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## **Talks of ‘Abdu’l-Baha: Notes of H. S. Fugeta.**

**Saichero Fugita**

**1919, Saichero Fugita**

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### **Talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Notes**

of

**Saichero Fugita**

**1919**

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**‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s House, 3:30 P. M. Sunday, Nov. 16, 1919.**

Mr. Denham: The Master must be very tired.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: When I associate with pure and sanctified souls, my fatigue passes away. Sometimes if I sit with a person for five minutes I become exhausted. With others I can talk for two hours and feel rested.

Mr. Denham: The atmosphere seems to be delightful here.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: You must come and stay here to get the benefit of it.

Mr. Denham: If everyone who would like to do so came here, there would be no room.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: There was a society in Persia that conversed only by signs. They thought it was good for sharpening their wits. Everyone who wished to join had to fill up a form of application and present it. A certain man was very anxious to join. The president wanted to make the members understand that they should not accept this man. He therefore, took a glass and filled it with water to the very brim so that it could not hold another drop without spilling. The members understood, and so did the candidate. The latter, however, was equal to the occasion. Taking a tiny piece of thin paper he placed it carefully on the surface of the water. It remained there floating and not a drop was spilled. The audience clapped with delight and the candidate was accepted with enthusiasm. You are like that piece of paper (to Mr. D.). However full we are we shall be able to hold such a guest as you.

Col. Allison asked about the effects of the war.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: First, The people before the war were wry negligent, especially in Paris. There no one mentioned the name of God. When I spoke about God to some people they would ask no to take another topic. But now they realize more. They are better than before. The hearts have become a little more tender.

Second, those who have lost dear ones in the war naturally think more of the spiritual world and of the life after death. There were Germans in Haifa who lost their sons and brothers in the war and they would come and ask me to tell them about spiritual things and about the immortality of the soul.

Third, the sufferings of the war have awakened people to the need for universal peace. The people do not want another war. Patriotic prejudices will disappear. If the governments want to make war, the people will say: ‘Very well, go and fight yourselves. Why should we go? What is the use? If there is any benefit you reap it, but for poor people like us there is nothing to be gained. If war is good, go and fight yourselves.’ All men will say 4, ultimately, we have no quarrel with our fellow-workers in other nations.

Fourth, the war has done much to sweep away racial, religious national prejudice. It will reach such a state that wherever a man is residing he will say, ‘This is my country, my home-land.’

Fifth, the war has convinced everybody that war is greatest evil and destroys the foundation of humanity. Sixth, economic effects. This war has made all the nations poor. The losses will be felt in the future. All these strikes in Europe and America are after-effects of the war. His Holiness Bahá’u’lláh fifty years ago mentioned the evils of this war and showed how to avoid them. If his advice had been acted upon there would have been no war. But they would not listen. What is the result? France will take fifty years to recover, Belgium, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, even Persia – all have had great losses which it will take many years to recover.

#### **Evening meal, November 16, 1919.**

‘Abdu’l Baba (helping himself to potatoes): Sixty years ago they introduced the potato into Persia. There was so much superstition that people would say: Whoever eats it becomes an infidel: hardly anybody would eat it, except a few who took it with wine. Now see what Bahá’u’lláh has done. See the difference between that state of matters and this feast!

After another course was served, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

President Wilson went back to America leaving his task in Europe unfinished. Now they have made a plan that the British, French, mod. Italian Governments will complete the work without America. The American Senate has decided that they will not be obliged to enter (or remain in (?)) the League of Nations. If President Wilson had succeeded in establishing the International Court of Arbitration, it would have been permanent. He entered the war so that real justice might become apparent, but the other nations did not take up the burden. He

announced the freedom of the nations – that each nation should be independent. It did not have any result. America sacrificed some of her youth and wealth, but without effect. Because the Court of Arbitration was not established, the Jar as largely in vain.

Mr. Randall said: Should America remain in the League of Nations?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: As thins are now, it is better that America should remain outside. Should Germany get a chance she will again attack France. Than if America is in the League she would be obliged to come and fulfil her agreement. If Germany gets the chance she will not forget to revenge herself. It is difficult for Germany to get this chance – very difficult because France, England, Italy and America are united. As long as this agreement lasts, she will not have an opportunity. But should a quarrel arise between France arid ‘En and this alliance will be broken. Immediately, Germany would declare war.

The best result of the war has been that this place (Palestine) is freed, because England has taken it. Mesopotamia also is freed. Baghdád and Mesopotamia will progress greatly. Especially good results will appear there, for the population were unable to better their own condition. It is necessary for her to be under the protection of a strong; nation. Nothing could be better for her than the help of England. E4,ypt, from the time the British have gone there, has progressed very much. Fifty years ago the revenues wore 8,000,000 pounds. Now they are 30,000,000 pounds. One fadan (Egyptian measure of ground) was worth 15 to 20 pounds. Now it is worth 500 pounds. There were no high schools except schools for theology. Now there acre many. The revenue in cotton was 13,000,000 bales. ‘Jew it is 50,000,000. If Egypt had remained under the old government, it would have made no progress, for the people are not able to carry on the administration. It is necessary that they be under the protection of another power. England has revived them.

Before the English wept to India the country was in a very bad state. The kings and rulers were great oppressors. England freed the people of India from the rip of these ‘kings. 10fere the English wont there, no one’s life or property were safe.

If America accepts the mandate for part of the Turkish dominions it will be very good4There is continued fighting between the Kurds and Armenians. In Anatolia there is continual slaughter. If America accepts the mandate, this will cease. We pray that all these strifes may cease. God willing the world of humanity will find rest.

Thank tied Bahá’u’lláh has emancipated us. With us all are the same. The world is our country. We have no quarrel with anyone. Any government that is based on justice is appreciated. As long as it is just, it is acceptable. Any country is our country while we are residing there. Bahá’u’lláh says the world is one home. Glory is not his who loves his country, but his who loves his kind. We are free and apart from all those quarrels and contentions.

**At Lunch, American Pilgrim House, Nov. 17, 1919.**

J. E. E. asked for an explanation of Bahá'u'lláh's teaching about Monarchial Government.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Despotic government is bad. A republican form of government as in America is good, but a constitutional monarchy is better, because it combines the virtues of both kingdom and republic. The head of a kingdom has a distinction that a president elected for a period of years has not. The kingship should pass from father to son. When the head of the Government is elected every few years, this leads to political intrigues and the whole nation becomes immersed in political contests. I was in America when President Wilson was elected. There was great agitation and discussion. One would say Wilson is good, another would uphold Taft. This was the general subject of conversation and there were constant disputes and conflicts in public gatherings, even in churches. The newspapers were in discord. Secretary Bryan and his wife came to see me in Aika. He came a second time. When I went to America I wanted to meet him. He had no time. He was giving many speeches every day. Once every four years there is an election.

J. E. E.: Is there an advantage in having a permanent head of the nation rather than one elected for a period or years?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In case we have no permanent ruler we shall have a republican form of government and that will lead to dissension and wire-pulling at election times. Then justice will not prevail.

J. E. E.: If the king is unworthy has the Parliament power to renew him?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The parliament can remove him – certainly. In a constitutional monarchy the king has no legislative power. All affairs are settled by the cabinet and the Parliament.

J. E. E.: Will the Parliament appoint a new king?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes.

J. E. E.: Should the Parliament appoint the Prime Minister?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá's No: the king will appoint the Prime Minister, but he will be responsible to the Parliament, and if he is at fault he will be dismissed. The advantage of a kingdom is that it has a dignity of its own. Compare, for example, France and England. In France there is very little dignity attached to the government, comparatively speaking.

Mr. Latimer: We always speak of the kingdom of God, not the republic of God should not earthly things be the counterpart of heavenly things?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Well said: In London, the Persian Ambassador came to me and said: There is some discussion between England and Persia about a certain matter, but Sir Edward Dray has said the matter must be so, so there is no

course but to accept his decision. I came to Paris and the Turkish Ambassador came to no. He said that with regards to a certain matter, the President of the Republic has said so and so, but we have left the matter pending. Very soon there will be a new election and perhaps the new president will agree with our ideas. In London, the ambassador said: As long as Dray saps, 'Do so,' it must be done, but in France: The President of the Republic will certainly be dismissed presently. This is Why Bahá'u'lláh says a constitutional monarchy is better because it combines the merits of kingdom and republic.

Mr. Randall: In such a case will there also be hereditary princes and nobles?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: One who serves his country well should be rewarded by fitting distinction, but no one will be able to say that he must be honored because his father was a great general. A person who does not serve the nation will not have any distinction. He may be respected to some extent because of his father's services, but so far as offices are concerned he will have no preference. He who serves must have the mark of distinction. It could not be otherwise – were it not so people would not care to serve.

Consider Bismarck. This one man built up the great empire of Germany. An empire of 70,000,000 souls. 70,000,000 people caused the downfall of Germany – so this one man was hotter than 70,000,000.

#### **MASHRAK EL AZKAR.**

Dr. E. spoke of a translation of a tablet in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá is reported as saying that only the words of Bahá'u'lláh must be read in the Mashrak el Azkar. Does this mean that the words of The Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá are not to be read?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: There is no harm if they are, but the essential thing is the reading of Bahá'u'lláh's words. The prayers of his holiness The Báb are also good. If it becomes necessary to have any explanation of some topic that comes up they may refer to them.

J. J. E.: Are not 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words the same as Bahá'u'lláh's?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Yes. Bahá'u'lláh in his explicit texts says: "He ('Abdu'l-Bahá) is the Expounder." I have no opinions of my own. Whatever is His Beloved Will, I carry out nature. His reason gives him power over nature. He can foresee the future, investigate the stars, communicate from East to West in a minute, imprison the voice in a machine. The sun with all its light, is a captive. If light were the standard of greatness, then a glow-worm would be above men, benzene higher than man. Man's body is subject to nature, like the animals, but his spirit is not.

**Supper, November 18, 1919.**

**Bahá'u'lláh at 'Akká**

He (Bahá'u'lláh) addressed Constantinople, when the Ottoman Empire was in the utmost glory saying, O thou city between the two seas—'

What he has said about the Ottoman Empire has come to pass. He said, 'This 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd is an owl.' He foretold the end of 'Abdu'l amid. Bahá'u'lláh was in the prison of 'Abdu'l-Ḥamíd but he was a king addressing, his servant. The imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh was like no other imprisonment. Many officials wore there. While in prison he was in the utmost glory and all were humble before him. Abduk Ḥamíd has issued a firman that the Beauty should not be allowed to leave his room. Soldier's were on guard. No one should be allowed to see him – not even myself. Nevertheless, the tent of the Blessed Beauty was pitched on Mount Camel. Throngs of Bahá'ís used to come outside the city of Aka to visit. There were always sixty or seventy of the Bahá'í Pilgrims there. The aide of the Governor of Yemen, 'Azíz Páshá was on a streamer and sent a message to me, 'Come I want you.' I went. He asked 'Whose pavilion is this?' (Bahjé) It is visible from afar. It has no equal.' I said that this was the pavilion of Bahá'u'lláh. He said, 'Is this the imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh?' When we first entered the barracks it was very difficult. Even I was not allowed to go to the Baths. After he left the city Bahá'u'lláh used to visit 'Akká now and again.

**Supper, November 19, 1919.**

Mr. L.: Was the great war Armageddon?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Yes.

Mr. Vail asked if the prophecy in the next to the last chapter in Daniel where it says the kings of the north and south will fight referred to this war.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Yes.

Mr. L.: If Germany gets the opportunity to declare war again, will the United States enter the war again?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: She will remain neutral. She has learned her lesson. She has spent so much money and life with so little result. She has found that interference with the political affairs of Europe is harmful for America. Neither should America interfere in the affairs of Europe, nor Europe in those of America.

Mr. R.: Had America not entered the war would not Germany have conquered the whole of Europe?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: No. The war would have been lengthened, but England would have gone on for five years longer, if necessary. America's coming in shortened the war.

Mr. R.: If the present League of nations does not include all the nations of the world, would it not be better for America to remain out of it?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Certainly. She should enter when all the notions are represented. Then we all have the International Court of Arbitration.

Mr. R.: Does the vision in Daniel of the three men in white who stood, one in the river and one on each bank, refer in this revelation?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes. You will find the interpretation in Some Answered Sections.

Praise be to God , the Blessed Beauty has freed us from all these quarrels and strifes and much as to be at peace with all nations and peoples.

Mr. L.: Was the companion of The Báb who was martyred with him killed with the first volley or the second?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The second. He was mutilated, but the body of The Báb was not hit by the first volley. The Traveller’s Narrative gives the correct account of the martyrdom and the rescuing of the body of the Báb. Sulaymán Khán, the martyr, brought the Blessed body to Tíhrán.

#### **Lunch, November 20, 1919.**

A delightful dish was served (something like doughnuts) called ‘the mouthful of the Judge.’ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told the following story:

The Turks are very fond of eating. In this respect they are like some of the monks. Once upon a time two men had a quarrel over a piece of land – a dispute over the boundary line. One of them invited, the Judge to his house and entertained him at dinner. Afterwards the Judge gave a decision in favor of this man taking ten metres of land from the other. When the other found this out, he also invited the Judge to dinner and served among other courses this delicious dish. When the Judge had eaten of this he was charmed. He went back and reversed his decision, giving to the second man twenty metres. When he was asked by the first man the reason for this he replied, ‘The first decision was based upon eggs (the first man had given him eggs for dinner) but this one was based upon something far more delicious. So this dish was called thereafter ‘The mouthful of the Judge.’

The Master asked Bahiyeh whether she would like an ostrich egg whether would like to taste camel flesh. She said she would rather see the camel alive. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said she must ride on it herself.

J. E. E.: Fugeta rode on a camel at the pyramids.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: We will send him to Japan on a camel – or better still on an elephant – a large one, then Fugeta would be quite eclipsed.

J. E. presented translation from German of a letter from Frau Schwarz. The Master was very pleased and his face became enkindled with happiness. He

turned to Doctor and said, "I am going to send you to Germany." Then he said that if it were possible Mr. Vail and the Randalls should go also. "You will enjoy it very much. 'You will find the friends there very enkindled. You will see little Miss. Knobloch. She is the sister of Fugeta in size.'" Dr. E. remarked that it might be difficult for an Englishman to get into Germany. The Master replied, 'Strive and endeavor to get into Germany. If you cannot do it now, go later on. If you spend but one day there you will be most happy.'

#### **Supper, November 21, 1919.**

Speaking of Bahiyeh, the Master said, "She will become eloquent and speak in large gatherings. I will supplicate the Blessed Beauty that he may confirm her so that she will attract many souls. In her time the Blesses Tree will give forth fruits. Now it has given leaves, but in her time it will bear fruit."

If violation had not occurred, the Blessed Tree would have already borne fruit. It was near its blossoming, but violation delayed it. It has not been for violation and Khayru'lláh's presence what would have been the condition of America! They have made the people indifferent. When the cause was ablaze, it was as the water had been poured on it.

It was just the same in the time of Christ. Violation retarded its progress, e.g., in the case of Arius. One and a half million souls were his followers – Even the Emperor of Constantinople. Arius was very eloquent. He proved the existence of something that did not exist, but the ocean of Christ sent forth a wave and cast ashore Arius and all.

#### **November 21, 1919.**

##### **Evening Meeting:**

There are many calls in the world now. There is the call of war – politics, peace, commercial interests, the churches, the Jews. There are innumerable calls. These calls have no effect. The call which pulsates in the heart of the world is 'Ya Bahá el Abhá!' This is the life of the arteries. This is the Call which creates activity. This is the Call which gives life!

#### **Supper, November 22, 1919.**

'Abdu'l-Bahá: On the way to 'Akká the rest of us went ashore at Alexandria and had a look around, but the Blessed Beauty did not land. Those who were taking care of us were quite sure we would not escape.

Mr. R.: When and where were Hidden Words written and why were they called 'Hidden Words'?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: It was revealed at Baghdád towards the end of our stay there. It was concealed at first, and was not circulated. There were not more than two or three copies of it. It was at a time when all the enemies were attacking us.



The Sháh of Persia was oppressing and so was the Ottoman government. At such a time they were revealed.

The Book of Aqdas is very clear and easy to understand. It is not like the Qur'án, which is in High Arabic and very difficult. It has no complications.

Mr. R.: We have no complete translation of it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Nothing has been translated well, for they have been translated by individuals. A person is needed who is well versed in Persian, Arabic and A single individual cannot do it satisfactorily. In future a committee will be formed for the purpose.

Now, the writings of the Blessed Beauty cannot be satisfactorily translated. The translation can never be like the original. The original is in the utmost of eloquence and beauty. It is so marvelous that no one is able to produce the like, – it is so eloquent and complete. Both in Persian and Arabic it is extraordinary. All is written in a new style. No one has ever written in such a style. – The actual words from the blessed lips have a power which is lacking in any translation.

If a person learns Persian now, it will not be like Greek, French or Italian. From it great results will come. After ten or twenty years the European who knows Persian will become famous throughout the world.

Mr. R.: We hope for better translation of the Surat-ul-Rykl.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It needs a translator like Fitzserald who translated Omar Khayyám. In this case the translation is much better than the original – very much better. The original is all in praise of wine, but the translator has elevated it so that in England they consider Omar Khayyám a great poet, but in Persia he has no importance. What a difference there is between him and Sa’dí (didactic) and between him and Haffiz (lyric).

### **Carmelite Monastery.**

The Carmelite Monastery had leased 1000 acres on Mount Carmel, but claimed 40,000. The governor said it was manifest oppression on their part. They had taken this land by unjust means. Then the governor was invited to a banquet, but the monks discovered he could not be bribed. He was not made more lenient by the banquet and sided with the people. They all sat around the table and the Master sat in one corner. On one side sat the governor and his officials, on the other, the monks and priests while facing them were the notables of Haifa. One of those notables addressed the governor, saying that those monks were the people of God and the Germans were bad people. The monks were always kind and they clothed the naked while the Germans were just the opposite. They cared for no one except themselves. The governor said ‘yes’ to all of this and asked ‘Have you finished?’ To whom are those monks related? He (the notable) answered, ‘To Christ.’ Then the Governor replied, ‘Christ was in the wilderness

without a home. He had no /amp save the stare, no bed save the ground, no food save the herbs, while with those monks it is exactly the opposite. Their food is sumptuous, their residence palatial, the view so splendid! They are in the utmost comfort and their wealth is immense. Notwithstanding this, consider how they have used force to do it. That connection does this have with Christ?' They all remained silent at this. Afterwards the monks said 'Abbás Effendi had told the Governor what to answer.

**From George Latimer's Notes of Visit to 'Akká, November 22, 1919.**

The barracks withstood all attacks of the Crusaders and eight months Beige by Napoleon in 1799. Taken in 1918 by two officers and three Indian soldiers in a motor car, without a shot being fired. Áqá Husayn the only survivor (except 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Greatest Holy Leaf) of the seventy-two souls who accompanied Bahá'u'lláh to 'Akká. He was the cook and has been associated with Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá for sixty-six years. He is now seventy-seven (years old). The party arrived when the figs were ripe in 1888. In the barracks the epistles to the Sháh and the Pope were revealed. Bahá'u'lláh's room had neither bed nor chair. The window of his room ever-looks the house where 'Abdu'l-Bahá lived from 1900-1910, when he received the first Western pilgrims.

To see Bahá'u'lláh pilgrims had to stand on the plain beyond the third series of ramparts, at quite a distance. The Purest Branch fell through a skylight from failing to keep count of his steps one night when he was saying his prayers. His dying wish was that, for the friends, 'The Gate of rooting crowd be opened.'

**Lunch, November 23, 1910.**

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Each of the friends should try to guide at least one soul – to make one Bahá'í each year.

Mr. R. spoke of Richard Mayer, a German Jew who was giving all his time to the cause.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: See the power of God, how He has united the Jew with you – such as Mírzá Luṭfu'lláh here, He is a Jew. So is Tuhanna Dawud of London. Those of the Jews who become believers have much love for Christ.

There was a Mrs. Ramsey at 'Akká who was a missionary. She was very much against me. Whenever she saw a European or an American here she would commence to talk against me. One day there was a Jew with me who had become a Bahá'í. We entered a shop where this lady was. She flushed with anger. I said to her, 'Dost thou know how much I love you?' She said, 'No.' I replied, 'Just as much as you hate me, do I love thee! If thou wishest to know how much that is, see how much hate you have for me.' When I said this she laughed. I said, 'Thou hast no reason to hate me, for this man was a Jew and I have made him a believer in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, – the Holy Ghost. If you want to know, ask him.' She asked him, 'Were you a Jew?' He said, 'Yes.'

‘Are you a Christian, do you believe in Christ?’ ‘Yes.’ Then I said, ‘Ask him what proofs he has that Christ is the Spirit of God, the Word of God. I taught him these, ask him.’ She asked. He replied, ‘Do you want intellectual proofs or from the Book?’ He proved the reality of Christ from the Old Testament. Then she asked for intellectual proofs. He gave these to her also. She looked up and said, ‘In the name of God, this is very good. He has a very good faith, but thou wilt not let him remain a Christian. You speak to him of Bahá’u’lláh. If you do not speak of Bahá’u’lláh it is very good, but you will not leave him alone. You will make him a Bahá’í also.

### **Evening Meeting:**

#### **November 23, 1919.**

Mr. R. said he had never seen such a perfect afternoon and evening.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is rare, but the moonlight nights are more wonderful. The air is clear. The moon shines so perfectly that one does not care to sleep, rather to sit up and watch it.

#### **Dinner, November 23, 1919.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá spoke of the prostitution of wonderful inventions – aeroplanes, wireless telegraphy, steamers, railways, etc., to purposes of war. “Had it not been for steamers, America would not have entered the war. After this war we hope the world of humanity will become awakened and will realize that there is no remedy for the world’s sickness except according to the heavenly teachings, for this war has become the cause of hatred. For instance, the Germans will not forget, the Austrians will not forget, the Bulgarians will not forget, the Turks will not forget. On one side there will rise the tumult of the Socialists, from another, the storm of the Bolsheviks, from another, the demands of labor, from another the antagonisms of nations, from another, religious hatred, from another racial prejudice. It is clear ‘that will happen. All of these are like dynamite. One day they will explode unless the banner of universal peace is raised according to the divine teachings and to the oneness of the world of humanity. But according to the divine teachings, the banner of universal peace must be raised ‘by the power of the Word of God. The oneness of the world of humanity must be established by the power of the Holy Spirit. No matter how the politicians strive, their efforts cannot bring peace. Unaided human power is of no avail.”

Shaykh Farajullah asked, the banner of universal peace going to be raised after this war?’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Not now. This period is like the deceptive dawn. We will see what the future brings. The real dawn has not yet come. We cannot abolish war with war. It is like trying to cleanse a blood-stain with blood. The divine teachings will accomplish it, however.

In the world of nature we find treachery, deceit, the struggle for existence. That which saves man from the world of nature is the power of God. It is faith. That will make of man an angel. The fear of God keeps man not only from open but from secret sins. The nations of the world are like fighting cocks. They fight, fight, fight until they are tired. Then they stop and make peace. After, they have rested awhile they fight again.

Mr. R. asked about the future in Russia.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The future is bad. There will be great destruction. Nations should strive to extinguish this fire before it spreads to other countries. It will soon affect other countries, for the mass of people have Bolshevich tendencies. The mass of people all desire to become equal with the rich. At present law and order prevents this – the poor are afraid of punishment, but when no order prevails, it is certain that the masses will strive to make themselves actual with the rich.

Col. A. asked whether the rulers, such as Wilhelm II who cause war should be tried.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Whoever is responsible should be, but in that case the ministers of all the nations will have to be tried. The Kaiser is not the only one guilty.

Col. A.: The English wish to try the Kaiser.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: What about Clemenceau? Was he not also one of the causes of the war? But the Kaiser is defeated, and it is always the defeated one who is to be tried. The Emperor of Germany was very proud. As a nation the Germans were proud. Even those in Haifa were proud. One could not talk with them.

Col. A. asked the Master if he saw the Kaiser when he came to Haifa.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Some went to meet him at the Port. I did not go. He was proud. He was the embodiment of pride. The Turks helped him much. He did not then dream of his downfall. When he read the Epistle of the Blessed Beauty, what did he care? Nothing: There were severe statements in it. All the vents were foretold. It is in the Surat-ul-Hykl which was published thirty years ago and spread throughout the world. In it the Blessed Beauty says: ‘Thou wilt become like Napoleon. Do not be so proud. I hear the lamentations of Berlin although today it is in manifest glory.’

In front of his carriage were two Ottoman soldiers. A poor unfortunate man was sitting on the ground. When he saw the carriage he got up, but the soldiers killed him. The Kaiser never even asked why they killed him.

#### **‘Abdu’l-Bahá at the Feast given for Pilgrims, November 26, ‘19.**

The friends are gathered with the utmost love and affection at this table. I hope they will all be present at the heavenly table, and may partake of the heavenly food. Although this food is rich, yet it is light, for it is cooked with love and

served with love. This pilau is cooked and served so. I ask God and beseech at the threshold of the Blessed Beauty, that, as he has gathered you around this table, so he may gather you in the heavenly kingdom, in the utmost love and fragrance, bestow illumination upon all. It is my hope that through the bounty and favor of God this gathering may not be forgotten.

### **Lunch, November 30, 1919.**

I asked the Master whether it had been prophesied by Bahá'u'lláh or himself that after the Great War there would be a period of economic unrest, revolt against governmental authority and chaotic social conditions, before the establishment of the Most Great Peace.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: Bahá'u'lláh frequently predicted that there would be a period when irreligion and consequent anarchy would prevail. The chaos would be due to too great liberty among people who were not fit for self-government. He had repeatedly said that in consequence of this there would have to be a temporary reversion to an absolutist form of government and firm coercion of the people. This would not, however, be an unjust coercion, such as that exercised by Turkey or the Russian government in the past, but a just coercion in the interest of the people themselves, to prevent disorder and chaos.

See how many disturbances there are now! England has come and freed these Arabs from the Turkish yoke. For 600 years the Arabs have been enslaved and now they are free, their children, themselves and their property. Now that they are free they say to the English, ‘What are you doing; hero? We do not want you. Get out of our country.’ England replied: ‘I have spent many lives here, much English blood has been shed. I have spent much money. Am I going to leave now? I have freed you from this slavery. I have erected a just and equitable government and I mean to recover from you what I have spent and to obtain compensation for the lives that I have sacrificed on your behalf.’ They say, ‘What right have you?’

It is our wish to be free and independent.’ Now if there was not this freedom, they would not say this and they would be very thankful.

J. E.: Does ‘Abdu'l-Bahá think that Wilson went too far in his proposals for entire self-determination for peoples inexperienced in self-government?

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: Wilson lacks experience in the world of politics. America, so far, has not entered into foreign politics. She is a beginner in this matter, but she is expert in the internal politics of her own territory. There was no need to proclaim entire freedom for all formerly subject nations. This is clear, that each nation now wishes complete self-determination and freedom of action.

There will come a period of disturbance and chaos. The prevailing state of the world is one of irreligion which must result in anarchy and confusion. I have always said that the peace proposals following the Great War were only a glimmer of the dawn and not the sunrise.

## **HOUSE OF JUSTICE.**

**Lunch, December 7, 1919.**

Question: Am I right in thinking that the Houses of Justice will at first be instituted for the Bahá'ís only, but when the Bahá'í Cause becomes widespread they will come to take the place of existing parliaments and legislative assemblies?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is the same Beit-ul-Adl. Belt-ul-Adl will be established. It is like parliament. It takes its place, but this is a parliament which has the utmost of authority and power.

Q. I see that in his tablet to Ex-Governor Sulzer the Master says that the Universal Arbitration Tribunal will consist of the best men and women of the different countries. Will women in the future sit in the Beit-ul-Adl also?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Men and women are equal in this respect, with the condition that woman should reach to the degree of men. As yet they have not reached this state. They will become members of the Beit-ul-Adl in the future. The time will come when woman will reach the degree of men (as regards education). Then they will be equal.

Q. When the Bei-ul-Adl are fully established All there be one supreme king for the whole world?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: There will be constitutional monarchs, but they will have no independent power. Bahá'u'lláh says that in each country there should be one head (king) but there will not be a supreme king for the whole world. The universal Beit-ul-Adl will be the supreme authority.

Q. The International Bait-ul-Adl will be a legislative body. Lust it not have an executive to carry out its decisions and must that executive not have a head?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In each country the executive of that country will carry out the decision of the International Beit-ul-Adl. It will be carried out as in the League of Nations. All, the countries will carry it through. In the same way the decisions of the Beit-ul-Adl will be carried out in all the countries.

Q. Then the only king of the whole world, the King of Kings will be God?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes! The real true King is God. The others are but figureheads.

## **Prophecy about ‘1917’ at Leland Stanford University.**

In that gathering I said that war would roach its crisis in 1917. The newspapers also recorded it. I said, ‘This universal mar will come.’ I said, after that they will unite.

J. E.: I got the impression from the English translation of the prophecy in the Spar of the West that the Lost Great Pews would follow almost immediately after 1917.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No! I said that in 1917 the scope of the war would be enlarged. Great disturbances will happen in the world. After that they will make peace.

Q. Will the International Court of Arbitration and the International House of Justice be one and the same?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No!

### **Knowledge of Bahá’u’lláh.**

#### **Lunch, December 15, 1919.**

J. E.: Would ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tell us about the knowledge of Bahá’u’lláh?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It was infinite, unlimited. This is clear. Can a limited power raise such a cause: This is apparent. Even the enemies of Bahá’u’lláh admit this. They say there is extreme power in this personage.

J. E.1 I have been told of a tablet in which he said that whenever he wanted to know anything, there it was before him in a clear and manifest tablet.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: When he wished anything it would be accomplished. (Leaving prison).

Dr. C.: Thy did Bahá’u’lláh refuse to go to Mazraeh when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá asked him, and then go when the Nufti begged him.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: I did not insist. Sometimes a king will not accede to the request of his Prime Minister but will grant the request of a farmer. I did not insist. I used only to supplicate. As he did not accede, I did not insist. But the Mufti was persistent. He had not the same feelings that I had. He took the Blessed Beauty’s hands and did not leave him till he got his wish.

J. B.: You didn’t insist yourself, but you sent the Shaykh to do it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá (laughing): You said right. Bravo, bravo (Aferin, Aferin)! A young man when he wishes something from his father states his wish with the utmost politeness, but a little child cries, snatches, kicks, and takes that he wants.

### **Illness of Bahá’u’lláh.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Bahá’u’lláh’s last illness lasted twenty-one days. (‘Abdu’l-Bahá did not specify the name of the disease) – it was nothing to speak of. Several months before that Bahá’u’lláh used often to speak about his ascension. For three years he used to eat very little – often he would eat nothing at meal times. They would take the food and bring it back untouched. Sometimes he would take milk or rice pudding.

### **Arrival at ‘Akká.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: At that time there was no port either at ‘Akká or Haifa. Passengers were carried ashore on a chair or on the shoulder. The notables had a chair. The Blessed beauty was carried on a chair. He went to a house in Haifa. Then went by a sailboat to ‘Akká. He came to Haifa by steamer and from Haifa to ‘Akká by boat. After nine years at ‘Akká, by his own wish, he went out of the town. He came several times to Haifa. His tent was pitched on Mt. Carmel. Two white donkeys were sent from Persia for him. He used them after he came from ‘Akká.

Q.: Did Jesus first realize his mission when the Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The Holy Spirit was always with Christ.

Q. Did he know of it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It was hidden from others but to him. The story about the dove is simply a metaphor. No dove came down. Amongst the people John the Baptist felt that there was the Holy Spirit in Christ. The Holy Spirit was always with Christ. He knew about his mission from early childhood.

Q. Did The Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá also know of their missions from early childhood?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes.

Q. In a book I read that at the age of twenty-four The Báb realized his mission.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: From childhood it was apparent to himself, like the sun. The people felt his greatness although they did not know about his future.

### **Lunch, December 13, 1919.**

Dr. C. asked if a statement concerning the title of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá which she had found among a collection of translations was correct.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: This is not a correct translation. I wrote that his highness The Supreme (Báb) was the fore-runner like John the Baptist, like the dawn. The Blessed Beauty is the sun and I am ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and no one should go beyond that. For me this one word ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is sufficient. I did not say that I have all the knowledges. The utmost of my perfection to this, that I am. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ – call me only ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Dr. C. spoke of a tablet just revealed for America, asking for earnest souls to proceed to Persia and of her willingness to go if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá desired it.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: You alone are not sufficient. There be a party.

Marriages of Bahá’u’lláh: ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:



If he is God, whatever he does is right. If he is false, whatever he does is also false – even though he may not marry. There are religious devotees in India who do not marry at all. Is this a proof of their truth? This is the essential (proof) but the non-essential is this:

When my mother became helpless and could not serve, Bahá'u'lláh did not wish, as is custom of the Europeans, to have a 'mistress,' he accepted another wife.

In the Bible polygamy is not forbidden. Christ prohibited divorce only. In the first century the Christians used to marry several wives. Even Paul says that the religious leader ('elder') must have one wife only. More than one is not permitted as otherwise he will be distracted. From this it may be inferred that they used to marry more than one. Monogamy was instituted by the Church Council, for this was the habit of the old times.

If one searches into the truth about Christianity one finds that all those rules are from the Council, who borrowed from the ancient nations. This Council adopted twenty-one things from the ancient nations:

1. Pictures and images in the churches. Till the seventh Council, there were no pictures. They said: 'The mass of the people are accustomed to idols of gold and silver. Now there is nothing in the church. It is empty and looks bare to them. It is better that one should put pictures of Christ, the disciples and Mary in the church, so that it may be more attractive – an empty church has no attraction. It has for the learned ones, but not for the mass of people.'
2. In the same way with lights. According; to the ancient custom they used to have lamps lighted in daytime. They said: 'These are necessary to make the church popular with the masses.'
3. In the same way with incense which they used to perfume the nostrils.
4. Then bells were used by the ancient ones also. At the time for prayer or service; the bell was rung.
5. Remission of sins. The religious heads, like the Pope, should grant absolution for sins.
6. The religious leaders should wear ornamented garments. Until that time the religious leaders wore simple clothes.
7. They appointed that no one should wear a crown (or mitre) according to the ancient customs.
8. That the priests should not marry.
9. The religious leader should have a private room in the church.
10. The religious leaders may have the right to excommunicate.
11. Sacrifice, which they had.

12. Transubstantiation. The priest would take the bread and bless it and bless also the chalice and would give it to the people in the church.
13. The clergy should have political as well as religious authority. There are twenty-one things and among these is monogamy which was instituted by that Council, according to the ancient customs.

**Bahá'u'lláh.**

**Lunch, December 19, 1919.**

“The time of the Blessed Beauty was spent in the manner described with the appearance of The Báb, but when The Báb declared himself, the Blessed Beauty began to spread the cause of The Báb. In every way he assisted it. Tíhrán was the capital of Persia and centrally situated. His house was always full of people – crowded. They used to come and ask questions. Notwithstanding that his holiness Bahá'u'lláh had never been at any school nor studied any sciences. This is certain. People of learning used to come – people of sciences – people of religion, of every sect, and he would answer their questions. People were astonished that the Blessed Beauty had never studied. Where did he get his wisdom Where his knowledge? With utmost of power he promoted the cause of The Báb. He spent great sums of money for it, he even sold some villages and devoted the proceeds to the cause. The news spread everywhere that the Blessed Beauty assisted the cause of The Báb. It was customary in Persia for the people of learning to wear a turban. If a person had no turban around head, it was presumed that he had no learning. Such was the custom at that time. It is not so now. The Blessed Beauty wore a hat, therefore whoever visited him would see only a hat and would become astonished.

“Then they took the Blessed Beauty and imprisoned him. The first one who went to prison for the cause of The Báb in Tíhrán was the Blessed Beauty – the very first – but it was for one night only and it was because he had given shelter to some Bábís. The next day they set him free.

“Then the journey to Bedasht was made. Kurratu'l-Ayn had been imprisoned in her father's house at Kasvin. They had made things very hard for her. Her husband, her father and all her relatives and her some The Blessed Beauty sent and arranged her escape by night. She was brought to Tíhrán and for a few days was in house. Then he sent her to Bedasht for the friends were gathered there. Later the Blessed Beauty went also. He spread the cause of The Báb in Mazandaran. The government had not yet risen again at the cause. There was a little opposition (by the government) at Shíráz but no serious opposition elsewhere. They had sent The Báb also to Tabriz. The people were not afraid. Therefore, in Mazandaran, whoever came to his holy presence became a believer. He went to Bedasht and there openly declared the tidings of the New Manifestation – that Hazrate A'la is the manifestation. The former ordinances are abrogated, such as veiling (of women). Once the Blessed Beauty was no well. He was in the garden. Jenab-i-Khuddus came to visit the Blessed Beauty. Kurratu'l-Ayn

wished that the Blessed Beauty should go to the garden where she was living. Jenab-i-Khuddus said, ‘He will not come.’ Jamáli Mobarak (Bahá’u’lláh) had arranged beforehand what they should do. In the meantime Kurratu’l-Ayn came without veil or covering. At that time about 300 or 400 friends were gathered there. This was a momentous event. It might easily have led to their all being killed, but God preserved them. Kurratu’l-Ayn came out without veil and proceeded to the tent of Jamáli Mobarak. All the friends were about and when she arrived he asked her to sit down. He then ordered that the Sura of Faqeyeh should be read and he proclaimed the New Era. ‘It is the New Era.’ Because of the unveiling of Ṭáhirih (The Pure), the gathering of the friends broke up in confusion. Some ran away; some returned (to their former faith); some objected, some were astonished and some remained firm. One drew a razor and cut his throat, saying, ‘The religion is broken.’ He became bewildered. Each one went his own way. Later they gradually reassembled. See what the abandonment of the veil meant when it caused a man to cut his throat!”

Q. Did Kurratu’l-Ayn habitually discard the veil after that meeting?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No. In the presence of some of the more intimate friends who used to visit her, she would unveil but not in public.

“Then Jamáli Mobarak went towards a fortress in Mazanderan, where some of the friends were gathered (Shaykh Tabarci was name of fortress). The people in that neighborhood began killing the friends. The friends gathered in the fortress to defend themselves. Jamáli Mobarak sent considerable stores of provisions to the friends. Then the government sent soldiers who surrounded the fortress – a large number of soldiers. Jamáli Mobarak went towards the fortress. Outside the fortress at night, the soldiers caught him – nine miles from the fortress (3 farsakhs) they caught him. They pillaged all his property and took him to the city of Amol.

“The remainder tomorrow!”

### **Lunch December 20, 1919.**

Mírzá, Taqí, governor of Amol, with 700 riflemen (at that time in Persia there were riflemen and regular soldiers. The soldiers were fairly well disciplined, but not the riflemen) surrounded the room of Jamáli Mobarak.

“They looted everything that was there. They brought Jamáli Mobarak to the town. The Mullás were gathered in the mosque. They brought Jamáli Mobarak and his companions there, and answers, they passed sentence of death on him. All the people of the town had come. The carpenters came with their axes and the butchers with their axes and gathered in the middle of the meeting. Jamáli Mobarak was sitting in a recess of the Mosque. The governor afraid that they Jamáli Mobarak. A great responsibility would then devolve upon him as Jamáli Mobarak and he were from the same town – from Mazanderan. He feared that the people would martyr Jamáli Mobarak because the ‘Ulamá had given the

sentence and the people were obedient to the ‘Ulamá and did not fear Governor. In this recess (where Jamáli Mobarak sat) the Governor’s men removed the wall from behind and carried Jamáli Mobarak out. By the time the people got at the place, Jamáli Mobarak was taken away. They carried.. to the house of the Governor and shut the door.

Q. Was Bahá’u’lláh called Jamáli Mobarak in those days?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá; In those days he was called by his name, Mírzá Ḥusayn ‘Alí.

J. E. Did he take the title Jamáli Mobarak after his declaration?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: We called him %mall. Mobarak because of respect. He did not call himself by that title. The uncle of this Mírzá Taqí (the Governor) was a general and in the fortress. He was a Bahá’í. When he received the news he wrote to Mírzá Taqí, ‘Beware that not one hair of his blessed head perish! How neglectful you have been. If anything happens, we shall not be free (of responsibility). They will require his blood of us. The family of Jamáli Mobarak will not take their ‘hands from our heads. However, now you must take the greatest care of him and all the property that has been pillaged must be restored.’ (But the property was carried off by the people and could not be traced).

Then Jamáli Mobarak went from there to Bandar-e-Jaz. The fortress had been taken. When the friends had gone hungry for eighteen days, the enemies let them out from the fortress and aware not to injure them. The friends came out and laid down their arms. All were except a few who escaped. Among those who escaped was Jonah Astag – father of Ebn Astag.

Briefly, while Jamáli Mobarak was in Bandar-e-Jaz Muḥammad Sháh issued a firman for the killing of Jamáli Mobarak. This story is very piquant! (How ‘Abdu’l-Bahá laughed as he made this remark.) When the firman came from Ṭihrán, Jamáli Mobarak’s whereabouts were not known. The order was, “Kill him wherever he is.” One of the relatives (of Jamáli Mobarak) in Dandar-e-Jaz was in the service of the Russian Government, doing all kinds of work. They sent the news to him. He said in the Holy Presence, ‘There are the Russian steamers and the work is in my hands. Now that Muḥammad Sháh has given the sentence of death, come, get on board one of those steamers.’ He said, ‘I will not go. It is impossible.’ At that time anyone who took refuge on a Russian steamer would be protected. He (the relative) said, ‘Then go to the place where the Admiral lives,’ for the house of the Admiral was on an island. Jamáli Mobarak did not go. The following day one of the notables of the town invited Jamáli Mobarak to go to one of his villages. He had also invited other notables. As he was a fellow-townsmen-Jamáli Mobarak. They rode on the way to other, but this person who was in the service of the Russian over and nearly died from fright. He was a relative of Jamáli Mobarak and did not know what to do. Jamáli Mobarak rode in the utmost dignity with the people around him.

Meantime a mounted messenger arrived from Ṭihrán and gave a letter to Mírzá

Majeed (the relative). He opened it, read it, and suddenly began to roar with laughter. (Like the laughter of Fugeta). They cried, ‘What is it?’ ‘That man is dead,’ he said. They said, ‘What is the matter?’ Mírzá Majeed said, ‘Don’t you know? He issued a firman that they should kill Jamáli Mobarak – now God has killed him – that firman is useless.’ They made a feast and had great rejoicing with Bahá’u’lláh because of this deliverance.

### **Lunch, December 21, 1919.**

From Bandar-e-Jaz, Jamáli Mobarak went to Núr there he taught. (Núr was the town where his family had lived for generations.) He entered the village and most of the inhabitants became believers. Then he went to Tíhrán. Nasr-ud-Din Sháh was on the throne and the Prime Minister was Amir Nazam. He was a very bloodthirsty man. He used to say, ‘Until I kill five or six persons a day I cannot rest, and I cannot govern the kingdom.’ He had great enmity toward Jamáli Mobarak and he was very despotic. Whatever he wished he did. He decreed that they should martyr Hazrat-e-A’la (the Báb). He sent soldiers to Mazanderan, Zanzan and. Tabriz. In those three places he commanded them to kill all the friends. The friends defended themselves. Then Jamáli Mobarak went to Baghdád and remained a year. Wherever he went he used to teach. In any city on the way, he tarried and spread the cause of God – everywhere. He did the same around Baghdád and in Kerbela and Najaf. Afterwards he returned to Tíhrán. Jamáli Mobarak was in the middle of this journey when Nasr-ud-Din Sháh seized Amir ilazam and killed him. Jamáli Mobarak came to Tíhrán, Mírzá Aka Khán had become Prime Minister. Jamáli Mobarak had greatly befriended Mírzá Aka than at a time when he was in need of assistance. When they had caught, him and fined him, the Blessed Beauty helped in the payment of the fine. Afterwards also, Bahá’u’lláh provided him with allowance and sent his wife and family to him with dignity and comfort, Mírzá Aka Khán the Prime Minister. He said to all his relations, “Go and meet the Blessed Beauty.” To his brother he said, ‘You go in place of me.’ The Blessed Beauty came to the house of Safar ‘Alí Khán (brother of the Prime Minister). Then the people, ministers, members of the court and princes used to come and go. From there Jamáli Mobarak went to the village of the Prime Minister for he had invited the Blessed Beauty saying, ‘Now you are my guest.’

The Blessed Beauty was there in the summer when his holiness The Báb was martyred. There was a young man by the name Saclike. He was present on the day of the martyrdom of His Holiness. He became greatly affected. From Azarbaijan, he started, taking two companions going straight towards the Sha. He fired a pistol at the Sháh, but he did not know how to go about it. He had charged the pistol with small shot instead of a bullet. Fourteen pellets struck the Sháh. Thor ho dragged the Sháh from his horse and fell over him. They killed him on the spot. A great commotion arose. Now this person had done this on his own initiative, but all the friends were blamed for it. Briefly, Jamáli Mobarak it was in the village of to Prime Minister. The Prime Minister

wrote a letter to his brother who was in that village with Jamáli Mobarak. He wrote telling of the occurrence and saying that there were rumors against Jamáli Mobarak. After a few hours another messenger came. The Prime Minister wrote that Jamáli Mobarak is strongly suspected (of complicity to the plot). Jamáli Mobarak saw that the Prime Minister was fearful about Jamáli Mobarak being in his village, so he determined to leave. The brother of the Prime Minister said, "It is not necessary," but he did not insist. This village is nine farsakhs (27 miles) distant from Tīhrán. There were people in that village who were supported by Jamáli Mobarak. He was always giving them something. They were immersed in the gifts of the Blessed Beauty. They were good people. They came to His Holiness and said, 'In these mountains are places which all the people of Persia could discover. We guarantee that you will remain safe there. We will let no one know where you are except one person who shall bring your food. There is a gorge, beyond that gorge another gorge, beyond that the mountains. For ten days journey there are gorges and mountains. There is no village there – nothing whatever.' If he had gone there he would have remained safe. He did not agree to go. He rode with the utmost dignity toward the village in which the Sháh was. About half a farakh before reaching the village, he alighted. They heard of it. One-hundred-fifty armed soldiers came and surrounded the house. Jamáli Mobarak rode with the soldiers around him and went to the camp. They raised a tent there and kept him there, with guard of soldiers. They asked him no questions. After fourteen days, in chains, with bare foot and head, accompanied by some of his followers, they sent him to Tīhrán, a distance of about three farsakhs (9 miles). His hardships on that journey were beyond description – barefooted, bareheaded., his neck loaded with chains. The guards would urge on their horses and they brought him to a dungeon in Tīhrán.

For four months the trial continued. At the end it became apparent that Jamáli Mobarak had no concern in this matter. He was released from prison very weak and thin. That prison was underground, had no apertures. There were ten or fifteen steps down. There was one door. When you entered from the door you would go down. There were about 150 persons imprisoned, but there also Jamáli Mobarak continued to speak about the cause. The friends were zealous and enthusiastic, in the greatest happiness. There were about thirty or 40 of the friends. Every day they used to come and martyr a few. The executioner would come and take them away. When the music was sounded, it was known that a martyrdom was taking place. When the executioner came to call a prisoner, he would rise up and dance – dance a regular dance – then would kiss his blessed hands and embrace the other friends and would go – to be martyred.

Prisoners were arranged in two rows facing each other and they sang portions of the Qur'án. One row sang, then the other one responded. After four months it was finally proved that Jamáli Mobarak had no complicity in the plot. He was released. For a month he was ill, as in the prison their daily ration was one loaf – no tea, no covering – one loaf per day. Then it was arranged that Jamáli Mobarak should leave Persia. He went to Baghdád.

**House of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Haifa, December 28, ‘19.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said to Mr. Chant, “Do you like Haifa by this time?”

Mrs. C.: It is very interesting.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Look at the spiritual side of Haifa, not the material side and see how spiritual it is. The prophets appeared in this region. For this reason spiritual susceptibilities come to man here. One forgets the troubles and the anxieties of the world of nature. When one gets to Paris he becomes a prisoner of nature. If one had some spiritual feelings they would die there, because all thoughts there are the thoughts of the world of dust. But here one obtains thoughts of spiritual freely. Tyhmore Land was a king (in the Orient) similar to Bonaparte (Napoleon). He conquered Turkestan, Írán, Tooran, Anatolia and here. There was a port in Aleppo and he left soldiers there. They rebelled against him and again he made them captives and again they rebelled. He sent an army against them and it rebelled. The king said that there must be some influence in that land because whoever enters that castle becomes rebellious; then he ordered that the castle be destroyed.

Dr. E.: Who gave the name Bahá’u’lláh to him?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The title of ‘Bahá’u’lláh’ was given by himself. The Blessed Beauty gave the name ‘Bahá’u’lláh’ to himself and he wrote it to His holiness the Supreme (The Báb). The Báb conjugated the name ‘Bahá’u’lláh’ in 360 different ways. His holiness The Báb gave to himself the titles ‘Báb’ ‘First Point’ (Noteyeh Oola) and ‘the mention of God’ (Zekrullah). His holiness Bahá’u’lláh chose only the title ‘Bahá’u’lláh’ and he wrote it to The Báb.

Dr. E. Did ‘Abdu’l-Bahá give the name ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to himself?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes. I myself chose this title for myself.

Dr. E.: Was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá born in Núr?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No. (I was born) in Tíhrán.

Dr. C.: Was Bahá’u’lláh born in Núr?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The father of the Blessed Beauty was born in Núr. So also his mother.

Miss B.: Where did Bahá’u’lláh make the declaration, ‘I am the one whom God would manifest.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In Baghdád he proclaimed himself as the One whom God would manifest, but Bahá’u’lláh was known to the believers (before this time) as the manifestation of Ḥusayn. (Ḥusayn was the grandson of Muḥammad).

Mrs. L. Asked concerning the Bible prophecy of the coming of the Prince of Peace out of Syria.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: That is, the Manifestation appeared in Syria not that he came out of Syria, but from Syria he appeared as the Prince of Peace and the place was this Syria.

**Pilgrim House, Lunch, December 28, 1919.**

The question was asked, ‘Did the climate of ‘Akká change when the Blessed Beauty went there?’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said it did. The water which was salty was soon changed. “During the time of the Blessed Beauty, the cholera came up to the gates of ‘Akká, but it did not enter ‘Akká. Ask, for they know about it, ask from the Christians of ‘Akká. It came to Damascus, Beirut, Mt. Lebanon, Aleppo, Tiberias, Nazareth and here it came too. It came up close to ‘Akká, but it did not enter. In the dungeon where three hundred were imprisoned it was so damp, so dark, no wind, no sun – it did not come. In Lebanon which is dry, it came. But immediately after the ascension of Bahá’u’lláh there was no cholera elsewhere, but it was in ‘Akká. The third day after the ascension it came. Even the Christians said that the talisman was broken.”

Dr. E. asked if the water was brought there during the time of the Blessed Beauty.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “In the beginning this water was brought here ninety years ago, then it was cut off. After thirty years of cut off, again the pipes were repaired. The water of ‘Akká is good.”

**At the Tomb of The Báb, Afternoon, December 28, ‘19.**

When Hájí Hayderr ‘Alí was brought into the room the Master remarked about him and others like him:

“The hair of these men has been made white (through their services) in the cause of God both during the days of the Blessed Beauty and afterwards. They had no ease day nor night – had no intention save service in the cause of God – had no other thoughts. The Bahá’ís of Persia fell greatly under tests, their blood was shed, their lives were given. They used to be caught, killed, imprisoned; they were beaten, they were fined, they were exiled. Notwithstanding this they remained firm and steadfast. They are of the believers who have been tested. They received afflictions and remained firm. When such tests come to America and the believers remain firm, then it will be well. For instance now there are no tests (save) spiritual tests. When there are material tests those are real tests. The Bahá’ís of Persia would go under the sword. The executioner would stand over their head with dagger in hand, saying, ‘Deny, then you will become free.’ He would not deny and was martyred. Another would come and be killed because he would not deny, saying, ‘God, forbid (that I should deny). They would cut out his throat, cut his ear, cut his nose; they would put iron in the fire and burn his flesh. Sometimes when opposition was at its worst, the government used to



search for them, throw them into the rivers. Whoever was suspected of being a Bahá'í was immediately. The Bahá'ís though walking an earth were not an earth, they were in heaven. They had no news of this world – no one knew that they would alive an hour, they knew not the feeling of this world – all the time they were engaged in prayer. Tomorrow I will show you the photograph where three executioners have taken one person, desiring to cut his throat. They took his photograph. The one who took the Epistle of Bahá'u'lláh to the Sháh of Persia, Nassir-ud-Din Sháh.”

All notes on these talks were taken in Persian by Dr. Luṭfu'lláh Ḥakím.

### **Pilgrim's House, Lunch, December 29, 1919.**

The question was asked, “Were some souls born to redeem others?”

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: No, but some souls, by their good morals and deeds did so. For instance, a son by his good deeds may be the cause of the redemption of his father if he does good deeds.

Miss. B.: The Master told my father he would be blest through me.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: God willing thou wilt do such a work that thou wilt be an honor to thy father.

Mrs. R.: Then some souls came to attain.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: they have capabilities. For instance, one has a capacity for politics; he attempts to become a merchant. He will not be successful, for he hasn't capacity for this. Then one who has the capacity for merchandise interferes in political affairs. He will not be successful here, but if he becomes a merchant he will be confirmed. Before I send a student to school in Beirut I ask, ‘What thing dost thou wish the most, what work.’ If he wishes to become a mathematician or doctor or learned one, whatever he desires I tell him to do that.

Dr. C.: How about those souls who do not know their capacity until later in life?

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: It must be considered what their capacity is. He must discover it. The well known Plato would not accept a pupil until he saw him. He would examine the student for a time and study his features. Aristotle came to become one of his students. He knew Aristotle and knew that Aristotle did not have capacity for medicine, so he sent word, ‘I cannot accept you (as my student).’ Plato had seen Aristotle in childhood and this is why he would not accept him. Aristotle saying, ‘Thou hast seen me as a child, when I have no capacity for medicine and I had other capabilities and that is not acceptable to you. That is correct. I have no objection to that, but with education I have changed and now I have a capacity for that, therefore if thou acceptest me thou wilt become happy – thou wilt see that thy education is not spoiled.’ Plato accepted Aristotle, when Aristotle said, “I have been educated.”

Mrs. P.: Did he become a good physician?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes. When thou dost train a young, a crooked branch it will become a straightened. If thou wilt train a garden of weeds it will become a flower garden. Even education had effect on some animals. For instance thou wilt see they can train birds. I have even seen a trained donkey to dance. For instance, through cultivation a five-petaled flowers becomes a hundred-petaled one. A fruitless tree through cultivation become a fruitful tree.

Mrs. P.: then persons who do not know how to train their children, would it not be well for them to have the state educate them according to Plato’s idea?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The business of the government is not merely to take taxes from people. The business of the government is to educate people. The government must be kinder than the father. Briefly, the government has great effect.

Consider how a small potato becomes very large.

Dr. C. Asked concerning x’s theory on vibration, “By date of birth and first name one can tell inclination of child.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: These rules of the stars are from the ancient astronomers. They used to take the sun coming out of the Zodiac and from that they would take out other things, but they had no true foundation.

Dr. C.: X says this theory has nothing to do with astronomy, but is a mathematical science.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: There is a kind of mathematics where they take the name of the person according to ‘Abjad’ (each letter of the alphabet has a numerical value) and the sum total of the values of the letters in the name used. This mathematics is a concise science. They add the numerical value of numbers. It becomes 120. (Note: This figure was indistinct in original copy. Copyist) See how many 9’s are in it. These things were very much studied in the East, but now the Eastern people have put them aside. In ancient times the king had a man who used these calculations especially to him. If the Sháh wanted to make a journey, this man might say, ‘don’t go. If you do it will be dangerous.’ If the Sháh wanted to marry, he might say, ‘Don’t marry this year, wait until a certain hour arrives, or until the sun reaches a certain sign (of the zodiac).’ If the Sháh wanted to take some medicine, he might say, ‘Don’t take it today.’ There were many, many such precautions, but it was found that no benefit resulted from observing them, so they were put aside.

Dr. E.: The Báb used such calculations, did he not?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: They did it only for giving names or titles. If they wanted to give a person a title they would select one with a numerical value equal to that of his own name.

Dr. C.: What I know about these systems is 100 times more than X knows. There are so many systems which I know, which X knows nothing about. But

these things take up man's time. They are unworthy. The mind of man is meant for nobler things. In these things there may be consolation for some people, but not for Bahá'ís. e.g., The expert counts and takes a number and tells his client, 'You have had difficulties in the beginning of your life. Toward the end of your life conditions will be more favourable.' This pleases the client. Or he says, 'In the future you will become wealthy. Your heart's desire will be fulfilled.' These things please the client. He says, 'You have been in great danger, but God will bring you safely from it.' This pleases him. I say this in order that you may not engage in such things, for these things have been taken from the East.

Mrs. P.: X said that 'Abdu'l-Bahá advised X to write a book about this subject.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: X said to me, 'I want to write a book.' I said, 'Write.' I do not prevent anybody. I saw that she was very keen on the object. It is not that I told her to do it or said that these things were good. If a person is keen on a subject and I object to it, he will be annoyed. One must so act as not to grieve people. X said, 'I want to do so and so,' so I said, 'Do it. May God assist you!' (To those at table): You know that reason is better than these things.

Dr. C.: X says, "Anyone who takes my course in Vibration becomes a firm Bahá'í"

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Now tell her, 'Turn your attention to spiritual things and make your discoveries from them, not from numbers.' These systems were prevalent in the East and caused danger in the East. e.g., A king wanted to go to war. They told him that he would be victorious for the number of of your name is greater than that of the other king's name. The unfortunate king took their advice and went to war and lost his country.

Mrs. P.: To Mrs. Waite you sent a tablet advising her to study the numbers '5' and '9'.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Those are the numbers of the name of the Blessed Ones. (Báb = 5. Bahá = 9) That is not playing with numbers. e.g., When we ('Abdu'l-Bahá) write a letter, we put the number '9' at the top. This stands for Bahá'u'lláh.

This number is that of the name of the Blessed One.

This time Turkey did not gain anything by entering the war. If she had not entered, it would have been far better for her. But the Páshás believed in these systems. Some said, 'We have made a calculation and found that you will be victorious. Germany will overpower England.' The unfortunate Turkey entered the war and was defeated. The human reason is a gift of God and is better than any other numerical system.

### **Home of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Supper, December 29, 1919.**

In connection with a remark made by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Shaykh Farajullah, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said that Christ said, 'I am the bread of heaven.' He (the sheikh) must eat bread alone until he follow in the footsteps of his holiness Christ.

He eats beans and he takes soup. We speak in Persian and in Arabic and you don't understand. We speak with you now in English. Praise be to God, we have interpreters. I wish that one day we go to visit the Holy Shrine (of Bah'u'llah). We have an auto now but we will let Mr. Jeffery go on a donkey, on two donkeys. Here donkeys are scarce – good donkeys are found in Egypt.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: I have mentioned and spoken about this subject of mathematics in the meetings in America. Now also tonight I want to say a little about it.

This reality of man encompasses all things and is the discoverer of things. All these things that thou seest were once not existence, but this power which is in man has been hidden. Everything has been hidden. Man has discovered it. That which was hidden has become manifest, such as the telegraph, photograph, electricity. In former centuries it was hidden, no one had any knowledge of it. The power of man has brought it to light. This is personal discovery, or the discovery of a person. The object is this, that before it was hidden, it was an absolute mystery. This power of man has discovered it and also other things have been discovered. There was a time when there was no petrol. The reality of man has discovered it. There was a time when there was no glass, man has brought it from the hidden things – also all the existing arts and present sciences. These present sciences were not here one hundred years ago. The power of man has brought them from the hidden; then it became apparent that in man was a power that was able to discover them and he is the creator of things. Things are hidden, he discovers them. This is clear and apparent. No one can deny it.

Those persons who prognosticate or use numbers – all of them try to concentrate their thoughts and from the excess of thought and concentration they deduce certain meanings and perhaps it may come to pass. But this is not from these numbers and prognosticates, neither from stars but he thinks it is from them while it is the reality of man which discovers them. I said this in America. Is it possible for a person to say that a thing will happen? No. It is the reality of man which has discovered it. But what does he think? He thinks the result is from the prognostication. This is the truth of the matter.

Miss B. asked about a passage in *The Íqán*, p. 175: ‘All prophets have explained but two letters and he says Gha'im shall bring forth the remaining twenty-five.’

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: Those are the letters of Abjad. There is a tradition which says that when the Gha'im appears all the civilization and sciences which have been existing before will be as one letter, but after the Promised One comes, it becomes twenty-seven. That is, so many discoveries will be made that all those (new) sciences, arts and discoveries are twenty-seven. In Arabic there are twenty-eight letters, in Persian, thirty-two; therefore there are more in the Persian than in the Arabic. Sheikl Almad and Seyyid Kashim Rasht were the forerunners (of The Báb). They were well known persons, that is, they were extraordinary good.

Mrs. L.: In the *Words of Paradise*, p. 54, ‘There is a wonderful instrument in the earth which has the power to change the atmosphere of the earth.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It does not say it is in the earth, but there is a power which is very strong which will become apparent in future, such as the power of dynamite. That is what he said and it has come to pass. For instance, he said, ‘There will be discovered a thing which is poisonous. Whenever it is discovered, if it reaches the nostrils of persons it will kill them. This become apparent in the late war. The Blessed Perfection said this fifty years ago, but now it has come to pass.’

Miss B.: Daniel prophesied that two-thirds of the people would be destroyed.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: This is not the time for the fulfilment of this. The object is that severe things will happen. Two-thirds of the people will perish. In this war many places were destroyed. This is what I said. It will become more severe than this. In this war, one-tenth of the earth was destroyed. A fourth of the people of the world were destroyed. Houses were destroyed. It will be worse than this in the future, because of war and other things – war, cholera, plague, etc.

Miss B.: Will the geography of the earth be changed?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The surface of the earth will be affected. For instance, what has become of the jungles, the places where war was? Ten states of France were destroyed. The banks of the River Rhine were destroyed. Russia was much ruined.

Mrs. P. asked the meaning of ‘There were two women in the field, one was taken and the other left.’

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: One will accept and the other reject the Revelation.

### **Lunch, December 30, 1919.**

A question was asked concerning the possibility of attaining the station of Christ.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: They have asked if it is possible for a person to reach the station of Christ – whoever suffers or prays, can he reach this station?

No! It cannot be, because Christ was the word of God, the Holy Spirit. This is ancient, but these people are accidental, and the accidental is not ancient. It cannot be.

Any person progresses in his own degree. For instance, this mineral progresses, but, no, no matter how much it progresses, it cannot develop eyes and ears. The highest station it can reach is that of the diamond. Its progress is confined to the mineral kingdom. The same is true of the vegetable kingdom. However much a flower progresses, it cannot have eyes and ears and understanding. The accidental powers cannot achieve that. This is especially for animals. Why? Because the station of the animal is higher than that, and however much an animal may progress, it progresses in its own kingdom. Suppose you gather all the animals, such as the horse, which is in the utmost of beauty, the peacock, which is in the utmost of grace, they cannot attain mind. They cannot reach the

station of man. In the same way, souls have degrees. They cannot be compared with the mineral and vegetable. This mineral, however much it progresses, cannot become vegetable.

Now there is a child who cannot remember things. It has no mind, nor power of understanding. However much it may progress, it will not become like an intelligent person.

Those who ask questions are people of knowledge, so that they may understand. But there are a good many people who come and ask questions of me. I answer them, but they don't understand the realities.

### **Supper, December 30, 1919.**

Mrs. P. asked 'Abdu'l-Bahá to tell a story which he had told on a certain occasion at Dublin.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: There was a family in Jazirat-ul-Arab. The Shaykh had a nephew who desired to marry the daughter of the Shaykh. Amongst the Arabs they say that the betrothal of cousins is made in heaven and it is good for them to marry. He said, 'According to the Arab custom, the Shaykh cannot refuse,' nevertheless the Shaykh refused, saying that if anyone would bring the mare of Shaykh Sharyan, he would give his daughter in marriage to that person. This mare was a famous one.

The boy went to the tribe of Shaykh Sharyan. Between the two tribes there was always war and dispute. If they had known that he belonged to the other tribe they would have killed him, so he changed his name and went. For two years he searched for this mare in the hopes of finding it and thus getting the girl. One day when he was crossing the desert, he saw the Shaykh riding on that mare and coming towards him. There was a well there, which was not deep. He threw himself into it. Then he cried aloud, 'Save me, save me!' The Shaykh heard his cries and came and saw him. He asked, 'Who are you? Whence came you?' The boy said, 'I am a stranger. I cannot get out.' The Shaykh undid his headgear and let down the end. He said, 'Take hold of this,' and dragged him out.

While the Shaykh was arranging his headgear, the boy jumped on the mare and started off. The Shaykh cried aloud saying, 'O youth, I cannot reach thee, but I want to know something you did this just for a trick, or because you saw the mare was good?' The youth answered, 'It was a trick.' The Shaykh asked, 'Why did you play this trick?' The youth replied, 'I want this mare in order that I may get the daughter of my uncle in marriage. Her father said that the one brought this mare should have the girl. For two years I have been searching for this mare and now God has given her to me!' The Shaykh replied: 'As this is the reason I make you a present of the mare and forgive you, so you will attain your desire.' The young man came back to him, saying, 'You are very generous. In order that I might attain my desire you freely gave me this mare. I return

the mare and will give up the girl as well as the mare.' The Shaykh replied, 'It is impossible that I should accept the mare,' but the youth persisted. Then the Shaykh said, 'Come and be my guest and the mare shall be yours.' The youth answered, 'I will return the mare.' Anyhow he accompanied the Shaykh. The Shaykh called the notables of his tribe and said to them: 'It is God's wish that we should associate with the other tribe. It is better that we should take this mare and the youth and go to the other tribe and give this mare to the head of that tribe, and have this wedding.'

The Shaykh rode with several of his tribe to visit the other tribe. News came to that tribe of the arrival of Shaykh Sharyan. They were surprised and said: 'What has happened that the Shaykh has come?' The visitors arrived and sat down. They said, 'This youth has wished for this mare and has searched for it two years. Now we have come to get the girl for him and to give the mare which was demanded.' The man replied, 'How is this? Tell me how it all happened.' The visitor said, 'This youth took the mare and went. I asked him why he did so and he replied, 'Because of the daughter of my uncle.' Because of this I presented the mare to him and said, 'Because you have been so generous in giving me this mare. He swore and I also swore.' I said, 'We will take the mare and come here and arrange things.' Shaykh Sharyan was a powerful man and so was the youth. The Shaykh of the other tribe said, 'I am no less generous than Shaykh Sharyan or the boy. I will give the girl and do not want the mare.' Thereupon they quarrelled. One said, 'I will not accept,' the other said, 'I will not accept' and the third said, 'I will not accept.' At last they came to an arrangement saying, 'We will have this wedding, and when a child is born, the mare will belong to it.'

Mrs. P. Told how they laughed over this story in Dublin.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Sometimes joking is necessary. Otherwise we would get depressed. The Blessed Beauty said, 'In every twenty-four hours, two hours must be spent in a way that will cause happiness.'

### **Lunch, Pilgrim House, Haifa, Dec. 31, '19.**

(Two Shaykh (Druce), one of them the head of the Druce community were present and sat on the Master's right.)

'Abdu'l-Bahá: See what his holiness Bahá'u'lláh has done, that he has gathered us all and has made us all one! They (the Druses) trust to no other, but they know that we are trustworthy and straight. Their hearts are assured. His holiness Bahá'u'lláh has taken the bonds from our necks and has made us free. This Shaykh is a very esteemed person. He is chief of the Druce community. He is very wealthy.

J. E.: Did the Druses suffer greatly during the war?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: No. – If the weather were good I would take you to visit the Druses' village. They have good mules and horses.

Mrs. P.: It was hearing of the people of different religions sitting around your table that attracted me to the Bahá'í movement. Now I have seen it for myself.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: God willing, you will see many things. There are still many things to be seen. When you go to Persia you will see many things. We could not spread the cause of Bahá'u'lláh in these regions (the neighbourhood of Haifa and ‘Akká) because the Turkish government prevented us. The Shaykh is inviting you all to his place.

Dr. E.: We should all be delighted to go.

### **Supper, December 31, 1919.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In the world of existence is it possible that the truth should not become known? No. e g., If we were not faithful towards the government they certainly would find out. In the times of the Turkish government they thought at first that we were not, but in the end it will become apparent that we were faithful. It does not matter how much they investigate at court – see how much they tried us and suspected that we were not faithful to the government, but at last it was proved. An intelligent man will always adhere to divine truth. If he does not do so it is certainly that it will become proved. The Turkish government wanted to prove us guilty and ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd was always trying to find something against us, but in the end it was proved that we were faithful. This shows that nothing is better than honesty. (Before supper ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had remarked that the British government paused all letters addressed to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá without opening them – thus showing their entire confidence in his faithfulness. He had just received a batch of letters from Germany unopened.) The Turkish government at first used to open all letters, but finding that there was nothing political and nothing against the government in them, they used later to pass many of them unopened. During the war ‘Abdu’l-Bahá received a letter from the Persian Consul in New York – an American – containing violent denunciation of the Turks and one from Mr. Dreyfus speaking very strongly against Germany, but, by the Providence of God, both were pass unopened.

Mrs. P. quoted two texts: “It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that man through whom the offence cometh.” “Ye are never tempted above what ye are able to bear.” (Baul) and asked for an explanation regarding individual responsibility.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: This is an intricate subject and must be investigated with great care. It is a complicated problem, and has baffled the comprehension of all. Its explanation is difficult. If you knew Persian or Arabic it would be easier. I will tell you about it briefly.

The general opinion is that whatever proceeds from man springs from his own will and has nothing to do with God. Whatever man does is created by man himself and for this reason.

This is the opinion of the philosophers. The philosophers of religion on the other



hand, say thus: "It is not so man is powerless. Of himself, he can do nothing. All is from God. This is the truth – not that." Now we must explain this.

It is unquestionable that there is no one but God. He is the Creator of deeds. Our help comes only from God. If God does not help, what can we do? Notwithstanding this, man's efforts count. Take, for example, the Governor here. Who has given him his power? The English government has given him the power, to do as he wishes. Now it is possible that he may do either justice or injustice. Justice is good, injustice is bad. If the English government has given him his power, he can do no justice except through this power. The minute the English government says, 'You are dismissed,' his power ceases. Can he do any oppression after his dismissal? No! Whatever he does is through the power of the government. But if he does injustice, that is not the fault of the government.

I say this again. You must consider it carefully. This is one of the most difficult questions.

Take another example. You come from America on board a steamer. What moved a steamer? Fire! If there were no fire, no steam, could the steamer come here? No! Could it go from here to America? No! Then the power of steam brought the steamer here, and it will carry it from here to America. The power of the steam, and not the steamer itself, is the propelling force. This power is from God. According to the will of the commander it will propel the ship wherever he wishes. If he wishes to go to the East, the steam carried the ship to the East. If to the West, the ship is carried to the West. The power of God is similar to this steam. If that help is cut off, the steamer cannot go either to the East or to the West. It will remain without motion, absolutely. The going of the steamer to the East or to the West is in the hand of man. The will of man through the real power directs him to any point he desires. Therefore it is said, "The real power is from God."

Take another example: (Here 'Abdu'l-Bahá moved his fingers.) These members of man moved through the power of the spirit. If there was no spirit, no member could move. When all those members are perfect, the movements are in order. The spirit causes this orderly motion. But if an illness affects the hand the movement is impaired. For instance he wishes to move the fingers to one side, but they go to the other, owing to paralysis. Whether the movement be normal or abnormal, both are from the spirit. If there be not the power of the spirit, the hand cannot move. If there be no spirit, can this hand move? No! This hand moves through the power of spirit. But the regularity of the movement is not through the spirit – is not from God. The work which a man does is through the power man has given him. If the power were not given him by God, he could do neither both good nor bad. But if he does bad work, God is not the cause of that. It is like the steam. Whether it moves regularly or irregularly, is due to the directing force. Notwithstanding this, the irregularity of the movement is from man and not from the spirit.

I will illustrate in another way: I can caress Fugeta or I can slap him. Both will

be by the power of the spirit. If I strike him, it will be because of my intention, not because of the spirit. It will be because of my wish to do so. The striking is by power of the spirit through my desire. Have you understood it now?

I will give you a short example: This movement of my hand is known of God. The movement of a tree God knows. Both are from God, but there is a difference. The tree has no will, but I have. The creator of both movements is God, but there is a difference between the movement of my hand and that of the tree. A leaf moves, but without will, but my hand moves by will. Both of these movements are from God.

### **Supper, January 1, 1920.**

General Allenby and his wife spent a day here, from morning to evening. He went to see the prison and the barracks and visited the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

Mrs. P. said she heard Gen. Allenby was going to be governor here.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Perhaps. Now he is governor in Egypt. He is a very humble person.

Miss B.: What is the form or condition of the human spirit before it becomes connected with the identity at the time of birth on this place?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The reality of spirit, because it is not corporeal, cannot be in bodily form. We cannot say it is like the fire, or like the water, or like flame, or like odor. In the world of man it has no likeness. The utmost is to satisfy the hearer. It is beyond explanation, for it is a reality of the intellect, and not a thing which can be perceived. Perceptible realities can be explained. But the intellectual realities cannot be explained by or through words. You may try to explain by words. For instance, the mind itself is the intellectual reality. It cannot be seen or heard or smelled or tasted or touched. This is the intellectual reality and is not perceptible by the senses. If you wish to explain it by the senses, it is impossible. You say it is the discoverer of the reality of things. This is the encompasser. This is the discoverer. This is the maker of rules. This is the cause of order in the world. The world of existence moves because of this. Those are its qualities. You cannot explain the reality of it in terms of the world of perception, for it cannot be perceived.

Miss. B.: What is the difference between soul and spirit?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: They mean the same. It is one reality. The names are different. We must consider it according to its use. Because it is the discoverer of reality, they call it intellect, for it is the cause of the true life of man. When it produces an effect on one, we speak of it as the hearts whilst these three things are one. For instance (pointing to a cup), this is called in ‘fenjan,’ in Persian: ‘cup’ in English; In Arabic. And these names are for this article.

Miss B.: Is ‘reality’ another name for the same thing?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is another name, another quality, for this.

**Pilgrim House, Haifa, January 2, 1920.**

Question: Was it right for Bahá’ís to buy ‘Liberty Bonds’ to carry on the war?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: That is passed now. An arrow that has been shot does not return to the bow. There is nothing to be gained by talking about it now.

Q. But if ‘Abdu’l-Bahá were to give his opinion about it this new, it would be a guide for similar occasions in the future.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: This is not a time to buy ‘paper.’

Q. What should be done about the ‘Liberty Bonds’ that were sent as contributions to the Mashrak-ol-Akhar fund?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: That rests with the Convention to decide.

Mrs. P.: Who is to decide on the piano for the Mashrak-ol-Akhar?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: That rests ‘with the delegates to the Convention – not all those present at the Convention, the delegates only – not strangers. The Convention is like a parliament. The delegates represent the opinion of the whole body of believers. What they decide unanimously or by a majority, must be accepted. The majority must rule.

L. B.: I am afraid the Convention will have a hard time unless ‘Abdu’l-Bahá prays for us.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Your duty is to go with the majority and accept to decisions.

Mrs. P.: Then it is the delegates to the Convention and not the Unity Board that have to decide on the plans?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes. The delegates must decide. The Board must carry out the decisions of the Convention. There must be order. It cannot be that everybody has the right of interference; in that case nothing would be accomplished.

Dr. C.: They say that all organization is forbidden by the teachings.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: That is all talk. The text of the Blessed Book cannot be changed. No one can interfere with it. Things not definitely stated in the Book are referred to the House of Justice. Whatever the House of Justice decided, that is obligatory. Now it is not possible for all the world to come together. The Convention is similar to the House of Justice to a certain extent. Its decision and laws must be carried out.

Dr. C.: In the beginning of the ‘Big Ben’ pamphlet, the words occur: ‘The Bahá’í Revelation is not an organization. The Bahá’í cause can never be organized.’ Is this a correct translation?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No. That gives the wrong idea. In the cause of Bahá’u’lláh there is the Beit-ul-Ad’l (House of Justice). Political affairs are not explicitly settled in the tablets. They are referred to the House of Justice. Whatever the House of Justice decides to obligatory. In the writings of Bahá’u’lláh instructions are given with regard to worship, but the assembly of the House of Justice sees that at one time a certain arrangement to necessary and at another time a different arrangement. It is not circumscribed in its action. One hundred years ago – one ruling was necessary, today, another, tomorrow, perhaps, another. Therefore the cause of God Is not rigidly circumscribed. It is in accordance with the exigenciss of time and place. The political affairs are not definitely fixed by Bahá’u’lláh. This is the object of what is sad in the Book of Aqdas. Bahá’u’lláh says: ‘Political affairs are referred to the House of Justice.’ Whatever they think wise accordingly to the requirements of time and place ought to be carried out. But the command of worship is to be found in the Book. Political things will not remain unchanged. The politics of one hundred years ago are quite impracticable today. For example there was slavery one hundred years ago. Could that be carried out now?

The members of the House of justice will be inspired. Whenever it is established it will be under the protection of the Blessed Beauty. Whatever the House of Justice decides is the will of the Blessed One. In this was there is order – otherwise there will be confusion. The Bahá’í laws are not rigid and unalterable. Whatever the House of Justice decides must be carried out.

Dictated: “Political laws in the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh are not rigidly fixed. Whatever decision is arrived at by the members of the House of Justice (which is like a parliament) either unanimously or by a majority – according to the requirements of time and place – that is the law of God. In other words the cause of Bahá’u’lláh is not circumscribed, for this reason, that circumstances of time and place change. For instance, the laws of America cannot be carried out here, and the laws of this place would be unsuitable for America. The circumstances are different.”

“In the time of Moses, the children of Israel were in the wilderness. There was no ease and comfort. Therefore ten offenses were made punishable by death. In the time of Christ there were towns and cities and civilization. The exigencies of the time did not require those ten laws for capital punishment, so he abolished them. Why? Because the time and circumstances were different. In the former time these laws were necessary, nut in Christ’s time, they were no longer necessary and in this time other arrangements are required.”

Dr. E.: “It is misleading, is it not, to say that the Bahá’í cause cannot be organized?”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “How is it possible that there should be no organization? Even in a household, if there is not organization there will be hopeless confusion. Then what about the world? What is meant is that the organization is not rigid. In ancient times it was rigid. In the Torah all the political affairs were rigidly fixed,

but in this cause they are not. In this cause there are political freedom, i.e., in each time the House of Justice is free to decide in accordance with what it deems expedient.

This is a brief explanation of the matter.”

**Supper, January 2, 1920.**

**Evening, after Mírzá Maḥmúd’s marriage.**

Talking of the marriage ceremony, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said:

“Here we do not have much talking but there (in America) they speak so much that nobody can follow what they say. In was invited to a wedding in America. People were talking in couples. In the East, one talks and the rest listen. When he has finished another will speak, but they do not talk so much. Every place has its special customs. Every nation likes its own ways. At Christian weddings they smoke cigars and the room becomes filled with smoke.”

Dr. E. remarked that it was nice to have the bride and groom take part in the ceremony themselves, as in the West, instead of by deputy.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is so now. Everything depends on the time. Now it is impossible in the East for the bride to appear.

Mrs. P: In America all the interest centers in the bride. The groom is insignificant.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The marriage which is associated with spirituality and illumination is good. In the Arab districts only the bride and bridegroom are present. They place two stones. The bridegroom stand on one and the bride on the other, opposite each other. The bridegroom says, ‘I am on one stone and all the world is witness that thou art my wife and I thy husband.’ The words are few but comprehensive. In the religion of God the consent of both parties is necessary. No one can compel a couple to marry – at most we give permission, we do not interfere more than this. Both parties must consent then the consent of the parents on both sides is necessary. This is obligatory. In the East it was customary that the girl was not consulted in the matter at all. She knew nothing whatever about it. Her father would give her to some man and she could not protest. To whomsoever he thought best he would give her. But the Blessed Beauty in the Kitáb-el-Aqdas, explicitly says that no one must interfere between the two, without the consent of both sides and the consent of the parents the marriage cannot take place. But you in America and Europe attach no importance to the parents consent, the young people do as they wish. If the parents are not agreeable, it will lead to inharmony.

In the East, among the Muḥammadans and Christians, there is no love between the bride and her mother-in-law, as a rule; there is continual quarrelling and contention, because the consent of the parents has not been obtained for the marriage. Of course the mother does not wish for her son to marry someone she

disapproves of and the son resents here interference. But amongst the Bahá'í it is very rare to find any unkindness amongst relations by marriage. As regards divorce, Bahá'u'lláh says that if a husband and wife cannot agree, there should be a preliminary separation of one year. If at the end of the year there is no reconciliation, then divorce is permissible. Because both sides would be in torment, separation is better. In the Bahá'í marriage the husband and wife must be in the utmost happiness together.

Mrs. P.: During the year friends on both sides must try to bring about reconciliation, should they not?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes. The object of marriage is to create a family. Therefore marriage must be very carefully considered. The Blessed Beauty said that we must marry so that children may arise to be the cause of the illumination of the world. The blessings of God are apparent.

#### **Pilgrim House, Haifa, Lunch January 3, 1920.**

Mrs. P.: It was the delegates and not the Unity Board who were to decide, was it not? This was spoken of yesterday but the notes were not taken. Will the Master please repeat so it may be taken down today?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The object is that all affairs ought to be referred to the Convention, that is, the Assembly which is composed of the representatives from the different assemblies sent to the Convention, not all the people gathered for the meetings. If all people present in the meetings take part in the discussions it would not do.

Mrs. P.: It was said by some that the Unity Board should be the deciding body.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No! Not in general affairs. The nation chooses representatives. These representatives make an Assembly of the nation. Now affairs are in the hands of the Assembly of the nation. Are the affairs in the hands of the Assembly of the nations or in the hands of the people? No doubt all affairs are in the hands of the Assembly of the nation, not in the hands of everybody. This Assembly of the Convention is like the Assembly of the nation or Parliament. Those members are elected by the nation. All affairs are referred to Parliament, not to the people. Parliament discusses affairs and reaches a decision. The Convention is like that and this meeting sees to the affairs and whatever the meeting decides the Executive Board must carry out. Did you understand?

Mrs. P.: Yes!

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The essential thing now is teaching. This gathering of the Convention is for the object, also to arrange for the building of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár or for choosing people to go out as teachers. These are the objects. In Persia there are no Conventions. There is a spiritual assembly in each city and all are engaged in teaching. People should be engaged in teaching the cause. Teaching should make one full of joy and happiness. It will attract one, it will

bring spiritual susceptibilities, it gives extreme happiness and joyfulness. One's own self becomes enriched thereby. Teaching the cause is the most important work in which any one can engage, for in any other work there will not be such results as in this. Give great importance to work of importance and this is not to be brought under special rules. It can't be. They should teach in any way possible. This will bring happiness; it also brings one nearer the kingdom of Abhá. It will be the cause of joy and happiness and refreshes one.

Dr. C. said he hoped we would return so filled with power and that our words might not arouse antagonism.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Leave unsaid anything that would create disagreement. It is not necessary to touch upon such subjects. Bahá’u’lláh says that whoever is the cause of differences should be avoided. In any problem if two people disagree both are in the wrong. He did not say, one is right, the other wrong. This is to prevent the arising of dissension.

Mrs. P.: Would it be wrong is quite the thing is forgotten. When discussion is forbidden the matter will be dropped. I will illustrate by a story: ‘I was in New York. An old lady of eighty years who was a little out of her mind came to me one day and said, “The spiritual assembly has made a certain decision. I want to discuss the matter before you and them. You please call them. I will prove their faults.” I said, “If you have any difference of opinions do not come to me and tell me. It will create trouble.” She said, “It is necessary and I know all about them.” “Well then go and tell them,” I said. She said “They will not listen to me.”“ She wanted to do this to have it known that she had opposed them. This is illness and malady.

Mrs. P.: I know the majority vote should decide questions, such as where to hold the Convention, and the question of all arrangements shirt of a matter of conscience. But when it comes to a matter of principle should one go against ones conscience?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: You cannot go according to an individual's conscience. Each one thinks he is right (concerning a subject) this must be considered. If each should move according to his conscience, disturbances would arise. Can you find two persons in the world having the same conscience in every detail? No! Now this must be considered. If there be a crowd, the difficulty increases.

Mrs. P.: I have to bring this to a more personal issue. I am willing to be told if I have made a mistake. A meeting was called in Chicago in December to hear the findings of a certain committee. I know of those findings and objected to the methods of procedure of the committee. Between December and April, when the committee met in Chicago, the findings of this committee were spread and caused each assembly to be divided into two camps. Disapproving of this, did I do right to remain away from the Convention or should I have gone and opposed this procedure?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Now this is a problem that is passed. If we speak of matters

that have passed it will not bring joy and happiness. Let us speak of subjects that will bring happiness and joy. If we speak on these subjects we will not become happy, nay, rather, it will depress us. We have gathered here for joy and happiness.

Mrs. P.: I think we are able to learn lessons from past experiences.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: This Convention which is held every year whatever decisions are reached must be accepted, for this is a general gathering. To a certain degree it is like the House of Justice, but it is not the House of Justice. Bahá’u’lláh says, ‘Whatever the House of Justice does that is my command. They cannot go against it.’ Suppose tomorrow there is a House of Justice, whatever command they would give could not be interfered with by anyone. The people must obey. For instance, Christ said that they must go about and teach, giving the glad tidings. Perhaps one might say, ‘I do not think wise and when we find a seeker, we will speak to him.’ Is that the way to obey that command? Whatever the House of Justice commands must be obeyed.

Mrs. P.: To follow Christ, Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, is very different. People in the time of the establishment of the House of Justice will be more spiritual.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: I said the Convention is similar to the House of Justice – not that it is the House of Justice. If it is not so one thousand sects of religion would arise. Each one would rise up to cause disturbance and would say, ‘My conscience says it is not good.’ Another would say, ‘My conscience says, “This is good”’ and they cannot agree on anything. Perhaps this little one (Pointing to Miss B.) would arise and start a sect, Fugeta another, Mrs. L., another, Dr. C., another, J., another, (as he pointed to each other in turn.) You would ask why and they would say, ‘Our conscience.’

Mrs. P.: Afterwards will the House of Justice, (Well ‘Abdu’l-Bahá told us to put this aside.)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Put this question aside. If I speak on this subject great disturbances will result. Should I speak on this subject do you know what will happen in America? Forget the past.

Mrs. P.: I am perfectly willing to do this.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: I desire that all your talks create spirituality, create happiness, create joy.

Dr. E.: I take it that the only thing that would prevent a majority vote would be in a matter contrary to the written teachings of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is the explicit text of Bahá’u’lláh that no one should disagree. He (The Blessed Beauty) said, ‘Whatever the House of Justice decided, that is my command.’ The purpose of this is that no one can say that the House of Justice has made a mistake. If this is said, it is the same as saying that the Blessed Beauty made a mistake. If in meeting one does not accept a decision he must be quiet. If he does not like it he must be quiet but not do anything



which will cause differences. He must not say this is wrong, he must be quiet and then there will not be any controversy. There are a number of people in America who are waiting to find some matter for controversy. For instance, you say it is day. Two or three will arise and say, 'No, it is night.' Especially those women of eighty years and more, I want to close all these doors (of controversy) so that there should remain no more of these things. They should speak of love, faith, mercy, teaching the cause of God, but questions other than these have engaged the people of America. Wherever they go this is to be put aside. In Persia there are none of these things, none whatever. There is no Convention. There is a spiritual assembly. If the spiritual assembly in a city decided a thing, if one does not like it he does not object, he remains silent. They are engaged in teaching morals; they have meetings for ethics, meetings in which they teach spiritual civilization. Nothing causes them to say this is bad. If he does not like a certain proposal he does not enter it. If he likes it he will join in. Now I want to become like mannered.

**Pilgrim House, Lunch, January 4, 1920.**

Question: Did Christ walk on this mountain (Carmel)?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes! He came several time because the people of Galilee were very much against him; also the people of Tiberias, therefore he used to come to this mountain.

Q: Were the people more friendly to him here?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: They were not so bad here. That is why Christ said, ‘A prophet is not without honor save in his own country.’ His own country was Galilee.

Q: Was Haifa a town in the time of Christ?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes! It is ancient. It is one of the Phoenician towns. ‘Akká is also ancient. It was also Phoenician. Haifa or Gaifa gets its name because it is at the foot of the mountain. The name is Phoenician, not Hebrew. The Phoenicians were here 2500 years before Christ.

Q. Did Christ speak Arabic?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It was not pure Hebrew, because the Romans have occupied Palestine. The Romans, Chaldeans and Assyrians were mixed and the language was a mixture. In ancient times the Arameans were at Damascus and its neighbourhood. There were two tribes in these regions at that time. Both disappeared. There were also Sodom, Adum and Amur. Sodom was the town where Lot lived...

The conversation turned to the subject of food.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá said that the body of man was in need of seventeen elements. In this kind of pea, eleven of these elements are present and six are lacking; in beans, nine of these elements are present and eight are lacking. In bread (whole wheat bread) all the seventeen elements are present. Therefore it is possible

for man to live all his life and keep healthy in bread. He cannot live in peas alone. If he does so for a year he will become ill. Eggs also have all the seventeen elements and so have milk, but eggs and meat are not suitable for all. The fatty elements in them does not agree with some. Excess of eggs is not good, it will prove injurious.

Q. Would eating eggs induce cancer?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Perhaps it might.

Q. What about eggs and milk?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: it is heavy. Whatever man needs is in bread. Meat is for carnivorous animals such as the lion and leopard. See! Man has no claws for tearing meat. This proves that meat is not his natural food. Animals and birds that have sharp claws are meat-eating, but man has not claws. The lion has curved teeth for seizing and tearing meat. He cannot eat bread or grains. He must eat meat.

Fugeta asked whether it was right to fish?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It is permissible, but I should not do it myself. I never hunt or fish, but your friends the Japanese fish very much. Their food is mostly rice and fish.

Q. Will ferocious beasts like the lion disappear?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In many places they have disappeared already. In the British Isles there are no lions or wolves, or bears. Many of the ferocious animals of old have completely disappeared ages ago. All these things are according to the divine will. We can see the remains of these animals in museums.

### **In the Master’s Salon, before Supper, January 4, 1920.**

(Jeffery, Mr. Chant, and Mírzá Shírázî had gone to Jerusalem)

Q.: Is the suppose sepulchre of Christ really the place of his burial?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: For three-hundred years after Christ’s death no one searched for his grave. Rubbish was depodited there. The mother of the Emperor Constantine came to Jerusalem and made careful enquiries to ascertain the place and they have to the conclusion that the grave was there. This is the truth that for three-hundred years they used to put rubbish in it.

Q.: I hear there are two reputed burial places, which is the correct one?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Opinions differ, but the general opinion is that it is there (i.e., at the Church of the Sepulchre). Christ at the time of his death was oppressed; also after his death and during his lifetime, he was oppressed. This oppression has turned the world upside down. It destroyed all the nations, but he himself was elevated. All the flags of the nations came down, but the one of Christ was exalted. All this because of oppression.

**Supper, January 4, 1920.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá told us of his talk with two newspaper reporters concerning the Revelation. These reports were taken down to be forwarded to Belgium papers by these reporters.

**Lunch, January 5, 1920.**

Dr. C. heard in America that a crypt was to be built in the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár in Chicago.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Whatever anyone thinks he says, but do not trust to what is said unless I have written about it. Whatever I have written with my own hand, that is correct.

Dr. C. heard that the remains of the Blessed Beauty would be transferred from ‘Akká.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: I have not said so. Do not accept anybody’s word unless it is from my pen.

Dr. C.: What was the age of Karratu’l-Ayn before her acceptance of the Báb’s declaration, also when martyred?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: She had passed her thirtieth year and after five years she was martyred. That is, when she was martyred she was about forty years old. The work, not the age of a person is the important thing. She was very humble. She would treat any other woman as if she were that person’s maidservant.

Mr. P. said that she heard that the tablet that was read at the wedding of Mírzá Maḥmúd had been revealed by the Blessed Beauty for a member of the household.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: The father of this girl (bride of Mírzá Maḥmúd) was martyred. When this girl was quite young, her father was killed and all the property was confiscated, causing her to grow up amidst great trials. Therefore the utmost of favour was shown to her. The girl, her mother and grandmother went through great hardships. Her grandmother was very good, very noble, had great knowledge, was revered, busy continually with the mention of God, not resting for a moment. After they had martyred their son-in-law, the Governor sent for her. As she entered the door he kicked her under his feet, beat her on the head with his feet till she became unconscious and like one dead. They left her. Her brother came and placing her on the shoulders of a man she was carried home. Because of this so much favour has been shown to this girl. Before the grandmother became a Bahá’í she was greatly esteemed and distinguished among women because of her goodness and her personality. The brother of the grandmother was also greatly esteemed, though he was not a Bahá’í. Had it not been for this brother she would have been killed. He was one of the great Mullá of Persia. He came and took her from Iṣfahán to Mashhad in the province of Khurasán. He said to her (his sister), ‘My sister, beware not to

Speak another word on this subject. You went through trouble in Iṣfahán and we have left there. Do not, do not speak here because here is the place we are visiting.’ These people who make a pilgrimage come from great distances and it is the custom that both in the morning and afternoon the tomb is visited. For instance, they go from morning to noon. This brother went in the morning to visit the tomb. She knew he would not return soon, so she went from house to house every morning and afternoon. Once her brother found out that she had thought many women. He took her and went away saying, ‘They will kill you and me.’ She was very spiritual. If one were to sit and talk with her from morning to night they would not become tired. She was very unassuming and when she spoke tears would come to the eyes of her hearers.

#### **Supper, January 5, 1920.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá had succeeded in securing butter and told Mrs. P. that he had done so because he knew that in America, butter was used on the bread. Mrs. P. said she could get on without it.

#### **Pilgrim House, Lunch, January 6, 1920.**

Mrs. P.: I am sure no one would object to this if it is given in public. When the speakers call ‘Abdu’l-Bahá by other names argument arises. Will ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tell us about it?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: I like this name but the Blessed Beauty has given other names also. Amongst the names, I like this name, but if the person calls me ‘The Greatest Branch’ I cannot object. He has said, ‘The Branch branched from the pre-existent Root,’ But I like this name. Whoever calls me by this name, (‘Abdu’l-Bahá) I become happy.

Mrs. P. We love other names as well. What is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s instruction concerning what we should say concerning ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s station to new believers and the public.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Tell them ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’ is my name and his signature is ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

Mrs. P.: Is it right to explain to those interested about other names also.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Tell them the Blessed Beauty has given them – for there are hypocrites who say ‘My Lord’ but their intention is to weaken the faith of the believers. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá calls himself ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, but you can tell them the Blessed Beauty gives him other titles. But ‘Abdu’l-Bahá says ‘Abdu’l-Bahá so that Náqíḍín shall have no grounds (for opposition). Tell them ‘Abdu’l-Bahá say: ‘I am ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’. The Náqíḍín mention those other names so that they may be able to cause troubles. One cannot speak in glorification of one’s self. The others should do that. If one says, ‘I am polite, I have done such and such good actions,’ – that would be a sign of hypocrisy. The one who praises himself – you should take no heed of him. I have written, ‘May my spirit be a sacrifice

for the dust of the feet of the friends.' Some people have thought that if the Covenant and Testament have weakened, it will be a good thing for them. There are some who think so. Beware of this. Their intention is to glorify themselves – like Dr. Farees and Mírzá Asadu'lláh. These things are like foam – they pass away. Let us speak of things which make us happy. Let them say what they like. Let them call me 'Abbás.' I like 'Abbás'. I always sign myself 'Abbás' when I write a poem. Man must have deeds. What do names matter?

The people have many titles, but what is the use of them? He must show works. One of his titles is 'Lion,' but he is not worth as much as a cat – yet his name is 'Lion'.

Miss B.: We heard in Persia that the Bahá'í cause is stronger than the Catholic church.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: It is more powerful – there is no comparison. The Catholic church is like a drop, but the cause of Bahá'u'lláh is like the open. The Catholic church is but a name. They are worshipping the dead bones.

Miss B.: Should we give the Message to the Catholics?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Yes! There is no harm.

Mrs. P. told of giving the Message to a young priest on his way to Rome. While she was talking to him to others listened and asked questions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: According to statistics, the Pope has sixty-thousand souls working under him – Cardinals, Bishops, Clergy of various ranks, missionaries, nuns. They claim three-hundred million followers. They have also one-hundred millions in wealth, but they are declining day by day. I have nothing; I am single and alone, but the world is disturbed. Astonishing news comes from Tíhrán, Irak (Mesopotamia) and from all parts of Persia, from Tabriz, from Khurasán and anywhere. In Kirmán and Kafsánjan there is resurrection. The resurrection is in progress. In the meetings all are engaged in the commemoration of God. Some believe and some deny. It is extraordinary.

Mrs. P.: When will the physicians learn to treat by proper diet?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: Ere long, during this century. I treat myself always by diet. Yesterday I treated myself with this butter. Today it was not necessary, so I did not eat it. One day at Adrianople I was with the Governor and we went to a garden where pears are growing. The Governor picked some pears with his own hand and gave them to me, insisting that I should eat them. I did not want them, but he insisted, so, being embarrassed, I ate. The effect was disastrous. Immediately it affected my chest. I fell down and had to be taken home. The Governor came home with me. They put me on bed. One brought me tea, another something else. I said, 'Bring me salt.' I put a lump in my mouth. It tasted then better than sugar. I began to suck it. The Governor asked, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'I am taking medicine.' He said, 'What medicine?' I said, 'Salt.' He said, 'My God, my God, what a medicine!' I took another piece and

began to suck it and a third piece. I felt better and the trouble was gone. The Governor said, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'I am alright now.' The Governor had a book in his pocket, taking it out he made a memorandum, 'Whoever becomes ill from eating pears should eat salt.'

In 'Akká there was a man, very short, an artist a very good man. His name was Hádí. One day he came to me and said, 'This malaria is killing me. I have had it for two years. The doctors prescribed medicine and it gets better for a few days, but returns. I am dying.' I joked with him, saying, 'You do not take any food.' He said, 'O yes, I eat very well!' jokingly I said, 'What food do you like best? I will mention the different foods and you tell me what you like best – pilau, abgousht, koftah (made with pounded meat), baqlaba (a sweet pastry with ground nuts), sweets, dried sour milk with shourba.' When I said 'shourba-e-Kashk (dried sour-milk mixed with broth) he said, 'and put some garlic in.' I said, 'Very well.' They prepared it for him and he got well. Then he was ill at another time and he told them to prepare the same thing for him. That time he ate it and died. ('Abdu'l-Bahá did not order it the last time.)

#### **Wedding Feast, Afternoon, January 6, 1920.**

Sobhi chanted a long prayer revealed by Bahá'u'lláh for the marriage of one of the friends.

Hájí 'Alí represented the bridegroom (Bahrám) and the bride was represented by ( ? ).

Each of these deputies had two witnesses. When the deputies were seated before 'Abdu'l-Bahá, with their respective witnesses behind them (standing) 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked the two witnesses of Hájí 'Alí: 'What do you witness?'

They replied, 'We witness that Bahrám has appointed Hájí 'Alí as his deputy.' He then asked a similar question of the two witnesses of the bride's deputy and received a similar answer. The Master then made the bride's deputy and received a similar answer. The Master then made the bride's deputy repeat the following words, 'I marry the one whom I represent, Zarintaj , the daughter of Áqá Ḥabíbu'lláh, to the one whom you represent, for nineteen miskals of gold and I asked God for confirmation.' The answer was, 'I also accept.'

#### **Lunch, January 7, 1920.**

Mrs. P.: Will 'Abdu'l-Bahá explain further what he means by the words, 'The only thing to disperse differences is the power of the Covenant.'

'Abdu'l-Bahá: First of all the Blessed Beauty made this Covenant so that there should remain no differences. If there remain any disagreements amongst the friends, or differences as to the meaning of the Book – in whatever way they may arise any difference, Bahá'u'lláh says explicitly turn to Him (i.e., to the Center of the Covenant), whatever he says is correct; and after him to the House of Justice. What is this for? It is to dispel differences. If there are any

differences among the friends – e.g., between you and Dr. E. – whatever I say, Bahá'u'lláh says, is correct. If I say you are in the right, the other one must obey: If I say he must follow you, he must do so, that there may remain no differences. This is for the Bahá'í unity, without this, no Bahá'í unity can be obtained. Notwithstanding that his holiness Christ said nothing about Peter except the one word, 'Thou art the rock and upon this rock I built my church,' this word became the cause of dispelling differences, so that whatever Peter said, the others would accept. Should Peter say, 'I believe so,' the others would say, 'His holiness has said that thou art the rock, Peter's faith is correct. Whoever believes in whatever Peter believes, he is a Christian.'

This saying of Christ is a tradition. It is not from the pen of his holiness. It is possible the one should deny it, but the Blessed Beauty made this Covenant with his supreme pen. No one can question it or deny it. He made it so that no differences of opinion they should be referred to him (the Center of the Covenant), 'therefore the Covenant is the greatest power. The Blessed Beauty is with his Covenant and helps his Covenant. This power is the power of the Blessed Beauty. Who can withstand it? The Yahyáís could not stand against it. They became humiliated and submissive. Whoever tried to oppose it perished, because the Blessed Beauty is the assister of his cause. No one can say, 'This is my opinion,' if there had not been the Covenant, there would have been by now one-thousand sects.

Mrs. P.: Was not Peter chosen by Christ because he had recognized Christ's station as the Son of God?

'Abdu'l-Bahá: His Holiness Christ wished his followers to understand that whatever Peter said was correct. His holiness was stating a general rule and not referring to a particular case. He does not say that in any particular case, Peter was right. He said, 'Thou art Peter and I shall erect my church upon thee.' Had he told Peter that this particular testimony of his was right, it would not be stating a general principle. No one objected, whatever Peter said they would accept. But this saying of Christ was an explicit Covenant (like that made by Bahá'u'lláh). His holiness does not say that if the people did not understand the meaning of the Bible they must turn to Peter. We must talk a little of the things which bring happiness.

Because these things refer to me I do not want to talk about them, but you force me. If I do not speak on this subject, divisions will arise, but I prefer not to talk of myself. I wish always to talk of the Blessed Beauty, of the things which will bring happiness and be the cause of progress and of the illumination. Whatever you wish to know about the Blessed Beauty ask. Whatever your heart wishes about him, ask. I know of nothing else but him. Ask about him, I know, for I am annihilated in him.

Mrs. P.: I wish I could get some stories about his youth.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: I have already told such stories. Whatever I say of the Blessed Beauty to anyone it belongs to all. These Náqíḍín talk and say that I will write,

‘May my life be a sacrifice to the dust of the feet of the friends!’ but the friends cannot write to me, ‘May you be a sacrifice for the dust of my feet.’ Could he write so? Could he say so? Now the Náqidín say, ‘As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá writes, May I be a sacrifice for the dust of your feet,’ this shows that the dust of our feet is nobler than he. They say that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in his prayer says, I am ignorant. ‘ so ‘Abdu’l-Bahá confesses that he is ignorant. He says I am a sinner. This I say, but no other person can say that I am a sinner. Do not you pray, ‘O God forgive me!’ Can anyone say to another, ‘O thou sinner, whilst he himself is a sinner?’

On said to Christ, ‘Good Lord,’ and Christ replied. ‘Why callest thou me good? There is none good save one, that is God.’ Can we say that Christ was a sinner? It is permissible for one in the station of his holiness Christ to say so but can anyone else say that Christ was a sinner? No! Was he not a well-doer? He said that because of his humility and submissiveness. He was the best well-doer of all.

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sooner.’ But instead of that his cause was elevated. He paid no heed to the Ottoman power. This is why the Ottoman minister became so angry. The Persian Ambassador was authorized by the Persian government to exert himself to the utmost to get the Blessed Beauty removed from Constantinople to Adrianople. He tried so much that he nearly killed himself in the attempt. Because of his efforts he went to Persia hoping to become Prime Minister and receive his reward. When he went to Persia he said, ‘Whatever I can do in the matter of exiling the Blessed Beauty, I did and my efforts were ultimately successful in getting him sent to ‘Akká, but this was a very difficult affair.’ But the justification for it is this: When Bahá’u’lláh arrived in Constantinople he became the cause of the honor of Persia, for he took no notice of the Ottoman government. All other Persians who have come even the princes, have been the cause of Persia’s humiliation for they used to go to the minister’s houses begging – one would beg a living, another would beg nationalization and so on. But when Bahá’u’lláh arrived in Constantinople he paid no heed to us (Persian officials) nor to the Ottoman government.’ He (the Ambassador) was an enemy and this is the wishes he gave.

They sent the Blessed Beauty from Constantinople. His cause became elevated and when they sent him to the prison for murderers and highway robbers in ‘Akká, in that prison he raised his banner. He wrote epistles to all the sovereigns. He wrote to Napoleon 3rd, to the Emperor of Germany, to the Queen of England, to the King of Austria, to the Pope, to the Sháh of Persia, to the Ottoman Vizír (‘Alí Páshá), to Sulţán ‘Abdu’l ‘Azíz. In prison his power became apparent. This was a manifest proof. In Surat-ul-Hykl, these letters are published.

J. E.: Was the letter to Ra’is addressed to the Sulţán of Turkey or to the Vizire?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: To the Vizír (Prime Minister) – ‘Alí Páshá in whose hands was the control of affairs.



Dr. C.: Did Bahá'u'lláh write to the United States.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá: Yes! He wrote to the President of the Republic who was killed. It is in the beginning of Hykl – all of it.

Briefly, two bloodthirsty monarchs, while Bahá'u'lláh was in prison, tried with all the Ulama and all the ministers of the two governments, to withstand him but they could not. One of the monarchs was killed, the other was dethroned. The more they killed the Bahá'ís, the more the light spread. The more they tried to raze the cause to its foundation, the stronger it became. The more they tried to cover up this light, the brighter it shone. The darker and dingier the prisons, the clearer became the illumination. That proof could be greater than this? When his holiness Moses appeared, a member of the household of Pharaoh became a believer. When the ministers of Pharaoh consulted concerning Moses and resolved to kill, exile or get rid of him, this believer was amongst them. He concealed his faith, but at the end he spoke his opinion as follows: ‘Moses does nothing except to assert the oneness of God. Should he be killed for this? He says God is .mighty. Is this a reason for killing him? Either he is telling the truth or he is not. If he is untruthful, there is no need for you to do anything. He will come to naught. Do not take useless trouble. Why strike at a tree that has no root? A tree that has no root no doubt will become dry. Why take trouble about, it? But if he is truthful your efforts will be of no avail. Without doubt his banner will be raised and whatever he wishes to do will be done.’

#### **At the Men’s Meeting. January 8, 1920.**

One of the friends from Rafsanjan asked whether he would have the privilege of visiting, ‘Akká once more. The Master answered (in substance) as follows:

God willing you will go the day after tomorrow. I am planning arrangements whereby friends may be able to stay at Bahjí for a few nights. At present that cannot be carried out owing to lack of bedding, etc., but we hope that in the future it will become possible. I could send away the people who are living in to Palace but do not wish to do that. I wish to treat them kindly. I expect that soon we shall have two motor cars which will make it easy for the friends to go frequently to ‘Akká.

We have lately received wonderful news – more wonderful than you can imagine or suppose, but now is not the time to make it fully known. However I will give you a hint about it. Nations are asking for assistance from the Bahá'í cause. Now is the time for us to work. I swear, by the Blessed Beauty that if we live and act according to the teaching of Bahá'u'lláh for one year, all the doors will be opened before us and the world will become a wonderful world. Until now we have been greatly oppressed. Suppose you have a bird in this room with all the doors and windows closed – the bird cannot fly. The Bahá'í cause has been like that bird, but new is the time of our freedom. The restrictions are removed. Now we must make an effort and the cause will make wonderful progress.

(The above was written down from memory the following morning and not taken down verbatim at the time.)

### **Supper, January 9, 1920.**

Amongst the proofs of the Blessed Beauty in this: That what he revealed in tablets about fifty years ago is accomplished today. Amongst his prophecies are those about the Turks in Kital-ul-Aqdas, Surat-ul-Hykl and in the Tablet to Ra'is. Whatever was revealed has now been accomplished. He addressed Constantinople fifty years ago as follows: 'O thou. Point which liest between the two seas (i.e., Constantinople)... Hath thine outward adornment rendered thee proud? Soon thou shalt perish, by the Lord of Creation! and thy daughters and widows and those peoples that are within thee shall lament.' He also says: 'We hear from amongst you the hooting of the owl.' This in Arabic means it will become ruined, for the evil haunts ruined places. And in the Tablet to Ra'is (addressed to All Páshá, Prime Minister) he said: 'Soon thou shalt be overthrown. To Persia, at time when the Sháh Nasiru'd-Din was in the height of his power, he wrote; addressing Tíhrán, foretelling political disturbances and the establishment of Constitutional government, he said: "Thou wilt become desolate and because of commotions great loss will come upon thee, but be not grieved, for thou art related to God and, God will assist and satisfy thee. He will grant thee a Sháh who will be the cause of thy comfort.'

An epistle was written to Napoleon, but Napoleon did not take any notice of it.

Dr. E. asked, 'Is the first Epistle to Napoleon in the Surat-ul-Hykl?'

'Abdu'l-Bahá: No! This epistle has been lost sight of. Then another epistle was revealed. In the second tablet he says: 'I wrote to thee to test thee. For thou hadst said when the Ottoman fleet was sunk by the Russians in the Black Sea and when the Czar of Russia said to thee, 'O Emperor, I am a Christian and thou art a Christian, why dost thou not come to my assistance?' – thou didst say, 'The cry of those (i.e., the Turks) who were drowned in the Black Sea reached my ears and awakened me. 'I wrote to thee, 'How did that cry affect thee? but thou didst not answer. Then it became evident that it was not that cry of lamentation that awakened thee. Nay, rather, it was thine own ambition that awakened thee. I tell thee plainly that thou wilt be punished and the kingdom will pass out of thine hand.' This was addressed to Napoleon when he was at the zenith of his power, but ere long he was overthrown. This prophecy is published and is in the hands of the opposers and enemies.

He addressed the Emperor of Germany in forcible terms as follows: 'See what happened to Napoleon (3rd) who was before thee. Be admonished and leave thy pride. Thy kingdom will not remain to thee. I hear the lamentations end moaning, of Berlin, although it is now in manifest glory.'

The occurrences which have been foretold by the Supreme Pen innumerable. i.e., About the coming of the Blessed One from Adrianople to 'Akká. He said:

‘They will imprison me in ‘Akká. There the climate is detestable and the water is foul.’ At that time the water in ‘Akká was very bad.

Dr. E.: Was this written before the Ottoman government had decided to send Bahá’u’lláh to ‘Akká?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: Yes! The Blessed Beauty wrote: ‘These things will not affect me. If they cut me to pieces the cause of God will prosper in every way.’

When he was in the barracks at ‘Akká and no one was allowed outside the prison walls, he wrote tablets to the friends saying, ‘Be not grieved. These doors will soon open and I will go out and my tent will be pitched on Mount Carmel.’ When the firman of the Ottoman government commanding everlasting imprisonment, i.e., imprisonment for life, came the Blessed Beauty said, ‘No, I will go out, the friends will go out also.’ After two (?) years this prophecy was fulfilled.

Miss B.: Did the Blessed Beauty prophecy that after the Great War all religions would be investigated and the Bahá’í movement would prevail?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: No! It is not so. He said: Great events would happen and people will become irreligious. There will be tumult and because of irreligion there will be such confusion that all will be in distress. Then they will return to religion. As long as there is no religion, the happiness of the world of man is impossible. If thou (Miss B.) wishest I will show thee the tablet tomorrow.

Mrs. P.: Was the letter to the Emperor of Germany addressed to Wilhelm 2nd or Frederick, his father?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: To Emperor Wilhelm. He said, ‘O Banks of the River Rhine, blood shall flow in thee, because thou didst become negligent of God. Another war will come and blood will flow and there shall be lamentation in Berlin.’

Mrs. P.: Is this something in the future, because in the recent war there was no fighting at the River Rhine?

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: It has already happened. The Rhine is between Germany and France. The phrase refers to the whole of Germany. When they speak of the banks of the Mediterranean, that includes all Syria, for this country is situated on the bank of the Mediterranean Sea.

All talks so far were given in Haifa, Palestine.

### **Bahjí, ‘Akká, January 10, 1920.**

(Saturday night before Supper, In the Master’s room.)

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: In Paris one of the notable representatives of Franca invited me to attend an evening party and I went. We saw that they had prepared a big banquet with sweets and cakes of many kinds. There were well-known musicians who played and sang. Pianists, violinists, cellists, flute-players and one young

man and a woman sang. Many noted people were present. I had thought they desired me to give an address but I found it was not so. I became extremely grieved that night. They played and sang but I was in agony. Than it was four hours after sunset I rose. The host asked me to sit. I said, 'It is our custom to sleep four hours after sunset.' The host said, 'We are just going to have dance.' I excused myself. He became greatly astonished that with such music and dancing I should desire to leave. I said, 'I am sleepy. I desire to go.' He was surprised. The son of Zele Sultan was there – Bahrám Mírzá, and a few of the Persian ministers. I said, 'These will be my representatives. They will hear these tunes and if there be a dance they will dance also. Excuse me, wish to go.' That night I was very uncomfortable.

Dr. E. said, 'You were like a fish out of water.'

'Abdu'l-Bahá: It is so. You have expressed it very well. Bravo!

Dr. E. asked if 'Abdu'l-Bahá had heard the report of the Committee of nineteen in the United States. The report seems more wonderful to us than the Acts of the Apostles.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: God willing, they will become assisted. Every night I pray and supplicate to the Kingdom of Abhá and beg confirmation.

### **Bahjí, 'Akká**

#### **Supper, January 10, 1920.**

'Abdu'l-Bahá: We are in a sweet place where our food is also sweet (Honey from the violets and molasses from grapes.)

Among the proofs are teachings of the Blessed Perfection. Such teachings as have not been given since the beginning of the world and these teachings refer to all mankind and the highest degree of advice is at hand. Advices in the utmost of eloquence and rhetoric, morals in the highest degree of perfection, politics in the highest degree of perfection, laws in the utmost firmness, public management in the utmost regulation. Whatever the world of humanity is in need of is to be found here.

All the religions of the world see the utmost perfection of man in those.

The Jews are attached to laws, even until now they are proud, saying, 'Our Book is the Book which contains laws.' The teachings and exhortations which his holiness Christ gave the Christians can be found in Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. Politics are in the Qur'án. The Muslims can find politics in the utmost degree in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Such fundamental things that are useful, as equality and freedom, these can be found in the laws of Bahá'u'lláh.

The kings will remain kings, ministers – ministers; the rich – rich; the poor will be in comfort and each person of humanity can find his greatest desire herein. These teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are all inclusive. Other teachings are

like branches but the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are like the trunk of a tree which sends out all the branches.

These are from a person who never entered a school, who had never seen a teacher, who had never associated with people of learning and who had from the beginning of his life been in the utmost of tribulation. Such teachings are divine. What greater proofs than these!

#### **Garden of the Riḍván, January 11, 1920.**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “In the days of the Blessed Perfection this was a place of recreation. He used to sit there (pointing) and the friends used to sit around on those seats. Words and prayers used to be revealed and they were all in the utmost of humility and submissiveness. One day I came here with the Motesareff (Governor). His holiness Bahá'u'lláh was here and the friends were here. He did not receive the Montesareff. He did not meet him. He did not meet me, either. He said, ‘Return with the Montesareff,’ and I returned”

“Bahá'u'lláh was thus imprisoned, with such glory and authority, and he did not take any notice of the Montesareff. From all his qualities the signs of power and greatness were apparent. Even in his imprisonment and his oppression (the signs were apparent).” (Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá said: ‘This place is greatly in need of repair.’)

#### **Bahá'u'lláh's House at ‘Akká, Lunch, Jan. 12, ‘20.**

The owner of this house was a native of Beirut, he himself used to live here. When the government gave permission for us to leave the barracks we wanted to rent a house. His partner had built a palace outside ‘Akká and his house (adjoining this one) became empty. We wanted to take that house and the partner was willing, but when the owner heard of this, he became furiously angry, saying, ‘How can I be content to live with these strangers. How can I have trust and confidence in them?’ His partner said, ‘I trust them. These are not people to be afraid of. If they do not pay the rent I will be responsible for them.’ The Russian Consul at that time, Mr. Urena, was a relative of the owner of the house and was an honorary interpreter of the government service. (In former times, certain people, for the sake of the honor used to work for the government without salary.) He said to the owner of the house. ‘You do not know these people. They are not highway robbers and they have been guilty of no treachery to the nation. They have been sent here because of some religious matter. Rest assured about this.’ Notwithstanding this the owner of the house is still distrustful and dissatisfied, until a Greek doctor in ‘Akká was also related to him, implored on their behalf saying, ‘The Consul and I will be responsible. If anything happens, we will hold ourselves answerable.’ At last at last they satisfied him and we came and lived in the small house adjoining this. The owner of the house carefully nailed up the door connecting the two houses, both in the upper and lower floors, so that there should be no going and coming

between the two houses.

Less than a fortnight afterwards we heard a knocking at the door. On opening it, we found the wife of the owner of the house who had come to visit the ladies. She asked, 'Why do you not come to visit us?' They answered, 'You have nailed up the doors between the houses.' She said, 'Ah! We did not know you, at first, but now the doors must be opened, both upstairs and downstairs, and you can fetch water (from our house).'

Less than a month elapsed, and I was sitting downstairs one day, when the owner of the house himself, came and said, 'I want to go to Beirut and I can trust no one. I have in the house money and jewels. I have three daughters and two sons-in-law, but I cannot trust them, and not even my partner. I want to leave things in your charge and go. I can trust no one else. I beg of you to let one of your people live in my house so that I can feel assured until I return after a few months.' I said, 'I cannot promise. Get someone else to undertake the charge and do not put it on me.' He said, 'It is impossible. If you do not consent, I shall have to give up this journey.' And he made an oath with Jamáli Mobarak. I was therefore obliged to consent, and sent one of the Bahá'ís to live in the house and take care of it until his return. He was exceedingly grateful and said, 'Never in all my life before have I travelled with my mind so much at ease as now, for I have the utmost confidence in you.'

### **Three Talks given by Ebn Asdaq, January 1920.**

#### **Pilgrim House, January 5.**

I visited Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád when I was ten years old. What I shall tell you is my own experiences, and not hearsay. About three years before Bahá'u'lláh left Baghdád, I visited him with my mother, father, sister and four servants and one of our relatives who was not a Bahá'í. at that time, Bahá'u'lláh had not openly declared his mission. He commanded us to go to a place two or three miles out of Baghdád, because the head of the Muḥammadans was there and we would not be interfered with. We made our headquarters at that place, but spent most of our time in Baghdád.

The Blessed Beauty took a house for us in Baghdád, and he said that those who wished to know about the cause should go to my father and learn about it. I was a child, and used to go with my mother to the household. We lived there fourteen months.

While there, although Bahá'u'lláh did not openly declare his mission, we could see the signs of greatness in him. The Báb told my father about Bahá'u'lláh and my father knew who he was before he proclaimed himself. I also knew it. Another important thing is: The Báb had written a tablet to my father because my father had served in Shíráz. He was punished there. (He received five hundred lashes on his bare back; had a ring put on his nose and was led through the streets by a cord attached to the ring.) Because of this, the Báb

had written a prayer, in which he said, "O God give him his reward as much as possible. When Asdaq sees the Lord, grant him his reward." Bahá'u'lláh wrote to my father: "O God in the time that he meets thee, grant him (to know) all the secrets. Thou art the doer of whatsoever thou wishest. Thou art the Dear, the Powerful."

Mrs. P.: Was 'Abdu'l-Bahá the first who knew and realized the reality of Bahá'u'lláh?

Ebn Asdaq: As 'Abdu'l-Bahá had the station of divinity, he would know. 'Abdu'l-Bahá says that 'Abdu'l-Bahá is not a human being. How is it possible that man should not know himself first? In the world of man my father was one of the first to realize the station of Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh while in Baghdád, wrote a tablet with his own hand for my father:

"O thou Sadiq, that Word which his holiness the Báb wrote has appeared. That Word has appeared through the Lord. It has appeared in the form of man. Then prepare to meet his Beauty and see him in that Beautiful garment (garment of man) and be humble and submissive to him."

My father became humble and submissive before his declaration. I also received a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh:

"O God, this is a servant, the son of a servant of thine. This boy has moved in the love of thy grace. He has journeyed in childhood from his native town to come and see Thee. He has journeyed far until he has arrived in Thy holy presence. He has been privileged to arrive in Thy holy presence, and at this time I ask Thee to grant him from Thy sweet milk, so that he may raise up the banner of Thy cause, and when he is grown, he may remain firm in Thy path. Because he has remained now under Thy command, may he in future remain firm, because thou art the Powerful, the Dear, the Beloved." This was in itself a declaration, and was revealed four years before the proclamation.

All the qualities of Bahá'u'lláh are seen in 'Abdu'l-Bahá. The form, movement, talking, walking even the feet are the same. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá begins to chant, the words and the voice are the same. The other day I was present when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was revealing tablets, and it reminded me to Bahá'u'lláh.

When we had fourteen months in Baghdád, Bahá'u'lláh said: "Your time is finished. Your visit is now at an end." Could a mere man say: "Your time of remaining here is finished. You must return to Persia." My father showed grief. Bahá'u'lláh said: "No! This is like a man in a steamer. The steamer goes many miles a day, but the man thinks he has not gone any distance. Your service has been great."

That day when we were dismissed, the river was very turbulent and we could not cross to the other side. When we started, the river became quiet. The bridge was lowered and we crossed to the other side. We had intended to start that same night, but we had to wait. That night when I saw they were not going, I ran back to Bahá'u'lláh's house. In the passage of the house I saw a

servant. The servant asked: "Why are you here? Have you not gone?" I said: "Yes." "Why are you here then?" I answered that I had come back to get one of the papers which Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá write on. Then I went with him to Bahá'u'lláh. When Bahá'u'lláh saw me, he said: "I am writing a tablet for you." At the same time Bahá'u'lláh wrote a tablet for my mother, in which he speaks of her weeping. (She had cried because of my leaving) Bahá'u'lláh said: "We have heard you crying." She cried, saying, "The love of the child is more than mine." However I returned with two tablets, one for myself and one for my mother. My parents asked where I had been and I told them.

We returned to Persia, Khurasán. There Ḥasan Absaltaneh was the governor. He knew that we had been at Baghdád. The Mullás heard of it also. Ḥájí Muḥammad Karim Khán of Kirmán, who was bitterly opposed to my father came also to Khurasán. The Mullás and he united and forced the Governor to take my father. They put him in chains and sent them on a camel to

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Ebn Asdaq: It is obligatory to say it for ourselves each morning. It is alright to say it also for a sick person. The Báb said: "Treat the sick by three methods: Giving them tea; giving lights drinks and by prayer. Bahá'u'lláh says: 'Thy remedy is the mention of me.' Prayer for healing is always good. The Greatest Name to be used in prayer is "Alláh-u-Abhá!" "Ya Bahá el Abhá!" is a call to God, equivalent to O God!"

### **Visits to Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká.**

I made four visits to 'Akká. The foundation of religion is to know the Manifestation of God. My aim was to get the teachings direct from the Manifestation so that I might be strong in the faith. Most of the talks I heard from Bahá'u'lláh concerned the following: First: The prophecies of the past; Second: The greatness of this Revelation; Third: The Center of the Covenant.

The foundation of all the religions of the past are contained in the Revelation. The foundation of the Bayán was founded in the Manifestation. It is the giver of the glad tidings of this revelation. One day when Bahá'u'lláh was walking and speaking of the greatness of his Manifestation, he said: "O son of my name (my father's name was Sadiq, i.e., faithful, but Bahá'u'lláh called him Asdaq, i.e., most faithful)! Thou hast seen that from behind millions of veils of light, we have manifested a mystery of this Revelation which is comparable to the eye of a needle, and have named it 'divinity.' Then all the people of the world were stunned. We have manifested the secret of divinity only because it was the wish of the First Point (Báb). Otherwise what differences does it make whether we call ourselves 'God' or 'slave?' For the honor depends on the person and not to the name given to him. Should I call myself, 'slave,' that word 'slave' would be equal to the word 'God.'"

Bahá'u'lláh often said: "Should anyone ask whether I claim divinity, say, 'Yea,



Yea! By the Lord of the Universe.’ ”

One day Bahá'u'lláh looked from the window of his room in 'Akká and saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá going to a tea-room in the public square which was used as a meeting house, both by believers and non-believers. Behind 'Abdu'l-Bahá were groups of friends and strangers. Bahá'u'lláh looked at me and said with a sad voice: “Although the calamities that have befallen us are countless, yet in comparison with what he ('Abdu'l-Bahá) is going through, we are at rest, because he bears the weight of the cause on his shoulders.”

On another occasion, one afternoon during the Feast of Ridván when I was standing with the number of the friends in the Holy Presence, Bahá'u'lláh was walking, bareheaded. He turned to his servant, Mírzá Aka Jan, and told him to bring and chant the new tablet which had been revealed. Aka Jan began to chant the tablet. It was a commune on behalf of the believers, the teachers, the arms of the Cause and the Branches. When Aka Jan reached the prayer for the Branches, Bahá'u'lláh sat down on the floor. He slapped his thigh three times, saying with emphasis each time, “Áqá ('Abdu'l-Bahá) is not of the creatures.” All the Branches (Muḥammad-'Alí and the others) were present when this was said.

A Talk given by Ḥájí Ḥaydar-'Alí, December 26, 1919, at the Pilgrim House.

When I was living in Adrianople, the Blessed Beauty told me to go to Constantinople. I remained there fifteen months where I was a sort of medium for the people. I sent their letters to Adrianople. After fifteen months the Blessed Beauty commanded me to go to Cairo but he told me to conceal my faith. ‘If they ask you if you have been to Adrianople say, ‘Yes, but only as a traveler.’ I went to Constantinople. When I arrived there I found people had sent fifty letters to that place saying that the prophet of the Bábís had come to Cairo. What was I to do? What would you have done, if you wore in my place? If I say I am not a Bahá'í, then they (believers) would come and say, ‘Curse it. Deny it!’”

I stood firm and said, “I am a Bahá'í.” There was a sort of freedom. No one could hurt anybody. I stood firm saying, “I am a Bahá'í.” Had I not done so they would have made me deny it. My house was full of people, morning, noon and night and I used to prove to that the validity of this mighty cause of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Persian Consul came and said, “I want to seek the truth and become a believer.” Even in secrecy he came to my house. Then he invited me to his house. I had a friend who told me to not go to the Consul's house because he was a materialist. He said, “If you go there you will be under the Persian flag and no other nation could save you. Do not go.” I said, “If God wishes me to go to prison I will and I am going to the Consuls house.” I and three others went to the Consul's house. The Consul appeared very kind. It was during the Feast of Ramazan. We sat down from night until early dawn. Then the Consul went into the house. The servants and soldiers came and said that the Consul

was not coming any more. "If you wish to go, go!" We came down from the top floor where we had been and as we descended it became lighter and lighter with we came near the place they had chosen to imprison us in. They placed ten of their men in charge of each of us. They took away our clothes, put our feet in stocks and chains on our necks. The following day they went into our houses. I had a lot of literature. Some of it was in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's own handwriting and the writing of Karim. Good and valueable literature. They took possession of all. Then the Consul went to the Egyptian government and said, "These people are the ones who wanted to kill the Sháh of Persia and now they want to kill you. The Khedive of Egypt became afraid because of this. Then they took us to a prison twenty-four miles away placed chains on our nooks and tied our hands behind our backs; they spit on us, but we said "Goodbye." The Egyptian mounted soldiers said that each of these men would strike fifty, but the people soon saw we were unable to strike two people. Gradually they pitied us and horses were given us to ride until we neared the prison. Then we had to dismount, the chains were replaced about our necks and we were brought to the prison. They had been given strict commands to put us in prison without light, in chains the ends of which were through a hole to the outside so people should know we were there.

There is a tablet by Bahá'u'lláh called The Trumpet and we began to chant this tablet. Those who befriended us brought light, opened the door and brought good food. When the soldiers came near, the door was closed until they passed and then opened again. We were kept here forty-five days before we were returned to Cairo. They took us to a place near the executioner's residence. I wrote to the one in charge of the prison that the government should be just. I said that we had not killed anyone or stolen anything. They say we have changed the religion, changing a religion is not in the power of a small man. Why have they imprisoned us near the executioner's house? When the government received the letter they said, 'Yes, if the rest of the people hear of this they will become Bábís also. So they took us to an upper floor, gave us rugs and made us more comfortable. Then they brought heavy chain. They tied a foot of one man to one foot of another man, one arm of one to one arm of another man and put us on camels, bodies and heads hanging down to the ground, each side of the camel. We rode all night this way. When we arrived near where the officers of the government were, we complained and they ordered a flat board to be placed on the camels and we rode on it and were more comfortable. Those who were on guard over us, mounted men said that we were not like men. 'You have not harmed anyone or stolen, yet you seemed so happy under these conditions. They took us from Cairo to Khartum. It takes the post thirty-six days to travel this distance but we were several months on this journey. In a tablet to us the Blessed Beauty said, "We have smelled the breath of faithfulness and steadfastness from Khartum." We had many troubles and afflictions before arriving in Khartum. They took us to a prison in the middle of the desert. On two sides was water (Nile) and there was a very large stable there. They placed us in the stable giving each of us the space of three span. (He showed by means of his

to outstretched hands, thumbs touching what he meant by a span.) They gave the prisoners maize to eat. Each one had his portion above his head. Those in prison used to gamble at night, either by lamplight or fire. There

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