latter to a Silk Weaver in Asman

8 J 26, f. 18

K MILLER CONTRACTOR (This letter was sent from Old Caire by a family seming from Que in Upper Egypt to their son in the gimest south of the country, in Assan (now famous for its dam). It is a good illustration of the most common topic in letters of provincial peoples the burden of the poll tax levied on religious minorities, which forced some members of the family to disperse to the remotest corners of the country in face of the ardent desire to keep the whole family together in one place. The polite and, at the same time, warm tone of the letter is also characteristic of provincial people who had some education (the father of the four brothers mentioned in the letter was a teacher). The inconsistency with which the writer asks his brother to some back to the family, but leaves the decision to him, is only natural. The price of wheat, the staple food, is referred Enely middle alth to here as in countless other letters.)

Here I am writing to you, my brother, my dear - may God prolong your life and accept me as a ransom for you from all evil. This is to let you know that we are in the best of health and do not miss anything except the pleasure of seeing you. May God unite us in the most joyous circumstances in His grees and mercy, if God will.

You wrote in your letter to Abii Ispaq that (you could not come here, as) the poll tax officials would apprehend you on our account. However,

your father and your brother Abū Sahl; time you would not be molested on our secount. In addition, if you came down, God would not withhold from you a livelihood here. You could call cut and offer your wares on the square, a) for the art of silk weaving is very much in demand. Your father and myself were questioned (by the police) because of you. Therefore, I would ask you, by God, not to stay on in Aswan. However, if you regard your return to Old Cairo as inadvisable, the choice is with you - may God direct you to do what is good.

I send you greetings and so does your lord.) Your mother weeps night and day and greets you. I wrote you another letter and gave it to Abii Ishiq, but I do not know whether it has reached you or not. May God let us see a good end to everything.

(Marginal motes)

Your father spent can night in prison because of you. Therefore, de not tarry, but come down soon.

(Postsoript:)6)

The wife of your paternal uncle greats you. Tahir cries and says:
"When will brother come?" May God unite us all soon.

One irdabb of wheat of middle quality costs forty-two (dirham).

May God make it cheaper, Amen. I wrote this letter in a hurry.

Aswan 6 J 26, f. 18/p. 3

(Address in Arabic characters:)

To be delivered in Que to Bu Dimran, the sen of the one-eyed teacher. From his brother Bayan - may he be made his ransom.

Netes

- a) There were a number of equares in the basear of Old Cairo, such as those of the perfumers, clothiers, or date merchants.
- b) Leso your fathere
- e) Written on the reverse side in the same direction as the first page.