

Home of Baha Ollah 11
Acca. Syria
March 29th 1915

Dear friends!

Yesterday and last night we had a heavy rainfall. Toward the evening the artillery of heaven boomed forth, the thunder roared, the lightning flashed and the windows of the upper sphere opened. Indeed it was a bounty on the part of the Lord of mankind to the people of these parts. It gave a new hope to the hopeless, forlorn farmers and a new lease of life to plant and animal kingdoms. It rained many hours during the day and all the hours of nights, thus the plain of Acca and the surrounding villages are for the present well-watered. When we entered the room of the Beloved this morning he looked out of the window and smilingly said: "Did you hear the thunder and lightning last night? The farmers must be now very happy. The Grace of God is truly unlimited. No matter how sinful are His servants still He is Kind and Forgiving. He showers His Bestowals upon them and encompasseth them with the angels of His Love. He does not leave them alone and helpless but comes to their succor whenever they call upon Him. He hearkens the prayers of His sincere worshippers when ~~their~~ redolent incense of their invocations ascend from the altar of their sacrifice to the throne of His Benevolence. He disappoints no one and turneth His bright Face toward all those who truly seek Him. Verily He is Kind, Indulgent and the Lord of Mercy. He is the Lord of Hosts and in His Hand is the rain of all things. No leaf falls from the tree without His permission and no man advanceth toward Him without the Light of His Guidance. The world and all that is contained therein is created through the power of His Love. If the radiance of the Sun of Divine Love be withheld from us for one second we will become non-existent. Morning and evening we must praise Him for His precious Favor and priceless Gift of Guidance and Knowledge. For even in darkness we behold the Light of His Countenance, in prison we witness the immensity of His Kingdom, amidst difficulties we experience the consolation of His beatitude and in the narrow well we see the paradise of His eternal Palace."

We received a letter to day from one of the believers in Hogaib on the shore of the Sea of Galilee that for the last few days there has been a great migration of locusts in those localities to such an extent that some hours during the day the heaven was darkened by their number. The people were alarmed over the unwelcome arrival of these terrible enemies of man, for they have been ^{responsible} since agriculture began, for wholesale devastation and famine. As you know well these insects will eat anything that is green and leave behind them ruin and hunger and suffering. The friends had begged the Beloved to protect them from the ravages of this plague. This afternoon when we sat in his presence it was reported to him. He thought for a moment and then slowly, deliberately said: - "These are ^{also} the servants of God. They are not created by the devil. They are in need of food. They will not eat very much. They are the guests of the people. During my childhood ^{an incident} occurred in Mazandran in which the locusts played an important part. There were two men by the names of Mohamad Khan and Ahmad Khan each one possessing a village at a distance of 20 miles. In the first month of spring these districts were visited by a voracious army of locusts and the people were alarmed at their appearance. Mohamad Khan who was rather a progressive man presented a plan to his colleague whereby to wage war on the pests and destroy them while in a state of larvae. Ahmad Khan was a fatalist and did not endorse the idea. 'These are the armies of God' he said 'I shall never become a party in a league to fight with them. Whenever they reach my village they are welcomed.' The other proprietor did not listen to the advice of his friend and being a rich man he availed himself of every known system to intercept the march of the migratory horde. Deep pits were dug, - so that the wingless grasshoppers may fall therein. These precautions, however, did not check their aerial migrations and innumerable swarms filled his farms and all the cultivated lands belonging to his village. First they ate all the green plants in sight and stripped off the trees from their leaves. Then they began to eat the bark of the trees. Finding ^{nothing} else to satisfy their hunger they arose in the air and migrated toward the village of Ahmad Khan. Wonderful to relate when

they reached the ^{said} village they tarried for an hour and then all of a sudden flew away without materially affecting the farms and the gardens. When Mohamed Khan heard about this extraordinary news he became dumfounded with astonishment. 'What!' he cried ^{out} after regaining his bearing 'Is this really true? I spent all my fortune in order to intercept these pests and still I did not succeed but this man did nothing! He believed they were the armies of the Lord and therefore entitled to honor and respect! Who could ever entertain such a subversive idea! They are the cause of famine and poverty and still they passed over his village without harming it! How ^{can} one explain this strange phenomenon? I took every precaution to stop their destructive ravage with no result but he sat in his house and did nothing, still his plantations were protected!'"

In the evening the question of niggardliness was touched. The Beloved related the following story: "There lived in Esphahan a merchant who was very rich but practiced parsimony to the utmost degree. Because he had many boys and girls, every evening before going home he would buy so many loaves of bread and in the morning he gave to each one loaf and one cent. This was ^{their} ration till the next 24 hours. Another merchant who displayed the opposite quality and prepared every means of comfort and enjoyment for the members of his family heard about the stinginess of his neighbor and upbraided him severely. 'Why,' he was answered 'I have six children and every day they receive six cents. With this sum they can ^{buy} two pots of Abgousht from the bazaar and eat its broth by day and its meat by night. What else do they want? But you send to your ^{children} every eatable things - the result is the over-filling of their stomachs with different kinds of food - thus causing them dyspepsia, constipation and other ills but my children are always in good health and seldom complain of any sickness. Therefore you see that my parsimony is backed up by hygienic and physiological considerations while your ^{extravagant} family expenses lead to troubles." Other stories were related and it was late when we came out of his Presence, our hearts the treasuries of his knowledge, our minds the keepers of his thoughts and our wills humble before his divine Will.