

SYRIA UNDER MEHEMET ALI—A TRANSLATION¹

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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

Oh Thou Helper (of men),²
Thy help do I seek!

The poor slave (of God), Naufal b. Nimat-il-Lah Naufal b. Jurjus Naufal-it-Tarabulsi, who hopes for the mercy of his powerful Lord, after having praised the self-existent, living, eternal, everlasting, and worshipful God, says:

I have compiled the greater part of this book from the greatest histories of the Exalted Empire; and after I had translated it into Arabic, I concluded it by adding to it [more exactly: "I added thereto by way of complementing it." Besides being a more just rendering of the Arabic phrase, this gives a very different, more modest, and for the author much more complimentary aspect to the author's own knowledge and view of what he was doing. He knows full well and says clearly enough that throughout, in the conclusion as well as in the main body of his work, the substance is taken from Ottoman Turkish histories, and native authors, his own recollections being used only in a complementary way. In other words, and herein lies the point of the editor's objection to Dr. Rustum's translation, this phrase does not refer to the conclusion or Epilogue, differentiated from the main body of the work, but to the author's method in general. M.S.] from that which I had collected from some of the modern and reliable native works, and from that which had remained in my memory of contemporary events. And I called it "The Unveiling of the Chief Features of the Government and the Court Decisions of the Two Provinces of Egypt and Syria from the Time When the Ottoman Empire Conquered Them until Egypt Was Distinguished by Hereditary Government and Syria Was Adjusted by the *Tanzîmât*."³ I have divided it into an Introduc-

¹ See this *Journal* for October, 1924.

² [The Arabic text, carefully revised and edited from the original manuscript, is now appearing in *Al-Kulliyah*, the *Journal of the American University of Beirut*. The Arabic of the section here published may be found in *Al-Kulliyah*, Vol. XI, No. 1 (Nov., 1924), pp. ٣٩-٤١. The translation is carefully revised after the definite Arabic text.—M.S.]

³ The leading words in the title of this book are *kashf* and *lithām*, both implied in the English word "unveiling." In the Arabic-speaking world the book would, for all practical purposes, go by them alone; for if there are any two words in the title that can sum up the author's message and purpose in writing this book they are probably these two words. They bring up to the mind of the average reader, in the Arabic-speaking world, the whole

tion, four periods, and an Epilogue, and each of these into chapters. Trusting in God we say:

(467) EPILOGUE

Concerning the conquest of Syria by the Egyptians and their departure from it, Egypt's attainment to the state of a hereditary government, and Syria's adjustment by the Tanzimât. In three chapters:

FIRST CHAPTER

From the coming of the Egyptian soldiers to the battle of Nazîb.

While the inhabitants of Damascus were dealing with Salim Pasha in the manner referred to above,¹ Abdullah Pasha, *wâlî* of Sidon, instead of meeting Mehemet Ali's favor with thanks, had been for a long time exerting himself in every way to annoy him, because he was arrogant and wanted to show to the people that he was not indebted to him, and that the Imperial Government had not pardoned him because of Mehemet Ali.² So, at one time, he would seem to hesitate to pay part of what remained due of the sums he had to pay to the Imperial Government as a condition of his pardon; he would say that they were not due from him but from the man who without previous consultation had promised to pay them. At another time he would collect tariff on horses belonging to Mehemet Ali Pasha as they went

institution of the harem with its sacredness and its seclusion. It is the bad woman, the woman that has gone wrong, and therefore the one that deserves to be unveiled, who is unveiled. The author is, therefore, in the choice of these two words, not simply describing but condemning the procedure of the administration of Syria and Egypt in the period covered by the greater part of his book. Any literal translation of this title, such as is given above, would not only be unfair to the author but would also be untrue to the text itself. The real force of the title of this book may be stated as follows: The disclosure of the inner workings of the government of the two provinces of Egypt and Syria, from the time when the Ottoman Empire conquered them until Egypt became a hereditary province and Syria was adjusted by the Tanzimât. In expressing the idea of adjustment, when he speaks of the adjustment of Syria, the author expresses it in a very amusing way: He uses the word "string" and falls back on the old idiom of the string of pearls. To him Syria, after it had been adjusted by the Tanzimât, was as orderly as are the pearls of a carefully arranged necklace. The Tanzimât themselves are the famous reform laws and edicts of the Sultans of Turkey that were promulgated for the first time during the second quarter of the last century. [The editor, and in the editor's belief Dr. Rustum himself, is none too well satisfied with the narrow scope of the term "Court Decisions" in the literal translation of the title. A circumlocution such as "Developments in the Maintenance of Law and Order" or a general term like "Administration" would not do violence to the Arabic. But a number of court decisions may have loomed large in the author's mind, and so the rendering is left unchanged above.—M.S.]

¹ [I.e., in the portion of Naufal's book which remains unpublished. The reference is to the rising of the inhabitants of Damascus against their governor, Selim Pasha, in 1831. See besides Kasatli, quoted in the following footnote, J. Kinnear, *Cairo, Petra, and Damascus in 1839* (London, 1841), p. 317.—M.S. after *Al-Kulliyah*, p. 36, n. 3.]

² Cf. the original in Kasatli, p. 88; also Najjar, p. 34.

down from Sidon to Egypt; and other matters whose explanation would be (too) long. Moreover, it was reported about Abdullah Pasha, that he was sitting in Bahjah one day, and in the course of his conversation about (Mehemet Ali) Pasha, referred to above, he said he would certainly have to draw his sword, cross the sea, and go and cut off Mehemet Ali Pasha's head in Alexandria itself; for Mehemet Ali Pasha was insulting him in his correspondence; he would address him in his letters with the words "Our Son," but to Amīr Bashīr, who was nothing but a servant to him, he was writing "Brother." Evidently (Abdullah) Pasha thought that the epistolary etiquette depended upon in Mount Lebanon was respected and depended upon by the Ottomans also. But a *wazīr* would write "Brother" to any one of the men of his entourage; and so with the Ottomans it does not carry much importance at all. "Our Son," on the contrary, a *wazīr* would not write except to him whom he wanted to show a really greater favor. So Mehemet Ali Pasha was addressing Abdullah Pasha with the same words he would use in addressing his son, Ibrāhīm Pasha. The gist of the matter is this: The said Abdullah Pasha kept on in this course until he heated Mehemet Ali Pasha's breast with fury against him. Mehemet Ali Pasha then began to petition the Imperial Government to confer upon him the *wilāyat* (province) of Syria, in order that he might take revenge upon Abdullah Pasha; and he repeated his request a number of times. Now in Constantinople, Hālat Effendi, whenever he could, opposed and nullified his designs; and the Imperial Government finally hinted that it was not within her powers to confer upon him as many *Iyālāt* as these. As for Mehemet Ali Pasha, he used to point out to the (Imperial Government) that what she (468) called *Iyālāt* were nothing more than four *Mukāṭaāt*.¹ Then, when he lost hope of getting them legally, he decided to conquer them. The Amīr

¹ Contemporaries of Naufal use *iyālah*, *wilāyah*, and *pashālik* interchangeably for the biggest administrative divisions of Syria during the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries. As for the word *mukāṭaah*, it seems to have been a smaller administrative division of the *iyālah*. Fleischer, in his *Kleine Schriften*, III, 278, translates it by the German word *Steuerbezirk*, but does not give his authority. The number of *pashāliks* into which Syria was divided, and the number of *mukāṭaahs* in each are, likewise, very uncertain. Reliable sources show the existence of four, five, six, and even seven different *pashāliks*, at one time or another, all within the Syria of 1914. Similar confusion and uncertainty exist with regard to the *mukāṭaahs* themselves. [With regard to the *mukāṭaah* this fluidity is not surprising, if the definition given in Redhouse, *Turkish Dictionary*, written in 1855, is correct: "A fief attached to an office, the tithes going to the holder of the office (now generally abolished, salary being substituted)"; cf. 2d ed., 1880, p. 805, col. 2.—M.S.]

Bashīr was awaiting him, and so he (Mehemet Ali Pasha), on the second day of November of the year 1247 A.H. (1831 A.D.), fitted out 30,000 troops, sent them overland against Acre and caused his own fleet to follow them by sea.¹ Now when Ibrāhīm Pasha, son of Mehemet Ali Pasha, and commander-in-chief of this army, reached Jaffa, Abdullah Pasha wrote to Amīr Bashīr and asked him to come to him with his men. So the Amīr summoned the men of all the *mukāṭaāt* to prepare themselves for departure. Then when Ibrāhīm Pasha reached the plain of Acre, he, too, wrote to the Amīr calling him to himself. Now when the Amīr was slow (to move), Ibrāhīm Pasha wrote and told his father about it; whereupon Mehemet Ali Pasha became angry with the Amīr and wrote to him a letter threatening him, that, in case he should be late in coming to his son, referred to above, he would destroy his houses and plant fig trees in their places. The Amīr finally betook himself, at the head of a hundred horsemen, to Ibrāhīm Pasha, who was at Acre. Now while he was on the way, the Amīr met Mehemet Ali Pasha's messenger going to him. So he took the letter from the messenger, read it, and kept on going until he reached the plain of Acre. Then the soldiers met him with music and the firing of gunpowder, and entered with him in procession until he came to the tent that was prepared for him. In the evening Ibrāhīm Pasha sent for (the Amīr) and extended to him a cordial reception. He then wrote to his father telling him of the submission of the Amīr and of his presence.² Mehemet Ali Pasha then wrote a letter to the Amīr in which he said:

After the salutation, [as used] in the letters of the dear ones, the exhibition of regard to you, and the inquiry respecting your good pleasure [we say]: Your Arabic letter that expresses your sincerity and contains the reasons for your delay in coming to the help of our son Ibrāhīm Pasha has come to us. I

¹ Cf. Najjar, 34, 275.

² Cf. again with Shidyāk, pp. 567-68. The sources disagree on the attitude of Amīr Bashīr and the rest of the Syrians toward the occupation of the country by the Egyptians. There are those who would make us believe that the entire population of the country, both Moslems and Christians, hailed the Egyptian conqueror as the liberator of their fatherland. Lucian Davésiés, as early as 1835, saw in it a racial struggle between the Arabs of the south and the Turks of the north (*Revue des deux mondes*, I [1835], 458.) On the other hand, many of the more reliable sources give an entirely different point of view and interpretation. Apparently unaware of this disagreement of the sources of social and political conditions in Syria a hundred years ago, and of Bedouin life and psychology, W. Alison Phillips too makes a similar statement in his excellent chapter on "Mehemet Ali" in the *Cambridge Modern History* (X, 550). To him the Arabs of those days, "sympathized with an

am aware of the sincerity of your love to us, O Amīr, but as the daily news used to come to us, and we saw no news of your coming to the assistance of said son of ours, I became impatient and wrote to you that former letter which spoke of our vexation and trouble. When, [however], the [news] of your presence at our headquarters and of your submission reached us, the traces of our vexation disappeared and your love to us was verified. Now because both of us are older men, well advanced in age, and since it is [therefore] not fitting that we should make presents of arms one to the other, I have sent to your grandson, who is with you, a pair of pistols and a golden sword. May he be girded with them while enjoying good health. Henceforward leave us not without tokens of friendship, and that is our hope.¹

On a certain day Abdullah Pasha hoisted white flags on the walls of Acre. So Ibrāhīm Pasha ordered a suspension of arms, and Abdullah Pasha sent his *kehya* for a conference on the matter of peace.² But meanwhile (469) an imperial rescript reached the said (Abdullah) Pasha encouraging him and promising to send him an ample number of soldiers for his help, and so he broke off negotiations. Ibrāhīm Pasha then ordered a constant fire.³ The Imperial Government thereupon

invasion which had assumed the character of an Arab movement against the Turks." But when we go a little farther in examining our sources we cannot fail to observe the following facts: (1) All native sources are opposed to this interpretation. (2) The few European sources that give this interpretation are not the most accurate and the best informed. (3) Davésiés lived in an age when nationalism was before the public eye; France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Greece, etc., etc., all these countries had just gone through a nationalistic crisis. (4) Mehemet Ali spoke Turkish at home and in public, and refused to recognize Arabic in his palace. (5) Most of the higher officers of his army were not Arabs, but Turks. (6) Many of the sources speak of the discontent of several elements of the population as early as 1832. This much, however, is true: The Christians on the whole favored the change of régime, because it gave them greater freedom. Various individuals and parties throughout the country, such as Amīr Bashīr, Mustafā Barbar, Abd-ul-Hadis, etc., etc., were won over by all sorts of promises from the conquering Pasha. And, finally, the Bedouins have always been ready to join hands with the victor, in order that they might have a chance to plunder the vanquished. All the nationalism of the twentieth century, in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt, has not as yet affected the Bedouin, to whom plunder and livelihood are synonymous terms. In the case of Amīr Bashīr, both promises and threats had to be used to make him join the Egyptians openly and sufficiently early to be of assistance to them. Even after Acre had fallen, Ibrāhīm Pasha felt it necessary to take Amīr Bashīr with him wherever he went, in order to prevent a probable desertion.

¹ Najjar, p. 276.

² From the Persian *kat-khuda*, meaning "steward," "master of the house." By the thirties of the last century he had become an official of considerable importance. Abdullah Pasha's *kehya* conducted peace negotiations for his master, and Mehemet Ali's *kehya*, Habib Effendi, presided over the Diwan in the absence of the Pasha. Cf. Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (Everyman's ed.), p. 114; and for further particulars d'Ohsson, *Tableau general de l'Empire Ottoman*, III (Paris, 1788-91), 41; IV, 19, 228; V, 541. [He seems to occupy in the official family of *wātis* (governors general) a position corresponding to that of the *wazīr-i-a'zam*, the Grand Vizier or Prime Minister in the general government at Constantinople. He could not, of course, be entitled *wazīr*, and so was given a title corresponding almost exactly to the English "general manager."—M.S.]

³ Shidyāk, p. 568.

issued official letters patent announcing the rebellion of Mehemet Ali Pasha and his removal from the government of Egypt, fitted out soldiers, and sent them from Constantinople under the leadership of Husayn Pasha, who had been formerly *Yenicheri Aghasi*.¹

In 1248 A.H. (1832 A.D.), Mehemet Ali Pasha wrote to his son Ibrāhīm Pasha to invest Amīr Bashīr with the administration of *the iyālah* Sidon, and that all the *mutasallims* and the governors of the *mukātaāt* be under his control.² Apparently his object was that his son might occupy himself exclusively with the war and the repulse of the troops that were coming against him, for the siege of Acre, contrary to expectation, had lasted long, and, particularly, the Egyptian warships, a few days after they had invested the said city by sea, returned heavily damaged by the shell fire of its forts; a fact which showed the skill of the engineers and the artillery-men found in it. Egypt and her government became very much disturbed over this matter. So much so that a peremptory order was issued, that absolutely no one in Egypt should mention the name of Syria and especially Acre. This pressure became so intense that one day in the morning one of the petty traders was opening his shop, and when the lock caught, he kicked the door and said: "Woe to you! Are you the wall of Acre?" But he had scarcely said this, when the police laid hands on him and brought him before the authorities, whereupon sentence of death was fixed as his penalty.

As for Ibrāhīm Pasha, he gave orders to press the siege against Acre by land and to dig trenches; and he constructed a breastwork of earth and on it mounted cannons. He sent men from his own party and gained control over Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut. To these cities he sent *muḥāfiẓīn*³ and to Tripoli he dispatched Mustafa Barbar as *mutasallim*, together with a detachment of troops. He also ordered the

¹ Najjar, p. 276. The *Yenicheri Aghasi* was the chief of the Janissaries. [Redhouse, *Turkish Dictionary* (2d ed.), 413, col. 1; d'Ohsson, *Tableau général de l'Émpire Othoman*, VII, 313, 353, and especially 354.—M.S.]

² Shidyāk, p. 568. Under the Turkish administration of this period the *mutasallims* of the various cities seem to have been their governors. Their powers were, very probably, just as ill-defined as were those of their direct superiors, the pashas. Under the Egyptian régime each city seems to have had a *mutasallim* and a *kaïmmaḳam*. The former was in charge of the civil administration of the town, while the latter was its military governor. Their powers, however, do not seem to have been very clearly defined. (Robinson 419; Perrier, p. 56).

³ [Redhouse, *Turkish Dictionary* (2d ed.), defines a *muḥāfiẓ* as "the governor of a fortified town." Cf. Kélékian, *Dictionnaire Turc-Française*, 1125, col. 2.—M.S.]

Amīr Bashīr to send his son Amīr Khalīl and with him a thousand men of the inhabitants of Mount (Lebanon) to Tripoli to guard it against the Imperial troops.

The Imperial Government had, in the meantime, issued an order to Muhammad Pasha, *wālī* of Aleppo, to muster his troops and open hostilities against the Egyptians in Syria. So (Muhammad Pasha) sent troops ahead under Uthmān Pasha-l-Labīb to occupy the sea-coast cities and distract Ibrāhīm Pasha from the capture of Acre, while he himself advanced with his army to Ḥims, sending his *kehya* to Latakia. After the *kehya* had occupied (Latakia), (Muhammad Pasha) ordered him to proceed to Akkār. So the *kehya* collected men from those *mukāṭaāt*, met the Egyptian troops, fought them, defeated them, and captured one of their detachments. But Mustafa Agha Barbar and Amīr Khalīl came to their assistance, and so (the *kehya*) was defeated and went back to the region of (470) Al-Ḥuṣn.¹ But the above-mentioned Amīr Khalīl had written to Ibrāhīm Pasha and had told him of the advance of Uthmān Pasha, and so Ibrāhīm Pasha left² headquarters, immediately with four thousand troops and marched against Tripoli. Now some of the inhabitants of (Tripoli) had written to the above-mentioned Uthmān Pasha to come with his troops, and they would deliver the city to him, whereupon (Uthmān Pasha) had answered them and told them he was coming. But the answer fell into the hands of Mustafa Barbar, and he killed the messengers and laid hands on the *ḳādī*, the *muftī*, and some of the notables (of Tripoli) and imprisoned them in the castle.³ Uthmān Pasha then advanced to the village of Al-Munyah⁴ with four thousand warriors—Arbanūd, Hawārah,⁵ and others from those *mukāṭaāt*,—and Mustafa Barbar came out to fight him at the head of two hundred Tripolitan warriors and two hundred Egyptian regulars. Fighting then began, and the Tripolitans were defeated. But when Amīr Khalīl saw that, he marched

¹ Cf. Najjar, pp. 276, 277.

² [The Arabic text printed in *Al-Kulliyah*, p. 40, l. 23, exhibits a disturbing omission by homoioteleuton after "Uthmān Pasha." Insert with the Chicago manuscript of Naufal (Dr. Rustum's copy from the original): **فنهض إبراهيم باشا**—M.S.]

³ See editor's Introduction to this manuscript.

⁴ [A little village near Tripoli and north of it. Cf. *Al-Kulliyah*, p. 41, n. 1.—M.S.]

⁵ [I.e., Albanians, and men of the Hawārah tribe of the Arabs not belonging to the regular troops of the Ottoman Empire. Cf. *Al-Kulliyah*, p. 41, nn. 2 and 3.—M.S.]

against Uthmān Pasha at the head of his own men and some 600 Egyptian troops, who were under his orders. The battle which ensued resulted in the retreat of Uthmān Pasha, after he had gained an advantage by killing some of the Egyptian soldiers and in capturing the rest. As for the Amīr Khalīl, he returned to Tripoli victorious, after he had killed thirty of Uthmān's soldiers and *shaykh* Ṣāfi Saqr of Sāfītā.

When Uthmān Pasha heard of the arrival of Ibrāhīm Pasha at Tripoli, he fled away by night toward Ḥamā. Ibrāhīm Pasha then dispatched Amīr Abdullah to Al-Munyah to seize whatever Uthmān Pasha had left there, and, at the head of his troops, followed the latter, till he reached Ḥimṣ.¹ But owing to the lack of provisions there Ibrāhīm Pasha fell back upon Baalbak. Uthmān Pasha then followed him with his troops and overtook him at a village called az-Zarrāah.² They fought there, and Uthmān Pasha was defeated and returned to Ḥimṣ,³ where the *seraskier*, Muhammad Pasha, *wālī* of Aleppo, had established himself. Ibrāhīm Pasha then wrote to Amīr Bashīr informing him of this battle, whereupon the latter left headquarters at Acre for Btaddin. Thence he proceeded to Zaḥlah, whither Abbās Pasha, the son of Ibrāhīm Pasha's brother, had preceded him, and where presently Ibrāhīm Pasha appeared also. Thence Ibrāhīm Pasha proceeded to Dayr-ul-Ḳamar and ordered Amīr Bashīr to demolish the houses of those of the Janbulāṭs, Amāds, and Nakads⁴ who had gone to Ḥimṣ to meet the *wazīrs* of the Imperial Government, and the house of their *kādī* likewise. The Amīr then (did according to these orders) in Mukhtārah, Kafar Nabrah and Dayr-ul-Ḳamar. And now Ibrāhīm Pasha returned to his headquarters in the plain of Acre.

On the twenty-seventh day of Dhu-l-Hijjah, of the year 1247 A.D. (Iyyār [i.e., May] 27, 1832 A.D.) (471) Ibrāhīm Pasha ordered his soldiers to make a general assault upon the walls of the city. He also ordered a constant fire of artillery. And so he captured the city by storm and entered it at the head of his troops, at the same time issuing a safe-conduct to Abdullah Pasha, who then surrendered. When Ab-

¹ Shidyāk, pp. 569-71.

² [A small village between Ḥimṣ and Baalbak. Cf. *Al-Kulliyah*, p. 41, n. 4.—M.S.]

³ Najjar, p. 277. [*Seraskier* or *sér-âssker*, according to Redhouse, *Turkish Dict.*, p. 596, col. 2, is "a military commander-in-chief," and *wālī*, according to the same authority, p. 850, col. 1, "a governor-general."—M.S.]

⁴ [Prominent families in Mount Lebanon.—M.S.]

dullah Pasha approached him, Ibrāhīm Pasha shook hands with him, comforted him, assured him of his own personal safety and of the safety of his harem, and took him to the Bahjah Palace. (Ibrāhīm Pasha) then sent (Abdullah Pasha) by sea to his father in Alexandria and wrote to Amīr Bashīr announcing the joyful news of the capture of Acre to him.¹ At the same time he ordered his soldiers to plunder the houses of the inhabitants.

When Abdullah Pasha reached Alexandria, Muhammad Ali Pasha had established himself there, and the city was decorated, and the flags were hoisted. (Alexandria) had not witnessed a greater day; there was nearly as much firing of artillery from its towers and fortifications as there had been on the day of the final storming of Acre. It is said that, when Abdullah Pasha came into his presence, Mehemet Ali Pasha rose (from his seat), prevented Abdullah Pasha from kissing the hem of his robe, took him by the hand, seated him by his side, and spoke consolingly to him, saying: "Forget the past, for you are just as dear to me as is my son Ibrāhīm Pasha; he is my right eye, and you are my left"; and much more in the same strain. Finally Mehemet Ali Pasha ended by expressing his surprise that Abdullah Pasha should have endured this siege for such a length of time. Abdullah Pasha answered him (and said) that if one stone had remained upon the other in the towers and the forts of Acre, he would not have come forth, nor surrendered and reached his present state. (He said this) pointing out the fact, that he, his harem, and his family had left the place with nothing except the clothes they were then wearing. Mehemet Ali Pasha forthwith issued orders that a residence that conformed with the dignity and position of Abdullah Pasha be immediately fitted out for his use together with sumptuous clothing for him and his family. Moreover, when he appeared in public, Abdullah Pasha moved about with fully as great a retinue as Mehemet Ali Pasha himself; *ḡawwāses*, *jāwīshes* with silver rods, and *juklans*² before him, and mounted men behind him. And of this show he never by any chance abated anything.

¹ Cf. again Shidyāk, pp. 571-73. We take this opportunity to correct an error that has crept into some of the best and most recent European works on the subject. Both Gaza and Jaffa seem to have been occupied by the Egyptians before they had besieged Acre. As for Jerusalem, it was occupied in December of 1831, about two weeks after the commencement of the siege of Acre.

² [Crook staves. Cf. *Al-Kullīyyah*, p. 42, n. 2.—M.S.]