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Excerpts from a diary by Ihsan Turjman (a Palestinian Arab soldier in the Ottoman Army in Palestine).

Misfortunes Visit Us All at Once:
Locusts, War, Inflation, and Diseases
Sunday, May 9, 1915

I write this with my mind totally preoccupied. I cannot think of anything except our present misfortune. When will we finish with this wretched war, and what will happen to us next?

Our lives are threatened from all sides: A European war and an Ottoman war, prices are skyrocketing, a financial crisis, and the locusts are attacking the country north and south. On top of all this, now infectious diseases are spreading throughout the Ottoman lands....

Typhus Is Spreading in Jerusalem
Monday, May 24, 1915

I was shocked to hear today about the death of Ahmad Effendi Nashashibi....He died from typhus in the prime of his youth. He was buried this afternoon. Diseases are spreading like wildfire among the population, especially among Muslims – for they do not take the proper precautions, may God forgive us. I was told from one of the health inspectors in town that four typhus cases were reported in one day alone in Bab Hutta. When I heard the news, I was struck with great dread, not only for the people but also for myself. First, because I live and breathe all day among soldiers, in a place that is full of bugs and lice; and second, because of the lack of good hygiene in the workplace....I love life and enjoy its offerings. Please God, I am still young, do not take me away.

“The Diary of Ihsan Turjman.” In *Year of the Locust: A Soldier’s Diary and the Erasure of Palestine’s Ottoman Past*. Salim Tamari and Ihsan Salih Turjman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 117-118, 127-128.