

In the Footsteps
of
'Abdu'l-Bahá

The Master in the British Isles

4 September 1911 – 3 October 1911

and

13 December 1912 – 21 January 1913

This book brings together in one volume two publications that were first issued a decade ago to mark the centenaries of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s historic sojourns in Great Britain, between 4 September and 3 October 1911, and 13 December 1912 and 21 January 1913.

The year 2021 marks the centenary of the Passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *‘that moment when the beloved Master was released from the confines of this world to rejoin His Father in the retreats of celestial glory.’*¹ The Universal House of Justice has stated that this year will be one of *‘profound reflection on the life of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the strength of the Covenant of which He was the Centre.’*²

For Bahá’ís the world over, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *‘position in the Faith is one for which we find “no parallel” in past Dispensations.’*³ He was the *‘Centre of the Covenant, the Mystery of God, the perfect Exemplar, Whose unerring interpretation of the Holy Texts and luminous examples of their application to personal conduct shed light on a way of life we must strive diligently to follow.’*⁴

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was born on 23 May 1844 at the precise moment when a new era was commencing in the spiritual and social evolution of the world. As the Báb in Shiráz announced the dawning of a new era, a child was born just over 400 miles away in Tihrán, Who would grow up to be the embodiment and exemplar of the new Revelation’s highest aspirations for the emergence of a ‘new race of men’. During the ministry of Bahá’u’lláh and even more so after His passing in May 1892, His eldest son ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was recognized for His virtuous character, His all-embracing love and altruism, extraordinary spiritual acuity, and super-human knowledge. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was the appointed representative of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh to humanity, tasked with preserving the unity of an emerging global religion, and exemplifying the standard of conduct expected of every Bahá’í.

‘Under all conditions’, the Universal House of Justice has written, *the Master is our ‘solace and support’.*

*And to all who arise to emulate Him, He offers this unfailing assurance: ‘that which is confirmed is the oneness of the world of humanity. Every soul who serveth this oneness will undoubtedly be assisted and confirmed.’*⁵

It is hoped that this book will provide a source of inspiration to all who read it. May the re-issue of this publication assist in increasing devotion to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and aid reflection on those sublime spiritual qualities, exemplified by Him, that all may aspire to emulate.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United Kingdom
23 May 2021

1 The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá’ís of the World, Ridván 2019.

2 The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá’ís of the World, 25 November 2020.

3 Written on behalf of the Universal House of Justice, to individuals, 3 June 1982.

4 *ibid.*

5 The Universal House of Justice, to the Bahá’ís of the United States, 22 July 2020.

The Master in the British Isles

4 September 1911 – 3 October 1911

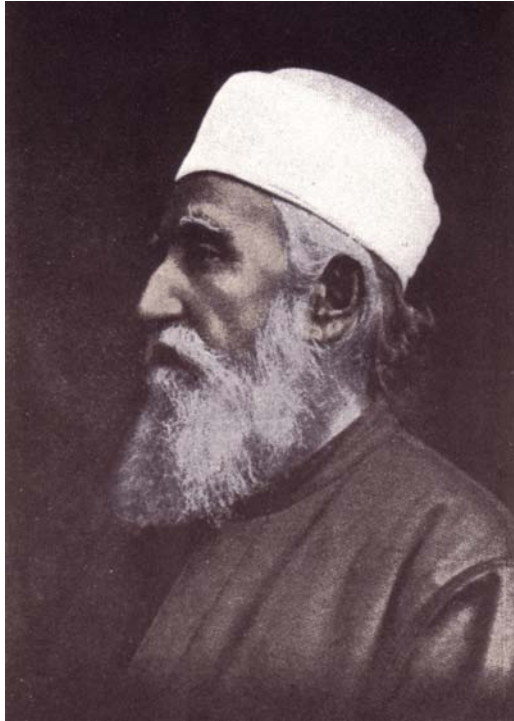


Photo: Lafayette

London

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Introduction – First Visit 1911

by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom

A full century has passed since this land was first blessed by the precious footsteps of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

With hearts overflowing with gratitude, we render thanks to our loving Master for having, in the words of the beloved Guardian:

... called into being this community ... at the time of the inception of His Father's Faith in the West, ... tenderly and vigilantly nursed it and guided its footsteps in the early years of its infancy, ... twice conferred upon it the inestimable blessings of personal contact with its members, ... sustained, from His station on high, its development in the course of no less than two decades, within the framework of a rising Administrative Order, ... enabled it to expand and consolidate itself within its island home, [and] launched it, subsequently, on its mission overseas ...

'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived on these shores on Monday 4 September 1911. Friends the length and breadth of the British Isles and beyond had gathered to welcome their revered Guest. We turn to the words of the immortal Lady Blomfield to transport us to that momentous occasion and to the presence of the Master:

A silence as of love and awe overcame us, as we looked at Him; the gracious figure, clothed in a simple white garment, over which was a light-coloured Persian 'abá; on His head He wore a low-crowned táj, round which was folded a small, fine-linen turban of purest white; His hair and short beard were of that snowy whiteness which had once been black; His eyes were large, blue-grey with long, black lashes and well-marked eyebrows; His face was a beautiful oval with warm, ivory-coloured skin, a straight, finely-modelled nose, and firm, kind mouth. These are merely outside details by which an attempt is made to convey an idea of His arresting personality. ...

'I am very much pleased with you all. Your love has drawn me to London. I waited forty years in prison to bring the Message to you. Are you pleased to receive such a guest?'

I think our souls must have answered, for I am not conscious that anyone uttered an audible word.

During the month that followed, 'Abdu'l-Bahá expended every ounce of His energy championing the Cause of God in London and Bristol, showering His love, His wisdom, His care on countless souls. In its message to the Bahá'ís of the world this Ridván, the Universal House of Justice described in a profoundly moving way the manner in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá taught the Faith of His illustrious Father during His "epoch-making journeys" to Egypt and the West:

Tirelessly, He expounded the teachings in every social space: in homes and mission halls, churches and synagogues, parks and public squares, railway carriages and ocean liners, clubs and societies, schools and universities. Uncompromising in defence of the truth, yet infinitely gentle in manner, He brought the universal divine principles to bear on the exigencies of the age. To all without distinction – officials, scientists, workers, children, parents, exiles, activists, clerics, sceptics – He imparted love, wisdom, comfort, whatever the particular need. While elevating their souls, He challenged their assumptions, reoriented their perspectives, expanded their consciousness, and focused their energies. He demonstrated by word and deed such compassion and generosity that hearts were utterly transformed. No one was turned away. Our great hope is that frequent recollection, during this centennial period, of the Master’s matchless record will inspire and fortify His sincere admirers. Set His example before your eyes and fix your gaze upon it; let it be your instinctive guide in your pursuit of the aim of the Plan.

To help us evoke the Master’s presence in our lives and inspire “frequent recollection during this centennial period”, the National Spiritual Assembly has commissioned the production of this booklet, *In the Footsteps of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, which documents the events associated with the Master’s visit to these shores in September and October 1911. It is offered as a commemorative gift to each Bahá’í home, and as a token of the National Assembly’s love for each and every one of the Blessed Beauty’s faithful followers in this land.

One hundred years ago the British Bahá’í community – who numbered just a handful of believers at that time – had the inestimable privilege and bounty of the physical presence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in their midst. Today, the Master lives on in our hearts and minds, He continues to surround us with His unfailing protection and watches over us as we toil hard to lay the foundation of that glorious civilisation enshrined in the Revelation of His beloved Father. And as we press on with the tasks at hand, may we hold ever more tightly to our connection with the Centre of the Covenant, remembering His assurances that He is always close to those who love Him and who strive to walk the path of service that He trod so heroically every moment of His beautiful life:

And now I give you a commandment which shall be for a covenant between you and Me – that ye have faith; that your faith be steadfast as a rock that no storms can move, that nothing can disturb, and that it endure through all things even to the end; even should ye hear that your Lord has been crucified, be not shaken in your faith; for I am with you always, whether living or dead, I am with you to the end. As ye have faith so shall your powers and blessings be. This is the balance – this is the balance – this is the balance.

Monday 4 September 1911

'Abdu'l-Bahá had been resting for a few days at Thonon-les-Bains near Geneva before travelling to England. He went to the home of Lady Blomfield at 97 Cadogan Gardens, Chelsea which was to be the base for His stay in England.

The evening of his arrival in London, Monday, September 4th, 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said: Heaven has blessed this day. It was said that London should be a place for a great proclamation of the Faith. I was tired when I went on board the steamer, but when I reached London and beheld the faces of the friends my fatigue left me. Your great love refreshes me. I am very pleased with the English friends.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 53



97 Cadogan Gardens (today) where 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the guest of Lady Blomfield

... Abdul-Baha was tired by the long journey but found his London quarters both comfortable and convenient. The rush and roar of the great metropolis have greatly interested him but at all times he gives one the impression of living a greater and fuller life, which takes little account of temporary material surroundings, recognizing instead the all-pervading power of the One Spirit pulsating throughout the whole universe.

Abdul-Baha receives all who come to him, whether great or small, providing they show a real interest in the Great Truths for which BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH STOOD. Countless press correspondents have been received and they usually retire from the interview greatly impressed by his noble dignity and spiritual simplicity. Many of the London dailies refer to him as the great Persian Prophet, but in *The Observer* (Sept, 10) and other papers, Abdul-Baha expressly states that he simply claims to be the Son of a Prophet and refers all enquirers to the Teachings and inspired life of his Father, BAHÁ'Ó'LLAH. Believers from the world over have gathered in London during the present month and express keen gratification at the tremendous wave of interest now being taken here in the Bahai Message. Abdul-Baha has been visited by many well-known leaders of thought now in this country.

Star of the West Vol. II No. 11

See also *The Christian Commonwealth* 4 Oct 1911, p. 11; *God Passes By* p. 280

The Master's custom was to receive the visitors by twos or by threes, or individually, during the early hours of the morning. Then, about nine o'clock, He would come into the dining-room whilst we were at breakfast to greet us. "Are you well? Did you sleep well?"

We tried to prevail upon Him to take some breakfast with us (we were always concerned that He ate so very little). At last one day He said He would like a little soup—then we had it brought in every morning. He smiled and said: "To please you I will take it. Thank you, you are very kind." Then to the servitor who offered it to Him: "I give too great trouble," He said.

In a few minutes He would go to His room, where He would resume the chanting of prayers and dictating of Tablets in reply to the vast number of letters which incessantly arrived.

Visitors having gradually gathered in the drawing-room (about ten o'clock), 'Abdu'l-Bahá would come to us, pausing just inside the door, smiling round at the guests with a look of joyous sympathy which seemed to enfold each and all who were present; they rose simultaneously, as though the kingship of this Messenger were recognized by an inner perception.

"How are you? My hope is that you are well. Are you happy?"

Speaking so to us, He would pass through our midst to His usual chair. Then He would talk rather *with* us than *to* us; so did He reply to unspoken questions, causing wonderment in those who were waiting to ask them—weaving the whole into a beautiful address, in the atmosphere of which all problems and pain and care and doubt and sorrow would melt away, leaving only happiness and peace.

Lady Blomfield in *The Chosen Highway*, pp. 157–8

Sara, Lady Blomfield (1859–1939), who was given the name Sitárih (meaning Star) by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was the widow of the architect Sir Arthur Blomfield. She was a supporter of the Women's Suffrage Movement, though not some of their actions, and worked with Eglantyne Jebb in the early days of Save the Children. She became a believer in Bahá'u'lláh in 1907.

Together with her two daughters and Beatrice Marion Platt, she made notes during the talks given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá while He was in Paris and these were published under the title *Paris Talks*. She produced a number of leaflets but is best known for her book *The Chosen Highway* which chronicles the history of the Bahá'í Faith, often through the recordings of the words of Bahá'u'lláh's own family members. It also has a substantial chapter about 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visits to this county.



'Abdu'l-Bahá was interviewed by the editor of *The Christian Commonwealth*, Mr Albert Dawson, and later met with the Rev R. J. Campbell



The Christian Commonwealth was a weekly newspaper published every Wednesday. It was started in 1881 and had a very liberal outlook. On 13 September it printed, on its front cover, an article which included the interview between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Rev R. J. Campbell that had taken place on 5 September. The following week the front cover had another article, entitled 'The Vanishing of the Veil', about 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to St John's, Westminster. Other issues also had substantial articles about His visits.

MEETING BETWEEN ABDUL BAHA AND MR. CAMPBELL.

Immediately Mr. Campbell entered the room Abdul Baha rose from his chair and advanced to meet him with smiling-face and arms extended; The elder man grasped both the hands of the younger, and, retaining them, warmly greeted him. His expression and manner showed that he regarded the occasion as no ordinary one. Standing face to face, linked hand in hand, in the centre of the room, these two spiritual leaders of world-wide fame—Eastern and Western, but essentially one in their outlook on life—formed an impressive picture that is stamped indelibly on the mind's eye of all who were privileged to be present. The meeting was so remarkable that I ventured to take notes of the conversation (conducted through an interpreter), and here reproduce them. It should be mentioned that the note-taking was quite unpremeditated. Neither speaker was aware that his words were being recorded. The conversation was private, and permission to publish was given with reluctance.

Abdul Baha first inquired after Mr. Campbell's health, and said he had been very anxious to meet him. The conversation then proceeded as follows:—

R. J. Campbell: I have long looked forward to this opportunity.

Abdul Baha: That is proof that both our hearts are at one.

R. J. C.: I think that is true.

A. B.: There is a Persian saying that hearts that are at one find their way to one another.

R. J. C.: I do not think that saying is peculiar to Persia.

...

The Christian Commonwealth, Wednesday, Sept 13, 1911

See also *Star of the West* Vol. II No. 11 and No. 12

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper at
31 Evelyn Mansions, Carlisle Place, Victoria

On the Wednesday following Abdul-Bahá's arrival in London, Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper gave an "At Home" to the believers and between fifty and sixty were present to meet him. One of the friends, a Mrs. Drakoules, who founded The Humanitarian League over twenty years ago, brought with her a leaflet pertaining to the work of the League, which was handed to Abdul-Bahá. Upon learning that kindness was its purpose, he highly commended her, and made it the theme of his discourse. He then said:

"You are all one family; you have grown out of one root. Each of you is like a branch, a flower, a fruit. You must look on no one as a stranger. You should try to show the greatest love to all men and to every creature. I have come to you as to my own people—brothers and sisters, sons and daughters. My bond is with all mankind; so should yours be. Try to follow the teachings of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, then each one will shine like a star. Since the time of Adam there has been no other teaching; until the end of time there will be no other."

Star of the West Vol. II No. 12

Mary Virginia Thornburgh-Cropper – known to her friends as Minnie and named 'Maryam Khánum' by 'Abdu'l-Bahá – first heard of the Bahá'í Faith in 1898 when she was 41. She was an American living in London and had been married to an Englishman.

Shortly after reading about the Báb in an encyclopedia, by coincidence, she was invited by her friend Phoebe Hearst to be part of the first group of Western Bahá'í pilgrims to visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Holy Land.

She is considered to be the first person to have become a Bahá'í in the UK and throughout her life was a very active member of the community. She was a member of the first elected National Spiritual Assembly of England (later Great Britain).

She made her motor-car available to 'Abdu'l-Bahá during His visits.

She passed away on 17 March 1938.



Friday 8 September 1911

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of Miss Ethel Jenner Rosenberg for a Unity meeting at White Lodge, 8 Sunnyside, Wimbledon (since demolished)

Discourse given at Miss E. J. Rosenberg's Unity Meeting. *September 8th, 1911*

Praise be to God, that such a meeting of purity and steadfastness is being held in London. The hearts of those present are pure, and are turned towards the Kingdom of God...

Bahá'u'llah then came and once more renewed the foundation of Faith. He brought back the teachings of God, and the humane practices of the time of Christ. He quenched the thirst of the thirsty, He awakened the careless and called the attention of the heedless to the Divine secrets. He declared the unity of humanity, and spread abroad the teaching of the equality of all men.

Therefore, all of you ought with your hearts and minds to endeavour to win the people with kindness, so that this great Unity may be established, that childish superstitions may pass away, and all may become one.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, pp. 44–5

Ethel Rosenberg (1858–1930) became a Bahá'í around 1899 and went on her first pilgrimage in 1901. While 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in London, Ethel Rosenberg was His social secretary, arranging appointments for the Master.

'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Ethel Rosenberg and a number of other people to form a committee to decide what to do about collecting funds and publishing Bahá'í books. Their first published book was *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*.

Ethel Rosenberg made her third pilgrimage in November 1921, but arrived just after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing. Shoghi Effendi sent her home with instructions to call for the election of the first National Spiritual Assembly of England. She served on this body for a number of years.

Shoghi Effendi named her an 'Apostle of 'Abdu'l-Bahá'.



'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of Miss Anett Schepel and Miss Alice Buckton, Vanners, Byfleet, Surrey (since demolished)

At Byfleet.

On the afternoon of September 9th, a number of working women of the Passmore Edwards' Settlement, who were spending their holidays with Miss Schepel and Miss Buckton at Vanners, in Byfleet, a village some twenty miles out of London, had the great privilege of meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá. They wrote a short record of his sayings to keep for themselves. The following is an extract:—

We gathered round him in a circle, and he made us sit beside him in the window seat. One of the members, who was ill, had a specially beautiful greeting from him. 'Abdu'l-Bahá began by saying, as he seated himself: "Are you happy?" and our faces must have shown him that we were. He then said: "I love you all, you are the children of the Kingdom, and you are accepted of God. Though you may be poor here, you are rich in the treasures of the Kingdom. I am the Servant of the poor. Remember how His Holiness Jesus said: 'Blessed are the poor!' If all the queens of the earth were gathered here, I could not be more glad!"

'Abdu'l-Bahá knew that we had a treasury box from which we try to help people less fortunate than ourselves. Presently he rose, and said: "You are dear to me. I want to do something for you! I cannot cook for you (he had previously seen us busy in the kitchen) but here is something for your fund." He went round the circle to each, with a beautiful smile, shaking hands with all, and giving the Bahá'í greeting: "Alláh'u'Abhá!"

Later on he walked in the village, and many poor children came to him, and mothers with sick babies and men out of work. He spoke to them all, through an interpreter. At tea-time other friends joined us. 'Abdu'l-Bahá liked the cottage garden at Vanners, the little orchard and the roses. He said: "This is like a Persian garden. The air is very pure."

On leaving for London he presented every one with a purple heartsease from the garden, and said again and again: "Good-bye" in English.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, pp. 85–6

Alice Mary Buckton (1867–1944) wrote many plays and poems. Her play *Eager Heart* was seen by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on His second visit to England. She became a member of the Froebelian Society which was formed to reform educational methods. She persuaded Anett Schepel who had worked at Pestalozzi-Froebel Haus in Germany to move to England and together they worked to improve child education, opening a school in St John's Wood, London.

Sunday 10 September 1911

'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke at the City Temple, Holborn Circus, to over 2,000 people. This was the first time He had addressed a Western audience.

Inscription in the Old Bible

Written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Persian

This book is the Holy Book of God, of celestial Inspiration. It is the Bible of Salvation, the Noble Gospel. It is the mystery of the Kingdom and its light. It is the Divine Bounty, the sign of the guidance of God.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbas

The City Temple as it is today. It was bombed in World War II and the pulpit Bible was destroyed. The church was rebuilt in 1958.



Address given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the City Temple

Sunday, September 10th, 1911

O Noble friends; seekers after God! Praise be to God! Today the light of Truth is shining upon the world in its abundance; the breezes of the heavenly garden are blowing throughout all regions; the call of the Kingdom is heard in all lands, and the breath of the Holy Spirit is felt in all hearts that are faithful. The Spirit of God is giving eternal life. In this wonderful age the East is enlightened, the West is fragrant, and everywhere the soul inhales the holy perfume. The sea of the unity of mankind is lifting up its waves with joy, for there is real communication between the hearts and minds of men. The banner of the Holy Spirit is uplifted, and men see it, and are assured with the knowledge that this is a new day..

The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers. . . .

There is one God; mankind is one; the foundations of religion are one. Let us worship Him, and give praise for all His great Prophets and Messengers who have manifested His brightness and glory.

The blessing of the Eternal One be with you in all its richness, that each soul according to his measure may take freely of Him. Amen.

From *The Christian Commonwealth* 13 September 1911 quoted in *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, pp. 19–20

The above address was spoken by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Persian from the City Temple pulpit and the translation was then read to the congregation by Wellesley Tudor Pole.

Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper gave a reception for 'Abdu'l-Bahá at her home
31 Evelyn Mansions, Carlisle Place, Victoria for about 45 people.

'Abdu'l-Bahá said:—Thanks be to God, this is a good meeting. It is very enlightened, it is spiritual.

As a Persian Poet has written:— “The Celestial Universe is so formed that the under world reflects the upper world.” That is to say whatever exists in heaven is reflected in this phenomenal world. Now, praise be to God, this meeting of ours is a reflection of the heavenly concourse; it is as though we had taken a mirror and had gazed into it. This reflection from the heavenly concourse we know as love.

As heavenly love exists in the supreme concourse even so it is reflected here. The supreme concourse is filled with the desire for God—thank God, this desire is also here.

Therefore if we say that this meeting is heavenly, it is true. Why? Because we have no other desire except for that which comes from God. We have no other object save the commemoration of God.

Some of the people of the earth desire conquest over others: some of them are longing for rest and ease; others desire a high position; some desire to become famous:— thank God *our* desire is for spirituality and for union with God.

Now that we are gathered here our wish is to raise the banner of the Unity of God, to spread the Light of God, to make the hearts of the people turn to the Kingdom. Therefore I thank God that He is causing us to do this great work.

I pray for all of you, that you may become celestial warriors, that you may everywhere spread the Unity of God and enlighten the East and West, and that you may give to all hearts the love of God. This is my utmost desire, and I pray to God that your desire may be the same.

I am very happy to be with you all. I am pleased with the English King and Government, and with the people.

You may thank God that in this land you are so free. You do not know what lack of freedom there is in the East. When anyone comes to this country he is content.

I wish God's protection for you all. Goodbye to you all.

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, pp. 46–7



Possibly the first picture of 'Abdu'l-Bahá taken in the West as He leaves a taxi.

* *Star of the West* Vol. II No. 11, records this meeting as having taken place on 12th September.

Sunday 17 September 1911

‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited St John the Divine Church, Smith Square, Westminster, meeting also the Salvation Army who were singing outside.

St. John’s Westminster: Introduction

On September 17th, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the request of the venerable Archdeacon of Westminster addressed the congregation of Saint John the Divine after evening service. With a few warm words characteristic of his whole attitude Archdeacon Wilberforce introduced the revered Messenger from the East, who had crossed seas and countries on his Mission of Peace and Unity for which he had suffered forty years of captivity and persecution. The Archdeacon had the Bishop’s chair placed for his Guest on the Chancel steps, and standing beside him read the translation of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s address himself. The Congregation was profoundly moved, and following the Archdeacon’s example knelt to receive the blessing of the Servant of God—who stood with extended arms—his wonderful voice rising and falling in the silence with the power of his invocation. As the Archdeacon said: “Truly the East and the West have met in this sacred place tonight.” The hymn “O God our help in ages past” was sung by the entire assembly standing, as ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the Archdeacon passed down the aisle to the vestry hand in hand.

Outside the Church, Salvationists were holding their meeting and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was deeply impressed and touched at the sight of the men, women and children gathered together in the night, at the street corner, praying and singing.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 21



Archdeacon

Albert Basil Orme

Wilberforce (1841–

1916) was an Anglican

priest and an author.

He was educated at

Eton and Oxford and

ordained in 1866.

He was appointed

Chaplain of the House

of Commons in 1896

and Archdeacon of

Westminster in 1900.

See also *Star of the West* Vol. II No. 12, p. 12.

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the home of Misses Marion Jack and Elizabeth Herrick, 137a High Street, Kensington. About 80 people were present.



Marion Jack (1866–1954) was a Canadian painter who had encountered the Faith in Paris at the start of the Twentieth Century. For a short while she taught English to the Master's family in 'Akká and 'Abdu'l-Bahá nicknamed her 'General Jack'. At the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit she shared an apartment with Elizabeth Herrick and 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited her studio in Stratford Mews, Oxford Street. In 1931 she pioneered to Bulgaria refusing to leave before the start of the Second World War. She is buried in Sofia.

Discourse by 'Abdu'l-Bahá given at the Unity Meeting of Misses Jack and Herrick

It is a cold and miserable day but as I was anxious to see you I came here. For a man who has love, effort is a rest. He will travel any distance to visit his friends.

Thank God I see you spiritual and at rest; I give you this message from God; that you must be turned toward Him. Praise God that you are near Him! The unworthy things of this world have not deterred you from seeking the world of Spirit. When in harmony with that world, you care not for the things that perish; your desire is for that which never dies and the Kingdom lies open before you. I hope that the teaching of God will spread throughout the world, and will cause all to be united.

... This day the countries of Europe are at rest; Education has become widespread. The light of liberty is the light of the West, and the intention of government is to work for truth and justice in Western countries. But ever the light of spirituality shines from out of the East. In this age that light has become dimmed; religion has become a matter of form and ceremony and the desire for God's love has been lost.

In [e]very age of great spiritual darkness, a light is kindled in the East. So once again the light of the teachings of God has come unto you. Even as education and progress travel from West to East, so does the spiritual fire travel from East to West.

I hope that the people of the West may be illumined by the light of God; that the Kingdom may come to them, that they may find eternal Life, that the Spirit of God may spread like a fire among them, that they may be baptized with the Water of Life and may find a new birth.

This is my desire; I hope by the will of God, He will cause you to receive it, and will make you happy.

In the same way that you have education and material progress so may the light of God be your portion.

God keep all of you in safety.

Saturday 23 September 1911

‘Abdu’l-Bahá travelled by train from London to Bristol going from Paddington to Bristol Temple Meads. He stayed at the Clifton Guest House at 17 Royal Crescent which was owned by Major Wellesley Tudor Pole.

Abdul-Baha arrived here from London mid-day on Saturday, Sept. 23rd, and was much pleased with the glorious Clifton views from the Guest House windows and balcony, and with the splendid air. After a short rest carriages were ordered and an extensive drive was taken through some of the world-renowned beauty spots around Bristol and neighbourhood. Abdul-Baha was much pleased with everything and indeed has been radiating joy and happiness among us all. At the evening meal nineteen sat down with the Master and he spoke of the great joy he found in freedom and in the growing interest now being taken in the Cause of Unity and Peace throughout this country. He told us that this supper was a great and holy occasion and would be recorded in history. The meal itself, partaken of in love and harmony, was indeed a sacrament and a mark of unity and fellowship that would bring the blessing of BAHÁ’ULLAH upon all gathered round the board.

After the meal Abdul-Baha addressed a gathering of about 80 friends in the Guest House Salon and Tammadon-ul Molk translated. The meeting was a most remarkable one and a wonderful spirit of unity pervaded the whole assembly. The Master spoke vigorously and with great fire, especially in reference to the New Age now dawning and our individual responsibilities in both East and West [see *The Christian Commonwealth* issue of the 27th, following]. He then blessed the whole assembly in the name of BAHÁ’ULLAH and shook hands with everyone.

Sept, 25th. *Wellesley Tudor-Pole*

Star of the West Vol. II No. 12

Wellesley Tudor Pole (1884–1968) was a businessman— active in many fields – who also had a strong interest in the occult and considered himself to be a ‘seer’. He first met ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Ramleh in Alexandria in 1908, having heard of Him earlier.

During the First World War Major Tudor Pole was instrumental in the rescue of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá when, in 1918, His life had been threatened by the Ottoman leader, Djemal Pasha.

Although an ardent follower of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Major Tudor Pole found it difficult to accept the more formal way that Shoghi Effendi was shaping the Bahá’í Faith and so did not become a Bahá’í.

A substantial part of his book *Writing on the Ground*, published in 1968, is devoted to the Bahá’í Faith and his memories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.



Sunday 24 and Monday 25 September 1911

'Abdu'l-Bahá returned to London from Bristol by train and went to Lady Blomfield's home.



In front of the Clifton Guest House in Bristol.

On Sunday, 24th, the Master rose early, as is his custom, and from 5a.m. to 8a.m. dictated letters and cablegrams. He then breakfasted with us all and said what great joy it afforded him to be among so many good friends. Another country drive followed and then he gave several private interviews to friends who had just arrived from London, Edinburgh and elsewhere.

After lunch the Master went all over the Guest House blessing and dedicating each room to the service of BAHÁ'ULLAH and promising that the house would become a centre of peace and rest for pilgrims from East and West. He also blessed the Oratory and all the workers in the house, calling them all into his presence and telling them of the dignity of labour and true service. Again we sat down nineteen to supper, and again, the Master blessed the gathering and showed great joy and animation. After the smoke and noise of London, Abdul-Baha greatly enjoyed the pure Clifton air and evidently benefited by it. He slept well and spent several hours on Monday morning in short discourses and in silent prayer.

About mid-day the Master returned to London after expressing the intention of returning again some day. He wrote a beautiful prayer and blessing in the Visitors' book, and his presence here will make the Guest House a centre of peace and unity for all comers.

Sept, 25th. *Wellesley Tudor-Pole*

Star of the West Vol. II No. 12

Thursday 28 and Friday 29 September 1911

‘Abdu’l-Bahá motored to Vanners, Byfleet.

On the 28th September, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again visited Vanners, the little farm house on the old royal manor that dates back to the time of Edward II. He motored down from London and stayed over night, returning on the evening of the second day.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was much struck during the drive by two detachments of Boy Scouts tramping the road. When told of the Scouts’ motto, “Be Prepared,” and that an act of kindness each day is one of their laws and that some of these boys put out a fire and assisted at a recent railway accident, he said. “This makes me very happy.”

Arriving at Vanners, he found a strangely mixed crowd, assembled about the gate to welcome him, from the quite poor to the wealthy who had motored over from their country places. A great number followed him and as many as could do so pressed into the garden and sat down around him. The silence was most impressive. The same attention and eagerness to hear was noticed among the people each time ‘Abdu’l-Bahá appeared in the village.

After expressing his joy at being with them, he began to speak to the little group in answer to a question about the elaborate civilization of the West...

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 86–7

The morning of the second day, a neighbour sent over her car asking if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would not like to take his guests to the Brooklands aviation ground. Though it was windy, an aviator was on the track, when he heard who the visitor was offered to fly for him. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left his friends and walked out into the middle of the course, where he stood alone watching the biplane making wide circles above him.

A Hindu who was learning to fly at the school joined ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s friends and asked: “Who is the man in Eastern dress?”

When told, he exclaimed, “Oh I know him very well through his teachings, which I have studied,” and immediately he went to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

They talked together for some time in Arabic, the young man showing great joy at being in his presence. He afterwards said that for many years he had longed for this moment.

While having tea out of doors, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the young Hindu, sitting at the head of the long benches that has been arranged, talked merrily to everyone.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 99

‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a farewell address at the
Passmore Edwards’ Settlement, Tavistock Place

At the invitation of Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper about two hundred* representative people met in the hall of the Passmore Edwards’ Settlement, Tavistock Place, last Friday evening to bid farewell to Abdul Baha Abbas on the eve of his departure for Paris. Arriving in London on Monday evening, September 4, he has spent a happy and busy four weeks in our midst. Except for a brief visit to Bristol last week, he remained at 97, Cadogan Gardens. His time was mainly occupied in interviews with people who wished to meet him. These included not a few whose names are household words in this country, and some travelled long distances to see him.

A beautiful spirit prevailed on Friday evening. The atmosphere was very different from that of an ordinary meeting or religious gathering. Everyone present was enriched by the lofty spiritual tone of the proceedings; the notes struck were all in the direction of Brotherhood, unity, peace. While a report of the speeches would give a very inadequate idea of the effect produced, yet they were so well-conceived, so sincere, so exquisitely phrased as to be all worthy of reproduction. Among others Ameer Ali Syed wrote regretting his inability to be present, and Archdeacon Wilberforce sent, affectionate greetings.

The Christian Commonwealth of Wednesday Oct, 4, 1911



* The reprint of this article in *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London* gives this figure as 460.

'Abdu'l-Bahá was invited to visit the Theosophical Society by Annie Besant.

On September 30th, 'Abdu'l-Bahá met the Theosophical society at their new Headquarters at the express request of their president Mrs. Annie Besant. After a general history of the movement and sympathetic words of welcome by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, 'Abdu'l-Bahá rose and delivered to the crowded assembly an address upon the distinctive notes of the Bahá'í teaching, warmly commending the eagerness of the Society in its search for Truth.



'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, p. 26

Discourse of 'Abdu'l-Bahá given at the Theosophical Head Quarters.

September 30th, 1911

O Respected Assembly! O friends of Truth! The inherent nature of fire is to burn, the inherent nature of electricity is to give light, the inherent nature of the sun is to shine, and the inherent nature of the organic earth is the power of growth...

Bahá'u'lláh, like a bright star, rose from the horizon of Persia and shone with the great Light of Guidance, giving heavenly radiance and establishing the new Teaching...

Firstly: He lays stress on the search for Truth. This is most important, because the people are too easily led by tradition...

Secondly: Bahá'u'lláh taught the Oneness of humanity; that is to say, all the children of men are under the mercy of the Great God...

Thirdly: Bahá'u'lláh taught, that Religion is the chief foundation of Love and Unity and the cause of Oneness...

Fourthly: Religion and Science are inter-twined with each other and cannot be separated. These are the two wings with which humanity must fly...

Fifthly: The Reality of the divine Religions is one, because the Reality is one and cannot be two. All the prophets are united in their message, and unshaken...

Sixthly: Equality and Brotherhood must be established among all members of mankind. This is according to Justice...

Seventhly: The arrangements of the circumstances of the people must be such that poverty shall disappear ...

Eighthly: Bahá'u'lláh declared the coming of the Most Great Peace. All the nations and peoples will come under the shadow of the Tent of the Great Peace and Harmony ...

Ninthly: Bahá'u'lláh taught that hearts must receive the Bounty of the Holy Spirit, so that Spiritual civilization may be established.

This is a short summary of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. To establish this Bahá'u'lláh underwent great difficulties and hardships...

'Abdu'l-Bahá in London, pp. 27-30

‘Abdu’l-Bahá blessed a marriage and later gave a short address at the Higher Thought Centre, 10 Cheniston Gardens, Kensington.

Quite an oriental note was struck toward the end of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s London visit, by the marriage of a young Persian couple who had sought his presence for the ceremony, the bride journeying from Baghdad accompanied by her uncle in order to meet her fiance here and be married before ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s departure. The bride’s father and grandfather had been followers of Bahá’u’lláh during the time of his banishment.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 77

The subjoined notes are taken from “The Quarterly Record of ‘Higher Thought’ Work,” November 1911.

One of the most interesting and significant events which have taken place, has been the visit of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to London. The Persian Mage whose life, passed in prison, has been spent in promoting peace and unity by the one certain method of aiding individual spiritual development, must in a very real sense have “tasted of the travail of his soul and been satisfied”. Not only was he visited privately by nearly every earnest truth-seeker and leader of high thought in London, but his message was made known to thousands who had but dimly heard his name before.

The Higher Thought Centre was well known to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the place where the Bahá’ís held their weekly meetings under the direction of Miss Rosenberg, and an invitation to the Centre was accepted by him just two days before his departure. Through his interpreter ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a kindly greeting and a short impressive address, dwelling on the blessedness of such an assembly gathered in a spirit of unity and spiritual aspiration. He concluded with a lowly uttered fervent prayer in his own tongue, and a benediction which all present felt to be very real.

On the following day a message was conveyed to the Centre from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá signifying the fullest appreciation of all kindness shown to the Bahá’ís, and concluding with these words; “it matters not what name each calls himself – The Great Work is One.”

“Christ is ever in the world of existence. He has never disappeared out of it... Rest assured that Christ is present. The Spiritual beauty we see around us today is from the breathings of Christ.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 40–41

In October 1902 the Kensington Higher Thought Centre passed this resolution: *That the Centre stands for the definite teaching of absolute Oneness of Creator and Creation – Cause and Effect – and that nothing which may contradict or be in opposition to the above principles be admitted to the ‘Higher Thought’ Centre Platform.*

By Oneness of Cause and Effect is meant, that Effect (man) does consist only of what Cause is; but a part (individual personality) is not therefore co-extensive with the whole.

Monday 2 October 1911

‘Abdu’l-Bahá breakfasted with the Lord Mayor of London
at the Mansion House, City of London.



The Lord Major of London at the time of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit was Sir Thomas Vezey Strong (1858–1920). He was a teetotaler and a temperance advocate. He traded in paper and was the holder of a number of honours.

The Mansion House as it is today

Visit to the Lord Mayor

At the express wish of the Lord Mayor, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá paid him a visit early one morning at the Mansion House. The talk turned chiefly upon the social conditions of great cities, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that London was the best regulated city he had seen.

He said: “Every man walking in the street is free as if he were in his own kingdom. There is a great spiritual light in London. The effort made for justice is real and in this country the law is the same for the poor as for the rich.” He took great interest in hearing of the care that is taken of prisoners as they leave jail, and spoke of the land being happy where the magistrates are as fathers to the people.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 109–10

On his last afternoon in London, a reporter called to ask him of his future plans, finding him surrounded by a number of friends who had called to bid him good-bye. When, in answer to this query, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told in perfect English of his intention to visit Paris and go from there to Alexandria, the press representative evinced surprise at his faultless pronunciation. Thereupon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá proceeded to march with a free stride up and down the flower-scented drawing room, his Oriental garb contrasting strangely with his modern surroundings; and, to the amusement of the assembly, uttered a string of elaborate English words, laughingly ending, “Very difficult English words I speak!” Then, a moment later, with the swift transition of one who knows both how to be grave and gay, he showed himself terribly in earnest.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 110–11

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left London from Victoria Station for Paris,
with a fairly large party accompanying Him.

The last morning came. The secretaries and several friends were ready to start for the train.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá sat calmly writing. We reminded Him that the hour to leave for the train was at hand. He looked up, saying:

“There are things of more importance than trains,” and He continued to write.

Suddenly in breathless haste a man came in, carrying in his hand a beautiful garland of fragrant white flowers. Bowing low before the Master, he said:

“In the name of the disciples of Zoroaster, The Pure One, I hail Thee as the ‘Promised Sháh Bahrám!’”

Then the man, for a sign, garlanded ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and proceeded to anoint each and all of the amazed friends who were present with precious oil, which had the odour of fresh roses.

This brief but impressive ceremony concluded, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, having carefully divested Himself of the garland, departed for the train.

We had witnessed a solemn act in the Mysterious Sacred Drama of the World.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s sojourn in London was ended.

We stood bereft of His presence.

Lady Blomfield in *The Chosen Highway* pp. 173–4

The Farewell

On the last morning of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s stay in London many friends gathered both at Cadogan Gardens and at the station to bid him farewell. An impressive and interesting ceremony was performed at the house by a Zoroastrian (a physician), who sent an elaborate telegram to some Parsis in Bombay, saying: “The Torch of Truth has been lighted again in the East and the West by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.” Instructed by his brethren, this follower of one of the most ancient religions in the world had brought with him a sacred oil of a rare perfume, with which he anointed the head and breast of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, afterwards touching the hands of all present. He then placed around ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s neck and shoulders an exquisite garland of rose-buds and lilies.

The last glimpse which the friends had at Victoria Station was that of the venerable face and form standing at the window, gazing out with a look of benevolence and wonderful tenderness on those he was leaving.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá in London, p. 113

Other events

After 100 years it is not always possible to give an exact date of an event if that date was not recorded.

A spirited conversation due to the visit of an ardent suffragist will long be remembered by those who had the privilege of being present...

‘Abdu’l-Bahá turned and said to the visitor: “Give me your reasons for believing that woman today should have the vote?”

Answer: “I believe that humanity is a divine humanity and that it must rise higher and higher; but it cannot soar with only one wing.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá expressed His pleasure at the answer, and smiling, replied: “But what will you do if one wing is stronger than the other?” *Answer:* “Then we must strengthen the weaker wing ...”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá smiled and asked: “What will you say if I prove to you that woman is the stronger wing?”

The answer came in the same bright vein, “You will earn my eternal gratitude!” at which all the company made merry.

Abdu’l-Bahá in London, pp. 102–03

Two ladies had written from Scotland asking if it were possible that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would spare them one evening...

Everybody was feeling elated at the prospect of a wonderful evening, unmarred by the presence of any but the most intimate and the most comprehending of the friends. Not more than half an hour had passed, when, to our consternation, a persistent person pushed past the servitors, and strode into our midst. Seating himself, and lighting a cigarette without invitation, he proceeded to say that he intended writing an article for some paper about ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, superciliously asking for “Some telling points, don’t you know.” He talked without a pause in a far from polite manner. We were speechless and aghast at the intrusion of this insufferable and altogether unpleasant bore, spoiling our golden hour! Presently ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rose and, making a sign to the man to follow Him, ... We looked at one another. The bore had gone, yes, but alas! so also had Master!

... Being the hostess, I was perturbed and perplexed. Then I went to the door of the audience room, and said to the secretary: “Will you kindly say to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that the ladies with whom the appointment has been made are awaiting His pleasure.” ...

Almost immediately we heard steps approaching along the corridor. They came across the hall to the door. The sound of kind farewell words reached us. Then the closing of the door, and the Beloved came back.

“Oh, Master!” we said.

Pausing near the door, He looked at us each in turn, with a look of deep, grave meaning.

“You were making that poor man uncomfortable, so strongly desiring his absence; I took him away to make him feel happy.”

Truly ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s thoughts and ways were far removed from ours!

Lady Blomfield in *The Chosen Highway* pp. 162–3

The Master in the British Isles

13 December 1912 - 21 January 1913

ABDUL BAHÁ IN ENGLAND.

Warm Welcome from His English Followers.

Addresses on the Unity of Religion and Universal Peace.

Abdul Bahá is again in England on his way back from America to the Orient. In London, the city where representatives of all races may be encountered, and the centre of a Government whose influence is felt at the far ends of the earth, has rarely sheltered a more significant and impressive personality than the leader of the Baháí movement. Three millions

followers call him Master, and the quality of their discipleship is compounded of reverence and love. Even the Western stranger coming into the Master's presence for the first time acknowledges an emotion akin to awe, and after a few minutes' speech with him, feels the stirring of a deeper spirit of devotion than the ordinary amenities of social intercourse are calculated to arouse. For Abdul Bahá, whose mission of peace and universal brotherhood he likes the coming of the four winds into the valley of dry bones, in Ezekiel's vision is much more than a picturesque Eastern figure in the idyllic setting of Western civilisation. He is a prophet. A venerable figure, of rather less than medium stature, clothed in long, flowing Persian garments, his white beard lying upon his breast silver-grey plaited hair falling over his shoulders, dark, brooding, pitiful eyes that light up when a smile of singular gentleness and sweetness passes across his face, and a low, mellow voice whose tones are charged with a strange solemnity—that is the Master as the stranger sees him. But to the Baháís he is the "Servant of God," the symbol of the unity of religions and races which it is his mission to promote. Although nearly seventy years of age, he has undertaken this tour of the Western world to proclaim his message of universal peace, and to recall the nations from their arched madness to the forgotten simplicities of the spirit. For nine months he travelled in America, crossing the continents from coast to coast, from east to west, addressing large audiences in churches, synagogues, temples, halls, drawing-rooms, hotels, and in some of the universities. Wherever he spoke, it was at the invitation of the heads of the institution or movement which organised the meetings. He was a guest at the National Conference of Peace Societies held recently. The subject of his discourses everywhere was the same—an exposition of the teaching of Bahá'í, the source of the present-day Baháí faith. Less than a hundred years ago it originated in Persia, when Mirza Ali Muhammad proclaimed that he was the bearer of a message from God. In the history of the Baháí movement he was the forerunner, the John the Baptist whose work made way for the "Coming Great One"—Bahá'í, "The Glory of God." Mirza Ali Muhammad suffered martyrdom in Persia for his pioneer activities, were continued by the disciples whom he chose, and in spite of much bitter persecution the movement grew in strength and numbers. When the long-expected leader came, he, too, suffered, passing many years in a Persian prison.

He declared that the movement would be carried on by his eldest son, Abdul Bahá, "The Servant of God." Hence in a modern flat, in the West End of London, lent to the Master by a titled lady follower, scientists, diplomatists, the leading figures in many of the modern movements have gathered to listen to the wisdom of

Sentence by sentence as they were translated to me, the Master told me of his itinerary through the American continent of the messages he delivered before many different assemblies, and of the deepening desire everywhere manifested for the unifying of races and religions which will banish the nightmare of warfare and combat.

people of America, will strive their utmost in promoting the principles of international peace and brotherhood. I pray that the war in the Balkans will be transformed into peace, and the rights of both sides may be protected."

In answer to a question regarding the Master's impressions of America, he said that material civilisation had advanced greatly, and he hoped that divine civilisation would be likewise established. The American universities were carrying on a most profitable and encouraging work, and he spoke of Dr. Jordan, the head of the Stanford University, in California, whose guest he had been, as "a very wise and upright man, whose mind is full of thoughts of peace."

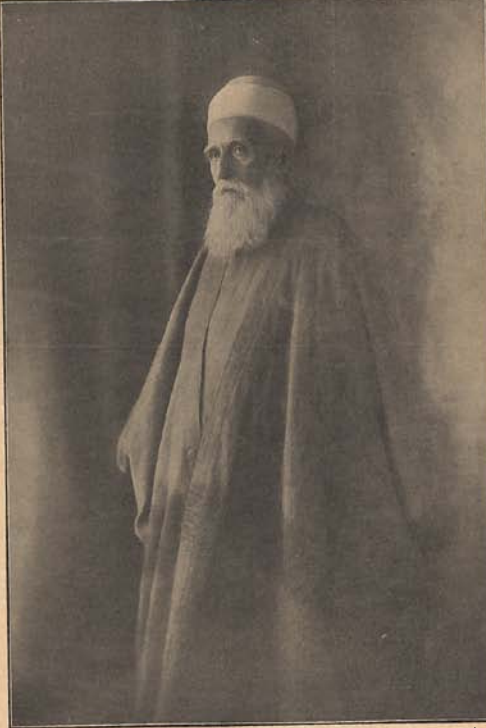
A further question regarding the Master's plans elicited the information that he would visit Edinburgh, Oxford, Liverpool, and perhaps other provincial centres before he leaves for Paris. In Liverpool it is arranged that he will address a large gathering of workers. He returns to the Orient after this programme is completed, and said me that the possibility of a later visit to Europe is uncertain. "It is not probable." He has been very much encouraged by all that he has witnessed, and repeated his hope that the cause to which his life is dedicated would prosper in Europe. The Master rose again as I took my leave, and clasped my hand with a smile that was as much a benediction as his parting words.

T.

Arrival in England.

Abdul Bahá arrived in Liverpool from New York on December 13 by the White Star liner "Celtic." Miss Elizabeth Herrick, formerly of Liverpool, now of London, had gone up to Liverpool a day ahead to arrange for the address; M. Hippolyte Dreyfus had come from Paris to meet the Master, and a group from Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds—all about a dozen—watched the great liner come slowly up the stream, literally out of the dark night. To the little group on the landing stage it seemed ages before the first, second, and third-class luggage was arranged in the Customs and the porters and reporters dashed aboard. Then as we saw the Master's white turbaned head, and directly behind him, as they came slowly down the gang-plank, one of the Persians carried a tiny Japanese orange-tree from California. Laden with fruit, it looked like an offering from the Orient as it swung in the gusts of the broad Mersey. Abdul Bahá stopped two days in Liverpool, resting at the Adelphi Hotel. During that time he gave two addresses, one to the Theosophical Society on Monday night, December 14, and one at Pembroke Chapel on Sunday evening, December 16. He left for London on the morning of the third day, Monday, December 16.

Abdul Bahá Abbas can be seen by appointment during his stay in London. Communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Abdul Bahá Abbas, Dr. Cadogan Gardens, S.W.



(From a photograph by Housman and Taggart, Paris.)

ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS.

the East and to revive the hope and dream of a world-order in which strife and confusion and the cruelty of man to man will be swept away.

"Abdul Bahá rose to receive me with a gentle courtesy and a murmured Persian sentence, which his interpreter, Mirza Ahmad Schrab, explained meant that the Master was pleased to welcome a representative of THE CHRISTIAN COVENANT, which had done much to promote the progress of his mission. The stir and movements beyond the threshold of the room when Abdul Bahá held his audience seemed to die away, and the familiar roar of London's traffic through which I had passed a little earlier receded into immense distances as we talked,

tion that now darkens the world. In America, he said, many societies are organised, whose purpose is the furtherance of universal peace. He has spoken before many of these organisations, and they have harkened to my addresses with the greatest interest. And now I have returned to Europe. I observe that, praise be to God, in this capital a conference of peace is sitting. It is conducive to the utmost of joy to me that in this great centre of civilisation and culture such an important gathering is being held. Therefore I hope that the rays of universal peace may radiate from this great metropolis to all parts of the world, and that the noble nation of England and its just Government, like the

Introduction – Second Visit 1912–13

by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom

Certain events are epochal, shaping the development of a group or community for a generation or more.

Such were the two visits by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, eldest Son of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith and Centre of His Father's Covenant, to Great Britain in 1911 and again in 1912–13. They will surely come to be regarded as the most significant events in the entirety of the spiritual history of these islands.

In those early days of the British Bahá'í community most of the Bahá'ís had limited knowledge, understanding and vision of their faith. But they clung to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who showered them unceasingly with love and continually deepened their knowledge.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, a prisoner and exile alongside His Father for most of His life, had determined to visit the nascent Bahá'í communities in Europe and North America as soon as He was free to do so.

During His extensive travels in 1911, 1912 and 1913 He conveyed the reality of His Father's teachings not only to the growing numbers of avowed believers, but also to different strata of the wider society in the countries through which He travelled. In public meetings and personal encounters, He spoke to high and low alike, to the powerful and the poor, to the influential and to the unseen homeless.

To the Bahá'ís He was known as 'the Master'. To the many thousands of the public who flocked to meet Him He was a holy man from the East, a man of wisdom, of penetrating insight, and of an often surprising humour.

The message 'Abdu'l-Bahá carried and shared with all He met was that God had sent a new Revelation to humankind, that this Revelation came through His Father, Bahá'u'lláh – the Glory of God, the Manifestation of God for humanity's spiritual maturity. Humankind in all its diversity is one single family. All the great faiths and religions emanate from one Divine Source, and are progressive stages of one eternal Faith. And humanity must put away the weapons of war and unitedly work for the Great Peace foreseen by Bahá'u'lláh.

But 'Abdu'l-Bahá was no dewy-eyed romantic. He knew only too well how human weakness and wickedness could delay the coming of a united and deeply peaceful world and frustrate the Will of God. He read the reality of

His times and clearly warned His interlocutors of the terrible consequences of ignoring His call to peace.

Sadly those consequences, in the shape of the first of two world-engulfing wars, came about only too soon.

Having spent four weeks in England in 1911, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had returned to Egypt, where He had established His residence, before embarking on an eight-month journey through North America. Greatly to the joy of the Bahá'ís in Britain His return journey brought Him back to these shores to renew and reinforce the relationship He had built with them during His first visit.

Not only did He revisit some of the people and places He had seen in 1911, He made a most significant journey to Edinburgh and responded to the spiritual needs of the people of Scotland.

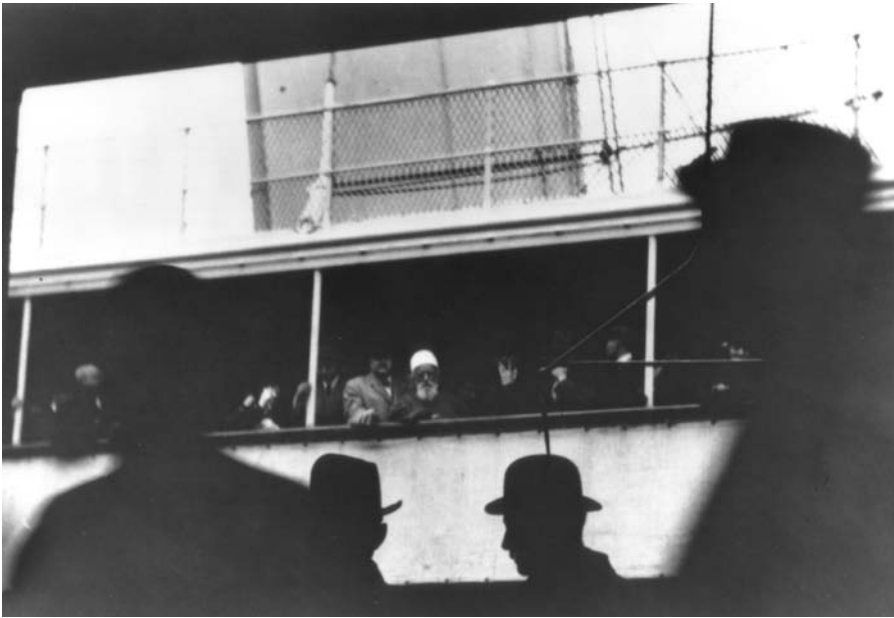
'Abdu'l-Bahá was not just for the Bahá'ís, He was for everybody. All who had the bounty of a personal meeting with the Master were touched to the core of their being. To be in His presence was to have one's very soul examined in the most loving and spiritually clear-sighted way. Not only did He read the reality of society, of faith, of global politics and international relations, He read the reality of each and every person He conversed with. He answered the questions of the heart, even for those reticent ones who found it well-nigh impossible to voice their deepest thoughts. And some, like tinder ready for the match, took fire and were utterly transformed.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the UK is very happy to offer this booklet as a token of its love for the Master and as a gift to all who wish to honour the centenary of His second visit to these islands.

When the Master departed from our shores for the very last time, hearts were heavy and tears were shed. But His legacy was a deposit of deeper knowledge about the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and of an unquenchable love for 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His teachings. His legacy was a growing and resilient community that was able, when the time came, to respond to the guidance and calls to action by His successor, Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, and to the Universal House of Justice, creating a passion in the hearts of His followers for translating His teachings of love and unity into acts of service for the well-being of the entire human race.

5 – 13 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá sailed from New York City to Liverpool on the S.S. *Celtic*.



‘Abdu’l-Bahá aboard the S.S.Celtic, leaving New York, 5 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s second visit to Great Britain came at the end of an eight-day crossing of the Atlantic Ocean aboard the SS *Celtic*. The 20,000 ton ship had been making the regular return journey between England and America since 1901. The Master’s voyage aboard the *Celtic* was on seas which were, for the first four days, as ‘calm as a mirror’.* ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sent two boxes of roses to the Captain and lavished sweets and fruit on the stewards. The Captain made a courtesy call to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on 7 December and expressed his pleasure at having Him on board.

As the smooth crossing continued, the Master remarked that He would like to see a big storm. The heavens complied and by five o’clock in the evening on 9 December, three days of relentlessly turbulent weather were unleashed upon the *Celtic* and its storm-tossed passengers. Up on the deck, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá delighted in the elements.

‘Look at that imperial wave, how it mounts high and devours the smaller waves!’ He enthused. ‘It is a wonderful sight. This is the best day. I am enjoying it.’*

* Sohrab, “With Abdul-Baha on SS. ‘Celtic’”, *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 16, p. 2

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 122–23

'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived in Liverpool's port on the S.S. *Celtic*. He stayed at the Adelphi Hotel. Elizabeth Herrick organised His small programme of talks in Liverpool.

The boat was late and it was about nine o'clock before it docked...a group from Manchester, Liverpool, and Leeds, in all about a dozen, watched the great liner come slowly up the stream, literally out of the dark night. Suddenly we caught sight of Abdu'l-Bahá in the ship's bow, and as she hove to he walked slowly down the long deck till he stood quite alone, in the very center of the center deck. All eyes on the landing stage were at once riveted upon him as he peered over the ship's side into the rain and gloom of Liverpool. The huge modern boat made a fitting frame for the Master-symbol, as it is of this outpouring of power, designed as it is to bring brothers into closer touch, and Abdu'l-Bahá, the Center of this dispensation, appeared standing in command.

To the little group on the landing stage it seemed ages before the first, second and third-class baggage was arranged in the customs, and the porters and reporters dashed aboard.

Finally we caught sight of the Well-Beloved's white turbaned head, and directly back of him, as they came slowly down the gang-plank, one of the Persians carried a tiny Japanese orange-tree from California. Laden with fruit, it looked like an offering from the tropics as it swayed in the gusts of the broad Mersey.

Isabel Fraser, "Abdul-Baha's arrival in England", *Star of the West* Vol. III, no. 17



Manchester Bahá'ís John Craven and Edward Hall on the ferry at Liverpool, travelling to meet 'Abdu'l-Bahá 13 December 1912. The third member of their party was John Downs of Leeds (presumably the photographer) who died in Flanders during the First World War.

It was an unforgettable sight – the coming of the Beloved to Liverpool! The great vessel on which he sailed...looming up out of the mist and rain and slowly coming alongside the well-lit landing-stage;...then the touch of his kindly hand and the sound of his sweet voice; then, after a brief half-hour in his blessed presence, the last glimpse of him...

One priceless glimpse for the Manchester brethren – to last them all their lives and to grow ever more valuable in their estimation!

E.T Hall, *The Bahá'í Dawn, Manchester*, p. 6

‘Abdul-Bahá addressed the Theosophical Society, Liverpool at 8.00pm

**Excerpts from the Address given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
at the Liverpool Theosophical Society.**

The Theosophists are very dear to me, for they have abandoned all prejudice. They do not abide in the confines of dogma, but are seeking truth in a spirit of freedom. All the religions of the world are submerged in prejudice... All follow the precepts of their fathers, refusing to go forth and seek for themselves.

We both (Theosophists and Bahá’ís) have abandoned all dogmas in our earnest search for truth. But look at the tribes and nations of the world—why are they seething with contention? Because they are not seeking truth. Truth is one. It admits of absolutely no division and accepts neither limitations nor boundaries. All dogmas differ, hence the nations are opposed. The different dogmas make wars and strifes. Behold the events of these days! If it were not for these differences in religions there would be no wars...

All the different religions of God that have risen on the face of the earth have one purpose: to educate man and to inform him of the spiritual, the luminous, the divine, so that he may partake of heavenly spirit and find eternal life, show forth the virtues of mankind, and from a world of darkness enter a world of light.

There is no other reality of meaning to the different religions. Their purpose is one, the teaching is one...

The very greatest blessings of God are represented by these divine beings who come and who will continue to come forth to humanity for hundreds of thousands of years. They represent the blessings of God and the blessings of God never cease...

My hope for you is that you may do all in your power to invite to this earth God’s greatest blessing in your search for truth.

Isabel Fraser, “The Search for Truth”, *Star of the West* Vol. III, no. 17



Ranelagh Street, Liverpool, with the Aldelphi Hotel at the far end, a few years after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s visit but much as He would have seen it. The hotel was less than a year old when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His entourage stayed there.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the congregation at Pembroke Chapel Baptist Church.

“Tonight I am exceedingly happy to find myself in an assembly, the members of which are a recognized factor in philanthropy and well being...

“Man should endeavor always to realize the Oneness of Humanity. We are all the children of God; all created by God; all provided for by God and all under the protection of God. God is kind to all His children. Why should they wage war between themselves? God is the Real Shepherd—all are His sheep...”

After the hymn, “All People That on Earth Do Dwell,” ‘Abdul-Bahá pronounced the following benediction in Oriental fashion, with hands outstretched and upturned: “O Thou most kind Lord, this reverent assembly is calling on Thy name. These souls are seeking Thy good pleasure. They are seeking the prosperity of the world of humanity. O Lord, confer upon their souls life evermore. O Lord, forgive their sins and keep them in Thy protecting shade in both worlds. O Lord, confer upon them Thy great pleasure. All are servants of international peace, all are servants of humanity. Thou art The Merciful, The Generous, The Forgiver, The Almighty, The Praiseworthy!”

Isabel Fraser, “Abdul-Baha addresses Pembroke Chapel”, *Star of the West* Vol. III, no. 17

9
16 Smith St
Pendleton
10/11/13

Dear Mr & Mrs Craven -
I received your
Christmas greeting with
much pleasure - I hope
you will have a bright
and prosperous New Year &
all the way thro - I am also
glad you had the privilege
of seeing Abdul Baha in
Lpool last month - it was
my privilege and pleasure
to see him on the Sunday
I enclose two books of Tablets
which you will see were
written while He was in
Prison
With all best wishes
Yours in El Abha
S. A. Ridgway

Letter from Sarah Ann Ridgway
(probably the first Bahá'í in the north
of England) to John and Hetty Craven
saying:

9
16 Smith St,
Pendleton
10/11/13

Dear Mr & Mrs Craven

I received your Christmas greeting with much
pleasure. I hope you will have a bright and
prosperous new year and all the way thro - I
am also glad you had the privilege of seeing
Abdul Baha in Lpool last month - it was my
privilege and pleasure to see him on Sunday
there. I enclose two books of Tablets which you
will see were written while He was in prison.

With all best wishes

Yours in El Abha

S.A. Ridgway

Sarah Ann Ridgway was born in
Lancashire but became a Bahá'í in the US.
She returned to her homeland in 1904 or
1905 and she died at the age of 65 a few
months after this letter was written.

Monday 16 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá travelled from Liverpool to London by train. In the evening He dined with the Reverend Daniel Cooper-Hunt at 97 Cadogan Gardens.

At nine o’clock this morning we left the hotel in Liverpool, walking to the Lime street station, where we were to take the train for London, Monsieur Dreyfus-Barney going before to secure tickets. Arriving at the station we took our compartment, M. Dreyfus-Barney, Ahmad Yazdi, Mrs. Fraser and Miss Herrick traveling with Abdul-Baha. On the way he spoke to Mrs. Fraser and Miss Herrick and said, “I am most pleased with you. You are the real servants of the Covenant.” To Mrs. Fraser he said: “You have written excellent articles in the papers in regard to the Cause, I will never forget these services of yours...”

At one-forty p. m. the train reached Euston station, London. About fifty Bahá’ís were there to welcome ‘Abdul-Bahá. Lady Blomfield with her two daughters and automobile were at the station. The Master went to 97 Cadogan Gardens without an interpreter. Later on they told us that he spoke English to them all the time. Lady Blomfield is a very remarkable woman, a most sincere Bahá’í, an active worker, and an enthusiastic speaker; really a wonderful woman.

‘Abdul-Bahá rested part of the afternoon. After a walk in the garden nearby, the newspaper men and women came. The subjects covered a wide range; a review of his trip in America, a message to the people of London, a synopsis of the Teachings of BAHÁ’O’LLAH and many minor questions. Then he attended to his mail, acknowledging telegram from Stuttgart expressing happiness at his safe arrival; invitations from Edinburgh, etc. The Master is going to visit that country.

Extracts from letters written by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab *Star of the West*, Volume III, no. 19

On the evening of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arrival Lady Blomfield hosted a dinner, inviting a Christian minister whom she had met in Switzerland, the Reverend Daniel Cooper-Hunt. When Sitárih had been in Geneva earlier that year, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had addressed a message to the clergyman.

‘Convey my utmost love and respect to Reverend Daniel Cooper-Hunt’, the Master had written, ‘and say: Praise be to God, the doors of the Kingdom have been opened wide, the angels of confirmation are unceasingly descending, the breath of the Holy Spirit conferreth a new life at every moment, and the hosts of heaven vouchsafe their assistance. I beseech God that thou mayest become the Paul of the Bahá’í Dispensation, may rend asunder the veils that blind the people, open their eyes, and make deaf ears to hear.’ The Master spoke in great detail with the clergyman, telling him of an opulent religious procession He had witnessed in Denver and how it contrasted with the simple life of Christ.

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, p. 125

Tuesday 17 December 1912

A large reception was held for 'Abdu'l-Bahá at Caxton Hall, at that time Town Hall for the City of Westminster, much in demand as a concert hall and venue for public meetings, especially those of the suffragettes.



Caxton Hall as it is today

In the afternoon a reception was held at Caxton Hall. There was a large gathering of people. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke on various subjects paying a great tribute to the Americans and emphasizing the love and unity which exists between the two countries. Then the chairman of the meeting made some appropriate remarks and refreshments were served. The Master walked back to his apartment. No sooner had he arrived than people began to come.

Extract from letters written by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, *Star of the West*, Volume III, no. 19

Wednesday 18 December 1912

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a talk at 97 Cadogan Gardens on ‘The Spiritual Worlds’. Later He was visited by the Counsellor of the Persian Embassy, a minister from the suburbs, and the president of the Esperantists who presented ‘Abdu’l-Bahá with the first translation of the New Testament in Esperanto. He was also visited by Professor Edward Granville Brown.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá delivered an address on the spiritual worlds. The address was very inspiring and eloquent. It conferred spiritual uplift and exalted our aspirations above this mundane life. He spoke with Divine authority; his words were born of the spirit; his utterances created conviction; his very presence was a heavenly proof.

Professor Browne, who has written so much on the Bahá’í Movement, was present at the meeting and afterward he was called to the Master’s room. “The last time I met you,” he said, “was twenty-two years ago in Acca under different environment, but now I have the pleasure of seeing you in London.” Then discussion commenced in Persian, for Professor Browne speaks Persian fluently. Many subjects were discussed: about Persia, history of the Movement, education of woman, inventions, etc.

Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá went for a walk. After walking a few blocks he called a taxi and we—the Persian friends—drove through the famous Hyde Park and Regent Park. It was a rainy day and the streets were not very clean.

Extract from letters written by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, *Star of the West*, Volume III, no. 19

Professor Edward Granville Browne (1862–1926) was a British orientalist who published a number of books and articles on the Bábí and Bahá’í religions. He was fluent in both Persian and Arabic although he had originally trained to be a doctor at Cambridge.

He is best known to Bahá’ís for his description of his meeting with Bahá’u’lláh in Bahjí in April 1890. He translated ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s *A Traveller’s Narrative* into English.

Ahmad Sohrab’s diary says the Professor’s wife, Alice Caroline Blackburne Daniell (1879–1925) whom he married in 1906, came with him. Also that they both called to see ‘Abdu’l-Bahá again on another occasion and sat with Him for two hours.



Hand of the Cause of God, Hájí Amin had arrived in London the day before with a few other Persians.

When ‘Abdu’l-Bahá received them, they threw themselves at his feet and wept. It was a touching scene. He took them up, kissed their cheeks and showed them much love.’

Extract from letters written by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, *Star of the West*, Volume III, no. 19

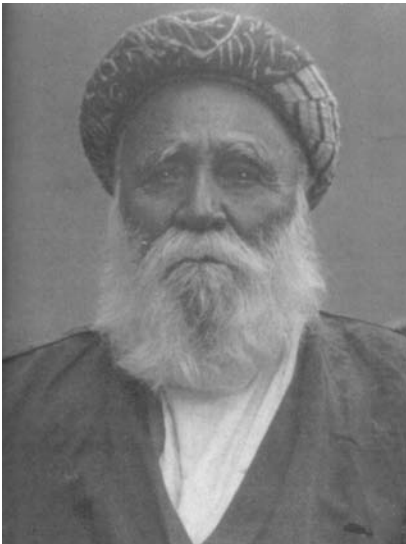
The following touching incident took place one day when we were seated at table with the Master.

A Persian friend arrived who had passed through ‘Ishqabad. He presented a cotton handkerchief to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who untied it, and saw therein a piece of dry black bread, and a shriveled apple.

The friend exclaimed: “A poor Bahá’í workman came to me: ‘I hear thou goest into the presence of our Beloved. Nothing have I to send, but this my dinner. I pray thee offer it to Him with my loving devotion.’”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spread the poor handkerchief before Him, leaving His own luncheon untasted. He ate of the workman’s dinner, broke pieces off the bread, and handed them to the assembled guests, saying: “Eat with me of this gift of humble love.”

Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* pp. 161–162



Hájí Abdu’l-Hasan-i-Ardikání, known as Hájí Amín (c.1831–1928) was born near Yazd and became a staunch Muslim. He learnt of the Bábí religion through his wife’s brothers and became a follower shortly after the martyrdom of the Báb. When Bahá’u’lláh declared His mission, Hájí Amín immediately recognised His station. He travelled throughout Persia and was known for his loving kindness to all. He was appointed Trustee of the Ḥuququ’lláh after the first Trustee was killed. He travelled to ‘Akká to see Bahá’u’lláh but was only permitted to see Him in the public baths. Shoghi Effendi appointed him Hand of the Cause postumously and he was also among those named as an Apostle of Bahá’u’lláh.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at the Westminster Palace Hotel. The Meeting was chaired by Sir Thomas Barclay, Liberal politician and former head of the British Chamber of Commerce. Miss Alice Buckton spoke, followed by Mrs Charlotte Despard, president of the Women’s Freedom League. M. Hippolyte Dreyfus-Barney of Paris closed the meeting.

A remarkable cosmopolitan gathering filled the large hall at the Westminster Palace Hotel, Friday evening, December 20th, to listen to an address by ‘Abdul-Bahá. His topic was one that is agitating many of the thinking minds of today—the vast subject of Peace.

...Among the audience were scientists, diplomats, leaders of the great movements of the day, including a number of Orientals. So great was the overflow that many were compelled to sit on the floor and a fringe standing at the outer edge extended out into the hall...

Address By Abdul-Baha

...Love is the cause of life, and hatred or animosity spell death or disintegration. Just as affinity is the fundamental principle of composition, the greater affinity, love, is the light of unity and the lack of love is the darkness of separateness. Love is conducive to existence, difference is conducive to disintegration. Love is the cause of the illumination of the whole of humanity, discord and dissension are the cause of the destruction of the human race.

All the divine messengers have come to this earth as specialists of the law of love. They came to teach a divine love to the children of men; they came to minister a divine healing between the nations; they came to cement in one the hearts of men and to bring humanity into a state of unity and concord. In this pathway, each one of these divine Manifestations of God’s love has accepted innumerable calamities and hardships. For the sake of a realization of love and concord amongst men, they have sacrificed their lives. How many persecutions have they suffered; so that they might bring into a state of harmony those contending nations and religions; so that they might create peace and consolation between these various peoples of the earth!...

...We too must be ready to sacrifice our lives, so that this love may live. We must accept every hardship, so that this love may come to the hearts of the people.

Consider carefully that for the last six thousand years there has been constant strife and warfare amongst the people. All the wars which have occurred in past history have been the basis of the destruction of the human race; love, on the other hand, has been the cause of cementing the people together...

...The great and wise men of the world have ever striven hard, so that the hearts of humanity might be cemented together by the heavenly teachers, whose mission it is to bring into the world this divine state of love.

Isabel Fraser, “Abdul-Baha in London”, *Star of the West*, Vol. III, no. 17

At 3.30pm 'Abdu'l-Bahá left Cadogan Gardens in Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper's car for a performance of 'Eager Heart' at Church House Westminster.

Miss Alice Buckton was an earnest visitor. She had written *Eager Heart*, a very interesting Christmas mystery play. The performance of this mystery play at the Church House, Westminster, was honoured by the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This was a memorable occasion, as it was the first time He had ever witnessed a dramatic performance.

The Master wept during the scene in which the Holy Child and His parents, overcome with fatigue, and suffering from hunger, were met by the hesitation of Eager Heart to admit them to the haven of rest which she had prepared, she, of course, failing to recognize the sacred visitors.

The Master afterwards joined the group of players.

It was an arresting scent. In the Eastern setting the Messenger, in His Eastern robes, speaking to them in the beautiful Eastern words of the Divine significance of the events which had been portrayed.

Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, pp. 154-5



The original Church House was founded in 1887 and built to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It was opened in 1896. This would have been the building that 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited. The current Church House, which stands on the same site, was officially opened on 10 June 1940.

Sunday 22 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá reflected on the themes of the play ‘Eager Heart’. He was taken for a drive in Richmond Park

The following morning the Master spoke again to friends assembled at Lady Blomfield’s apartment about the performance, which evidently left a marked impression on Him. After praising the actors once more, He reflected on the expectations of people who, when the Promised One appears, are unwilling to offer Him shelter.

‘They prepare palaces for Him, they decorate the streets, they arrange downy couches,’ the Master said, ‘but He, the Son of Man, cometh when no one knoweth. Through the highways and byways He walks, people unconscious of His divine presence, pursuing their own pleasure and yet expecting His arrival as a king and ruler.’

Later that same day an actress arrived to meet ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

‘We also have a theatre,’ the Master told her. The visitor immediately became interested and enthusiastic.

‘Where is it?’ she asked. ‘I should love to see it. Can I play in it?’

‘Our theatre,’ the Master answered, ‘is built in a country where there is eternal springtime, the streets of that city are as clean as the surface of a mirror, the lights of that playhouse are the rays of the Sun of Reality, the actors of our drama are the Holy Manifestations of God, the audience is composed of pure and sanctified souls. They play their parts with the most delicate art, they deliver their words with power and potency.

‘The stage of our theatre is the arena upon which is played the sublimest tragedy, the most terrible dramas, the most thrilling and heart throbbing events of life. Come and join our company. You have acted all your life in the material stage, now come and act on this celestial stage. Your fellow actors will assist you, will coach you in your part and step by step you will become a star shining in the galaxy of these heavenly inspired dramatists.’

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 133–4

At twelve o’clock Mrs Cropper comes with her lovely auto to take the Master for a ride. A young student from Bagdad and myself He takes as attendants. We drive through the London Streets and avenues, most of them decorated in honour of Xmas. Throngs of people coming out of churches are feeling their ways toward the parks. The air is warm and cloudy. Our auto threads its way to Richmond Park. We pass by the Thames. The Park is very large, the trees are bare but here and there green sward is visible. The Master comes down to walk. After a few minutes the sun floods the field with its golden rays...The Master enjoys the weather. He pushes off His fur coat. For one hour He walks, sometimes talking, sometimes silent...

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

‘Abdu’l-Bahá met all day with many visitors, and walked in Battersea Park. He had an interview with the special correspondent from *The Christian Commonwealth* and also the editor of the *Theosophical Magazine*.

Today we started with music, with song the giver of joy and happiness. There was a woman, who while in the Presence of the Beloved asked Him to confirm her in the study of music. “There are two kinds of music,” He says “divine music and earthly music. Divine music exhilarates the spirit while earthly music has an effect over the body. Divine music belongs to the Kingdom of God; earthly music is of this mundane world. I hope that you will be confirmed to study both kinds of music so that you may be able to sing the anthems of heaven and the songs of this world.”...

Again Mrs. T. Cropper was present and took the Master in her auto to Battersea Park which is quite near. The meadows were green. Haji Ameen and Mirza Lotfollah Hakim were with us. He walked for about one hour through the Park, passing once or twice by the Thames river. Today we spoke very little, because He was speaking all morning...

The Master first met several laboring men who had come from far to see Him. One of these men said that although I am not a Bahá’í but I like to tell you what I think of you. You are “the Napoleon of Peace”.

To another one He said: The Cause of God is like a rose-garden. As long as man is far from it, he cannot survey its artistic beauty, he cannot see how many kinds of flowers are planted therein, he cannot inhale the sweet fragrances of the roses. But when he approaches the garden, he experiences new feelings; he hearkens to the melody of the birds, the delicate perfume is wafted toward him by the gentle breeze; he beholds the variegated flowers; his soul is rejoiced by the charming scene and his spirit is refreshed.”

To another one He said: “The Cause of God is like a house. As long as man has not entered therein he does not know what it contains. In the house there are many precious jewels, many rare objects the like of which cannot be found anywhere in this world. But the men in the street may pass by the house a 1000 times and know nothing about it. Only the one who has the key can enter. That key is the love of God.”...

It goes on like this all day...

At dinner the question of Suffragists comes up. The Master tells a story which makes everybody laugh, Lady Bloomfield tells a story which makes everybody serious about the wretchedness of man denying women the vote.

It’s nine o’clock. It rains. The Master calls me: Let us go out and take a walk. I run for my overcoat and umbrella. For one hour we walk in the lighted avenues, the Master watching the windows decorated with all kinds of Xmas goods. We return wet and tired.

Then again another hour of talk.

Tuesday 24 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spent Christmas Eve fairly quietly.

Reporters had a long interview with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on Christmas eve. As usual they wished to know where He had come from and why He was there in London. He told them of His journeys in the United States; of the conferences He had attended, the addresses He had delivered; of His aim and purpose, to disseminate the Teachings of Baha’u’lláh, to call upon the people to abandon their prejudices, realize their oneness, dwell in peace; for the greatest of all things in this epoch and era was the establishment of world peace, the uniting of religions and nations. He told them He was glad that London was the scene of a conference convened to terminate the war in the Balkans.

H.M. Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Centre of the Covenant of Baha’u’lláh*, pp. 348–149

Christmas Eve was a comparatively quiet day at the Blomfield’s apartment. After receiving a few visitors, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá reflected on the life of Jesus Christ, beginning with the trials of the Virgin Mary and the poverty and hardships of the Holy Family, and concluding with the crucifixion.

‘But today, they worship His name,’ the Master told the small gathering... ‘they commemorate His birth in thousands of churches, they celebrate His virtues and they spread sumptuous feasts. Kings glory in His name. Emperors are proud to wear the golden crowns of Christendom, royalties in their luxurious palaces sing the hymns of praise and glorification because the Son of Man was born. But the King of Kings was born in a stable, He did not have a place to lay His head, He was shunned, persecuted, a crown of thorns adorned His heavenly brow. This has ever been the custom of the people, to worship those who are dead, to martyr those who are living.’

Sitting down to dinner that evening, the Master told His companions that He was not hungry, but that He had agreed to come to the table because Lady Blomfield had insisted. Two despotic monarchs of the East had not been able to command Him and bend His will, He laughed, but the ladies of America and Europe, because they were free, gave Him orders.

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, p. 136

Just now although it is long past midnight I hear His voice speaking to the Persians. The friends have sent much flowers to the Master for Xmas and the drawing room is transformed into a Rose Garden.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Christmas Day

Throughout Christmas morning guests arrived to wish ‘Abdu’l-Bahá the season’s greetings....

‘To each who came to Him on that Christmas Day,’ observed Elizabeth Herrick, ‘He gave a spiritual present – compatible with the capacity of each; for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s method of teaching the people so that they become moved with conviction, is through the heart.’

At noon ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke to those gathered about the marvels of the 20th century, linking the great stirring that occurs in the world with the birth of every Manifestation of God.

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 136–7

...dinner was served. The table was most beautifully decorated with roses, lilies, nasturtium, other flowers and holly. It was a very artistic spread and the Master expressed His surprise when He entered in the dining room. “Beautiful! Beautiful” He said in English. We had turkey and many other dainties. After the dinner the Master went to His room to rest. At three o’clock Mrs Cropper came in to take the Master to her home where it was arranged for Lord and Lady Lamington, who were in Persia, last year to meet Our Beloved.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab



Lord Lamington (1860–1940), born Charles Cochrane Baillie, and his wife Mary Houghton Hozier, were close friends of a number of the early Bahá’ís in Britain. Lamington had been a colonial administrator for the British government, serving as Governor of Queensland, Australia, from 1896 to 1901 and Bombay, India, from 1903 to 1907. He had a strong interest in the Middle East and spoke frequently on the subject in the House of Lords. He had been entertained by the Master in Alexandria the previous year and on this Christmas Day they talked about many subjects, the Lamingtons listening attentively and referring to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as ‘our Beloved Master’.

Abdul-Baha at the “Salvation Army” Shelter

On Christmas night ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited the poor of the Salvation Army Shelter, Westminster, where each year a Christmas dinner is provided for those who have no homes and no friends, and but for the shelter would have no lodgings. There were about 1,000 present on this occasion. It was a most impressive scene—the dinner for the homeless and the Master from the East delivering Christ’s message to the poor. As a true test of attention, many of the hungry men forgot to eat and listened intently.

With that wonderful tact ‘Abdu’l-Bahá displays on all occasions, his message to the homeless was simple, direct and short. He said:

“I feel tonight great joy and happiness to be in this place, because my meetings and callings have ever been mostly with the poor, and I call myself one of them. My lot has ever been with those who have not the goods of this world...

“Consider his Holiness Christ: He appeared in the world as one of the poor. He was born of a lowly family; all the apostles of Christ were of humble birth and His followers were of the very poorest of the community. This is what Christ states in the Gospels. ‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.’ ... It is easy for the poor, very easy for them to enter into the Kingdom of God... If wealth were a necessity, Christ would have wished it for himself. He lived a simple life, and one of the titles of Baha’o’llah was ‘the poor one.’ In Persian His title was ‘darvish’ and that means one who has not a slave.

“All the prophets of God were poor, His Holiness Moses was a mere shepherd. This will show you that in the estimation of God, poverty is greater than the accumulation of wealth—that the poor are more acceptable than the lazy rich. A rich man who spends his wealth for the poor is praiseworthy. Consider that the poor are not born in a state of solvency: they are not tyrannous. All the tyranny and injustice in this world comes from accumulation. The poor have ever been humble and lowly; their hearts are tender. The rich are not so.

“Sorrow not, grieve not. Be not unhappy because you are not wealthy. You are the brothers of Jesus Christ. Christ was poor; Baha’o’llah was poor. For forty years he was imprisoned in poverty. The great ones of the world have come from a lowly station. Be ever happy; be not sad! Trust in God and if in this world you undergo dire vicissitudes I hope that in the Kingdom of God you will have the utmost happiness!”

At the close of his talk, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá...left twenty golden sovereigns and many handfuls of silver with Colonel Spencer of the Army, so that the poor might enjoy a similar dinner New Year’s night. Colonel Spencer told the men that they were to have this New Year’s dinner in ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s honor. The Master was just leaving the hall when this announcement was made. With one accord the men jumped up and waving their knives and forks gave a rousing farewell cheer.

Isabel Fraser, “Abdul-Baha at the ‘Salvation Army’ Shelter”, *Star of the West*, Vol. III, no. 18

‘Abdu’l-Bahá answered questions from guests gathered at 97 Cadogan Gardens, including these:

Should Prayer take the form of action?

‘*Abdu’l-Bahá* – Yes: In the Bahá’í Cause arts, sciences and all crafts are (counted as) worship. The man who makes a piece of notepaper to the best of his ability, conscientiously, concentrating all his forces on perfecting it, is giving praise to God. Briefly, all effort and exertion put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity. This is worship: to serve mankind and to minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer. A physician ministering to the sick, gently, tenderly, free from prejudice and believing in the solidarity of the human race, he is giving praise.

What is the purpose of our lives?

‘*Abdu’l-Bahá* – To acquire virtues....

See further questions and answers from the evening in *Paris Talks* by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá pp. 189–92

‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited the Cedar club. Lady Blomfield held a reception, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke of the meeting of the East and the West

Charlotte Despard, the prominent suffragette, welcomed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to the Cedar Club House, maintained by the Women’s Service League which provided food to needy mothers and assisted their young children with nutrition. The Master and His entourage entered a large assembly room, still draped with the green and red decorations of the Christmas season. At two long tables, some 60 women and more than a hundred children sat, enjoying an afternoon tea. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was invited to speak from a podium but as was His wont, He walked straight to the impoverished women and spoke as He mingled with them, pacing up and down the aisle between the two tables, His face beaming.

‘I am very glad’, He said, ‘to be among you, who are blessed in God’s name with children. They are the true signs of His spiritual love. The most divine gifts of God. These little ones will grow to be fruitful trees. We must look to them for the founders of many beautiful families. Let their education be directed in the ways of purity and useful service. Here are the seeds of the future race and upon them may be granted God’s blessing.’

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 145–6

Sunday 29 December 1912

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at King’s Weigh House

It was a very lovely church. The stairs leading to the wide platform as well as the platform itself were of pure, white marble. The Master stood in the center of the platform looking in the faces of the large audience. His was a heavenly picture, standing there supreme and often walking or fixing his turban and uttering words of love and good will to all the nations and religions. The address made a profound impression upon the hearers. They all listened most attentively. After the address, the Congregation sung the song of “ring out the old, ring in the new” Then the Minister in a few words thanked the Master for His “words of life” and requested Him to close the service by a benediction. The prayer was as regards the Balkan situation.

The other Persians leaving Miss Gamble’s house go to a wrong Catholic Church. They sit through the long, weary sermon for the Master to come out but they were disappointed. After our arrival they came home with their story. It made the Master laugh very much and in connection with this the Beloved told the story of a blind Mohamadan who goes by mistake into a Jewish synagogue.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab



The King’s Weigh House today serves as the ‘Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of the Holy Family in Exile’ but when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited it was a Congregational Church.

A Feast was held at the home of Mrs Robinson.

At 8 o'clock there is a unity Feast at the house of Mrs Robinson and Mrs Sigmundo... Mrs Cropper with the Master comes to take some of us in the auto. When we arrive at the meeting we find many people gathered; especially a deaf man and wife who have lived in Alexandria and knew the Master most well. After talking with them a few minutes He starts speaking on the material and spiritual reciprocity and co-operation and explaining the real meaning of the nineteen day's Feasts. After the address He shook hand with everyone and we were driven back home...

I forgot to write you yesterday that the Minister of the church last night instead of reading from the Gospel as it is their custom, read the Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá about Peace and love. He read it with such effect and such power that you could hear a pin drop. In Conservative England this is a very remarkable event, amounting to a miracle...

Then with Mrs Cropper, Mirza Lotfollah and Ahmad Sohrab He goes in the auto to 59 Cromwell Road to pay His call on His Highness Maharaja of Rajnaput. Here He speaks about the law of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, how the strong is ever attacking the weak, how the rich oppressing the poor. All these are the result of the survival of the brute force in man. However the spiritual love will change these unjust conditions. His Highness likewise is anxious to see Our Beloved in India, for we look to you, he says, to unify the religions and the nations. No doubt Your teachings will do a tremendous lot of good in India.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab



59 Cromwell Road as it is today

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited Oxford to address a meeting at Manchester College.

The visit to Oxford was one of notable interest. The meeting between 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the dear, revered higher critic, Dr. T. K. Cheyne, was fraught with pathos. It seemed almost too intimate to describe, and our very hearts were touched, as we looked on, and realized something of the sacred emotions of that day.

'Abdu'l-Bahá embraced the Doctor with loving grace, and praised his courageous steadfastness in his life's work, always striving against increasing weakness, and lessening bodily health. Through those veiling clouds the light of the mind and spirit shone with a radiant persistence. The beautiful loving care of the devoted wife for her gifted, invalid husband touched the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. With tears in His kind eyes He spoke of them to Mrs. Thornburgh-Cropper and myself on our way back to London:

"She is an angelic woman, an example to all in her unselfish love. Yes, she is a perfect woman. An angel."

This lady was Elizabeth Gibson Cheyne, the very specially gifted poetess.

Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* pp. 168–9



Thomas Kelly Cheyne (1841–1915) was born in London and educated at Worcester College Oxford and Göttingen University. He was married to the poetess Elizabeth Gibson Cheyne. From 1885–1903 he was Oriel professor of interpretation of the Scriptures at Oxford and was ordained as an Anglican Priest in 1865, later becoming Canon of Rochester from 1885 until 1908. In 1909 He became Professor Emeritus of Oxford University. He was a noted authority on scriptural writings, and an important pioneer of the 'higher criticism' of the bible in the English-speaking world. Dr Cheyne's last work was 'The Reconciliation of Races and Religions', published in London in 1914, it was designed to contribute to the cause of universal peace.

During His visit 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave him the name Ruḥání meaning 'spiritual'. In a letter to the Manchester Bahá'í, Mr Craven, 31st Jan 1914 he wrote 'Why I am a Bahá'í is a large Question, but the perfection of the character of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá is perhaps the chief reason.'

Wednesday 1 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the friends gathered at 97 Cadogan Gardens.

Civilization is like a moving hill of sands. Today it is here. Tomorrow a hundred miles away. It is subject to these constant transferences... Who knows what course of nobler and higher civilization is not paved for the East – the cradle of Spiritual Civilization, the foundation of the moral life of man, the main-spring of divine Effulgences, the horizon from which the Day-Star of Hope is arising with resplendent beauty. When the material civilization joins hand to divine civilization then the world has reached the goal of a new order of things. Then there will be no poverty, no squalor, no crime, no shame. Then there will be no night and no winter. Eternal day and perennial spring will gladden all hearts.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá quoted in a letter of Ahmad Sohrab

Thursday 2 January 1913

In the evening He addressed The Women’s Freedom League at Essex Hall.

That night the Master was invited to speak at Essex Hall to the Women’s Freedom League, of which Mrs Despard was the President... More than a thousand suffragettes were present. After Mrs Despard’s stirring introduction, the Master began to speak on the subject of the equality of men and women, His remarks, often witty, eliciting laughter and a shower of approval. After every few sentences the crowd burst into applause...

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 145–6



The front of Essex Hall in 1920

Friday 3 January 1913

The artist Felix Moschelles came and painted 'Abdu'l-Bahá's portrait in oil.

I believe the Master has bought from Paris several hundred overcoats for the poor of Acca and Haifa to protect them from the cold of the winter, and these overcoats are now on their way for distribution. Is not this wonderful that while Our Beloved is here day and night He is thinking of the poor of the Orient.

The interviews continued till noon while people were gathering in the drawing room. The number of people are being constantly increased and the parlor is filled to its capacity, many persons standing or sitting on the floor.

The talk of the Beloved today was on the general education which is bestowed upon humanity by the Holy divine Manifestations, how in every age they are the real educators of the human world, how they raise an ignorant nation to the high summit of Knowledge, Therefore, in this age the Universal Instructor of Mankind is Baha-ollah. He confers life to humanity. He grants the heavenly gifts. He is the divine Messenger...

After the lecture the Master went out with Mrs Cropper and Nouri Khanom, Lady Blomfield's daughter without any interpreter. They went to Regents Park and about 2 o'clock they returned. On the way and while they walked in the Park the Master taught them Persian words and they tell me they had a very enjoyable time.

We had our dinner at 6.30 pm and at 7.30 Mrs Cropper came with her auto to take the Master to Mrs Dunlop, White Lodge, Sunnyside, Wimbledon by Mr Hammond, the author of the Splendor of God. There were many Theosophists present and the Master spoke from their own standpoint; the evolution of the single atom through the various Kingdoms of being; in every stage going into the making of a certain composition and in every form appearing with a distinctive virtue. Then He spoke about the eternal dominion of God which is not accidental or temporal but everlasting. Therefore His holy Divine Manifestations have appeared always and His grace is never-suspended.

They were all pleased and Mr Hammond thanked the Master for His gracious acceptance of invitation.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Regent's Park as it is today



‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke at 97 Cadogan Gardens.

What a power is love! It is the most wonderful, the greatest of all living powers.

Love gives life to the lifeless. Love lights a flame in the heart that is cold. Love brings hope to the hopeless and gladdens the hearts of the sorrowful. In the world of existence there is indeed no greater power than the power of love. When the heart of man is aglow with the flame of love, he is ready to sacrifice all – even his life. In the Gospel it is said God is love. There are four kinds of love. The first is the love that flows from

God to man; it consists of the inexhaustible graces, the Divine effulgence and heavenly illumination. Through this love the world of being receives life. Through this love man is endowed with physical existence, until, through the breath of the Holy Spirit – this same love – he receives eternal life and becomes the image of the Living God. This love is the origin of all the love in the world of creation.

The second is the love that flows from man to God. This is faith, attraction to the Divine, enkindlement, progress, entrance into the Kingdom of God, receiving the Bounties of God, illumination with the lights of the Kingdom. This love is the origin of all philanthropy; this love causes the hearts of men to reflect the rays of the Sun of Reality.

The third is the love of God towards the Self or Identity of God. This is the transfiguration of His Beauty, the reflection of Himself in the mirror of His Creation. This is the reality of love, the Ancient Love, the Eternal Love. Through one ray of this Love all other love exists.

The fourth is the love of man for man. The love which exists between the hearts of believers is prompted by the ideal of the unity of spirits. This love is attained through the knowledge of God, so that men see the Divine Love reflected in the heart. Each sees in the other the Beauty of God reflected in the soul, and finding this point of similarity, they are attracted to one another in love. This love will make all men the waves of one sea, this love will make them all the stars of one heaven and the fruits of one tree. This love will bring the realization of true accord, the foundation of real unity.

But the love which sometimes exists between friends is not (true) love, because it is subject to transmutation; this is merely fascination. As the breeze blows, the slender trees yield. If the wind is in the East the tree leans to the West, and if the wind turns to the West the tree leans to the East. This kind of love is originated by the accidental conditions of life. This is not love, it is merely acquaintanceship; it is subject to change.

Today you will see two souls apparently in close friendship; tomorrow all this may be changed. Yesterday they were ready to die for one another, today they shun one another's society! This is not love; it is the yielding of the hearts to the accidents of life. When that which has caused this 'love' to exist passes, the love passes also; this is not in reality love...

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 192–5

Sunday 5 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá was not well. Despite this, He met with a number of people and in the evening spoke at a meeting organised by Elizabeth Herrick.

This morning when I entered in the Presence of Our Lord I found Him indisposed. Last night He said, He could not sleep He had fever, the climate not agreeing with Him. I was very sorry but He came out and at about 9 o’clock the interviews started. Every evening at midnight or after midnight, Our Beloved gets up and for at least two hours He prays and communes with the Infinite and when He gets up in the morning, He again prays for more than one hour. Does not this teach us a lesson in prayer with God, Our Maker who sustains us, provides for us and protects us?...

At twelve o’clock the Master entered the Drawing room and delivered a farewell address, expressing His hope that the seeds which He has sown in the ground of the hearts may develop and grow and bring forth many harvests.

Today He did not go out, because it was rainy, foggy and very damp. The afternoon was devoted to many more interviews. The wife of an Englishman who has been serving in the Turkish Government for 40 years came to see the Master. This Englishman was working with another Englishman who was given the title of “Rastam Pasha” by the Turkish authorities. It so happened that the Master knew Rastam Pasha when he was the governor of Lebanon. “He was a good man” Our Beloved said. “He was more loyal to the Turkish government than most of the Ministers. If Turkey had five Ministers like Rastam Pasha, she would not have met so many difficulties”. Then the Master told us several intimate stories about this man which in turn surprised and delighted our guest. The story of Rastam Pasha’s hunting with the Emperor of Russia and how he saved the latter was very dramatic. Another story was about his loyalty in keeping fast during the month of Ramazan, although he was a Christian. Then the story of Sultan Abdul Aziz sending a necklace to Queen Victoria and its subsequent sequel was most interesting.

Later on a celebrated painter came and the Darwinian theory of evolution was discussed, its fallacy proved, the two kinds of evolution “horizontal” and “perpendicular”, material & spiritual touched upon.

Later Mrs Cropper brought her auto and the Master was whisked to Miss Herrick’s meeting where we found more than 150 people (a group of friends) all anxiously waiting the arrival of the Master. He gave a very spiritual lecture, the subject of which it is hard to say. But it was about the negligence of the people about God and their submerging in the Sea of Materialism.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

‘Abdu’l-Bahá travelled to Edinburgh by train.

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Above: *Charlotte Square*

Right: *Interior of the Manse*



© National Trust for Scotland

Early in the morning of Monday 6 January Lady Blomfield and her daughters collected the Master from the apartment and travelled with Him to Euston railway station... He had been invited by Mrs Jane Elizabeth Whyte, ‘one of the noblest and kindest women that I have ever met,’ wrote Ahmad Sohrab. A friend of Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper, Mrs Whyte had travelled with her on a visit to the Master in ‘Akká in 1906. Mrs Whyte’s husband, Alexander, was a leading figure in the United Free Church of Scotland and a former Moderator of its General Assembly. Their expansive manse at 7 Charlotte Square in Edinburgh’s New Town district was a fine Georgian house, attached to St George’s United Free Church...

On the train journey to the Scottish capital, the Master told His company that the work of teaching the Bahá’í Faith was only just beginning in the city and that they should associate with the people with exemplary devotion. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stayed at the Whytes’ home with Ahmad Sohrab while the rest of His entourage stayed in a hotel. The Whytes had prepared for the Master a room on the third floor with its own fireplace, which gave it ‘an air of comfort and a glow of peace’.

The manse in Charlotte Square quickly took on the appearance of Lady Blomfield’s home at 97 Cadogan Gardens. Eminent citizens, Esperantists, Theosophists, suffragettes, churchmen as well as students from the East packed into its elegant, high-ceilinged drawing room to pay their respects to one about whom they had heard much.

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, pp. 149–50

Tuesday 7 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá visited the Outlook Tower Museum and later addressed the Esperanto Society.

He drove in the morning to Castle Hill to visit the Outlook Tower museum. Professor Sir Patrick Geddes, a man renowned for his pioneering work in the field of education and social reform, the founder and president of the Outlook Tower Society, was there to receive ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and show Him round that very interesting museum of history, sociology, and geography. Later in the day ‘Abdu’l-Bahá drove down the Royal Mile and past Holyrood Palace, the ancient home of Scottish kings, and along the equally famous King’s Drive. (Now Queen’s Drive).

In the evening He addresses the Esperanto Society at the Freemason’s Hall in George Street. Their impressive programme, with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s photograph, announced the gathering as a ‘Meeting of Edinburgh Citizens to Greet Abdul Baba (Abbas Effendi)’. The hall was packed. Many were standing and some three hundred had, perforce, to stay outside...

‘Abdu’l-Baha’s address was chiefly concerned with an auxiliary international language. Sir Patrick Geddes spoke afterwards to propose a vote of thanks.

H.M Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Centre of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 363–4

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Above: *The Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh, 1912*

Right: *The Outlook Tower*



© Camera Obscura & World of Illusions, Edinburgh

Wednesday 8 January 1913

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited a school and orphanage in the morning and in the afternoon gave a talk.

After he had received his morning visitors, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was taken by Mrs Whyte to visit a technical school and an orphanage, where he encouraged the children in their studies and admired their work.

At 4.30 that afternoon, 'Abdu'l-Bahá appeared before a large crowd at the Rainy Hall, his second public discourse in Edinburgh... The meeting had been arranged by the Outlook Tower society... In the evening, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was invited to hear a performance of Handel's Messiah in St Giles Cathedral... the concert was privately organised by a group of philanthropists for the poor of the city.

Anjam Khursheed, *The Seven Candles of Unity* pp. 88–9

Thursday 9 January 1913

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the foremost Celtic revivalist painter John Duncan and viewed his paintings, He was then driven to see the Forth Rail Bridge. In the afternoon He spoke at the Manse, and in the evening to the Theosophical Society at 28 Great King Street.

In the afternoon of January 9th, a number of well-known suffragettes and a number of prominent men opposed to them gathered at the manse to hear 'Abdu'l-Bahá... The evening of the same day, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke before the Theosophical Society of Edinburgh, at 28 Great King Street. Theosophists of neighbouring districts had come as well, and there was not room in that spacious hall for all who attended the meeting. David Graham Pole, the secretary of the Society, said in his opening remarks: 'Abdu'l-Bahá has tremendous spiritual powers. In my opinion, He is the focal point of the spiritual, intellectual, and theological forces of the present and future centuries.' At that very meeting the spiritual powers of 'Abdu'l-Bahá were particularly witnessed, even before He spoke, for He arrived very tired. Seated on the platform He looked exhausted. Lady Blomfield writes; 'Then, seeming to gather strength, He arose, and with voice and manner of joyous animation, and eyes aglow, He paced the platform with a vigorous tread, and spoke with words of great power.' He spoke of the renewal of religion from age to age. That night, He was the guest of the Theosophical Society for dinner, autographing a number of His own photographs which some of the members had, prayed for a young couple about to be married who, kneeling before Him, asked for His blessing, and wrote this prayer in the Society's book; 'He is God. O Lord! Cast a ray from the Sun of Truth upon this Society that it may be illumined'.

H.M Balyuzi, *Abdu'l-Bahá, The Centre of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 367–8

Friday 10 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá left Edinburgh for London, by train. On the morning of His departure to London, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá wrote a letter to Andrew Carnegie, the famous Scots philanthropist whom He had met in America in 1912.

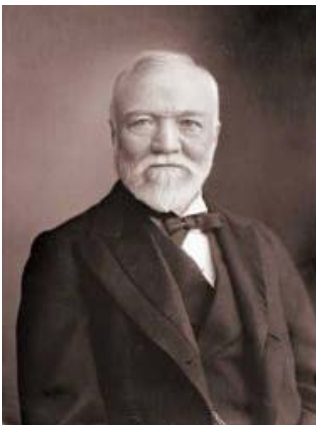
O respected personage! I have read your work, *The Gospel of Wealth*, and noted therein truly apposite and sound recommendations for easing the lot of humankind.

To state the matter briefly, the Teachings of Bahá’u’lláh advocate voluntary sharing, and this is a greater thing than the equalization of wealth. For equalization must be imposed from without, while sharing is a matter of free choice.

Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one’s substance, leadeth to society’s comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth honour upon humankind.

I have seen the good effects of your own philanthropy in America, in various universities, peace gatherings, and associations for the promotion of learning, as I travelled from city to city. Wherefore do I pray on your behalf that you shall ever be encompassed by the bounties and blessings of heaven, and shall perform many philanthropic deeds in East and West. Thus may you gleam as a lighted taper in the Kingdom of God, may attain honour and everlasting life, and shine out as a bright star on the horizon of eternity.

Anjam Khursheed, *The Seven Candles of Unity*, p. 109



Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919) was born in Dumferline and emigrated to America with his parents in 1848. He made most of his fortune in steel and was thought to be the second richest man of his day. He turned to philanthropy and established libraries, schools and universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom as well as other countries. Although ‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not normally associate with the very wealthy, He granted Andrew Carnegie an interview in New York in November 1912 and He wrote to him on at least two occasions.

Saturday 11 January 1913

'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a meeting at Caxton Hall and had dinner at Sir Richard Stapley's home.

On the afternoon of 11 January Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper had organized another large farewell meeting for the Master at Caxton Hall. As the entourage arrived, they found the hall was filled to overflowing, with many of the audience standing. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's speech on the life of Bahá'u'lláh, which included stories of the early martyrs of the Faith including Tahírih, made a profound impression. After His address 'Abdu'l-Bahá went into a large adjoining room where cakes and fruits were arranged on long tables. Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper introduced an array of clergymen, parliamentarians, ministers, writers and thinkers who were pleased to shake 'Abdu'l-Bahá's hand...

That evening Sir Richard Stapley organized a dinner for the Master at his home in Bloomsbury Square. Several professors were present, along with more churchmen, philanthropists and other prominent men and women...

The dining room was decorated most lavishly with flowers on the table. In front of the Master a large cake was placed with the word 'Unity' on it. On each of the four corners of the cake were beautiful white doves and in the centre two hands clasped together as a symbol of the unity of East and West.

Robert Weinberg, *Lady Blomfield, Her Life and Times*, p. 151

Sunday 12 January 1913

In the morning, 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed a Quaker meeting and in the early evening, the New Congregational Church in Woolwich.

Address by 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the Friends' Meeting House, St Martin's Lane:

Bahá'u'lláh says there is a sign from God in every phenomenon. The sign of the intellect is contemplation, and the sign of contemplation is silence; because it is impossible for man to do two things at the same time – he cannot both speak and meditate.

It is an axiomatic fact that while you meditate you are speaking with your own spirit. In that state of mind you put certain questions to your spirit, the spirit answers, the light breaks forth, and reality is revealed...

Through the faculty of meditation man attains to eternal life; through it he receives the breath of the Holy Spirit – the bestowal of the Spirit is given in reflection and meditation.

The Spirit of man is informed and strengthened during meditation; through it, affairs of which man knows nothing are unfolded before his view. Through it, he receives Divine inspiration, through it he partakes of Heavenly Food.

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries...

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 192–5

Monday 13 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá addressed the Peace Society at Caxton Hall and later the Persian Minister in London gave a dinner for Him at the Legation.

This morning when we arose we experienced a new sensation. What was it? A real, truly London fog. We had heard of the inky fog of London, but it was quite something else to see it. Looking out of the window you could see next to nothing. The fog invaded our rooms and in an hour or two we could hardly distinguish ourselves. All the electric lights were burning but with little effect. People could hardly see each other in the avenues and street. The Master was quite interested in this strange phenomenon. “It is all right” He would say laughing. “Now, if we leave London and people ask whether you have experienced London fog we will have the pleasure of telling them yes.” It continued all morning and all afternoon, getting worse every hour. But strange to say, people came to interview Our Beloved just the same...

Mon. Dreyfus came in the afternoon and at about 4 o’clock the Master with Mon. Dreyfus and Mrs Cropper in automobile started for Caxton Hall where the Peace Society had arranged a meeting for the Beloved to speak... The address was on the all-important subject of Peace, Peace amongst religions, Peace amongst the nations, Peace amongst the fatherlands. It was lofty in tone and musical in strain, full of passionate appeals for the much desired Peace. Like a perfect artist with the brush of His mighty word and the colors of His divine sympathy. He painted a portrait of Peace before the wondering gaze of the audience.

After the meeting the chairman expressed thanks to the Master for His words of reality, because He has come from the East to remind them of these divine lessons which are forgotten in the West for we have entirely abandoned these teachings to our shame.

Then we called 3 taxi cabs and proceeded for the Persian Legation. The Minister greeted Our Beloved most cordially... If I want to write all about the interesting time we had there, it may take many more pages. Our Beloved said just think of the Power of the Cause that while a few years ago these people would not have given any importance to the Cause today they invite us to the Embassy with the utmost joy and privilege. This is the Penetration of the word of God.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Tuesday 14 January 1913

A day without meetings

After lunch and a few minutes of rest, Our Master went out with Mrs Cropper and Miss Rosenberg and Mirza Lotfollah. First they spent a little time in Battersea Park then the Master calls on Mr Dawson, the editor of the Christian Commonwealth. He was perfectly delighted to have Our Beloved in his office.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

‘Abdu’l-Bahá made His second visit to Bristol, travelling by train and staying at Wellesley Tudor Pole’s home, the Clifton Guest House.



‘Abdu’l-Bahá with His entourage and members of the family and friends of Wellesley Tudor-Pole outside his guest house



Mr. Tudor-Pole, took Abdul-Baha for a drive in the afternoon, after which he re-met many of the guests and neighbors who dropped in to renew their acquaintance of a year ago. In the evening about 150 gathered to hear the Master’s message. ...It was a notable gathering of east and west, with the central saintly figure. Here and there was seen a scarlet fez which denoted the presence of eastern students...

Afterward in the library the guests were afforded the honor of meeting Abdul-Baha and one picturesque little group that lingered behind the rest pleased him mightily. There were five Egyptian students wearing the red fez, Abdul-Baha’s suite standing in the background wearing the black fez—there was a German, a Californian and a Welshman, whose work lay in a Universal Brotherhood movement and on whose work Abdul-Baha pronounced a beautiful blessing.

Then changing his mood and laughing heartily he talked in Arabic to the students and, as befitting the occasion, he emphasized again the great necessity for a Universal language. He said that in the future many such groups would gather from the four corners of the earth for the purpose of mutual understanding.

Thursday 16 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá travelled back to London. In the afternoon, He addressed an audience at 97 Cadogan Gardens, and in the evening He visited Lord and Lady Glenconner’s home. Later the Master gave the outline for a pageant play called ‘The Drama of the Kingdom’.

Talk given at 97 Cadogan Gardens, London, England

The Cause has become very great. Many souls are entering it – souls with different mentalities and range of understanding. Complex difficulties constantly rise before us. The administration of the Cause has become most difficult. Conflicting thoughts and theories attack the Cause from every side. Now consider to what extent the believers of God must become firm and soul-sacrificing. Every one of the friends must become the essence of essences; each one must become a brilliant lamp. People all around the world are entering the Cause, people of various tribes and nations and religions and sects. It is most difficult to administer to such heterogeneous elements. Wisdom and Divine insight are necessary. Firmness and steadfastness are needed at such a crucial period of the Cause.

All the meetings must be for teaching the Cause and spreading the Message, and suffering the souls to enter into the Kingdom of Bahá’u’lláh. Look at me. All my thoughts are centred around the proclamation of the Kingdom. I have a lamp in my hand searching throughout the lands and seas to find souls who can become heralds of the Cause. Day and night I am engaged in this work. Any other deliberations in the meetings are futile and fruitless. Convey the Message! Attract the hearts! Sow the seeds! Teach the Cause to those who do not know. It is now six months that Siyyid Asadu’llah implored that I write a few lines to my sister, my daughters. I have not done this because I find I must teach. I enter all meetings, all churches, so that the Cause may be spread. When the ‘Most Important’ work is before our sight, we must let go the ‘Important’ one. If the meeting or spiritual assembly has any other occupations the time is spent in futility. All the deliberations, all consultations, all the talks and addresses must revolve around one focal centre, and that is: Teach the Cause. Teach. Teach. Convey the Message. Awaken the souls. Now is the time of laying the foundation. Now must we gather brick, stone, wood, iron, and other building materials. Now is not the time of decoration. We must strive day and night and think and work; what can I say that may become effective? What can I do that may bring results? What can I write that may bring forth fruits? Nothing else will be useful today. The interests of such a Glorious Cause will not advance without such undivided attention. While we are carrying this load we cannot carry any other load!

‘Abdu’l-Bahá quoted in Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* pp. 176–7

'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the mosque in Woking.



Members of the Muslim Community of Great Britain came to pay their respects, and at their request 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the mosque at Woking, where an important gathering of their friends gave an enthusiastic welcome to Him Who, albeit the bearer of the new Message to all the religions of the world was descended from the ancient line of nobles in Islam.

Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway*, p. 154

The mosque in Woking was built in 1889 by Dr Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, a Hungarian-born linguist and editor of the *Asiatic Review*. It was the first mosque to be built in Northern Europe. When the Oriental Institute that it supported closed, the mosque was only used on rare occasions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit was at the request of a number of Muslims who had previously visited Him at Cadogan Gardens. Under the auspices of the *Asiatic Review*, they invited Him to give a talk at the mosque on the theme of world unity.

"To God belongeth the East and the West. Therefore whosoever a man turneth to pray, there is His Face of God."—KORAN.
 "Thou, whom the human races worship, who belondest unto many peoples, lead us forward into better things!"—SANSKRIT.
 "Love one another. As I have loved you, even so love ye also one another."—NEW TESTAMENT.
 "This handful of dust, the world, is one home! close your eyes to racial differences. Consort with all people with love and fragrance. Welcome all with the light of Oneness."
 HIDDEN WORDS.

To meet Abdul Baha (H. E. Abbas Effendi)
 The Mosque, Woking, Surrey,
 Friday, January 17th, 1913,
 at 3.15 o'clock.

THE ASIATIC QUARTERLY

TRAIN LEAVES WATERLOO AT 2.27 P.M. FOR WOKING.
 RETURN TRAINS LEAVE WOKING AT 4.50 P.M. AND 5.8 P.M.

Saturday 18 January 1913

In the morning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke with the eminent scientist, Sir William Crookes, He had lunch as a guest of the Reverend Dr R.J. Campbell, and in the evening dined with the Maharajah of Jhalawar.

Lunch is served. Mr Campbell sits beside the Master and says “I feel as though I am sitting beside Abraham, the Friend of God. This scene carries me back into the Biblical age.” Our Beloved is asked to pray and He delivers a benediction in Silence.

There is a canary in the dining room and it began to sing most beautifully. “The Canary is welcoming the Master” Mr Campbell remarks....

After the lunch, the Master was shown the Library and the room which was prepared for Him to rest... Then the young Ministers came in and the Master gave them a wonderful talk which was more like a glorious poem. He ended His remarks by saying: May the Fragrance of your lives be diffused all around like these flowers (pointing to the roses on the piano)! May your hearts become as transparent and clear as this mirror (pointing to the looking-glass) thus reflecting the rays of the Sun of Reality! May each one of you become as luminous torches (pointing to the flames of fire in the fire-place) shedding the light of love and good-fellowship across the path of those who are led astray. The talk made a deep impression on them. One of them asked the meaning of Logos and the Master gave them the Bahai interpretation of the 1st verse of the first chapter of St John...

On our return the Master rested for a while and at eight o’clock... He went to dinner to His Highness the Indian Ruler... There were about 20 guests. All the various kinds of dishes were deliciously cooked. They were Indian but very much resembling Persian. From eight till 10 o’clock we sat at the table and much desultory discussions were carried on. From time to time the Master would illumine the scene with flashes of His divine Wisdom and Intelligence. Going up in the drawing room the discussion swayed between science, religion and the Indian customs and how to do away with the caste system which is so severe in India. Toward the end of the interesting meeting His Highness anointed us with an Indian perfume and put around the neck of each guest a very curious necklace. He even put one around the head of the Master. Altogether it was a most interesting meeting and our royal host was much attracted to the cause....

When you think of the work of the Master just on this one day it is most significant. In the morning He spoke to Sir William Crookes, the foremost scientist of England; in the afternoon He talked with the most famous preacher of Europe, Mr Campbell and in the evening He was received by one of the most enlightened Rulers of India – thus science and religion and statesmanship united together to pay homage to Our Beloved.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

'Abdu'l-Bahá met with many visitors in the morning including Mrs Pankhurst, the Suffragette leader. Later He visited the artist Felix Moschelles, and addressed members of the 'Higher Thought' movement.

Then Mrs Pankhurst, the head of the Suffragette Movement of England by appointment came to see the Master. The interview was wonderful and full of significance. For here was sitting before the Master one of the most energetic and famous women of all England. She said when the Master gave his talk before the Equality's League she was out of London but her daughter was in the audience and she was so charmed and carried away with the address that she printed it verbatim in her own magazine. The address showed such wonderful grasp of the whole situation. For seldom men will credit women with accomplishing anything worth while. Then the Master spoke with her for nearly one hour, she listening attentively. His last advice to her was: Try to gain the right of suffrage with dignity, with love, with poise and serenity, with divine power, divine faith."

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab



Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928). Raised in Manchester by politically active parents, she was introduced to the women's suffrage movement at an early age. She married Richard Pankhurst, who was a barrister, in 1878 and they had 5 children. He supported her early activities but died in 1898 before she founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), which had as its motto 'deeds, not words'. The organisation became increasingly militant and Mrs Pankhurst and her daughters were frequently imprisoned. There they staged hunger-strikes to improve conditions. When women over 30 were given the vote in 1918, Mrs Pankhurst began working to promote equality for women in public life.

At four o'clock Mrs Cropper with her automobile comes to take the Master to Mr Moschelles the artist. He has invited many people to his palatial residence to hear the Master... The large studio around whose walls are hung priceless paintings is crowded with people. There are prominent members of Parliament, Peace Societies, Politicians of various parties, Representatives of various Churches and creeds, Esperantists, Socialists and prominent reformers. First Lady Blomfield gives a very vivid picture of the history of the Cause. Mr Moschelles introduces the Master. Our Beloved delivers a powerful address on Peace, Economics and universal language.

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Monday 20 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá received a constant stream of callers including a doctor, a poetess, a publisher, an Indian solicitor, Lady Eleho, the The Persian Ambassador and the Chargés d’Affaires, and Ardeshirjy, the leader of the Zoroastrians in Persia.

This is the last letter from London. We leave to morrow for Paris. The tickets are bought. The luggage is packed and London with all its past Bahai history so far as the trip of Our Beloved is concerned will be a closed chapter from one standpoint and the master-key to open many doors for the spread of the Cause. We observe the signs of great interest all around us. From the poorest in the Salvation Army to the highest in the land, Lords and ladies, politicians and socialists, members of Parliament and Peace Societies, Suffragists and Reformers, Christians and Jews, Mohamadans and Buddhists, religionists and agnostics, pacifists and militants – all, all – the leaders and the rank and file – came and met the Master. They heard him talk, they received his wisdom freely and they left His audience or His Presence so much the wiser, so much more inspired, with wonder in their eyes, amazement in their faces. Who is this man who can put himself in touch with his audience as soon as he utters one word? What is his mission? He enters in all the meetings. He addresses all manners of societies. He is just as much at home in a Jewish Synagogue as in a Christian Church. He worships God in a mosque or in a Temple. With no army, he fights and his victories are successive. Without any help he works and the fruits of his labor are abundant. Nations listen to his counsel. People heed his words. His weapon is the love of God. His sword is the Knowledge of God. His influence is the Trust of God. His reliance is upon the Holy -Spirit. With the simplicity of God, with the power of the Kingdom of Abha, with the penetration of the Sun of Reality, he rules over the hearts and the spirits; because his hope is to see these hearts becoming the dawning-places of divine inspiration; these spirits shining like the twinkling stars in yon canopy of God. May all of us attain to His Good Pleasure!

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Tuesday 21 January 1913

‘Abdu’l-Bahá departed for France from Victoria Station.

At the station in London there were many Bahais to bid Abdul Baha farewell. His royal Highness, the Indian Maharajah, had a wonderful wreath of flowers which he presented to Abdul Baha in the presence of the hundreds gathered to witness his departure.

Before leaving many books and photos had been brought to Abdul Baha to receive his autograph or a line of prayer. In one he wrote, “O Thou Lord of Unity, confirm this person who is old in faith and young in love, to summon people to Thy Kingdom.”

To another he wrote, “Abdul Baha begs providence and protection from the Threshold of Unity in behalf of this maidservant of God.”

Letters of Ahmad Sohrab

Reflections of some who met 'Abdu'l-Bahá

We who had the happiness of greeting him in London met a man of patriarchal bearing. None could approach him without veneration, but each visitor was immediately set at ease by the beautiful graciousness which marked each reception with the impress of acknowledged and realized brotherhood. Patient with all questioners, eager and apposite in reply, bent from moment to moment upon the establishment of unity, his spiritual kindness grasped the individual and the universal alike.

Eric Hammond

Abdul Baha is above all things an apostle of democracy. He loves a man for the spirit within him, not for the gifts of fortune he happens to possess, and frequently he honors more those who the world esteems least. No one who saw him in England can forget his sorrow when a poor man was accidentally refused entrance to his house, nor the great pity that possessed him at sight of the poverty of an English village. He went to the postmaster, who was also the banker, and changed all his gold pieces into sixpences, so that he might comfort the hungry looking children who followed him everywhere and who treasured his gentle words and caresses even more eagerly than the sixpences.

Mary Hanford Ford

His method of life has been, and continues to be a luminous example of the fact that, here and now, despite all the surroundings of struggle for fame and wealth and material mastery, an existence guided and guarded by the Light of the Spirit, is a possible actual thing. Those who pray for the coming of the kingdom of God on earth may see in Abbas Effendi one who dwells in that kingdom consciously, and creates an environment pulsating with the peace that passeth ordinary understanding.

The Daily Chronicle newspaper

Abdul Baha Abbas has a striking personality; the forty years of martyrdom spent in a Turkish prison at Acre have not quenched the noble kindness of his nature, and in spite of the lines which indescribable hardships have left on his face, his dark eyes are alive with the fire of understanding and sympathy.

The Evening Standard newspaper

Never have I beheld one more full of grace and truth, or in whom the majesty of simple devotion exhibited itself more impressively. Neither have I confronted a man who seemed more at peace with himself or with mankind.

Richard Dimsdale Stocker

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At the end of each day, Ahmad Sorab, who translated for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, wrote to Harriet Magee of New York. Some of these letters, with more information, can be found at:

<http://bahaistudies.net/bahaiworks/edinburgh.pdf>

Front cover, picture of Old Edinburgh: © Courtesy of RCAHMS. Licensor www.rcahms.gov.uk

The words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as quoted in this booklet were recorded by people who were with Him at the time. Since these words were spoken rather than written by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá they cannot be taken as authentic but rather should be considered in the same way as ‘pilgrims’ notes’.