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Moonbeam Bahai Calm  
Abou Senan, Acca Syria  
April 3<sup>d</sup> 1915

Dear friends!

Locusts! locusts, locusts! They come from all directions. Like ~~unto the leaves~~ before the mighty blasts of October, they are seized, whirled around through the air and sprinkled far and wide over the green fields, to be green no more. Like ~~unto the~~ white snowflakes of the cold and frozen January, dancing and eddying while descending from the upper regions, <sup>to</sup> covering <sup>the</sup> mountains and valleys to be melted in the spring forming a rushing, furious deluge, to carry before it, every sign <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ plants and <sup>the</sup> ~~vegetations~~; Like ~~unto the~~ frenzied and infuriated armies of great Powers they march on with violence and impetuosity, leaving in their wake destruction, and poverty, and misery and famine. Like ~~unto the~~ surging waves of the tempestuous ocean they rise and rise, causing the sinking of hundreds vessels of lives and thousands ships of animated beings. Millions of <sup>tiny</sup> airships, soaring above the heads of the wondering villagers who look up at them with dismayed hearts. Like ~~unto the~~ innumerable sands of the African Sahara they are blown hither and thither, covering the green farms with their yellow bodies and eating the substance of the widows and orphans. In the sunlight they looked like ~~unto~~ millions of shining, dazzling bits of beaten cotton, driven westward or northward by the blind force of the wind. It was an irresistible flood of pestilential insects, <sup>life</sup> raining down upon wretched humanity to complete the circle of God's catastrophes. From 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. their migration continued uninterrupted, and ~~undiminished~~ <sup>uninterrupted</sup> and as the night approached their ~~flight~~ <sup>numbers</sup> of their ever increasing armies stopped, to be resumed tomorrow and after. I had never seen the fearful migration of locusts and therefore was out often during the day, watching these "hosts of heaven" passing by in their search for food. Now and then they covered the face of the sky, casting gloom and fear <sup>for</sup> of the future in the faces and hearts of the awe-struck beholders. What a dreadful danger is before the <sup>people</sup> ~~public~~! Syria has been afflicted in the last year with all manner of disasters and the locusts have come to consummate and round up the work of ruin.

No sooner <sup>had</sup> they ~~locusts~~ <sup>when</sup> began to descend on the fields of wheat, barley, <sup>and on</sup> corn the olive and fig trees than the women and girls poured out of their mud cottages with tin cans and sticks in their hands to scare them away. The whole valley was reverberating with this noise all day. I walked through many fields and saw the poor women frantic with <sup>the</sup> fear of famine, chasing away the locusts by the dint of this loud clatter and clamor. Many of them were weeping with despair as the locusts <sup>plunged</sup> jumped from one corner of the farm and descended <sup>on</sup> another. "Oh locusts! O locusts! fly away for the starlings and storks are coming" was the line sung by the girls as they ran from one end of the field to another. As I walked in the road thousands arose before my feet and fluttered around my head, and hit their wings in my face. Just before sunset they spread themselves on the boulders and rocks, shining with their yellow colors. They are quite big and large, the length of the females being more than three inches. It is a common belief that sometimes right after the coming of locusts the storks will appear on the scene and eat them, but when their hunger is satisfied they cut them into two pieces and throw them on the ground. Likewise it is claimed that the starlings will do away with them but I do not yet know whether these matters are really true. It is said that the home of these locusts is in Nejd and Arabia. They have already covered half the country of Syria and are still extending the limit of their migration. At first they eat the tender grass and late <sup>planted</sup> corns and wheat. Then they lay their eggs and within 3 to 5 weeks the larvae appear, eating everything before them. In fact the damage wrought by the larvae is more serious than the parents. One of the most distressing situations that faces the Syrian communities is that all the active young men are in the army and many of them are already killed - leaving behind women, children and old men to carry along all the labors, with this new threat of general famine, no one would like to raise the <sup>curt</sup> and look into the future - unless God may open before their faces the unexpected doors of His Mercy. From every side He hath encircled the people with the fiery ring of His wrath and indignation, pouring upon the rain of His displeasure.

This morning the Beloved went out to call on Mahamad Ibrahim Mashadi Fattah who is said to have been attacked with dyspepsia. He has been sick for a week, suffering from considerable fever, chill and high temperature. Our Doctor has been attending him almost every day and we hope he will pull through the critical stage, as he is quite an old man. On his return he came to our Cabin and sat in front of window for more than half an hour watching the unceasing flight of the locusts. "These are the armies of God" he said "They are countless in number. Look at them how they fly. How high they are ascending in the air. They must also be fed. Every animated creature and living organism must have food. These are the new guests. So far they have had their breakfast, they now desire their lunch and dinner. On the other hand the people are in great agitation and perturbation. - The physical trials stir them up to the deep but the ideal ordeals do not touch them. They are concerned for the well-being of their bodies but do not care for the protection of their spirits. They are not troubled about the perdition of their souls but are solicitous for the preservation of their corpses. They have no regard for the punishment of their minds but are pleased over the chastening of their physical bodies. . . . . I remember many years ago there was a great migration of locusts between the plain of Acca and Haifa, to such an extent that the ground was covered with these insects. While they were flying the air was filled with thousands of storks and they began to eat and cut them to pieces."

<sup>it</sup> This was a day of locusts. Everybody spoke about <sup>it</sup> or was out looking toward the sky and watching the heavenly hosts passing by. We saw the Master several times behind the window looking at this scene. In the afternoon he rode on horseback and with Shiek Saleh went to Yarkeh, the village wherein the Blessed Perfection spent one summer. We were chasing the locusts in the valley when we descried a rider from afar. As he approached ~~we~~ he gave us the information that he was sent by the Shiek to let the members of the Holy Family know that the Beloved will stay in Yarkeh over night and come next morning. With this news we returned to the Cabin singing Bahai songs and praying to God to be merciful to His servant.