to be in ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s presence. The Master’s talk was this:

He is God! Praise be to God that Mrs Krug has been the

cause of your gathering in this meeting where you are

engaged in mentioning God and in adducing proofs. I

hope that day by day you will become more attracted,

become more enlightened and make extraordinary spiri-

tual progress. You should learn from one another so that

you may know how to teach the Cause and guide the souls.

Your hearts must be so attracted that when a question is

heard you will be able to give a conclusive answer and the

Holy Spirit may speak through your tongue. You must be

assured and confident that the favors and confirmations

of the Blessed Beauty will make a drop into an ocean, a

seed into a fruitful tree, an atom into a luminous sun and

a stone into a brilliant jewel. His favors are great, His

treasuries inexhaustible and His bounties infinite. God,

Who has bestowed favors upon others, shall surely bestow

His favors upon you. I supplicate at the Court of the

Almighty and beg that mighty confirmations may surround

you, that from your tongues may flow irrefutable proofs

and that your hearts become recipients for the splendors

of the Sun of Reality. May your thoughts expand and your

stations be exalted, so that you may be able to diffuse the

fragrances of God and to make prodigious progress in the

world of man. Unless a man acquires perfection for him-

self, he cannot teach others how to attain such perfection;

and unless he gets life for himself, he cannot give life to

others. We must therefore try first to acquire the bounties

of the Kingdom for ourselves and attain life everlasting,

and then endeavor to quicken the nations and give life to

the world. Thus, we must constantly pray to His Holy

Court and seek His eternal bounties. We must acquire

pure hearts like unto mirrors, so that the lights of the Sun

of Reality may shine. Every night and day we must suppli-

cate to Him and beg for His assistance, saying: ‘O Lord,

we are weak, make us strong; we are ignorant, make us

wise. O Lord, we are poor, give us the wealth of the King-

dom. O God, we are dead, bestow upon us everlasting life;

we are in utter lowliness, exalt us in Thy Kingdom. Should

Thy heavenly confirmations surround us, each one of us

can be a luminous star, otherwise we become lower than

dust. O God, help us; make us victorious; assist us to

overcome self and desire; and deliver us from the world

of nature. O God! Quicken us through the breaths of the

Holy Spirit so that we may arise to serve Thee, engage

ourselves in worshipping Thee and broadcast the signs of

Thy Kingdom with utmost truthfulness and sincerity. Thou

art the Powerful, the Mighty, the Generous and the Com-

passionate.’[[383]](#endnote-383)

From this meeting the Master went to Mrs Kinney’s

home.[[384]](#endnote-384) The rush of friends and seekers was greater than

ever before and all hearts were aflame. The Master ex-

horted them to exert their utmost to propagate the divine

principles and to diffuse the fragrances of God. He ex-

plained the new teachings and the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.

After the meeting, the believers gathered around Him. He

bade farewell to each, bestowed His favor upon all and then

went upstairs.[[385]](#endnote-385)

Wednesday, December 4, 1912

[New York]

Among the new seekers who met the Master today was a

rabbi to whom the Master spoke extensively about the

Torah, saying:

The verse ‘God created heaven and earth in six days’ has

reference to the Day of God and the spiritual creation, for

there was no day or night before the creation of this

heaven and earth. And the meaning of ‘the water’ in the

verse of the Torah ‘The spirit of God moved upon the face

of the water like a bird’ is the water of knowledge which

is the source of heavenly life. It is written that God said,

‘Let us make man in our image’; this means in the image

of divine names and attributes, for God is holy above all

physical images and is pure and sanctified above all forms

or likenesses.

Elucidating further the nature of biblical language and the

mysteries of the holy books, He explained the signs and

prophecies regarding the promised Manifestation. The

rabbi was impressed and acknowledged the Master’s in-

sight.

Later some prominent people, including professors,

came to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. They told him about Professor

Colombo who had written an article about the Mashriqu’l-

Adhkár near Chicago in which he referred to the contribu-

tions of the Eastern Bahá’ís towards its construction as one

of the indications of the greatness of the Cause. The Master

spoke with them about the dogmas and blind imitations of

the priests and the superstitions of the religious leaders.

At the Kinney’s home in the afternoon, a number of Mr

Kinney’s students met the Master. Some came during the

meeting and others after it. The Master spoke to them

about understanding the holy Book:

The object of reading and reciting is to understand the

inner significance of the verses and mysteries of the Book.

Had reading sufficed, all the Jewish people should have

acknowledged Christ but as they lacked understanding of

the mysteries and the inner meanings, they were deprived

of the bounty of believing in Him. They interpreted the

book in a literal or outward manner and did not find the

appearance of Christ to conform to their traditions, imita-

tions and the prevailing customs of their people, so they

denied and rejected Him. Hence, they remained heedless

and ignorant of divine realities and mysteries.

This evening there was a large gathering at the Theosophi-

cal Society of New York. The subject of the Master’s address

was ‘The Eternity of God’s Kingdom’: material existence,

the betterment of the world through the divine favors, the

guidance provided by the Manifestations of God and their

reflection upon the world of creation. ‘This is the law of

God, and thou shalt not find any change in it.’[[386]](#endnote-386) This is a

translation of the Master’s address:

He is God! Those who are uninformed of the world of

reality, and do not study created things, cannot investigate

and discover hidden truths. They only have a superficial

idea of things, are embodiments of ignorance and blind

imitators. They believe that which they have heard from

their fathers and do not have any knowledge or under-

standing of their own and are bereft of hearing and in-

sight. They rely on traditions and tales and follow the path

of their ancestors. They imagine that God’s dominion is

accidental, that this world has existed for but six thousand

or eight thousand years and that before that time God had

neither creation nor sovereignty.

Should this notion be accepted, then, the Lord forbid,

the Divine Reality is to be regarded as accidental, not

eternal, whereas as long as there was God, He must have

had a creation; as long as there was light, there must have

been recipients of that light, because light cannot become

manifest without illumining its recipients. So likewise

without a creation, the existence of the Creator cannot be

proven.

The Divine Reality presupposes a creation, the All-

Provider presupposes a recipient of His bounty. To imag-

ine a God without His creatures is like imagining a

king without a country and a people. A king must have a

kingdom. Could there be a king without a country and

subjects? It is an impossibility. If there had been a time

when there were no country and no army, how could we

say there was a king at that time? Thus he must have had

his people. Thus, as the Divine Eternity is infinite, His

creation is also without beginning and without end. From

everlasting God was the Creator, the All-Provider, the

Quickener and the Bestower. There was no time when His

attributes did not express themselves. Cessation is wholly

inconceivable. The sun is the sun because of its light and

heat. If we conceive the cessation of heat and light, we

predicate the non-existence of the sun. If it had no light

and no heat, it was not the sun. Likewise, when we say that

at one time God had no creation and no recipient of His

grace, we assert that there was no Creator. This is denying

the eternity of the Divine Entity and regarding Him as an

accidental being. It is obvious that this endless universe,

this mighty handiwork of God, this vast firmament, these

gigantic globes are not merely six or seven thousand years

old. They are ancient. The reference in the Torah to six

thousand years has an inner meaning and should not be

taken literally. It is stated that God created the heavens

and the earth in six days. If before such a creation there

was no sun, no east and no west, how was it possible to

determine the length of each day without the existence of

a sun? Thus the statement has a different meaning.

The sovereignty of God is eternal and not accidental.

His creation, His Kingdom, His Army are coexistent and

will continue as such. The bestowals and bounties of God

are constant and are uninterrupted. Like the light and

heat of the sun, they have no cessation. The holy Manifes-

tations of God, Who are the dawning places of divine

bounties, have ever been and shall ever be. The wisdom

and purpose of their appearance is to cause the image and

likeness of God to appear in the world of man.

The reality of man possesses two aspects: one being the

image and likeness of God and the other is the material

and satanic aspect. Besides the physical body, man has a

reality which is called the spiritual body, or the heavenly

creation or form. When man says, ‘I saw’, who is it that says

‘I saw’? Clearly it is something besides the physical body.

When one thinks, it is like consulting with oneself. It is

clear that there is a second entity which is being consulted.

It is not the physical body that advises man ‘to do’ or ‘not

to do’ a thing and informs him whether it is profitable or

harmful.

Frequently a person firmly decides on a course of

action, but later, upon some reflection, changes his mind.

The reason is that he has consulted a reality, has become

aware of the harm involved and has changed his former

decision.

In addition to this, man journeys in the world of

dreams. Though the body is here, the soul wanders in the

East and West of the world. Who is it that makes these

journeys? It is the second entity. Although a man has died

and his body is under the earth, one’s soul can, in a dream,

ask him questions and receive answers. What is it that is

talked to? It is the second reality. Hence, it is clear that

besides the physical body man possesses another reality.

Though the body grows weak, becomes fat or defective,

still that reality remains unaltered. In sleep the body of

man appears dead but that reality moves, understands,

talks and discovers. This reality is the spiritual form and

the heavenly temple, not the physical body. It reveals

hidden realities, comprehends things, discovers arts and

sciences, subdues electricity and other forces and commu-

nicates simultaneously with the East and the West. Plainly

it is not the body. If it had been the body, similar powers

and perfections should have existed in animals, for they

share our physical powers. Hence, it is the second reality

that reveals hidden realities, permeates the universe,

becomes informed of mysteries, leads to the Kingdom and

is a guide to the people of the world. It is this reality that

distinguishes man from the animal. But this reality is in

a state between the divine world and that of the animal.

If spiritual forces prevail, this human reality becomes the

noblest of all creatures and the possessor of the image and

likeness of God; but if the animal aspect predominates,

man becomes lower than animals because in man, animal

desires and passions are even stronger and more harmful.

For instance, anger, lust, struggle for existence, war,

contention, fraud, deception, greed and avarice are among

the imperfections of man but the necessary qualities in

animals. A crafty man without spiritual education is as the

fox. In the animal we find covetousness, aggression and

passion. These qualities are also in man. Since the reality

of man is comprehensive, his expression of these animal

qualities is more vehement. They are among the exigen-

cies of the world of nature and lead to the gloom of imper-

fections. They are the cause of utter degradation and

misfortune.

On the other hand, man is the repository of divine

perfections and heavenly favors that bring him eternal

happiness and everlasting honor. Such perfections as

justice, fidelity, truthfulness, purity, wisdom, piety, mercy,

bounty, love, amity, nobility and sagacity enable man to

comprehend the realities of things and unfold hidden

mysteries. Human reality is therefore between light and

darkness and has a threefold nature: the heavenly, the

human and the physical. The physical condition is dark-

ness upon darkness and the source of trouble, disgrace,

discord, bloodshed and war. The heavenly condition,

however, which is the zenith of the human aspect of man’s

nature, is light upon light and the means of acquiring

everlasting prosperity, peace and tranquillity, honor and

glory.

The holy divine Manifestations have appeared to make

it easy to replace the gloom of animality with the lights of

heavenly qualities and to change the imperfections of the

world of nature to the perfections of the spirit so that the

heavenly aspect may prevail, the image and likeness of

God may appear in the world of man and the divine

illumination and spiritual virtues may become manifest.

These holy dawning places are the Educators of the world

of existence and the Teachers of man. They deliver human

beings from the darkness of error and heedlessness and

the defects and vices of nature and lead them to the realm

of spiritual virtues and heavenly perfections. Those who

are ignorant become wise, those who are like animals

attain human perfections, the rapacious become angelic,

the tyrannical and proud become just and humble, so that

earthly man becomes heavenly, the human is changed into

the divine, the suckling child attains its maturity and the

poor and abased attain wealth and glory. If the holy

Manifestations had not appeared, all humanity would have

remained in a state of animality, if not worse. If the chil-

dren are not educated and are not trained in schools, they

will remain ignorant. If plains and hills are left to their

natural state, they will turn into jungles and forests which

will not bear sweet and luscious fruit, but when the gar-

dener takes control, flowers bloom, fruits appear and

prosperity sheds its blessings. Creation is a dreary forest

full of thorns under the yoke of nature and the holy Mani-

festations are the divine gardeners and the supreme

educators of the world of man who come to promote the

progress of the world of existence in order that the trees

of beings may continue to be verdant, may burst into fresh

foliage, may yield good fruits and may adorn the gardens

of the human realities. This divine bestowal of this heav-

enly education is continuous.

It is impossible that this great bounty should cease, that

this divine bestowal should end and that the Sun of Reality

should sink forever into a setting not followed by a sunrise,

a death not followed by a revival. How can the Sun of

Reality, shining from the divine world, remain set forever

and be precluded from educating the world of existence?

No, by God! The function of the sun is to give illumina-

tion. How can it set forever and its effulgence brought to

an end? Its bounty is eternal, its luster is ever manifest, its

rays are perpetually radiant, its breezes are continually

wafting and its bestowals are ever apparent. We must be

expectant and hopeful, turning our gaze in the direction

of His bountiful Kingdom that through the appearance of

these holy Manifestations humanity may attain the bless-

ings of the All-Glorious, that the earth be changed and the

contingent world may become a garden and a paradise of

delight. But the appearance of the divine Manifestation

must take place in the most perfect form and invested with

unparalleled powers and virtues. With a divine influence

and heavenly might He must be exalted above all else and

peerless in all His attributes, just as the sun is exalted

above other stars. Though every star and planet shines in

its place and gives light in the night, the sun has another

splendor and its radiance is greater. The Manifestation of

the bounty of God must also be like the physical sun so

that the world may be convinced that He is a divine

Teacher, an Educator of the world of man, a sun of reality

and the brightest Light shining from the realm on high.

His effulgence and influence must be inherent and not

acquired from other human beings, otherwise we would

say that others imparted such powers to Him. How can a

man, who is educated by other human beings, become the

educator of humanity at large? The Manifestations of the

bounty of God must be self-subsistent, not under the

shadow of others. He must be an educator, not educated

by others. He must be perfect, not deficient. He must be

independent of all, not dependent on training by others.

He must combine in Himself all perfections, unrestricted

by human limitations, so that He may be able to educate

humanity, dispel the gloom of ignorance, through divine

power change the world, bring about universal peace,

establish the oneness of humanity and unite the diverse

religions. I hope that the divine bounties and blessings

may shine brightly so that the lights of the Sun of Reality

may give luster to our eyes, illumination to our hearts and

joy to our souls and may ennoble our thoughts and grant

us eternal life. Then we may attain to the apex of the world

of man.

For nine months I have been touring America, calling

the people to the oneness of humanity. I have delivered

addresses in churches and large assemblies in many cities,

inviting the people to the oneness of mankind and to love

and unity. The people of America extended a cordial

welcome to me. In fact, Americans are a noble nation, with

capacity to acquire every virtue and investigate every truth.

Since I shall leave your shores tomorrow, I bid you

farewell. I pray that divine confirmations, heavenly glory

and eternal life may be granted to you, so that you may

reach the highest pinnacles of the world of man. I am most

grateful to you and shall never forget you. I shall ever

supplicate at the court of the Almighty and beg divine

assistance and heavenly bounty for you.[[387]](#endnote-387)

The Master’s talk enthused the audience and one by one

they came to Him to express their sincere thanks and

admiration. When they were told of His imminent depar-

ture, they became downcast. It was astonishing to witness

the deep sorrow of the friends and the lamentation of their

hearts as they contemplated their separation from Him.

Thursday, December 5, 1912

[New York]

A great number of believers from New York and other cities

came to the SS *Celtic* to bid farewell to their beloved. The

tears in their eyes bespoke of their great sorrow. The sobs

and lamentations of both the young and the old could be

heard from afar. Although the first class lounge was quite

large, it could not contain the crowd of believers. Some

were sitting and others standing outside the lounge. As He

moved among the friends, the Master spoke to them words

of exhortation and admonition, consoling their hearts as

He bade them farewell. He guided the sorrowing ones onto

the path of everlasting happiness and reminded them of

the glad tidings of the Abhá Kingdom until the time came

for the friends to depart. He then spoke His parting words:

He is God! This is our last day and my last meeting with

you. In a few minutes our steamer will leave these shores

and this is my last exhortation to you. I have repeatedly

spoken to you and invited you to realize the oneness of

humanity. I have impressed upon you that all human

beings are the servants of the same God and God is kind

to all; He provides for all and gives life to all. In the

presence of God all are His servants and His bounties are

equally distributed among all. We must also be kind to the

people of the world and forget all religious, racial, patri-

otic and political prejudices. The whole earth is one globe.

All nations are one family. All are the servants of one God.

Therefore he who causes grief to another’s heart has

sinned against the Lord. God desired the joy of all hearts.

He wishes that every individual may pass his life in utmost

happiness and felicity and should abandon religious,

racial, patriotic and political prejudices. Praise be to God!

Your eyes are illumined, your ears are opened and your

hearts are informed. You must not entertain these preju-

dices and differences. You must look to the bounty of God.

He is the real Shepherd who is kind to the whole flock.

When God is kind to all, is it befitting that we, who are His

servants, should engage in war and conflict with one

another? No, by God! We must be grateful to God and the

way to express gratitude for His bounty is to love each

other, show amity and affection and evince friendship and

kindness toward all.

In brief, beware, lest you offend any heart or engage

in backbiting. You must be friends to all and regard all as

your own kith and kin. Your supreme object must always

be to bring pleasure to a heart, to give food to the hungry,

clothes to the naked, honor to the degraded, help to the

helpless and comfort to the distressed. This is the way to

win the good pleasure of God. This is that which is condu-

cive to eternal happiness. This is the light of the world of

man. As I wish eternal honor for you, so I exhort you with

these words.

Behold what is happening in the Balkans! Human

blood is being spilt! How many children are rendered

orphans! How ruthlessly properties are looted! What a fire

is aflame! God has created them to love one another but

they are shedding one another’s blood. God created them

to help and assist one another but they are engaged in

plunder and destruction. Instead of being a cause of

comfort to their kind, they persecute one another. Make

your motives lofty and exert with heart and soul every

effort; perchance, the light of universal peace may shine

forth and this gloom of estrangement be dispelled. May

all human beings become one family and every individual

seek the welfare of all. May the East help the West and the

West assist the East, for the whole earth is one country and

all its people are under the favor and protection of one

Shepherd.

Behold! What persecutions have the Prophets of God

suffered so that human beings may love one another and

cling to the cord of love and unity. These sanctified souls

ever sacrificed themselves for this aim. But behold! How

ignorant is man! In spite of all these sufferings, people are

warring against one another. Notwithstanding all the

exhortations, they are massacring one another. What

ignorance! What heedlessness! What gloom! They have a

God who deals kindly and equally with all yet they move

and act against His good pleasure. He is benevolent and

merciful to all but they are in utmost hatred and war. He

gives life to all but they bring death. He brings prosperity

to the countries but they destroy one another’s households.

How heedless they are! Your duties are different because

you have been informed of the divine mysteries and your

eyes and ears are opened. You are to deal kindly with all

the people of the world. You have no excuse before God.

You know that the pleasure of God lies in the welfare and

prosperity of all. You have hearkened unto His words of

advice, His exhortations and His teachings. You must love

all, even your enemies. To those who show you ill-will

show them your good-will. To those who oppose you be

a faithful friend. You should act according to these teach-

ings. Perchance, the abysmal gloom of war and bloodshed

may vanish; the light of God may shine forth; the East may

be enlightened; the West may be filled with fragrance; the

North and the South may embrace each other; and the

nations of the world may associate with one another in

utmost love and amity! Unless the world reaches this

station, it can find no rest, no enduring happiness.

But if men act according to these holy teachings, the

world of dust shall reflect the lights of the Kingdom and

the earth shall become the Abhá paradise, a garden of

blissful joy. I hope that each one of you will be assisted to

act according to these teachings so that, like a brilliant

star, you may give light to humanity and like a spirit move

the body of the contingent world. This is eternal glory!

This is everlasting happiness! This is the image and like-

ness of God and unto this I call you! I pray God that you

may attain it.[[388]](#endnote-388)

When the passengers and officers of the steamer heard this

address and saw the devotion of the friends, they were

overwhelmed and asked themselves, ‘What is it? Who is this

personage in whose presence the Americans stand with

such reverence and humility?’ Young and old alike were

like moths to a candle, circling about the light of the Cove-

nant.

One by one the friends came to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to shake

His hand, to take hold of the mantle of His grace and favor

and to supplicate His assistance and confirmation. Then,

in great sorrow, they left the ship. They stood on the wharf,

weeping and overcome by emotion, their heads bowed with

grief and their hands lifted towards the heavens in prayer

as they gazed their last at the Center of the Covenant. As

the steamer moved out to sea, their grief and sadness and

the fire of their devotion knew no bounds. The throng of

believers, stretching as far as the eye could see, waved

farewell to the Master, now far in the distance. And He

said:

Observe how the power of the Cause of God has created

a tumult in the hearts and what a revolution it has pro-

duced. See how the aid and assistance of the Abhá Beauty

have reached us constantly and invariably the lights of

victory have shone from the supreme horizon. These have

been from the promised confirmations of the Kingdom of

God and the assistance of the invisible sovereignty of the

Abhá Beauty, which He has promised clearly in the verse,

‘Verily, We behold you from Our realm of Glory, and shall

aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with

the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our

favored angels.’[[389]](#endnote-389)

The events that took place during ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s travels

in Europe and His return to the East are recorded in the

second volume of this book.

\* \* \*

A hundred thousand thanks and praises for the confirma-

tions of the Abhá Beauty and the bestowals of that essence

of faithfulness, the Center of the Covenant, that this lowly

servant was able to complete this first volume of the Kitáb-i-

Badáyi’u’l-Áthár in the year ah 1332 [at the end of ad 1913

]. With his own hand he wrote it and submitted it to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá (may the lives of His followers be a ransom

for His Covenant of faithfulness). In the year 1914 I was

commissioned to go to India to obtain permission to pub-

lish and distribute it. With the assistance of the friends Mr

Javan Mard Goshtasp and Mr Mehtar Isfandíyár Bah-

rám,[[390]](#endnote-390) I was able to publish it in 1914 in Bombay.

[Signed] Maḥmúd Ibn-i-Ismael Zarqání

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Biographical notes

**‘Abdu’l-Bahá** (1844–1921) Eldest surviving son of Bahá’u’lláh;

the Center of the Covenant; the Mystery of God; the Master.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá accompanied His father on His exiles, spending

more than 40 years as a prisoner. After the passing of Bahá’u’lláh

in 1892, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá became the head of the Bahá’í Faith and

worked to maintain the unity of its followers. Freed by the Young

Turks’ Rebellion in 1908, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá began to travel outside

the Holy Land, making His first visit to Europe in 1911. See

Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*.

**‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd II** (ruled 1876–1909) Sultan of the Ottoman

Turkish Empire, known as ‘the Great Assassin’. As the result of

the plotting of Mírzá Muḥammad-‘Alí, in 1901 he restricted

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s freedom, confining Him and His family within

the city walls of ‘Akká. He later sent two commissions of inquiry

to investigate false charges made against ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by the

Covenant-breakers. He was deposed in 1909 following the

Young Turks’ revolution of 1908. See *God Passes By*, pp. 269–72.

**Abu’l-Faḍl Gulpáygání**, Mírzá (1844–1914) Preeminent Persian

Bahá’í scholar and author, noted for his learned treatises on the

Bahá’í Faith, who was sent to the United States by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

in 1901 to deepen the American Bahá’ís and to counter the

attempts of Kheiralla to create a division within the American

Bahá’í community. He was named an Apostle of Bahá’u’lláh by

Shoghi Effendi.

**Abu’l-Qásim-i-Hamadání**, Áqá (d. 1856) Sole companion of

Bahá’u’lláh during His retirement to Sulaymáníyyih. He was set

upon by highwaymen or frontier patrols and was mortally

wounded. When found near death, he gave his name and be-

queathed all his possessions to Darvísh Muḥammad-i-Írání, the

name Bahá’u’lláh had assumed. See Balyuzi, *King of Glory*,

pp. 116–117.

**Afnán-i-Yazdí** (1830–1911) Also known as Ḥájí Muḥammad-

Taqí, the Afnán, a cousin of the Báb and the chief builder of the

first Bahá’í House of Worship in ‘Ishqábád, in Russian Turkistán,

which had been initiated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in or about 1902.

Taqí’s state title was Vakíl’ud-Dawlih. He was named an Apostle

of Bahá’u’lláh by Shoghi Effendi. See ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Memorials*

*of the Faithful*, pp. 126–9.

**Asadu’lláh-i-Qumí, Siyyid** A member of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s entour-

age.

**Ashraf, Qudsíyyih** First Persian woman to travel to the United

States. She represented Bahá’í women of the Orient at the laying

of the corner-stone of the Wilmette Mashriqu’l-Adhkár.

**Bagdadi, Dr Zia** (d. 1937) Medical doctor from Iraq who settled

in the United States in 1909 and was a prominent member of

the Chicago Bahá’í community. He represented the Arab Bahá’ís

at the laying of the corner-stone of the Wilmette Mashriqu’l-

Adhkár. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 7, pp. 535–9.

**Bell, Alexander Graham** (1847–1922) ‘Scottish inventor and

teacher of elocution and speech correction. He went to live in

Canada in 1870. He developed a method of teaching speech to

the deaf and in 1873 became professor of vocal physiology at

Boston University. In 1876 he obtained a patent for the tele-

phone, which he developed during long evening sessions with

the mechanic Thomas Watson. His other inventions included the

photophone, a device that transmitted sound on a beam of light,

and the graphophone, which recorded sound on wax discs.’ At

the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit he lived in Washington dc. Law,

*Giant Book of 1000 Great Lives*, pp. 32–3.

**Bosch, John** (1855–1946) California vintner who became a

Bahá’í in 1905 and subsequently changed his profession. His

property at Geyserville, California, was used as a permanent

Bahá’í summer school from 1927 and was deeded to the Ameri-

can National Spiritual Assembly in 1936. See *Bahá’í World*,

vol. 11, pp. 488–94.

**Bourgeois, Louis** (d. 1930) French-Canadian architect who

became a Bahá’í in the winter of 1906–7 and moved to West

Englewood, New Jersey, to assist in the development of the

Bahá’í community. His design was chosen for the Mashriqu’l-

Adhkár in Wilmette. See Whitmore, *Dawning Place*, pp. 76–86.

**Breed, Alice Ives** (b. 1853) Well-known society and club woman

of Boston and one of the early Bahá’ís in the United States. She

was the wife of Francis W. Breed and the mother of Florence

Breed, who married Ali Kuli Khan. See Gail, *Summon Up Remem-*

*brance*.

**Browne, Professor Edward Granville** (1862–1926) Distin-

guished British orientalist from Cambridge University who

published many books and articles on the Bábí and Bahá’í

religions and who had four interviews with Bahá’u’lláh in ‘Akká

in 1890. He is best known to Bahá’ís for his pen-portrait of

Bahá’u’lláh. See Balyuzi, *Edward Granville Browne and the Bahá’í*

*Faith*.

**Bryan, William Jennings** American politician who became

Secretary of State under President Woodrow Wilson. He had

tried to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá while on his travels near ‘Akká but had

been unable to do so. ‘Although he was defeated three times for

the presidency of the United States, William Jennings Bryan was

for many years a leader of the Democratic Party and it was his

influence that won the Democratic presidential nomination for

Woodrow Wilson in 1912. He … negotiated treaties with 30

countries, representing three-fourths of the world’s population,

for investigation of disputes before resorting to war. He pub-

lished a paper called The Commoner and gave lectures advanc-

ing the cause of prohibition, of religion and of morality. Because

of his opposition to war, he resigned from office in 1915 in

protest against the sinking of the *Lusitania*. After the war he

moved to Florida and worked to advance moral and religious

causes.’ *Compton’s Encyclopedia*, America Online edition, January

1, 1993.

**Carnegie, Andrew** (1835–1919) Industrialist and philanthropist

born in Scotland who migrated to the United States as a young

man. He ‘started at the bottom in a railway company but rose

rapidly and made shrewd investments. During the American

Civil War he founded iron and steel firms and established trusts

to use his money for the good of the community. He endowed

over 1,000 libraries and founded universities and colleges, giving

away 300 million dollars in his lifetime.’ Law, *Giant Book of 1000*

*Great Lives*, p. 72.

**Chase, Thornton** (1847–1912) Called by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘the first

American believer’, Chase became a Bahá’í in 1894 in Chicago

and was the principal organizer of the Chicago Bahá’í commu-

nity. He founded the Behais Supply and Publishing Board in

1900, which was incorporated as the Bahai Publishing Society

in 1902. He wrote a number of pamphlets about the Bahá’í

Faith, an introductory book, *The Bahai Revelation*, and an account

of his pilgrimage in 1907, *In Galilee*. He was given the name

Thábit (Steadfast) by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and was named a Disciple of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. His grave site in Inglewood,

California, is visited annually by the Bahá’ís. See Whitehead,

*Some Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 1–12.

**Cooper, Ella** (1870–1951) Prominent American Bahá’í teacher

who accepted the Faith in 1898 and, with her mother Helen

Goodall, helped establish the first Bahá’í community on the

American West coast, in Oakland. She was among the third

group of Western pilgrims to visit ‘Akká, in March 1899. After

her second pilgrimage in 1908 she and her mother published

a small book, *Daily Lessons Received at Acca*. See Whitehead, *Some*

*Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 21–34 and *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12,

pp. 681–4.

**Dayyán, Mírzá Asadu’lláh-i-Khuy** A Bábí on whom the Báb

conferred the designation ‘Dayyán’ (lit. ‘conqueror’ or ‘judge’).

After the martyrdom of the Báb, a number of His followers

turned to Dayyán for guidance. He claimed to be ‘He Whom God

shall make manifest’ but after meeting Bahá’u’lláh in Iraq he

retracted the claim. Mírzá Yaḥyá instigated the murder of

Dayyán, ‘whom he feared and envied’. See Shoghi Effendi, *God*

*Passes By*, p. 165.

**D’Evelyn, Dr Frederick** Learned and staunch San Francisco

Bahá’í, elected chairman of the local community in 1911. He was

encouraged by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to plan the first International Bahá’í

conference, in 1915.

**Ḍíyá Páshá, Yúsuf** Turkish Ambassador to the United States

at the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit.

**Dodge, Arthur Pillsbury** (1849–1915) Lawyer, publisher,

inventor and self-made man who became a Bahá’í in 1897. He

was named a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. See

Stockman, *Bahá’í Faith in America*, vol. 1, pp. 116–17 and *Star of*

*the West*, vol. 6, no. 13, pp. 100–1.

**Dreyfus, Hippolyte** (1873–1928) Prominent French lawyer and

the first Frenchman to become a Bahá’í, in 1901. He wrote a

number of works on the Bahá’í Faith and translated several of

Bahá’u’lláh’s writings into French. In 1911 he married Laura

Clifford Barney with whom he had worked on a French transla-

tion of *Some Answered Questions*. He was named a Disciple of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. See Shoghi Effendi’s apprecia-

tion of him in *Bahá’í World*, vol. 3, pp. 210–14.

**Dreyfus-Barney, Laura** (1879–1974) Prominent American

Bahá’í who accepted the Faith in Paris around 1900. She made

a number of extended visits to ‘Akká, asking questions of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá, the answers to which she later compiled as *Some Answered*

*Questions*. She was twice decorated by the French government for

her services to humanity. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 16, pp. 535–8.

**Faríd (Fareed), Dr Amínu’lláh** Nephew of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s wife

and a member of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s entourage, serving as translator

for many of His talks. He began to solicit funds clandestinely

from the American Bahá’ís, using a seal of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s which

he had stolen. He was later declared a Covenant-breaker for his

disobedience to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. See Taherzadeh, *Covenant of*

*Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 341.

**Farmer, Sarah Jane** (1847–1916) American philanthropist who

became a Bahá’í upon meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in ‘Akká in 1900.

She gave Green Acre, her property at Eliot, Maine, to the Faith

for use as a permanent Bahá’í summer school. She was named

a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. See *Green Acre on*

*the Piscataqua*.

**Fujita, Saichiro** (1886–1976) Young Japanese man who became

a Bahá’í in Oakland, California, in 1905, the second Japanese

in the world to accept the Faith. He was invited by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

to travel with His entourage to California from Chicago. For a

time he lived with the family of Corinne True and in 1919 was

invited to serve ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the Holy Land. He served the

Master and afterwards Shoghi Effendi until 1938, when he went

to Japan for the duration of the Second World War. In 1955 he

returned to the Holy Land where he served Shoghi Effendi and

then the Hands of the Cause and the Universal House of Justice.

See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 17, pp. 406–8.

**Getsinger, Dr Edward** (1866–1935) Early American believer

who had become a Bahá’í by 1897. He and his wife Lua were the

first American-born Bahá’ís to visit ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, remaining in

the Holy Land from November 1898 to March 1899. See

Metelmann, *Lua Getsinger*.

**Getsinger, Lua** (1871–1916) Outstanding American Bahá’í

traveling teacher who accepted the Faith in Chicago in April

1897. She and her husband, Edward, played a central role in

opposing Kheiralla when he began to question the authority of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Lua devoted nearly all her time to teaching the

Faith, spending much time away from home. In 1914–15 ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá sent the Getsingers on a teaching trip to India. Lua went

on to ‘Akká and then Egypt, where she died of an illness she had

contracted in India. She was given the title ‘Herald of the Coven-

ant’ by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and was named a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

and ‘Mother Teacher of the West’ by Shoghi Effendi. See *Bahá’í*

*World*, vol. 8, pp. 642–3 and Metelmann, *Lua Getsinger*.

**Goodale, Mr and Mrs Henry L.** Bahá’ís from Kenosha, Wiscon-

sin in whose home ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed for one night on Septem-

ber 15, 1912.

**Goodall, Helen** (1847–1922) Prominent American Bahá’í

teacher who accepted the Faith in 1898 and, with her daughter

Ella Cooper, helped establish the first Bahá’í community on the

American West coast, in Oakland. After her first pilgrimage in

1908 she and her daughter published a small book, *Daily Lessons*

*Received at Acca*. She was named a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by

Shoghi Effendi. See Whitehead, *Some Early Bahá’ís of the West*,

pp. 21–34.

**Grant, Rev Dr Percy Stickney** Rector of the Church of the

Ascension, New York, and a friend of Juliet Thompson. See *Diary*

*of Juliet Thompson*.

**Greatest Holy Leaf, Bahíyyih Khánum** (1846–1932) Daughter

of Bahá’u’lláh and Navváb, and sister of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

**Gregory, Louis** (1874–1951) Prominent American Bahá’í

traveling teacher and advocate of racial unity. The son of Georg-

ia slaves, Gregory was admitted to the bar in 1907 and became

a Bahá’í in June 1909. His marriage to Louisa Mathew, a white

English Bahá’í, in September 1912 was the first Bahá’í interracial

marriage in America. Gregory traveled extensively through-

out the American states teaching the Bahá’í Faith, particularly

among blacks in the South. He was elected to the Executive

Board of the Bahá’í Temple Unity in 1912 and to the National

Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States in 1922.

He was the only black to serve on either body until 1946. He was

posthumously appointed a Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi

Effendi. See Morrison, *To Move the World*; Harper, *Lights of*

*Fortitude*, pp. 85–98 and *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12, pp. 666–70.

**Hall, Albert Heath** (1958–1920) Lawyer, the son of a minister,

who became a Bahá’í between 1900 and 1903. While he was

handling the case for the defense of Fred Mortensen, he taught

the young man the Faith. Hall was president of the Executive

Board of the Bahá’í Temple Unity from 1911 to 1914. See

Whitehead, *Some Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 111–14.

**Hannen, Joseph** (1872–1920) Leading Washington Bahá’í and

active teacher of the Faith who became a Bahá’í shortly after his

wife, Pauline. Along with his wife, he pioneered teaching the

Faith to blacks in the United States. Among those they taught

was Louis Gregory. In 1916 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent the first Tablet

of the Divine Plan to the southern states in care of Joseph. He

was named a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. See

Stockman, *Bahá’í Faith in America*, vol. 2, pp. 137, 224–6.

**Hannen, Pauline** (1874–1939) American Bahá’í teacher and

advocate of racial unity who accepted the Faith in Washington

dc in November 1902. She taught several members of her family

the Faith, including her husband Joseph and her sisters Fanny

Knobloch and Alma Knobloch. Overcoming her own racial

prejudice, she began to teach blacks in Washington, opening her

home for Bahá’í meetings. She also organized the Bahá’í chil-

dren’s classes in the city. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8, pp. 660–1 and

Stockman, *Bahá’í Faith in America*, vol. 2, pp. 137, 224–6.

**Harmon, W. W.** Boston metaphysician and Theosophist who

‘revered ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, supported the Bahá’í teachings and

associated with the Bahá’í community’ (Smith, ‘The American

Bahá’í Community’, in Momen, *Studies in Bábí and Bahá’í History*,

vol. 1, p. 169). His controversial explanation of the Bahá’í

writings caused a rift in the American Bahá’í community.

**Harris, Hooper** (1866–1934) American lawyer who became a

Bahá’í in New York City in 1899. He answered the call of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1906 for an American to go to India to teach the

Cause, leaving New York that year with Harlan Ober. They first

went to ‘Akká to receive instructions from the Master. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá sent with them two Iranian teachers, neither of whom could

speak English: the elderly Hand of the Cause Ibn-i-Abhar and

Mírzá Maḥmúd. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 6, pp. 486–8.

**Ḥaydar ‘Alí, Ḥájí Mírzá** (c. 1830–1920) Prominent Persian

Bahá’í known by Western Bahá’ís as the ‘Angel of Carmel’. He

became a Bábí and later met Bahá’u’lláh in Adrianople. He

suffered many years of persecution and imprisonment in Egypt

and the Sudan because of his fidelity to the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh.

In his later years He served the Master in Haifa. See Ḥaydar ‘Alí,

*Delight of Hearts* and Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá’ís*, pp. 235–50.

**Hearst, Phoebe Apperson** (1842–1919) American philanthropist

and mother of the newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst.

She was a supporter of Green Acre and met Sarah Farmer in

1897. In 1898 the Getsingers called on her and she became

interested in the Faith. She organized and financed the first

pilgrimage of Western Bahá’ís to ‘Akká in 1898–9. She financed

a number of Bahá’í teachers and some Bahá’í publications,

including the first English translation of the Arabic Hidden Words.

She began to distance herself from the Faith after some adverse

newspaper publicity. See Whitehead, Some Early Bahá’ís of the

West, pp. 13–19 and *Bahá’í World*, vol. 7, pp. 801–2.

**Hemmick, Alice Barney-** Mother of Laura Dreyfus-Barney. She

was closely associated with the Bahá’í community, although ‘It

is not clear to what extent she may have considered herself a

Bahá’í.’ Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 144, biographical

notes.

**Hoar, William H.** (1856–1922) Early American Bahá’í, named

a Disciple of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by Shoghi Effendi. Hoar heard of the

Faith at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893

and became a Bahá’í in January 1896. He was instrumental in

forming the first Bahá’í consultative body in New York, the New

York Bahá’í Board of Counsel, elected on December 7, 1900. He

was elected to the Executive Board of the Bahá’í Temple Unity

in 1909, serving for three years.

**Ḥusayn Khán, Mírzá (Mushíru’d-Dawlih)** Persian ambassador

to Constantinople in the time of Bahá’u’lláh. Although involved

in the banishment of Bahá’u’lláh from Baghdád, he testified at

the court of Náṣiri’d-Dín Sháh to the dignity, majesty and high-

mindedness of Bahá’u’lláh. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*,

p. 159 and Balyuzi, *King of Glory*.

**Isfandíyár** Loyal servant of the household of Bahá’u’lláh, a

member of the family entrusted with marketing and other family

affairs. Despite the great danger to his own life when Bahá’u’lláh

was imprisoned in the Síyáh-Chál, he remained in the household

to serve the holy family. Bahá’u’lláh’s wife sent Isfandíyár to

Mázandarán in northern Iran to be safe but he returned one

week later to pay the household’s debts. See Afnán, *Black Pearls*,

pp. 27–32.

**Ives, Rev Howard Colby** (c. 1876–1941) Unitarian minister,

pastor of the Brotherhood Church, Jersey City, New Jersey who

became a Bahá’í after meeting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. His autobiography,

*Portals to Freedom*, is an account of his conversion to the Bahá’í

Faith. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 9, pp. 608–13 and Ives, *Portals to*

*Freedom*.

**Jání, Ḥájí Mírzá** Merchant who was the first to become a Bábí

in Káshán. He was an early historian of the Bábí Cause and was

later martyred.

**Khan, Ali Kuli** (1879–1966) Distinguished Bahá’í and diplomat

who came to the United States in 1901 as a translator for Mírzá

Abu’l-Faḍl. His marriage to Florence Breed in 1904 was the first

marriage between a Persian and an American Bahá’í. He was an

early translator of some of the most important works of

Bahá’u’lláh into English. See the two-volume biography written

by his daughter Marzieh Gail, *Summon Up Remembrance* and

*Arches of the Years*.

**Kheiralla, Ibrahim George** (1849–1929) Syrian Christian who

became a Bahá’í around 1888. He migrated to the United States

in 1892 and began to teach the Faith in New York. In 1894 the

Faith began to establish itself in North America through his

classes. He began to question the authority of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá after

February 1900 and eventually broke with the Bahá’í Faith,

creating a crisis in the Bahá’í community. See Stockman, *Bahá’í*

*Faith in America*, vol. 1, pp. 158–84; Smith, ‘The American

Bahá’í Community, 1894–1917’, in Momen, *Studies in Bábí and*

*Bahá’í History*, vol. 1, pp. 88–99; and Hollinger, ‘Ibrahim George

Kheiralla and the Bahá’í Faith in America’ in Cole and Momen,

*From Iran East and West* (Studies in Bábí and Bahá’í History,

vol. 2), pp. 95–133.

**Killius, Mr and Mrs Albert C.** Bahá’ís who represented Spo-

kane, Washington at the Fourth Annual Convention of the Bahá’í

Temple Unity in Chicago, April 27 to May 1, 1912.

**Kinney, Edward** (1863–1950) and **Carrie** (1878–1959) Wealthy

New York Bahá’ís. Edward, a musician, was introduced to the

Bahá’í Faith by Howard MacNutt in the winter of 1895 and wrote

to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá confirming his belief the same night. Carrie

became a Bahá’í shortly afterwards. In 1907 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked

the Kinneys to go to Egypt to help Zia Bagdadi establish the first

tuberculosis hospital in Alexandria. On their return to New York

their large home at 780 West End Avenue became a meeting

place for Bahá’ís. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave His first talk in America

here on April 11, 1912. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá named Edward ‘Saffa’

(serenity) and Carrie ‘Vaffa’ (certitude). See Whitehead, *Some*

*Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 43–53; *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12, pp. 677–

9 and *Bahá’í World*, vol. 13, pp. 864–5.

**Knobloch, Fanny** (1859–1949) One of three sisters (the others

are Alma Knobloch and Pauline Hannen) born in Germany who

migrated to the United States. She became a Bahá’í in Washing-

ton dc in 1904. She was the guest of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá while He was

in Dublin, New Hampshire, and was invited to Paris as His guest

in 1913. In 1923 she pioneered to South Africa. See *Bahá’í World*,

vol. 11, pp. 473–6.

**Krug, Dr Florian** (b. 1859) New York surgeon who was initially

opposed to the Faith but became a Bahá’í after meeting ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá in 1912. It was he who closed the lids of the Master’s eyes

after He passed away. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8, pp. 675–6; Gail,

*Arches of the Years*, pp. 106–7; and Rutstein, *He Loved and Served*,

p. 93.

**Krug, Grace** (d. 1939) American Bahá’í teacher who heard of

the Faith around 1904, accepting it a few years later, despite

initial opposition from her husband. She was in Haifa with her

husband when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away in November 1921.

See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8 and Gail, *Arches of the Years*, pp. 106–7.

**Lunt, Alfred E.** (d. 1937) Prominent Boston Bahá’í lawyer who

became a Bahá’í shortly after hearing a lecture by Ali Kuli Khan

in the winter of 1905. He was engaged by Sarah Farmer as her

lawyer in her struggle to keep Green Acre in the hands of the

Bahá’ís. He was a member of the Executive Board of the Bahá’í

Temple Unity and later of the National Spiritual Assembly of the

United States. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 7, pp. 531–4 and Whitehead,

*Some Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 121–9.

**Lynch, Rev. Frederick** Author of the book *International Peace*

and an active member of the peace movement.

**MacNutt, Howard** (d. 1926) Lawyer, company executive and

early New York Bahá’í. Howard learned of the Faith from

Kheiralla in January 1898 and he and his wife, Mary, became

Bahá’ís shortly afterwards. They moved to Brooklyn in 1902 and

became the nucleus of Bahá’í activity there. After observing a

Nineteen Day Feast in ‘Akká in 1905, he and his wife helped to

establish the Feast in North America, hosting what was perhaps

the first Feast to be held in the country in May 1905. His ideas

about the station of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá differed from those held by

other Bahá’ís and he fell out with some, particularly Arthur

Dodge. He also failed to break off his relationship with

Covenant-breakers when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá requested him to do so.

He publicly repented of this in November 1912. He collected

and edited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks given in America, publishing

them as *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*. See Whitehead, *Some*

*Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 35–42.

**Mathew, Louisa** (1866–1956) British Bahá’í who accepted the

Faith in Paris. She traveled with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the SS *Cedric*.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá intimated to her that He would be pleased if she

would marry Louis Gregory, whom she had met on pilgrimage.

Their marriage in September 1912 was the first marriage be-

tween a black and a white Bahá’í. From the 1920s Louisa spent

most of the year teaching the Faith in Eastern Europe, returning

to the United States in the summers to be with her husband. See

Morrison, *To Move the World*.

**Maxwell, Mary** (1910-) Hand of the Cause of God and promi-

nent Bahá’í lecturer and traveler. The daughter of Sutherland

and May Maxwell, she married Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of

the Bahá’í Faith, in 1937. Shoghi Effendi gave her the title

Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum. She was appointed a Hand of

the Cause in 1952. See Rabbani, *Priceless Pearl* and Harper,

*Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 168–82.

**Maxwell, May Ellis Bolles** (1870–1940) Prominent early Ameri-

can Bahá’í and teacher of the Faith. She learned of the Faith in

Paris when Phoebe Hearst brought her group of pilgrims

through on the way to ‘Akká. May joined the party, arriving in

the Holy Land in February 1899. This marked her acceptance

of the Faith. When she returned to Paris she formed the first

Bahá’í group in Europe. In 1902 she married William Suther-

land Maxwell and moved with him to Montreal, where their

home became a focus of teaching. Their daughter, Mary, was

born in 1910. May traveled widely for the Faith and was named

a martyr by Shoghi Effendi when she passed away in Buenos

Aires. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8, pp. 631–42.

**Maxwell, William Sutherland** (1875–1952) Hand of the Cause

of God and outstanding Canadian architect. In 1902 he married

May Ellis Bolles and their home in Montreal became a center

of Bahá’í activity. He became a Bahá’í after meeting ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá in ‘Akká in 1909. After the passing of his wife in 1940, he

moved to the Holy Land at the suggestion of Shoghi Effendi, who

had married Sutherland’s daughter Mary in 1937. He designed

the superstructure for the Shrine of the Báb and supervised its

construction. He was appointed a Hand of the Cause in 1951.

See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12, pp. 657–62 and Harper, *Lights of*

*Fortitude*, pp. 276–86.

**Mills, Mountfort** (d. 1949) Eminent lawyer who became a Bahá’í

in 1906. He was the first chairman of the National Spiritual

Assembly of the United States and Canada and prepared the

final draft of the Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the Na-

tional Spiritual Assembly in 1927. He successfully appealed the

case of the House of Bahá’u’lláh in Baghdád to the League of

Nations. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 11, pp. 509–11.

**Moody, Dr Susan I.** (1851–1934) American physician who

became a Bahá’í in 1903 in Chicago. At ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s invitation

she went to Persia in 1909 to provide medical care for the Bahá’í

women. She founded the Tarbiyát Girls’ School in Ṭihrán in

1910. She lived in Persia for 15 years. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 6,

pp. 483–6.

**Mortensen, Fred** (1887–1946) Juvenile delinquent who became

a Bahá’í through his lawyer, Albert Hall, and who ‘rode the rods’

to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Green Acre. He spent many years teaching

the Faith across the United States and was a member of the

Chicago community for 21 years. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 11,

pp. 483–6.

**Muḥammad ‘Alí, Mírzá** (1853–1937) ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s half-

brother, the arch-breaker of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant. See *God*

*Passes By*, pp. 246, 249 and Taherzadeh, *Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh*,

pp. 125–34.

**Muḥammad ‘Alí Mírzá** Shah of Iran following the death of

Muẓaffaru’d-Dín Sháh in 1907. He abdicated in 1909.

**Muḥammad-Taqí Manshádí, Siyyid** Persian Bahá’í living in

Haifa, and later Port Said, through whom Tablets and letters

were sent and received. The Covenant-breakers attempted to win

him to their cause but he remained loyal to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. See

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful*, pp. 54–7.

**Nabíl-i-Zarandí, Nabíl-i-A‘ẓam** ([1831] d. 1892) Title of Muḥammad-i-

Zarandí, the author of *The* *Dawn-Breakers*. He learned about the

Bábí Faith at the age of 16 and met Bahá’u’lláh in 1851. He

made several journeys on behalf of Bahá’u’lláh, was imprisoned

in Egypt and is the only person known to have made the two

pilgrimages to the House of the Báb in Shíráz and the House of

Bahá’u’lláh in Baghdád in accordance with the rites set out by

Bahá’u’lláh. After the passing of Bahá’u’lláh, and at the request

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he arranged a Tablet of Visitation from

Bahá’u’lláh’s writings which is now used in the Holy Shrines.

Shortly afterwards, overcome with grief, he walked into the sea

and drowned. See Balyuzi, *Eminent Bahá’ís*, pp. 268–70.

**Nakhjavání, Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar** Member of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s entour-

age. His son ‘Alí Nakhjavání was elected to the Universal House

of Justice in 1963.

**Náṣiri’d-Dín Sháh** Shah of Iran from 1848 to 1896. See

Momen, Bábí and Bahá’í Religions, pp. 156–60.

**Nutt, Dr William Frederick** Early American Bahá’í active in

Chicago who later broke the Covenant.

**Ober, Harlan** (1881–1962) Early American Bahá’í traveling

teacher. He learned of the Faith in 1905 and became a Bahá’í

in 1906. Shortly afterwards he traveled to India with Hooper

Harris in answer to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s call for American Bahá’ís to

visit the country. He served on the Executive Board of the Bahá’í

Temple Unity for a number of years. In 1912, at the suggestion

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, he married Grace Robarts; ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Him-

self presided at the ceremony. His friendship with Louis Gregory

took him on many teaching trips to the Southern states and he

was much in demand as a public speaker. After the passing of

his wife in 1938 he remarried and, in 1956, pioneered in Pre-

toria, South Africa. In 1957 he was a appointed a member of the

Auxiliary Board for Protection in Africa. See *Bahá’í World*,

vol. 13, pp. 866–71 and Whitehead, *Some Bahá’ís to Remember*,

pp. 118–44.

**Parsons, Agnes** (1861–1934) Washington dc society matron and

early Bahá’í. She heard about the Bahá’í Faith in 1908 and

became a confirmed believer during her pilgrimage to ‘Akká in

1910. She was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s hostess during His stay in Washing-

ton and arranged for Him to visit Dublin, New Hampshire, her

summer residence. On her second pilgrimage, in 1920, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá instructed her to organize the first race amity conference,

which she did in 1921, working closely with Louis Gregory. See

Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*; *Bahá’í World*, vol. 5, pp. 410–15;

Morrison, *To Move the World*, pp. 134–43 and Whitehead, *Some*

*Bahá’ís to Remember*, pp. 76–96.

**Parsons, Arthur Jeffrey** (1856–1915) Husband of Agnes Parsons

and a librarian at the Library of Congress.

**Peary, Admiral Robert Edwin** (1856–1920) American Polar

explorer. At his seventh attempt he became the first person to

reach the North Pole, on April 6, 1909. He accomplished this

by sailing to Cape Sheridan in the Roosevelt then traveling by sled

to the Pole.

**Ralston, William and Georgia** Early California Bahá’ís. Georgia

was a childhood friend of Ella Goodall Cooper and learned of

the Faith from her and Helen Goodall around 1910. She trav-

eled with Helen and Ella to New York to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. See

Brown, *Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 24–5.

**Remey, Charles Mason** (1874–1974) Prominent early Bahá’í

and traveling teacher, appointed a Hand of the Cause in 1951

but declared a Covenant-breaker in 1960. Remey became a

Bahá’í in Paris in December 1899 and served the Faith devotedly

for many years in various capacities. He was a member of the

Executive Board of the Bahá’í Temple Unity. In 1909 he and

Howard Struven set out on the first round the world Bahá’í

teaching trip, one of his many journeys to teach the Faith. He

was appointed president of the International Bahá’í Council in

1951. After the passing of Shoghi Effendi in 1957, he broke the

Covenant. See Harper, *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 287–306.

**Riḍáy-i-Shírází, Áqá** Believer exiled with Bahá’u’lláh to ‘Akká.

Between Baghdád and Constantinople he and Áqá Mírzá Maḥ-

múd traveled ahead of the party to prepare the food and make

arrangements for the comfort of the believers. See ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,

*Memorials of the Faithful*, pp. 39–41.

**Robarts, Grace** (d. 1938) Early American Bahá’í teacher whose

marriage to Harlan Ober in 1912 was at the suggestion of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. She secured and made ready the various apart-

ments in which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed during His journey in

America. Her nephew, John Robarts, was appointed a Hand of

the Cause. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8, pp. 656–60 and Whitehead,

*Some Bahá’ís to Remember*, pp. 118–44.

**Roosevelt, President Theodore** (1858–1919) 26th President of

the United States, 1901–9.

**Rúḥá Khánum** Third of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s four surviving daugh-

ters. She married Mírzá Jalál, the son of the King of Martyrs. She

broke the Covenant in the 1940s.

**Salmán, Shaykh** Early believer who carried many Tablets from

Bahá’u’lláh for distribution among the friends in Persia. He also

conducted Munírih Khánum to ‘Akká before her marriage to

‘Abdu’l-Bahá. See Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá’u’lláh*, vol. 1,

p. 113 and Balyuzi, *King of Glory*, pp. 344–7, 441–4.

**Shoghi Effendi** (1897–1957) Eldest grandson of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

and appointed in His Will and Testament the Guardian of the

Bahá’í Faith. Brought up in the Master’s household in ‘Akká, in

his youth he became his grandfather’s secretary for a time before

leaving the Holy Land to study at the University of Oxford.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away Shoghi Effendi became head

of the Bahá’í Faith. Under his guidance the Bahá’í administra-

tion was developed and the Faith taken to virtually every country

in the world. In 1937 he married Mary Maxwell. He passed away

in London, where he is buried. See Rabbani, *Priceless Pearl* and

Rabbani, *Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith*.

**Shu‘á‘u’lláh, Mírzá** Son of Mírzá Muḥammad-‘Alí, arch-breaker

of the Covenant. He arrived in the United States in 1905 and

remained until the 1930s or 1940s. He attempted to win con-

verts to his father’s cause from among the Bahá’ís but was

unsuccessful.

**Sohrab, Mirza Ahmad** (d. 1958) Persian Bahá’í and a major

translator of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablets into English. He had been

sent by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the United States in 1903 to translate

for Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl. He settled in Washington dc and became

well-known in the American Bahá’í community. After the passing

of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá he opposed the establishment of the Bahá’í

administrative order decreed in the Will and Testament of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá and was declared a Covenant-breaker. See Ta-

herzadeh, *Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 343–7.

**Struven, Howard and Hebe** Early Baltimore Bahá’ís. Howard’s

brother, Edward, learned of the Bahá’í Faith from Lua Getsinger

and became a Bahá’í immediately. Howard became a Bahá’í in

1899. In 1909 ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked him to travel around the

world with Mason Remey, the first round the world Bahá’í

teaching trip. He married Hebe (Ruby) Moore, Lua Getsinger’s

sister, in 1912. See Clark, ‘The Bahá’ís of Baltimore, 1898–1990’,

in Hollinger, *Community Histories*, pp. 111–45.

**Ṭáhirih** (1817–52) Outstanding heroine of the Bábí Dispensa-

tion, the only woman among the Letters of the Living. See

Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 7, 33, 75 and Nabíl, *Dawn-*

*Breakers*, p. 628.

**Thompson, Juliet** (1873–1956) Prominent early American

Bahá’í and artist. She learned about the Faith from May Bolles

in Paris and became a Bahá’í in 1901. After a few years she

settled in New York. In 1909 she went to ‘Akká on pilgrimage

and met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to whom she became devoted. When He

arrived in New York in 1912, she followed Him everywhere and

He agreed to allow her to paint His portrait. Juliet wrote a

moving story about Mary Magdalen, *I, Mary Magdalen*, published

in 1940. See *Diary of Juliet Thompson*; *Bahá’í World*, vol. 13,

pp. 862–4; and Whitehead, *Some Early Bahá’ís of the West*, pp. 73–

85.

**True, Corinne** (1861–1961) Prominent early Chicago Bahá’í

teacher and Hand of the Cause of God. Corinne learned of the

Bahá’í Faith in 1899. The deaths of five of her eight children

between 1899 and 1909 drew her closer to the Faith. ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá asked her to spearhead the building of the Mashriqu’l-

Adhkár in Wilmette, a task she undertook energetically over a

number of years and for which she was known as the ‘Mother of

the Temple’. She was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly

of the United States and Canada in 1922. She was appointed a

Hand of the Cause in 1952. See Rutstein, *Corinne True*;

Whitmore, *Dawning Place*, pp. 18–35; and Harper, *Lights of*

*Fortitude*, pp. 391–407.

**Valíyu’lláh Khán-i-Varqá, Mírzá** (1884–1955) Prominent

Persian Bahá’í and Hand of the Cause of God. The son of the

martyr-poet Mírzá ‘Alí-Muḥammad-i-Varqá, Valíyu’lláh Khán-i-

Varqá joined ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s entourage in America. He was

appointed Trustee of the Ḥuqúqu’lláh in 1940 and a Hand of

the Cause of God in 1951. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 13, pp. 831–4

and Harper, *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 329–32.

**Varqá, Mírzá ‘Alí-Muḥammad** Persian Bahá’í martyred, to-

gether with his twelve-year-old son, Rúḥu’lláh, by the brutal

Ḥájibu’d-Dawlih. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 296 and

Harper, *Lights of Fortitude*, pp. 42–9.

**Waite, Louise R.** (d. 1939) Poet-composer who became a Bahá’í

sometime before 1902 in Chicago. She was given the Persian

name Sháhnaz Khánum by the Master. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8,

pp. 661–4.

**Wilhelm, Roy C.** (1875–1951) Prominent New Jersey Bahá’í and

wealthy entrepreneur posthumously named a Hand of the Cause

of God. Roy learned of the Bahá’í Faith through his mother but

did not become a Bahá’í himself until he accompanied his

mother on her pilgrimage to ‘Akká in 1907. In 1908 he met

Martha Root and introduced her to the Faith. In 1909 he was

elected to the Executive Board of the Bahá’í Temple Unity,

serving on this and its successor, the American National Spiritual

Assembly, almost continuously until 1946. At ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

behest, a unity feast was held in the grounds of his home in West

Englewood, New Jersey, in June 1912, an event which is com-

memorated every year. He was posthumously appointed a Hand

of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi on December 23, 1951.

See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12, pp. 662–4 and Harper, *Lights of Forti-*

*tude*, pp. 129–41.

**Wilson, President Woodrow** (1856–1924) 28th President of the

United States (1913–21). His ‘14 points’, upholding democracy

and self-determination of states, was intended to form the basis

for a peace treaty after World War I. He was largely responsible

for the establishment of the League of Nations. His presidency

ended in failure when the Versailles treaty was not ratified by the

American Senate.

**Windust, Albert R.** (1874–1956) Early Chicago Bahá’í and

publisher. He became a Bahá’í in 1897 and was a member of the

first Spiritual Assembly of Chicago. He became the first publisher

of Bahá’í literature in the West, including the *Hidden Words*. In

1910 he founded and printed the Bahá’í magazine *Star of the*

*West* and later collected and published three volumes of ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá’s Tablets to American believers. He also helped Howard

MacNutt to publish The *Promulgation of Universal Peace*. See *Bahá’í*

*World*, vol. 13, pp. 873–4.

**Yaḥyá, Mírzá** (c. 1832–1912) Younger half-brother of Bahá-

’u’lláh who turned against Him and caused division and enmity

among the Bábís. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 112–27,

163–70 and Taherzadeh, *Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 60–96.

**Yamamoto, Kanichi** (1879–1961) First Japanese Bahá’í. Kanichi

learned of the Faith in Hawaii after leaving Japan. He became

a Bahá’í in 1902. In 1903 he left Hawaii to become a butler to

Helen Goodall’s family in Oakland, California. He arranged the

meeting at the Japanese YMCA at which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on

October 7, 1912. See *Bahá’í World*, vol. 13, pp. 831–3 and White-

head, *Some Bahá’ís to Remember*, pp. 176–86.

**Zarqání, Mírzá Maḥmúd-i-** (c. 1875–1924) Persian Bahá’í travel

teacher and chronicler of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s travels in the West. In

his youth Maḥmúd made travel teaching trips around Iran. From

1903 he began to go to India, where he traveled for several years

and learned Urdu. During this period he went on pilgrimage to

Haifa, where he was responsible for transcribing Tablets, and

from there he accompanied ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on His journey to

Europe and America.

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1. ‘… there hath appeared and above its horizon there hath

   shone forth the Orb of the beauty of the great, the Most

   Mighty Branch of God—His ancient and immutable

   Mystery …’ Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Lawḥ-i-Arḍ-i-Bá’ (Tablet of the

   Land of Bá), *Tablets*, p. 227. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Since Maḥmúd wrote his diary, several books have been

   published of transcripts or notes of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks

   given on His travels to Europe and America. Among them

   are *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, a collection of His

   talks in the United States in 1912, *Paris Talks* and *‘Abdu’l-*

   *Bahá in London*, notes of His discourses in those cities in

   1911-12. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. See the Báb’s address to the Letters of the Living: ‘Such

   must be the degree of your detachment, that into whatever

   city you enter to proclaim and teach the Cause of God, you

   should in no wise expect either meat or reward from its

   people. Nay, when you depart out of that city, you should

   shake the dust from off your feet. As you have entered it

   pure and undefiled, so must you depart from that city.’

   Nabil, *Dawn-Breakers*, pp. 92–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Thus far only the volume relating to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s jour-

   ney in North America has been translated. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. See *Paris Talks*, a collection of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s addresses in

   Paris and London in 1911–13. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. The SS *Cedric* was built by Harland and Wolff, a Belfast

   firm. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. ‘Mashaeen’ (the Peripatetics) were followers of the school

   of thought originated by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle; the

   ‘Ishraq’ (Illuminationists) followed the Sophists, such as

   the Persian philosopher and physicist Shahabidin Soh-

   rehvardi, who lived in the 12th century. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 107–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. In Persian, *tasbíḥ*, a rosary of 95 beads for reciting the

   Greatest Name of God, Alláh-u-Abhá (God is the Most

   Glorious). [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. From Jalálu’d-Dín Rúmí, eminent Sufi mystic and poet

    (1207–73). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Maḥmúd states that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá cited a poem of Ḥáfiẓ

    which says, ‘Is there any relationship between piety and

    uprightness and hypocrisy?’ [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Three other sources indicate that the arrival of ‘Abdu’l-

    Bahá to America was on April 11, 1912: Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-*

    *Bahá*, p. 172; *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 3; and

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 3. It may

    be because the Muslim day begins and ends at sunset that

    April 11 was indicated by Maḥmúd as April 10. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is reported to have said when He saw the

    Statue of Liberty, ‘There is the new world’s symbol of

    liberty and freedom. After being forty years a prisoner I

    can tell you that freedom is not a matter of place. It is a

    condition. Unless one accept dire vicissitudes he will not

    attain. When one is released from the prison of self, that

    is indeed a release.’ *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá saw the New York City skyline He is

    reported to have said, ‘These are the minarets of Western

    World commerce and industry …’ *Star of the West*, vol. 3,

    no. 3, p. 4. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Juliet Thompson records that Edward Kinney ‘was called

    to come on board the ship’. Although most of the Bahá’ís

    left the pier, Marjorie Morten, Rhoda Nichols and Juliet

    hid themselves to catch a glimpse of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. *Diary*

    *of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 233–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 3–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. The events described here took place on Friday, April 12,

    1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 4–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 7–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. The events described here took place on Saturday, April

    13, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. At 141 East Twenty-first Street, New York. For a transcript

    of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 9–11. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. The events described here took place on Monday, April

    15, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. For a transcript of this interview see *Star of the West*, vol. 3,

    no. 7, pp. 4–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. For a transcript of this interview see *Star of the West*, vol. 4,

    no. 7, pp. 5–11. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. According to *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, the talk at

    the home of Mountfort Mills was on April 15, 1912. For

    a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 16–18. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. The sinking of the *Titanic* in the North Atlantic occurred

    on the night of April 14, 1912. The discrepancy in the

    date is no doubt due to the fact that Maḥmúd assembled

    and wrote the diary months later, using notes he hastily

    took at the time. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. At Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street, New York. For tran-

    scripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 11–13,

    and *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 7–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. That is, they were awe-inspired. This is an allusion to a

    Persian proverb. When the iguana hunts flies, it sits on a

    rock facing the sun. In Persian, an iguana is called *áftáb*

    *parast*, ‘sun worshipper’. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Union Meeting of Advanced Thought Centers, Car-

    negie Lyceum, West Fifty-Seventh Street, New York.

    For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 14–16. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 23–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 25–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. According to *Promulgation*, p. 32, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to the

    Bowery Mission in New York City was on April 19, 1912.

    For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 32–4 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 7, pp. 11–12. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 29–32. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. The celebrated lover of ancient Persian and Arabian lore

    whose beloved was Laylí. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Joseph Hannen notes that ‘Receptions were held at the

    home of Mrs Parsons every afternoon at about 5:00 o’clock

    [sic], from Monday to Friday, inclusive’. *Star of the West*,

    vol. 3, no. 3, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    p. 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Located at Thirteenth and L Streets, Washington dc. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. For another transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulga*-

    *tion*, pp. 39–42. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk was at the home of Mr and Mrs Arthur

    J. Parsons, 1700 Eighteenth Street, nw, Washington dc.

    For a transcript see *Promulgation*, pp. 43–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Agnes Parsons states in her diary that this talk was given

    on April 23, 1912 at the Parsons’ home and this is con-

    firmed by *Promulgation*, pp. 46–8, which is a transcript of

    the talk. Mrs Parsons states: ‘From the Khan’s we returned

    to this house where we found the place thronged. There

    were probably 250 people present, many standing. Abdul

    Baha [sic] spoke about the Titanic Disaster.’ Hollinger,

    *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. This dinner party was held on April 22, 1912. Agnes

    Parsons states: ‘A Persian dinner, cooked by Mirza Sohrab,

    was served by Abdul Baha about 8 o’clock … Abdul Baha

    served and talked while the others ate.’ Also at the dinner

    were Siyyid Asadu’lláh-i-Qumí, Ali Kuli Khan, Mírzá ‘Alí

    Akbar Khán, Dr Faríd, Edward Getsinger, Charles Mason

    Remey, Joseph Hannen, Ahmad Sohrab and Mírzá

    Maḥmúd. (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 25–6.)

    Marzieh Gail notes that ‘Mrs Parsons’ house had a large

    ball-room that would seat around two hundred people,

    and a crowd of this size would be invited whenever He

    spoke in her home’. (Gail, *Arches of the Years*, p. 80.) [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Howard University was founded in 1867 ‘to educate newly

    freed slaves’ and was in 1912 ‘one of the foremost black

    universities in the country’. (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’*

    *Diary*, p. 29, note 42.) Allan Ward notes that ‘well over a

    thousand students, faculty members, administrators, and

    guests jammed Rankin Chapel’. (Ward, *239 Days*, p. 40.) [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 44–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. Joseph Hannen notes that ‘This was a most notable occa-

    sion, and here, as everywhere when both white and colored

    people were present, Abdul-Baha [sic] seemed happiest.

    The address was received with breathless attention …’

    *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Ali Kuli Khan was the *Chargé d’Affaires* for the Persian

    Legation. Agnes Parsons states that there were 19 people

    present at the luncheon apart from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, includ-

    ing Ali Kuli Khan, his wife, Florence, and two children;

    ‘Mrs Breede’ (probably Alice Ives Breed, Florence Khan’s

    mother), Mrs Severance, Helen Goodall, Ella Cooper, Miss

    A Dorr, Edward Getsinger, Dr Faríd, Ahmad Sohrab, Juliet

    Thompson, Louis Gregory, Charles Mason Remey and

    Agnes Parsons. (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 31.) It

    was at this luncheon that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rearranged the

    seating, asking Louis Gregory to sit beside Him, although

    Mr Gregory had not been invited to the luncheon. (See

    *Bahá’í World*, vol. 12, p. 688.) For Juliet Thompson’s

    account of this luncheon see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*,

    pp. 269–70. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Juliet Thompson describes this as a ‘reception’ attended

    by the Turkish Ambassador Ḍíyá Páshá, Admiral Peary

    and Alexander Graham Bell. (*Diary of Juliet Thompson*,

    pp. 270–3.) Agnes Parsons indicates that the Turkish

    Ambassador went on with the party to the Parsons’ home,

    where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke again. (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’*

    *Diary*, p. 34.) *Promulgation*, pp. 46–52, indicates that

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave three talks on April 23, 1912: at

    Howard University, at the home of Mr and Mrs Arthur J.

    Parsons and at the Bethel Literary Society. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. *Promulgation*, pp. 46–8, indicates that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke

    about the tragedy of the sinking of the *Titanic* and the

    relationship between material and the spiritual worlds. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. According to Mrs Parsons these were Mr and Mrs Arnault

    Belmont, Juliet Thompson and two Iranians. Hollinger,

    *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 35–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the Bethel Literary Society at the

    Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church, M

    Street, nw Washington dc. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-

    Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 49–52. Joseph Hannen

    notes that ‘again the audience taxed the capacity of the

    edifice in which the meeting was held’. *Star of the West*,

    vol. 3, no. 3, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. This was held at Studio Hall, 1219 Connecticut Avenue,

    Washington dc. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see

    *Promulgation*, pp. 52–4. Joseph Hannen indicates that this

    was held in the afternoon, noting that it was ‘one of the

    most beautiful functions of the week’: ‘… more than 100

    children, with as many adults, parents and friends, gath-

    ered. Abdul-Baha [sic] received and embraced each child,

    seeming most happy in their presence, and then delivered

    a wonderful address. Abdul-Baha presented each child,

    before he left, with a gift.’ *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 7. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá also spoke at the Parsons’ home later in the

    afternoon. For a transcript of His talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 54–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. Zia Bagdadi in his diary wrote of this event, ‘In the eve-

    ning, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the white and colored

    believers and their friends at the home of Mrs Dyer, a

    member of the colored race.’ Bagdadi, ‘‘Abdu’l-Bahá in

    America’, *Star of the West*, vol. 19, no. 3, p. 89. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. Alan Ward indicates that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took a streetcar to

    Mr Bell’s home. Ward, *239 Days*, p. 43. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. This passage was translated by Shoghi Effendi. See *God*

    *Passes By*, p. 293. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. He was not the Ambassador but the *Chargé d’Affaires*. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the Theosophical Society at the

    Parsons’ home at 10:30 in the morning. For a transcript

    of this talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 58–60 and *Star of the West*,

    vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 22–3. Agnes Parsons notes that ‘Abdu’l-

    Bahá ‘addressed a small group of Theosophists in my large

    room. I have invited them here to save Abdul Baha having

    to go out so much. The Theosophists had asked Him to

    speak to them.’ Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 46.

    The Theosophical Society was founded in New York in

    1875 by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel H. S. Olcott and

    is based on Hindu ideas of karma and reincarnation,

    nirvana being the eventual aim. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. That is, the Parsons’ home. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-

    Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 61–4 and *Star of the West*,

    vol. 3, no. 5, pp. 7–8. Agnes Parsons notes that the meeting

    took place in her ‘large room’, which was ‘thoroughly

    filled’. Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 47. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. Agnes Parsons indicates that those at the dinner were ‘the

    Ambassador, his son, his son’s wife, his daughter, Mirza

    and Mme. Khan, Dr and Mrs Williams, Dr Fareed, the two

    visiting Persians, the Persian Secretary, Mr Parsons and

    myself.’ (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 47.) ‘Roses had

    been piled along the tables and formed a mound in the

    center where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Ḍíyá Páshá sat.’ (Ward, *239*

    *Days*, p. 44.) [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. Theodore Roosevelt visited ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the Parsons’

    home on April 25, after the reception at the Turkish

    Embassy. He was not President at this time. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. Agnes Parsons states that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the

    Woman’s Alliance (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 50);

    the subject was the equal rights of men and women. Allan

    Ward confirms this, saying that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘addressed

    the ladies of President Taft’s All Saints Unitarian Church;

    the room was completely filled’. (Ward, *239 Days*, p. 45.) [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. Agnes Parsons indicates that the meeting began at quarter

    to five in the afternoon and was held in the large room.

    ‘It was filled with people eager to hear His last talk at our

    house. His subject was the Human and Divine Spirit in

    Man. He made a little farewell talk also, expressing His

    gratitude and happiness and added an admonition to all

    who had heard the Spiritual teachings to endeavor to gain

    something from them.’ Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*,

    p. 51. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. This was the Continental Hall, the ‘public hall of the

    Daughters of the American Revolution’, ‘perhaps the most

    prestigious meeting place in Washington, at the time’.

    (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 51–2, note 73.) Sam-

    uel Gompers, president of the American Federation of

    Labor; Benjamin Trueblood, secretary of the American

    Peace Society; and A. C. Monohon of the United States

    Bureau of Education shared the platform with ‘Abdu’l-

    Bahá. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. Secretary of the United States Treasury, Lee McClung.

    Allan Ward says that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had breakfast with Mr

    McClung. (Ward, *239 Days*, p. 44.) Juliet Thompson later

    asked Mr McClung how ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had impressed him.

    She wrote, ‘A shy look came into his face, and Mr McClung

    is anything but shy. “Well, I felt as though I was in the

    presence of one of the great old Prophets: Elijah, Isaiah,

    Moses. No, it was more than that! Christ … no—now I

    have it! He seemed to me my Divine Father.”’ (*Diary of*

    *Juliet Thompson*, p. 280.) [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. Agnes Parsons says: ‘I went down at 9:30 p.m. and found

    everything looking very lovely. I had arranged for Abdul

    Baha to sit on the large sofa in the south eastern corner

    of the library, but others took possession of it and as I had

    to receive, I haven’t yet heard in detail the way and where

    the people were presented to Him.’ Hollinger, *Agnes*

    *Parsons’ Diary*, p. 54. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. Admiral Peary had attended the reception at Ali Kuli

    Khan’s on 23 April. On that occasion ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had

    told the Admiral, in the words of Juliet Thompson, that

    ‘for a very long time the world had been much concerned

    about the North Pole, where it was and what was to be

    found there. Now he, Admiral Peary, had discovered it and

    that nothing was to [be] found there; and so, in forever

    relieving the public mind, he had rendered a great ser-

    vice.’ *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 272–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. Edward Alfred Mitchell Innes was not the ambassador but

    rather an employee of the British Embassy in Washington

    dc. Agnes Parsons was present during the interview and

    remembers ‘Abdu’l-Bahá saying, ‘A man who has been

    injured should not retaliate—but that the Law should carry

    out retribution. In its doing so, there is not the spirit of

    revenge, for this that the Law does is for the safety of the

    Body Politic.’ Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 57. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. Agnes Parsons states that she and Dr Faríd traveled with

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in His carriage to the station. Others at the

    station included the Turkish Ambassador and his son, Ali

    Kuli Khan and Mme Khan, Mirza Sohrab, Charles Mason

    Remey, Mrs Belmont and Leona Barnitz. Hollinger, *Agnes*

    *Parsons’ Diary*, p. 58. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. This may be a reference to the Síyáh-Chál (the Black Pit)

    in Ṭihrán where Bahá’u’lláh was imprisoned for eight

    months in 1852; to His banishment to Adrianople, ‘this

    remote prison’; or to His exile in 1868 to the prison city

    of ‘Akká. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Allan Ward records that the *Chicago Daily News* reported

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá missing in its April 29 edition. ‘In the Corin-

    thian hall in the Masonic Temple building 170 delegates

    attending the Bahai [sic] convention waited for the leader

    of the movement.’ (Cited in Ward, *239 Days*, p. 47.) ‘The

    delegates expected ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to arrive in Chicago early

    on the twenty-ninth and “passed an anxious morning and

    afternoon meeting inward-bound trains”.’ (Whitmore,

    *Dawning Place*, p. 57.) [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. The part of European Turkey where Adrianople (Edirne)

    is situated. At the time it was under the rule of the Otto-

    man Empire. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Jane Addams, a sociologist and vice president of the

    National American Woman Suffrage Association, founded

    Hull House, one of the earliest community centers, in

    Chicago in 1889. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at

    Hull House see *Promulgation*, pp. 67–9 and ‘Wisdom Talks

    of Abdul-Baha’, *Star of the West*, supplement to vol. 3,

    no. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Fourth Annual Conference of

    the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

    People. For transcripts of His talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 69–

    70 and ‘Wisdom Talks of Abdul-Baha’, *Star of the West*,

    supplement to vol. 3, no. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the final session of the Convention

    held at Drill Hall, Masonic Temple. For transcripts of the

    talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 65–7 and ‘Wisdom Talks of

    Abdul-Baha’, *Star of the West*, supplement to vol. 3, no. 3. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. Dawning-place of the praises or remembrances or mention

    of God. Generally, this term refers to the Bahá’í House of

    Worship or Temple and the dependencies clustered

    around it. (Momen, *Dictionary*, p. 148.) For accounts of

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to the Temple site in Wilmette see

    Whitmore, *Dawning Place*, pp. 60–5 and *Star of the West*,

    vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 5–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 71–2, ‘Wisdom Talks of Abdul-Baha’, *Star of the West*,

    supplement to vol. 3, no. 3 and *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no.

    16, p. 250. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. Honore Jaxon reported: ‘Abdul-Baha [sic] next called for

    the implements necessitated by the gravelly nature of the

    soil, and in response there was brought to him first an axe

    and then a shovel. With these tools of every-day life of the

    workers of the world, Abdul-Baha and friends from every

    race present, excavated a resting place for a stone …’ *Star*

    *of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 6. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. Pársís are Zoroastrian Persians who emigrated to India

    after the Arab conquest of Iran. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said as He set the stone in the ground, ‘The

    Temple is already built.’ Cited in Whitmore, *Dawning*

    *Place*, p. 65. [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. There does not appear to be a transcript of this talk in the

    English accounts, if indeed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave it. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 74–7 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 12–14. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. From Maḥmúd’s description, this appears to be the talk

    delivered at the Plaza Hotel on 2 May, transcripts of which

    can be found in *Promulgation*, pp. 79–83 and in *Star of the*

    *West*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 15–17. There is no indication that

    this was given to Unitarians. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. This talk was given the following day, May 4, 1912. For

    a transcript of the talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 87–91. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. According to *Promulgation*, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to this

    church at 935 East Fiftieth Street on May 5, which is

    supported by other sources. (Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 55–6;

    *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 22.) Balyuzi states that the

    talk was given on May 4. (Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 188.)

    For transcripts of the talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 93–6 and

    *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 22–4. The rector’s name

    is variously spelled: Milburn and Melbourne in Ward, *239*

    *Days*, pp. 56 and 57; Milburne in Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*,

    p. 188. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. This was perhaps a visit to the grave of Corinne True’s son

    Davis, who died shortly after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival in

    Chicago. Rutstein, *Corinne True*, p. 103. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. According to *Promulgation*, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk took place

    on May 5. Allan Ward confirms this, adding that ‘The

    meeting was held, since the congregation had no building

    of its own, at the Abraham Lincoln Center at 700 East

    Oakwood, a building with a seating capacity of seven

    hundred.’ (Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 56–7.) For transcripts of

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 97–100 and *Star*

    *of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 24–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. According to Allan Ward, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had ‘especially

    invited the children to be brought to the Large Parlour.

    He talked to each one of them, held them in His lap,

    embracing and kissing them, whispering in their ears.’

    (Ward, *239 Days*, p. 55.) For an account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

    meeting with the children see *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 7,

    pp. 6–7. For other translations of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see

    *Promulgation*, pp. 91–3 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4,

    p. 22. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s train arrived in Cleveland at 4:00 p.m.

    Ward, *239 Days*, p. 60. [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. For an account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit and a transcription

    of His talk see *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 6, pp. 5–6. A

    different translation can be found in *Promulgation*, p. 104.

    Both accounts indicate that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk was given

    at Dr Swingle’s sanatorium, 8203 Wade Park Ave. n.e. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)
89. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 101–3 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 29–32. [↑](#endnote-ref-89)
90. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

    pp. 105–10 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 6, pp. 2–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-90)
91. Agnes Parsons states that Ali Kuli Khan and his wife, Mr

    and Mrs Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney, Ahmad Sohrab,

    Joseph and Pauline Hannen and herself were at the train

    station to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’*

    *Diary*, p. 61. [↑](#endnote-ref-91)
92. The apartment belonged to the family of William

    P. Ripley, who temporarily vacated it for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and

    His party. Mrs Parsons gives the address as 1336 Harvard

    Street n.w. (Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 59, note

    80.) According to Allan Ward, the address was 1340

    Harvard Street. (Ward, *239 Days*, p. 64.) [↑](#endnote-ref-92)
93. Agnes Parsons notes that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘had a ten o’clock

    dinner at Mrs Hemmick’s’. Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*,

    p. 65. [↑](#endnote-ref-93)
94. Agnes Parsons notes that the carriage to take ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

    to the railway station did not reach His apartment in time,

    so ‘Abdu’l-Bahá missed the train. Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’*

    *Diary*, p. 66. [↑](#endnote-ref-94)
95. Hudson Apartment House, 227 Riverside Drive, New

    York, overlooking the Hudson River. Juliet Thompson

    notes: ‘A few of us gathered in His rooms to prepare them

    for Him and fill the room with flowers; then to wait for His

    arrival: May Maxwell, Lua Getsinger, Carrie Kinney, Kate

    Ives, Grace Robarts, and I. Mr Mills and Mr Woodcock

    were waiting too … His flat is on one of the top stories,

    so that its windows frame the sky.’ *Diary of Juliet Thompson*,

    p. 282. [↑](#endnote-ref-95)
96. Theodore Roosevelt was president from 1901 to 1909;

    William Howard Taft was president during the period of

    ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to the United States. [↑](#endnote-ref-96)
97. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulga*-

    *tion*, pp. 111–13 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 11–

    13. [↑](#endnote-ref-97)
98. See *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, p. 284 for a description of this

    event. [↑](#endnote-ref-98)
99. For the stenographic notes of this address taken by E.

    Foster see *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 7, pp. 12–13. [↑](#endnote-ref-99)
100. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see Promulgation,

     pp. 113–16 and Star of the West, vol. 3, no. 7, pp. 13–14. [↑](#endnote-ref-100)
101. ‘Ayn-‘Ayn = ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ‘Abbás. [↑](#endnote-ref-101)
102. Meeting of the International Peace Forum held at the

     Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, West 104th Street,

     New York. [↑](#endnote-ref-102)
103. For another transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulga-*

     *tion*, pp. 116–22. [↑](#endnote-ref-103)
104. This meeting was held at the Hotel Astor, New York. For

     transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 123–6 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 8, pp. 14–15. For

     transcripts of the other speeches made on this occasion see

     *Star of the West*, pp. 10–14.

     Juliet Thompson notes, ‘The Master was really too ill

     to have gone to this Conference. He had been in bed all

     morning, suffering from complete exhaustion, and had a

     high temperature. I was with Him all morning. While I was

     sitting beside Him I asked: “Must You go to the Hotel

     Astor when You are so ill?” “I work by the confirmation of

     the Holy Spirit,” He answered. “I do not work by hygienic

     laws. If I did,” He laughed, “I would get nothing done.”’

     *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, p. 285. [↑](#endnote-ref-104)
105. A four-wheel carriage with a top divided into two sections

     that can be let down, thrown back or removed, with a

     raised seat outside for the driver. [↑](#endnote-ref-105)
106. The night before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Lake Mohonk, He gave

     Dr Zia Bagdadi the key to His New York apartment,

     requesting him to bring back a Persian rug by 10:00 a.m.

     the following day. Since no trains ran at night, Dr Bagdadi

     jumped on the caboose of a moving train heading for New

     York. He collected the rug, caught an early morning train

     back to Lake Mohonk, hitched a ride with the mail carrier

     and arrived back at the conference site at 10:00 a.m., just

     as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was shaking hands with Mr Smiley in

     farewell. See Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 68–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-106)
107. *Promulgation*, pp. 126–9 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 9,

     pp. 9–12 indicate that this talk was given on Sunday, May

     19, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-107)
108. For Ives’ account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at his church see

     *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 80–7. Ives notes that ‘it was one of

     the briefest of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s public talks (p. 87). He

     further comments, ‘To me ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk in the

     Brotherhood Church and the address before the Unitarian

     Conference in Boston marked a new phase in my spiritual

     journey from self to God’ (p. 90). [↑](#endnote-ref-108)
109. The Woman’s Suffrage Meeting was held at the Metropoli-

     tan Temple, Seventh Avenue and Fourteenth Street, New

     York. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulga-*

     *tion*, pp. 133–7 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 8, pp. 15–20. [↑](#endnote-ref-109)
110. For an account of this day see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*,

     pp. 288–93. [↑](#endnote-ref-110)
111. The name is unclear in the original. It could read Blake. [↑](#endnote-ref-111)
112. It was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s sixty-eighth birthday. He was born

     on May 23, 1844, the same date and year as the Declara-

     tion of the Báb. [↑](#endnote-ref-112)
113. For another account of this event see Gail, *Arches of the*

     *Years*, p. 89. [↑](#endnote-ref-113)
114. Also called the Unitarian Conference, held at Ford Hall,

     Boston. For a transcript of the talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 140–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-114)
115. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk and prayer see

     *Promulgation*, pp. 143–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-115)
116. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 147–50 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 8, pp. 20–2. For

     another account of the evening see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*,

     p. 296. [↑](#endnote-ref-116)
117. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk, see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 150–3, and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 7, pp. 14–21,

     both of which state that the talk took place on May 28. [↑](#endnote-ref-117)
118. For another transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Star of the*

     *West*, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-118)
119. The events described here took place on Thursday, May

     30, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-119)
120. For transcripts of this talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 156–60

     and *Star of the West,* vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 55–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-120)
121. Hoar’s Sanitorium was located in Fanwood, New Jersey. [↑](#endnote-ref-121)
122. For a transcript of the talk given at the Fanwood Town

     Hall see *Promulgation*, pp. 161–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-122)
123. For other transcripts of the talk of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá see *Pro-*

     *mulgation*, pp. 163–71, *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10,

     pp. 24–9 and *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no. 16, pp. 246–50. [↑](#endnote-ref-123)
124. The events described here took place on Tuesday, June

     4, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-124)
125. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s answers to questions put

     to Him see *Star of the West*, vol. 7, no. 9, pp. 77–84. [↑](#endnote-ref-125)
126. Ashrafí, Persian gold coins (about 22 to 24 carats, weigh-

     ing approximately 9 to 12 grams). [↑](#endnote-ref-126)
127. The house at 309 West 78th Street belonged to Mrs

     Champney. [↑](#endnote-ref-127)
128. This is in reference to Amín’u’lláh Faríd who often solic-

     ited money and gifts in the name of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá despite

     the Master’s explicit instructions to the contrary. Owing

     to his further disobedience to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Faríd was later

     declared a Covenant-breaker. See Smith, ‘The American

     Bahá’í Community’, *Studies in Bábí and Bahá’í History*,

     pp. 188–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-128)
129. Balyuzi notes that this was on Saturday, 8 June 1912. See

     Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 209. [↑](#endnote-ref-129)
130. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks in Philadelphia and

     an account of His visit there, see *Promulgation*, pp. 172–82,

     *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no. 6, pp. 83–90 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 5, no. 7, pp. 99–106. [↑](#endnote-ref-130)
131. One was the Unitarian Church at 15th Street and Girard

     Avenue and the other the Baptist Temple, at Broad and

     Berks Streets, Philadelphia. According to *Promulgation*,

     both meetings took place on June 9, 1912. For a transcript

     of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Unitarian Church see *Promul-*

     *gation*, pp. 172–6; for a transcript of the talk at the Baptist

     Temple see *Promulgation*, pp. 176–82. [↑](#endnote-ref-131)
132. According to Balyuzi and Ward, the events recorded here

     took place on Monday, June 10, 1912. See Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-*

     *Bahá*, p. 211 and Ward, *239 Days*, p. 88. [↑](#endnote-ref-132)
133. Bahá’u’lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 53 (translated by Shoghi

     Effendi). [↑](#endnote-ref-133)
134. The events described probably took place on Tuesday,

     June 11, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-134)
135. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks given on June 11,

     1912 see *Promulgation*, pp. 183–7 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 4, no. 6, pp. 99–101. [↑](#endnote-ref-135)
136. The events described probably took place on Wednesday,

     June 12, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-136)
137. For a transcript of one of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks given on

     June 12, 1912 see *Promulgation*, pp. 187–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-137)
138. The events described probably took place on Thursday,

     June 13, 1912. See Ward, *239 Days*, p. 90. [↑](#endnote-ref-138)
139. The events described probably took place on Friday, June

     14 or Saturday, June 15, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-139)
140. Sultan of Turkey from 1876 until he was deposed in 1909. [↑](#endnote-ref-140)
141. A commission sent by the Ottoman government to investi-

     gate charges leveled against ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by violators of

     the Covenant. See Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 112–25. [↑](#endnote-ref-141)
142. This talk was given at 309 West Seventy-eighth Street, New

     York, on June 15, not June 13. For a transcript of the talk

     see *Promulgation*, pp. 189–90. [↑](#endnote-ref-142)
143. The events described probably took place on Saturday,

     June 15, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-143)
144. A believer mentioned in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *Memorials of the*

     *Faithful*, pp. 54–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-144)
145. A quotation from the poet Rúmí. [↑](#endnote-ref-145)
146. The events described here took place on Sunday, June 16,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-146)
147. This meeting took place at the Fourth Unitarian Church,

     Beverly Road, Flatbush, Brooklyn. For transcripts of

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 190–4 and *Star*

     *of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 30–2. [↑](#endnote-ref-147)
148. For translations of the prayer see *Promulgation*, p. 193 and

     *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10, p. 32. [↑](#endnote-ref-148)
149. For ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address to the Sunday school children

     see *Promulgation*, pp. 193–4 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3,

     no. 10, p. 32. [↑](#endnote-ref-149)
150. 935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 194–7 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 17–19. [↑](#endnote-ref-150)
151. The Central Congregational Church, Hancock Street,

     Brooklyn. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promul-*

     *gation*, pp. 197–203 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10,

     pp. 19–22. [↑](#endnote-ref-151)
152. The events described here took place on Monday, June 17,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-152)
153. Although not identified, this is most likely Mírzá ‘Alí-

     Muḥammad Varqá. [↑](#endnote-ref-153)
154. The events described took place on Tuesday, June 18,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-154)
155. For another description of this event see *Star of the West*,

     vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 2–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-155)
156. The events described here took place on Wednesday, June

     19, 1912. Although not mentioned by Mírzá Maḥmúd,

     June 19 was the day ‘Abdu’l-Bahá designated New York

     the City of the Covenant. See Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 220

     and *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 311–16. [↑](#endnote-ref-156)
157. Also known as the Súriy-i-Ghuṣn, it was revealed by

     Bahá’u’lláh while in Adrianople. See Shoghi Effendi, *God*

     *Passes By*, p. 242. [↑](#endnote-ref-157)
158. Those following Mírzá Yaḥyá, also known as Subḥ-i-Azal,

     the half-brother of Bahá’u’lláh who claimed to be the

     successor of the Báb. [↑](#endnote-ref-158)
159. A believer who had been exiled with Bahá’u’lláh to ‘Akká. [↑](#endnote-ref-159)
160. The events described here took place on Thursday, June

     20, 1912. See Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 221 and *Diary of*

     *Juliet Thompson*, p. 317. [↑](#endnote-ref-160)
161. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 206–9 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 10, pp. 23–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-161)
162. The events described here took place on Friday, June 21,

     1912. See Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 221 and *Diary of Juliet*

     *Thompson*, pp. 317–21. [↑](#endnote-ref-162)
163. The events described here took place on Saturday, June

     22, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-163)
164. The events described here took place on Sunday, June 23,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-164)
165. Mírzá Asadu’lláh of Khuy, on whom the Báb conferred the

     designation ‘Dayyán’ (lit. ‘conqueror’ or judge’). After the

     martyrdom of the Báb, a number of His followers turned

     to Dayyán for guidance. He went to the length of claiming

     to be ‘He Whom God shall make manifest’ but after meet-

     ing Bahá’u’lláh in Iraq, he retracted the claim. Mírzá

     Yaḥyá caused ‘the murder of Dayyán, whom he feared and

     envied’. See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 165. [↑](#endnote-ref-165)
166. For details of ‘Abdu’l-Vahháb, see the chapter entitled

     ‘The Story of a Shírází Youth’ in Balyuzi, *King of Glory*,

     pp. 94–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-166)
167. Juliet Thompson relates in her diary: The Master’s whole

     aspect suddenly changed. It was as though the spirit of the

     martyr had entered into Him. With that God-like head

     erect, snapping His fingers high in the air, beating out a

     drumlike rhythm with His foot till we could hardly endure

     the vibrations set up, He triumphantly sang “The Martyr’s

     Song”.

     ‘I have come again, I have come again,

     By way of Shíráz I have come again!

     With the wine cup in My hand!

     Such is the madness of Love!’

     *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 320–1. [↑](#endnote-ref-167)
168. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 210–13. [↑](#endnote-ref-168)
169. The events described here took place on Wednesday, June

     26, 1912. See Ward, *239 Days*, p. 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-169)
170. This visit to Newark took place on Thursday, June 27,

     1912. See Ward, *239 Days*, p. 100. [↑](#endnote-ref-170)
171. A Persian hat, brimless, of lambskin or felt, long worn by

     government officials, civilians, etc. The term ‘hatted’ refers

     to laymen while ‘turbaned’ indicates the clergy or learned

     class. Gail, *Bahá’í Glossary*, p. 27. [↑](#endnote-ref-171)
172. A ‘para’ was the smallest denomination of currency of the

     Ottoman Empire in the 1860s. [↑](#endnote-ref-172)
173. A reference to Bahá’u’lláh’s withdrawal in April 1854 from

     Baghdád to Sulaymáníyyih, a small town about 200 miles

     away in Kurdistán, where He resided until March 1856.

     See Balyuzi, *King of Glory*, pp. 115–22. [↑](#endnote-ref-173)
174. ‘O God, He Who is invoked.’ The cycle of every Divine

     Dispensation. Specifically, the time of Mustagháth is the

     day of the Latter Resurrection, i.e. the Advent of Bahá-

     ’u’lláh. Gail, *Bahá’í Glossary*, p. 37. See also Bahá’u’lláh,

     *Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 229, 248. [↑](#endnote-ref-174)
175. He was the sole companion of Bahá’u’lláh in Sulay-

     máníyyih. He was set upon by highwaymen or frontier

     patrols and was mortally wounded. When found near

     death, he gave his name and bequeathed all his posses-

     sions to Darvísh Muḥammad-i-Írání, the name Bahá’u’lláh

     had assumed. See Balyuzi, *King of Glory*, pp. 116–17. [↑](#endnote-ref-175)
176. The events described here took place on Saturday, June

     29, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-176)
177. Roy Wilhelm’s home, the venue of the Unity Feast, marks

     the only public memorial which the American Bahá’ís have

     been permitted to construct in observance of ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá’s North American journeys. For another account of

     this event, see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 322–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-177)
178. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Unity Feast see

     *Promulgation*, pp. 213–15 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 8,

     pp. 16–18. [↑](#endnote-ref-178)
179. The events described here took place on Sunday, June 30,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-179)
180. Mr Topakyan, the Persian Consul General, resided in

     Morristown, New Jersey. [↑](#endnote-ref-180)
181. The events described here took place on Monday, July 1,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-181)
182. During His stay in New York, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá resided at 309

     West 78th Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-182)
183. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks on July 1, 1912 see

     *Promulgation*, pp. 216–18 and *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 6,

     pp. 102–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-183)
184. The events described here took place on Tuesday, July 2,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-184)
185. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks on 1 July see *Pro-*

     *mulgation*, pp. 216–17 and 218. [↑](#endnote-ref-185)
186. The events described here took place on Wednesday, July

     3, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-186)
187. The events described here took place on Thursday, July

     4, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-187)
188. Juliet Thompson records that

     On the fourth of July, Mamma had her birthday dinner

     with the Master. He was so sweet to her … When we

     sat with Him after dinner, He spoke of tests. ‘Even the

     sword,’ He said, ‘is no test to the Persian believers.

     They are given a chance to recant; they cry out instead:

     “Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá!” Then the sword is raised,’—He

     shot out His arm as though brandishing a sword—‘they

     cry out all the more “Yá Bahá’u’l-Abhá”. But some of

     the people here are tested if I don’t say “How do you

     do?”’ *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 326–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-188)
189. It is not clear on what day the events described here took

     place. [↑](#endnote-ref-189)
190. The National History Museum. For an account of this

     excursion see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, p. 329–32. [↑](#endnote-ref-190)
191. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s two talks see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 218–25, *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 11, pp. 6–10 and

     *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 5, pp. 87–90. [↑](#endnote-ref-191)
192. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 225–8 and *Star of the West,* vol. 3, no. 11, pp. 10–12. [↑](#endnote-ref-192)
193. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had asked Lua Getsinger to go to California

     to proclaim the Covenant. Juliet Thompson relates that

     as Lua was eager to remain with the Master, she delayed

     going and, in order to prevent her departure, had deliber-

     ately walked through some poison ivy during the Unity

     Feast at Roy Wilhelm’s house, which made her feet swell.

     Lua said to Juliet Thompson, ‘Look at me, Julie. *Look* at my

     feet. Oh, please go right back to the Master and tell Him

     about them and say: “How can Lua travel now?”’

     I did it, returned to the Master’s house, found Him in His

     room and put Lua’s question to Him. He laughed, then

     crossed the room to a table on which stood a bowl of fruit,

     and, selecting an apple and a pomegranate, gave them to

     me.

     ‘Take these to Lua,’ He said. ‘Tell her to eat them and

     she will be cured. Spend the day with her, Juliet.’

     O precious Lua—strange mixture of disobedience and

     obedience—and all from love! I shall never forget her,

     seizing first the apple, then the pomegranate and gravely

     chewing them all the way through till not even a pom-

     egranate seed was left: thoroughly eating her cure, which

     was certain to send her to California. *Diary of Juliet Thomp-*

     *son*, pp. 323–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-193)
194. It has not been possible to identify either Siyyid

     ‘Abdu’lláh’s work or Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl’s refutation of it.

     Mírzá Abu’l-Faḍl’s *The Brilliant Proof*, published in 1912

     to refute the criticisms of the Christian missionary Peter

     Z. Easton, does not contain the passages cited. [↑](#endnote-ref-194)
195. Naysán is the name of a Hebrew month. It had been used

     in the ancient Egyptian calendar and was still in use in

     1912. It originated in Babylonia before its adoption by

     other civilizations. [↑](#endnote-ref-195)
196. The guinea was one pound and one shilling (i.e. one

     pound and five pence in today’s currency). In 1912 the

     equivalent of 1,000 guineas was approximately $16,000. [↑](#endnote-ref-196)
197. O Ye Peoples of the World!

     Know, verily, that an unforeseen calamity followeth you,

     and grievous retribution awaiteth you. Think not that

     which ye have committed hath been effaced in My sight.

     By My beauty! All your doings hath My pen graven with

     open characters upon tablets of chrysolite. Bahá’u’lláh,

     *Hidden Words*, Persian no. 63. [↑](#endnote-ref-197)
198. The events described here took place on Friday, July 12,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-198)
199. For Juliet Thompson’s description of Percy Grant’s meet-

     ing with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the meeting at her home see

     *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 339–46. [↑](#endnote-ref-199)
200. The events described here took place on Sunday, July 14,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-200)
201. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the All Souls’

     Unitarian Church, Fourth Avenue and Twentieth Street

     on July 14 see *Promulgation*, pp. 228–35 and *Star of the*

     *West*, vol. 3, no. 11, pp. 12–16. [↑](#endnote-ref-201)
202. The events described here took place on Monday, July 15,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-202)
203. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Krugs’ home

     see *Promulgation*, pp. 236–7. The text of this talk differs

     from the overview of it provided by Maḥmúd. [↑](#endnote-ref-203)
204. The events described here took place on Wednesday, July

     17, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-204)
205. There are several accounts of this wedding. In her obituary

     of Grace Ober, Mabel Rice-Wray Ives writes:

     During the months of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in America in

     1912 Mrs Ober (Grace Robarts) had the honor of being

     indeed the ‘servant’ in His home in whatever city He was

     staying. He chose her to go ahead and secure an apart-

     ment for Him and have it in readiness upon His arrival.

     Then she would care for His home as a housekeeper and

     hostess while He and His secretaries and those Persians

     who had the privilege of serving Him in various capacities,

     remained there. She kept the home immaculate, and

     always ready for the constant stream of guests from morn-

     ing to night, Bahá’ís and inquirers and souls in difficulty

     to whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was always a loving Father. It was

     during one of the New York City visits of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that

     He suggested her marriage to Harlan Ober. Gaining the

     consent of these two devoted believers, who in His con-

     summate wisdom He had drawn together, He, on the

     following day, July 17, 1912, married them in the morning

     according to the Bahá’í marriage.

     This infinite bounty of being chosen for each other and

     joined in marriage by the Centre of the Covenant Himself

     was a unique favor bestowed upon these two souls alone,

     out of all America. The *Bahá’í World*, vol. 8, p. 658.

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     Juliet Thompson writes in her diary:

     In the evening I returned from a wedding, Grace Robarts’

     and Harlan Ober’s, where the Master, for me, as well as

     for the bride and bridegroom, turned the water of life into

     wine.

     Grace and Harlan stood together, transfigured; they

     seemed to be bathed in white light. Mr Ives, standing

     opposite, married them. Back in the shadow sat the Mas-

     ter. There were times when I, sitting at a little distance

     from Him, felt His lightning glance on me. At the end of

     the service He blessed the marriage. *Diary of Juliet Thomp-*

     *son*, pp. 350–1.

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     Howard Colby Ives provides a long account of the wedding

     and discusses the nature of Bahá’í marriage. (See Ives,

     *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 92–113.) Here he describes the

     Master at the ceremony:

     After the simple wedding ceremony and the bride and

     groom had resumed their seats, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose. His

     cream-colored ‘abá fell in graceful folds to His feet. Upon

     His head he wore a tarboosh, or fez, of the same color,

     beneath which His long white hair fell almost to His

     shoulders. Most impressive of all His impressive aspects

     were His eyes. Blue they were but so changing with His

     mood! Now gentle and appealing, now holding a deep,

     tranquil lambent repose as though gazing upon scenes of

     glory far removed.

     His brow above those wide-set eyes was like an ivory

     dome. His neatly clipped beard, snowy white, touched His

     breast, but around His mouth no straggling hairs obscured

     the mobile lips.

     He spoke through an interpreter, as was His custom …

     He swept the room with a glance at once enfolding and

     abstracted. He raised His hands, palm upwards, level with

     His waist, His eyes closed and He chanted a prayer for the

     souls united by Him and by me.

     For another account of the wedding see *Star of the West*,

     vol. 3, no. 12, pp. 14–15. [↑](#endnote-ref-205)
206. The events described here took place on Thursday, July

     18, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-206)
207. The events described here took place on Friday, July 19,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-207)
208. Mentioned in the *Dawn-Breakers*, chapter 5. [↑](#endnote-ref-208)
209. A doctor of Islamic law, who has authority to interpret and

     issue judgments. [↑](#endnote-ref-209)
210. Known as Shaykh Hindí, a poet from India. [↑](#endnote-ref-210)
211. Martha Root was among those in the audience that eve-

     ning and was so taken by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s account of the

     martyrdom of Varqá and his son Rúḥu’lláh that she later

     wrote her own moving account of the Varqá family, ‘White

     Roses of Persia’. See Garis, *Martha Root*, pp. 53–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-211)
212. The events described here took place on Sunday, July 21,

     1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-212)
213. It is customary in the East to show one’s highest respect

     to a guest by apologizing for the lack of any service ren-

     dered. [↑](#endnote-ref-213)
214. A ruler of Egypt from 1867 to 1914, governing as a viceroy

     of the Sultan of Turkey. [↑](#endnote-ref-214)
215. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 238–9 and *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 7, p. 122. [↑](#endnote-ref-215)
216. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the Theosophical Society at The

     Kensington, Exeter and Boylston Streets, Boston. For a

     transcript of His talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 239–43. [↑](#endnote-ref-216)
217. For transcripts of this brief address see *Promulgation*,

     p. 244 and *Star of the West*, vol. 7, no. 12, p. 116. [↑](#endnote-ref-217)
218. Yá Rasúlu’lláh, an invocation of Muslims to the Prophet

     Muḥammad. [↑](#endnote-ref-218)
219. For other accounts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Dublin see

     Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 69–124 and Ives,

     *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 114–31. [↑](#endnote-ref-219)
220. Muslim clergymen, doctors of religion, by whose decisions

     Muslim life is regulated. [↑](#endnote-ref-220)
221. Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablet to the Shah of Persia, dispatched from

     ‘Akká, and His lengthiest to any single sovereign. The

     Shah put its bearer, Badí‘, to death. [↑](#endnote-ref-221)
222. Muḥammad ‘Alí Mírzá succeeded Muẓaffaru’d-Dín Sháh

     to the throne of the Qájár dynasty in 1907 and abdicated

     in 1909. [↑](#endnote-ref-222)
223. From a Persian proverb, equivalent to ‘home is where the

     heart is’. [↑](#endnote-ref-223)
224. For an account of the visit of the Bahá’ís to Dublin see *Star*

     *of the West*, vol. 3, no. 11, pp. 3–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-224)
225. It is possible that the events described as taking place on

     this date took place at some other time, as Joseph Hannen

     had provided transcripts of two talks ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave

     in Dublin, one ‘at Abdu’l-Baha’s house, Dublin, Wednes-

     day morning, July 31st’ and the other ‘at 9:30 a.m., July

     31st, Abdu’l-Baha, on the veranda of His house’. (*Star of*

     *the West*, vol. 3, no. 11, pp. 4–6.) See also the entry in the

     diary of Agnes Parsons for Wednesday, July 31. (Hollinger,

     *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 85–8.) Mrs Parsons’ diary sug-

     gests that the date of the visit to the summer school was

     August 1; however, there are two entries for August 1 in

     her diary (pp. 88–91). [↑](#endnote-ref-225)
226. Shoghi Effendi describes this incident:

     Even in the city of ‘Ishqabád the newly established Shí‘ah

     community, envious of the rising prestige of the followers

     of Bahá’u’lláh who were living in their midst, instigated

     two ruffians to assault the seventy-year old Ḥájí Muḥam-

     mad-Riḍáy-i-Iṣfahání, whom, in broad day and in the

     midst of the bazaar, they stabbed in no less than thirty-two

     places, exposing his liver, lacerating his stomach and

     tearing open his breast. A military court dispatched by the

     Czar to ‘Ishqabád established, after prolonged investiga-

     tion, the guilt of the Shí‘ahs, sentencing two to death and

     banishing six others—a sentence which neither Náṣiri’d-

     Dín Sháh, nor the ‘ulamás of Ṭihrán, of Mashhad and of

     Tabríz, who were appealed to, could mitigate, but which

     the representatives of the aggrieved community, through

     their magnanimous intercession which greatly surprised

     the Russian authorities, succeeded in having commuted

     to a lighter punishment. Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*,

     pp. 202–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-226)
227. The events described here took place on Sunday, August

     4, 1912. See Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, p. 94. [↑](#endnote-ref-227)
228. The author says, ‘*shaghul ghamar*’ (an impossible act). [↑](#endnote-ref-228)
229. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s half-brother, the arch-breaker of Bahá-

     ’u’lláh’s Covenant. See *God Passes By*, pp. 246, 249. [↑](#endnote-ref-229)
230. A notorious enemy of the Faith. See *God Passes By*, p. 146. [↑](#endnote-ref-230)
231. A comprehensive study of Islamic theology by Shaykh Ibn

     al-‘Arabí, one of the most influential Sufi thinkers, much

     quoted by the ‘ulamá. The work contains a full exposition

     of Sufi doctrine. ‘Conquests' in a mystical context carries

     no military connotations but implies the opening of the

     heart to knowledge and understanding. [↑](#endnote-ref-231)
232. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Dublin Inn on August 5, 1912.

     For transcripts of His talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 245–7 and

     *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 18, pp. 4–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-232)
233. This is possibly the talk recorded in *Promulgation*, pp. 247–

     52 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 18, pp. 6–10. [↑](#endnote-ref-233)
234. Before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went to the church He spoke with

     Howard Colby Ives. See Ives, *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 120–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-234)
235. A famous 14th-century Persian musician poet. [↑](#endnote-ref-235)
236. Herat is a city in western Afghanistan. Bokhara is an

     ancient city of Persia, now a part of Russian Turkistan in

     the Uzbek Republic. [↑](#endnote-ref-236)
237. The river of Múliyán, near Bokhara. [↑](#endnote-ref-237)
238. Rúdakí, as translated by Edward G. Browne. See *A Literary*

     *History of Persia*, vol. 1, p. 16. [↑](#endnote-ref-238)
239. Sa‘dí, the great 13th-century Persian poet, famous in the

     West for his ‘Gulistan’ or ‘Rose Garden’. [↑](#endnote-ref-239)
240. A Persian Bahá’í woman, the first Persian woman to travel

     in the United States. [↑](#endnote-ref-240)
241. A Persian expression denoting one who passes round the

     wine cup at joyful gatherings. [↑](#endnote-ref-241)
242. For an account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival at Green Acre see

     *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 15, pp. 3–4. H. M. Balyuzi

     writes:

     Green Acre, an estate of nearly two hundred acres, lies on

     the banks of the Piscataqua river in Eliot, Maine, four

     miles from the shores of the Atlantic … In 1894 … Miss

     Sarah J. Farmer, a woman highly enlightened, had opened

     the estate as a conference center for people of advanced

     and liberal views. Two years later she embraced the Bahá’í

     Faith. And when she went on pilgrimage to ‘Akká, she

     offered the facilities of Green Acre to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá …

     Today the Green Acre property (the home of a well-famed

     Summer School) is administered by the National Spiritual

     Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States. It includes

     the Inn, the Fellowship House, the Arts and Crafts Studio

     and a holding on Monsalvat where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stood and

     commended the wish of Sarah Farmer that a ‘university

     of the higher sciences’ should be built on that height.

     Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 240–1.

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     See also *Green Acre on the Piscataqua*, an account of Green

     Acre’s 100 year history, chronicling its development from

     a resort hotel in 1890 to its present-day use as a Bahá’í

     school. [↑](#endnote-ref-242)
243. In fact, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited Miss Farmer at the sanatorium

     in Portsmouth where she, an invalid, was a patient. [↑](#endnote-ref-243)
244. The Eirenian, the House of Peace. [↑](#endnote-ref-244)
245. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 253–61 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 16, pp. 5–9.

     Balyuzi states that this was ‘one of the longest talks of His

     entire tour’. Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 241. [↑](#endnote-ref-245)
246. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave several talks in Green Acre on August

     17, 1912. For transcripts of these talks see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 261–3, 263–4 and 270–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-246)
247. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 264–70 and *Star of the West*, vol. 8, no. 7, pp. 76–80. [↑](#endnote-ref-247)
248. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Star of the West*,

     vol. 3, no. 15, pp. 4–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-248)
249. Then called Eliot House, now Staples Cottage. [↑](#endnote-ref-249)
250. For Fred Mortensen’s own account of his meeting with

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at Green Acre, see *Star of the West*, vol. 14,

     no. 12, pp. 365–7; Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 247–51; and

     Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 127–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-250)
251. Green Acre on the Piscataqua gives two accounts of this unity

     feast:

     After dinner He hosted a unity feast from the porch of

     what He called ‘Bahá’í Home’ … We have only a few

     descriptions of the feast. Alice Tobey Cummings remem-

     bered the round peppermints that Ella Robarts had

     brought at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s request for the refreshment table

     at the feast, some of which she and Louise Thompson

     saved and for years distributed to the friends on special

     occasions. She also remembered ‘Abdu’l-Bahá saying that

     He had left enough spirit at Green Acre to bring dry bones

     to life. *Green Acre on the Piscataqua*, pp. 51–3.

     After dinner ‘Abdu’l-Bahá emerged from what was then

     known as the Eliot House and, standing on the porch,

     spoke to those gathered. So forceful and melodious was

     His voice that passers-by would stop to listen.

     One can imagine ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, a man of sixty-eight

     years, wearing a long flowing, cream colored robe and a

     dark ‘abá or overcoat, a white turbaned headdress on his

     flowing silky white hair. As He talked, He walked back and

     forth across the porch gesturing with His hands. His voice

     strong and sure, His translator by His side. *Green Acre on*

     *the Piscataqua*, p. 58 (based on notes of Ivy Drew Edwards). [↑](#endnote-ref-251)
252. *Green Acre on the Piscataqua* provides several accounts of

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Monsalvat, among them Harry

     Randall’s:

     He went to the top of Mt. Salvat, which is a part of the

     Green Acre property there, and He told us that on this

     spot a great Mashreq’ul-Azkar [sic] would be built and that

     the whole hill would be covered with institutions of learn-

     ing, science, and religion, and to impress us with the

     importance of this Center, He said already it had been

     created and was not a prophecy alone and the Mashreq’ul-

     Azkar hung low over that place. *Green Acre on the*

     *Piscataqua*, p. 59. [↑](#endnote-ref-252)
253. Maḥmúd describes the moving picture as a camera which

     rotated in two different directions when it took photo-

     graphs. Its plate was about half a meter long. [↑](#endnote-ref-253)
254. ‘That evening He dined with and spoke to nineteen guests

     at the home of Esther Annie Magee and her daughter

     Edith Inglis.’ *Green Acre on the Piscataqua*, p. 59. [↑](#endnote-ref-254)
255. The Wilson house is today part of the endowments of the

     American Bahá’í community. [↑](#endnote-ref-255)
256. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk to the New Thought

     Forum at the Metaphysical Club in Boston see *Promulga*-

     *tion*, pp. 276–80 and *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 7, pp. 117–

     22. [↑](#endnote-ref-256)
257. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at Franklin Square

     House, Boston, see *Promulgation*, pp. 280–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-257)
258. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 284–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-258)
259. It is likely that the wedding of Ruby Breed, youngest

     daughter of Francis and Alice Breed, to Clarence Johnson

     took place on this date. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá attended the wed-

     ding ceremony and afterwards gave a talk ‘on marriage,

     on the union of the sexes in all four kingdoms—mineral,

     vegetable, animal and human—and passing on to the next

     life in the Heavenly Kingdom’. For a description of the

     wedding see Gail, *Arches of the Years*, p. 90; for a newspaper

     account see Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 131–2. [↑](#endnote-ref-259)
260. This meeting took place at the home of Madame Morey,

     34 Hillside Avenue, Malden on Thursday, August 29,

     1912. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulga-*

     *tion*, pp. 289–96. On August 31, a local newspaper, the

     *Transcript*, reported:

     Abdul Baha Abbas [sic] … was the guest of honor at a

     reception given on Thursday evening at her residence in

     Malden by Mme. Beale Morey, the musician. There were

     nearly a hundred guests present, for whom Mme. Morey

     played at the piano an introductory musical programme,

     following which Abdul Beha Abbas [sic] gave a talk on the

     ‘Religions of the World’, showing the points of similarity

     of beliefs of different nations and their relations in the

     forming of a universal brotherhood. Cited in Ward, *239*

     *Days*, p. 132. [↑](#endnote-ref-260)
261. The Maxwell home at 1548 Pine Avenue West, Montreal,

     (indicated as 716 Pine Avenue West in *Promulgation*) is now

     a national Bahá’í endowment, given to the Faith by

     Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum in 1948. [↑](#endnote-ref-261)
262. John Lewis, editor of the *Montreal Daily Star*. See Balyuzi,

     *‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 256–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-262)
263. From Saná‘í, 12th century, the first of the great Persian

     mystic poets. [↑](#endnote-ref-263)
264. Ahmad Sohrab, one of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s entourage. [↑](#endnote-ref-264)
265. For another translation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promul-*

     *gation*, pp. 297–302. [↑](#endnote-ref-265)
266. For transcripts of the talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, which were

     given at the home of Mr and Mrs Maxwell, see *Promulga-*

     *tion*, pp. 302–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-266)
267. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 308–12. [↑](#endnote-ref-267)
268. This is probably a believer mentioned in *Memorials of the*

     *Faithful*, pp. 171–2, who at one time waited on Bahá’u’lláh. [↑](#endnote-ref-268)
269. The first Caliph of Islam after the passing of Muḥammad. [↑](#endnote-ref-269)
270. For a transcript of the talk by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the St

     James Methodist Church, Montreal, see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 312–19. [↑](#endnote-ref-270)
271. The child, Mary, was then two years old. In 1937 she

     married the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith, Shoghi Effendi,

     and was given the title Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum.

     She was appointed a Hand of the Cause of God in 1952. [↑](#endnote-ref-271)
272. From the Persian proverb, ‘Your place is vacant’, meaning

     that you are missed. [↑](#endnote-ref-272)
273. A title of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: ‘When the ocean of My presence

     hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn

     your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who

     hath branched from this Ancient Root.’ Bahá’u’lláh, *Kitáb-*

     *i-Aqdas*, para. 121. [↑](#endnote-ref-273)
274. Corinne True lived at 5338 Kenmore Avenue. [↑](#endnote-ref-274)
275. This is possibly Bernard Jacobsen, a prominent Bahá’í in

     Kenosha. [↑](#endnote-ref-275)
276. See *Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 99–134. [↑](#endnote-ref-276)
277. Shu‘á‘u’lláh, the son of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s faithless half

     brother Mírzá Muḥammad-‘Alí, was in the United States

     at the same time as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. On May 4, 1912 he had

     written to the *Kenosha Evening News* denouncing ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá for trying to subvert the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and

     proposing a meeting between himself and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

     to settle their differences. Kheiralla was also to attend.

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá ignored the letter. Kheiralla, on July 8, also

     wrote to the newspaper in support of Shu‘á‘u’lláh. Roger

     Dahl notes that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Kenosha ‘seems to

     have been primarily intended by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as a means

     of uplifting the spirits of the Bahá’ís in Kenosha and

     raising the public prestige of that community in the face

     of opposition by the followers of Kheiralla’. Dahl, ‘A

     History of the Kenosha Bahá’í Community, 1897–1980’

     in Hollinger, *Community Histories*, p. 1–57. [↑](#endnote-ref-277)
278. For another account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Kenosha see

     Collins, ‘Kenosha, 1893–1912’ in Momen, *Studies in Bábí*

     *and Bahá’í History*, vol. 1, pp. 244–8. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was

     taken to the Bahá’í Center in Kenosha at Gronquist Hall,

     616 Fifty-seventh Street. [↑](#endnote-ref-278)
279. A governor of Palestine during a period of the Ottoman

     Empire. [↑](#endnote-ref-279)
280. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 320–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-280)
281. Martyred in Iṣfahán with his brother, the Beloved of

     Martyrs (Mírzá Muḥammad-Ḥusayn) on March 17, 1879.

     See *God Passes By*, pp. 200–1. [↑](#endnote-ref-281)
282. The Walker Art Gallery. See Ward, *239 Days*, p. 148. [↑](#endnote-ref-282)
283. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave this talk at the home of Dr and Mrs

     Clement Woolson, 870 Laurel Avenue, St Paul, on Septem-

     ber 20, 1912. For a transcript of the talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 329–33. [↑](#endnote-ref-283)
284. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the home of Albert Hall, 2030

     Queen Avenue South, Minneapolis on September 20,

     1912. For a transcript of His talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 325–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-284)
285. In the early days of Islam, on the recommendation of the

     Persian Salmán, ditches were dug to protect the believers

     from the onslaught of the enemies attacking the Prophet

     Muḥammad. [↑](#endnote-ref-285)
286. Anushírván was a Sásáníd king known for his just rule. The

     Prophet Muḥammad was born during his reign. Khusraw

     is the name of several Persian kings. Khusraw I (ad 531–79)

     was the greatest of the Sásáníd monarchs. He extended

     his rule east to the Indus River, west across Arabia, and

     north and northwest, taking part of Armenia and Caucasia

     from the Byzantines. [↑](#endnote-ref-286)
287. The Executive Committee of the Central Organization for

     a Durable Peace. [↑](#endnote-ref-287)
288. A low mountain near the village of Tákur, in the province

     of Núr, Persia, the summer residence of Bahá’u’lláh. [↑](#endnote-ref-288)
289. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá here is speaking ironically in reference to

     His nephew Shu‘á‘u’lláh, whose name means ‘ray of light’,

     as being ‘of darkness’, for shortly after the passing of

     Bahá’u’lláh he became a Covenant-breaker, following in

     the footsteps of his father, Mírzá Muḥammad-‘Alí, ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá’s unfaithful half-brother. [↑](#endnote-ref-289)
290. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá here is quoting a passage from the *Kitáb-i-*

     *Aqdas*, para. 37. [↑](#endnote-ref-290)
291. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the home of Mrs Sidney Roberts on

     September 24, 1912. For transcripts of His talk see *Pro-*

     *mulgation*, pp. 334–7 and *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 13,

     pp. 219–26. [↑](#endnote-ref-291)
292. Although not identified, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is likely referring

     to Fujita, who accompanied Him on His journey westward. [↑](#endnote-ref-292)
293. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Second Divine Science Church,

     3929 West Thirty-eighth Avenue, Denver was given on

     September 25, 1912. For a transcript of His talk see

     *Promulgation*, pp, 337–42. [↑](#endnote-ref-293)
294. A story based on the Mathnaví of Rúmí. [↑](#endnote-ref-294)
295. Ḥajaru’l-aswad, a stone at the northeast corner of the

     Ka‘bá, which is the holiest spot in the Islamic world, the

     center of pilgrimage for Muslims and the direction in

     which they face for their obligatory prayers. [↑](#endnote-ref-295)
296. See Qur’án 29:69 (Suríh of the Spider), a reference to the

     flight of Muḥammad and His son-in-law ‘Alí to a cave

     outside Mecca because of persecution by the enemies of

     His Cause. [↑](#endnote-ref-296)
297. This was also the week of the State Fair and the Mormon

     Convention and the city was filled with people from Utah,

     adjoining states and beyond. For the account of Feny E.

     Paulson, a Bahá’í who met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His entou-

     rage in Utah, see Ward, *239 Days*, pp. 159–63. [↑](#endnote-ref-297)
298. Siyyid Yaḥyáy-i-Dárábí, surnamed Vaḥíd, a devoted fol-

     lower of the Báb. [↑](#endnote-ref-298)
299. He had been a servant of the Báb at Máh-Kú. [↑](#endnote-ref-299)
300. This event occurred at the home of Bahá’u’lláh when

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was a child of five. See Nabíl, *Dawn-Breakers*,

     p. 432. [↑](#endnote-ref-300)
301. For another account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in San Fran-

     cisco see *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 12, pp. 9–10 and vol. 3,

     no. 13, pp. 11–13. [↑](#endnote-ref-301)
302. This was Kanichi Yamamoto, the first Japanese Bahá’í.

     Ḥasan is the name of the second Imám and means ‘good’

     while Ḥusayn, the name of the third Imám, is a diminutive

     form of Ḥasan. [↑](#endnote-ref-302)
303. David Starr Jordan, the president of Leland Stanford

     Junior University. [↑](#endnote-ref-303)
304. A different talk is recorded as taking place at the home of

     Mrs Helen S. Goodall on October 3, 1912 in *Star of the*

     *West*. See vol. 4, no. 11, pp. 190–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-304)
305. For a transcript of one of the interviews see *Star of the West*,

     vol. 4, no. 12, pp. 206–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-305)
306. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to the Japanese Young Men’s Chris-

     tian Association at the Japanese Independent Church,

     Oakland on October 7, 1912. For a transcript of His talk

     see *Promulgation*, pp. 343–8. The talk was translated first

     into English and then into Japanese. See Ward, *239 Days*,

     p. 166. [↑](#endnote-ref-306)
307. Those portions of Dr David Starr Jordan’s introductory

     and closing remarks included by Maḥmúd have been

     taken directly from *The Palo Altan*. The newspaper devoted

     its entire edition of November 1, 1912, to the visit of

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to Stanford University and printed, in their

     entirety, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks at the university, the

     Emmanu-el Congregation and the Unitarian Church in

     Palo Alto. [↑](#endnote-ref-307)
308. For transcripts of Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at Leland Stanford

     Junior University see *Promulgation*, pp. 348–55 and *Star*

     *of the West*, vol. 3, no. 12, pp. 10–14. [↑](#endnote-ref-308)
309. This meeting was held on Monday, October 7, 1912. For

     a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 343–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-309)
310. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 355–61. [↑](#endnote-ref-310)
311. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s statement is recorded in *Promulgation*

     (p. 361) as:

     Strange indeed that after twenty years training in colleges

     and universities man should reach such a station wherein

     he will deny the existence of the ideal or that which is not

     perceptible to the senses. Have you ever stopped to think

     that the animal already has graduated from such a univer-

     sity? Have you ever realized that the cow is already a

     professor emeritus of that university? For the cow without

     hard labor and study is already a philosopher of the

     superlative degree in the school of nature. The cow denies

     everything that is not tangible, saying, ‘I can see! I can eat!

     Therefore, I believe only in that which is tangible!’ Then

     why should we go to colleges? Let us go to the cow. [↑](#endnote-ref-311)
312. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s interview on October 10,

     1912, with Mr Tinsley, who was recovering from an acci-

     dent, see *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 12, p. 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-312)
313. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at Temple Emmanu-el, 450 Sutter

     Street, San Francisco. [↑](#endnote-ref-313)
314. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promul-*

     *gation*, pp. 361–70 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 13,

     pp. 3–11. [↑](#endnote-ref-314)
315. Mrs Hearst took the first group of Western pilgrims to visit

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in ‘Akká in 1898. [↑](#endnote-ref-315)
316. City and district of ancient Sumer in southern Babylonia. [↑](#endnote-ref-316)
317. Equivalent to about $10 in 1912 currency. [↑](#endnote-ref-317)
318. From the Sufi poet Rúmí. [↑](#endnote-ref-318)
319. Thornton Chase had died suddenly and unexpectedly on

     September 30, 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-319)
320. Maḥmúd is probably referring to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay. [↑](#endnote-ref-320)
321. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Nineteen Day

     Feast see *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 12, pp. 203–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-321)
322. For another account of the Nineteen Day Feast see Brown,

     *Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 54–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-322)
323. A town near Shíráz where many Bahá’ís were cruelly

     martyred by fanatical mobs and mullás during the ministry

     of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. [↑](#endnote-ref-323)
324. For another account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Thornton

     Chase’s grave see *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 13, pp. 14–15. [↑](#endnote-ref-324)
325. Shu‘á‘u’lláh was in Pasadena, California during ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá’s travels in America. [↑](#endnote-ref-325)
326. And it was told him [by certain people] which said, Thy

     mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see

     thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother

     and my brethren are these which hear the word of God,

     and do it. Luke 8:20–1. [↑](#endnote-ref-326)
327. Bahá’u’lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 53. [↑](#endnote-ref-327)
328. For a transcript of a talk ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had with one of the

     friends on October 22, 1912, on the meaning of sacrifice

     see *Star of the West*, vol. 4, no. 12, p. 205. [↑](#endnote-ref-328)
329. For another account of the morning of October 23, 1912

     see Brown, *Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 78–81. [↑](#endnote-ref-329)
330. This refers to Bahá’u’lláh’s retirement to the mountains

     of Sulaymáníyyih between April 1854 and March 1856.

     See *God Passes By*, pp. 119–26. [↑](#endnote-ref-330)
331. Bahá’u’lláh’s companion while in Sulaymáníyyih, who was

     ‘set upon either by highwaymen or frontier patrols and was

     mortally wounded’. See Balyuzi, *King of Glory*, p. 116. [↑](#endnote-ref-331)
332. This paragraph was translated by Shoghi Effendi. See *God*

     *Passes By*, pp. 293–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-332)
333. For another account of the evening of October 24, 1912

     see Brown, *Memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, pp. 83–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-333)
334. This was Christine Fraser, who operated a ‘Home of Truth’

     in Sacramento. The Homes of Truth were based on the

     teachings of New Thought developed by Emma Curtis

     Hopkins. Caton notes:

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was met at the Central Pacific Arcade Station

     by Christine Fraser and Carrie Yoerk, a Sacramentan from

     a prominent family who was also associated with the Home

     of Truth. They took him, with his entourage, by car to the

     Home of Truth and invited him to remain for lunch and

     stay for the night. Goodall and Cooper, along with the

     other Americans, went directly from the train station to the

     Hotel Sacramento where they were to be staying and

     where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was to speak that night.

     … there were a number of New Thought people there,

     and they were very interested in the Bahá’í Faith. ‘Abdu’l-

     Bahá retired to a private room to rest after lunch. At about

     3:20 p.m., Cooper, Goodall, and others arrived from the

     Hotel Sacramento. It seems that his luncheon at the Home

     of Truth had come as a surprise to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, since

     Cooper later related that he called her into his room to

     scold her for arranging the meeting without consulting

     him, and so requiring that he separate himself from the

     other Bahá’ís and leave them waiting at the hotel. Caton,

     ‘A History of the Sacramento Bahá’í Community, 1912–

     1987’ in Hollinger, *Community Histories*, p. 245. [↑](#endnote-ref-334)
335. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Hotel Sacra-

     mento see *Promulgation*, pp. 370–6. [↑](#endnote-ref-335)
336. For Lua Getsinger’s notes of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Sacra-

     mento see Metelmann, *Lua Getsinger*, pp. 177–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-336)
337. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk in the Assembly Hall

     at the Hotel Sacramento at 9:30 a.m., see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 376–80 and *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no. 17, pp. 259–62. [↑](#endnote-ref-337)
338. ‘And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east

     and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and

     Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the

     kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall

     be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ Matt. 8:11–12. [↑](#endnote-ref-338)
339. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 381–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-339)
340. This incident took place on August 8, 1912, in Dublin,

     New Hampshire, between Mrs Agnes Parsons and her

     husband, Jeffrey. See Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*,

     pp. 97–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-340)
341. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 383–7 and *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no. 15, pp. 230–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-341)
342. There is nothing in the writings of Bahá’u’lláh which

     provides for musical instruments in Bahá’í Temples or

     rostrums for the delivery of addresses. Indeed, in the

     Kitáb-i-Aqdas Bahá’u’lláh states: ‘Ye have been prohibited

     from making use of pulpits’ (para. 154). In the Notes (note

     168) to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas the Universal House of Justice

     has elucidated:

     These provisions have their antecedent in the Persian

     Bayán. The Báb forbade the use of pulpits for the delivery

     of sermons and the reading of the Text. He specified,

     instead, that to enable all to hear the Word of God clearly,

     a chair for the speaker should be placed upon a platform.

     In comments on this law, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Shoghi

     Effendi have made it clear that in the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár

     (where sermons are prohibited and only the words of Holy

     Scripture may be read) the reader may stand or sit, and

     if necessary to be better heard, may use a low moveable

     platform, but that no pulpit is permitted. [↑](#endnote-ref-342)
343. The Tarbíyat Schools were highly acclaimed. The boys’

     school was established in 1898 and the girls’ school was

     founded by Dr Susan Moody after her arrival in Ṭihrán

     in 1909. Both schools were owned and managed entirely

     by Bahá’ís, although children of all religions attended,

     particularly the children of government and civil officials.

     The schools closed in 1934. [↑](#endnote-ref-343)
344. This woman is not identified but may be Mrs Farmer. [↑](#endnote-ref-344)
345. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk given at the Grand

     Hotel in Cincinnati see *Promulgation*, pp. 388–9 and *Star*

     *of the West*, vol. 6, no. 11, pp. 81–2. [↑](#endnote-ref-345)
346. The ‘Young Turk Revolution’ of 1908 resulted in the

     reinstatement of the constitution, which the Sultan had

     suspended, and the release of all religious and political

     prisoners. See *God Passes By*, pp. 271–2. [↑](#endnote-ref-346)
347. Compare with Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,

     p. 270:

     In the Orient scatter perfumes,

     And shed splendors on the West.

     Carry light unto the Bulgar,

     And the Slav with life invest. [↑](#endnote-ref-347)
348. Maḥmúd is probably referring to the Súriy-i-Múlúk (Súrih

     of Kings) revealed by Bahá’u’lláh. [↑](#endnote-ref-348)
349. The Sultan of Turkey at the time of Bahá’u’lláh, one of the

     monarchs addressed by Bahá’u’lláh in His Súriy-i-Múlúk. [↑](#endnote-ref-349)
350. The revolution occurred in Ṭihrán in 1905, replacing the

     absolute monarchy of the Qájárs with a parliamentary

     monarchy. In 1921 the Qájár dynasty was overthrown by

     Reza Shah Pahlavi, who established the Pahlavi dynasty,

     which was in turn overthrown in 1979 by the Ayatollah

     Khomeini. [↑](#endnote-ref-350)
351. Mrs Parsons’ account of the events of November 6, 1912

     differ markedly from Maḥmúd’s. See Hollinger, *Agnes*

     *Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 127–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-351)
352. For Mrs Parsons’ account of November 7, 1912 see

     Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 128–30. For transcripts

     of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s two talks given at the home of Mrs

     Parsons on November 7 see *Promulgation*, pp. 397–9, 400–2

     and *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 19–21. [↑](#endnote-ref-352)
353. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Church of Our Father (Univer-

     salist), Washington dc at 8:15 p.m. on November 6, 1912.

     For transcripts of His talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 390–7 and

     *Star of the West*, vol. 5, no. 13, pp. 195–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-353)
354. For Mrs Parsons’ account of the events of November 8,

     1912 see Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 130–2. [↑](#endnote-ref-354)
355. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Eighth Street

     Temple (Jewish Synagogue) on November 8, 1912 see

     *Promulgation*, pp. 402–10 and *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 1,

     pp. 3–10. [↑](#endnote-ref-355)
356. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks given at the home

     of Mrs Parsons on November 9, 1912 see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 411–15, 415–18 and *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 2,

     pp. 11–16. [↑](#endnote-ref-356)
357. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Bahá’í Banquet

     at Rauscher’s Hall, Washington dc see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 418–21 and *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 13, pp. 97–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-357)
358. For Mrs Parsons’ account of the events of November 9,

     1912 see Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 132–5. [↑](#endnote-ref-358)
359. *The Brilliant Proof*, published in Chicago in 1912. [↑](#endnote-ref-359)
360. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the home of Mrs

     Parsons see *Promulgation*, pp. 421–5 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 21–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-360)
361. Joseph and Pauline Hannen lived at 1252 Eighth Street,

     NW, Washington dc. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá talk

     see *Promulgation*, pp. 425–8 and *Star of the West*, vol. 6,

     no. 13, pp. 99–103. [↑](#endnote-ref-361)
362. For Mrs Parsons’ account of the events of the day see

     Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 135–7. For transcripts

     of a talk given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at 1901 Eighteenth Street,

     nw, Washington dc on November 10, 1912 see Promulga-

     tion, pp. 428–30 and *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 13,

     pp. 103–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-362)
363. For Mrs Parsons’ account of the events of November 11,

     1912 see Hollinger, *Agnes Parsons’ Diary*, pp. 138–41. [↑](#endnote-ref-363)
364. Howard and Hebe Struven lived at 1800 Bentaloo Street,

     West Baltimore. [↑](#endnote-ref-364)
365. For an another account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit to Baltimore

     see Clark, ‘The Bahá’ís of Baltimore, 1898–1990’ in

     Hollinger, *Community Histories*, pp. 125–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-365)
366. For another account of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival in New York

     see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 362–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-366)
367. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Tablet to Andrew Carne-

     gie see *Star of the West*, vol. 6, no. 11, pp. 82–3. [↑](#endnote-ref-367)
368. For another account of the events of November 12 see

     *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 364–7. [↑](#endnote-ref-368)
369. For transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks at 48 West Tenth

     Street see *Promulgation*, pp. 431–7 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 29–40. For Juliet Thompson’s description

     of the events see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 368–9. [↑](#endnote-ref-369)
370. Ḥaḍrat means ‘his excellency’ or ‘his honor’. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

     may be referring to Ṭarázu’lláh Samandarí, appointed a

     Hand of the Cause of God by Shoghi Effendi on December

     24, 1951. [↑](#endnote-ref-370)
371. For a another transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk given at 309

     West Seventy-eighth Street see *Promulgation*, p. 437. [↑](#endnote-ref-371)
372. See ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful*, pp. 39–41. [↑](#endnote-ref-372)
373. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke on November 17, 1912 at the Genea-

     logical Hall, 252 West Fifty-eighth Street. For a transcript

     of His talk see *Promulgation*, pp. 437–42. [↑](#endnote-ref-373)
374. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the home of

     Mr and Mrs Frank K. Moxey, 575 Riverside Drive, New

     York, see *Promulgation*, pp. 442–7 and *Star of the West*,

     vol. 6, no. 8, pp. 59–64. [↑](#endnote-ref-374)
375. For an account of the beginning of the Howard MacNutt

     affair, see Stockman, *The Bahá’í Faith in America*, vol. 1,

     pp. 168–78. For another account of the discussion between

     ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Howard MacNutt see *Diary of Juliet*

     *Thompson*, pp. 369–72. [↑](#endnote-ref-375)
376. See Matt. 5:17: ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the

     law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to

     fulfil.’ [↑](#endnote-ref-376)
377. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 447–8. [↑](#endnote-ref-377)
378. For Juliet Thompson’s account of the banquet see *Diary*

     *of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 375–6. For Howard Colby Ives’

     account see *Portals to Freedom*, pp. 149–50, 158. [↑](#endnote-ref-378)
379. Luke 18:16–17: ‘But Jesus called them [unto him], and

     said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid

     them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say

     unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God

     as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.’ [↑](#endnote-ref-379)
380. For another account of the events of November 25, 1912,

     see *Diary of Juliet Thompson*, pp. 376–80. [↑](#endnote-ref-380)
381. For a transcript of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the home of Mr

     and Mrs Kinney see *Promulgation*, pp. 449–52. [↑](#endnote-ref-381)
382. For transcripts of other talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered on

     Monday, December 2, 1912, at the home of Mr and Mrs

     Kinney see *Promulgation*, pp. 452–3, 453–7 and *Star of the*

     *West*, vol. 4, no. 15, pp. 253–8 and vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 7–10. [↑](#endnote-ref-382)
383. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk see *Promul-*

     *gation*, pp. 357–8 and *Star of the West*, vol. 7, no. 12,

     pp. 114–15. [↑](#endnote-ref-383)
384. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk this evening was given to Mrs Kinney’s

     Bible class. For a transcript of His talk see *Promulgation*,

     pp. 458–60. [↑](#endnote-ref-384)
385. For the transcript of another of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talks given

     on Tuesday, December 3, 1912 at the home of Mr and Mrs

     Kinney see *Promulgation*, pp. 460–1. [↑](#endnote-ref-385)
386. Qur’án, Súrih 48:23: ‘Such is God’s method carried into

     effect of old; no change canst thou find in God’s mode of

     dealing.’ Rodwell, *The Koran*, p. 462. [↑](#endnote-ref-386)
387. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s talk at the Theo-

     sophical Society, 2228 Broadway, New York see *Promulga-*

     *tion*, pp. 462–8 and *Star of the West*, vol. 7, no. 8, pp. 69–76. [↑](#endnote-ref-387)
388. For other transcripts of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s farewell address see

     *Promulgation*, pp. 468–70 and *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 18,

     pp. 3–4. [↑](#endnote-ref-388)
389. Bahá’u’lláh, *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, para. 53. [↑](#endnote-ref-389)
390. Early Zoroastrian Bahá’ís of India. Mr Bahrám had previ-

     ously been a Zoroastrian priest. [↑](#endnote-ref-390)