

spit of him, and required the Porte to build a fortress there and provide it with cannon, at the expence of the Sultan: his demand was complied with, and Daher, shortly after, procured the fort to be adjudged useless, demolished it, and transported the brass cannon from thence to Acre.

These things kept alive the discontent and alarms of the divan, and though these were diminished by the great age of Daher; the turbulent spirit of his sons, and the military talents of Ali, the eldest of them, still gave the Porte much uneasiness: she dreaded to see an independent power perpetuate itself, and even become formidable. But, steady to her ordinary system, refrained from open hostilities, and proceeded by secret means; she sent Capidjis, excited domestic quarrels, and opposed agents, capable at least of preventing, for a time, the consequences she feared.

The most persevering of these was that Osman, Pacha of Damascus, whom we have seen act a leading part in the war of Ali Bey. He had merited the favour of the Porte, by discovering the treasures of Solomon Pacha, whose mamlook he was. The personal hatred he bore to Daher, and the known activity of his character, were still greater recommendations. He was considered as a proper counterpoise to Daher, and was accordingly named Pacha of Damascus in 1760. To give him still additional weight, his two sons were appointed to the pachalics of Tripoli and Haide; and, to complete his power, in 1765, Jerusalem and all Palestine were added to his apnage.

Osman perfectly seconded the views of the Porte: as soon as he had taken possession of his government, he greatly annoyed Daher. He augmented the tribute of the lands he held under the pachalic of Damascus: the Shaik resisted, the Pacha menaced, and it was evident the quarrel would come to a speedy issue. Osman watched the opportunity to strike a blow which should bring this matter to a decision: this at length presented itself, and war broke out.

Every year the Pacha of Damascus made what is called the circuit of his government, the object of which is to levy the mirlor impost on the lanes. On this occasion he always takes with him a body of troops, strong enough to support his authority. He thought to avail himself of this opportunity to surprise Daher; and, followed by a numerous body of troops, took his route, as usual, towards the country of Nablous. Daher was then besieging a castle defended by two of his sons: his danger was the greater, as he relied on a

truce with the Pacha, and he owed his deliverance to his good fortune.

One evening, at the moment he least expected it, a Tartar courier brought him some letters from Constantinople. Daher opened them, and, immediately suspending all hostilities, dispatched a horseman to his children, and desired them to prepare a supper for him and three of his attendants, for that he had affairs to communicate of the last importance to them all. The character of Daher was known; his sons obey him; he arrives at the appointed hour; they sup cheerfully together; and at the end of the repast, he produces his letters and reads them; they were from his spies at Constantinople, and to the following purport:—‘That the Sultan had deceived him in the last pardon he had sent him; that he had at the same instant delivered a *kat-sheriff* against his head and property; that every thing was concerted between the three Pachas: Osman and his sons, to surround and destroy him and his family; and that the Pacha was marching in force towards Nablous to surprise him.’ The astonishment this intelligence excited, may easily be imagined; a council was immediately held, in which the opinions were divided. The greatest number were for marching with all their forces against the Pacha; but the eldest of Daher’s sons, Ali, who had rendered himself illustrious in Syria, by his exploits, represented that a large army could not march quick enough to surprise the Pacha; that he would have time to provide for his defence, and the disgrace of violating the truce fall on them; that nothing could be effected but by a *coup de main*, which he would take upon himself. He demanded five hundred horse; his courage was known, and his demand acceded to. He set off immediately, marching all night, and concealing himself during the day; and the following night was so expeditious, as to reach the enemy early in the morning of the second day. The Turks, according to custom, were asleep in their camp, without order and without centinels; Ali and his cavalry fell upon them, sabre in hand, cutting to pieces every thing that came in their way. All was panic and tumult; the very name of Ali spread terror throughout the camp, and the Turks fled in the utmost confusion. The Pacha had not even time to put on his pelisse; scarcely was he out of his tent, before Ali arrived, who made himself master of his coffee, his shawls, his pelisses, his poinard, his kerkeel, and, to complete his success, the *kat-sheriff* of the Sultan. From this moment there was open war, which was carried on, according to the custom