

Hopefulness

There was once a man with no home, who lived alone on the banks of the River Thames in London. He was very sad and had lost all hope for happiness in life.

One day, he walked past a shop and a photograph in a newspaper caught his eye. It was the face of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. The man stood frozen, staring at the face. He had never seen ‘Abdu’l-Bahá before and did not know who He was, but he was certain that he must meet Him.

The address of a house was given in the newspaper, so the man started walking, hoping to find Him there. It was a very long distance—thirty miles—but he kept walking until he reached the house.

The man was tired and hungry when at last he arrived, and the lady of the house kindly invited him in, gave him some food, and let him rest for a while. As he rested, he told his story to the woman and then asked her whether ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was there.

“Will He see me?” he asked. “Even me?”

Just as the woman replied that she was certain ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would see him, the Master Himself appeared at the door. The man stood up, and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá stretched out His arms to greet him. It was as though the man was an old friend whom ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had long been expecting. He welcomed him with love and compassion and asked him to sit down next to Him.

Then ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who always knew how to bring lost joy back people’s hearts, began to speak to the man. He encouraged him to let go of his sadness, reminding him that he was rich in the Kingdom of God! As ‘Abdu’l-Bahá showered the man with compassion, His comforting words began to heal his heart and give him strength.

Little by little his sadness drifted away. Before he departed, the man told ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that he would not let his poverty bring him sadness anymore; instead he would find work in the fields and save his money so that he could buy a bit of land, on which he would grow violets to sell in the market. His despair had been changed into hope.