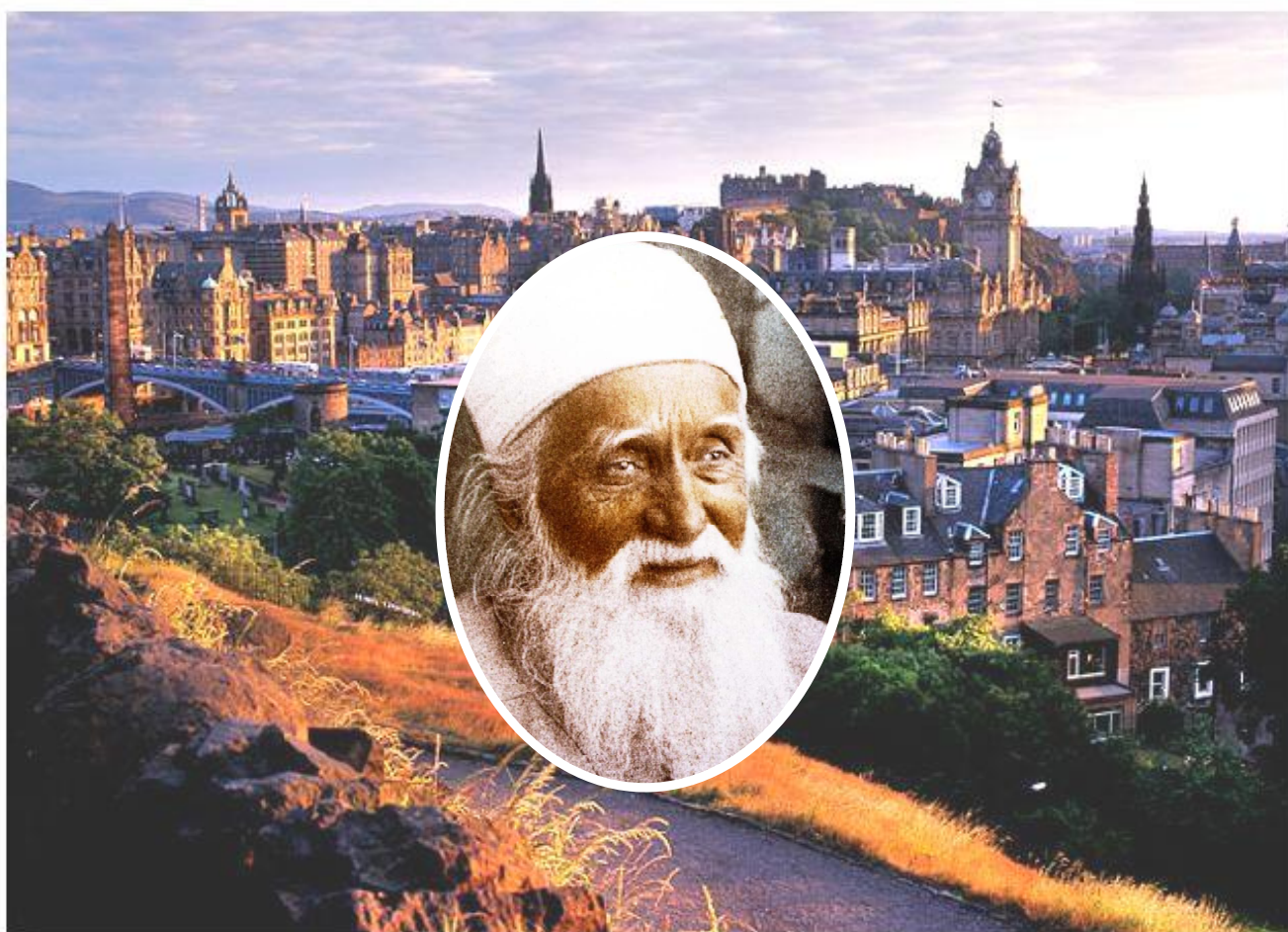


# Abdu'l-Bahá in Edinburgh

The Diary of Ahmad Sohrab



6 Jan 1913 - 10 Jan 1913

# Abdu'l-Bahá in Edinburgh

Version: 2011.05.24 [ Diary Text: 2008.01.15 ]

Latest: <http://bci.org/edinburgh/history/SohrabDiary.pdf>

*Sohrab's Diary 5 Jan 1913 - 11 Jan 1913*

## Overview

### The Diary

What follows, is a very detailed account of Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Edinburgh by Ahmad Sohrab, who was amongst Abdu'l-Bahá's entourage, and also His translator. The Diary takes the form of letters written each day, on 7 Charlotte Square headed paper, to Harriet Magee of New York. These letters are part of a huge volume in the US Bahá'í Archives.

The story really begins in Edinburgh on the 6 Jan; however, some early mentions of Edinburgh and the 5 Jan have been included as a lead-in, along with some extra items by Ahmad Sohrab after leaving Edinburgh.

### Other Accounts

In addition to this Diary by Ahmad Sohrab, there is also the account of the Master's visit to Edinburgh in Volume 2 of Mahmud-i-Zarqani's diary (volume 1 being translated as 'Mahmud's Diary'), with is untranslated publically, although Adib Taherzadeh did a translation of the section on Edinburgh. There was also the diary of Abdu'l-Bahá's host, Mrs Whyte ('she had a diary and kept I think written down everything'), although this latter diary is yet to be found, and finally, various minor references and recollections.

### Notes Whilst Reading

It should be borne in mind whilst reading, that Ahmad Sohrab often quotes Abdu'l-Bahá without using any quotation marks, with the result that when the Diary says 'I' as if Sohrab is speaking, it is often Abdu'l-Bahá speaking. The state of the Diary, means that the writing was hard to read, and symbols used in the text are detailed after the Diary as an appendix.

At the end, there is a description of 7 Charlotte Sq, a map showing how Edinburgh in 1915 compared to the size of Edinburgh today, and a map of where 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited, and a list of contents of the Diary with page numbers.

Small raised numbers are to footnotes at the bottom of the page, whilst numbers within a square are original page numbers in the diary e.g. [9].

### Special Note

The words of Abdu'l-Bahá are the recollection and understanding of the author at the end of the day, conveyed through a different language, and should not be taken as Abdu'l-Bahá's exact words or meaning. Abdu'l-Bahá's actions and their context and intent are similarly subject to the author's recollection and understanding.

David Merrick

Contact : <http://www.paintdrawer.co.uk/david/email.php>



1 Jan 1913

### Plan for Edinburgh

[6] ...The plan of Edinburgh is presented to the Master<sup>1</sup>. He says I have not been there yet, and they have already planned what I must do in every hour. Then He jokes with them about these [rigid] customs, [program-making] and date-fixing of this<sup>2</sup> so far ahead...



5 Jan 1913 - Sun

### London

[1]  
97 Cadogan Gardens<sup>3</sup>  
London S.W.  
Jan. 5th 1912

Dear Harriet!<sup>4</sup>

### The English

This is Sunday and tomorrow at 10.am our train will start for Edinburgh, so this is the last letter that I am writing to you from London in which we have already spent 20 memorable days! for ourselves and the Cause. Just at this time there is a great spirit of attraction and enkindlement amongst the Bahais as well as those who are on the verge of becoming as such. It has often been [said] that once the English people take hold of this Cause, they will spread it most energetically; therefore there are many important men and women who come and go with zeal to do that which lies in their power to propagate these doctrines. They are an excellent race, full of pluck and courage.

### Illness, Interviews, Daily Schedule

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

### A Woman's Questions

... A woman who lives in the same <??afsh> House called on the Master and had many questions about Christ "within", visions, dreams, spiritual life and many other topics. Lovingly Our Beloved discarded her ideas and [3] notions about these matters, telling her the realities of every question. "Today," he

<sup>1</sup> "Mrs Whyte... had invited the Master while in London to go to Edinburgh" [Lutfullah]

<sup>2</sup> In the emended text: "the western people".

<sup>3</sup> 97 Cadogan Gardens was the home of Lady Sara Blomfield, who was a very active believer of extraordinary service to the Cause, author of "The Chosen Highway", and whose notes form the substance of Paris Talks; she visited Edinburgh in 1926.

<sup>4</sup> Miss Harriet Magee of New York (1883 - 16 Jan 1915 Green Acre, Eliot, Maine) - Canadian Bahá'í (1899) from London, Ontario. Met 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Green Acre and New York City, 5 Dec 1912. In 1910 elected to the New York City Women's Board of Council. She with her mother, Esther Magee and sister Edith Magee Inglis were the first Bahá'ís in Canada.

said, "the door of the Kingdom of God is open, you must enter therein." "Where is this Kingdom?" she hesitatingly asked. "It's the Celestial Kingdom of Abha," the Master answers her. "Oh! I don't see it! Is it impossible for me to enter therein?" "No! Turn your face to God; trust in him, submit all your thoughts and ideas to Him and he shall lead you to His eternal Kingdom!" "But, I have been doing this for <2> long years" "Very good! I hope you shall attain therein".

### English Minister in China - Women

After a few more people coming and receiving divine Blessings, an English minister who has been in China for 40 yrs is ushered into the Presence of Our Beloved. He is interested in the education and uplift of the Chinese women. He has done everything possible to help them. He has heard that the Bahais are doing a wonderful [4] educational <propaganda> work in Persia and he likes to get the facts so that he may write them for the Chinese people to show them how their Asiatic brothers are advancing in education. The Chinese are great imitators and if you show them how their Persian sisters are progressing they will walk in the same footstep[s]. The Master was patient enough to give him enough data and material so that he may go and write his articles. "This is indeed a marvellous man" he says as he goes out of the room, his face beaming with happiness.

### How To Hold Meetings

Then one of the friends comes in and asks how the Bahais must conduct their meetings in London<sup>5</sup>. When the believers gather together the Master answers "their sole object must be the commemoration of God. When all the friends are present, one in the most clear and effective voice, may read a prayer or commune.



[5] Then for 5 or ten minutes to most quiet communing with the source of life, and thinking how they should be better and act nobly; then one who knows how to speak may rise and deliver an address either on the proofs and evidences of the Cause, the hardships and tribulations of Baha-ollah, the exposition of the Bahai principles, quoting from the Tablets of the Blessed Perfection to the Kings and rulers etc, etc. When this is over, one or the same person may read another among the supplications, thus bringing the meeting to a close. Then they may either talk with each other in groups or may return to their homes or they may serve refreshments. The questioner asked about music. "As regards to music, they may act as they are pleased. If they like to have it, all right; if not, again it is all right."

### Farewell Address to London

[6] At twelve o'clock the Master entered the Drawing room and spoke a farewell address, expressing his hope that the seeds which he has sown in the ground of the hearts may develop and grow and bring many harvests.

### Interviews, Rastam Pasha

Today He did not go out, because it was rainy, foggy and very damp. The afternoon was devoted to many more interviews. The wife of an Englishman who has been serving in the Turkish Government for 40 yrs came to see the Master. This Englishman was working with another Englishman who was

given the title of "Rastam Pasha"<sup>6</sup> by the Turkish authorities<sup>7</sup>. It so happened that the Master knew "Rastam Pasha" when he was the governor of Lebanon. "He was a good man," Our Beloved said. "He was more loyal to the Turkish government than most of the ministers. If Turkey had [7] five<sup>8</sup> ministers like "Rastam Pasha", she would not have met so many difficulties" Then the Master told us several intimate stories about this man which in turn surprised and delighted our guest. The story of Rastam Pasha's hunting with this Emperor of Russia and how he saved the latter was very dramatic. Another story was about his loyalty in keeping fast during the month of Ramazan, although he was a Christian. Then the story of {Sultan} Abdu'l Aziz<sup>9</sup>, sending a necklace to the Queen Victoria and its cause [- this] sequel was most interesting.

### Painter, Evolution

Later on a celebrated painter came and the Darwinian theory of evolution was discussed, its falacy proved, the two kinds of evolution "horizontal" and "perpendicular" touched upon.

### Meeting at Miss Herrick's

Later Mrs Cropper<sup>10</sup> brought her auto and the Master was whisked to Miss Herrick's<sup>11</sup> meeting where we found more than <150> people [8] all anxiously waiting the arrival of the Master. He gave a very spiritual lecture, the subject of which it is hard to say. But it was about the negligence of the people about God and their submerging in the sea of materialism.

### Maharaja of Rajputana

Tonight His Highness Maharaja<sup>12</sup> of Rajputana<sup>13</sup> dined with the Master. He is an exceedingly charming personality and speaks the English language very fluently. Many topics were discussed, the elevation of the women in India, the progress of aviation, dispelling prejudices from amongst the religions and castes in India, Aryan race, their original home and their migration to Europe. He stayed till 10.30 and invited Our Beloved, Lady Bloomfield<sup>14</sup> and her two daughters and the servants of the Master to dinner on the night of the 18th which invitation was accepted. On the 21st he sails from Marseilles for India. Love to all Ahmad



<sup>6</sup> Rustem Pasha was son-in-law of "Suleiman the Magnificent", "the Lawgiver" (1494-1566); this latter was the tenth and longest-serving Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, under whose leadership the Ottoman Empire reached its Golden Age and became a world power. The Rustem Pasha Mosque is renowned for its exquisite tiles set in floral and geometric designs.

<sup>7</sup> "Sultan" in the amended version; a sultan was a sovereign ruler, or like one.

<sup>8</sup> Or "fine" - the handwriting is ambiguous

<sup>9</sup> Sultan Abdu'l-Aziz (9 Feb 1830 - 4 Jun 1876) - 32nd sultan of the Ottoman Empire, reigning between 25 Jun 1861 - 30 May 1876

<sup>10</sup> Mrs Mary Thornburgh-Cropper was a close friend of Mrs Whyte; Mary was an American widow resident in London, who taught Ethel Jenner Rosenberg, a painter from a distinguished artistic family; together Mary and Ethel played a key part in establishing the Bahá'í Faith in the UK.

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth Herrick lived in London with Mrs Thornburgh-Cropper, authored 'Unity Triumphant', and visited Edinburgh in July 1926.

<sup>12</sup> Each Indian State had a king ("raja"); a few raja were particularly powerful, and they were called "maharaja".

<sup>13</sup> Rajputana (India) was a region of western India, now part of Rajasthan.

<sup>14</sup> Lady Sara Bloomfield - see note 1

<sup>5</sup> There were perhaps about 40 Bahá'ís in London in 1913, although exact numbers are hard to say, particularly as members (who can vote) and simple admirers were quite vaguely distinguished.



6 Jan 1913 - Mon

### Weather

*"That morning the weather was bright and the sun was shining brilliantly." [Lutfallah]*

[1] Jan 6th 1913

Dear Harriet

### Whyte's House

Well, here we are in Edinburgh, in the very artistic house of Mrs Jane E. Whyte<sup>15</sup>, one of the noblest and kindest women that I have ever met. Her house is very big and very beautiful. On the second floor she has one of the largest and loveliest libraries that I have ever seen. On the third floor the Master has a large, most comfortable room with a beautiful fire-place, which warms the room and gives to it an air of calmness and quietness.



### About Edinburgh

[2] As far as I could gather at the table Edinburgh is a very beautiful city, enjoys the splendid reputation of having a wonderful University, with its medical department very famous throughout England and the East; so that students from Burma, Russia, Egypt, India and Persia crowd its lecture-halls and study the profession of medicine. Its population is 300,75 thousands.

### Mrs Whyte in Acca

Many years ago I believe Mrs Whyte goes to Acca and for 3 days she stays there receiving the divine teachings<sup>16</sup>.

### Mr Whyte

Mr Whyte<sup>17</sup> is a celebrated clergyman, and well known throughout this part of the world.

### Train Journey

[3] This morning I got up very early, wrote a few letters, packed my satchel and at 8 o'clock I was ready to start. By that time Lady Bloomfield and her two daughters arrived to meet the Master and accompany him to the station. For the next 4 days they are going to the sea shore to rest and will be back before our return on Friday. Having all our luggage ready Doctor Mousae<sup>18</sup>, Mirza Mahmaud<sup>19</sup>, Haji Ameen<sup>20</sup> and myself in a taxi cab started



<sup>15</sup> Mrs Jane Elizabeth Whyte (1857-1944) was the wife of Mr Alex Whyte. She was instrumental to Abdu'l-Bahá's visiting Edinburgh; her maiden name was Jane E Barbour.

<sup>16</sup> Mrs Whyte's account is in "Seven Candles of Unity", pp 47-49.

<sup>17</sup> Mr Alexander Whyte (1837-1921) was a Scottish divine; a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, he became colleague and successor of Dr R S Candlish at Free St Georges (now St George's West, 58 Shandwick Place), and then principal and professor of New Testament literature at New College, Edinburgh.

<sup>18</sup> Doctor Mousae : Lutfallah Hakim enumerates Abdu'l-Bahá's companions as 'Sayed Assodullah [Siyyid Asadu'lláh-i-Qumí] an old and devoted Persian, Mirza Mahmud Zargoui [Mirzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqání] secretary, Mirza Ahmed Sohrab interpreter and myself'.

ahead of them about 9.10 for the station to buy the tickets and secure the seats.

The Master arrived a few minutes later and after a while all of us were in the <car>.

[4] Mirza Lotfallah Hakim<sup>21</sup> was added to this party which travelled from America for Europe. At 10 o'clock the train was pulled out of the Eusten station, while the Persians, Mrs Cropper, Lady Bloomfield and other friends were shaking hands and handkerchiefs in the air. On the train I read [a] portion of Thomas Moore's<sup>22</sup> Utopia to Our Beloved. Later on at twelve o'clock we had all lunch in the dining car, the Master had, however, his own dinner which was prepared by Sayed Assadallah.

Here in England the Railroads [5] charges 2 shillings and half<sup>23</sup> for lunch and give you a great deal to eat, very wholesome food. After lunch the Master had a nap and at 4 we all had tea in His Presence.

### Miss Ramsey

∴ He spoke to us at the time about a Miss Ramsey<sup>24</sup>, from Scotland who was a most zealous missionary in Acca. She was not friendly to the Cause but the Master showed her all manner of kindness because she was very faithful to her Christ. "Miss Ramsey! do you know how much I love you? Look in your heart and see how [6] how much you hate me; to that extent I love you." the Master would tell her as she would try to turn her back upon Him. She had the Bible in her hand, and from morning till evening she would go from house to house and read it to the people. For a long time she used to come to our house and read it to the members of his Household. They did listen to her every time most attentively. Finally she thought that now I have converted them. One day she was reading, when one of the family asked her the meaning of the verse read. She could not give it. They told her this is a prophecy about the [7] appearance of Baha-o'llah. You see, it is so plain. She got very wrath and left the house. She was very charitable.

She spent all her money in this work. She had 12 girls educated in the college in Beirut at her own account and often she gave money to the poor in Acca. For forty years she labored very faithfully and when she was 70 yrs old she said I must return now to Scotland, I have grown too old to be useful. [Abdu'l-Bahá said:] I gave her a farewell banquet. I liked her very much. I would like to see her in Scotland. I will tell her: see, how I have come to see you.

### Islamic Sect

[8] Then he told us the evolution and progress of a Mohamadan Sect in Persia, how they became powerful and influential through their chastity and purity.

<sup>19</sup> Mirza Mahmud wrote a diary which includes this visit to Edinburgh.

<sup>20</sup> Háji Amin - see earlier note.

<sup>21</sup> Mirza Lutfallah Hakim (d. 1968) left a short account of Abdu'l-Bahá's visit; he later also resided in Edinburgh on the Assembly in 1948, became member of the International Bahá'í Council (1951-61) and the Universal House of Justice (1963-1967).

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Moore (28 May 1779 - 25 Feb 1852) was an Irish poet, singer, songwriter, and entertainer.

<sup>23</sup> 2 shillings and half was about £30 in 2005 money.

<sup>24</sup> Miss Wardlaw-Ramsay of the Church Missionary Society opened a station in 'Acca. (See 'Studies in Babi and Baha'i History', Moojan Momen, pp75-76.)

## Arrival in Edinburgh

About 6, the lights of Edinburgh are seen<sup>25</sup>. It seems the city is illuminated. The train enters in the station at 6.15 and as we alight Mrs Whyte, Mrs Fraser<sup>26</sup> of London, and several other friends hail our Beloved<sup>27</sup>. An automobile takes the Master, Mrs Whyte and Ahmad<sup>28</sup> to her home, the three others in a hotel near by<sup>29</sup>. Mrs Whyte welcomes the Master, inquires about the trip etc. In the house Mr Whyte, who is a vigorous [9] old man is introduced with her two daughters, and her two sons. Her eldest son is gone to Belgrade<sup>30</sup>, to attend to the wounded. Her eldest daughter who met Our Beloved last year in London is married and lives in another city.

## Dinner and Visitors

At 7.30 we have dinner, our Persian brothers coming too<sup>31</sup>. At eight a number of people who have been serving on the committee of arrayment are invited to visit Our Beloved. There

<sup>25</sup> "As the train was approaching Edinburgh, in the late afternoon, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, calling His little party together, said, "We are now coming to Edinburgh, and this is the beginning of the diffusion of Divine fragrances there. You must consort with all the people with such devotion, radiance and spirituality, that all may testify that you are of heaven, and the servants of the Kingdom of God: that your hearts are illumined: and your souls adorned with the mysteries of the Kingdom." " [1963]. "When we got near to Edinburgh the Master called us four to His compartment and advised and directed us saying that we are going to Edinburgh where is the beginning of defusing the ABHA Message. We must associate with the people with such enthusiasm and spirituality that all may witness that we are heavenly servants who have turned to ABHA Kingdom with hearts full of light and life full of garden and roses. Then He told us wonderful accounts and real stories and then said now that we are the servants of Divine Threshold and guards of the Everlasting Kingdom we should rise with full enthusiasm and with whole heart and soul to serve His Threshold. Think what we will have to do. However He advised us in detail." [Lutfullah] "On the train 'Abdu'l-Baha told His attendants that they were going to a city where the work of teaching the Cause was just starting and that they should associate with the people with exemplary devotion. Then He told them the story of the Sufi leader, Nur'Ali Shah, who had to flee his homeland because of the hostility of government and people, could not dwell in peace even in the neighbourhood of the holy Shrines of 'Iraq due to the opposition of the divines, and died an outcast in Baghdad. A few who had remained faithful to him in adversity, though heavily burdened with the cares of the world, pledged themselves not to allow the memory of their master to fade away. They arose with sincerity and determination and, although their work was not of high import, their success was great. How confirmed, said 'Abdu'l-Baha to His attendants, they would be, whose task was to serve the Cause of Baha'u'llah, should they arise with equal devotion." [Balyuzi Abdu'l-Baha]

<sup>26</sup> Mrs Isobel Fraser stayed on with Marion Jack in Edinburgh holding Bahá'í classes after Abdu'l-Bahá had left.

<sup>27</sup> "Mrs. Whyte and some prominent men welcomed the party on the platform." [1963] "Mrs Whyte and many people had come to the station to meet the Master. It was a most wonderful sight at the station." [Lutfullah] Traditionally, it is recollected that Bagpipes welcomed them. It is hard to imagine Sohrab missing this out, equally, Lutfullah was on the Edinburgh Assembly and the notion may come from him. Perhaps the answer could be that the bagpipes were playing but unrelated to the visit.

<sup>28</sup> Ahmad Sohrab, the author of this diary.

<sup>29</sup> "...within a stone's-throw of the house where he was" [Prof G S Stewart]. "Mrs Whyte... insisted that the whole party stay at the manse" [1963] "The Master wished to stay in a hotel but with repeated begging and wish of Mrs Whyte that He should stay in her (Mrs Whyte) house He accepted it. So He and the interpreter lived at Rev. Alexander Whyte and we three Persians stayed in a hotel near by." [Lutfullah]. "The most personal attendant was called, in translation, the "Lion of God", an old man, picturesque in appearance and of a most attractive spirit, whose after-dinner stories were a great delight. There was a young man, an interpreter, who was not of the inner company, I think, and who had a more or less permanent home in London. Then there was a very handsome, cultured man, who was a poet of some distinction, according to the interpreter, and whose talk, even in translation, was deeply interesting, spiritually discerning, and beautifully expressed. These three, while sleeping and eating in the hotel, were Dr. Whyte's guests, and to emphasize that, he invited an elderly Quaker lady, a young artist, and myself to be fellow guests with them in the hotel. We had a private suite and did not mingle with the other guests, and it was for us three a very delightful experience." [Prof G S Stewart]

<sup>30</sup> Belgrade is the capital of Serbia, south-eastern Europe.

<sup>31</sup> i.e. From the hotel. [v. Lotfulluh].

are, however, many other people. The Secretary of [the] Esperanto Society<sup>32</sup>, the general Secretary of [the] Theosophical Society<sup>33</sup>, [10] several professors and many clergymen with their wives are present. The Master comes down. First coffee is served. Then he speaks about his trip from Alexandria<sup>34</sup> to New York [and of] how some of the friends had insisted that he <?????y> take the "Titanic" instead of [the] "Cedric" direct. Afterward people were introduced to Him and He spoke with the Secretary of [the] Esperanto {Society}.

This <led> our Beloved to speak on the various means of unification, that although each a powerful agency for unity, yet they were not sufficient.

The power of the Holy Spirit [11] is the eternal hand that binds the hearts of men together. Then he spoke on the misunderstanding which exists between the present nations and religions of the world and how easy it is to do away with these bones of contention. He then reviewed his address before the Jews in San-Francisco, which created a tremendous effect, because most of these people are very devoted Christians.<sup>35</sup>

An old scotch song was sung after the Master's address which was very sweet and effective. The Master bade them good bye and went to his room.



## 7 Jan 1913 - Tue

[1] Jan 7th 1913

Dear Harriet!

These days are rapidly passing and once gone they shall form the glorious background of our lives, the springs from which new inspirations shall flow, the caskets which contain the treasures of the heart, the blue, turquoise heaven towards which all of us aspire, the garden of memory in which all these flowers are gathered to perfume the nostrils. After all if the soul is not enriched by these divine experiences, if the [2] the spirit is not transformed in the image and likeness of God, if the heavenly life is not obtained then it is better to abandon all hope for future advancement.

## Esperanto Society 1

We had a very wonderful day, full of interesting experiences; from {early} morning till now, returning from the enthusiastic Esperanto meeting<sup>36</sup>. For the City of Edinburgh, it was indeed a miracle! Nothing could show more definitely the power of the Cause and the influence of the word of Our Beloved than the two meetings of today; each unique and distinguished in its own {sphere}.

## Morning Prayer

[3] It was about half past eight when I {heard} the bell calling us, as I found later, to prayer.

<sup>32</sup> Esperanto Society promotes Esperanto, a Universal Language.

<sup>33</sup> Theosophical Society (founded 1875) promoted brotherhood, the importance of Eastern philosophies and the search for spiritual and psychic truths.

<sup>34</sup> Alexandria in Egypt.

<sup>35</sup> "...some distinguished guests paid their respects to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to them, at length and in great detail, about the teachings of God in this age, the manner in which all the Manifestations of God had appeared, and how man has always denied and rejected Them at the time of Their appearance." [1963]

<sup>36</sup> Freemason's Hall, 96 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 3DH.

When I went down to the Library I saw principal Whyte with the members of the family standing on one side and all the maids which were seven I think, standing on the other side, each having a hymn book in the hand. Mrs Whyte gave me one of these books and she went to the organ. All of us <sang> the songs and afterward Rev. Whyte prayed while all of them [4] knelt down. It was a very new experience to me. Of course this is their daily custom for the Master and the servants to pray to God every morning before starting their daily labors. This is a very lovely custom and affords one a few moments whereby to commune with his Creator. After the prayer we had breakfast and I carried up Our Beloved's tea to his room.



### Visitors

∴ About 10.30 a number of people came to see Our Beloved; some with their children; others to receive His Blessings. The children of one of [5] one of the callers were dressed à la Hylanders, which looked very pretty.

### Outlook Tower

∴ At 11 o'clock, the brother<sup>37</sup> of Lord Haldene<sup>38</sup> the Chancellor or Secretary of the Navy of Great Britain sends his magnificent auto mobile to the Master to go out and visit the "Outlook Tower"<sup>39</sup> which is guided by the <great> learned scholar and astronomer Prof Patrick Geddes<sup>40</sup>.

### Scenery in Edinburgh

∴ <sup>41</sup>As we drove out we saw from far the wonderful mountain<sup>42</sup> upon which the old castle of the Scottish Kings is built<sup>43</sup>.

[6] It dates back to 12th Century and is an interesting historical spot. On this mountain, the base of which is decorated with a lovely blue lake<sup>44</sup> there has been built in those bygone ages, a road<sup>45</sup>, one end of this road the castle was constructed and the other end a monastery<sup>46</sup>. This was the beginning of Scotland.

<sup>37</sup> John Scott Haldane (3 May 1860 - 14/15 March 1936) was a Scottish physiologist, the son of Robert Haldane and the grandson of the Scottish evangelist James Alexander Haldane; he was an international authority on ether and respiration and the inventor of the gas-mask during World War I, and founder of "The Journal of Hygiene".

<sup>38</sup> Lord Richard Burdon Haldane (1856-1928) was born in Edinburgh, educated in Edinburgh/Germany; one of Britain's greatest War Ministers (1905-1912), he served as Lord Chancellor 1912-15.

<sup>39</sup> Outlook Tower, 549 Castlehill, Edinburgh EH1 2ND.

<sup>40</sup> Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) was a Scottish biologist and botanist, known also as an innovative thinker in the fields of urban planning and education; as a town-planner in Palestine he had involvement in the cypress avenue leading up to the Shrine of the Báb (Balyuzi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p 447; Leroy loas, p218), and he also planned a Bahá'í House of Worship in India.

<sup>41</sup> When looked at closely, the scenic description that follows seems rather confusing, with things from one hill mixed onto the other. However it makes good sense, if we assume the Author is treating Castle Rock and Arthur's Seat as one single mountain with Castle Rock a connected outcrop, and the clue that this might be the case is where he writes, 'On this mountain... there has been built... a road...'

<sup>42</sup> Castle Rock, not Arthur's Seat.

<sup>43</sup> The Castle has royal apartments. After the 15th Century, Holyrood Palace served as the main residence of Kings and Queens.

<sup>44</sup> Duddingston Loch (larger) and St Margaret's Loch (smaller) are two lakes beside Arthur's Seat, whilst there used to be a somewhat defiled lake called the North Loch beside Castle Rock, which had before his visit already been drained in 1763 and transformed into Princes St Gardens in 1818. He is probably referring to Duddingston Loch.

<sup>45</sup> The Royal Mile / High Street

<sup>46</sup> Holyrood Palace was founded as a monastery in 1128.

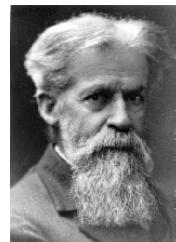
### Outlook Tower

Having reached the Outlook Tower, Prof Giddes gave Our Beloved a rousing reception. The Outlook Tower is an educational institution which attempts to teach astronomy, natural geography, maps etc.

[7] There are hundreds of maps of various countries, different kinds of globes, maps depicting the progress of the nations; maps portraying the growth of Edinburgh, special rooms devoted to different continents, even the floors of the rooms maps were drawn. Prof Geddes with great excitement took us through these rooms<sup>47</sup>, floor after floor till we reached to the highest room in the Tower. Here the room was made dark in the center there was a round revolving canvass and in the ceiling a hole. I suppose over the roof [8] our Prof. has installed certain mechanical devices and sun-cameras which are connected with wires to the room.

Now by the manipulation of these wires the most marvellous thing becomes visible before your eyes. The Master and all of us are gathered around this round revolving canvass. Suddenly we see the city with its streets with its smoking chimneys with people walking to and fro, cars running hither and thither, even women dusting rugs from the windows. You must [9] know this is not a moving - picture but just at that very moment that we were looking at the canvass, these things were going [on in the] outside world<sup>48</sup>. Most amazingly, every part of the city was shown, the scene constantly changing, giving us the most kaleidoscopic picture of the real life of Edinburgh.

Coming out of the Tower we had a most charming view of the whole city. The Master praised his energy and patience, for Prof Geddes has devoted 25 yrs of his life to this institution.



### Country Drive

[10] Then after leaving the Outlook Tower we had a drive through the country<sup>49</sup>. One of the most beautiful things about Edinburgh is that it enjoys many green and verdant mountains at the foot of which there are lovely lakes<sup>50</sup>. The scenery is most entrancing! One of the mountains is called King Arthur's seat where with his 12 knights he discussed the finding of the Holy Grail<sup>51</sup>. The palace of the King<sup>52</sup> was shown to us that when George V comes to Scotland he lives there.<sup>53</sup>



<sup>47</sup> "...took Him by the arm and showed Him around" [1963]

<sup>48</sup> A Camera Obscura.

<sup>49</sup> Edinburgh in 1913 was much smaller than today, its northern areas crossing the Waters of Leith only where the rivers pulls into the city on the north-east, stretching on the West only to the start of Gorgie Road, reaching on the South to the Meadows with sparser housing continuing southwards to the railway line, clinging down the bridges to the end of Minto Street, not straying west beyond Arthur's Seat, and connecting (relatively recently) up to Leith.

<sup>50</sup> One wonders how far afield they drove out, as there are (and were) not many mountains and lakes right in Edinburgh itself; perhaps they drove out south to the Pentland Hills or even beyond.

<sup>51</sup> Legendary story.

<sup>52</sup> Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh EH8 8DX.

<sup>53</sup> "...they all went for a drive down the Royal Mile, past Holyrood House, and up the King's Drive. They found the scenery very pleasing." [1963]



## Princes Street

[11] Returning home the Master walked for nearly one hour in the nearby park<sup>54</sup> and then we switched toward the Princes Street where the principal shops and depart[ment] stores are. Here also is the magnificent statue of Sir Walter Scott<sup>55</sup>. Our Beloved bought several things in different stores and returned home.<sup>56</sup>

## Charlotte Square

∴ <Then> had discussion[s]; the Master afterward going to His room to have a much needed rest. I have not been feeling well for the last two days, having caught a severe cold.

[12] So I went to the Library and put my large, comfortable chair in front of the cozy, bright fire place and tried to warm myself. At 4 the Master had his tea and Mrs Whyte also came to have a cup of Assam [tea].

## Oriental Students

∴ At five o'clock the Oriental students began to arrive<sup>57</sup>. First the Master met some of them in the small private rooms, then at 5.30 He entered in the large library where all of them were sitting. There were almost 200, more than fifteen nationalities from Asia; all gathered [13] under one roof, the most potent evidence of the power of the Word of God. First Rev. Whyte expressed his pleasure at having "our great Master amongst us;" and talked several minutes<sup>58</sup>, then a gentleman from India spoke very beautifully about the wonderful effect of the Bahai Cause and in behalf of the students thanked "Our Master" for His presence. Then a very eloquent student from Damascus<sup>59</sup> spoke. His speech was on peace, brotherhood and welcome to the Master.<sup>60</sup>

[14] Then Our Beloved arose from his seat and spoke on medicine, how the doctors must ever be the means of physical and spiritual healing. He spoke also on a few Bahai principles and advised them when they return to their respective countries, they must be like shining stars. After our Master's talk, which was quite long a student from Persia spoke and on the part of the students he tendered a rising vote [of thanks] which was carried amidst loud clapping of hands<sup>61</sup>. Then the Master called 3 of the Egyptian students [15] and talked with them for sometimes.

<sup>54</sup> The nearby park could be Queen's Street Gardens or Princes Street Gardens.

<sup>55</sup> Scott Monument (built 1840-1846) is 200 feet high, 55 sq ft at base.

<sup>56</sup> "He felt the cold very trying and his hostess found from his attendant that he was most insufficiently clothed for this northern city and a forenoon was spent in providing for his greater comfort - to the interest and admiration of several shopkeepers, unaccustomed to oriental dress and speech." [Prof G S Stewart] "Our only anxiety was lest the rigours of an Edinburgh winter should press hard on the physique of an oriental who, at an advanced age, was touring the World and had never been so far north before. But, when the time came, a miracle seemed to happen; for we were granted four mild and sunny days in which to welcome the venerable guest to our beautiful capital." [EHC Pagan]

<sup>57</sup> 1963 mistakenly puts this on the afternoon of 8 Jan.

<sup>58</sup> "Dr. Whyte, addressing 'Abdu'l-Bahá, said, "Dear Master, I have held many meetings in this house, but in all my life never have I seen one like this. This gathering reminds me of the words of Paul, saying, that God "hath made of one blood all the nations of men" (Acts 17, v. 26), and Christ saying that "They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God." (Luke 13. v. 29)." [1963]

<sup>59</sup> Capital of Syria in the Middle East. "Egyptian student" [1963]

<sup>60</sup> See 1963 for a summary-style (adding little) of the speeches of these students and Abdu'l-Baha.

<sup>61</sup> "Then Dr Whyte got up and thanked Mrs Whyte (his wife) that she was the cause of the coming of Abdul Baha there and because the cause of such a great blessing. On that day money were being gathered for the poor from amongst those present The Master also gave some few pounds as well. This action of the Master touched all those who learnt of this very much." [Lutfullah]

## Esperanto Society 2

∴ At 7.30 we had our dinner and at 8 o'clock the automobile was ready to take the Master to the Freemason's Hall to address the Esperanto Society. The program of which I enclose. As we reached at the door, there were more than 300 people, standing outside, desiring to enter in the Hall, but it seemed they could not. The floor and the gallery seat about 1000 people. It is a new building, and the architecture is very majestic, simple and dignified well lighted with brilliant electricity.

[16] On the platform there sat rows of Professors, Scholars and clergymen of the city, most prominent people<sup>62</sup>. When our Beloved entered the platform all the audience rose to welcome him. It was a wonderful sight never to be forgotten. Not only all the seats were taken but all the ai[s]les were crowded with people standing, while outside there were hundreds of people disappointed. It seemed that all Edinburgh was there. Before the Master sitting on the platform the musical program [17] was given and so the addresse[s] started. First Rev. John Kelman M.A.D.D.<sup>63</sup> spoke for some minutes. He gave the short history of the movement etc. Then Mr Andrew Wilson<sup>64</sup> (look for his academic letters in the program) spoke on the progress of Esperanto and welcome to Abdul Baha. Then Our Beloved delivered a stirring speech on the necessity of a universal language, telling stories and points which throw the audience into laughing<sup>65</sup> [18] and good humour. He carried the audience with his irresistible eloquence on and on to rarer sphere of unity, and unfolded before their eyes the benefits of a universal auxiliary language. There were two tables around which two<sup>66</sup> reporters sat and Our Beloved's address will appear in all the Esperanto magazines and papers as well as tomorrow[']s dailies.

After the meeting Prof. Prof Geddes delivered an interesting address, showing the progress of events and thanking the Master for his words of wisdom.

[19] Then the Master spoke with several of those who were on the platform and shook hand with more than 200 of the people<sup>67</sup>. Tired and fatigued we returned home and a



<sup>62</sup> Who were looking for doctrines to contend about, but were not given any!

<sup>63</sup> Rev. John Kelman, D.D. of Edinburgh was a prolific writer on religious and literary subjects, and at one time assistant with the world-famed Biblical expositor Dr. George Adam Smith (Memorial Notices, The Manx Quarterly, #29 - 1923).

<sup>64</sup> Mr Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., special Councillor of the British Esperanto Society.

<sup>65</sup> Or "laughter"

<sup>66</sup> Or "the"

<sup>67</sup> "...from a remote corner in a distant gallery, I saw and heard the Master for the first time. My very eagerness made me impatient of preliminaries, and perhaps unduly critical of the opening remarks from a local clergyman who seemed to feel his position acutely; for, instead of using his eloquent gift of extemporaneous speech, he rode a carefully prepared statement in which politic insistence on religious barriers somewhat impaired his graciousness as host to such a guest as Abdul Baha. He was followed by Mr Andrew Wilson, F.R.S.E., special Councillor of the British Esperanto Society, in whose name he expressed a warm welcome to Abdul Baha, in Esperanto, of which the Master showed hearty appreciation. Of his address that evening I can find no record, but I well remember with what vigour the aged prophet strode about the platform and how his richly sonorous voice rang out in answer to the greetings offered him by the officials of the Society. He spoke in Persian, each sentence being translated for us into English as soon as spoken. He limited himself to the subject of Esperanto, and illustrated the lack of some such Universal language by humorous anecdotes of travel and also by the fact that notwithstanding his familiarity with at least ten Eastern languages, he required an interpreter in order to communicate with a Western audience." [EHC Pagan]

newspaper man interviewed our Beloved on some points of the Cause.<sup>68</sup>

### Dinner + Overview

At 10.30 he had his dinner or supper. These two meetings today were very significant! indeed, just in Edinburgh where people have never heard the name of the Cause there is such tremendous interest. Mrs Whyte was very happy on account of [20] the results of these two meetings.

The effect of the Master's talk to the students will be far-reaching. No one can estimate how much.

We have just received from brother Wilhelm<sup>69</sup> 500 copies of Palo Altan<sup>70</sup> and we divided the same amongst the students. Well, this is 1 o'clock after midnight. I am very tired and I must go to bed. Hope you can read this scribbling and add to it any word which I have left out. Love to all  
Ahmad



## 8 Jan 1913 - Wed

### Weather

*"The weather in Edinburgh... was dull. There was a light wind from the south-east. A shower fell in the afternoon. In the evening the sky was clear and starlit. The maximum temperature recorded at the City Observatory, Calton Hill, was 46.5 degs. At 10 P.M., when the barometer was steady at 29.45 inches, the thermometer registered 41 degs."*  
(Scotsman 9 Jan)

[1] Jan 8th, 1913

Dear Harriet!

### St Giles Cathedral 1

As we entered St Giles' Cathedral<sup>71</sup> and the Beloved took His seat in the front row of the gallery looking down upon the mass of humanity who have gathered there to hear Handel's Messiah, all the eyes involuntarily turned to Him with wonder and respect. Then the chorus with delightfully trained voices raised the exultant tone "And the Glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."<sup>72</sup> Was not this a wonderful prophecy which had they wisdom and perception they could [2] see the Glory of the Lord revealed before their own eyes!



### Cables

This morning Our Beloved called me to His room and dictated many cables to be forwarded to all parts of the Orient so that the friends may know that he is well and upholding the standard of Baha-o-llah in amongst the contending nations of Europe, "with murder in their eyes".

<sup>68</sup> "I saw him at Dr. Whyte's just after the meeting. He was lying back in an arm-chair, while his personal attendant massaged his legs. He was an exhausted man." [Prof G S Stewart]

<sup>69</sup> Roy C Wilhelm (1875-1951) of New York was a Hand of the Cause.

<sup>70</sup> Palo Altan - [add note]

<sup>71</sup> St Giles Cathedral, Royal Mile, Edinburgh EH1 1RE, also known as the High Kirk of Edinburgh, was Edinburgh's religious focal point for at least 900 years.

<sup>72</sup> Isaiah 40:5; about 10 mins into the piece. "Among the audience, in the reserved portion, was the Persian mystic, Abdul baha, who arrived late, with a few attendants." [Scotsman 1913-01-09]

### Morning Prayer

The call to prayer was heard and I hastened down stairs to join the congregation. We sung a very comforting song and Principal<sup>73</sup> White prayed while the rest on bended knees listened.

### Mr Whyte and his work

Principal Alexander White is not only a famous preacher of Scotland, not only enjoys the leadership of one [3] of the most influential churches of Scotland in which he delivers lectures every Sunday morning, but he is the President of one of the greatest Theological Colleges in the Country. From these facts you can dimly realize how significant is the Master's presence in his home as honoured guest by his own insistent invitations. He is rather an old man but vigorous and active. He is at the head of a committee of 200 with another committee of 200 representing the two churches of Scotland who are trying to unite them and remove the sectarian differences. They have been at it for two years and [4] they are very hopeful. The committee had one of its sessions today and after 3 hours of deliberation Principal White came home, an optimist. Tomorrow they will have another session of 5 hours in the Theological College.

He is much strengthened and inspired by our Beloved's words and encouragement.

### Morning Papers

After the prayer I got hold of the only morning paper of Edinburgh which contained a fairly good article. Later on the noon papers were read which contained better articles all of which I send you in a separate package. The editorial of the evening dispatch is very good.



### Marriage Request

[5] Last night as I came out of the Freemason's Hall a young Mohamadan Hindu who is a medical student in the university gave me a letter for our Beloved. Later on when I read it to Him, the young man desired to be married by the Master to a Scotch "lassie". He came this morning, and after much talk we found out they cannot be married now because it takes ten days to get a license from the Registrar of the city. And as the Master would not perform the marriage ceremony without the young man's compliance [6] with the laws of the country and as there was no time for such compliance, therefore the young man was disappointed. However, nothing could be done to change the situation.



### Sir John Clark

Then a Sir Jhon<sup>74</sup> [blank space] came to see the Master. He is the publisher of a 12 volumes of the Encyclopaedia of religion and morality<sup>75</sup> which contains an article on Bahai movement by Prof. Brown<sup>76</sup>. He is the superintendent of the 4 largest schools in Edinburgh, having more than 4 thousand pupils.<sup>77</sup>



<sup>73</sup> Principal of New College, Edinburgh, a theological college, and now the School of Divinity.

<sup>74</sup> Sir John Maurice Clark (presumably), a partner in T&T Clark from 1880 to 1923, the reference to the schools needs verification (look in 'The T&T Clark Story' by John Dempster (Pentland Press, Durham, 1992), ISBN 1 872795 09 9).

<sup>75</sup> Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, ed. James Hastings et al, published by T&T Clark (founded in Edinburgh, 1821).

<sup>76</sup> Edward Granville Browne (1862-1926) was a British orientalist who visited Bahá'u'lláh and wrote much about the Bábi and Bahá'í Faith and Iran.



## Mr Whyte Autographs

∴ Mr Whyte was anxious to impress me with his importance and influence in many circles. He had a book of autographs, signed by Queen Victoria [7] and many royal families and nobilities. He requested Our Beloved to write his autograph in it. He, however, wrote for him a very beautiful prayer which was translated. While He was talking with Sir John — there was a woman sitting in a corner of the room making a miniature of the Master which was not finished.

## Edinburgh College of Arts

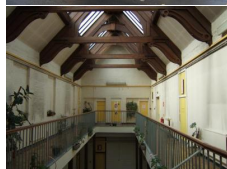
About 11.30 the automobile of Sir —<sup>78</sup> Haldane was again brought at the {door} and our Beloved according to the invitation of the President went to the Edinburgh College of Arts<sup>79</sup>. It is a very massive building. Nearly two thousand art students attend. They teach painting, sculpture, drawing, and designing etc.



[8] The Master conducted by the President of the College was taken to various rooms where boys and girls were painting, moulding etc. Their best student in Sculpture is an Indian. So far at every student's competition he had carried away the highest prize. The Prof of Sculpture took us to this {Hindu} young man. His studio is next to the Professor and he is honoured very much. The Master talked with him, praising his work and giving him incentive to go to India and found the new school of sculpture. He was most delighted with Greek sculpture which are so life-like and human.

## Poor Schools / Kings Commissioner

Leaving the college of arts [9] we were driven to the poor district where the <??> schools for their children are most interesting. After long discussion in the educational circles and the Press, the state has come forward and taken into hand the feeding of the very poor children at lunch time {the children were eating the lunch provided for them<sup>80</sup>}. The Master walked in these long halls<sup>81</sup> where the children of 6 to 12 yrs - on one



side the girls, on the other side the boys - were sitting around large tables and eating their bowls of soup etc. He liked the sight and [10] praised the teachers for their self-sacrifice and service. In one of these rooms the children sung to him some nursery songs and He in turn prayed for them. They are going to frame the prayer and keep it in the room as a keepsake of this wonderful visit.<sup>82</sup> As we came out of the school to go to a kindergarten school<sup>83</sup> which was a block



away hundreds of children followed us. Somehow the children got the notion that Our Beloved is the High Special Commissioner appointed by the King of England to pay them a visit, so they were very respectful. Having [11] reached the kindergarten, the little tots greeted Our Beloved. The teacher was delighted and surprised. She showed us the various little rooms and the playthings of the children; their little cots on which they sleep one hour a day, their gardens etc. The Master told her she is a noble worker, every one must appreciate her services, she is serving indeed the future generation; may she be confirmed and assisted! We got in the auto and the hundreds of children with their small, darling hands and little capes bade a hearty farewell to the "Kings' Commissioner".<sup>84</sup>

## Food and Shopping

[12] At 7 Charlotte Square the Master asked Mrs Whyte to talk around food long of an hour. We roamed toward the stores and looking through the window glasses, He was attracted by the opera-glasses. He bought ten of them to be taken to Syria for souvenirs.



## Universal Peace

We returned home and have lunch. Some one asks whether the Master attended Peace Conferences in America. "Many of them", the answer is given and then an exhaustive discussion as regards universal Peace is carried on. The Master says that in future no war must be undertaken [13] by any nation without the consent of the people and the government may find out this matter by applying the law of Referendum.

## Rainy Hall

At half-past four, after drinking a cup of tea, we are driven to the Rainy Hall<sup>85</sup>. The Hall is large and filled to the door<sup>86</sup>. Prof Geddes introduced the Master to the audience who will speak to you on the ideas and ideals of the Bahai movement. Then the Master rises from his seat and delivers a powerful speech on the many principles of the [14] Bahai Revelation, a complete record of which will appear in the tomorrow's papers. The audience enjoyed repeated the wonderful illuminating address and repeatedly applauded. After Our Beloved's address Dr Barbour<sup>87</sup> expressed the thanks of the audience to Abdul Baha for his eloquent exposition of one of the great movements of the time. What struck him, when the Master was speaking was that he was giving expression to some wishes of their own hearts. The Rev. A. B. Robb<sup>88</sup> said we have been in the habit of sending missionaries from the West to the East to preach the Gospel; this day we [15] have a missionary



<sup>77</sup> "That morning, many seekers after truth availed themselves of the opportunity of visiting Him." [1963]

<sup>78</sup> John Scott Haldane (see above, 7 Jan; alternatively, the use of 'Sir' might be taken more formally for Lord Richard Haldane, and a correction to what the author writes there).

<sup>79</sup> 74 Lauriston Place, Edinburgh EH3 9DF in 1913, in a huge red sandstone building in the Beaux-Arts style.

<sup>80</sup> In the amended text.

<sup>81</sup> North Canongate School, 5 New Street, Canongate

<sup>82</sup> "He encouraged the children in their studies and admired their work." [1963]

<sup>83</sup> 8 Chessel's Court, Canongate (entrance where New Street meets Canongate). For this kindergarten, see "Diary of a Free Kindergarten" by Lileen Hardy.

<sup>84</sup> "Mr. Andrew Young, headmaster of the North Canongate School, who presided, said that the head of this great movement when he was in Scotland had the splendid courtesy to come down to the North Canongate School, and bless the bairns and their noon-day meal. Abdul Baha had won the hearts of the children by his great generosity and kindness... On Tuesday, the children of the Canongate enjoyed the lantern slides of the Holy Land, responding with eagerness to the lecturer's questions. When at the end they saw the picture of Abdul Baha, they cried out with delight, and sent their love to him." [Christian Commonwealth (London) 7 May 1913, p. 562]

<sup>85</sup> Rainy Hall, New College, the Mound, Edinburgh EH1 2LX.

<sup>86</sup> "Among the audience were church dignitaries and many eminent Edinburgh men." [1963]

<sup>87</sup> Dr George Freeland Barbour was a successful Glaswegian businessman, and the father of Jane Whyte; he wrote "the Life of Alexander Whyte".

<sup>88</sup> Rev A. B. Robb from Falkirk.

from the East to preach the old Gospel and to preach it in a new and original way; Dr Kelman said last night that Abdul Baha was not here to proseletyze. I am not sure of that; I feel we are not preaching quite the Gospel we have heard today, though we are all longing to preach it and perhaps Abdul Baha's address would give some of us assurance to do so. After the meeting many people came forward and shook the Master's hand and expressed their delight and happiness<sup>89</sup>

### City

[16] Returning home we had a splendid view of the general illumination of the City as the college of Theology in whose large hall the Master spoke is built on the hill you can see the whole lighted avenues before you.

### St Giles Cathedral 2

Without resting much about 8 o'clock the auto took us to St Giles Cathedral. This performance was specially given for the poor<sup>90</sup>. Thousands of people were present. The Master sat in the gallery and during the two hours program listened most carefully.

Please remember me to all the friends

Ahmad

[1963: 'Abdu'l-Bahá enjoyed the programme very much, and when He returned, said, "It was a good meeting. I saw the poor people were happy. The hearts of the poor are very tender, and so they are hurt<sup>91</sup> easily. Once, in Baghdad, a poor man visited us. He sat on a small carpet. Putting his hands on it, he said to me, 'I suppose one can sleep longer and relax better on this carpet because it is very soft? I gave him the carpet. After a few days I saw him again. He said to me, 'I thought I would sleep better on it, but really, it did not make any difference, so I sold it.' "

Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá continued, "The hearts of the poor break easily, so there are no limits to the ways we can give them happiness<sup>92</sup>. In 'Akkà, many times I had the poor in my house. But you do not know the extent to which the poor in the East are in need: these poor people - what can they do!"



## 9 Jan 1913 - Thu

### Weather

*The weather in Edinburgh... was dry and pleasant, with a light wind blowing from the south-east and a mild atmosphere. The sky in the forenoon was cloudy, but in the afternoon there was a spell of sunshine. The evening sky was clear. The maximum temperature recorded at the City Observatory. Calton Hill, was 45.2 degs. At 10 P.M., when the barometer was steady at 29.50 inches, the thermometer registered 43 degs. (Scotsman 10 Jan 1913)*

<sup>89</sup> "A large number of those present availed themselves of the Chairman's invitation to meet Abdul Baha in an adjoining room where we found him seated to receive us. We went in single file; and each had the separate privilege of a personal greeting that seemed like meeting one's dearest friend and at the same time receiving a benediction. When my turn came I mentioned the name of a Bahai friend in London who had asked me to do so, and I was rewarded by a specially radiant smile as he repeated the name, or rather his own abbreviation of the name, "Rosa", and spoke a few words in English. I could not claim more than this brief moment; but I heard afterwards from "Rosa" that he had mentioned the incident on his return to London." [EHC Pagan]

<sup>90</sup> See description at start of day.

<sup>91</sup> "Touched" [Lutfulluh]

<sup>92</sup> "...the hearts of the poor will very soon be touched and so the more one be the Cause of the happiness of the hearts of the poor the better." [Lutfullah]

[1] Jan 9, 1913

Dear Harriet!

### Theosophical Society

We have just returned (11.30 pm) from the beautiful meeting in the Theosophical Society<sup>93</sup>. There was a most lovely spirit of love and sympathy. Amongst these. Everything was warm and hospital. The audience running into several hundred of people most sympathetic.



Members of the Society have come from all parts of Scotland and even from Ireland<sup>94</sup> to hear the Master talk. It is one of the most wide-awake Theosophical Centers of Europe.

[2] They have a darling house, quite large and commodious, on the second floor of which they have their lecture Hall<sup>95</sup>. They had invited the Master not only to deliver an address but to dine with them. Having left home in two automobiles brought by the general secretary at <6.45> we reached their headquarter after a few minutes. They have here the largest Theosophical Library in the world and all their rooms were well-furnished. On arriving the Master was taken into a private room. Here he met a Mrs Brown who has been born in Ramleh<sup>96</sup> from a Scottish father.

[3] She is a Theosophist and devotes much of her time and her means to the maintenance of this establishment. The Master talked with her and prayed for her that she may soar to the heaven of Reality, a heaven whose sun never set, whose moon never disappears, whose stars never fall. Afterward a mother with seven daughters, the first of whom has in turn nine daughters came in to receive the Blessing of the Master. "I hope your daughters may form a blessed family. Abraham was one single soul. God blessed him [4] and today he is represented in millions of soul."<sup>97</sup> Other Secretaries, Treasurers, Presidents of the various Lodges were presented to Our Beloved, especially a young couple who are the assistants of the General Secretary and who are going to marry next June were presented and both received a very wonderful blessing:- "May you become as one pearl in a casket! May you two become as one soul in two bodies!" etc. Then at about 8 o'clock the Hall being filled, Mr Paole<sup>98</sup> made a very short introduction, that it's the [5] greatest privilege of my life to come in the Presence of Abdul Baha who radiates love.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>93</sup> 28 Great King Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QN.

<sup>94</sup> Orig "Ireland" (could be read 'Inland'). "...even from England and Ireland" [EHC Pagan]

<sup>95</sup> An 'L'-shaped room in a Georgian House.

<sup>96</sup> Ramleh was then in Palestine, now in Israel.

<sup>97</sup> "We went in as a family, mother & her seven daughters & some of her grandchildren. He stood laughing happily at the long procession and we made a ring round him, & he congratulated mother & hoped she would have as many descendants as Father Abraham." (I M Pagan, 2 Aug 1943).

<sup>98</sup> Major David Graham Pole, Secretary Theosophical Society

<sup>99</sup> "Abdu'l-Bahá has tremendous spiritual powers. In my opinion, He is the focal point of the spiritual, intellectual, and theological forces of the present and future centuries. When people recognize the powers that 'Abdu'l-Bahá has access to, then they will have no doubt that this Cause will greatly revolutionize the religious and economic life of mankind." [1963]

The Master spoke on three subjects<sup>100</sup> : on the indestructibility of the primordial atom<sup>101</sup>; on the immortality of the soul and on the unity of the Manifestations of God. It was a very powerful array of fact and it will appear in the Feb number of "Theosophy in Scotland," a copy of January I mail with other papers in which the Master[s] arrival is announced on the first page.

[6] After the lecture he delivered a most powerful and spiritual prayer. He stood at the door and shook hand with all<sup>102</sup>. They were delighted with the address and many of them thought it is so much like our own ideas. The Master rested in the room for half an hour; and it was then announced that the supper is served. I suppose there were about 15 of the Theosophical Leaders [who] were invited for dinner<sup>103</sup>. They had some Persian and Turkish dishes which [were] immensely enjoyed. After dinner, the autograph book of the headquarter, Bahai books, photos of the Master [7] were brought to him to write a line or sign his name, which he did with the utmost of patience<sup>104</sup>. The General Secretary was the happiest man on the face of the earth! He is a young man, full of enthusiasm, brimming over with hope and optimism<sup>105</sup>. Then the two autos being ready, he himself came with the Master till 7 Charlotte Square. Really, I was so pleased with this meeting. The people were alive and appreciative and there was an air of culture and refinement about them. There were some newspapermen and I have no doubt an article may appear in tomorrow morning's paper.

### Ahmad / Newspapers

[8] This morning I got up a little late, because I went to bed extremely tired and wearied with the activities of the day. Having attended to my morning prayer with the rest of the family I was glad to read in the paper a complete report of the last night meeting. It is fair and you will realize by reading it whether the translator has done well or not.



<sup>100</sup> "when He mounted the platform in the evening, before a packed hall, He looked very tired. He remained seated in silence for a few moments, after Mr. Graham Pole had reverently introduced Him. Then, seeming to gather strength, He arose, and with voice and manner of joyous animation, and eyes aglow, He paced the platform with a vigorous tread, and spoke with words of great power." [Chosen Highway]

<sup>101</sup> Primordial atom - [add note]

<sup>102</sup> "When He sat down, applause and cheering reverberated throughout the building. The audience, most reluctant to leave, filed past the Master reverently. A young couple, who were to be married shortly, knelt in front of Him, and whilst holding on to His robes, begged Him to bless their lives." [1963]

<sup>103</sup> "Many of these were granted private interviews from which they returned refreshed, feeling their troubles lessened and their difficulties explained in a new and illuminating manner. These interviews, following on the afternoon talk to women, must have tasked the Master's strength; and although he would let no one go away unsatisfied, he certainly looked very tired when he mounted the Theosophical platform to address the members and friends who had crowded to hear him. He remained seated in silence for a few moments after Mr Graham Pole had reverently introduced him to the audience and then, as if gathering strength from our sympathy, he sprang to his feet and, with voice and manner of joyous animation, and eyes aglow, he paced the platform and exclaimed, as translated to us sentence by sentence... Abdul Baha remained at the Theosophical Head-quarters where he was entertained to supper before starting for London by the night train. those who were privileged to be with him at table were struck by his geniality and by the special concern he showed in seeing that a member who was deaf should not lose her share of the happy conversation around her." [EHC Pagan]

<sup>104</sup> "...the President brought the Society's Book, in which He wrote this prayer:- "He is God. O God, from the Sun of Truth cast a ray upon this Society, so that it may be illumined." " [1963] "Then the head of the Society brought the Society's book and the Master wrote a prayer in it for them. Then he (the headman) gave his own book and the Master wrote in his book a short prayer as well." [Lutfullah]

<sup>105</sup> "The Theo. Society was so pleased that eve. that it is beyond my power to explain." [Lutfullah]

### Visitors

∴ Later on a Prof. from Aberdeen, the Secretary of the Islamic Society and a member of the Theosophical Society came to see the Master. The first asked questions about heredity, immortality soul and [9] environment; the third about healing and incarnation and the second desired that the Master may speak to the members of [the] Islamic Society. All these questions were satisfactorily answered. Some more people came and received the blessing.

### Visitors / Painter

∴ At about 11.30 am, the auto which has served us for the last 2 days is present. This time a Miss Watson and a Minister came with the Master. First Our Beloved called on a painter of artistic and imaginative pictures.

[10] He and his wife showed us some of the large pai[n]tings. One represented children doing almost all the <coueeereeeble> things<sup>106</sup> (=all kinds of delightful pranks), the other depicting the legendary story of Drydas<sup>107</sup>, another a little child riding on a lion; another sinner before Christ and many other works. The Master blessed them and they were most pleased.



### Forth Rail Bridge

∴ Then we drove for nine miles to see the greatest engineering feat of Scotland, a bridge<sup>108</sup>, more than one mile long over a river<sup>109</sup>. Having arrived there we came down to look [at] it. Indeed it is a very colossal affair.



[11] We drove back home and on the way the Master spoke to the minister, and Miss Watson. She is an artist of considerable ability and {the Master} praised her much for her keen intelligence and understanding, asking her to read the Bahai writings.

### Lunch Table

Arriving home we had our lunch. At the lunch table the Master asked Lancelot<sup>110</sup>, the youngest son of Mrs Whyte to study Persian and talked with him a great deal about these matters.

### Women and Equality Meeting

∴ At 4 oclock Mrs Whyte had the meeting of Edinburgh women (<100> <sup>111</sup>) in her own spacious library. The [12] Master came down. At first in an adjoining room, some noble Ladies were introduced. There was a Lady who is leaving to London. She is almost a Bahai and she invited the Master to speak in her large parlor. The Master told her to come and see Lady Bloomfield. Then Our Beloved was conducted by Mrs Whyte in the other room. All arose from their seats. His talk was first devoted upon the unity and spirituality, then he branched off to the equality of women, the stories of several



<sup>106</sup> The text is unreadable!

<sup>107</sup> John Deydras gained access to the royal palace of Beaumont in Oxford and claimed he was the true heir of the realm rather than Edward II and offered to combat him, which Edward II himself was inclined to treat humorously.

<sup>108</sup> Forth Railway Bridge, Edinburgh EH30 9TB, an engineering marvel stretching 2.5 km from South to North Queensferry, opened 4 March 1890.

<sup>109</sup> Firth of Forth, where the River Forth flows into the North Sea.

<sup>110</sup> Lancelot Law Whyte (1896-1972) - his account of 7 Charlotte Square is given as an appendix. He was a Scottish financier and industrial engineer, and claimed to have worked with Albert Einstein on the unified field theory. Whyte proposed something he called "the unitary principle" to unify theories of physics.

<sup>111</sup> Reading might be "180".



Bahai heroines etc. It was a dramatic address in many <sup>[13]</sup> of its passages. In the audience there were suffragists<sup>112</sup>, suffragettes<sup>113</sup> and anti-suffragists<sup>114</sup>. It was a most difficult thing to talk in a way that all of them may be pleased, all of them may co-operate with each other. But after the meeting Mrs Whyte said that all of them were highly satisfied.<sup>115</sup>

### Bulgaria Hospitals

∴ Mrs Whyte had received a letter from a woman's nurse in one of the hospital[s] in Bulgaria about the awful conditions <sup>[14]</sup> owing to the lack of medical treatment. So she read this letter to the audience and solicited funds for the wounded and sick in this hospital. There are more than 150 sick ones with only one doctor and one nurse. Turks and Bulgors are alike treated in this hospital<sup>116</sup>. The maid had a small tray in her hand at the door of the room and everyone gave something. Our Beloved gave £10<sup>117</sup>.



### On Confirmations

∴ Then the Master came up and talked to us a long time on the confirmations of Baha-allah, how He has assisted all of us in the performing services in <sup>[15]</sup> His Kingdom. Then he quoted an arabic poet:- If divine assistance is with thee, thou canst draw the globe toward thyself with an hair; if confirmation is cut from thee, even the chains will be broken."<sup>118</sup> Then he told us a long story about a man who became the King of Persia through his fidelity and love to God.

### Overview

Well, Harriet! This is the last letter from Edinburgh. Tomorrow morning at 10 we will take the train for London. Altogether the meetings in Edinburgh were miracles of the <sup>[16]</sup> power of Abdul Baha. In a city where there is no Bahai assembly, no active workers in the Cause, to witness so much interest, not only in the part of the public but the ministers! - All the ministers praising Our Beloved and his Teachings! Such events are really incomprehensible! Every gathering was well attended and many people were disappointed because they could not get any seat; all the audiences were sympathetic and glad to hear the message of love and life!  
Good bye for tonight.

<sup>112</sup> Suffragists were men or women who lobbied for women's right to vote, an issue that was at the fore of the times, and which came to pass in 1918.

<sup>113</sup> Suffragettes were members of the women's suffrage movement, often quite radical or militant.

<sup>114</sup> "The Suffragettes were there and also an opposing group of men who occupied high positions in life." [1963]

<sup>115</sup> "Abdul Baha addressed a Drawing-room Meeting on the subject of "Women's rights", which was a burning question of that time. Besides speaking of the high importance of Motherhood and all that is involved in the early training of children, he urged women to fit themselves by study and training in every kind of science and art and social service. "Fit yourselves for responsibility", he said, adding with sad emphasis, "you will inevitably have it thrust upon you." These words came back to many of us, when, before two years had passed, women were called upon to fill every kind of civilian post left vacant by our men at the front; and also to organise and carry out auxiliary army services for the relief of sick and wounded all over the world. Political enfranchisement has naturally followed this evidence of "fitness" in nearly every country concerned; so that his advice to adhere to a constructive rather than a militant policy seems justified... From this meeting at the house of his Scottish hostess, Mrs Alexander White, Abdul Baha and his Persian friends went to the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society..." [EHC Pagan]

<sup>116</sup> Bulgaria (Orthodox Christian) borders Turkey (Muslim), having broken away from Ottoman rule and re-established as a constitutional monarchy in 1878.

<sup>117</sup> Worth £2000-3000 in 2005 currency according to <http://www.mswth.com/ukcompare>. "Mrs Whyte wished to meet the hotel bill of 'Abdu'l-Baha's attendants, but He would not accept her offer." [Balyuzi Abdu'l-Baha]

<sup>118</sup> Poet - [add note]

Love to all  
Ahmad



10 Jan 1913 - Fri

<sup>[1]</sup> 97 Cadogan Gardens  
London S.W.  
Jan 10th 1913

Dear Harriet!

### Scotland

Our Beloved was most pleased with the results of the work in Scotland. For, during 3 days of our stay there, many people accepted the Cause to the extent that they came to him and asked how should they join the Bahai Cause. I believe from now on there will be Bahais in Scotland and, of course, many people who will be always interested and many Societies who will be glad to open their platform to Bahai teachers. The Scottish people are deeply religious and, once they accept the teachings, they will become very active Bahais. The seeds of Truth are scattered in the prepared [soil]; now, some one who can teach wisely must go there and water them: then many harvests shall be garnered and heavenly benediction shall descend.

### Morning and Packing

<sup>[2]</sup> This being our last day in Edinburgh I had to get up very early morning, pack up my small satchel and be ready to be called by Our Beloved which He did after awhile. I packed His satchel too and was doing something else when the call to prayer reached my ears. I hastened down stairs in the large Library and joined my voice with others in Thanksgiving unto the Lord. Having a hasty breakfast I returned upstairs. Mrs Whyte came in with her autograph book in which Our Beloved wrote a most beautiful prayer with His own Hand. The Persian friends came from the hotel and between Our Master and Mrs Whyte there was a long discussion as to who is going to pay the Hotel Keepers<sup>119</sup>. Mrs Whyte having already making the arrangement wanted to pay and the Master insisted gently that He has money and He must pay. At last Mrs Whyte yielded reluctantly and the Master <sup>[3]</sup> ordered Mirza Lotfallah to go and pay the bill.



A curious event happened this morning which was very interesting. Principal Alexander Whyte in giving me one of his printed book on the life of Jacob Boheme<sup>120</sup> said:- "I wish you were Christian" I answered: "We are all Christians. The Bahais are teaching today the Christ"

### Departure

It was about 9.45 when we came down to go to the station. Our Beloved asked for all the maids. When they all gathered He said: you have a very good lady For the last few days you have served me. I am very pleased with you. I will never forget you. I will pray for you that you may become confirmed and assisted and that your head be crowned with the diadems of eternal glory. Then in the palm of each hand he puts a £1- <sup>121</sup>. Two automobile[s]



<sup>119</sup> Where Abdu'l-Bahá's companions were staying.

<sup>120</sup> Jacob Boehme (1575-17 Nov 1624) was a German Christian mystic.

<sup>121</sup> Worth £200-300 in 2005 currency according to [www.mswth.com/ukcompare](http://www.mswth.com/ukcompare). In the 1963 account it is a guinea, making the difference between a note and a coin. "He expressed His deep appreciation of

take us to the station which is [4] very near. There we meet Mr Page, the active and energetic [Secretary of] [the] Esperanto Society, Mr Paul<sup>122</sup>, the kind and hospital Theosophical general secretary; one of the Persian students and two ministers with several ladies and gentlemen who have come to say farewell to Our Beloved. Their hearts are full of gratitude. They are happy because the Sun of Truth shone from the horizon of their country<sup>123</sup>. Just at 10.5 <sup>124</sup> the train was pulled out of the station and our eyes could see on the platform the hands and handkerchiefs waving farewell to Him.

### Cables

The Master dictated some cables to be sent to America. One to Mr [Roy] Wilhelm [in New York]. "Scotland illumined. Greetings to all friends."

### Isobel Fraser

On our train the ever-faithful Miss [Isobel] Fraser who came especially to Edinburgh to serve was with us on the train and Our Beloved [5] called her to His Reserved compartment. All the way from Edinburgh to London, now and then the Master would give her teachings and instructions; especially about the prophesies of the old Testament concerning the coming of the Messiah. "This is a great Dispensation" the Master says. All its events are unique. Baha-ollah appeared with such Majesty and Power that even the enemies were discomfited. They arose in persecution and in order to exile [Him], but they were unable to ridicule or scoff at the Cause. The greatness of this Cause will become apparent in the future. Miss Fraser told us how on her arrival in Edinburgh [she] went directly to see two of the Editors and gave them literature and articles some of which were printed.

One of these editors said - that the people of Scotland cannot realize what a wonderful event has happened in the history of Scotland, <and> [6] I know and appreciate and will do everything to bring the principles of this Cause before the attention of the public.<sup>125</sup>

### Food in Train

At 1.30 pm all of us took lunch in the dining car with Our Beloved. He said: The most important food is the spiritual food. This material food must be eaten three times a day, but whosoever eats of the spiritual food shall never hunger. The Spiritual food is the love of God, the Knowledge of God, attraction with the Breaths of the Holy Spirit and abstraction from material desires. These very conversations of ours today consisted of the spiritual food. God had so destined that you

---

their services during their stay, and gave each of them a guinea. The gentleness of His manner and speech affected some so much that they broke down into tears." [1963]

<sup>122</sup> Major David Graham Pole, Secretary Theosophical Society

<sup>123</sup> "Even Dr. Whyte was very much touched. He (Dr Whyte) gave his book and the Master wrote a prayer for him in his book. He (Dr Whyte) and many came to the station to see the Master off. Mrs Whyte, the heads of Esperantists and Theosophists Societies begged His blessings. He spoke so touchingly and heartfully to them all. I cannot express how touching that farewell in the station was and of how Dr and Mrs Whyte and others were affected is beyond saying." [Lutfulluh]

<sup>124</sup> This could be 10.05 or 10:50.

<sup>125</sup> "During the journey, He remarked, "Such soul-stirring influence among people is solely due to the Might and Confirmations of the Kingdom of God, that in the great gatherings of this city, and in the house of one of their eminent clergy, we, a few souls from Persia, were enabled to diffuse the signs and teachings of God with such power and might, and speak of the glory and greatness of Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to such an extent that all became humble and showed their humility and respect. The eye of creation has not seen such assistance and confirmations before. "We must appreciate these confirmations and in thanksgiving arise in His service." " [1963] "The whole of that day the Master was very happy and joyful of His visit to Edinburgh." [Lutfulluh]

(Mrs Fraser) be here with us in this train; so that undisturbed we may talk together on these ideal subjects. There must be a wisdom in this. I hope that thou mayest become a great teacher of this Cause [7] and be my daughter.

### Chinese and Roman Artists

... Later on the Master told a story<sup>126</sup> of competition between the Chinese and Roman artists. The king appointed a large hall where both of them could paint. The Chinese asked for a curtain to be hung in the middle of the Hall - so that their competitor may not see what they are doing. The Chinese artists worked for 6 months day and night but the Roman artists did not work and everybody thought they are going to lose. Just one day before the King's coming to give the award, the Roman artists set to work and polished the wall like a mirror. The King's ministers and courtiers came. First they saw the Chinese paintings. They were marvellous and beautiful. The curtain then was put aside so they see also the Roman works. The wall polished by the Roman Artists was so transparent that the Chinese paintings on the opposite wall were entirely reflected therein.

[8] The award went to the Romans. Now, may your heart be as pure and as transparent so that the pictures and images of the Kingdom of Abha may be reflected therein.

### London

We arrived in Euston station at 7 o'clock. Miss Jack<sup>127</sup> and several other friends were there to greet Our Beloved.

In a taxi cab we drove to 97 Cadogan Gardens. The ladies were waiting for the coming of the King. After a few minutes the Master expressed the desire of going to [a] hotel and have the meetings here. They have travelled themselves too much. Lady Bloomfield and her daughters and Miss Platt moaned and lamented and pleaded, the latter on her knees till the Master consented to stay. Haji Ameen and the rest are gone to Paris but two new Persians have arrived from Tehran. I had a very bad headache so I went to bed before 11 o'clock. I enclose a copy of "vote" in which the Master's address is printed (not all of it) also copy of Edinburgh paper. Love to all Ahmad



**11 Jan 1913 - Sat**

[1]  
97 Cadogan Gardens  
London  
S.W.  
Jan 11th 1913

Dear Harriet!

...

[2] (line 4)

### Followup Teachers to Edinburgh

...Since his return to London he is anxious that teachers may go to Edinburgh and yesterday the name of Miss Buckton<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>126</sup> This story also appears in Ahmad Sohrab's "I Heard Him Say", p64.

<sup>127</sup> Miss Marion Jack was an artist who shared a flat with Elizabeth Herrick and who stayed on and promoted the Faith in Scotland with Isobel Fraser, including public meetings at 54 Canaan Lane in Edinburgh.

<sup>128</sup> Miss Alice Buckton from London, who wrote the mystery play "Eager Heart".

was mentioned in the train; that is she knows how to speak with Church people, she is certainly the one to go there for awhile and try to teach and water the seeds that the Master has sown; for there were many people who have expressed their desire to join the Bahai movement. Therefore this morning when Miss Chapel<sup>129</sup> and Miss Buckton came in, the Master called them in and after greeting them and inquiring about their health said {to the latter<sup>130</sup>}, Thou must go to Scotland. The people are immensely interested. Edinburgh has great capability. There are many people who are interested.

[3] You must go there and teach in churches, in societies, everywhere. We have scattered good seeds in that soil; now souls who can water this cultivation must go there.

...

## 14 Jan 1913

[Balyuzi: In the evening of the 14th, Mushiru'l-Mulk, the Persian Minister in London, gave a dinner party for 'Abdu'l-Baha at the Legation. The Minister and his staff rejoiced over the news of 'Abdu'l-Baha's visit to Scotland, the reception accorded <p369> to Him in Edinburgh, the reports which had appeared in the press. That 'Abdu'l-Baha had indeed brought glory to the people of the Orient was evident to them all, even as He had described it to the Minister, in their first meeting.]

## 1 Jul 1913

### Tablet to Theosophical Society

Port Said, Egypt

Last night Abdu'l-Bahá told me to come to Him in the morning with a number of petitions just received; so I was there quite early. While He was dictating Tablets he carried on different lines of conversations with a stream of callers and pilgrims. Tablets were revealed for a large number of friends in Europe and America, and a wonderful article for the "Theosophy" of Scotland in Edinburgh, the Editor of which is Mr Graham Pole. [Tablet Quoted]

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p2*

## 28 Jul 1913

### Fatigues in Europe

"I have tarried in Egypt for a few days because I was weakened by the fatigue of traveling through the cities of Europe; by the variable climates of the American mountains and prairies and by the length and hardships of the voyage. While in Europe one day we were in London and another in Edinburgh; now in Paris and anon in Stuttgart; once in Budapest and again in Vienna. We were almost every hour in another place, delivering lengthy speeches and addresses, and notwithstanding the indisposition of the body, day and night I cried and raised my voice in large meetings and important churches..."

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p122*

## 19 Aug 1913

### Isabel Fraser

...May the Hand of God protect you [Isabel Fraser] throughout your voyage and bring you safely into the land of Egypt wherein the ideal Joseph lives! We [Ahmad and company] are all gladness because you are coming and look forward to the day when we will again talk of holy and divine things as we were wont to do in London and Edinburgh, Bristol and Paris. You will be a welcome guest in the holy household...

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p207*

## 29 Aug 1913

### Tablet to Theosophical Society

To-night we had a meeting at the House of Khorassani. Mirza Mahmoud spoke on the trip of Abdu'l-Bahá to Edinburgh. There were many Bahá'ís of different nationalities. An interesting Tablet was sent to Mr. Graham Pole, the Editor of the *Scotland Theosophy* in Edinburgh, in which Abdul Baha refers to Mrs. Besant, the President of the Theosophical Society. As he has spoken before many of their societies in various cities, both in the United States and Europe, it will not be out of place to quote it herein, so that the friends may become informed of its contents:

O THOU MY BELOVED FRIEND !

"Thy letter was received from India. From its contents it became evident that thou art occupied, and art spending thy days in the company of that respected lady, Mrs. Besant. I hope thou mayst be ever happy, serene, confirmed and assisted; so that thou mayst become able to render a signal service to the respected lady, Mrs. Besant. The ideal of Mrs. Besant, I say truly is very lofty. She is working and labouring most valiantly, and her utmost hope is to render a service to the world of humanity, and to be the means of the establishment of good-fellowship and love between all the communities of the earth. At all times I am praying in her behalf, so that the Confirmations of the Kingdom may surround her, that she may sow the seed of service in pure, productive soil; and that she may gather many, many harvests; then the heavenly benediction will be obtained, the outpourings of the Holy Spirit realised, and her services, troubles and hardships crowned with eternal results. I desire this station for her.

Consider how many important women have come into this world! How many queens have lived upon this earth! How many distinguished ladies have become the presidents of Societies! But neither have their names nor any great account of their deeds been left behind! Yet Mary Magdalene, who was only a peasant woman, because she became inspired to serve the Kingdom of Christ and to scatter his seeds in productive ground - what a great crop she gathered! And through the blessing of that harvest, they are even now building churches in her name! In all the Churches the people glorify and praise her and now, after 1900 years, Abdul Baha is speaking of her lofty station! He testifies to the fact, that, in the Kingdom of Christ she served more than all the apostles. She even became the cause of the firmness and steadfastness of the Apostles, for, accordingly to the Text of the Gospels, their faith wavered after the crucifixion, but Mary Magdalene inspired them with resolution, and certainty. Consider what a service she rendered to the Kingdom of Christ! That is why, like unto a star, she is shining from the horizon of Eternity.

<sup>129</sup> Miss Annet Schepel, Alice Buckton's longterm companion. They lived in Byfleet, Surrey, where 'Abdu'l-Baha visited them. See also Abdu'l-Bahá in London.

<sup>130</sup> In the amended text.



"Convey my most respectful greeting to the revered Lady, Mrs Besant.

"Upon thee be greeting and praise.

(Signed) "ABDUL BAHÁ ABBAS."

While in America and Europe Abdul Baha often stated that the Bahais must associate with the Theosophists because they were nearer to this Cause than many other groups.

- *Abdu'l-Bahá in Egypt by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab, p253*

## "A Meeting Recalled" - Florence Altass Recollections

The following is an account by Miss Florence Altass, now <sup>[1967]</sup> of Hastings, of her meeting with 'Abdu'l-Baha in Edinburgh in 1912.

"I had known Dr. Johnson and Dr. Hakim who had invited me to meetings and I went regularly and always felt the profundity of the readings. It all rang so true.

Then the great day arrived when the Beloved 'Abdu'l-Baha gave a talk. Although I didn't know the language, I felt I knew the message he gave. The interpreter didn't mean anything to me, somehow my eyes were riveted on The Great Teacher and Messenger. His great blue eyes seemed to pierce my very soul and I knew then I belonged, but not on the outer plane. Within me a battle went on for years after, as I had been an ardent Catholic and felt that Church held my allegiance.

When 'Abdu'l-Baha shook hands with me, he seemed to transmit something to me, and I've never been the same since, but still the battle went on and the Church I loved seemed like a barrier between me and my conscience. Before Dr. Johnson passed on, I was deciding to go to London. He gave me an address, in a very shaky writing, at Clifton Hill where I could contact more Baha'is. I never called them and for years heard no more until Richard St. Barbe Baker came along. I never mentioned to him my thoughts about the two loves and whether I should be true to the Church of my childhood. While talking he read a prayer to me and then sent me a prayer book, Baha'i, of course, which I treasure. He went away and I used the Prayer Book daily and asked for light but had quite lost sight of any Baha'is until in Brighton I saw an advertisement and went along each week. Friends were very kind to me although I was still an "outsider". Then for three years I was very ill, with no thought of recovery. That decided me, I felt compelled to write and ask to be accepted. No doubts then that I was not doing the right thing.

### Thoughts on seeing a vision of 'Abdu'l-Baha

Beyond the consciousness of dreams, I slept,  
A human body, cuffed by fatigue,  
Away from heartbeat, and the circling blood,  
Deeply alone with myself, and yet I went beyond  
The touch of friendly hands,  
And saw no mortal face.  
But as I stretched to wake  
it was as though  
My whole self breathed celestial verities.  
I found no depth that was not deeper still,  
No height that could be called the peak of time,  
No width that was not wider than the wide.  
Where had I drifted in the where of space?  
Whose love had brought me certainty again?  
Through the tight wrappings of the days' swift pass -  
Then crystal clear - I knew!  
My Lord had seen my need - no chiding word!  
The total love of Baha'u'llah for all the world!  
He took - and shared with me.  
For one bright flash, unknowingly, yet known  
I had ascended with Him into Light.

Writing in 1978, she said: "I felt so unworthy and could never reach the heights expected of me as a Bahá'í. The gentle voice of 'Abdu'l-Bahá still rings in my ears and His lovely blue eyes have followed me all my long life - now in my 95th year. Pardon this reference to myself - it is not to my credit!"



## 7 Charlotte Square

*Description of the Whyte's house at 7 Charlotte Square, and a mention of Abdu'l-Bahá on pp 7-11 of 'Focus and Diversions' (1963) by Lancelot Law Whyte (b 1896, the 8th child of Jane Elizabeth Whyte).*

There were four floors and a basement. On the top floor my eldest sister, a Christian Science practitioner, earned fees for meditation directed towards clients who, not being Scientists, thought that they were physically ill.

On the next floor I only remember two bedrooms: my father's small room, which did not count, and my mother's, which most decidedly did. For it was big and full of strange objects, scents, and other mysteries. There was an electric ozone machine to purify the air. There were spirit lamps for midnight meals (in the day-time she preferred, as it were, 'to live off the scent of flowers'), Celtic crosses, scarabs and drawings from Egypt, several Buddhas of dubious sex, eaux de Cologne and lavenders galore, and my mother sitting up in bed writing letters to extraordinary men all over the world: men with dreams to convert mankind (there was nothing sectarian in No. 7, everything was universal) to new and better religions and more wonderful ways of living. She did not need to save money, so she gave it away, I imagine, to geniuses and cranks. Patrick Geddes I remember, the cranks are forgotten. One floor further down was my father's enormous study, a room of dignity with 6,000 books, where he would be writing sermons or letters to simple unhappy men and women everywhere. In retrospect he seems to me, like most of us, to have been a divided person, but with a warm and sensitive nature.

On the ground floor was a large schoolroom. In an attempt, I suppose, to balance Mary Baker Eddy, the Buddha, Calvin, and Boehme, this was devoted to what I used to call 'muscular Christianity', for it was turned into a gymnasium, complete with parallel bars and what-not, where my father's church assistants used to teach us boys that religion also meant having a healthy body - sex into muscle.

Was any other Scottish home religious quite in the manner of No. 7? A distinguished agnostic, a good friend of the family, once said, 'My religion is No. 7': he found everything there.

None the less, through all this melee of sublimations there flowed a vigorous current of humanity, intelligence, knowledge of the wide world, nonconformism, and, in my mother, a streak of prophetic common sense amounting almost to genius. To these blessed sanities I owe my escape from religious mania. It seems that my mother decided rather early that she had to do something about the religious excess at home. For her four sons were sent to advanced experimental schools in England. By the time I arrived her assurance was established, for she saved me at the age of ten from further Calvinism, and went whole hog by sending me 350 miles away to Badley's agnostic and rationalistic co-educational Bedales.

## Transcription Notes

## State of the Diary

### Sample of Diary Writing

This sample of the Diary is from 6 Jan 1913, page 10, illustrating how the later editing makes the original difficult to read.

## Sample of Diary Writing

trip from Alexandria to New York  
and how some of the friends <sup>had</sup>  
attempted to persuade him ~~about~~ to  
~~insisted~~ that ~~he~~ <sup>they</sup> take the  
"Titatic" instead of the "Cedric"  
~~ship~~. After ~~the~~ people  
were introduced to him  
and ~~Handspake~~ with  
the <sup>to the</sup> Secretary of Esperanto.  
This ~~last~~ <sup>Secret</sup> ~~man~~ <sup>man</sup> ~~Barlow~~  
about Baba said that  
speech ~~see~~ the various

## Key

- ◆ Items of uncertain reading are enclosed in <angle brackets>.
- ◆ Items in {curly brackets} use the amended version. If the wording is clearly required due to omission in the original, it is inserted without curly brackets.
- ◆ Capitalisation is very hard to discern beyond what you expect to be the case. The original for example is very inconsistent about capitalising pronouns for Abdu'l-Bahá, and so have been capitalised throughout.
- ◆ Missing full-stops and closing quote marks are added as required.
- ◆ Footnotes appear at the bottom of pages.
- ◆ The symbol ::: indicates a continuous paragraph split by a heading.
- ◆ Numbers in a square are page numbers e.g. [9].
- ◆ "1963" is the 1963 Abdu'l-Baha in Edinburgh based on the diary of Mahmúd-i-Zarqání; "Lutfullah" refers to Lutfullah's Jan 1948 account.

# Contents

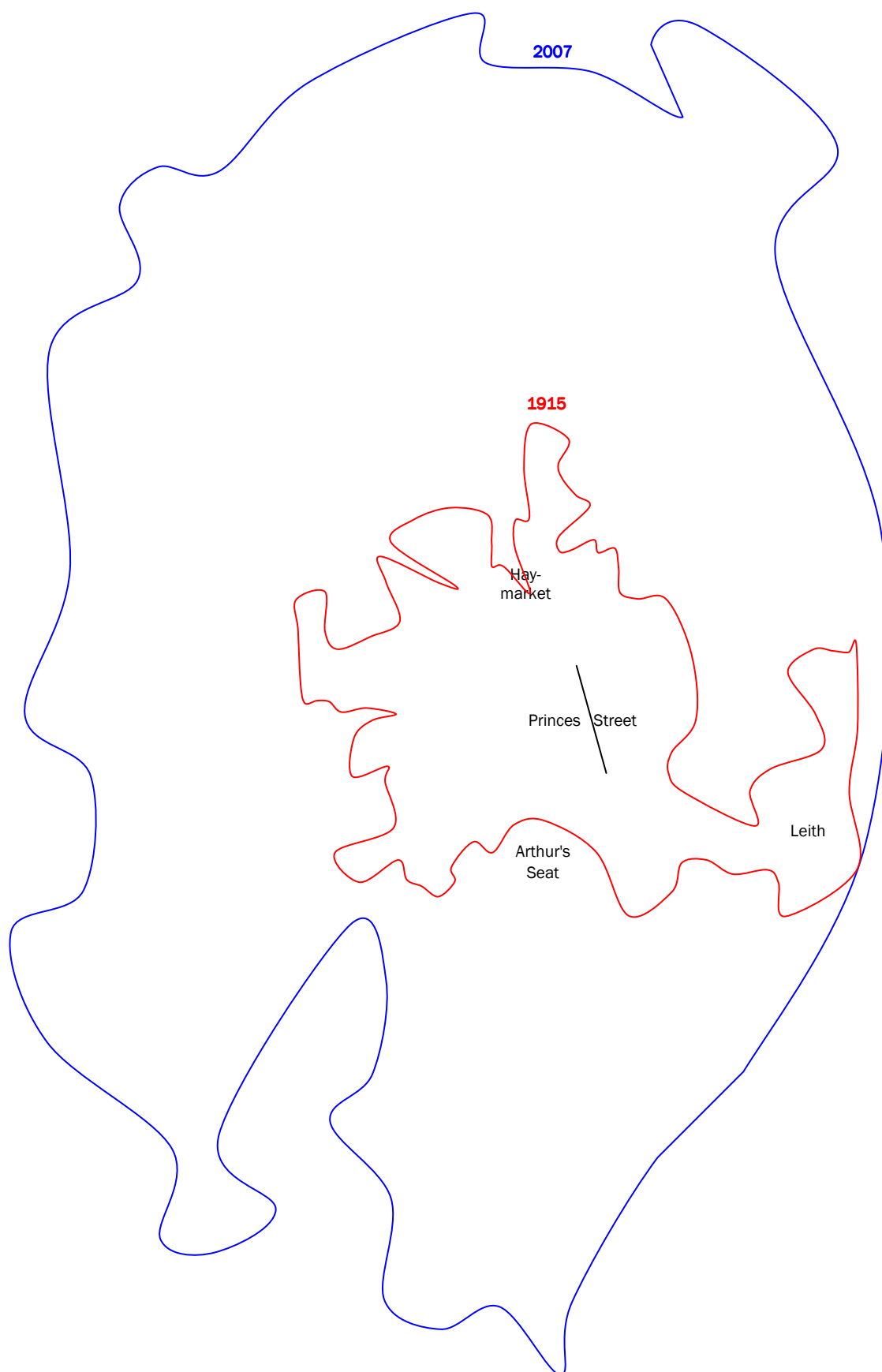
OVERVIEW.....	2
The Diary.....	2
Other Accounts.....	2
Notes Whilst Reading.....	2
Special Note.....	2
1 JAN 1913.....	2
Plan for Edinburgh.....	2
5 JAN 1913 - SUN.....	2
London.....	2
The English.....	2
Illness, Interviews, Daily Schedule.....	2
A Woman's Questions.....	2
English Minister in China - Women.....	3
How To Hold Meetings.....	3
Farewell Address to London.....	3
Interviews, Rastam Pasha.....	3
Painter, Evolution.....	3
Meeting at Miss Herrick's.....	3
Maharaja of Rajputana.....	3
6 JAN 1913 - MON.....	4
Weather.....	4
Whyte's House.....	4
About Edinburgh.....	4
Mrs Whyte in Acca.....	4
Mr Whyte.....	4
Train Journey.....	4
Miss Ramsey.....	4
Islamic Sect.....	4
Arrival in Edinburgh.....	5
Dinner and Visitors.....	5
7 JAN 1913 - TUE.....	5
Esperanto Society 1.....	5
Morning Prayer.....	5
Visitors.....	6
Outlook Tower.....	6
Scenery in Edinburgh.....	6
Outlook Tower.....	6
Country Drive.....	6
Princes Street.....	7
Charlotte Square.....	7
Oriental Students.....	7
Esperanto Society 2.....	7
Dinner + Overview.....	8
8 JAN 1913 - WED.....	8
Weather.....	8
St Giles Cathedral 1.....	8
Cables.....	8
Morning Prayer.....	8
Mr Whyte and his work.....	8
Morning Papers.....	8
Marriage Request.....	8
Sir John Clark.....	8
Mr Whyte Autographs.....	9
Edinburgh College of Arts.....	9
Poor Schools / Kings Commissioner.....	9
Food and Shopping.....	9
Universal Peace.....	9
Rainy Hall.....	9
City.....	10
St Giles Cathedral 2.....	10
9 JAN 1913 - THU.....	10
Weather.....	10
Theosophical Society.....	10
Ahmad / Newspapers.....	11
Visitors.....	11
Visitors / Painter.....	11
Forth Rail Bridge.....	11
Lunch Table.....	11
Women and Equality Meeting.....	11
Bulgaria Hospitals.....	12
On Confirmations.....	12
Overview.....	12
10 JAN 1913 - FRI.....	12
Scotland.....	12
Morning and Packing.....	12
Departure.....	12
Cables.....	13
Isobel Fraser.....	13
Food in Train.....	13
Chinese and Roman Artists.....	13
London.....	13
11 JAN 1913 - SAT.....	13
Followup Teachers to Edinburgh.....	13
1 JUL 1913.....	14
Tablet to Theosophical Society.....	14
28 JUL 1913.....	14
Fatigues in Europe.....	14
19 AUG 1913.....	14
Isabel Fraser.....	14
29 AUG 1913.....	14
Tablet to Theosophical Society.....	14
"A MEETING RECALLED" - FLORENCE ALTASS RECOLLECTIONS.....	15
Thoughts on seeing a vision of 'Abdu'l-Baha.....	15

7 CHARLOTTE SQUARE.....	15
TRANSCRIPTION NOTES.....	16
State of the Diary.....	16
Sample of Diary Writing.....	16
Key.....	16
CONTENTS.....	17
EXTENT OF EDINBURGH IN <b>1915</b> COMPARED TO <b>2007</b> .....	18
BAHÁ'Í LANDMARKS IN EDINBURGH.....	19



## Extent of Edinburgh in 1915 compared to 2007

Boundaries enclose well-populated areas. North is to the right.



# Bahá'í Landmarks in Edinburgh

**Eagles**  
*Fredrick Street meets Queen Street*  
Eagles copied across the Holy Land

**Theosophical Society**  
*28 Great King Street EH3 6QN*  
09 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá talks on many topics

**Bahá'í Centre**  
*44 Albany Street EH1 3QR*  
15 Jul 2005 Purchase of new Bahá'í Centre

**Esperanto Society**  
*Freemason Hall,  
96 George Street EH2 3DH*  
07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá addresses 300 people on International Language

**Georgian House**  
*7 Charlotte Square*  
06-10 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá's residence during his stay and site of many discussions

**Forth Railway Bridge**  
*S Queensferry (off page)*  
09 Jan 1913 11:30  
Abdu'l-Bahá is taken on long drive to visit the Forth Railway Bridge

**St George's West Church**  
*58 Shandwick Place EH2 4RT*  
Church of Rev Alexander Whyte, at whose house Abdu'l-Bahá stayed

**Rainy Hall**  
*New College, The Mound*  
08 Jan 1913 16:30 Abdu'l-Bahá talks on Basic Bahá'í Principles

**Waverley Station**  
*Off Princes Street*  
06-10 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá's arrival (18:15) and departure (10:50)

**Gates of Holyrood Palace**  
07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile

**North Canongate School**  
*5 New Street*  
**St Savior's Child-Garden**  
*8 Chessel's Court*  
08 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Baha visits North Canongate School and kindergarten close by.

**Edin College Arts**  
*74 Lauriston Place,  
Edinburgh EH3 9DF*  
08 Jan 1913 11:30

**Outlook Tower**  
*549 Castlehill EH1 2ND*  
07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá visits tower and city projection (Camera Obscura)

**St Giles Cathedral**  
*Royal Mile*  
08 Jan 1913 evening Abdu'l-Bahá attends charity performance of Handel's Messiah

**Royal Mile**  
07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile down the Royal Mile

**Salisbury Crag, Arthur's Seat**  
07 Jan 1913 Abdu'l-Bahá driven in automobile around the hill Arthur's Seat and also Salisbury Crag