



## Everything in America Is “All Right!”

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THE FINAL LEG OF THE VOYAGE that carries the Hudson River to the sea walks a tightrope between the New Jersey shoreline on its right and the island peninsula of Manhattan on its left. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá sat in a chair by the window of his apartment on Riverside Drive, and looked out across the water to the rising cliffs of the New Jersey Palisades, which formed a canyon along the opposite shore.

He returned to New York today, the city that first greeted him upon his arrival to America. His friends had filled his rooms with flowers.

The Hudson Apartment House was at 227 Riverside Drive, a boulevard on the western side of Manhattan that runs along the river from 72nd Street to north of Harlem, where it finally turns inland. It is a relatively quiet, upper class neighborhood with a strip of park that slopes dramatically to the water below. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá will call this park “his garden,” and return to it again and again.

Over the next two days ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is going to speak to a number of peace societies in the New York area, after which he will travel upstate to deliver the opening talk at the Eighteenth Annual Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration. It takes place every year at a lake resort about ninety miles north of the city, nestled among the mountains. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá has stated that attending this conference is one of the primary reasons for his visit to America.

The reflective atmosphere of the apartment has now been shattered by the arrival of guests. Questions pour in. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá admits that he has “had no rest by day or night,” since his departure, and has been “either traveling, moving about or speaking.” However, “it was all so pleasantly done,” and he has been “most happy.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s flat is located on one of the top stories of the building. Tomorrow he will cross the river once again for a day trip to Montclair, New Jersey. Now that he has spent a month in America, his impression of us is forming. We have been “kind and pleasant,” “polite,” and “inquisitive,” he says. He finds us energetic, progressive, and full of potential.

As his audience looks on, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá tells the story of an American man he met who disagreed with his position that religion is a cause of unity. Yet the man changed his mind after hearing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s argument, declaring: “It’s all right!” “All right! All right!” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá repeats over and over, sending a ripple of laughter through the audience.

“Everywhere you go you hear it,” he later observed. “You ask the bell boy at the hotel to do something and he responds, ‘All right’; you inquire as to the health of a friend and he answers, ‘All right’; everything is ‘all right.’” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá concludes, “I believe that it reflects the optimism of this great country.”

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### **FOOTNOTE / ENDNOTE:**

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