

Hussein I. El-Mudarris

and

Olivier Salmon



Romantic Travel
through Bartlett's Engravings

From Europe to the Middle East



Design:

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*To my dear friend Dr. Nikolaos van Dam **

* We dedicate this book to His Excellency Dr. Nikolaos van Dam, the renowned Arabist and current Ambassador of the Netherlands in Indonesia, who developed a great passion for Syria and the Arab world, ever since he travelled to Syria for the first time in 1964, before working at a later stage in Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, Germany and other countries. Similar to the way in which the artist Bartlett reveals the similarities between different regions in the world, the Arabist Dr. van Dam succeeds in establishing this precious connection between peoples and cultures through his diplomatic and academic career.

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برعاية نيافة المطران مار غريغوريوس يوحنا ابراهيم للسريان الأرثوذكس في حلب
 قنصلية المملكة الهولندية وقنصلية جمهورية ألمانيا الاتحادية الفخرية في حلب
 تتشرفان بدعوتكم لحضور افتتاح معرض الباحثين

حسين عصمت المدرّس و أوليفيه سالمون

رحلة رومانسية عبر رسوم وانطباعات الرحالة الفنان وليام هنري بارتليت
 رسوم وانطباعات من أوروبا والشرق الأوسط في منتصف القرن التاسع عشر

وذلك يوم الأحد ٢٤ حزيران ٢٠٠٧ الساعة السابعة مساء في صالة الأسد لنقابة الفنون الجميلة في حلب
 ويستمر المعرض حتى يوم الخميس ٢٨ حزيران ٢٠٠٧ ضمنا من الساعة السادسة وحتى التاسعة مساء

الدعوة عامة

Under the patronage of
His Eminence Monsignor Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim
 Archbishop of the Syriac Orthodox Church in Aleppo

The Royal Consulate of the Netherlands

&

The Hon. Consulate of the Federal Republic of Germany
in Aleppo

cordially invite you to the opening of the exhibition

Romantic Travel through Bartlett's Engravings
Drawings of Europe and the Middle East from the 19th Century
 Collection of:

Hussein J. El-Mudarris & Olivier Salmon

On Sunday June 24th 2007 at 7 pm.

at Al-Assad Gallery - Syndicate of Fine Arts - Aleppo

The exhibition will be open from June 24 to 28, 2007 from 6 till 9 pm.

Free entrance

Foreword of the Authors

The genesis of this book stems from the wish of the public to see in a single volume Bartlett's beautiful engravings so much admired during the exhibition organised in Aleppo in June 2007. Copies of Bartlett's books are difficult to find and often conserved in private libraries. Our purpose is to open our libraries so that everyone can admire Bartlett's drawings. *Picturesque* and *Romantic* are certainly the words which appear most often in Bartlett's books and are very appropriate to characterize his art. Looking artistically at landscapes, monuments and scenes of everyday life as well as revealing their harmonious arrangement through plays of shade and light, such is Bartlett's ambition through his drawings.

Like all travellers in the nineteenth century, Bartlett enriches the description of places with numerous historical and geographical comments; but he always has the honesty to quote his sources. The texts chosen to illustrate the engravings reflect Bartlett's personality; only anecdotes and extracts expressing the artistic sensibility of the author have been selected. Unfortunately, Bartlett did not write any books about the European part of the Ottoman Empire and only views of the Middle East are accompanied by texts. From his various travels, we created an imaginary itinerary which goes from the Netherlands to Syria through Belgium, Germany, Central and Eastern Europe to Constantinople, then to Rhodes, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Antioch and Scanderoon situated nowadays in modern Turkey.

The original spelling has been conserved – even for place-names – as it does not create any ambiguities.

Hussein I. El-Mudarris & Olivier Salmon

Acknowledgments

We would like to address special thanks to Dr. Philip Mansel for his preface, to Mr. Pierre Antaki for his suggestions and excellent ideas, to Mr. Haitham Kabbani who welcomed this book in his publishing house, to Dr. William Erskine as well as to all those who encouraged us to publish a book after the exhibition.

*Preface by Dr. Philip Mansel**

W. H. Bartlett's views demonstrate both the affinities, and the contrasts, between western Europe and the Middle East. This English artist, born in London in 1809, admired and recorded every style of monument in the region: not only Pharaonic, classical, Christian and Crusader remains, but also Islamic masterpieces such as the tomb of Sultan Kaitbey in Cairo, which for Bartlett represented the 'unique invention of Mohammedan art in its highest enrichment'.

Because of its documentary value for the Middle East, Bartlett's work is, today, better known in Aleppo and Beirut than in London. Many of the cities and monuments he depicted have since been transformed or demolished. Bartlett engravings have become part of the heritage of the area. They have been used in Syrian bank notes and hung in many Beirut flats on my first visit there in 1970. This new edition of Bartlett's books of engravings, by two historians of Aleppo, Hussein I. El-Mudarris and Olivier Salmon, confirms the importance attached to Bartlett in the regions he recorded.

On the other hand, the creation of such an encyclopedic visual record by a European, rather than a local, artist confirms the absence or disappearance, in the Middle East, of a tradition of depicting landscapes and buildings. There were no Arab Bartletts. Only later in the nineteenth century did wealthy houses in Damascus and Aleppo begin to be frescoed with landscapes by local artists.

Bartlett records a particular moment in the history of the region: he first arrived in 1834, when Ibrahim Pasha, son of the great reformer Mohammed Ali, governor of Egypt, was ruling Syria, conquered from the ottoman sultan Mahmud II three years earlier. Ibrahim Pasha was the first moderniser of Syria – though Bartlett, like many British officials, disapproved of him, largely because he was pro-French. Bartlett records the beginning of modernisation – a mullah in Damascus asked this English artist to draw his wife. He also shows the tents of Ibrahim Pasha's army outside Adana in 1839, as he was preparing for his second attack on his nominal suzerain the Ottoman Sultan. Partly due to the intervention of the Great Powers of Europe, the conflict ended with the withdrawal of Ibrahim Pasha. The region remained under Ottoman rule until 1918. Hussein I. El-Mudarris and Olivier Salmon have given back to the region a superb record of its incomparable historical heritage.

* Philip Mansel (www.philipmansel.com) is a historian of France and the Ottoman Empire. His books include *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire*, which is available in English, French, Greek and Turkish and *Sultans in Splendour: Monarchs of the Middle East*, which has just been translated into Arabic. He is currently working on a history of the Levant.

Bartlett's Life

William Henry Bartlett was born in London on March 26, 1809¹. He was the second child of middle class parents, William and Ann Bartlett. On the 27th March the family moved into a new house in Bartholomew Place in London. William Henry Bartlett was sent to a private school till 1821 and then became apprentice to John Britton, a well-known antiquarian whose reputation had emerged in 1807 when he published the first volume of *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain*. Britton composed many of the forty works on topography, fine art, and architecture which bear his name. He had followed Auguste Charles Pugin's example and had taken in pupils so that he could train them to make the sketches and architectural drawings which he needed for his embellished publications. Bartlett was the fourth of his pupils, and in the course of time he was introduced not only to his own antiquarian interests but also to the sketches of contemporary artists like Prout, Cotman, and Mackenzie. In John Britton's establishment at 17 Burton Street in the parish of St Pancras, the young Bartlett found a friendly environment where his talents were quickly appreciated. His work, in the form of a chronological study of twelve towers and spires of English churches and cathedrals, appeared in the *Chronological History and Graphic Illustrations of Christian Architecture in England* published in 1826 also containing examples of the work of famous artists like J.M.W. Turner. Another early work to which the apprentice Bartlett contributed is Britton's *Picturesque Antiquities of the English Cities* published in 1830. Of the eighty-three engravings, Bartlett's name appears as the draftsman for sixty-seven.

In 1829, the young Bartlett took leave of John Britton but he continued to do journeyman work for him until he married Susanna Moon, two years his junior and niece of the Lord Mayor of London, on July 6, 1831. They spent a honeymoon of one month in Holland during which time they had a ten-day trip up the Rhine. On their return to London, Henry fixed his residence in his native suburb, in the Kentish Town district, and resumed his connection with his publisher, George Virtue, whom he met through the intervention of John Britton.

By the spring of 1832 Bartlett met Dr. William Beattie who proposed him to make the illustrations for his book on Switzerland. This was the beginning of numerous travels for the young artist. By the end of 1835 and during the winter of 1836, he was sketching in the Low Countries for Professor N.G. van Kampen's book: *History and Topography of Holland and Belgium* which contains fifty-one delicate drawings of famous buildings. The artist visited America for the first time from July or August 1836 till July 1837; the second tour in 1838 lasted from early summer to December and was mostly spent in Canada; and the third trip was from March to December 1841. He also travelled extensively in the Middle East and visited several European countries: Ireland, Italy, and all the countries crossed by the Danube in 1842.

¹ All the information in this introduction are taken from the essay of Alexander M. Ross, *William Henry Bartlett: Artist, Author and Traveller*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1973.

Bartlett turned to the life of a journalist from March 1849 to January 1852. Literature had always appealed to him and his knowledge of English literature was very considerable, but his acceptance of the editorship of *Sharpe's London Journal* in 1849 might also have been a matter of economic necessity. This activity did not prevent him from travelling: in the spring of 1850 Bartlett took a trip by way of Paris and Marseilles to Malta and then to Gibraltar, whence he paid a visit to Malaga and Granada. These travels are described in *Gleanings, Pictorial and Antiquarian, on the Overland Route*, which was published in 1851. The last of Bartlett's European travel books, *Pictures from Sicily*, which was in press late in 1852, was based largely upon his visit to the island in the spring and summer of that year. Bartlett died of a fever at sea off Malta returning from Palestine on September 13, 1854.

Bartlett's Work

In December 1855 a very large collection of Bartlett drawings was sold by auction in London. Virtue and Company printed a catalogue for the sale listing 205 lots which contained altogether 1012 items. Of these 517 were described as 'original sepia drawings', 125 were listed as 'original watercolour and sepia drawings', and 370 were described as 'original watercolour drawings'. But the catalogue omits Bartlett's drawings in numerous works, among them *Picturesque Antiquities of the English Cities*, *Ireland Illustrated*, *Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated*, *The Watering Place of Great Britain and Fashionable Directory*, *American Scenery*, *Canadian Scenery*, *The Pilgrim Fathers*, and *Pictures from Sicily*. So it is reasonable to assume that Bartlett must have produced more than 1500 sketches between 1824 and 1854. Bartlett is usually thought of in terms of the hundreds of black and white engravings of his sketches, but the catalogue reminded us that he was also a watercolourist. In 1829 John Britton noticed by commenting on his pupil's work: 'I often be astonished that he did not particularly allude to the coloured drawings he then made, as they are some of the best examples of the kind by a student in Art, I have ever witnessed'. The diminution of his reputation as a watercolorist could be explained by the fact that many engravings have been tinted to resemble watercolours. Bartlett's knowledge of painting was extensive and appears clearly in his biography of Sir David Wilkie, *The Wilkie Gallery*, where he comments with ease upon the characteristics of such Dutch and Flemish artists as Adriaen van de Velde, Bakhuizen, Cuyp, David Teniers the younger, and Ostade.

What is always evident in the engravings and woodcuts is the quality of the training in architectural drawing which the youthful Bartlett had received from Britton. The adjective 'faithful' is recurrent in comments upon his work: John Carne speaks of 'the artist who has so faithfully and admirably sketched the various views of this mountain and the rest of Syria'², and Julia Pardoe, back in England from her expedition to Turkey, gazes 'on the extraordinarily faithful and admirable sketches which lie upon [her] table in "merrie England", from the pencil of Mr. Bartlett'³. The artist claimed this authenticity in the preface of *The Nile Boat*: 'While disclaiming for the text of his book any pretensions to originality, the writer is anxious to say that this is not the case with the illustrations, of which the whole were drawn upon the spot, many of them with the Camera Lucida'⁴. He has often the same approach in term of composition when he sought out a point of view which would offer him a prospect. Many sketches were made from a hillside and many others from rivers or lakes where the artist's vision was unrestricted.

But the Bartlett drawings can't be reduced to a topographical or architectural work. They often possess charm and delicacy and reveal the artist's understanding of landscape and his ability to use light and shade with effect to enliven his scene. By 1829 Britton must have known that Bartlett was more interested in picturesque and scenic effects than

² John Carne, *Syria, the Holy Land and Asia Minor*, t. II, p. 66.

³ Julie Pardoe, *Beauties of the Bosphorus*, p. 4.

⁴ William Bartlett, *The Nile Boat*, p. iii.

he was in the fine and original architecture of the Middle Ages. *Picturesque Antiquities of the English Cities* and *Ireland Illustrated* offered many examples of the apprentice's interest in scenic effects, especially in those that could be classified as picturesque. The taste of the picturesque is frequently accompanied by an interest in the sublime which certainly sprang from his attachment to the poets and prose writers of the Romantic period. When contemplating sublime scenery, Bartlett can find quotations from them to illustrate his emotions, or from the Bible, Cervantes, Shakespeare, etc... as his knowledge of older authors was extensive. If he was interested in representing the landscapes, he also paid attention to the people and their lives. That is why he often sketched the inhabitants in their house or in gardens like in Constantinople and Damascus.

By the end of the 1830's, Bartlett's popularity was high. Attractive travel books containing engravings of his sketches sold remarkably well at home and abroad. That Bartlett's name is famous till now, is attributable not only to the excellence of his art but also to the hundreds of impressions which the engravers of the Turner school made available from their steel engravings and which, in turn, illustrated the elegant publications that came from George Virtue's press at London. During and after his lifetime, many books appeared bearing copies of Bartlett's engravings. Even the illustrations on the Syrian 10 and 25 Pounds bank notes which were printed in 1920 and 1939, and engraved by Bradbury, Wilkinson & C^o, are copies from Bartlett's drawings representing the old port of Tyre and a general view of Damascus published for the first time in 1836⁵. The influence of Bartlett on his successors is particularly sensitive in the views from the Middle East which he visited several times.



The principal collections of his work are conserved at the British Library, the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, the Leeds Museum, and at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

⁵ Cf. Adnan Djaroueh, *Encyclopedia of Syrian Paper Money*, Beirut, Dar al Mourad, 2005.

Bartlett and the Orient

Bartlett's first travel to the Middle East took place in 1834: he was delayed for some time in Malta and after three weeks in quarantine in Alexandria, he sailed to Jaffa and went to visit Acre, Mount Carmel, Tyre, Sidon, Djouni where he met Lady Hester Stanhope, and finally reached Beirut in June 1834. He followed the sea-shore to Tripoli, then ascended the steeps of Lebanon; slept in the house of the Sheikh of Ehden; examined the Cedars, and descended into the plain of Cœlo-Syria, at the further extremity of which appeared the temples of Baalbec. His intended visit to Jerusalem - the chief object of this journey - was entirely defeated by the open war between Mohammed Ali and the Ottoman Sultan. From Baalbec, therefore, he proceeded to Antioch and to Tarsus where he sailed for Europe but he remained on the way for a month on the Island of Rhodes recovering from a serious fever that nearly claimed his life. He was back to England in January 1835 with 107 sketches that made up the illustrations in the three volumes of John Carne's *Syria, the Holy Land, Asia Minor* who had travelled extensively in the Middle East in 1821 and had published *Letters from the East* in 1826.

His second trip lasted from August 15, 1837 till March 1838: Bartlett travelled in the company of Julia Pardoe (1806-1862) in Turkey and prepared 83 steel engravings of Constantinople and its surroundings for her book *The Beauties of the Bosphorus* published in 1839. He also visited the Turco-Russian provinces of the Ottoman Empire when he went along the Danube through Serbia, Bulgaria, Moldavia, and Bessarabia in 1842.

The same year, he undertook a new trip to the East. He landed at Beirut and went to Jaffa, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, the Jordan and the Dead Sea. After another week in the Holy City, he set off to Nazareth and the Lake of Tiberias; and then, cutting down from Safed to Acre, returned by sea to Beirut. On his return he had to remain in quarantine in Alexandria in July 1842. The result of this visit was *Walks about the City and Environs of Jerusalem* published in 1844 and written by Bartlett himself. A second edition appeared in 1845. The book was dedicated to his brother the Reverend F. A. Bartlett and its principal object was to put before the student interested in biblical history a picture of what was described. The poor demand for large illustrated volumes on travel certainly compelled Bartlett to consider other means of making his livelihood and of accepting the idea put forward by Beattie that he should use 'his pen as well as his pencil'. The sketches he had made during this journey also appeared in 1847 through eighty steel engravings in Henry Stebbing's *The Christian in Palestine, or Scenes of Sacred History*. The surfeit of illustrated travel books, especially on the Middle East, may have forced his editor Virtue to curtail such publications. *The Critic* lauded the illustrations: 'Mr. Bartlett has a remarkable eye for the picturesque; all his views are taken from good points. He never fails to present us with a perfect picture, full of objects of interest, and conveying a better idea to place than any sketcher whose works we have seen of late years. What an acquisition it will be to quarto editions of the Bible!'

Forty Days in the Desert (1848) and *The Nile Boat* (1849) were the outcome of his travels in August-September 1845, when he journeyed seven hundred miles up the Nile to the temple of Philæ above Assuan, and October-December 1845, when he travelled along the east side of the Gulf of Suez to Mount Serbal, then east to the Gulf of Akaba, and north to Petra.

Bartlett wrote two other books about the Holy Land: *Footstep of our Lord and His Apostles* (1851) and *Jerusalem Revisited*, which was published posthumously in 1855 and included steel engravings and woodcuts to illustrate the author's travels. Both books contain material which Bartlett had published previously, sometimes verbatim and sometimes rewritten. For example *Footsteps of our Lord and His Apostles* includes details of his journeys to the East in 1834, 1837, and 1842.

These books were very popular with the public. By 1862 both *Forty Days in the Desert* and *The Nile Boat* had run to five editions. In 1872 Bell and Daldy of Covent Garden brought out the seventh edition of *Footstep of our Lord and His Apostles*. Another small volume, *Scripture Sites and Scenes... in Egypt, Arabia, and Palestine*, which appeared with nineteen engravings for the first time in 1849, was republished in 1854. This success could be explained by the mid-Victorian interest in biblical exegesis, the prose style of the author as well as the numerous engravings and woodcuts which accompanied the text. The Middle East was a very popular subject. Napoleon's conquest of Egypt and his campaign in Syria had attracted considerable attention toward the East. The building of railways in France and the introduction of the steamship greatly facilitated travel to the Middle East and the number of western travellers increased. Bartlett was affected by influences of these numerous western travellers. During a sojourn in Paris in 1836, Bartlett was introduced to Lamartine. He had a little conversation with him and was gratified by having made the acquaintance of the French poet whose *Voyage en Orient*, he had perused among the very scenes which had inspired it.

The object of his last travel in 1854 was the exploration of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. From Smyrna he undertook during the summer 1854 visits of Cassaba, Sardis, Ephesus, Magnesia, Pergamus, and was back in Smyrna at the beginning of September. But the severe pestilence through the region prevented him to visit all the places that he intended, and he contracted a fever from which he died, at sea off Malta on September 13, 1854.



Romantic Travel
through Bartlett's Engravings

From Europe to the Middle East

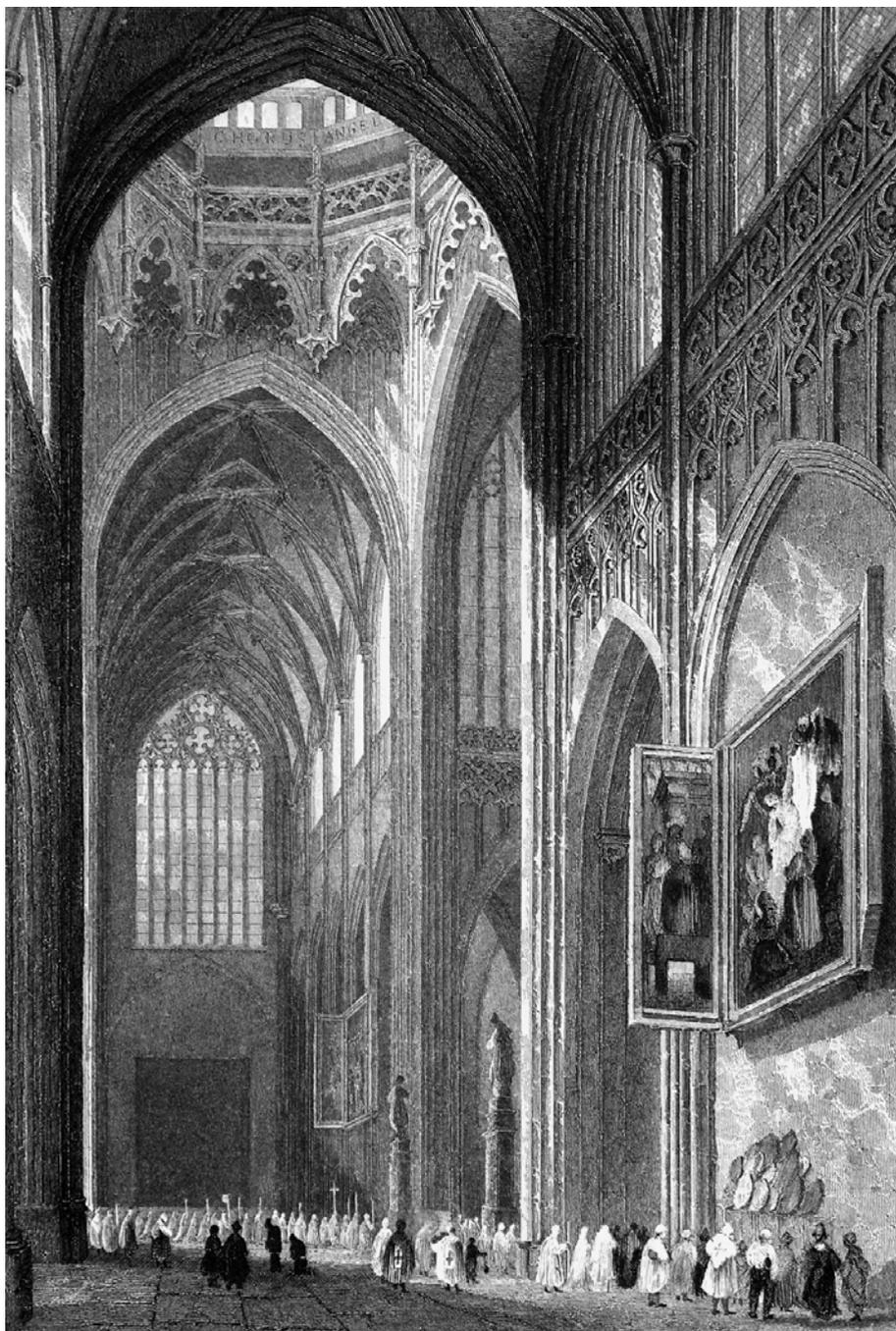


THE NETHERLANDS

Town Halls



The Town Hall at The Hague

BELGIUM

Interior of Antwerp Cathedral

CONSTANTINOPLE

THE

BEAUTIES OF THE BOSPHORUS

BY MISS PARDOE
FROM DRAWINGS
BY WILLIAM H. BARTLETT



Constantinople is a vast phantasmagoria – very much like a moving diorama full of scenes from fairy tales... impossible for the pencil to express its beauties as they are scattered about in a manner very puzzling to the artist. And how express the oriental light – which without the accidents of light and shade usual in the north – is sufficient to produce the most brilliant relief combined with a softness and harmony equally beautiful. I fear we can only give the mere form of the objects viewed – but not that beautiful luster with which in the East they are always invested.

Letter to William Beattie, from Pera, October 1837

EGYPT

Alexandria

On the fourth day appeared a long, low, yellow line of sand, scarcely visible above the azure sea, with a few distant palm trees, like back specks, and camels pacing slowly along the shore, announcing that we were on the threshold of those lands of which we have so often dreamed; the hope of visiting which was perhaps, at one time, too extravagant for a moment's indulgence.



Alexandria

Yet the first view of Alexandria, full as it is of historical reminiscence, is, in all other respects, more unimposing than that of any other city on the Mediterranean. A long line of windmills on a sandy ridge, the new light-house and palace built by the present pasha, and the tall column of Dioclesian, the only visible wreck of the ancient city – such are the few prominent objects which rise above the dead level of the sea. The entrance of the harbour is difficult, but its spacious area is thronged with ships of war, steamers, merchantmen, and all the smaller craft incident to extended traffic. For under the government of Mehemet Ali, this city, which is his principal residence, and the scene of his most important improvements, has experienced an immense development, and is likely to regain a large proportion of its ancient consequence.

PALESTINE

WALKS
ABOUT
THE CITY AND ENVIRONS
OF
JERUSALEM.
BY
W. H. BARTLETT.



DALDY, ISBISTER & CO
56, Ludgate Hill, London.

LEBANON

Tyre



View of Tyre from the Mainland

On the morrow, coming abruptly to the edge of the precipice, at a point where it sunk down sheer some two hundred feet into the sea, the territory of old Phœnicia spread out before us, – the cradle of ancient commerce and navigation, and which has played so important a part in the history of mankind. It is narrow strip of plain, rarely extending above a mile or two from the shore, and backed by ranges of mountains piled tier upon tier to the snow-covered crests of Lebanon. Jutting out at about three miles off, was seen the desolate-looking island of Tyre, connected with the mainland by a broad causeway of sand; while some broken lines of aqueduct, and a little hill crowned with a small mosque, are dotted about the adjacent plain; far different from the scene which must once have burst upon the spectator from this height, when caravans converging from all parts of the East unloaded their riches at the port, which was filled with the thousand sails destined to waft them to the remotest coasts of the known world.

But it was not the time, nor was it the place to moralize on the spectacle of fallen grandeur before us, our utmost attention being bestowed on the preservation of our precious necks, as we stumbled and slid down one of the most dangerous stone pathways in the world, gaining dizzy peeps down upon the sea chafing among the ‘unnumbered idle pebbles’ at our feet. This road, said to have been made by Alexander the Great, is no doubt as old as the city itself, and bears the suitable appellation of ‘the Ladder of Tyre’.

SYRIA

S Y R I A,
THE HOLY LAND, ASIA MINOR,
&c.

ILLUSTRATED.

IN A SERIES OF VIEWS DRAWN FROM NATURE

BY

W. H. BARTLETT, WILLIAM PURSER, &c.

WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PLATES

BY JOHN CARNE, ESQ.

Author of "Letters from the East."

Second.

FISHER, SON, & CO.; LONDON, PARIS, & NEW YORK.

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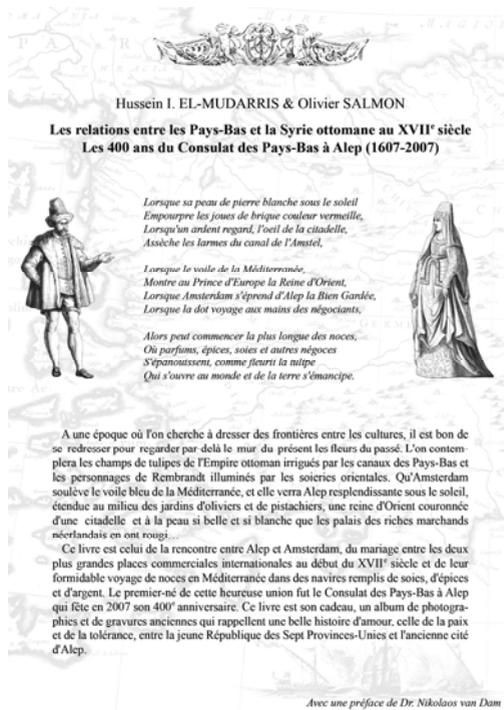
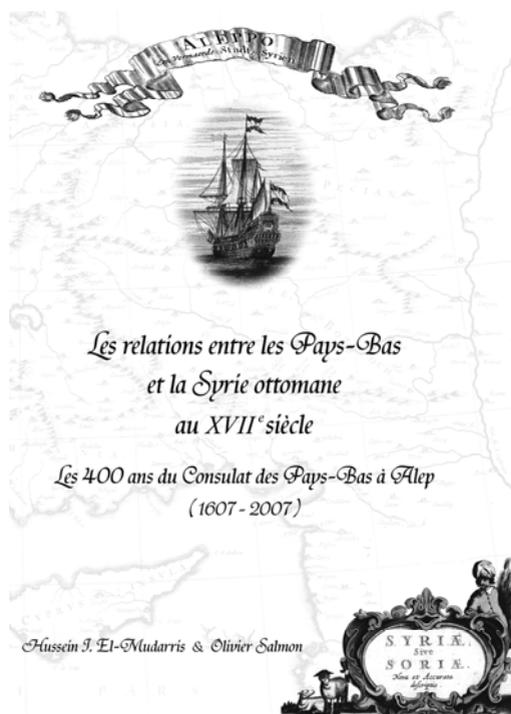
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