

# Abdu'l-Bahá's Travels to the West

New York, 12-14 May 1912  
International Peace Forum  
*Oneness of Humankind*

# International Peace Forum

In a talk at a meeting of the International Peace Forum, New York, 12 May 1912, 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke about the causes of war and the role of religions in uniting people and bringing about peace, emphasizing the oneness of humankind.



'Abdu'l-Bahá  
in New York



# Oneness of Humankind

*In the creative plan there is no racial distinction and separation such as Frenchman, Englishman, American, German, Italian or Spaniard; all belong to one household. These boundaries and distinctions are human and artificial, not natural and original. All mankind are the fruits of one tree, flowers of the same garden, waves of one sea.*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 47)*

# Oneness of Humankind

*In the animal kingdom no such distinction and separation are observed. The sheep of the East and the sheep of the West would associate peacefully. The Oriental flock would not look surprised as if saying, “These are sheep of the Occident; they do not belong to our country.”*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 47)*

# Oneness of Humankind

*All would gather in harmony and enjoy the same pasture without evidence of local or racial distinction. The birds of different countries mingle in friendliness. We find these virtues in the animal kingdom. Shall man deprive himself of these virtues?*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 47)*

# Oneness of Humankind

*Man is endowed with superior reasoning power and the faculty of perception; he is the manifestation of divine bestowals.... This earth is one household and the native land of all humanity; therefore, the human race should ignore distinctions and boundaries which are artificial and conducive to disagreement and hostility.*

*(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, [The Promulgation of Universal Peace](#), 47)*



'Abdu'l-Bahá



# Lake Mohonk Conference

On 14 May 'Abdu'l-Bahá went to Lake Mohonk, NY, a four-hour train ride north of New York City, speaking at the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, organized by the International Peace Society.

# Lake Mohonk Conference

The conference was mostly about materialistic matters. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke about the unity of all the peoples of the world, the reformation of the whole world, and how the Manifestation would bring about the complete unity of the world.



'Abdu'l-Bahá with Persian Consul-General Mr. Topakyan

# Peace Conference

Later, 'Abdu'l-Bahá met a group of young people to whom he told this story about the effects of the peace conference.

(Earl Redman, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, pp. 130-131)

# Peace Conference

*Once the rats and mice held an important conference the subject of which was how to make peace with the cat. After a long and heated discussion it was decided that the best thing to do would be to tie a bell around the neck of the cat so that the rats and mice would be warned of his movements and have time to get out of his way.*

(Earl Redman, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, pp. 130-131)

# Peace Conference

*This seemed an excellent plan until the question arose as to who should undertake the dangerous job of belling the cat. None of the rats liked the idea and the mice thought they were altogether too weak. So the conference broke up in confusion.*

Everyone laughed, 'Abdu'l-Bahá with them.

(Earl Redman, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, pp. 130-131)

# Peace Conference

After a short pause He added that that is much like these Peace Conferences. Many words, but no one is likely to approach the question of who will bell the Czar of Russia, the Emperor of Germany, the President of France and the Emperor of Japan. Faces were now more grave. 'Abdu'l-Bahá laughed again: *'There is a Divine Club,'* He said, *'which shall break their power in pieces.'*

(Earl Redman, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, pp. 130-131)



'Abdu'l-Bahá



# Return to New York City

'Abdu'l-Bahá returned to New York City  
until 22 May



'Abdu'l-Bahá in New York