

Day 7: Thursday, August 22, 1912



Gertrude Hammond, Francis Keefe with Abdu'l-Baba at Sarah Farmer's home

Mahmūd writes: So many assembled this morning in the Master's home that there was no room to stand. The Master said that it was not possible to speak to each individually, therefore He stood in front of the group and spoke about the teachings and divine exhortations. At one point He said, "I hope that harvests will be reaped from the seed-sowing and that it will receive heavenly blessings."

After the meeting the Master gave permission to some earnest seekers to see Him privately. Afterwards, He went to visit the homes of some of the friends.

Today a lady who had survived the Titanic disaster came to see Him. "I am told," she said, "that you advised not to travel by that ship."

The Master replied in the affirmative. She questioned, "Did you know that this would happen?" The Master said, "God inspires man's heart."

When He returned to the Inn, some prominent people came to see Him. In the course of the conversation they said, "We have always understood that religion is opposed to science but we are now indebted to your discourses and teachings for throwing a new light on our thinking."

The Master gave another talk on these issues for their enlightenment. Another group of people came to visit Him, expressing their heartfelt sorrow that He intended to leave Green Acre. They begged Him to write them a few words in His own handwriting and He wrote brief prayers for them in His exquisite script.

In the afternoon He paid farewell visits to some of the friends at their homes. At each gathering He offered life-giving words and in each home He was as the beloved one who steals hearts. He then returned home extremely exhausted, to the point that He could not even sit down. "Our condition," He said, "is like that of the exhausted iron worker's apprentice whose master said to him, "Die, but pump." After a brief rest He went to the hall at Eirenion and gave a talk on unity among the races, the elimination of prejudice amongst the peoples and nations, and the necessity for the oneness of the world of humanity in this enlightened age. At the end He chanted a prayer in such melodious and sweet tones that every heart was attracted to the divine kingdom and every soul turned to the Beauty of the Beloved. —*Mahmūd's Diary*, 218–19



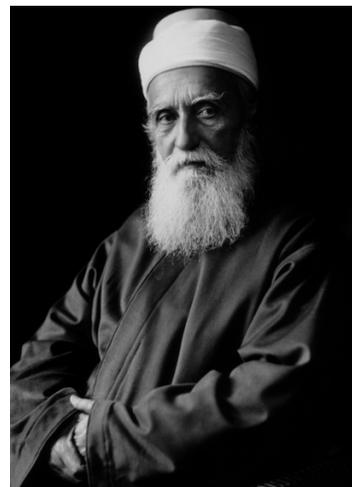
I remember seeing dear Miss Farmer driving in a car to her old home, Bittersweet, there 'Abdu'l-Bahá gave a talk to friends who had gathered there. Miss Farmer had been brought over from Portsmouth where she was living in a nursing home or sanitarium. — **Edith Inglis**

Francis Keefe's Account of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Visit To Bittersweet:

The foregoing [see below] was written by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Persian in a book wherein the guests registered at Emma's (Hammond) reception on Thursday, August 22, 1912. The same will be preserved as a souvenir of the visit of the Persians and the Master's great love for dear Miss Farmer. After resting and sleeping for over an hour in Miss Farmer's suite, He expressed great pleasure and joined the group of people assembled. He paid a glowing tribute to Miss Farmer's Green Acre and said how much he prized His stay amid the sacred places. He summed up briefly what the purposes were and offered congratulations because such a center had been provided it meant much . . . and would mean more in the future for more than was possible for some to appreciate at present. It was and would remain a center of all truth despite any combinations or speech to the contrary. The Lord has blessed it and blessed its founder and like the tree her work had borne fruit and would continue so to bear until all was accomplished in the spirit of love and justice. — *Francis Keefe*

Prayer by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Guestbook at Bittersweet (Sarah Jane Farmer's Home)

He is God! O Thou Kind Lord: This is the house, the home and the nest of the dove of Peace and Concord, Thy dear maidservant Miss Farmer. O God: Bless this house and ignite the lights of oneness in the world of humanity. Verily Thou art the Almighty, the Powerful. (*Signed*) 'Abdu'l-Bahá (*translated by Dr. Fareed*)



A Mr. Tobey, an elderly townsman who enjoyed many Green Acre activities and used to drive many of the friends about with his horse and carriage—"a surrey with the fringe on top"... drove 'Abdu'l-Baha up to Lanier Camp, a couple of miles up the river, there He inspected everything and gave a talk to the campers. After the drive Mr. Tobey made the comment, "He is a nice old man." —**Edith Inglis**



Lanier Camp and Crafts Barn





Juliet Thompson and May Maxwell at Green Acre

From Juliet Thompson's Diary (written 1947)

If only I had written of Green Acre day by day while we were there with Him! There are unforgettable things, but so many details—precious details—have slipped away. . . . When we arrived at the Green Acre Inn the Master met us at the door with His loving Marhaba; then He drew me into the dining-room. “She does not want?” He asked in English. I couldn’t tell the truth then—but of course He knew.

Pictures come back to me. Mamma and I following Him down a path to the Eirenion, where He was to speak to the believers. He was all in white in the dark. Mamma whispering to me:—“It is like following a Spirit.”

A tussle day after day to keep Mamma in Green Acre, in which dear Carrie Kinney helped me.

A night when a horrifying young man came to a meeting at the Kinney’s house. From head to foot he was covered with soot. His blue eyes stared out from a dark gray face. This was Fred Mortenson. He had spent half his boyhood and young manhood in a prison in Minneapolis. Our beloved Albert Hall, who was interested in prison work, had found him and taken him out on parole and given him the Bahá’i Message. But Albert Hall was dead when the Master came to America.

Fred Mortenson, hearing that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was in Green Acre, and having no money to make the trip, had ridden the bumpers to His Presence.

He came into the meeting and sat down and was very unhappy when the Master, pacing back and forth as He talked, took no notice of him. “It must be that He knows I stole a ride” thought Fred (who told me all about it afterward.) But no sooner was the meeting over and the Master upstairs in His room than He sent for Fred.

Fred had said nothing to anyone about his trip on the bumpers—but the minute he entered that upstairs room the Master asked smiling and with twinkling eyes: “How did you enjoy your ride?” Then He took from Fred’s hand his soot-covered cap and kissed it.

Years later, during the first world-war, when the American believers sent ten thousand dollars for the relief of the starving Arabs, the messenger they chose to carry the money through the warring countries was—Fred Mortenson. The Master declined the ten thousand dollars, relieving the Arabs Himself by His own hard labor. He went to His estate near Tiberius and Himself ploughed the fields there; then stored all the grain in the Shrine of the Bab. For this He was knighted by Great Britain when British rule replaced Turkish in Palestine. . . .

But to return to Green Acre. One day the Master, speaking from the porch of somebody's cottage, while the believers sat on the grass below, made this fascinating statement: "We are in affinity now because in pre-existence we were in affinity." "Let's ask Him what He means by that" whispered Carrie to me. So, in the evening, while the Master was in our room—Mamma's and mine—and Carrie was sitting there with us, I put the question to Him. "I will answer you later," He said. But He never did—outwardly.

In a minute or so Mamma, with that funny boldness of hers which would sometimes burst through her timidity, said: "Master, I would like to see You without Your turban." He smiled. "It is not our custom, Mrs. Thompson, to take off our turbans before ladies, but for your sake I will do it." And oh the beauty we saw then! There was something in the silver hair flowing back from His high forehead, something in the shape of the head, which, in spite of His age, made me think of Christ.

There was another night—when Carrie, Mamma and I and a few other believers were sitting in the second-floor hall. Suddenly, on the white wall of the floor above, at the head of the staircase the Master's great shadow loomed. Mamma slipped over to the foot of the stairs and looking up with adoring eyes, called: "Master!"

And still another night. This was our third in Green Acre. Again we were sitting in the second-floor hall, but now the Master was in our midst. "We must say goodbye tomorrow" Mamma said to Him. "Oh no, Mrs. Thompson" He laughed, "You are not going tomorrow. One more day," and He laughed again. "You see, I am leaving for Boston day after tomorrow and you are of My own family. Therefore you must travel with Me." And Mamma submitted now with a satisfaction wonderful to see. She was proud as a peacock. "He said I was of His own Family" she kept repeating to me.

He called Mamma and me into His room and among other things He said was this: "There are correspondences, Mrs. Thompson, between Heaven and earth and Juliet's correspondence in Heaven is Mary of Magdala."

Questions:

1. In response to the woman who asked whether 'Abdu'l-Bahá knew that the Titanic would sink:
 - a. He answered, "Yes. I am aware of all matters, past, present, and future."
 - b. The Master said, "God inspires man's heart."
 - c. He responded, "No, but I'm certainly glad I took another boat."
 - d. He shrugged and said, "I had a feeling. . . ."
2. At Bittersweet, Sarah's home, 'Abdu'l-Bahá praised Sarah's Green Acre and offered a prayer, which included the phrase *ignite the lights of _____ in the world of humanity.*
 - a. peace
 - b. race unity
 - c. progress
 - d. oneness
3. The two themes He spoke on **most** at Green Acre were:
 - a. Mosquitoes and how to avoid backbiting
 - b. Science and superstition
 - c. Peace and reconciliation
 - d. Investigating reality and the oneness of humankind
4. Juliet Thompson wanted to know why the Master said, "We are in affinity now because in pre-existence we were in affinity." But He never explained. What do you think this means?
5. What are you MOST inspired about regarding the visit of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Green Acre?