

great regret the immense damage caused by the locusts, just at the time that the grass is fresh, and grain in the ear. I will quote in his own words, the account given by Benedetto Bordone, in the third Book of his *Isolario*. After speaking of the advantages enjoyed by the island, he goes on to describe the destruction wrought by the locusts. "But among so many blessings (so that there may be nothing in this world without its bitterness) the luck and prosperity of the island are marred by an evil of such gravity that for all its fertility it can hardly bear up against it. This is the enormous quantity of *cavallette* or locusts, which appear with the young crops, and in passing from place to place so vast are their legions that like a thick cloud they hide the sun. And where they light they devour the corn, the grass, and the very roots below, so that you would fancy a fire had blasted the ground. And this though the inhabitants with all diligence give their time and money to destroy them by digging out their eggs before the insects are hatched. It may seem an exaggeration, but it is true that in some years they find as many as 30,000 bushels. They try too another most costly remedy, sending to Syria to fetch a certain water, with which they drench the ground, and the eggs so watered burst, and do not hatch out the insect." Things are very different now. Then the peasants took all possible trouble to extirpate the plague; now they are forbidden to search for the eggs, though at this stage the locusts are so easily destroyed. It is the Turks who forbid them, because they esteem it a capital sin to rebel against a Divine judgment, and the Greeks let the creatures be, for fear of some fresh ill treatment. Their chief habitat is the plain of Mesaria, and when they appear one can only hope for a strong land breeze, which carries out vast numbers to be drowned in the sea. The remedies used from time to time to destroy the locusts are described at the end of a Report, printed in 1717 at the Grand Ducal press at Florence, of the operations in Tuscany, where they appeared in great numbers in 1716.