

he was suddenly ordered to the Mediterranean, in consequence of the revolt of Mehemet Ali against Turkey, and the hostile proceedings of his adopted son Ibrahim Pacha in Syria. In this struggle the Porte would have succumbed under its powerful vassal, but for the support of Britain and France, and a fleet under the command of Admiral Stopford was stationed at the mouth of the Dardanelles, to check the victorious progress of Ibrahim. The arrival of Napier to join this fleet put life and activity into its proceedings. In whatever enterprise he was engaged, whether as principal or subsidiary, there could be no lack of action; and although he was nominally second in command to Sir Robert, the force of his character won for him the ascendancy in the warlike events that followed.

The course of events brought on the war sooner than was expected. Sultan Mahmoud died, his young son and successor, Medjid, was unequal to the crisis; and encouraged by his possession of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, Mehemet demanded to be recognized as independent sovereign of these countries, threatening in the event of a refusal to march his army to Constantinople. The British portion of the combined French-and-English fleet, consisting of twelve sail of the line, proceeded from the Dardanelles to the coast of Asia Minor; and soon after Syria revolted against the Egyptians, the mountaineers of Lebanon were in arms, and Mehemet Ali had despatched an expedition to suppress them. With a small portion of the fleet Napier was detached to the coast of Syria to hinder this advance, but with instructions not to commit himself—an order which he was not likely to regard, especially under such circumstances. An Egyptian army of 40,000 or 50,000 men was stationed throughout Syria, the insurgent men of Lebanon were quelled and in treaty with their conquerors, when Napier, having under him four ships of the line, anchored in the entrance of the port of Beyrout, where he was soon after largely reinforced by British, French, and Turkish ships of war from the allied fleet. Thus strengthened for action, he landed at Djounie Bay, and prepared for land service by entrenching his little army of 5000 British sailors and marines, Turks, and mountaineers of Lebanon who had taken arms against their oppressors. Finding that the enemy respected his position too much to attack it, Napier assumed the initiative by crossing the Nahr-el-Kelb, and driving off a strongly posted body of Albanian soldiers, of whom 400 were made prisoners. His next and more important movement was his long-projected attack upon Sidon. For this his land force consisted of 750 British marines, 100 Austrians, and 500 Turks, while this city of ancient remembrances was protected by a fort and citadel, and a garrison of 2700 men. The place, however, was speedily stormed, Napier himself leading the assailants, and when he seized the citadel he mounted to the summit of one of the turrets, and raised aloft his cap on the point of his sword—a signal of success which the crews of the British ships in the bay welcomed with three cheers. The whole garrison surrendered, and on the 29th of September, 1840, he thus briefly announced in his letter home the events of this campaign:—"I have just time to say I have gained two victories—one on the 24th, when we took between 400 and 500 prisoners; and another on the 26th, when I stormed and took the town of Sidon, and made between 2000 and 3000 prisoners."

The next proceeding which Napier recommended was a simultaneous movement upon Beyrout both by sea and land, the former by Admiral Stopford, and the latter by himself. For the execution of his own

part of the plan it was decided that from his encampment of Djounie he should lead a Turkish force across the mountains, descend in the rear of Beyrout, and there either attack the town or intercept the retreat of Suleyman Pacha, its commandant, should the latter judge it prudent to retire. But instead of Suleyman it was Ibrahim himself whom he met, and that too at the head of a considerable force. Even upon this redoubtable commander, the most formidable and successful of all the Asiatic generals, Napier inflicted a most severe defeat; but for this purpose he was obliged to urge his apathetic Turks and dispirited mountaineers to the attack, not only with exhortations, but blows of his cudgel, and by pelting them with stones. This, and the example of himself and his European staff, who charged in the front rank like ordinary soldiers, and his skilful arrangements, at length secured the victory, and the terrible Ibrahim and his highly disciplined troops fled before the Turks whom hitherto they had been wont to rout with ease. Such was the half-comic but important mountain battle of Boharsef, fought on the 10th of October, and in which his conduct was so highly valued that Admiral Stopford, among many other commendations, thus wrote to him:—"I do most heartily assure you of being fully sensible of the benefits which I and the whole expedition have received from your indefatigable services; and on rejoining the *Powerful* your conscience may be perfectly satisfied of your having accomplished all that could be done." Just before the battle Napier had received a note from the admiral, dated the day previous, apprising him of the arrival of Colonel Sir Charles Smith to take the command of the forces, and ordering him to retire, but Napier rightly judged himself too far gone, and too deeply compromised with his Syrian and Turkish allies, to obey the order. At the risk of a court-martial he therefore persevered—and we have seen the fortunate result. His soldiering ashore having ended after a month's occupation, the gallant commodore returned to the sea-service.

A still more important event, and for which Napier regarded all that had been done as only preliminary, was an attack upon Acre. This stronghold of Mehemet's authority in Syria he had carefully reconnoitred, and the effectual way of attacking it he had also calculated; and in consequence of his urgent representations it was at length resolved that the attempt should be hazarded. No wonder indeed that such hesitation should have been felt; the long and successful resistance which the town had offered to Bonaparte, and the change it had produced in his wonderful career, still continued to make the name of Acre a word of dread. The allied fleet having reduced several coast towns, resolved to crown their exploits by the capture of this town, which had been fortified by European engineers until it was considered all but impregnable. The attack was made by the admiral and the combined fleet on the 4th November, 1840. In assigning the positions of the various ships, the admiral had decided that Commodore Napier in the *Powerful* should lead in the fleet, and commence the attack. Napier, however, in passing to his station, discovered a more favourable opening, which he at once proceeded to assail, and although this movement deranged the admiral's plan, it was one that made success more easy and certain. A tremendous cannonade followed, but the Egyptians having calculated that the hostile fleet would have anchored outside of a shoal, had elevated their guns too much, so that most of their shot passed over the assailing ships, or only damaged their rigging. On the other hand, from the closeness of their approach to the town, almost every shot of the allies told