



# The environmental example of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

(One of the first colour photographs, Paris 1911)



In 1875... 'Abdu'l-Bahá rented an island created by two canals, diverted from the Na'mayn river to power two flour mills. On this island, 'Abdu'l-Bahá created an exquisite garden for His father....

Bahá'ulláh called the garden “Ridvan” - which means “paradise.”





He used to take a walk in the park along Riverside Drive. Often He went alone, and, knowing that the friends would like to accompany Him, He said, "I sleep on the grass. I come out of fatigue. My mind rests."



Along the way He commented on the greenness of the region and mentioned how much Bahá'u'lláh had enjoyed such scenes. Several times He asked the driver to stop, and the rest of the party stood and waited as He viewed the area.

(in New York)

When He had finished  
He hurriedly left the  
house and went again to  
“His Garden.”

*239 Days: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America - Allan L. Ward, 1979, p. 89*



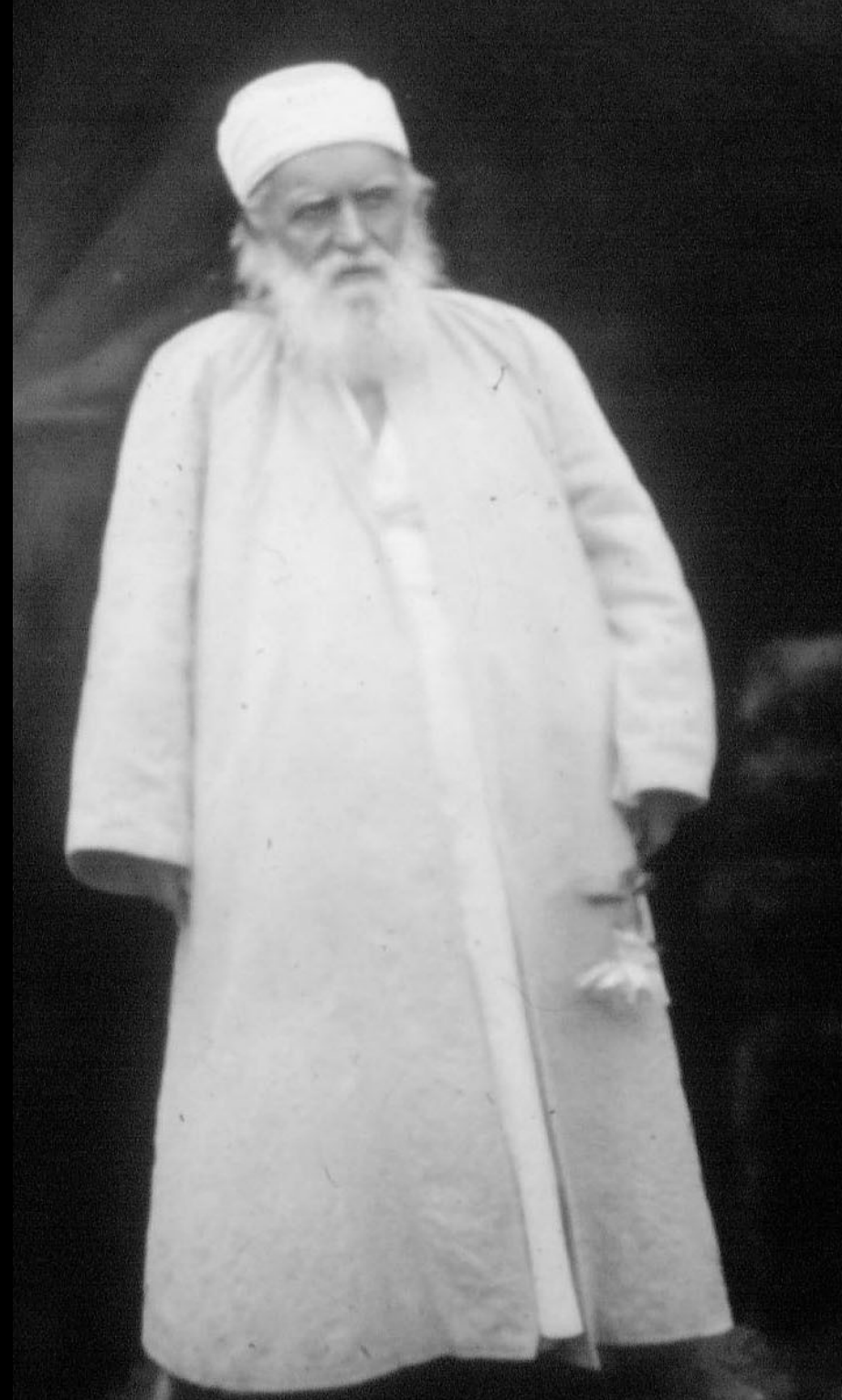
'Abdu'l-Bahá often walked in the morning and evening through Lincoln Park and through the zoo, taking the friends with Him and talking on the way.... From the zoo He led the friends toward the lake, sat on a bench...

239 Days: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America - Allan L. Ward, 1979, p. 54



...when some of the friends described places for sightseeing in America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá remarked, "We love meetings of fidelity and not picturesque scenes.... If we wish to see places of interest and picturesque scenes we should do so when we go to pay visits or when we have to pass through such places and scenes."

*239 Days: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America - Allan L. Ward, 1979, p. 93*





He visited the agricultural exposition, looking at the equipment for ploughing and irrigation, asking about their uses and prices, and surveying the displays of vegetables, grains and fruits. He bought some seeds to send to the Holy Land.

*239 Days: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America* - Allan L. Ward, 1979, p. 159



After morning prayers and tea 'Abdu'l-Bahá and His companions strolled around the beautiful grounds, surrounded by towering mountains.... 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, “We have been in many places during this journey but we had no time to see the sights. We had not even a moment’s rest. Today, however, we have had a little respite.” As they came out and looked at the river and mountains, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said “May God have mercy on the tyrants who kept the Blessed Beauty in prison for forty years. Such scenes were loved by Him.”

*239 Days: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey in America - Allan L. Ward, 1979*



So imperturbable was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's equanimity that, while rumors were being bruited about that He might be cast into the sea, or exiled to Fízán in Tripolitania, or hanged on the gallows, He, to the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits when the storm had blown over, He would bid His faithful gardener, Ismá'íl Áqá, pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him.



Who knows what memories stirred within Him as He stood before the thundering waters of Niagara, breathing the free air of a far distant land, or gazed, in the course of a brief and much-needed rest, upon the green woods and countryside in Glenwood Springs, or moved with a retinue of Oriental believers along the paths of the Trocadero gardens in Paris, or walked alone in the evening beside the majestic Hudson on Riverside Drive in New York, or as He paced the terrace of the Hotel du Parc at Thonon-les-Bains, overlooking the Lake of Geneva, or as He watched from Serpentine Bridge in London the pearly chain of lights beneath the trees stretching as far as the eye could see?

Shoghi Effendi (1957), *God Passes By*, pp. 292-293

In the small room on the roof where 'Abdu'l-Bahá slept and where he died, there was on his desk an illustrated booklet on the sequoias (redwoods) of California.

(personal observation on pilgrimage in 1960)

