

Abdu'l-Bahá's Travels to the West

Edinburgh, Scotland

6-10 January 1913

International language; patriotic prejudice

Travels of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 45

Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, Scotland, 'Abdu'l-Bahá stayed with Jane Whyte, probably the first Scottish Bahá'í, and her husband Reverend Alexander Whyte, head of the Free Church of Scotland and professor and principal at New College, Edinburgh. There were articles in the local papers and He met many important people.

Edinburgh

‘Abdu’l-Bahá went on a driving tour of the city and visited the University of Edinburgh on 7 January, meeting some of the foreign students. In the evening in the Freemason’s Hall, he spoke to a packed audience about the need for an international language.



Freemason's Hall, Edinburgh



International Language

There were two friends who did not know each other's language. One of them got sick; the other one called upon him, but he could not express his sympathy, so by making a sign he asked him, 'How are you?'

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 295)

International Language

By making another sign, the sick man answered, 'I am almost dying,' and the friend... thinking that he had told him that he was feeling much better, said, 'Thanks be to God.' By such incidents you realize that the best thing in this world is to be able to make yourself understood by your friends, and also to understand them.

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 295)

Risk of War

Speaking in the Divinity Faculty of Edinburgh University on 8 January, 'Abdu'l-Bahá referred, as He often did, to the coming risk of war.



University of Edinburgh

Patriotic Prejudice

What is this native land, this fatherland that we glory over so much? We live but a few years on the surface of the earth; afterwards it becomes our eternal cemetery, as it has been the cemetery of all men and women that have lived since Adam. In the circumstances, is patriotic prejudice worth all the division it has caused?

(‘Abdu’l-Baha, in Earl Redman, *‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst*, Oxford: George Ronald, 2011, p. 296)

Edinburgh

‘Abdu’l-Bahá told one Bahá’í that “*the Federation of Europe would actually come about in the present century.*” Thirty nine years later, after two terrible wars, the first steps were taken in 1951 to form the European Common Market and then the European Union.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá



Return to London

'Abdu'l-Bahá returned to London on 10 January 1913.