

CATALOGUE
OF
ARABIC PAPYRI
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MANCHESTER

BY
D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, D.LITT., F.B.A.

LAUDIAN PROFESSOR OF ARABIC IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD; CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE 'SACHSISCHE AKADRMIE DRR WISSENSCHAFTEN •

WITH FORTY PLATES

Pages 1-49

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THE present volume forms the fifth issue in the series of descriptive catalogues or guides to the collection of oriental and western manuscripts in the John Rylands Library.

For the difficult task of describing the Arabic papyri dealt with in the present volume the Governors have been extremely fortunate in being able to secure the services of so distinguished a scholar as Professor Margoliouth, to whom they take this opportunity of offering their most grateful thanks.

The constantly growing collection of manuscripts to which these documents belong constitutes one of the principal attractions of the library, and it may not be out of place in this introductory note again briefly to indicate something of its present range and character.

The nucleus of the collection consisted of less than a hundred manuscripts contained in the Althorp Library, which was acquired by Mrs. Rylands in 1892, from the late Earl Spencer, to form part of the equipment of the new library at that time in course of erection. These were added to from time to time as opportunities occurred, but the present range and character of the collection was determined in 1901, by the purchase of the manuscripts of the late Earl of Crawford, consisting of some six thousand rolls, tablets, and codices, illustrating the history of writing and illumination in the principal oriental and western languages, and offering to students in many departments of historical and literary research original sources of great interest and importance.

Commencing with the Oriental section: there are upwards of two thousand Arabic, Persian and Turkish codices, which include many inedited texts of considerable importance, and examples of the *Kur'an* dating from the eighth and ninth centuries, of great beauty, three of which are written throughout in letters of gold. There are ten copies of the *Shah-namah* of Firdausi which for the beauty of their paintings are probably unsurpassed. A catalogue of the Arabic examples by Dr. A. Mingana is nearly ready for publication.

The Syriac manuscripts number nearly a hundred, including vellum codices of the Peshitta Gospels (*c.* 550), the Harkleian Recension of the Gospels (*c.* 750), and one of the earliest complete copies of the New Testament (*c.* 1000). Another noteworthy volume contains the Odes and Psalms of Solomon, discovered in 1909 by Dr. Rendel Harris, and since published in facsimile.

The Samaritan group of biblical and liturgical texts, though not large, is of great interest, including a vellum codex of the Pentateuch written A.D. 1211.

The Hebrew manuscripts comprise many scrolls of the *Sepher Torah* and the *Megillath*

Esther, several illuminated codices of the *Haggadah*, and a number of liturgical texts.

Among the Greek manuscripts are several beautiful Gospel books of the tenth and eleventh centuries, but the most important manuscript is a considerable fragment of a vellum codex of the *Odyssey* of the third century A.D.

The Chinese and Japanese books properly occupy a place between the manuscripts and the printed books, for though many of them have been produced by hand, the bulk have been printed xylographically, a type of production forming the connecting-link between the manuscript and the type-printed book. The number of *pên* or native volumes in this collection is about nine thousand.

There are also about fifteen hundred drawings and paintings of Chinese, Indian, and Persian origin. The Indian paintings number five hundred and include work by painters at the courts of the Mogul emperors.

Another group consists of two hundred pieces of undetermined age in the language of the Mo-so people, a non-Mongolian race scattered throughout Southern China. These manuscripts are mostly oblong in shape, and are written in picture characters on thick oriental paper of uneven texture.

Other oriental languages represented are: Amharic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Sanskrit, Pali, Bali, Panjabi, Hindustani, Marathi, Parsi, Pehlevi, Burmese, Canarese, Cingalese, Tamil, Malay, Javanese, Balinese, Tibetan, Batak, Bugi, Kawi, Madurese, Makassar, Pushtu, and Mongolian.

The papyrus rolls and fragments include examples of the *Book of the Dead* in Egyptian Hieroglyphic and Hieratic. The Demotic rolls form probably the most important collection of documents in that script extant, and have been described by Professor F. Ll. Griffith in an elaborate catalogue, in three quarto volumes, which appeared in 1910. There are a large number of Greek papyri, the cataloguing of which was undertaken by Professors Grenfell and Hunt, assisted by Dr. J. de M. Johnson and Victor Martin. Two volumes of their catalogue have already appeared, the first dealing with the literary portion in 1911, the second dealing with the non-literary documents of the Roman and Ptolemaic period in 1915. The third volume, which is in course of preparation, will treat of similar documents of the Byzantine period. Considerable additions have been made to the collection in recent years, including a number of letters and documents from the archives of Zenon, the Governor of the Fayum in the third century, which await examination.

A catalogue of the Coptic papyri and codices ranging from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries, compiled by Mr. W. E. Crum, made its appearance in 1910.

Turning now to the Western section: the Latin manuscripts number over four hundred, and include first-class examples of the art and calligraphy of the great medieval writing schools of Europe from the sixth century onwards. The two first volumes of a detailed catalogue of these, prepared by Dr. Montague Rhodes James,

appeared in 1920. Since the publication of Dr. James's Catalogue considerable additions have been made to this section, many of which are of outstanding importance. They include, for example, early liturgical works, royal account books and chronicles. These accessions have been described in readiness for inclusion in the succeeding volumes of the Catalogue, partly by Dr. Fawtier, and since 1928 by Dr. Tyson. In the meantime a printed hand-list of them has been issued.

The collection of charters and deeds is growing rapidly, and includes documents dating back to the twelfth century. There is an interesting and extensive collection of wills, marriage-contracts, deeds of gift, and other documents relating to the Medici family from the Medici Archives. The manorial court-rolls number many hundreds and date back to the thirteenth century. There are many other documents of historic and diplomatic interest, and others of inestimable value to the local historian and genealogist.

The Italian, French, and Spanish manuscripts, though not very numerous, include a number of finely illuminated manuscripts and several rare texts. The Italian group, for instance, contains works of Dante and Petrarch, and others relating to Savonarola; in the French group are a mid-thirteenth century *Bible en images*, an early fourteenth century *Lancelot du Lac*, a fourteenth century *Passion de Notre Seigneur Jesus Christ*, and a number of chronicles; and other important chronicles are found among the Spanish manuscripts.

Printed hand-lists of these groups have been issued.

The English collection comprises upwards of seven hundred items, which include a number of boxes containing well over ten thousand autograph letters. The manuscripts vary in importance, but there are a number of noteworthy examples, namely the richly illuminated copy of John Lydgate's *Siege of Troy*, and the same author's translation of Boccaccio's *Fall of Princes*, both written in the first half of the fifteenth century; a curious vellum roll bearing Queen Elizabeth's signature several times repeated, and recording the New Year's gifts made by and to the Queen in 1559; and a *Form of Cury* by the master cook of Richard II. There are fifteen manuscripts of the Wiclifite Bible or parts of the Bible, written in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries; various Wiclifite treatises; three copies of *The Pricke of Conscience*, Nicholas Love's translation of Bonaventura's *Life of Christ*; a collection of News-letters for the years 1667-1669; a collection of letters and papers on Indian affairs many of which relate to the period of the administration of Warren Hastings; and upwards of three thousand letters of Mrs. Thrale, Dr. Johnson, and their circle of friends.

The Irish collection of one hundred and thirty-six volumes consists, for the most part, of transcripts from famous manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy by such scholars as E. O'Curry, D. H. Kelly, Michael McDermott, and O. Donovan. The chief interest of many of these transcripts is that they are of manuscripts which have since disappeared.

If the manuscripts themselves excite interest, not less striking are many of their jewelled bindings in metal and in ivory dating from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, which impart to them a character and value of a very special kind. It is the intention of the Governors, when the opportunity occurs, to invite some expert to prepare a monograph upon these relics of medieval art.

In concluding this note the writer desires, on behalf of the Governors, to acknowledge their indebtedness to the Printer to the University of Oxford for the care which he has bestowed upon the production of this volume.

HENRY GUPPY.

The John Rylands Library.

PREFACE

THE Arabic Papyri described in this Catalogue were purchased together with a large number of paper fragments by the late Earl of Crawford in the year 1899. They were placed by him for deciphering and cataloguing in the hands of the late Dr. Josef Karabacek, director of the K. K. Hofbibliothek, Vienna, a scholar who may be regarded as the founder of this particular study, whose works dealing with it are models of scholarship, erudition, and sagacity, and are indispensable to all who have to handle similar material. Though the documents were in his possession for some years, he appears to have found no time to do work upon them, and when the collection became the property of the John Rylands Library, Manchester, in 1901, it was sent over from Vienna, and presently put into the hands of the present writer, who published some specimens of its contents in the *Florilegium* dedicated to M. de Vogüé in 1909. With the authorization of Dr. Guppy, Librarian of the John Rylands Library, the present writer had these documents mounted between glass sheets,¹ and arranged in boxes similar to those used for lantern slides; since his time was largely taken up with other work, and he had repeatedly to travel in the East, he thought it best to send these back to the Library, and pay occasional visits to Manchester to study them. At Dr. Guppy's request he made in 1931 a final verification of his materials.

The town most frequently mentioned in these documents is Ushmun, sometimes in the dual form Ushmunain. These names are of frequent occurrence in the papyri, and the passages in which they occur have been collected by A. Grohmann,² in an article which contains valuable information about these as well as about other local names which occur in these documents. His conclusions with regard to the extent of the *kurah* of Ushmun or Ushmunain are confirmed by the Rylands papyri, which might possibly have supplemented them if the document XI. 19 had been more fully preserved. The dual form is explained by the division into an Upper and a Lower Ushmun, both copiously illustrated by Grohmann. From the document cited it would appear that Darūt might also have had a dual form since there was a Darūt the Less. As will be seen from the Index of Local Names the documents do not either emanate from or belong exclusively to this district, but are likely to have been consigned to the waste-paper baskets (or their equivalents) of residents there. Indeed since the great majority of the scraps belong to letters, which might from their nature come from anywhere, we should expect to find references to places at a distance from Ushmun. On the other hand the documents which do not belong to this class are likely to belong

¹ Glass which had been used for X-ray photographs was supplied at a low price for this purpose by the Radcliffe Infirmary.

² *Archiv Orientalní*, Journal of the Czechoslovak Institute, Prague, iii (1931), p. 388 sqq.

to Ushmun or its district, even when the fragment contains no allusion by which its home can be identified.

A list is given at the end of the work of dated documents, and the greater number belong to the third century A.H., while a few belong to the second, some to the fourth, and (perhaps) a very few to the fifth; the use of papyrus as late as this is surprising.

They have been classified in the manner shown in the Table of Contents, but it has not always been easy to decide whether a document should be included in one of these groups, or relegated to the mass of 'Minor Fragments'. Size and legibility have been the determining considerations.

The contents of waste-paper baskets have a tendency to be similar in all ages and with all nations. Documents of importance rarely find their way thither; such are either carefully guarded or carefully destroyed. The majority of those which have got into this collection are of a sort which were neither valuable nor dangerous; chiefly private letters of persons whose lives entered neither into political nor literary history. Few of these are preserved intact; most of them were torn either vertically or horizontally before being consigned to the rubbish heap, whence only a portion remains. Even when such documents are preserved intact, interpretation is often difficult, since the matters with which they deal, though familiar to the addressee, are quite unknown to outsiders; domestic joys and sorrows, difficulties and expectations, for the understanding of which family history is requisite. Where, as in the majority of cases, what is preserved is only a scrap or torn portion of a letter, ingenuity would be wasted in the endeavour to reconstruct it.

It would seem that Professor Karabacek had hoped to be able to piece together complete letters from some, at any rate, of the fragments, and the present writer has in one or two cases been able to effect this. The process could not often be carried out, since what survives is most frequently either the commencing or the final salutation; care perhaps was taken to destroy the actual messages. Of the peril which sometimes attended the preservation of a letter we have a hint in VI. 6, where the writer requests that it be burned after perusal: the contents do not explain the necessity for this. The danger resulting from preservation is clearly illustrated in one of Tanukhi's anecdotes.¹ Abu'l-'Abbas, brother of the celebrated vizier Ibn al-Furat, noticed hanging up in a confectioner's shop a letter (to be used for wrapping sweetmeats) which he perceived to be in the script of one Husain b. 'Amr, who had been secretary to al-Muktafi (ob. 289 A.H.) when he was a provincial governor. Abu'l-'Abbas ordered his slave to purchase some of the confectioner's wares and see that they were wrapped in this particular cover. The letter proved to be a communication to the vizier 'Ubaidallah b. Sulaiman in which the future Caliph was charged with viciousness and incompetence and his recall urgently advised. Abu'l-'Abbas preserved the document as a weapon to be used, if desirable, against its author, and presently, when al-Muktafi was Caliph,

¹ Translated in *Islamic Culture*, vi (1932), p. 384.

an occasion arose on which he employed it effectively for that author's ruin. Unfortunately his procedure enabled his enemies to represent him as a dangerous person to the vizier in whose favour he had employed this weapon, and who, if Tanukhi is to be believed, put him to death with poison.

Besides illustrating the reasons for destroying correspondence this anecdote also indicates that individuality of script in this alphabet of at most 14 signs was no less marked than in ours of 52. And indeed there is this individuality in the fragments which form the collection which is here described.

Since papyrus was an Egyptian product, it is likely to have been cheaper in that country than elsewhere. There appears to be no reference to the cost in these papyri; which are full of requests for correspondence. Some economy was practised by replying to letters on the verso, and by washing out a communication with the view of using the same material for another. It is clear that many of these documents have been subjected to this process, which naturally does not improve their legibility. References to the practice, and indeed in connexion with *paper*, are frequent in Arabic literature. It was familiar in the fifth century B.C. to Aeschylus, who has a line

βολαῖς ὑγρώσων σπόγγος ὤλεσεν γραφήν

The material is mentioned by its Arabic name (*qirṭās*) in the fragment XV. 78. Dr. Mingana has called my attention to a passage in the Apology of Timotheus for Christianity,¹ wherein it is distinctly stated that the letter of the Caliph al-Mahdi (775-785 A.D.) was written on papyrus, the Greek word being there given as the equivalent of the Syriac word which is the origin of the Arabic *qirṭās*, and the reed whence it was manufactured mentioned. Maqrizī asserts that paper (*kāghad*) was introduced into the public offices by Ja'far b. Yaḥya the Barmecide in the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd, who came to the throne in 786 A.D. An interesting notice is quoted by Tha'ālibī³ from Jāḥiẓ of Basrah (ob. 255 A.H. = 869 A.D.) that 'the papyri of Egypt are to the West like the papers of Samarqand to the East'; while Eastern Islam was using paper, Western Islam continued to use papyrus. Maqrizi (ob. 846 A.H.) does not state whence he got his information, which is remarkably confirmed by Dr. Mingana's document.

By the end of the fourth Islamic century it would seem that papyrus had been driven out of the market by paper, of which in the time of Abu Ṣāliḥ (sixth century of Islam) there was a factory in Asouan.⁴ Another rival which was driven out by paper, and which is not represented in this collection, was parchment. When Jāḥiẓ speaks 'of skin' in this context, he apparently refers to binding material, not to the material

¹ *Woodbrooke Studies*, ii. 21 (p. 96 of the Syriac text).

² *Khiṭaṭ* (original edition) i. 91, line 8 a f., cited by W. Björkman, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei in Aegypten*, Hamburg, 1928, p. 7.

³ *Laṭā'if al-Ma'ārif*, p. 97, line 6 a f., cited by de Goeje, *Gloss. Geog.*, p. 341.

⁴ B. T. A. Evetts and A. J. Butler, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, Oxford, 1895, p. 66, with Evetts's notes.

of the book. 'I have seen' he says 'in the possession of Dāwūd b. Muḥammad al-Hāshimī a book on snakes, more than ten skins; what is correct therein is the amount of one skin and a half.'¹ By 'skin' he appears to mean 'volume', a word taken over from the time of papyrus rolls. The employment of this material for title-deeds about the year 300 A.H. is illustrated by an anecdote recorded by Ibn Khallikan.² A man of Ispahan presented his beloved with certain estates, of which he sent her the title-deeds; these were loaded on a mule. Another lover, who wished to imitate his generosity, and supposed the gift to consist in pieces of parchment, purchased enough to form the load of two mules, and sent them to his lady-love. The latter was indignant at this unsavoury gift, and replied with some stinging verses. The assignation of plantations in IX. 1 is on papyrus, doubtless a less costly, but also an inodorous material.

Where enough remains to indicate the purport of the letters, one is reminded of Dickens's words about the old mail-coaches;³

We thought of the numbers of people to whom one of those crazy, mouldering vehicles had borne, night after night, for many years, and through all weathers, the anxiously expected intelligence, the eagerly looked-for remittance, the promised assurance of health and safety, the sudden announcement of sickness and death. The merchant, the lover, the wife, the widow, the mother, the very child who tottered to the door at the postman's knock,—how had they all looked forward to the arrival of the old coach! And where were they all now?

Mutatis mutandis this description applies to the recipients of the letters which in a seriously damaged condition have ultimately found their way to Manchester. One of the chief *mutanda* is in the mode whereby the letters were conveyed. The Egyptians of this period had neither mail-coaches, nor in our sense postmen; though the earliest of our documents are orders on the postmaster of Ushmun to supply messengers with mules, conveyance of letters to private persons was ordinarily through unofficial travellers. The case of VI. 8 is clearly exceptional. But the contents of the letters, and the mentality of the recipients, correspond well with this passage. 'The eagerly looked-for remittance' is the writers' chief concern, though the letters more often deal with the request for it than with the despatch.

Next to private letters tradesmen's and household accounts form the largest portion of the collection. These were of course private memoranda, doubtless both legible and intelligible to their authors, but conveying little meaning to outsiders, especially when only scraps survive. It has been considered sufficient to transcribe some specimens of these accounts, while relegating the remainder to the 'Minor Fragments'. Cereals and vegetable produce are the wares most frequently mentioned. If the document XI. 11 has been correctly interpreted, it is of some interest as introducing us into the bureau of a provincial apothecary. In the great cities the healing art was practised on a great scale; one Qaṭī'ī who lived in Egypt in this period 'used to earn every month a thousand dinars from stipends and fees paid by ordinary

¹ *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* iv. 60. ² Ed. Cairo, 1299, ii. 204. ³ *Pickwick Papers*, Chapter xlix.

patients.' He could afford to keep a private hospital for poor people.¹ The members of the profession with whom this document acquaints us more nearly resemble those of Algeria before the French occupation, as described by a German visitor near the end of the eighteenth century, from whose work M. E. Mersiol has published an amusing extract.²

Receipts for payment of kharaj, mostly in illegible scrawls, which however Karabacek has taught us to decipher, are well represented in this collection. It would seem that the sums were paid in very small instalments, which must have made the task of the Collector one of great difficulty. Occasionally, however, larger sums are mentioned.

To the study of the import of these documents and their notation the most valuable contribution known to the writer that has been made since the time of Karabacek is the article in *Der Islam*, iv (1913), *Beiträge zur arabischen Papyrusforschung*, by K. W. Hofmeier. This scholar has called attention to the extreme difficulty of reading many of the figures, and has produced some valuable results obtained from his examination of numerous documents of this sort. It would seem, however, that the publication of which a portion had been set up, and which was to have contained facsimiles of such documents with his interpretation of their contents, has not yet appeared. It is likely that that publication would have given convincing proof of the correctness of the solutions which he offers to the difficulties suggested by these receipts; the receipts in the possession of the Rylands Library are not sufficient in number either to confirm his solutions or to suggest others. One difficulty lies in the employment of series of fractions of the dinar, when the arithmetical operation required could have been avoided by giving the sum in Qirāṭs. If 24 of these went to the Dinar, it would surely be easier to say 23 qirats than $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{8}$ of a dinar. Further in what form were these fractions of a dinar paid? Hofmeier says in silver; hence he renders the formula in some of the receipts *bilā ṣarf* 'without agio', i.e. the money-changer's commission to be paid by the taxpayer. The process was evidently a somewhat complicated one, if this be right; for in addition to computing the value of the silver coins in terms of the gold dinar, the taxpayer or taxcollector had also to calculate the allowance to be made for the money-changer's commission. The process could only be carried out with facility if there was a fixed ratio between the gold and silver coins and a fixed commission. The texts suggest that the ratio between gold and silver coins was exceedingly variable, and the question arises how it came to be possible to express these fractions of the dinar in silver coins at all. It is unfortunate that Maqrizi's treatise on Islamic coinage³ is of no help whatever for these matters, and the *Maḥāṭib al-'Ulūm*, though in general of great value, gives scanty information about the coinage.

¹ Tanukhi in *Islamic Culture*, V (1931), p. 579.

² *Deuxième Congrès National des Sciences Historiques*, Alger, 1932, p. 311.

³ *Al-Nuqūd al-Islāmiyyah*, Constantinople, Jawā'ib Press, 1298.

This Kharaj or Land-tax, about which much has been written, fills many a page in both the historical literature and the collections of anecdotes, and was a matter of prime importance to the people from whom our documents emanate; mention of it crops up incessantly. The sources enumerated introduce us to various forms of dishonesty practised both in assessment and collection, to which some of the perpetrators confess unblushingly; the letters in this collection add some illustrations.

Although so much is heard in these documents of the kharaj, it does not seem that the notices which they contain will modify the results obtained by C. H. Becker from a study of those described by Karabacek collated with the statements of the historians.¹ It would appear that the increase of the duty to something over 1 dinar for a feddan, introduced in 228 A.H. (Becker, p. 118) was not unknown before that period; for in the very interesting lease IX. 6 of the date 182 A.H. whereas the rent to be paid for the land is 1 dinar for 1 feddan, the lessee has to pay kharaj 'according to the distribution'; the tax then is unlikely to have been identical in amount with the rent, and was clearly a variable sum. There is (apparently) an allusion to a tax on naphtha in II. 8, which resembles the tax on sodium carbonate introduced by Ibn al-Mudabbir about 247 A.H. (Becker, p. 146); this document is unfortunately without date. Kharaj on the plant *qarad*, mentioned in VII. 19 perhaps belongs to the same group of additional demands. The writer of II. 5 complains of a tax called *nuzl*, which in Spain meant provisions to be supplied to a prince who was travelling, and is likely to mean the same here; this is not mentioned in the long list of extortions abolished by Saladin.² The fragment XV. 38 is likely to refer to some recently introduced form of taxation.

Of literary works there are here very scanty remains; possibly such books as these Egyptians possessed were too valuable to be consigned to the rubbish-heap. And indeed, when we get notices of the price of books, it appears to be somewhat prohibitive.³ From the amounts which our correspondents expend, and for which they express unbounded gratitude, we should gather that they were for the most part of small means.

Magic is represented by one fairly lengthy page out of a book of spells, and certain fragments which belong to the same subject. They are similar in character to those of which Tanukhi gives examples in the Second Part of his *Nishwār*, and which he found infallible. How widespread the belief in magic was is indicated by the fact that this writer not only belonged to the most highly educated class, but was an adherent of Mu'tazilite doctrine, which ridiculed the belief in Jinn and their activities.

¹ *Beiträge zur Geschichte Aegyptens unter dem Islam*, 1903, pp. 114 foll.

² Maqrizi, *Khīṭaṭ* i, 104 (quoted by Becker).

³ The Sharif al-Murtaḍā (355-436 A.H.) paid 60 dinars (about £45) for a copy of the *Jamharah* of Ibn Duraid (Ibn Khallikan i. 425). Copies of Jauhari's Dictionary (by a caligrapher) fetched 100 dinars (*ibid.* ii. 274).

The spells which he favours consist largely of Qur'anic verses,¹ but he does not disdain the employment of barbarous words, which are very common in these compositions, and are sometimes, though by no means always, traceable to some foreign language.

The very modest interest and importance which attaches to this material is explained by the considerations which have been given above. The accession of the 'Abbāsid dynasty had removed Egypt very far from the centre of the empire; the days when its ruler was to be a dangerous rival to the Caliph of Baghdad had not yet arrived. And though we are fortunate in possessing monographs on its rulers and qādīs, the information which they furnish is scanty. And in Egypt Ushmunain (about 31 E. long. 28 N. Lat.), W. of the Nile, not far north of Tell el-Amarna (E. of the Nile), which has recently become famous, was not a place of much importance; Istakhri and Ibn Hauqal call it a small city, populous, possessing palms and cultivated fields, whence many garments are exported. To the palms there are some references in the papyri, notably in the document IX. 2, dealing with a bequest of certain plantations. References to wheat, and other agricultural produce, are frequent. On the other hand the orders for clothes suggest that these were imported rather than exported. The inhabitants were very largely Copts, whose names figure largely in the papyri, mixed with others which are evidently Muslim. Jewish names also occur, but rarely. Probably the life in this 'city' and the villages of the district (according to Abu Ṣāliḥ 300 in number) was not very different from that which is so vividly described by Ṭā Hā Ḥusain in the autobiography of which Mr. Paxton has furnished a translation. They were indeed interested in changes in the government, but their concerns were mainly domestic and either agricultural or commercial. Earnest students, like Shāfi'ī and Ṭabarī, who travelled far and wide to hear traditions, would not ordinarily visit such places. Several of those which are mentioned in the documents are to be found in the geographical Index to the work of Abu Ṣāliḥ, edited by Mr. Evetts,² where details of their Churches and Monasteries are furnished.

The material collected here is unlikely to be of much interest to the historian, but it may have some for the sociologist. He will not fail to be struck by the important part played by women in the management of affairs. A large number of the letters are either from or to women, who give instructions about the management of estates, and interfere with the collection of kharaj, besides exerting their influence in domestic matters. If their correspondence was written and read by themselves, and not through professional letter-writers, they must have attained a good standard in education, since grammatical mistakes are slight and infrequent, colloquialisms are rare, and ability to read these documents at all is not easily acquired.

We should gather that the relations between the Muslim and Christian communities were ordinarily of a friendly character, though I. 4 suggests discrimination against the Copts. In many of the lists dealing with business matters Muslim and Coptic names

¹ Cf. his *Al-Faraj ba'd al-Shiddah*, i. 30 foll.

² *op. cit.*

figure miscellaneous, and the complaints which many of the letters contain appear to be unconnected with the religious difference. To the harsh conditions which some of the Caliphs imposed on the *dhimmīs* it would not be easy to find any allusion in this material. Neither do the sectarian storms which raged in other Islamic territories seem to have affected these backwaters.

For historical allusions the treatises of al-Kindī, edited by Mr. Guest,¹ have proved useful; for geographical matter the monumental work of 'Alī Pasha Mubārak² has been found a mine of information. For the identification of Coptic names the recently published work of Dr. Gustav Heuser³ has been very helpful.

The writer has endeavoured to profit by the study of the works of the masters of Arabic papyrology, Karabacek, Becker, Grohmann, Hofmeier and others.

Although much time and trouble have been spent on the classification, decipherment, and to some extent interpretation of the documents, the utmost for which the writer hopes is that the judgement of experts on his work may be lenient. There are indeed certain matters which evidently call for excuse or apology.

In the first place he has not deemed it necessary to furnish photographic facsimiles of all the documents; he believes the selection which he has made will be sufficient to enable the student to estimate the correctness of the transcriptions, and to illustrate the palaeography of the periods to which the documents belong, and the classes from which they emanate. Should any student require a facsimile of any document which has not been reproduced in this way, it will be easy to procure one at small cost by application to the Librarian with reference to case and number. The 'old numbers', i.e. those which were attached when the preliminary survey was made, have been recorded, solely for the purpose of rendering the finding of the plates required easy and certain.

In the second place the documents have been with rare exceptions copied in the ordinary Arabic script with diacritic points, though these are almost entirely absent from the originals. We learn e.g. from the handbook of Abu Bakr Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī, who died 338 A.H.,⁴ and so was contemporary with the writers of many of these documents, that the insertion of diacritic dots was regarded as an insult to the intelligence of the reader, though it is admitted that their omission often led to serious misunderstanding. An earlier author on the art of letter-writing, Ibrahim b. al-Mudabbir (ob. 279 A.H.) in his *Risālah al-'Adhrā'*⁵ goes so far as to warn the letter-writer against inserting diacritic points or vowel-signs, except where a word is so difficult that the addressee is quite sure to be non-plussed by it. He adds that he prefers to be in doubt about a word to the disgrace of points and vowel-signs, and

¹ *Governors and Judges of Egypt*, Gibb Memorial, 1912.

² *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-jadidah al-Taufiqiyyah*, Cairo 1309 &c. A.H.

³ *Die Personennamen der Kopten*, Leipzig, 1929.

⁴ *Adab al-Kuttāb*, Cairo, 1341, pp. 57 and foll.

⁵ Ed. Zaki Mubarak, Cairo, 1931, p. 25.

that the Caliph Ma'mun had severely condemned their use. The poet Abū Tammām (ob. 228 A.H.) speaks of a letter with diacritic dots and vowel-signs as a curiosity.¹ Examples of mistakes which arose from their absence are given in al-'Askari's work on textual corruption.² The grammarian Mubarrad records a serious one dating from the first century of Islam.³ Yet, when the letters are carefully formed, as in the scripts of the second century, a faithful copyist might well leave it to the reader to insert them; for usually one who knows the language can do this with certainty, *when the form of the consonant is distinct*. The practice of employing the same sign for *B, T, Th, N, Y* is not so very different from our method of using the combination *OUGH* for sounds as dissimilar as *UFF* and *OW*, etc. In the greater number of cases this condition is by no means fulfilled. Some of the initial salutations are so written that it would be no great exaggeration to say that the same sign is employed for at least nine different letters; and though these formulae owing to their frequent recurrence are legible, greater difficulty arises when the practice is extended to the rest of the document. The decipherer has in such cases to *interpret*; it seems best to furnish a complete interpretation.

In the third place, since a Catalogue is not the same as an edition, the writer has exercised some licence with regard to the amount of material to be reproduced or translated. From the description given above of the Minor Fragments (§ XV), it will be seen that little or nothing would in most cases be gained from a complete reproduction and translation. It would resemble a lengthy series of *Dear Sir* and *Yours sincerely*. The assignation of particular compliments to particular officials, which, if properly observed, would give a clue to the position of the addressees, seems to belong to a period later than these papyri. Hilāl (360-447 A.H.) gives a detailed account of the usage of the fourth century of Islam.⁴ In the handbook of Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī (ob. 336 A.H.)⁵ the assignation would seem to be far less stereotyped. Some of the questions which arose with regard to these initial compliments involve subtle considerations. Thus according to some authorities *May I be made your ransom* should not be addressed to a superior, since a ransom should be the equivalent of the ransomed, and this formula would imply equality with the addressee. No such inconvenience would attend the wish which we occasionally find, that the addressee may outlive the writer, or that the addressee may outlive his wife.

Where what is preserved of the longer letters consists entirely of compliments and salutations, translation has seemed superfluous; such proper names, however, as occur in these documents have been recorded in the Index.

The sections which on the one hand have given the writer most trouble, and on the other seem to him the least satisfactory, are those which reproduce Accounts of

¹ *Dīwān*, Beirut, 1889, p. 374.

² *Kitāb al-taṣḥīf wal-tahrīf*, Cairo, 1908.

³ *Kāmil* (Cairo, 1308 A.H.), i. 292.

⁴ *Kitāb al-Wuzarā*, ed. Amedroz, pp. 153-159.

⁵ *Adab al-Kuttāb*, especially pp. 150 foll.

tradesmen and managers (§§ XI and XII). For the interpretation of the figures employed he has been guided chiefly by Karabacek, but has obtained occasional help from some other sources, e.g. the tables appended to the treatise on the *Hamzah* by 'Abd al-Masīḥ Ṣalīb al-Mas'ūdī.¹ It might indeed have been expected that even in private memoranda figures would have been written so distinctly as to be unmistakable. This expectation is by no means fulfilled, whence the liability to error in the identification of the signs is very serious. That which represents the Greek γ is at times indistinguishable from that which is intended for δ ; that which is meant for η might easily be confused with κ . The sign of which Karabacek (or Wessely) discovered the import to be $\frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{4}$ is very like one which clearly signifies $\frac{2}{3}$. Karabacek has himself called attention to the carelessness with which the signs for *dīnār* and *qirāṭ* are written. All these signs seem to be scrawled with extra negligence in the receipts for *kharaj*, where we might expect them to be particularly clear; in these however the sums are also written in words as well as the dates, so that the import is fairly certain. The words which signify the fractions *a half* and *an eighth* are ordinarily so written as to furnish little indication of the consonants of which they are composed. The use of the Arabic notation (i.e. the employment of the Arabic letters as figures) appears in a receipt for A.H. 309. The experience of the writer in interpreting the dates on the astrolabes edited by Dr. Gunther² has shown him that it is possible to render these as illegible as the Graeco-Coptic figures.

The statement quoted by Mez³ from Yaḥyā b. Ādam⁴ that the dinar was the coin of Egypt, whereas the dirhem was that of Iraq, is in the main borne out by these documents, though the dirhem figures not infrequently.⁵ Hence he is quite right in charging Maqrizi with serious exaggeration in the assertion that the dirhem was not heard of in Egypt till Saladin's time; and indeed this assertion can be disproved from Maqrizi's own treatise on the coinage. A curious passage dealing with coins is to be found in VIII, 6, which the writer has endeavoured to explain. In VIII. 2 a quarter of a dirhem is sent by a slave, with instructions as to the price to be paid for the different drugs required; the sum does not seem to come right. In most cases where the figures attached to the items might be checked by a total, either the total or some of the items are lost.

The writer's treatment of these documents may therefore meet with severe and possibly just criticism: he can only allege in excuse that he has done his best.

Further excuse must be offered for the writer's procedure in occasionally dealing with the recto and the verso of the same papyrus in different parts of the volume. This was a necessary result of his endeavour to classify the material and arrange it under heads. Any inconvenience that may arise should find its solution in the Index of the papyri

¹ *Takmil al-Shurūḥāt fi Qawā'id kitābat al-Hamazāt*, Cairo, 1925.

² *The Astrolabes of the World*, Oxford, 1932.

³ *Die Renaissance des Islams*, p. 445.

⁴ *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, ed. Juynboll, p. 58.

⁵ See also C. H. Becker, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Aegyptens unter dem Islam*, 1903, p. 132.

according to their location in the Library. Where a number of fragments have been mounted between the same sheets of glass they are distinguished by letters of the alphabet (A, B, etc.), and the student should have no difficulty in identifying them. They have been so mounted chiefly with a view to economy.

In certain cases it will be found stated that some part of the papyrus is in a script unknown to the writer, and possibly in cipher. He has not regarded it as part of his duty to describe these writings any further. The employment of cipher for secret messages at the time of these documents is attested by Ibrahim b. al-Mudabbir¹, who gives some curious precepts for this purpose. People, he says, in this matter have attached themselves to al-Qummi and al-Isfahani; he does not tell us whether these were the names of persons or of ciphers. His own suggestion is that the letters should be secretly substituted for each other, or that secret ink be employed, of which he mentions several varieties. He also knows methods of tampering with the seals of documents, but does not consider it desirable to describe them.

I will terminate this Preface by again expressing the hope that critics of this work will make allowances for the many difficulties which it has involved; and my gratitude to Dr. Guppy both for entrusting me with it, and providing all possible facilities for its execution: to Dr. Mingana, till recently in charge of the Oriental MSS. of the J. Rylands Library, for counsel and assistance: and to Mr. U. Gantillon of the Clarendon Press, who has taken great interest in the work, and made many valuable corrections and suggestions.

¹ *Al-Risālah al-'Adhrā*, § 19.

OXFORD,
January 1933.

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I. DOCUMENTS OF AN OFFICIAL CHARACTER

1

D VI 12 recto.

21 x 10

Old number 141.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ جعلت فداك واعزك الله
٣ وانعم مساءك
٤ قد كتبت لاهل هور اكرمك الله
٥ على ما امرت به واديت لهم
٦ في بدار كل رجل مرادك
٧ اكرمك الله في الامر
٨ بالنظر في امرهم وسرائرهم
٩ وفعل ان شاء الله
١٠ جعلت فداك
١١ وفي تبصر كتابهم وكشفه
١٢ والاحتياط به لا نخل
١٣ منه شيئا ان شاء الله

- 1 In the name of God, &c.
- 2 May I be made your ransom, and may God exalt you
- 3 and make your evening happy!
- 4 I have written to the people of Hur (God honour you)
- 5 according to what you ordered, and instructed them
- 6 to hurry, every one, to perform your bidding
- 7 (God honour you) in the matter
- 8 of studying their affairs and minds;
- 9 and this will be done, if God will.
- 10 May I be made your ransom, &c.
- 11 And in studying their letter and examining it
- 12 and taking care of it, we shall not neglect
- 13 any part thereof if God will.

Hur is in the district of Ushmunain. The cryptic nature of the contents makes it likely that the letter refers to some conspiracy which the people of this place were asked to join.

2

A I 1 (B).

24 x 13

Old number 9.

١ وسعادته واتم نعمه عليه وزاد في احسانه عليه وفضله عنده
 ٢ ان الله تبارك وتعالى قد جعل القائد اطال الله بقاءه بركة على اهل
 ٣ عمله ونفا عنهم به الجور والظلم وامن بلدهم فاطال الله بقاء القائد
 ٤ وادام امر سلامته وزاد في دائمه ايامه انه على كل شى قدیر اعلم
 ٥ القائد ابقاه الله انى رجل غريب اصاب فى هذه المدينة ليس لى فيها

(1) and his happiness, and complete His favours towards him, and increase His benefits and His bounty upon him! (2) Verily God Almighty has made the General, whose life God preserve! a blessing to the people (3) of his province, and driven away through him injustice and oppression from them, and made their land secure. May God preserve the life of the General (4) and continue his good health, and increase the perpetuity of his days! Truly He is Almighty. I would inform (5) the General that I am a stranger who has fallen upon this city wherein I have no . . .

The 'general' is not named. Probably the document is too early to admit of his being identified with the conqueror of Egypt, Jauhar.

3

C III 2 (A).

24 x 4

Old number 280.

١ قد كنت اقامت يومين فى
 ٢ لاعلمتك ما كان بعدك وذلك انى كنت على الامر الذى فارقتنى عليه حتا ورد على كتاب
 ٣ من ابى جعفر ابقاه الله وكتاب من ابى الخير حفظه الله يامرنى بتسليم شرقى الجسر وانى صرت
 ٤ ن مرانى بتسليمه راي فى امر وجهوه

The writer states that he had been in *statu quo* until he received orders from Abu Ja'far and Abu'l-Khair, bidding him surrender the eastern side of the Bridge. Abu Ja'far is likely to be Ma'mun's general Ashinas who enters into the affairs of Egypt in 217-26.

Verso seems to be in cipher.

4

F II 6.

12 × 14

Old number 216.

Order to one Abu 'Ali al-Ḥasan.

Written inversely لابی علی الحسن ابقاه الله

عافانا الله وایاک

١

٢ لا تضع کتابی من یدک حتی ترکب

٣ الى شنشور تخرج الاقباط حتى تتفق الى

٤ مائة اردب قمح وابعث به ساعة ياتيك

٥ کتابی ولا تتخلف به فبلغنی متى جاءتك

٦ شاء الله

٧ اهاه يهبوه ايضا فدا-

٨ احسانه اليك

1 God give health to us and you!

2 Do not put down my letter from your hand before you ride

3 to Shunshur to bring pressure on the Copts till they agree to *hand over*

4 a hundred ardebs of wheat, and send it the moment there reaches you

5 my letter, and make no delay therewith. And inform me when there comes to thee *if*

6 God will.

Shunshur was in the Manufiyyah province; 'Ali Pasha Mubarak describes it at length. Some words are lost at the end of the lines, but the sense is clear. Verso are fragments of seven lines in a similar hand.

٣ اعلامك ذلك

٤ [ء]لم من سرورك به وموضعه منك

٥ نفسى باكية م-

5

B II 10 recto.

32 × 29

Old number 8.

١

٢

٣

٤ من سرورك به وموقعه منك

B 2

I. DOCUMENTS OF AN OFFICIAL CHARACTER

- ٥ تقدم علينا والى ولا خبر عند كتابى
 ٦ اليك فاذا وقع عندنا خبر كتبت
 ٧ به اليك سريعا ان شا الله والقمح عندنا
 ٨ ثمانية ويبات ونصف والشعير ثلاثة ارادب
 ٩ وان المزرعين عندنا قد وضعوا ايديهم
 ١٠ فى الزرع باسفل الارض
 ١١ وان عمال الكور قد تسجلوا لهم وان ابنتى
 ١٢ قد دخلت على زوجها
 ١٣
 ١٤ وقد كنت كتبت الكتاب قبل اليوم لابعث به حين [ورد] علينا
 ١٥ ولاية حوى بن حوى على الصلاة والخراج
 ١٦ وقد ولى بن مليح الزمام والخراج وابو عبدة
 ١٧ بن عقبة بن نافع على الصلاة والخراج وقد كتب حوى كتابه
 ١٨ الى العمال باشخاصهم من العراقيين احببت اعلامك ذلك
 ١٩ لتكون منه على علم وانما قرت ولايته يوم الاحد
 ٢٠ لثلاث خلون من رمضان ولم يكون عندنا بعده ما نكتب به
 ٢١ اليك وقد نقلت التوابيت

- 1
 2
 3
 4 your delight in him and the place he holds with you
 5 and I have no news to write
 6 to you, and if we get any news I will write
 7 it to you speedily, if God will. Wheat is with us
 8 eight waibahs and a half and barley three ardebs.
 9 And the cultivators have put their hands
 10 on the crops in the lower part of the country,
 11 and the officials of the districts have registered for them. And my daughter
 12 has cohabited with her husband
 13
 14 Now I had written the letter the day before intending to send it when we learned

- 15 that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy had been appointed minister of prayer and kharaj :
 16 now Ibn Malīḥ was appointed minister of control and kharaj and Abu 'Ubaidah
 17 b. 'Uqbah b. Nafi' of prayer and kharaj. And Ḥuwayy has written his letter
 18 to the officials bidding them be brought from the two Iraqs. I have thought proper to inform you
 of this
 19 that you might be aware of it. His appointment was only confirmed on Sunday
 20 the third of Ramaḍan. We have nothing more after this to write
 21 to you. And the *tabuts* have been transferred

The Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy of line 15 is probably the same as the person mentioned by Kindi as one of the *ashraf* or nobles of Egypt, whose right to give evidence was not allowed by the qāḍi al-'Umari (185-194) though he had been honoured by a former qāḍi. The historians do not mention him among Egyptian office-holders. Line 16 quotes precedents for the combination of two offices; Ibn Malīḥ is unknown, and Abu 'Ubaidah b. 'Uqbah b. Nafi', who is mentioned by Kindi as a leader of Egyptian forces at the beginning of the second century does not figure in the lists of office-holders. Combination of two or more ministries in the provinces is familiar.

The *tabut* was in the care of an officer in Egypt, and Kindi twice alludes to this. His editor, Mr. Guest, offers no suggestion as to the sense of the word; the context in which it occurs implies that it meant some sort of police or bodyguard.

The figures in lines 7 and 8 probably are to be interpreted of prices, i.e. the amount to be obtained for one dinar.

6

Exposed 3.

64 × 13

Old number 38.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----|
| كتب المشفق | ١ |
| الحال | ٢ |
| الله عز وجل ثم الى الامير | ٣ |
| الحاج حاجا على يديه وفي | ٤ |
| والذي اردنا | ٥ |
| من الله ولم يبق فيه | ٦ |
| يرد الصبيان واضعاف الرجال | ٧ |
| تمالك علينا وسد الثغر | ٨ |
| الثغر لا ملجا لنا فيه | ٩ |
| الا سبقته الى الامير | ١٠ |
| وارجوا ان يصوننا الله | ١١ |

- ١٢ الامير ادام الله تاييده
 ١٣ اعز الله الامير الحائط القبلى منه
 ١٤ تشقق من جهات كثيرة ورفعها
 ١٥ المهندس الى ثغر رشيد
 ١٦ باب الما فعلى خير والحائط
 ١٧ الصيف قبل جرى النيل
 ١٨ [ا]نغط الى البحر ما وها منه
 ١٩ هذا الحائط على يدى الطولونية
 ٢٠ الذى دخل منه جيش الكفرة
 ٢١ الامير ادام الله عزه بالاسكندرية
 ٢٢ وهو اشفق من حادث فلو ورد
 ٢٣ اشتوم لما تاخر منها مركب
 ٢٤ وبين يديه وهو فى هذا

The mention of the *Tuluniyyah*, i.e. the followers of Aḥmad b. Ṭulun (254-270) gives us a *terminus a quo* for the date of this letter, which evidently conveyed important information to a government official, and demanded help for various necessary measures. It states in line 21 that the Amir is in Alexandria and in fear of some disaster; and mentions several localities in Egypt, Rashid (Rosetta) in line 15, al-Farama in line 18, and Ushtum in line 23. An entry of unbelievers (a Byzantine raid?) is mentioned in line 20.

Too much is lost to permit of any continuous sense being enucleated.

7

D II 4 (A) recto.

24 × 11

Old number 137.

- ١ وتجعلوا على العسكر
 ينصرف
 ٢ الى بكتابه اقربكم الى جابر بن هرون خص نفسك بالسلام
 ٣ وابو الحسن ابقاه الله السلم كثيرا وابو نصر ورفيقه
 ٤ وجميع من قبلنا فى عافية

Since the first words preserved mean *and ye shall set over the army* this document would seem to have emanated from some important person. If nothing is lost in what follows the words should mean *and there shall return to me with his letter the nearest of you to Jābir b. Hārūn*. Since this combination of names is rare, it is reasonable to identify this personage with the Jābir b. Hārūn mentioned by Ṭabarī, iii. 1524 foll., in the events of 250 A. H. He was connected with the rising of al-Ḥasan b. Zaid in Ṭabaristan, having been sent by Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh the Ṭahirid to take possession of property belonging to the former, an operation in which he exceeded his duty and, by seizing lands which had been occupied by others, brought on a war.

8

C IV 3 (A).

14 × 17

• Old number 179.

Remains of five lines in bold hand.

Official document, fragmentary.

١ من حال القوم مع العمل (?) وبما له
 ٢ وتعمله ولا تؤخره ان شا الله ولا تتغافل بها [ان شا] الله
 ٣ حيالك الله ومتع بك
 ٤ اعمله الى ان ياتيكم البقية (?)
 ٥ فاني كتابي وارد عليك

9

D IV 12 verso.

Old number 55.

Official letter, fragmentary.

١ ابي بكر اعزه الله الى ابن الشعبى فيعمل بما
 ٢ قد استغنيت عن معاودة فيما
 ٣ فرايك ادام الله عزك في الكتاب الى
 ٤ ارك وعيونك موفق ان ب
 ٥ اطلال الله الخ

10

D I 7.

20 x 15

Old number 102.

Remains of nine lines.

- ١ اصح قبلك
 ٢ واصلح الجماعة واستحضر
 ٣ ليودوا ما عليهم وارى منع المراكب عن الحمل وانما عندنا مركب
 ٤ يحمل عشرة احمال كتان وانما لحمل

 ٩ وما اقصر والله يا سيدى اعزك الله

11

D II 4 (B).

14 x 12 recto

Old number 137

Report of an action about money.

- ١ وان النقد هو حق له فاتفق المجلس
 ٢ شرعيا مثقال دفعة فخرج هو بن عيسى
 ٣ الى بحرية ويحيى وامه واخته ودفعوا اليه
 ٤ خمسمائة درهم ومائة ولم يبق لهم فقط
 ٥ حق ولا دعوى ولا طلبه على الوجوه والاسباب
 ٦ كلها وصارت المجلس
 ٧ النقد المسطور فى هذا الكتاب

It is reported that as the result of an action the sum of 1500 dirhems and 100 dinars (?) was paid in cash to certain persons who in consequence had no further claim.

12

D III 8 recto.

22 x 16

Old number 107.

Order to a police officer.

١ على ذلك والله اعزك الله
 ٢ الى الله وعليك مع اهل رمجوس
 ٣ عليك اعزك الله
 ٤ ان هذا الرجل من اهل رمجوس وانه ورد ابن
 ٥ ابي الحسين وعندي بن حملة الى رمجوس وقد
 ٦ والله اعتمد الخيل فيهم واحب ان تنكل به وتجمعه
 ٧ اصلاح لغيره ان شاء الله ولا تبقي من امره بحاله
 ٨ والسلام
 ٩ اطال الله الخ

1

2 With the people of Ramjus

3

4 Verily this man is one of the people of Ramjus. Now there came Ibn

5 Abi'l-Ḥusain and 'Adi b. Ḥamalah to Ramjus, and

6 by Allah he tried to trick them. I desire you to punish him and make of him

7 a reformation of others, please God. Do not spare him in any way.

8 Salutation !

9 God lengthen &c.

Ramjus is mentioned in the Book of Egyptian Place-names, published in Cairo, 1898. It is among the dependencies of Ushmunain.

13

C I 2 recto.

11 x 12.

Old number 256.

Governor's Order for the production of certain persons.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ استحضر اليانا من مدينة انصنى بقطر

C

- ٣ الطحان و امر العمال باحضاره
 ٤ واستخضر الينا باسرته
 ٥ اجمعين او تستحضر اياه وابنه
 ٦ [واستعجل] احضاره ان شاء الله

- 1 In the Name &c.
 2 Produce to us from the city of Anşina Victor
 3 the miller and order the magistrates to produce him.
 4 Also produce to us his family
 5 all of them, or produce his father and his son
 6 *and hasten* their production, if God will.

Anşina is in the Ushmunain district. In the time of al-Ashraf Sha'ban (1363-1376) its area was 163 feddans, and its revenue of 1000 dinars assigned to the Amir of Medinah in Arabia. The description of it as a *medinah* or city shows that at the time of this order it must still have been a place of importance.

14

E II 9.

21 x 16

Old number 251.

Report of an execution.

Papyrus of second century, much torn and perforated, fragments of 17 lines.

- ١
 ٢ العامل
 ٣ كان فيهم لص
 ٤ بين اللصوص من مثلها قد
 ٥ فيها بعد ان تلص
 ٦ وانا جالس جريح
 ٧ الله
 ٨ الله اسمعيل بن
 ٩ الله
 ١٠
 ١١ واولادهم
 ١٢ صلبت الثلثة في

١٣

١٤ شهر

١٥ فاذا لا شيء عادل مثل

١٦ لما قد حق عليه

15

F III 18.

12 x 13

Old number 8.

Discharge order of a prisoner.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

٢ جعلت فداك

٣ اطلق يحنس كنانة فقد ضمن

٤ لنا ابو رازي ما عليه من المال

٥ بعد ان يطلق المتقبل امين

٦ ان شا الله

٧ جعلت فداك

- 1 In the name &c.
- 2 May I be made thy ransom !
- 3 Release Yuhannis Kinanah for Abu Razi
- 4 has guaranteed to us the money which he owes
- 5 after his release. The guarantor is trustworthy
- 6 if God will
- 7 May I be made thy ransom !

The formula used seems surprising since the letter must clearly be addressed to an inferior.

16

F IV 17.

19 x 9

Old number 235.

١ الى على بن عمران

٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

٣ عافانا الله واياك

٤ لا تتعرض لبكر وبته ؟

٥ فيما عليه فانه قد اداه

٦ انه لم يزرع ان شاء الله

٧ وكتب

(1) To 'Ali b. 'Imran (2) In the Name &c. (3) God give us and you good health (4) You are not to give trouble to Bakr . . . (5) concerning what he owes for he has paid it. (6) He has not cultivated. If God will. (7) Written by

This would seem to be an order from a governor to a collector not to demand land-tax from one Bakr, on the ground that he had paid what had been due, and that he had ceased cultivating.

17

B V 2 recto.

32 x 23.

9 lines.

١ يم
٢ بن عبد القوى لعبد الله بن يوسف
٣ بطاعته وان يتولى القرية واصلاح
٤ اهل الجرائم والريب ويقمعهم
٥ من تجاوز ما ينهى عنه الى الرعية
٦ غير اهلها وابياتهم وسلخهم
٧ ومن قرىء عليه كتابى هذا من الحراس والاعوان
٨ واهل الضيعة وغيرهم فليعلم ذلك ولا يجعل على نفسه فى تعديده
٩ سبيلا ان شاء الله وكتب فى ذى القعدة

1 In the name of Allah &c.

2 This letter was written by

b. 'Abd al-Qawī to 'Abdallah b. Yūsuf

3 obedience to him and that he should take charge of the village and set in order

4 its affairs and search out criminals and suspects and suppress them

5 and punish any one who transgresses what has been forbidden him in dealing with the subjects

6 other than their owners and their houses and strips them.

- 7 And to whomever this my letter shall be read of the guardians and the adjutants
 8 and the people of the estate and others, let him know that and not make against himself by trans-
 gressing it
 9 a path, if God will. Written in Dhu'l-Qa'dah.

The verso perhaps contains a reply or rather retort from the person to whom the above was addressed.

18

B V 2 verso.

32 × 23

Old number 21.

Sixteen lines, of which the first nine are lost.

١ بسم
 ٢ اما بعد

 ١٠ ميعاد اما بعد فان الله له الحمد
 ١١ وخلق الخلائق ودبر الامور واحضر الملائكة
 ١٢ لم يكن فيها احدا ولم يستنصر عليه عونا
 ١٣ اما بعد فان الامير اصلحه الله بعثنا الى ارض ماؤها
 ١٤ فيها جائع والكبير فيها ضائع فلم يصيب الا
 ١٥ فنحن في اليقين في بلد حزين نسد جائعين نصلح ضائعين

The writer tells the Amir who has appointed him to some government that he found his province in a miserable condition and that he is doing his best to remedy it.

II. DOCUMENTS CONNECTED WITH TAX-COLLECTION

1

C II 2 (A).

14 × 21

Old number 276

- ١ هذا كتاب لابی علی شعیب بن حاتم
٢ عامل السيدة ام امیر المومنین
٣ اکرمها الله علی خراج کور سر والمستغلات
٤ واقوات الملك

The heading of a letter addressed to 'Ali Shu'aib b. Hātim administrator of kharaj for the Queen-mother in the districts of and of crops and royal provisions.

The queen-mother referred to is doubtless the Mother of Muqtadir, known to the historians as *al-Sayyidah*, the title which she has here. The name of the place after *districts of* is not easily decipherable; it is likely to be some place in Egypt. Perhaps, however, it is to be read *Tustar* (in Khuzistan) a likely place for estates belonging to this queen-mother. A good deal is heard of her agents in the *Table-talk of a Mesopotamian Judge*.

2

C I 1 (B).

23 × 10

Old number 257.

Letters (fragmentary) about tax-collection.

Recto

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ اطال الله بقاءك قد صدرت لجهيد بناحيتك الى اني
٣ وقررنا وبعد ذلك سالت
٤
٥ ولا تقصر معونته واجره على رسوم الناحية وغيرها بلغني
٦ ان شا الله مع

Verso

- ١ قد وقفت على ما كتبت يا سيدى ورئسى اطال الله
٢ اجلك صار تاما فقدمت فى جهيدة

ولا ناحية من النواحي ٣

زيادة ولا نقصان وانها ٤

The verso is evidently a reply to the recto; to the custom of replying to letters on the back there are many allusions.

The recto contained instructions from a high official to a lower among other things about the payment of some agent according to the usage of the district. In the reply the person addressed asserts that he has carried out the instructions.

3

C III 10 (A).

25 × 14

Old number 209 b.

After basmalah and compliments.

انا اعلم اعزك الله انى ١

سرورك بما يجرى بينى وبين ابو عبد الرحمن اطل الله [بقاه] سالتك ٢

الايام ان تتفضل وتخرج لى رقيمة باسم من عليه الخراج وقد خراج على فلم يسلم ٣

و[الله] المستعان وتعرف ايدك الله انك لا تقتضى منه واحد ٤

It would seem that this person had been charged kharaj which was in his opinion due from some one else.

4

F III 11 (A).

12 × 4

Old number 162.

Letter (fragmentary) connected with kharaj.

١ ولا كثير ولا يدع

٢ احد من اصحاب

٣ الامير

٤ ولم والله ياخذ

٥ منه شى فقد

٦ اغلقت عنه خراج

٧ وتساله بذلك

٨ ان شا الله

It would seem that orders had been given that no kharaj was to be paid by the associates of the Amir, and that in spite of that the full amount had been exacted from one of them. The person addressed is asked to make inquiries on this subject.

The plate contains besides four scraps.

5

C II 5 (A).

20 x 11

Old number 206.

١

٢ فصار الى الساعة وانا في

٣ اشتكا الى المطالبة بالنزل

٤ وان تعلم ان هذا رسم لم نقف عليه

٥ تصنع لنا ما لا يحتاج اليه فان

٦ ياخي اعزك الله

٧ دونك

٨ اعترف ياخي بحقك عليك

٩ ولا توجههم الى تبكية ولا

١٠ والى جماعة اصحابنا

١١ ولا نفسك بما تعلمه

Fragments of 3 more lines.

The writer records a complaint that a demand has been made on some one for *nuzl*, i.e. provisions to be supplied to a prince when travelling, and that this is a tax of which he has not heard. He asks his correspondent to recognize his claims and (apparently) not reduce his family to moving people to tears.

Verso: figures.

6

F III 9

12 x 11

Old number 124.

Recto :

١

٢ ان ياتى ذكر الصاحب ايده الله فى ذل
 ٣ سأل الصاحب اعزه الله ان يسقط ذلك
 ٤ من المحال. اكرمك الله ان يستخرج من
 ٥ ثم يسقط لهم بدل ذلك شىء هو حق

Verso : order for payment.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ جعلت فداك ادفع الى موصل رقتى
 ٣ هذ[ه] وهو ابو عمرو ثلث دينار واحسب
 ٤ حسابك ان شاء الله

خيران

The signature is probably to be read thus.

7

D VI 11.

13 x 15

Old number 41.

Order to be satisfied with a guarantee.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ عافاكم الله ورحمكم فان وقاد بن عبد الله
 ٣ قد ضمن لنا ما يلزم بلل مولى اسمعيل اخو وقاد
 ٤ من الخراج والضرا[ئب] والنوائب فى السنة كلها
 ٥ فخلوا بينه وبين جزاء ما رفع عليه وذره وحسابه
 ٦ لبدخله فيما عليه من الخراج واحتفظوا بما بقى

D

٧ له سوى ذلك [ح]تى ياتىكم راى فيه ان شاء الله

٨ عافاكم الله ورحمكم وكتب

يوم ' فرموته

Second century writing.

(1) In the Name &c. (2) God give you health and mercy. Verily Waqqad b. 'Abdallah (3) has guaranteed to us all for which Bilal client of Isma'il Waqqad's brother is liable (4) in the way of kharaj, taxes, and extraordinary dues in the whole year; (5) so leave him free from paying that of which he has been assessed, and leave his account alone, (6) that he (*Waqqād*) may enter it into the kharaj for which he is liable; but keep what remains (7) to him besides that until my instruction on the matter comes, please God. (8) God give you health and mercy. Written by (9) 10 Farmutah.

The name *Waqqād* is rare, though other names formed from this root are found. The document is addressed to a number of persons, evidently by a governor, whose name is lost.

8

A I 3.

22 x 20

Old number 34.

Instructions to a kharaj official.

١ وجوه الجباية لخراج سنة

٢ ابث بها على ان يورد بيت المال

٣ ما يلزمها من ذلك فى كل طبل من طبولك

٤ على ما يكتب به الى من مبلغه ووجوهه

٥ فاعلم ذلك ولا تعرض لوكيل حاده

٦ ولا لاهل بيته وكل من يسمى لك خلى

٧ وكيله من الخراج واكتب الي بما يلزمهم

٨ من ذلك فى كل طبل من طبولك لا امر باخذ

٩ كفيلهم بايراده بيت المال قبله

١٠ وخلي بين وكيل حاده وبين

١١ غلته من النفط والخراج واهل بيته

١٢ ولا تعرض لهم فيها واصرف الاجناد

١٣ والامنا عنها ان شاء الله

The language of this document is unusual, since, if Björkman's Index to Qalqashandi is exhaustive, the expression *ṭabl*, plural *ṭubūl* is not noticed by that author. In *Tāj al-'Arūs* Ibn al-A'rābī is cited for the sense *kharaj*, and the *Asās al-Balāghah* (Cairo, 1341, ii. 26) for the sense 'instalment'; the example cited is 'the people of Egypt paid one, two, or several *ṭabl* of *kharaj*'. In this letter it appears rather to have the sense 'register' (Karabacek, *Mitteilungen*, 163). The naphtha 'crop' (line 11) is illustrated by Abu Ṣāliḥ, p. 276: 'In the district of Uswan (Asouan) there are springs of white naphtha in the mountains, which were found by the son of Ain al-Saif, when he was at Aswan in the year 400 (A.D. 1010).' The date of our document is at least a century earlier.

The name of the person whose agent is not to be approached with demands for *kharaj* is not easy to read; perhaps it is intended for Junādah, a name which occurs in Kindi's history.

9

B IV 8.

26 x 10

Old number 29.

Letter to a woman about the *kharaj*.

- ١ انك رضا بنت على
- ٢ بن مسعدة تعلمين
- ٣ انك منعت يحنس
- ٤ بن سلمن من الجباية
- ٥ وكسرت عليه الخراج
- ٦ ووليت عليه الاقباط
- ٧ وكتابى اليك
- ٨ وعدو الله قدم علينا
- ٩ مرتين وهو الثالث
- ١٠ هلا نقضت علينا الجراح
- ١١ ونحن نجب الا [يد]صل
- ١٢ عليك فقد بقى لنا
- ١٣ عليه مائتين دينار
- ١٤ فلا تدعيه يقتل بك
- ١٥ ان شاء الله
- ١٦ حفظك الله وابقاك

- 1 Verily thou, Riḍā, daughter of 'Alī
- 2 b. Mas'adah knowest
- 3 that thou hast prevented Yuḥannis
- 4 b. Salmān from collecting,
- 5 and hast withheld the kharaj from him
- 6 and put the Copts over him;
- 7 and I am writing to thee
- 8 when the enemy of God has come against us
- 9 twice and he is the third.
- 10 Hast thou not reopened our wound
- 11 while we were desirous that it should not come
- 12 upon thee? There remain due to us
- 13 from him two hundred dinars;
- 14 so suffer him not to be killed through thee
- 15 if God will.
- 16 God keep thee and preserve thee.

This interesting letter contains allusions to which we do not possess the key. The lady to whom it is addressed would seem to have been a Muslim owner of land, who interfered with the collection of the tax by a Christian collector. The writer would seem to be an agent of the governor, who had to report the defalcation of the collector, who was responsible for 200 dinars of kharaj. The 'enemy of God' is probably an agent sent to demand payment.

III. RECEIPTS FOR PAYMENT OF KHARAJ

B II 10.

1

Old number 8.

Receipt for payment of kharaj.

A.H. 295.

سنة خمس تسعين ومائتين

دينر
٥٧٤

فرمودة

١ الرقعة

٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

٣ أدى محمد بن ابي الاشهل عما يلزمه من الخراج

٤ عما زرع على اللهون

٥ نصف وثلاث وثمان دينار مثقال بلا صرف

٦ الى نقله بن اندونه الجهبذ بحضرة خليفة

٧ ابي عيسى محمد بن العباس العباسي العامل

٨ اعزه الله بخراج سنة خمس وتسعين ومائتين
 ٩ وكتب نقله بن اندونه بخطه
 ١٠ دينر
 ٤٧٥

- 1 Paper 3. Farmutah year 295. Dinar $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{8}$
- 2 In the Name &c.
- 3 There has paid Muḥammad b. Abi'l-Ashhal on account of the kharaj due from him
- 4 for what was sown at Allahun (by Ibn 'Abdallah and his associates)
- 5 a half, a third, and an eighth dinar, *mithqāl* without agio,
- 6 to Nicolas son of Andunah the collector in the presence of the deputy of
- 7 Abu 'Isa Muḥammad b. al-'Abbas al-'Abbāsī the governor
- 8 (whom God exalt!) on the kharaj of the year two hundred and ninety-five 295,
- 9 and Nicolas son of Andunah wrote it with his hand.
- 10 Dinar $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{8}$

It is doubtful whether the first word should be read *الدفعه* 'the payment' or as above. The latter has been chosen owing to the figure 25 following it in No. 8.

Allāhūn originally in the Fayyum district, afterwards attached to that of Behnesa.

Line 4 is supplied from no. 2.

The figures employed are a cursive form of the Coptic numerals. *Mithqāl* is interpreted by Karabacek, *Denkschriften W. A.* xxxiii. 233 as 'of the standard introduced A.H. 203'.

2

D IV 11 verso.

22 x 11

Old number 49.

Receipt for kharaj. A.H. 295.

السنة

بشهر

٧

ط ٢٠

برميت

١ الرقعة

٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

٣ ادى محمد بن ابى الاشهل عما يلزمه من الخراج

٤ عما زرع على اللهون بن عبد الله ورفقاه

٥ نصف وثلاث وثمان دينار مثقال بلا صرف

٦ الى نقله بن اندونه الجهبذ بحضرة خليفة

٧ ابى عيسى محمد بن العباس العباسى العامل

٨ اعزه الله بخراج سنة خمس وتسعين ومائتين صح

٩ وكتب نقله بن اندونه بخطه

3

D IV 8.

Old number 49.

Receipt for the same sum to the same person.

4

D VI 8.

11 x 8

Old number 50.

Receipt for payment of kharaj.
A.H. 299.

١ رقعة ٥٠
٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٣ ادى سعدون بن ابي حمزة الحداد عن الخراج بادفوا
٤ سنة تسع المنقولة عن سنة ثمان وتسعين ومائتين
٥ نصف وثلاث وثمان ودانق مشقال وكتب سمعون بن مينا
٦ فى شعبان سنة تسع وتسعين ومائتين
٧ بخراج سنة ٢٩٩

- 1 Paper 2
- 2 In the Name, &c.
- 3 Sa 'dun b. Abi Hamzah the smith has paid on account of kharaj in Udfu
- 4 of the year nine transferred from the year two hundred and ninety-eight
- 5 one half and one third and one eighth and a danaq *mithqāl*; and there wrote Sam'un b. Mina
- 6 in Sha'bān in the year two hundred and ninety-nine.
- 7 For the kharaj of the year 299.

This last date is in Coptic figures. The amount paid is, like the number of the paper, in the cursive notation.

Owing to the Muhammadan year being an arbitrary group of twelve months, which bears no relation to the seasons, the kharaj, which was properly a proportion of the crops, had either to be paid according to a solar calendar or the error which accumulated had occasionally to be set right by the omission of a year. Maqrizi (old edition I. 274) produces a letter of Mu'taḍid of the year 281 in which it is ordered that one year of every four should be omitted. This ordinance, which seems unnecessarily generous, explains the omission of the year 298.

5

B III 4 (C) verso

10 x 8

Old number 158.

Receipt for kharaj to the same person.
A.H. 299.

١ السنة
٢ ٥-٦= ٥٦
٣ رقعة ٥٠

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم	٤
ادى سعدون بن ابي حمزة عن اخراج بادفوا لسنة	٥
المنقولة عن سنة ثمان وتسعين ومائتين ثلث وثمان وخمس دوانق	٦
مشقال الى سمعون بن مينا في شهر رمضان	٧
سنة تسع وتسعين ومائتين	٨
٢٢٤	٩
بخراج سنة	١٠
٢٧	١١

The figures are interpreted in the text.

Perhaps the first amount should have been read ثلثين.

6

F III 2.

$4 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$

Old number 218.

Receipt for kharaj to the same person.

A.H. 299.

١ رقعة ✓
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ ادى سعدون بن ابي حمزة عما يلزمها من ال
٣ المنقولة عن سنة ثمان وتسعين ومائتين نصف وثلث وثمان دينار
٤ مشقال وكتب سمعون بن مينا في شهر رمضان
٥ سنة تسع وتسعين ومائتين
٦ لخراج سنة ٢٢٤

The payment here is for Ramaḍān of the same year, and the document is written by the same person. Although the decipherment seems certain the writing is all but illegible.

In no. 4 Sa'dūn pays a half, a third, an eighth and a danaq on account of 299 transferred from 298 in Sha'ban; in no. 5 on account of the same year a third, an eighth, and five danaqs in Ramaḍān; in no. 6 a half, a third, and an eighth of a dinar on account of 299 in Ramaḍān also. Since the two last are receipts for money paid in the same month, it would seem that Sa'dūn was allowed to pay his kharaj in small instalments; which must have given the collector trouble. None of these documents explains in what form the fragments of a dinar were produced.

7

E IV 13 (A)

10 x 8

Old number 313.

Receipt for kharaj.

A.H. 308. Bashnas = Muḥarram.

- ١ بن سليمان النان
- ٢ عما يلزمه من الخراج بشنس العربيه محرم
- ٣ بن الليث اعزه الله ربع وسدس
- ٤ وسدس ثمن دينر مشقال معسول الى مينا بن
- ٥ بخراج سنة ثمان وثلاثمائة
- ٦ حسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل

م
٤
٧

8

Exposed 6.

4½ x 2½

Receipt for kharaj.

A.H. 309.

- ١ الرقة كه طرقة ك
- ٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
- ٣ ادى مهدي المونسي ولاهز ابته
- ٤
- ٥ بالمدينة قبالة ابي بكر العباسي
- ٦ اعزه الله تسعة دنانير
- ٧ وثلاث ونصف ثمن دينار
- ٨ مشقال بلا صرف الى مرو

سمت

وسملود

٩ بن مينا الجهيز بخراج سنة
 ١٠ تسع وثلاثمائة
 صح شهر رجب

- 1 Leaf 25, Series 20
- 2 In the Name &c. Samant and Samlud
- 3 Mahdi al-Munisi and his son Lahiz paid
- 4 on account of the *kharaj* which was due from them
- 5 in al-Medinah in the presence of Abu Bakr al-'Abbasi,
- 6 whom God exalt! nine dinars
- 7 and a third and half an eighth of a dinar
- 8 *mithqal* without agio to Marwan
- 9 son of Mina the collector for the *kharaj* of the year
- 10 three hundred and nine 309.
- 11 Paid in the month of Rajab.

This document differs in some ways from those of an earlier date. The numbers of the account books are in Arabic letters, though the date at the end is given in Coptic numerals. The two places which are at the top of the left margin are mentioned in close proximity in Sharaf al-din's work, though he spells the latter Samlut. The sum paid is not given in figures as well as in words.

9

F IV 16.

14 x 10

Old number 236.

Receipt for *kharaj*.

١ يوم بابہ دننیر
 ٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٣ براءة لمحمد بن رفا عما يلزمه من خراج ما زرع بقرية بكورة ضيعة الامير
 ٤ ابقاه الله تسعة وتسعين دينرا ونصف وثمان دينر مشقال
 بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ١٤٩٢

Day 1 of Babah

(2) In the Name &c. (3) Discharge to Muhammad b. Rifa for what was due from him of *kharaj* on what he sowed in a village in the district of the estate of the Amir, (4) whom God preserve, ninety-nine dinars and a half and an eighth *mithqal*

(5) In the Name &c.

Figures of sums mentioned.

10

F IV 18.

17 × 8

Old number 319.

Receipt for kharaj.

A.H. 310.

له

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ برأة لصدر بن عن دينار واحد
 ٣ معسولا دفعه ليزداد بي احمد
 ٤ من خراج ما يجب عليه عن حصته
 ٥ اسط شهر سنة عشر وثلاثمائة

The name of the payer is torn : the year is 310 : the month does not appear to be given. The term in line 3 in the sense 'of full weight' is illustrated by Karabacek, *Mitteilungen*, p. 160. Probably the first word in line 5 stands for Asyut.

11

D IV 7.

22 × 11

Old number 16.

Receipt for kharaj. A.H. 250.

With seal.

رقعة

١

٢ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٣ ادى كثير بن عبد الله عما يلزمه من دنائير شتى
 ٤ من خراج ابشادة ومقطول من ضياع
 ٥ الامير اعزه الله لخراج سنة خمسين ومائتين
 ٦ دينار ونصف وثمان كاهه مشقال بيت المال
 ٧ ووزنه الى مينا وبنيامين القسطلين
 ٨ بحضرة خليفة بن محمد وكيل ابي بكر
 ٩ موسى بن صقر اعزه الله لخراج سنة ٥٢٤
 ابشادة بامر كثير بن عبد الله ١٢٤
 مقطول بامر كثير بن عبد الله ١٢٤
 وخرجه الينا

This receipt is carelessly written, and some words have been obliterated. The two places mentioned, Ibshadah and Maqtul, belong to the Ushmunain district. The whole amount paid is a dinar, a half, and an eighth, which are afterwards specified as a half, a third, and an eighth for Ibshadah, and two thirds for Maqtul. The year is 250; the month does not appear to be mentioned.

12

B I 4

16 x 4

Old number 157.

Receipt for Jaliyah. A.H. 314.

ω H α ١
 ٢ المحرم شعبان الرقعة
 ٣ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٤ ادى يسر بن العراقى عما
 ٥ يلزمه من الجالية بالمدينة
 ٦ الى ابن ابى عبد الله البصرى
 ٧ اعزه الله ثلثين ١١ مثقال
 ٨ وادى جرموزة بن سالم ثمانمائة
 ٩ بحضرة خليفة ابى بكر
 ١٠ العامل اعزه الله بخراج
 ١١ سنة اربع عشرة
 ١٢ وثلثمائة

- 1 (Figures) 1 8 2
 2 al-Muḥarram Sha'ban Paper
 3 In the Name &c.
 4 There paid Yasir b. al-'Iraqi on account of
 5 the jaliyah for which he was liable in the City
 6 to Ibn Abi 'Abdallah al-Baṣri,
 7 whom God exalt, thirty *mithqāl*
 8 and Jurmuzah (?) b. Salim paid eight hundred
 9 in the presence of the deputy of Abu Bakr
 10 the governor, whom God exalt, for the kharaj
 11 of the year fourteen
 12 and three hundred.

The Abu Bakr mentioned as governor at the time would seem to be Waṣīf the clerk who according to the authorities was governor of Egypt for Muqtadir at the time.

The 'City' is probably Ushmun, the capital of the district.

The word *jaliyah* is used for any form of tribute, and probably has here no special signification, since the name of the first payer and of his father are not foreign.

13

B II 1 (A).

8 × 9

Old number 97.

Receipt for kharaj : fragment.
Parts of 7 lines.

The name of the magistrate *خلد بن*, the place *المدينة*.

IV. ORDERS FOR CONVEYANCE BY POST-MULES

1

D V 4.

14 × 9

Old number 3.

A.H. 136.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ من عبد الملك بن يزيد الى صاحب بريد اشمون
٣ فاحمل راشد رسول يونس بن سلمة وهو شاب
٤ جيد [على دابتين] من
٥ البريد احدهما دابة فرانق وكتب
٦ محمد في رجب سنة ست وثلاثين ومائة

- 1 In the Name &c.
- 2 From 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazid to the postmaster of Ushmun.
- 3 Mount Rashid messenger of Yunus b. Salamah, who is a lad
- 4 good of *on two beasts* of
- 5 the post, one of them a courier's beast. Written by
- 6 Muhammad in Rajab of the year 136.

'Abd al-Malik b. Yazid Abu 'Aun was governor of Egypt from 133 to 136. He was displaced in Rabi' II of 136. This order therefore belongs to the very end of his governorship.

2

E III 14.

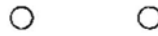
14 × 11

Old number 169.

A.H. 133.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
٢ الى صاحب
٣ فاحمل صالح وهو امرد ار(و)ع ابيض رسول

- ٤ محمد بن سليم على دابتين من البريد احدهما
 ٥ دابة الفرائق وكتبه محمد في جمدى الاخرى سنة
 ٦ ثلث وثلثين ومائة



verso (obliterated)

صحب بريد اشمون

Line 2 torn, probably عبد الملك بن يزيد to be inserted.

3

E III 12.

9 × 13

Old number 19.

A.H. 127.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ من عيسى بن ابي عطا الى صاحب بريد اشمون
 ٣ فاحمل هشام رسولى
 ٤ على دابتين من البريد احدهما
 ٥ دابة الفرائق وكتب محمد فى شهر
 ٦ ربيع الاخر سنة سبع وعشرين و
 ٧ مائة



Verso

من عيسى بن ابي عطا بريد اشمون

||||

4

E III 10.

12 × 15

Old number 72.

A.H. 134.

- ١ يد اشمون
 ٢ ط بن عبد الله

IV. ORDERS FOR CONVEYANCE BY POST-MULES

٣ وهو اسد نفه ابيض الى سمط بن عبد الله

٤ ن من البريد احديهما دابة

٥ الفرائق كتب سليمان في رجب سنة

٦ اربع وثلاثين ومائة

Verso.

من عبد الملك بن يزيد الى

1 From 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazid to the master of the post of Ushmun

2 Mount messenger of Simṭ b. 'Abdallah

3 who is brown white nosed to Simṭ b. 'Abdallah

4 on two beasts of the post, one of them a beast

5 of the courier. Written by Sulaiman in Rajab of the year 134.

Verso: From 'Abd al-Malik b. Yazid.

As has been seen this governor took office in 133.

5

F IV 1.

9 × 7

Old number 318.

١ بسم الله الرحمن

٢ من عبد الملك بن ر

٣ فاحمل عبد الحميد

٤ شاب جيد ابيض

٥ احديهما دابة ا

٦ شوال سنة احد

Half this document has perished.

In line 2 عبد الملك seems certain; but the father's name seems to have commenced هر unless the paper is blotted

Verso:

صحب بريد اشمون

6

F IV 2.

12 × 13

Old number 324.

Order for mount.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ جعلت فداك واطال الله بقاءك واعزك
 ٣ فانا كنت عازم على الركوب فاركب لنعون حرو
 ٤ واطال الله بقاءك واء

In line 3 perhaps ليكون خيرو.

V. ROLLS AND REGISTERS

1

D VI 13 (B).

11 × 12

Old number 142.

Census roll fragmentary.

- ١
 ٢ امرأة صالح وهم اربعة
 ٣
 ٤ منزل طويس وهم ثمانية
 ٥ منزل عروة وهم اربعة
 ٦ منزل احمد وهم خمسة
 ٧ سلمة وهم خمسة
 ٨ انيسة وهم ثلاثة
 ٩ ابراهيم وهم اثنين
 ١٠ ورقان وهم خمسة

This list seems to be of the number of persons in various establishments. Since the name Aḥmad (line 6) would not be borne by a Christian or a Jew, it cannot very well be a census for *jizyah*.

2

D I 8.

25 × 17

Old number 99.

Agricultural register.

Papyrus badly torn.

Register of faddans with notice of crop.

The verso is divided into two columns, under the right hand being حساب المساحة.

Under the left hand المال.

Line 2 (recto) has the word قمح i.e. قمح and beneath was a line giving number of faddans and the price
اثنين واربعين دينار.

Line 4

رط

Line 5

فدادين تسعة فدادين خمسة الدينير ونص

Line 6

فدادين ونصف اربعة ثمانين وربع ونصف قيراط ثمانية الدينير ثمانين ولد

Line 7

.

The verso seems to have followed a different system.

3

D IV 4.

23 × 22

Old number 15.

Agricultural Report.

١ ما بذر من البذار في القبلى

٢ محمد بن مندر

٣ بذرت من القمح مائة اردب وثمانين اردب وويبة

٤ بذرت من الشعير خمسة عشر اردب ونصف اردب

٥ وربع اردب

٦ وبذرت من اللساسة واربعين

٧

٨ وبذرت من الجزور مائة واربعين اردب

٩

١٠ ومن البرسيم [النين وثلاثين اردب

This fragment is a record of quantities of different cereals and vegetables sown. In line 2 the name Muhammad b. Mundhir occurs, but this person is probably the owner of property which bounded the writer's farm. The quantities are

Wheat: 180 ardebs and one waibah

Barley: 15 ardebs and a half, and a quarter.

Lusasah: 40 Waibahs

Carrots: 140 ardebs

Clover: 32 ardebs.

Of these the reading *lusasah* is unconvincing. *Lusas* is said to be the name of a plant resembling bugloss. The quantity sown is evidently small.

4

D IV 9.

12 x 7

Old number 305

Attendance Roll?

With seal. Upper portion missing.

١

٢ الحصريون الديوان

٣ الذي ان سا الله

٤ سور بن موسى

٥ برد الحمار

٦ طرس الحمار

٧ اشاره يوم صفر

٨ ليل السرار

The names offer no difficulty. The sense of lines 7 and 8 seems to be: 'Indication of day. Šafar, last night'.

VI. PRIVATE LETTERS COMPLETE OR NEARLY COMPLETE

1

B IV 9 recto.

20 x 6

Old number 89.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
- ٢ انعم الله صباحك ابا
- ٣ القاسم واتم نعمك
- ٤ تفضل يا ابا القاسم
- ٥ ايدك الله وجه
- ٦ الى الساعة بالجارية
- ٧ ترسلها مع يوم انشا
- ٨ الله على الركابات
- ٩ وخذ ابو محمدا ولا
- ١٠ تدفعها الى غيره
- ١١ وليس يسيرك
- ١٢ في هذه الجمعة غير
- ١٣ هذا المركب
- ١٤ والدعا مثل الصدى
- ١٥ وقل لابي بكر يعجل
- ١٦ بشرا الحاجة وتعجل
- ١٧ بالذى وسعك ايدك الله

Verso

١٨ وتفضل يا ابا القاسم

١٩ تكون مع الجارية

٢٠ ولى اليك حاجة

٢١ مهمة مهمة

٢٢ الدعا افضل من

٢٣ من الصدى

(1) In the Name &c. (2) God make your morning good, Abu (3) 'l-Qasim, and perfect your comforts. (4) Be so good, Abu 'l-Qasim, (5) God help you, as to send (6) to me at once the slave-girl, (7) send her in one day, please (8) God, on the riding camels (9) and take *Abu* Muḥammad and do not (10) commit her to any other, (11) and there will not carry thee (12) in this week any other than (13) this mount. (14) And a prayer is like an echo. (15) And bid Abu Bakr hasten (16) with the purchase of the needful and hasten thou (17) to the utmost of thy ability, God help thee. (18) And be so good, Abu 'l-Qasim, (19) be with the slave-girl, (20) for I have a need of thee. (21) Serious, serious. (22) A prayer is better (23) than an echo.

This letter is in the main clear, but in some ways decidedly cryptic. In line 9 the word *Abu* may have been intended to be erased, and if this be so, Muḥammad would seem to be the name of the eunuch to whose care the slave-girl was to be entrusted; if it be the name of the camel, it may be remembered that Maḥmud (another form of the Prophet's name) is said to have been that of the celebrated elephant. Yet the final instruction seems to be to bring the slave-girl himself. The words in lines 14 and 22 may be some family jest. They allude to Surah viii. 35, where the prayer of unbelievers is said to be *taṣḍiyah*.

2

D VI 7.

17 × 18

Old number 101.

Verso

اسوان

من محمد بن معاوية

Recto

١ بسم [الله الرحمن الرحيم]

٢ اكرمك الله بطاعته واسع [بك] برحمته وجمع

٣ وانا بخير حال والله محمود لا شريك له قد كنت طلب

٤ فاسل الله ان لا يجعله اخر العهد بيننا وقد سال حامد

٥ الى اخي باسوان بحسن معونته حتى تدخل المعدن فذاك

٦ فاني احب الدخول الى المعدن فاشترى له وجميع بيته

٧ فى ذلك الاجر والثواب وان جاء كتاب

٨ فليس الكتاب كتابى وانا كنت

٩ وحوائجك وحوادث نعم الله عندك فانك تسر بذلك

١٠ فى الدنيا والآخرة وصلى الله على محمد

Verso From Muḥammad b. Mu'awiyah

Asouan

Recto (1) In the Name &c. (2) May God honour you with obedience to Him and assist you with His mercy and unite *those of us who are parted*. *I am writing*

(3) being in the best of conditions, praise be to God who has no associate. *I remember our last meeting*

(4) and I ask God that it may not be the last occasion of the sort between us. Ḥāmid asked *me to intercede* (5) with my brother in Asouan for his kind services that we might enter the mine,

(6) for I should like to enter the mine and so purchase for him and all his house

(7) therein the pay and the reward. And if a letter should come *purporting to come from me in a different sense* (8) then that is no letter of mine. I have been (9) and thy wants

and the renewals of God's favours unto thee; for thou wilt please therewith (10) in this world and the next. And God's prayer be on Muḥammad.

The mine to which he refers is the emerald mine near Asouan; see 'Ali Pasha Mubarak viii. 64.

3

F IV 20.

9 × 17

Old number 238.

١ بيد حامل كتابى هذا ففضل وزيدنى بهم قمح مع الذى قبلك

٢ فلعلى احتال . . . ومرد عبد الرحمن فديته بدنانير اوجه بها

٣ اليك لقمح ايضا خص نفسك باكثر السلم واطيبه

٤ وعلى راخلى فديتها وحسين اكثر السلم وحق لهم بشر ابنكم و

٥ شقيقتكم لا عدمتكم خير كثير وسلامتكم احب الى من كل شى

٦ فديتك لا يبطل كتابك بخبركم وحالكم لنسر بذلك

The author desires wheat to be sent him and other wheat to be purchased, as he has some chance of selling it—doubtless at a profit. The rest of the letter is greetings.

4

E IV 4 recto.

17 × 13

Old number 244.

- ١ اطال الله بقالك لم يبق غاية في طريق لسانى
 ٢ قد استحييت ان اخرج به والله وقد كنت شكوت اليك
 ٣ امرى ولا عبد الله ابدا ورجوت انك ناظر فى امرى مذ نيت
 ٤
 ٥ اجرا وجزاك جنات النعيم واعلم اكرمك الله انى لم ادع
 ٦ وكلامك والله الا الحيا مع ثقتى بجميل رايك
 ٧ ورايت اكرمك الله ان تفعل فى امرى
 ٨ وكثيرا ما فرجت عن مكروب واعلم اعزك الله انا ليس
 ٩ فى مكافاتك الا بالدعاء لك فادام الله لك
 ١٠
 ١١ فضل وابقا عليك وعيالك نعمه وعلى ولدك وجميع
 ١٢ عائلتك اطال الله بقالك وجعلنى فداك

The letter was an appeal for assistance of some kind.

5

F IV 15 recto.

16 × 7

Old number 314.

- ١ الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ واطال الله بقالك
 ٣ عزك واكرمك واتم نعمه عليك
 ٤ [كتابى] اليك ادام الله عافيتك
 ٥ بحال عافية والحمد لله كثيرا
 ٦ والله وجعلنى فداك فى المنزل

- ٧ سنة وما اقدر ان اخرج
 ٨ الى الطريق منذ وصل العامل
 ٩ الجديد وارجوا ان يكون الفرج
 ١٠ قريبا ان شاء الله

The writer states that he has been kept in his house and unable to go into the street since the arrival of the new governor : and hopes for speedy deliverance.

The verso is in a different hand : containing fragments of 10 lines and one transverse.

After salutations.

- ٥ وانا
 ٦ على ما تحب ويسرك
 ٧ وربنا محمود قد
 ٨ يوسف اخوك ما
 ٩ اشمون منذ ايام ولم نر
 ١٠ ارسلنا
 ١١ ان سلم كما ارجو]

6

Exposed 7.

33 x 22

Old number 11.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ فهمت كتابك وقد رددت
 ٣ إليك العشر دننر فادفعها
 ٤ إلى أبي الحسن مع العشرين اردب
 ٥ قمح وقد رددت إليك القرض
 ٦ على حاله فان سالك فاعلمه
 ٧ ان رسولاك اصابني قد دفعت

٨ وان رسول عبد الخلق جاءك

٩ لتطلقه القمح وحرقت رقتي

١٠ اذا اقراتها ان شاء الله

١١ فان قبل القمح مع الدينر والا

١٢ فرد القمح الى وليك وابعث

١٣ الى الدينر مع اول من يخرج اليها

١٤ ان شا الله

- 1 In the Name &c.
- 2 I understand your letter and I return
- 3 to you the ten dinars and do you hand them over
- 4 to Abu 'l-Ḥasan with the twenty ardebs
- 5 of wheat ; so I have returned to you the loan
- 6 in its condition ; and if he asks you, then inform him
- 7 that your messenger found me having already paid,
- 8 and that the messenger of 'Abd al-Khaliq came to you
- 9 that you might give him the wheat ; and burn my letter
- 10 when you have read it, please God.
- 11 And if he shall accept the wheat with the dinars—otherwise
- 12 return the wheat to your friend and send
- 13 the dinars to me with the first person who comes out to us,
- 14 please God

This letter is in a fine bold hand, and one or two of the characters have diacritic points. Its purport, however, is not perfectly clear. Since the writer desires the letter to be burned as soon as read (an instruction which was not carried out), its contents ought to be of a compromising character. It contains what seems to be a slight misstatement, viz. that he had paid before his correspondent's messenger arrived ; we cannot say whether the statement about 'Abd al-Khālīq's messenger was true or not ; probably it was false.

Probably the 'friend' of line 12 is 'Abd al-Khālīq of line 8 ; he is clearly a different person from Abu'l-Ḥasan of line 4. Since the word meaning 'pay' is used in his case, whereas in lines 2 and 5 one signifying 'return' is used, it would seem that the writer had borrowed from a man who was himself in debt or under some obligation to Abu 'l-Ḥasan. But the transaction is so complicated, that without further information it can scarcely be elucidated.

7

E II 8 verso

23 × 17

Old number 243.

١ اطل الله بقالك الخ

٢

٣ احتجت الساعة الى حمار فاحب

- ٤ ان تدفعه الى ابو نجاح حتى يحملنا ما
 ٥ نحتاج اليه ان شا الله ووجه الى الحمار
 ٦ اعزك الله ولا ولاخى حتى
 ٧ يوجه به الي فاني ايدك الله شديد [الحاجة
 ٨ اليه]

Request for donkey to be sent with certain other instructions.

8

64 x 13 recto

Exposed 8.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ اطال الله بقاءك وادام عزك وكرامتك وتأييدك واتم نعمه عليك
 ٣ وزاد في احسانه اليك وجعلني من كل سوء فداك
 ٤ ما قرأت لك ياخى ولاهل المنزل كتاب ولا عرفت لكما خبرا
 ٥ ورجوت ان يكون تاخر ذلك الى خير وسلامة وانا والله
 ٦ ياخى فى حال لا يعلمها الا الله عز وجل من الجوع ولا ثوب
 ٧ على حتى اخرج لراى الناس وما زلت به
 ٨ السنة الاولى سيدى وتركتنى احتاج الى الصدقة
 ٩ والحمد لله كثيرا ولولا انه استاء ما عملت واخاف برد العرى
 ١٠ نخرجت هارب على وجهى من الجوع ولكنى اخاف البرد والعرى
 ١١ وقد تقطعت ثيابى وانا جائع ميت بالجوع وما توهمت ان عمى
 ١٢ يفعل بى هذا الفعل اخرجونى من مالى وسهمى مثل ما اخرج
 ١٣ الشعرة من العجين واحوجنى الى الصدقة حاجة السؤال
 ١٤
 ١٥ وقد كتبت الى عمى كتاب اعرفه حالى لعله يحن

- ١٦ ويرجع فيفضل على بقليل قمح اختك
 ١٧ استودعها الله تكلمه لعاه يحتال لي بما حضره
 ١٨ من القمح ويكل في امر القمح على ابي محمد الحسين التمار
 ١٩ حتى يوجه الي منه شى البتة وتقادني ياخي افضل المنة
 ٢٠ وتعرفني خبرك في جواب كتابي وخبر الاخت اعزها الله والاخت
 ٢١ ام ابي الجود وابو الجود لاشير الى ذلك
 ٢٢ وحوائجك وما انت عليه فانك تسرنى بذلك ان شا الله
 ٢٣ وتوجه الكتاب الى ابي الفضل بن سهل الوزير فانه ينفذه
 ٢٤ اعزه الله الي مع كتابه ان شا الله

(1) In the Name &c. (2) God prolong your life &c. *to the end of* (3). (4) I have not read any letter of yours nor of the people of the house, nor do I know at all of your news, (5) and I hope that this delay will mean that all is well. I by Allah, (6) O my brother, am in a state of hunger which only God knows, (7) and no one knows when I shall be able to come into people's sight; and I have constantly (8) the first year, and you have left me in need of alms (9) praise God, and were it not that he disapproved what you have done and that I fear the cold of nakedness, (10) I should have fled headlong from hunger. Only I fear the cold and the nakedness (11) and my hopes are at an end and I am dying of hunger. I never conceived that my uncle (12) would act with me thus. They drove me out of my property and my share as a hair (13) is pulled out of the dough (13) and made me need alms like a beggar. (14) (15) and I have written to my uncle to let him know my condition hoping that he might take pity (16) and relent and bestow on me a little wheat. *Please ask* your sister (17) whom I commit to God's care, to talk to him; perhaps he may find some means of letting me have (18) some of the wheat which he has ready and make his agent in the matter of the wheat Abu Muhammad al-Husain the date-merchant, (19) so that he may send me at least a little of it. You will be conferring on me, brother, a great favour. (20) Also tell me your news and those of your sister, whom God exalt; and the *other* (21) sister Umm Abu 'l-Jud and Abu 'l-Jud (to refer to that) (22) and your wants, and what you are doing, for this will give me pleasure, please God. (23) Send your letter to Abu 'l-Faql b. Sahl the vizier, for he will transmit it (24) (God exalt him) with his own.

By the Vizier Abu 'l-Faql b. Sahl probably al-Faql b. Sahl is meant, who was vizier in the early part of the reign of Ma'mun. This would give us some date like 200 A.H. for the letter. The name Abu 'l-Jud is mentioned by Dhahabi in the *Mushtabih*, but is not of frequent occurrence. It is probable that the sister who was to intercede with the uncle was his wife, whence the 'brother' of the letter should not be understood literally.

9

B III 10 recto.

29 x 15

Old number 2 B.

A few diacritic points.

- ١ بسم الله الخ
 ٢ اطل الله بقاءك وادام عزك وكرامتك وتاييدك

- ٣ وسعادتك وسلامتك واتم نعمته
 ٤ عليك وزاد في احسانه اليك ياخي كتابي اليك
 ٥ عن سلامة وعافية [موصول ر] حمنا ورزقنا
 ٦ مشكور اعلمك اعزك الله يا باكثما
 ٧ اني لم اكن مسيئا لك وانت تعلم
 ٨ انا قد جلسنا بظلام وليس في يدين
 ٩ وانت تعلم ياخي ان الرجل وكل الى لو يح[تا]
 ١٠ جو الى الطعام وبالعزيز على اني اكتب اليك
 ١١ استقضيك دينار ولكن قد بقيت
 ١٢ وقد صبرت عليك ما صبرت فتف[ضل]
 ١٣ على وانت مثاب ولا اتخذه الا هدية
 ١٤ منك لي فالله الله ياخي فان جاء ابني
 ١٥ فادفعه اليه فانه يصله الى ان شاء [الله]

(1) In the Name &c. (2) God lengthen your life and similar wishes continue till the middle of line (4) O my brother I am writing to you (5) in safety and health, our family relations being affectionate and our maintenance (6) something to be thankful for. I would have you know, God exalt you, O Abu Aktham, (7) that I have done you no harm; and you know (8) that we sat in darkness not having in our hands (9) You know too, my brother, that the man was put in our charge should they (10) want food, and it is painful for me to write to you (11) and demand payment of a dinar, only I have stayed (12) and waited for you all this time, so be bountiful (13) with me, and you will be rewarded, and I shall not regard it but as a gift (14) from you to me. And by Allah, my brother, if my son comes (15) hand it over to him, for he will deliver it to me, if God will.

This letter would seem to be from some tax collector, on whom the provision of food (for troops or police) had been imposed, and who has had difficulty in obtaining the dinar from one of the tax-payers.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ اطل الله بقاءك وادام عزك وكرامتك و

٣ وجعلنى من كل سوء فداك انت تعالىم

٤ اجزاك الله وانت وحسن نظرك

٥ بعنايتك وبفضلك على وبيني وبين

٦ قال له بن طيفور اقر على اخو حسن

٧ وتقول ان اخوه قد خلف له حمير

٨ واخذ انا ثلث احمره ومال اخر

٩ وانا اتكال على الله وعليك يا مولاي

١٠ طرحت نفسى عليك وهذا

١١ قد هجم بن طيفور والحراس ود

١٢ ومثلك من صير الثلثة لنا فانك تقدر

١٣ فانت احسنت الى طيفور الى امرته

١٤ وصر بذلك وتتفضل فى امر

١٥ اطلال الله address verso

عبده وخادمه احمد اخو حسن الذى

The fragmentary character of the document renders translation difficult. According to line 5 some one was asked by Ibn Ṭāfur to salute the writer and inform him that his brother had left a number of donkeys, and that he, Ibn Ṭāfur, proposed to appropriate three of these donkeys and other property as well. The writer, relying on God and the person to whom he writes, throws himself upon the latter; Ibn Ṭāfur with the police has seized these goods by violence and the writer holds that it is in his correspondent's power to secure the three donkeys for the former. As the correspondent was the benefactor of Ibn Ṭāfur's father he would be able to effect this.

11

B I 2 verso.

21 x 19

Old number 20.

كتبت اليك

١

٢ وتماه فنحن على ما يكفى اس[ل] الله تمام النعمة ودوام

٣ الكرامة فى الدنيا والآخرة

G 2

- ٤ واسله ان يصلى على محمد عزيز رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم
 ٥ قد بلغنى واخى ياخى تعطيفك لابی سعيد ابقاه الله ومد لنا
 ٦ فى عمره على ولده وبنى اخيه عافاك الله ياخى ويجزيك خيرا
 ٧ وان يركاك فى نفسك وولدك ونسلك
 ٨ لا تدعى الكتاب الينا بخبرك وحالك [حال ابى] سعيد ابقاه الله
 ٩ وامه ومحمد فانه يسرنى صورة كتابك [لي] بخبرك
 ١٠ واسر ياخى ان تامرى سعيد يشتري [لى من] احمد
 ١١ بدرهم سوف^١ ملو[نا] اسود وابيض اكثر فان لم يكون
 ١٢
 ١٣
 ١٤ وابغى سعيد السلم
 ١٥ وانه بالعافية
 الى ام سعيد ابقاها الله

After compliments and pious formulae the writer proceeds:

(5) I have been told, and my brother has been told, O my sister, how you have reconciled Abu Sa'id, whom God preserve, and whose life (6) may He prolong for us, to his children and his brother's sons; may God give you health, my sister, and good reward (7) and *I pray that He* may watch over you with regard to yourself, your children and your descendants. (8) Do not omit to write to us of your affairs and condition and those of Abu Sa'id whom God preserve (9) and his mother, and Muhammad; for the style of your writing to me about your affairs gives me pleasure. (10) And it will please me, sister, that you should order Sa'id to buy for me of Ahmad (11) for a dirhem coloured wool, black and white. (12) (13) (14) Salute Sa'id from me.

Verso: Address to Umm Sa'id whom God preserve.

It would seem that by 'sister' here the ordinary relationship is meant. The person addressed is the mother of a son named Sa'id from whom the father also took his kunyah. The woman is thanked for having healed some family quarrel.

^١ Looks like سعب; apparently for صوف

12

D III 7 recto.

22 x 14

Old number 40.

- ١ لابی اللیث
- ٢
- ٣ ابی عبد الله عبد الاعلی بن منیر
- ٤ بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم
- ٥ الی ابی اللیث
- ٦ اما بعد عافاك الله [وايانا]
- ٧ فان عبد العلاء كاتب ابن خرشة الذی یسكن قهقاوة
- ٨ كان دفع الی دینر لاشترى له به خبز يوم مربنا
- ٩ مصعد وقد بعث برسول فيه وسالنی ان اشترى
- ١٠ له ثلث دینر زيتون اسود وكتب الی مع رسوله
- ١١ یامرنی بدفع ذلك الیه وبعث الی بثلاث الدراهم
- ١٢ فی ثمن الزيتون ودينر آخر سال ان اشترى له به خبز
- ١٣ مع الدينر الاول لا نزعم له منها ذكر فی كتابه
- ١٤ وقد وجهت الیک رسوله بالثلثة الدراهم وبالدينر
- ١٥ الذی بعث به فخذ له من فرج دینر خبز من نحو ما
- ١٦ یشتري اشترى له بالدينر الاخر من السوق ان قدرت
- ١٧ علیه وخذ من سعید خمسة قلال زيتون اسود
- ١٨ مما عنده واحمله له الی قاربه واكتب الیه كتاب
- ١٩ منی جواب كتابه الی تعلمه ما بعث به من الزيتون
- ٢٠ واخبز ولیکن الدينر الذی تاخذه من فرج من عندك

٢١ تدفعه اليه في ثمن الخبز حتى اقدم واما الدينر الذي

من عندك ٢٢

٢٣ تشتريه من الزيتون فخذ من رسوله

To Abu'l-Laith

[From]

- 3 Abu 'Abdallah 'Abd al-A'la b. Munir
 4 In the Name &c.
 5 To Abi 'l-Laith
 6 To proceed—God give you health and [us].
 7 'Abd al-'Ala, clerk of Ibn Kharashah, who dwells in Qahqawah
 8 had given me a dinar to buy for him with it bread on the day whereon he passes by us
 9 up stream. And he has sent a messenger about it and asks me to buy
 10 for him a third of a dinar of black olives; and he has written to me with his messenger
 11 bidding me hand that to him, and has sent me the three dirhems
 12 for the price of the olives, and another dinar asking me to buy him bread with it
 13 with the first dinar, of which there is no mention, we fancy, in his letter.
 14 Now I have despatched to you his messenger with the three dirhems and the dinar
 15 which he has sent, so take for him from Faraj a dinar's worth of bread of the sort which
 16 he buys, and buy for him with the other dinar from the market if you can
 17 and take from Sa'id five jars of black olives
 18 such as he has, and convey it to him at his boat. And write him a letter.
 19 from me in answer to his letter to me, to inform him concerning what I have sent in the way
 of olives
 20 and bread. And let the dinar the value of which you will take from Faraj be of your own
 21 which you will pay him as the price of the bread, till I come. And as for the dinar which
 22 of your own
 23 the olives which you will buy, take it from his messenger

The sense of this letter is plain enough; it contains instructions to one Abu'l-Laith from some one in the writer's employ to make certain purchases on behalf of the secretary of one Ibn Kharashah, who lives at Qahqawah. This place may be identified with Qahquh mentioned by Yaqut as a district (*kurah*) of Upper Egypt. Various spellings of the name, including the same as appears in this document, are recorded by de Goeje in his notes on Ibn Khurdadbeh.

13

D II 11.

15 x 18

Old number 43.

١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

٢ يا سيدى اطل الله بقاءل وادام عزك وكرامتك وتاييدك وسعادتك وسلامتك

٣ وجعلنى من كل سوء ومكروه فداك قد تاخرت سيدى عنا اليوم

٤ وارجو ان يكون تاخيرك بخير وراك الله الاسوا وادام لك السلامة

٥ والسرور وراك من الاسوا فاحب ايدك الله ان تتفضل تعرفنى
٦ خبرك اطابه الله اشكر لك ذلك بقلبي عبدك ان شا الله
٧ اطلال الخ

Letter in which the writer complains of the delay of his correspondent and hopes that it may have no sinister reason. The letter consists almost entirely of good wishes.

14

A I 1.

22 x 11

Old number 9.

9 lines.

١ حفظك الله يا اخى وعافاك وابقاك كتبت اليك وانا وما قبل
٢ بحال عافية والله محمود وقد كتبت اليك غير كتاب لم ارا لك
٣ كتاب اختك فى حقى على ما فارقتنى عليه وحلفت عليه فى
٤ منزل ابو الحسن ثم خرجت فلم تصنع فى ذلك قليل ولا كثير
٥ تعد التملى وتوعد مرة بعد اخرى فلم ارا لذلك تحقيق شى
٦ فالله المستعان وما كان راى اكتب اليك بحرف واحد لولا
٧ خروج رسول يحيى وقد قدم غير واحد فلم اراك كتبت الى
٨ شى وقد وجهت اليك يحيى وهو وكيلى فيما عليك
٩ وعلى غيرك وصدد وخذ كتابك

(1) God guard thee, O my brother, and keep thee in health and preserve thee. I am writing to thee being with those about me (2) in good health. Thank God! I have written to you more than one letter but cannot find that you have (3) written to your sister about my claim in reference to the condition on which she left me and to which she swore, (4) in the house of Abu 'l-Hasan, after which she went out and did nothing in the matter small or great; (5) she constantly promises and threatens time after time, and of that I see no realization. (6) God's help must be implored. It was not my idea to write to you a single letter of the alphabet had it not been (7) that Yahya's messenger has gone out, and several have come, and I cannot find that you have written to me (8) at all. I have sent Yahya to you, and he is my agent for what is due to me from you (9) and others and my friend. And take thy letter.

It would seem that the person addressed is the brother-in-law of the writer from whom his wife parted on certain conditions to which she swore, but which she did not attempt to keep. The modernism *tamalli* in line 5 is noticeable.

15

D III 11.

19 x 15

Old number 53.

١

٢

٣

عن سلامة والحمد لله وانا ارجو ان

٤ ادخل الى يومين ولا تدع ان تشتري حوائج رمضان والحمد لله

٥ على سلامتكم التي حاطتكم في عافية فلا يكون في قلوبكم

٦ غم وابو كريم يقريكم سلام كثيرا وانا اوجه لكم

٧ من بيتنا اليكم ولا تدع ان الجارية في بدرقة

٨ على الاجران فتنقلوا البر الى المنزل وتصيروه في البيت

٩ الداخل والملمن الداخل حتى يقام لكم عند الكندوج

١٠ مستحم وغطوه كثيرا وابنوا حوايه حيط وقت

١١ حتى نكترى لكم من يصلحه واقروا اختكم السلم كثيرا

١٢ ونحن ندخل الى قريب ان شاء الله وابعث الجارية الى

١٣ الاسكاف حتى تروح على الخلف واحفظي الساعة

١٤ مع ما معك اقبضوا مني افضل السلم والمنة ونسل

١٥ يكن عندكم كثير السلم

١٦ ابقاك الله وحفظك

١٧ وامتع بك

1

2

3 *I am writing* being, thank God, in good health, and I hope to

4 come home by two days. Do not fail to buy the necessities of Ramadan and thank God

5 for your safety which has kept you in good health. Let there not be in your hearts

6 grief. And Abu Karim sends you copious greeting. And I am sending . . .

7 from our house to you. And do not fail to *send* the slave-girl with escort to

8 the threshingfloors and to remove the wheat to the dwelling and put it in the inner

9 chamber and the inner brickwork so that it may be well kept in the vessel which holds grain.

10 And cover it well and build a temporary wall round it

11 until we hire some one to put it right for you. And convey copious greeting to your sister

- 12 and we shall come home soon, please God. And send the slave-girl to
 13 the cobbler that she may go about on shoes. And take care of the goods
 14 with what you have got. Take from me the best of greetings and thanks and we ask
 15 let there be with you abundant peace.
 16 God preserve and protect thee
 17 and cause us to profit by thee.

Evidently the letter of a householder who is abroad to some one who manages his affairs. The imperatives are in the masculine singular or plural, except one word in line 13 which has the appearance of being feminine singular.

16

D IV 8.

15 x 13

Old number 28.

- ١
 ٢ كثير وعلى ام سليمان حفظها الله السلام وعلى حسن استودعه الله
 ٣ اسل الله ان يريني وجهها في عافية مني السلام كثير وعلى جده وامها مني السلام
 ٤ عليك ورحمة الله وبركاته وقد قدم ابو سهل مصر مع ولده وهو يقرياك
 ٥ السلام واحمد بن خيشمة وحسن ومحمد بن جنادة يقرونك السلام والسلام عليكم ورحمت
 ٦ الله وبركاته ولا تدع ابقاك الله الكتاب الى بخبرك وحالك وحال ام صفوان
 ٧ اسل الله ان يحلها في عافية وسلامة وحسن اقرئه ابقاك الله مني السلام ثم قبله عني بمسرة
 ٨ واني استخلف الله عليه وعليكم اجمعين فانه احسن خليفة واستودعه د بنكم وامهاتكم
 ٩ ابقاك الله تعالى وحفظك وكفاك الشر برحمته في الدنيا والاخرة
 ١٠

This letter consists entirely of good wishes and greetings. The people mentioned are not otherwise known.

17

C I 3 (A) recto.

27 x 11

Old number 332.

Remains of 7 lines followed by 4 inversely.

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 ٢ جعلت فداك