

Orders were given that he should deduct this sum from the revenues of the island, but the Muhassil Haji Ismail Agha, who had paid up to the last *para* his debt to the Porte, refused the Pasha's supplies, and the leading citizens, Turks and Greeks, for all their poverty, were obliged to borrow to provide for his entertainment for eighteen months. He duly gave receipts for the money, but run as they might to the Porte with entreaties to be allowed to deduct it from the new assessment, they laboured in vain, they got nothing. The Pasha had calmed matters down, and was ordered to leave the island and to proceed to his province.

Peace was concluded between the Turks and Russians immediately after the accession of the new Sultan Abdul Hamid, January 21, 1774. About July the island began to recover itself a little, although in addition to the old taxes four hundred new warrants were added to the *kharaj* assessment. The inhabitants however, great and small, hoped for rest and peace, or at least to be exempt from fresh charges. It was some time since a wood-cutter of the deserted village of Clavlia, a one-eyed creature called Baqi, threw up wood-cutting, and joined the *levendler* or volunteers. He wrought a great deal of harm among the respectable villagers, and getting into the graces of an *odalik*, the slave-mistress of some notable, became *muselmán* at Attalia. Hounded thence for his villainy, he returned to Cyprus and began to play the tyrant and robber at Larnaca. Here he was made *zabit* (magistrate), but being dismissed for his tyranny by the dragoman Christophaki, the blood-sucker set upon the latter and murdered him on Easter morning, 1750. Under Suleiman efendi, Governor in 1767, on account of his ineffable tricks and wiles, treacheries and persecutions, he was thrown into prison, banished, deserted, and left so poor that he would fain beg his bread in the streets. But the unhappy country which Providence allowed him to call his own was yet to suffer fresh tumult, the sad result of his crimes. Reviled and despised as a common plague, and unlettered as he was, Ismail Agha, *muhassil* in 1771, made him *defterdar*: it may have been from kindly feeling to Baqi, but more certainly because the aghas obstinately refused to pay the five hundred piastres, he asked to allow them to appoint whom they would. The agitator takes up his office, and begins to spread slanders and confusion: he gets rid of Haji Joseph, who was almost a sovereign among the Greeks, and whose office of dragoman had brought him dignity and riches, and houses,—the beam in the one eye of the High Treasurer. A new *muhassil*, Ali Agha, arrived. He knew the creature in 1760, when he was Kiaya in the house of his father-in-law Kasim, as shifty and hated by aghas and rayahs, and—but for the sins of the island—would have wiped him off the face of the earth. But Ali Agha fell ill, and the wily Baqi found means to evade the danger by persuading a doctor of his own kind to substitute poison for a purge. The *muhassil* died, and the Porte appointed his Kiaya to complete his term. He too unfortunately fell sick, and the one-eyed monster again appears at his side with his potions; begs, intreats and persuades the wretched Kiaya, who takes, drinks and drains the cup to the dregs, and forty days later he too is despatched to his grave.

Having succeeded so far, while the general suspicion was still thick upon him, the wretch, who was now Alay Bey, assembled the Ulama and aghas, and with infinite cunning and flattery persuaded them all, and the bishops as well, to write of him in favourable terms to the Porte, that he might be appointed to complete the unexpired term of the Governorship. Things turned out as he wished, so anxious was he to see himself Muhassil of Cyprus. At the end of the year one Hussein Agha came in his room, a silly drunken creature, under whom Baqi became again Alay Bey. The island's evil luck brought to its shores the Qapudan Pasha Hassan, who was on his way to chastise Tahir Omer, Governor of Acre, who in the recent war had proved himself a traitor, and the close friend of the Russians. The one-eyed