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From the Christian Register.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Letter from the Rev. Dr. Lowell, of Boston, to one of the Secretaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

BOSTON, Feb. 5th, 1842.

My Dear Sir,—The death of our respected friend, Lt. Gov. Winthrop, has interrupted our meetings in reference to the Greeks, but it has not diminished, I am sure, the interest that we feel in them, or made us less anxious that their cry for help should be heard, and responded to, by those whose spiritual privileges are greater than theirs.

When I was in Athens, I was introduced by my friend, Mr. Perdicaris, to the celebrated chieftain, Mavromichalis, or Petrom Bey, the prince of Maina, a part of the ancient Sparta.

At this interview, he expressed in glowing language, and with deep emotion, his gratitude to my countrymen for the succor they had afforded the Greek nation whilst struggling for independence, and for the interest manifested by the Christian community here, in the intellectual and moral regeneration of Greece. He spoke of the school which had been established by the A. B. C. F. M. in his native country, Maina, of the great good it had done, within its limited sphere, and of the earnest desire of the Mainotes, that it might prove the precursor of the extensive diffusion of the means of education among them.

On my visiting Athens a second time, on my return from Egypt and Syria, the aged chief, hearing of my arrival, and fearing that I might not again call on him, came, himself, to my lodging, to repeat the subject of our former conversations. I can never forget the kindling eye, the animated gesture, the earnest expostulation, the fervid eloquence of the old man, as he urged the claims of his countrymen upon my sympathy, and through me, as he trusted, upon the sympathy of the American public.

In my first discourse to my people after my return home, I briefly presented these claims, as well as the claims of missions generally, in the region I had visited, and determined to follow up these inculcations, both in the pulpit and from the press.

The dispensations of Providence, demanding nearly all my time for domestic duties, which was not necessarily devoted to parochial labors, have prevented me hitherto, from fulfilling my purpose.

At a season of much anxiety of mind, I received a letter from Mavromichalis. It was shown to several friends in whom I thought it might excite an interest in favor of its object, and I determined to bring it before my people, and the public; but it was unfortunately mislaid, and though sought for with much diligence, has been but recently recovered.

I transmit you a copy of it for publication, and as it is a voice from Sparta, intones touching and eloquent, I trust it will not be uttered in vain.

“My Honored and Reverend Sir,—Having had the good fortune of becoming personally acquainted with you during your visit at Athens, and having witnessed your zeal for the cause of education in Greece in general, and in my native Sparta in particular, I take the liberty to recal myself to you, by my present letter, and to request that you would be so good as to interest the benevolent institutions of America, the friends of Greece, and of the Spartans, amongst you, and induce them to contribute something for the establishment of common schools in Laconia, which, owing to the poverty of the people, is unable to secure the blessings of education, and that, too, when the inhabitants, though ignorant, are far from being deficient in love of learning.

The common school established at Areopolis, the capital of Laconia, by your praise-worthy countrymen, the Rev. Mr. Houston and the Rev. Mr. Leyburn, is making good progress, and is promising much for that part of the country, but, owing to its limited means, its benefits are confined to the Demos of the capital, and to a few neighboring districts. The increase of means will necessarily tend to increase the sphere of education. The desire which I feel in my old age and its consequent infirmities, is to aid my compatriots in acquiring the blessings of education, without which they cannot be truly happy;—and for the aid of this object, I address myself to you, and entreat your co-operation.

I remain, with sincere esteem,

Very respectfully, yours,

PETROM BEY MAVROMICHALIS.

Mavromichalis alludes to my 'zeal for the cause of education in Greece.' I should have been cold, indeed, if I could have visited the most interesting institution of Mr. and Mrs. Hill, the Episcopal missionaries in Athens, and the schools which the Greeks themselves, in their zeal, have got up, without having my spirit stirred within me. No description can convey an adequate idea of the intenseness of that ardor with which the young Greeks engage in the pursuit of learning; inheriting the spirit, as in many instances they bear the names of their renowned ancestors. The schools are overflowing, and hundreds are pressing for admission who cannot obtain it.

At the University, I found them outside the door, leaning forward and eagerly catching the sounds of instruction from the lecturer, within—'daily watching at the gates, and waiting at the posts of the doors.' Nor is this pursuit of learning confined to the young. All ages, especially ecclesiastics, who had only earned to read, or could not read at all, are seen with their books, on their way to school; the oldest placing themselves with docility in the same form with the youthful learner.

I would that I could introduce my countrywomen into the school for girls, for, alas! there is but one, besides the American school in Athens. I should need no other argument to move their sympathy. But I must only *tell* them how these interesting children, of their own sex, crowded around us, exhibiting the little specimens of their ingenuity and industry, and how delighted they were, when told that their case should be stated to American women, who would not fail to furnish them with additional materials for learning, and to enable others to share with them in the privileges they enjoyed. Will not our countrywomen redeem the pledge we gave on their behalf? Will they not send, or furnish the means of procuring, books and charts and instruments, and afford other Greek females, too, the means of being instructed, and qualified to instruct others?

The university of Athens has been instituted, not out of the abundance, but the penury of the Greeks. They have laid the foundation. Will not the young men in our colleges, and other seminaries, bring each a stone to aid in completing this temple of science? Will they not form associations for the purpose of extending to their Greek brethren the advantages with which they themselves are so abundantly furnished?

The first American school in Greece was that established by your Board at Syra, in 1827. It still exists under the name of the 'American School,' though it is supported by the Church Missionary Society in England. It contains, I believe, between six and seven hundred pupils of both sexes. This school, with a school commenced in 1829 by Dr. King, in the island of Tenos, (the first of that kind ever known there,) and that of Mr. and Mrs. Hill, before mentioned, have given a most salutary impulse to the cause of education in Greece. Indeed, without that impulse, probably little, if anything, would have been as yet effected. Of the devotion of Mrs. Hill, and the young ladies her assistants, to their good work, I can hardly speak too highly.

The American schools are connected with the American missions, and I have a few words to say on the subject of these missions. I visited the Baptist missionary at Patras, and the congregational missionaries of your Board at Smyrna, and Cyprus, and Beyrout, and Jerusalem. With some of them I remained several weeks, and with all of them a sufficient length of time to become acquainted with their operations, and their prospects of success. They are unostentatiously, but steadily, judiciously and diligently, pursuing their work. This work is the infusing the life and spirit of Christianity into the Greek and Armenian churches, which have a name to live, but are dead.

If the American missionaries, or any other missionaries, shall be the instruments in the hands of God, of resuscitating these lifeless bodies, a work will have been performed worth all the labor and expense that have been, or ever will be devoted to it.—They will be the instruments of raising thousands and tens of thousands of their fellow beings from the most degraded state of ignorance, superstition and vice, to light, and rational religion and virtue;—from the slavery of sin and Satan, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. This the missionaries are aiming to do, by teaching the young, by preaching and by translating, printing and circulating, not covertly but openly, and with the sanction of authority, the Holy Scriptures, and works of science and literature and practical piety. As much has been done as ought to have been expected in the time and under the circumstances—though certainly not as much as is to be done, and may be done—yes, and by God's blessing, will be done. The ground has been broken, seed has been sown, and, in many instances, has already germinated, and sprung up, and brought forth fruit.

I need not particularize. You have the reports of your missionaries ;—it is for me only, who have been an eye witness, to add my testimony to the truth of those reports. It is impartial testimony—for, though a Congregationalist, as regards the outworks of the house of God, in theology—I belong to no sect. I have no name but Christian, and no creed but the Word of God.

The missionaries, Baptist, Episcopalian, and Congregational, with whom it was my happiness to become acquainted, are, in my opinion, sensible, liberal minded, good men, laboring, side by side, in their noble undertaking, without jealousy—nay, I trust, with the kindest feelings towards one another.—They have, indeed, the same object ; not to make proselytes to their denomination, but converts to vital, evangelical religion.

Their labors are exclusively directed to nominal Christians, but in the East there will be a reflex influence upon the disciples of the Koran. Indeed, already, the American missionaries have been consulted, and have furnished the model of a school at Constantinople, if they have not, as I think has been the case, furnished important aid in its instruction.

I am aware that there are those who think that the Mohammedans may as well remain as they are. The honesty of the Turk is often presented in contrast to the knavery of the Christian. If the Christian is less honest than the Turk, it is not the fault of his religion, but because he is less observant of its requisitions. But let us look at the reverse of this picture. The Turks in general, are ignorant, lazy, sensual. The most intelligent among them, indeed, in many instances, are infidels in regard to

Mohammedanism, and very little observant of the precepts of their Bible. The late Sultan died of delirium tremens. I was in Constantinople at the time of his death, and had the fact I have stated from undoubted authority. Is there any enlightened and virtuous American, who would exchange his condition with that of a follower of Mohammed?

There are those, again, who think that all we have to give should be given to *home* missions. The homely proverb is often quoted. 'Charity begins at home.' It is true; but it does not end there. The Samaritan who bound up the wounds of the Jew who had fallen among thieves on his way to Jericho, did not think that it ended there. If he had, the wounded traveller would have perished. The apostles were commissioned to preach the Gospel to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem. And how did they fulfil the commission? Did they wait till all Jerusalem was converted, before they went to the Gentiles? The devout centurion, to whom Peter was sent, may answer this question.

Let those who believe that charity begins and ends at home, take care and be faithful in doing their own duty at home; and let those who feel the force of the admonition, 'These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone,' do what they will with their own.

For myself, I am in favor both of home missions and of foreign missions—and I will do what I may,—little, indeed, it is, to help them forward. I honor the man, let him bear what name he will, who, forsaking country and friends, the home of his affections and early associations, the land of his fathers' sepulchres,—goes forth, with the banner of the cross in his hands, and the glad news of salvation on his lips, to carry the bread of life to those that are perishing for lack of knowledge. I bid him God speed. He has my fervent good wishes, and my poor yet fervent prayers, for his success. And in every measure of success which I witness, or of which I hear, I do rejoice, yea, I will rejoice.

I am, dear sir, respectfully and affectionately

Your friend and brother,

CHAS. LOWELL.

Rufus Anderson, D. D., Sec'y of the A. B. C. F. M.