

# Abdu'l-Bahá's Travels to the West

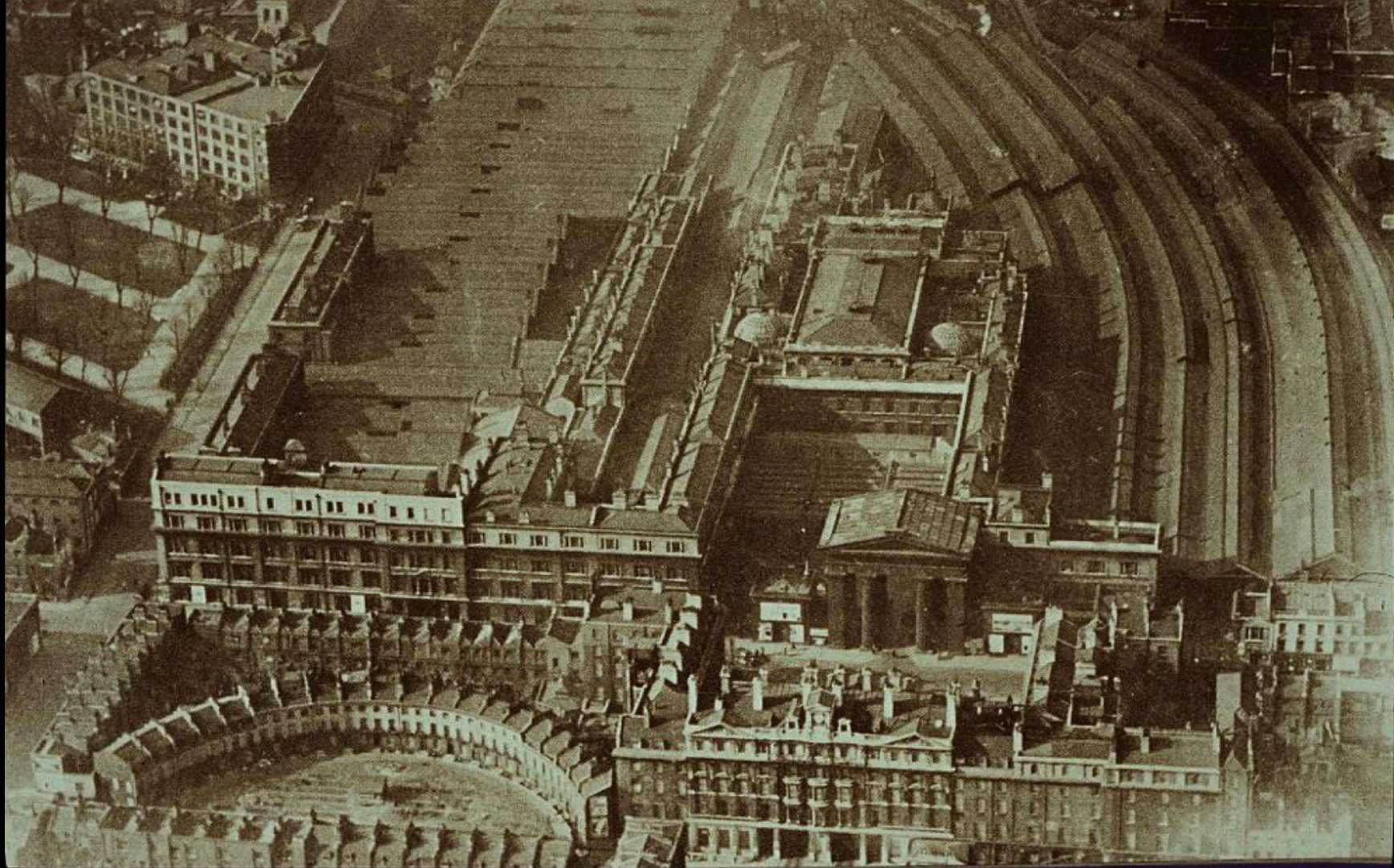
## London, England

16 December 1912-6 January 1913

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'Abdu'l-Bahá arrives in London



London – Euston Station

# Arrival in London

At Euston Station, about fifty Bahá'ís welcomed 'Abdu'l-Bahá to London, where he stayed at the home of Lady Blomfield, who had helped to publish His talks, and He said she "*was dearer to me than all the queens of the world.*"



Lady  
Blomfield



# Arrival in London

One lady told Him that many people in Europe were afraid of a new religion. He responded:

# Fear of a new religion

*They are like unto those souls who say: 'We don't like fresh flowers but we are satisfied with withered and decayed flowers.'*

*Decayed flowers do not have sweet fragrance; their odour is not good; they have no freshness and charm.*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 277)

# Fear of a new religion

*The fresher the flower the sweeter it is and the more charming. If old and decayed flowers were good enough then the Adamic flower would have been sufficient. Every new year needs a new flower, new fruits are necessary, fresh and gentle breezes are needed.*



# A love offering

Hájí Amín arrived from Persia carrying letters from Persian Bahá'ís in an handkerchief. When he opened it for 'Abdu'l-Bahá, it also contained two small loaves of bread and an apple which were sent by a Bahá'í from far off Russia, too poor to show his devotion and love with anything more. 'Abdu'l-Bahá looked at this love offering with such tenderness, with such joy and kindness in his eyes. He ate a piece of the stale bread and shared the rest with those at the table.

# Love

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s first public talk in London was at the Westminster Palace Hotel on 20 December, where He talked about love.

# Love

*As in the material world so in the spiritual world, love is the attracting force that welds together the constituent elements into a composite unity and holds them firm against disintegration.... Love is the cause of the illumination of whole of humanity; discord and dissension are the cause of the destruction of the human race....*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 280)

# Love

*The foundation of all religion as taught by all the divine messengers has been love and affinity. A hundred thousand pities, alas, that the divine message has become the means of warfare and strife!*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 280)

# Speaking to the poor

On Christmas day 'Abdu'l-Bahá visited the Salvation Army Shelter where Christmas dinner was provided to a thousand poor men and He spoke to them about the spiritual benefits of being poor.



London – Salvation Army Shelter

# Speaking to the poor

'Abdu'l-Bahá received many visitors and spoke in churches. On 31 December He went to Oxford to speak at Manchester College where clergymen were trained. On 2 January He again spoke to the poorest working mothers at the Women's Service League.



London – Salvation Army Shelter for Women



# Spiritual benefits of being poor

*I am very glad to be among you, who are blessed in God's name with children. They are the true signs of his spiritual love. The most divine gifts of God. These little ones will grow to be fruitful trees.*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 286-287)

# Spiritual benefits of being poor

*We must look to them for the founders of many beautiful families. Let their education be directed in the ways of purity and useful service. Here are the seeds of the future race and upon them may be granted God's blessing.*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 286-287)

# Spiritual benefits of being poor

As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left the shelter, He said:

*I am truly happy when among the gatherings of the poor. It brings full joy to my heart. I come in contact with those in high stations of life, and those rich in worldly possessions, but my joy is in being with those who are in material poverty, for their sufferings draw them nearer to God.*

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 287)