

Home of Abdul Baha
Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria
June 22^d 1915

Dear friends!

As I entered this morning the garden of the Lord my heart was sad for it looked like a sea of hopping and flying locusts, eating away with an enormous appetite all the trees and flowers; even the barks of tender branches are eaten up. It seems to me that their very breath is poisonous to the flowers for no sooner they sit on them and start to devour the leaves they are dried up. They are so numerous that they have denuded large gardens of several acres from every green foliage in three hours or less. Once they stick to the trees it is impossible to chase them away and it is simply useless to do so, for if one by dint of effort chase away one party in five minutes another party will take its place. They are hungry and in need of subsistence. Especially do they love the leaves of orange, mandarine, fig, pomegranate and apricot trees. Vegetables of all kinds are much relished and for flowers they manifest an inordinate desire. This ^{and next} year we will have no fruits whatever, no watermelons, no figs, no grapes, no vegetables of any description. Already in the market there is scarcely any green things. The price of butter, olive oil, soap is quadrupled and great consternation reigns amongst all classes. The poor ones have been already stripped of every means of support and the rich are being placed rapidly in the same class. Not only do they not get a cent out of their nude and devastated gardens but they must also pay the exorbitant and merciless charges of the government as well as war-taxes. Many people will be more than glad to get out of the country but there is no possible way of escape. Day by day the condition of the poor becomes more hopeless and harrowing and the army of unemployed and destitute growing larger and larger. I wonder when God will send a relief, when will He show His face of mercy to these people, when will He take away the heavy ^{load} from behind their bent backs, when will He open a way, when will He shower His graces upon the world of humanity and when will He extinguish the fire of hatred raging in the hearts.

For the last five days a merchant steamer was anchoring off the bay of Haifa with apparently nothing to do but this morning at ten o'clock an aeroplane arose from her deck and made a complete circle above Mount Carmel. The Beloved came out of his room and as it passed above the house he watched it intensely. Its whirrs were heard most distinctly. Reaching the central part of Haifa the air mariner dropped down on the frightened populace many packages of magazines and newspapers giving no doubt unfavorable news to Turkey and her reverses. But as far as possible they were gathered by the police. No doubt a few pages will fall into the hands of the people and before long we will hear their contents. For example it is stated that one of the papers dropped in Beirut contained the following significant ^{in French} sentence: "Daus vinge jours. bonjour pour toujours".

At noon Our Beloved entertained at lunch about twenty officers, government officials, Mofti, the judge, the Gaemmagam and other distinguished men. They all sat around his generous table and partook of this bounteous Persian dinner prepared for them.

In the afternoon he took a long walk toward the German colony and because there were so many locusts on the way he spoke about the damage they have already wrought to Syria. Then he related to us a dream he had last night. "Last night I dreamt I was riding on a dromadery, going fast through a desert. The animal became wild and beyond my control. Then I jumped down from its back and ran away and stood on a hill. Somehow he had got hold of my shirt and imagined that I was in it. He was striking it against the sand with great rage as though he wanted to tear me to pieces. However from my vantage-ground I was looking at him and was much amused at his irresistible fury."

In the evening we had a quiet spiritual meeting. Hidden words were read and supplications chanted. The Beloved spoke briefly about the Bahai cemetery in Haifa and how it must be intersected by four straight avenues and the plan of a garden he drawn. He wished every tomb be surrounded with flowers and a rest-house be built within the enclosure for the comfort of those who follow the funeral.