

Bahai Inst. Mount Carmel
Haifa Syria
August 26th 1914

Dear friends!

You may be interested to know the contents of the Beloved's talk on the night of the 20th. It is interesting from a historical standpoint. It concerned the services of the two oldest Bahais who are now in the Kingdom and whose names were Aga Reza and Mirza Mahmood. The children of these two wonderful men are now grown up, are married and have their own offsprings. They were two of that devoted band who followed and served Baha-Ollah from Bagdad and all through his imprisonment in the penal colony of Acca. Their tombs are now outside of the walls of Barrack and this last time while the Beloved was there, arranged for the engraving of a suitable verse on their tombstones. Now I suppose you would like to read the Master's words. He said: "His Honor Aga Reza and His Honor Aga Mahmood were most sincere. They were serving day and night. In reality they accomplished such services that cannot be duplicated by another human being, viz; - it is beyond the power

Baha Allah

of human endurance. When the Blessed Perfection was ^{exiled} from Bagdad, the large number of the ^{Bahais} believers who followed him, divided the work of the party amongst themselves. For example: Darvesh Sedk Ali and Haji Ehrasim acted as equerries; Ostad Mohammad Ali looked after the baggage; Mirza Mohammad Toli supervised the pitching up of the tents and I had the ^{the commissariat department} ~~was if we may use a Military expression in this connection -~~ ^{including the horses etc} ~~a commissary officer~~ and I had to supply the party with food and daily necessities. Often, ^{during the} either by day or by night we covered a distance of 25 to 30 miles. No sooner ~~than~~ we reached a Caravanserai than through sheer fatigue and exhaustion everybody would lie down and sleep. ~~Complete weakness having overtaken every one they were unable to move.~~ But Mirza Mahmud and Aga Reza would not rest for one moment and after their arrival would be engaged immediately in cooking for the party of nearly 72 people. (This was after their arduous ^{duty} ~~work~~ ^{which consisted in} of holding the rein of the horses ^{Baha Allah} ~~in which~~ ^{carried} the planguin of the Blessed Perfection, ~~all day or all night.~~) When the meal was cooked and made ready, all those who had slept would awake, eat and sleep again. Then these two men ^{and packed} would wash ~~all the dishes, pack them up in their proper places and~~

By that time they were so tired that they slept even on a hard ^{floor} ~~boarder~~. During their travel, when they got exceedingly tired, they ^{slept} ~~would~~ sleep while walking. Now and then I ^{saw} ~~see~~ one of them taking a bound ~~and~~ leaping from one point to another. ^{Later we were told by him} Then it became evident ~~afterwards~~ that he was sleep ^{in that state} and he was dreaming that he had reached a wide creek and ^{had} ~~he~~ the jump. In short, from Bagdad to Samson ^{these two souls} they served with such rare faithfulness and loyalty. Truly, no human being had the ^{strength} stamina to bear cheerfully all these hard labors; but because they were unkindled, they performed these services with the greatest amount of happiness. I ^{often} remember when ~~in~~ the early morning we ^{were} ~~wanted~~ to start for another Caravanserai, ^{after} ~~after~~ we saw these two men ^{were} fast sleep. We ^{and we had to shake them hard to} ~~would~~ go and shake them ~~hard~~ but they ~~would~~ ^{then} awake ~~after much difficulty~~. ^{But when} and ~~while~~ they were walking ~~on foot~~ they ~~were~~ ^{very soft} always chanting communions and ~~supplications~~.

In those days a famine raged all along the road. ~~Then~~ ^{our stopping} when we reached the station, Mirza Jafer and myself ^{would} ride and go from one village to another, from one ^{this} Arab or Kurdish tent to ^{the next} another, trying to gather food, straw, barley etc for the men and animals.

Many a time we were ~~out~~^{away} till midnight. One day we ^{happened} to call on a Turk who was harvesting. Looking at his large pile of straw we thought we have come to the end of our ^{search}. I approached the Turk politely and said:- 'We are your guests and one of the conditions of faith is to honor the newly arrived guests. I have heard that you ^{belong to} are very liberal ^{race} people, very ~~generous~~ and whenever you entertain a guest, you kill and cook for him a whole sheep. Now we desire to have such and such a thing and are ready to pay any price ~~for them~~ you demand. We hope this is ^{reasonable} enough!' He thought for a moment and then said:- 'Open thy sack'. Murzo Jafor opened it and he put in it a few handfuls of straw. I was amused and said: 'My friend! What can we do with this ^{little} straw. We have 36 animals and we want feed for everyone!'

In brief, everywhere we encountered much difficulties till we arrived in Karpout. Here we observed our animals have become very lean and walked with great effort, ^{as} and we could not get ^{enough} straw and barley for them. Having reached Karpout the acting-governor General came ^{out} and called on us and ~~with himself he brought~~^{he sent} ten car-loads of straw, ten sacks of barley, ten sheep

several baskets of rice, several bags of sugar, many
 pounds of butter etc. There were sent as gifts by the gov-
 ernor General, Ezzat Pasha, for ^{Bahá'í} ~~the Blessed Perfection~~.
 Having had the experience and knowing how difficult it
 was to get anything from the farmers on the way, when
 I looked at these ^{gifts and} ~~things~~, I knew ^{were} ~~that~~ they are god-sent
~~and~~ they were accepted gladly. At that time Aga
 Hossein Ashjee was ^{the} assistant-cook and was working
 day and night. He had no time to sleep. We stayed in
 Karpant one week and had a good rest. For two days
 and nights I did nothing but sleep. The Governor-
 General, Ezzat Pasha called on the ^{Bahá'í} ~~Blessed Perfection~~.
 He was a very good man and showed us much love
 and service ~~I have ordered that the tomb stone~~
^{Like wise} of Meshfeen Talam (the great Bahai Caligraphist)
~~may also be built.~~ He was one of the most worthy ^{amongst} men
 and always good-natured. With his inimitable stories
 and mimicry he made every one laugh. He was a
 blessed soul. In the path of the ^{Bahá'í} ~~Blessed Perfection~~
 he was exiled to Cyprus. His faith was strong and
 he was never agitated or disturbed. Whatever
 happened we were together, ~~were~~ not separated.

and were engaged with our own affairs but he was left almost alone on the Island of Cyprus. Notwithstanding this, he was always endeared and attracted. Sini Saray his honor Sayyah Effendi, Aga Mohamad Pasha and Aga Abdollah. These believers of God remained firm and steadfast. They were all blessed souls. They underwent sufferings and persecutions in the Path of the Blessed Perfection. They became homeless and shelterless - wanderers over the face of the earth. It is most difficult to stand unshaken during the days of trials. While we were still ^{living} in Bagdad, the conditions at one time were so constrained, that the friends of God were always in the jeopardy of losing their lives. No night was spent with the assurance that they will be alive in the morning and not morning did they arise with the heartfelt security that they will see another night; yet were they in the highest station of constancy, resolution, spirituality and attraction, Aga Reza and seven others lived in one small room. They rested, ate and slept in this one room. Every night they had spiritual meetings and they chanted prayers and poems till long past midnight. Often their food consisted of a few dates.

These Bahais were peddlers in the bazaars; some of them did not sell anything all day. When in the evening, all of them returned home, they put together the few Piastres they have made and bought their dinner with that ^{small} amount of money. Some days they had sold only 20 Pares. With this they bought dates and helped themselves with that. Withal they were the richest men on the face of the earth. They were in a condition of holiness, sanctity, attraction and devotion. There was amongst them a man by the name Sheik Sadek of Yazd. In reality he was a spiritual soul. When ^{Baha Ollah} the Blessed Perfection departed from Bagdad he supplicated Him to be one of the party. Baha-Ollah told him to continue to stay there for the present. When we arrived in Karkout which is about 12 days from Bagdad, the fire of separation flamed so intensely in the heart of Sheik Sadek that he left Bagdad and ran for miles and miles with the post horse to reach us; but he died on the way. There was another man, Aga Ali Ezzat from Kashan. He was also a most holy soul. There was another man, Pedar Jan. I cannot sufficiently praise him.

He was the embodiment of spirituality. He used to carry under his arm a dozen of stockings while walking in the Bazaars, in the hope of selling them. Meanwhile forgetting his surroundings he would chant slowly the communens and some one would come up quietly after him and take the stockings from under his arm. ^{Later on when} Then if a customer ^{asked him for} ~~wanted~~ a pair of stockings, he would look ^{under} his arms and there were nothing to ^{be} ~~seen~~. Then he thought, he ^{would} ~~will~~ carry the stockings ^{next} ~~this~~ time on the palm of his hands. Again he became absent-minded by the ^{prayer} ~~reading~~ of the ~~supplications~~ and the stockings were stolen without his knowledge. There was also amongst this group his honor Ishaq. In short, when ~~we~~ mention the names of these true spiritual pioneers of the Cause, ^{my} ~~our~~ hearts become illuminated ^{and} the fragrances of the Merciful reach ^{my} ~~our~~ nostrils. ^{the remembrance of} For their deeds, words, and actions makes one thoughtful and aware of the stern realities of life ..."

This morning a little shower and the air was cleaned from its oppressive heat. The Master came out and walked in the garden. In the evening he called into his presence two newly arrived pilgrims from Bagdad and Teheran.