



Day 4: Monday, August 19, 1912

Mahmúd writes:

Among the friends was a lady who had come from Brooklyn to ask `Abdu'l-Bahá's permission to go to Utica. He kindly said to her:

“Put your trust in the Blessed Beauty. Every momentous work that one undertakes has difficulties in the beginning. One should withstand such difficulties with the utmost steadfastness. We who wish to raise this magnificent edifice must be as brave as the soldiers who are intent on conquering strong fortresses.”

Later He walked to Mrs. Taylor's home. Resting in the foyer, He praised the climate and beauty of the surroundings, saying:

“Here on a moonlit night, when the moon is in its full brilliance, when the stars are shining and the air is pure and a sweet breeze is wafting, at such a time to pray and weep before the Court of God has a delight of its own.”

As He left there He encountered some women who were fortune tellers. Some read palms and others interpreted dreams. They all voiced their opinion that `Abdu'l-Bahá possessed divine spirit and heavenly power. He showered kindness on all of them then returned to the Inn and gave a talk about superstitious beliefs and the severe discipline and asceticism of the Hindus.

He also visited a residence known as the Bahá'í House. He praised it, saying, “It would have been good if we had stayed here.” The Master then gave instructions for the Nineteen Day Feast to be held the following day, saying: “Tomorrow I will host the festivity.”

In the afternoon He was invited to a summer school for girls held on the Green Acre common. Mrs. Tatum drove Him in her automobile. There He sat on the grass near the bank of the river as the students pitched their tents and began their exercises. The principal and a teacher gave Him information about the school. A group had assembled under the trees to hear the Master's address. With great reverence, the superintendent of the school introduced the Master. He then gave an eloquent talk on both spiritual and material education which drew much admiration from the audience.



Afterwards the chairman and school mistress thanked the Master and expressed everyone's appreciation for His talk. The students then stood and sang in praise of `Abdu'l-Bahá in such sweet tones that everyone was enchanted. When the Master left everyone went to the automobile to shake His hand and to express their gratitude.

In the evening `Abdu'l-Bahá spoke on the everlasting dominion of God and His Holy Manifestations. After the talk He answered questions.

STATEMENTS BY ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ REGARDING GREEN ACRE:

THERE IS A PLACE in America called Green Acre. It is customary during the months of summer for people of different creeds and religions to gather there and the leaders of various movements and thoughts deliver lectures and addresses. Thus they have combined most effectively education and recreation. The significance and usefulness of this unique place lie in the fact that they offer a free and unrestricted platform to the citizens of every nation and the adherents of every religion. Thus every subject is discussed with that full liberty of conscience which is enjoyed in the United States. The founder of these conferences, wherein every nationality and religion is worthily represented, is Sarah J. Farmer. To her is due all praise and commendation for having thus initiated this wonderful plan, which must be carried out to its logical conclusion—a universal platform for all mankind, irrespective of race, religion or nationality.

As the name Green Acre is similar to the town of Acca [Acre], when I arrived there I was made very happy. I spent one week in that green and delightful Acca. They had a large meeting every evening in which many people gathered, and I spoke to them on spiritual subjects. I met there many cultured and educated people. It is a most beautiful country place. Its water is pure, its air salubrious, and its atmosphere is spiritual. There are many pine woods; and under a cluster of fine old trees people gather to hear lectures. Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl, when in Green Acre, used to give some of his addresses under these pines, so they are known as the “Persian Pines.” I went there one afternoon; many people had gathered, and I spoke on the Bahá’í teachings.
—*The Bahá’í Newsletter, No. 5 May–June, 1925, 4*

HOW IS GREEN ACRE? When will the season be opened? Green Acre is a most delightful spot. I enjoyed my visit to that charming place. If I go to

America I will pay a second visit to Green Acre. It is a most ideal spot for the dissemination of lofty ideals. . . . You must lay such a foundation so that the influence of the confederation of religions and sects may permeate to all parts of the world from Green Acre; and Green Acre for all the future ages and cycles may become the standard bearer of the oneness of the world of humanity. I will pray for the fulfillment of this truth.

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted in a letter from Ahmad Sohrab, dated May 18, 1913, *National Bahá’í Archives, Wilmette, IL*

THE DESIRE TO SERVE Green Acre is in reality a very important matter. This name (Green Acre) must appear with all its significant meaning, that is, Green Acre must become the reflection of the plain of Acca, and attain to the utmost verdancy, greenness and artistic beauty. Its charms and wonder lie in this—that it may become the center of the Bahá’ís and the cry of Ya Bahá’u’l-Abhá (O Thou the Glory of the Most Glorious!) be raised from all its direction.

—*The Bahá’í Yearbook, Vol. I, 89*

Questions:

1. What kind of talk did `Abdu’l-Bahá give after He met the fortunetellers?
2. What did `Abdu’l-Bahá say regarding the significance and usefulness of this unique place?
3. What did `Abdu’l-Bahá say was the logical conclusion to this place?
4. Why was `Abdu’l-Bahá happy with the name “Green Acre”?
5. What did `Abdu’l-Bahá say was an important matter?
 - a. Giving funds to keep Green Acre alive
 - b. Shooing off people like the fortune tellers
 - c. The desire to serve Green Acre
 - d. Building a larger lecture hall on the property

[Additional story about Green Acre below]

RECOLLECTION OF STANWOOD COBB'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH AT GREEN ACRE, 1906

Two months later I found myself at Green Acre, Maine, looking into the Green Acre Summer School of Comparative Religion, which I had been reading about in *The Boston Transcript*. I was working nearby that summer, and I went over one Sunday to look into it and heard a lecture by a New York sculptor. The lecture did not interest me, but at the end I went up to greet Sarah Farmer, the founder of Green Acre, whom I had met initially the past winter in Cambridge. She held my hand earnestly and said, "Have you heard of the Persian Revelation?" "No," I said. "I know by your eyes you are ready for it," she answered. "Go and ask that lady to tell you about it." That lady happened to be Mary Lucas, a music teacher who had just returned from a visit to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. We sat down under the apple tree on the lawn at Green Acre, and in five minutes I was a Bahá'í.

—*Stanwood Cobb, from his autobiography, A Saga of Two Centuries, 128–29*