

## DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND GREECE 1868-1878

Although the United States recognized Greece as an independent state in 1833 and concluded with it a Treaty of Commerce and Navigation in 1837, it was not until three decades later that diplomatic relations were established between the two countries. On June 16, 1868, Charles Keating Tuckerman presented his credentials to king George I in Athens, while the previous year Alexander Rangabé, a Greek diplomat noted for his literary production, had arrived in Washington as Minister of Greece.

The rebellion in Crete — the fourth since 1833 — was still going strong. When it had flared up two years earlier, it had brought back into the Greek picture that veteran Philhellene of the Greek War of Independence, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe; had preoccupied the U. S. Minister in Constantinople, E. Joy Morris; and had aroused Congress. Secretary of State William H. Seward had been informed from Constantinople about the declaration of the people of Candia in which they stressed their earlier but vain efforts “to throw off the Ottoman yoke” which prevented them “from following the march of modern civilization,” and called upon the Christian powers to aid the Cretan families “wandering in the mountains exposed to the cold of winter and the cruelty of the barbarians.” Morris had commented that this application for relief was very natural. “Common humanity,” he wrote, “justifies their relief, noncombatants as they are. If an American vessel were sent to their relief, I am sure the Turkish Government would not object to their being carried away to Greece.”<sup>1</sup> As for Congress, it had expressed in a joint resolution proposed by Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts both its strong sympathy with the people of Crete — “a part of the Greek family to whom civilization owes so much” — and the hope that the Ottoman Government would favorably consider this declaration in determining its policy toward Crete. Congress also called upon the President of the United States to communicate this resolution to the Ottoman Government.<sup>2</sup> Seward accordingly

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1. *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs 1866*, part 2. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867 (cited hereafter as *U.S. Foreign Relations*), 256 - 257 (Morris to Seward, November 22, 1866).

2. *Ibid.*, 1867, part 2, 15 (Seward to Morris, July 22, 1867).

instructed the American Minister in Constantinople, and the latter read the Congressional resolution to Aali Pasha, the Grand Vezir, causing him speechless surprise.<sup>3</sup>

In presenting his credentials to king George I, Tuckerman made no reference to the Cretan uprising, however. He expressed the hope that Greece “drawing from her imperishable past the principles of public liberty, and rejecting those conflicting elements which caused her decline, by a well-developed system of political economy and internal improvement” would, “through patient peace, realize the just expectations of her patriotic and persevering people.” And the young king observed in reply that “the sympathies which united the Greek people to those of the United States” dated from the period of the Greek War of Independence, adding that the Greek people and he himself placed a very high value on the friendship of the United States. “There is more than one point of resemblance between the two nations” the monarch said. “With one as with the other, the love of order and of liberty form the basis of their character. Both conquered their independence by a long struggle, and passed through many trials to sustain these two principles.”<sup>4</sup>

In the United States, a few days later, on July 25, Congress passed a second joint resolution on the Cretan question which was received in Greece with unqualified satisfaction.<sup>5</sup> Going beyond its previous proposal, resolution 169 — likewise proposed by Senator Sumner — urged autonomy for the island of Crete. Ties of common religion, not only gratitude to the Greek race “of which the Cretans are a part,” were invoked as a rationale for this declaration, which also called upon “the civilized powers of the world to unite “in friendly influence with the Government of Turkey,” and asked the President to instruct the U. S. Minister in Constantinople to co-operate with the Ministers of other powers “in all good offices to terminate the suffering of the people of Crete, and to communicate a copy of this resolution to the Turkish Government.”<sup>6</sup>

Later that same year — between August 31 and September 7 — Admiral David G. Farragut, on his flagship, the USS *Franklin*, accompanied by the USS *Frolic*, anchored off Athens after visiting Constantinople, and excited great interest among the Greeks and the Cretan refugees. The king went aboard the American ship, and the Admiral and his officers attended the bap-

3. *Ibid.*, 15 (Morris to Seward, August 2, 1867).

4. *Ibid.*, 1868, 121 (Tuckerman to Seward, June 18, 1868).

5. *Ibid.*, 130 (Tuckerman to Seward, August 20, 1868).

6. *Congressional Globe*, 395, 40th Congress, 2d sess. Washington : Office of the Congressional Globe, 1868, 4283.

tism of the first native-born prince royal, the future king Constantine. The American navy men also made a liberal contribution in money and clothing for relief of the Cretan refugees. Then, in October, the Greek Government signed a contract for the purchase of 15,000 Remington U. S. rifles, and, in November, the Vouli—Greek Parliament—voted a resolution of thanks for the solicitude of the United States for the Greek nation.<sup>7</sup>

The diplomatic dispatches which Tuckerman and his successors in Athens sent to the Department of State, until Congress in 1878 failed to provide for any appropriation for a legation in Athens, reveal not only the nature of the emerging relations between the United States and Greece and the state of affairs in the latter, but also the attitudes of Americans toward Greece at the time and provide occasional insights of Greek attitudes toward the United States. And Tuckerman's book, *The Greeks of Today*, published in 1878, adds to the picture.<sup>8</sup>

The envoy of the American republic, reporting on August 6, 1868, to the Secretary of State on the birth of the crown prince of Greece, commented that this event would do more "to fix the wavering mind upon the inevitability of monarchism in Greece, than could any event or any circumstance at the present time. Whatever dreams of republicanism may have at times disturbed the popular mind here, the true friends of the Hellenic race cannot but perceive that such ideas are incompatible with the character of the people and the political surroundings of the kingdom."<sup>9</sup>

Concerning the Cretan uprising and the Congressional resolutions it had generated, Tuckerman deplored the apathy of Europe and the inability of the Greek Government and people to offer material aid to the insurgents. As a citizen and public servant of the United States, he fervently hoped that the appeal of the U. S. Government to the Porte would result in positive reforms which sooner or later would lead to the entire independence of the island of Crete. The American idea with regard to Greece, to say nothing about Crete, he observed in another dispatch, was not that of Europe, and it would be ineffective against such material interests unless pronounced "in the most unequivocal terms and with an emphasis which shall command for it attention." Elsewhere he noted that "unfortunately Britain, believing that her own interests were better preserved by maintaining the *status quo*, apparently forgot the teaching of one of her most eminent statesmen, namely,

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7. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1868*, 132-133, 142-143, 136 (Tuckerman to Seward, September 10; October 3; November 25, 1868).

8. C. K. Tuckerman, *The Greeks of Today*, New York: G. P. Putnam & Sons, 1878.

9. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1868*, 130 (Tuckerman to Seward, August 6, 1868).

that “forms and stipulations can never unite populations which are dissevered by sympathy.”<sup>10</sup>

Nor did the Greek attitudes and expectations from the United States remain unnoticed. The Cretan petition of 1869 abandoning Enosis—union—but acknowledging the Sultan’s sovereignty, was submitted not only to the six great European powers but also to the United States. The Greeks, Tuckerman observed in another cable, knowing that the United States had no territorial interests in the matter of Crete and was simply and sincerely desirous that free institutions should succeed wherever they might be planted, “give their unbounded confidence in that distant republic, instead of their nearer and less disinterested neighbors.” Of that confidence, he added, “I have been a recipient from the throne and from the people; not in the way of self-exaltation on their part or flattery toward myself, but in the way of earnest consultation and appeal.”<sup>11</sup>

With regard to the other powers, Tuckerman felt forced to admit that in spite of the assertions of friendship for Greece on the part of the representatives of England and France, he had never once heard from either minister a single word of approbation for the Greek Government or people. The three great European powers, exercising three distinct influences upon the kingdom, were all, nevertheless, united in repressing the natural aspirations of the Greek people. The possession of Crete by Greece would assist in the ambitious views of the Russian Government.<sup>12</sup> As for Britain, it was impossible to say whether it had any ideas of future territorial conquest in the east of Europe. Probably, this was a matter of indifference—as long as France showed no inclinations in that direction. The objective of these powers seemed at present to keep Greece quiet on external questions, which “if agitated may affect the so-called ‘equilibrium’ of Europe, but which, if not agitated, will, in the Greek point of view, keep her forever hemmed within limits which her natural aspirations compel her to attempt to expand.” That the United States might be of essential service to Greece in her present position appeared to be of no dispute. Shall this service be strictly confined to votes of sympathy by Congress? Tuckerman asked. The Greeks hoped, he observed, that in the affairs of Crete, the United States would feel itself justified in at least urging upon the Christian powers of Europe such interference as would protect the general interests of humanity where infringed... “by the excesses of a barbarous and despotic government.” He noted, on the other hand, that his Brit-

10. *Ibid.*, 130, 136, 138 (Tuckerman to Seward, August 20; October 3, 1868).

11. *Ibid.*, 142 (Tuckerman to Seward, November 25, 1868).

12. *Ibid.*, 143.

ish colleague, Mr, Erskine, had expressed to him the other day his surprise that "any such interference in the affairs of Crete should be desired on our part, on the ground that this course would be inconsistent with our emphatic remonstrances against interference with our own domestic affairs during the late rebellion in the States." <sup>13</sup>

American awareness of the ancient Greek heritage of modern Greece — another feature in relations between the United States and Greece — was again revealed in the address which Tuckerman's successor, John M. Francis, made when he presented his credentials to the king in November 1871. "Our political institutions," he acknowledged, "have many points of resemblance to those of this classic and venerated land." To his remark that the people of the United States had felt a great interest in Greece from the beginning of its new career as a nation, bearing in mind its heroic struggle for independence as well as the fact that its ancient grandeur had largely contributed toward the element of American civilization, king George replied that the American people had helped the Greeks when they most needed help, and in the Cretan rebellion had extended their sympathies to the oppressed. But it had been ancient Greece that had done so much for civilization, "though we hope to do our duty now and go forward steadily in improvement." <sup>14</sup> Other salient points in this chapter of American interest in ancient Greece: dispatches concerning the supposed finding of a missing arm or the Venus of Melos and about excavations in Sparta; and the forwarding to the State Department — for deposit in the treaty-making department of the U. S. Government — of two plaster cast of ancient Greek treaties, the one between the Athenians and the Chalcedonians of 445 B. C., the other, found at Olympia, mentioning Alcibiades. <sup>15</sup>

As late as the 1870's, the memory of American aid during the Greek War of Independence apparently still lingered on vividly among Greeks. After a tour in the Peloponnese and the mainland, Francis reported to Washington that "on every hand, the expressions of gratitude to the American people for aid and sympathy to the Greeks in the hardships of their revolution were eloquent and heartfelt, and admiration for our institutions and for the grand progress of our country was expressed in simple language without stint. In several cases the men who ate American bread and wore American clothing in the Greek revolution gave utterance to their thanks and their prayers

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13. *Ibid.*, 142 - 143.

14. *Ibid.*, 1871, 226 (Francis to Fish, November 10, 1871.

15. *Ibid.*, 1877, 289-290, 294; 1876, 316 (Read to Evarts, May 10 and 16; July 24, April 12, 1877; August 23, 1876).

for those whose charity had saved their lives and their cause." And Archbishop of Athens Theophilos (1862-1871) told the American Minister that the United States was the best friend poor Greece ever had. The generous contributions of the American people during the revolution had saved multitudes of men, women, and children from starvation. "Other nations flaunt the Cross from their foreheads, but cherish the Crescent in their hearts." For the archbishop, Francis, reported, the United States and its government were examples of political excellence and religious justice that should be held up as a model, not for the Greeks only, but for the entire world."<sup>16</sup>

While the Greeks admired American political institutions, both Tuckerman and Francis were impressed by the voting method used in Greek elections, and stressed its advantages: perfect secrecy and the dispensation of nominating conventions.<sup>17</sup> This method had been taken over from the Ionian islands, and first introduced after king Otho's expulsion. Besides, Tuckerman in his *The Greeks of Today*, devoted two entire separate chapters to the political characteristics of the Greeks in the era of prime ministers Dimitrios G. Voulgaris, Thrassyvoulos Zaïmis, Epaminondas Deliyorgis, and Alexandros Koumoundouros, as well as to an analysis of the "Great Idea."

Sympathizing with a small European state that appeared to be a political football between the powers of Europe, the envoy from the Western Hemisphere defended the Greeks "against the tireless reiteration of Greek national deficiencies in volumes, magazines, and London newspapers." If there was corruption in Greek politics, there was such corruption in other countries too, and the pay of the Greek office-holder was small. Egotism rather than depravity in morals was the charge that could be brought against Greek statesmen. The love of power was "the secret loadstone, which draws the Greek politician up, up into the highest office he can reach, and which gives him contentment therein, even when he feels that the price may have to be relinquished with a brief period of months."<sup>18</sup>

Greece, Tuckerman pointed out further in his book, was "the first of constitutional monarchies." The sovereign, he underlined, had been called to the throne by the voice of the people. Greeks were equal before the law, and had no titles of nobility or distinction. The liberty of the individual and his house was inviolable. Trial by jury was maintained. The press was free, and was permitted to be the vehicle of any and every opinion not contrary to the re-

16. *Ibid.*, 1873, 437-438; 1872, 233-234 (Francis to Fish, May 24, 1873; March 2, 1872).

17. *Ibid.*, 1872, 237-238 (Francis to Fish, March 23, 1872). Tuckerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-100.

18. Tuckerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 94, 97.

ligion of the state or against the person of the king. Suffrage was universal and would become more and more successful, as the people learned to be more self-reliant and independent of arbitration by placemen. Elections were a safety-valve to the passions of the people and were in harmony with the principles of liberal government. During the elections, perfect tranquility prevailed in Athens, though in some of the provinces the presence of troops was required to keep order. Unlike the United States which returned to normalcy after the elections, in Greece, Tuckerman noted, the defeated candidates retired from the open field only to unite to get their opponents ousted on the first convenient opportunity.<sup>19</sup>

The instability of the ministries was another phenomenon the diplomat could not help noticing. Between 1868 and 1878 seventeen changes of cabinet occurred, so that the average life of a ministry was seven months. The Greek minister, wrote Tuckerman, soon finds his seat slipping from under him and his popularity oozing away; and when he falls, it is to give place to an opponent who will pursue pretty much the same political course, and meet the same political fortune. To retain popularity in office for any length of time was "an impossibility for a Greek statesman." For no matter how pure his motives, how earnest his endeavors to steer the ship of state past the breakers and into a safe haven, "he will find public sentiment pressing for his removal or a change of ministry, if for no other reason, because he has been too long in office." It was only when a minister returned to private life, that his accusers ceased accusing, because they were busy with the new incumbent or, what was not unlikely, the former minister would for the first time read encomiums upon "his late honorable and successful administration, and learn that a man must be first politically dead if he wishes to read his own epitaph." Greece, he went on to say, was "a nation of politicians without a party—of opinions, without public opinion."<sup>20</sup>

But, in Tuckerman's view, the real evils of Greek government were those of administration and "the stifling system of centralization." In his opinion, power should be diffused, until each individual in each commune and village felt that the executive power was responsible to him as one of the people. He had never witnessed public meetings in villages, towns, or cities, composed of the working or the industrious classes, for the purpose of discussing or enforcing a public measure. Ideas were as thick as blackberries but they were unwholesome, because never allowed to ripen into practical results.<sup>21</sup>

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19. *Ibid.*, pp. 98, 100.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 101-102; 111.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

The "impotence of poor truncated Greece," he acknowledged, was largely due to foreign interference, and if Greece required to be advised, so were its advisers. And he quoted the words of king George I to an unnamed foreign ambassador: "Do you recognize Greece as a kingdom? Well then, treat her as such." Youngest of all nations, Greece was upbraided for not possessing those qualities which in other nations were the growth of centuries. This, Tuckerman intimated, was unfair.<sup>22</sup>

Unfair, too, in Tuckerman's view, was the attitude of the European powers toward the "Great Idea," which was "a component part of the Greek brain and the Greek heart." After describing the content of this aspiration as a conviction that it was the destiny of Hellenism to Hellenize the vast stretch of territory "which by natural laws the Greeks believe to be theirs, and which is chiefly inhabited by people claiming to be descended of Hellenic stock, professing the Orthodox or Greek faith, or speaking the Greek language," he pointed out the difficulties of this idea's realization, because of the lack of military forces sufficient to make the first attempts of the Greeks to deliver their countrymen and because of the mistrust of the irredeemed Greeks in the results of any revolutionary movement.<sup>23</sup>

But regardless of whether the "Great Idea" was presently practicable, Tuckerman supported the right of the Greeks to entertain this idea. Other nations as witness as Britain, France, or Russia had "Great Ideas." And the unification of Italy had been an Idea which, when successful, had won the applause of the world. And the United States itself, where the whole continent was the limit of its "Great Idea," was permitted to indulge in dreams of aggrandizement without ridicule or reproach. Every nation, indeed, had dreams of glory which failed to arouse the wrath of the scoffer. Why should Greece be an exception? Why should the Greeks perpetually be told to "abandon their little idiosyncracies?" The Greeks, he went on to say, will never abandon the "Great Idea." It was quite unnatural to expect them to act otherwise, and it was morally and politically wrong to wish that they would. "If these aspirations tend to disturb a line of policy which diplomacy has laid down for the protection of certain material interests in the East, these interests should give way to the higher claims of humanity." Britain, he maintained, would have consulted her own political interests by actively promoting the "Great Idea," not by encouraging intrigues or revolutionary agitations, "but by giving open countenance to the idea that the principle of Greek nationality, enunciated by the war of independence,... was a principle to be maintained

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22. *Ibid.*, pp. 113; 114-116.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 120.



until it reached fruition." In his view, the "moral forces of Hellenism are the only real strength it possesses, and if properly directed by a sagacious power they could achieve their mission." There was something not only unnatural but appalling to Christian eyes in the fact that "a handful of Mussulmans, without a single drop of sympathetic blood for the people they govern—aliens in race, religion, manners, customs, and language—should come over into Europe and hold control over six times their number belonging to a different race."<sup>24</sup>

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The tragic Dilessi affair of 1870, of course, focused the attention of American diplomats in Athens on the matter of brigandage in Greece. In a dispatch of May 4, 1872, to Washington, Francis saw fit, at any rate, to report that much of the news published in the European press concerning brigands in Greece was exaggerated and false. Two thirds of the country—the Peloponnese and the islands—were free of outlaws. In the north, the brigands drove over the borders and then returned into Greece. His conclusions were that there was no organized brigandage; that the government was doing all it could to prevent it; that the danger was confined to the northern section of the country; and that military escort could be obtained for the asking, and without charge, for those visiting the northern section.<sup>25</sup>

Earlier, Tuckerman, on the occasion of the Dilessi affair, in which bandits had murdered four foreigners, including two secretaries, of the British and Italian Legations, respectively,<sup>26</sup> had made an interesting analysis of the problem of brigandage, in a private paper he sent in May 1870 from Athens to Secretary of State Hamilton Fish.<sup>27</sup> Fully acknowledging that brigandage was an unmitigated evil and observing that Greece agreed with all the world in this, he pointed out the historical, social, and political factors of this social phenomenon. Brigandage was "no child of today." It had been born from Turkish oppression, when restless men fled to the mountains to secure the only independence left to them. The outlaw of his times did not, of course, have the nobility of the kleft. He had, though, the same strategy and cunning, and the same mountain fastnesses and impenetrable defiles in the mountains were available to him. An army might scour the kingdom and find not a single brigand and, if it happened to clash with a hand of them, it was likely that more soldiers than brigands would be killed, and the band's nucleus would escape and reappear elsewhere. With the peasants there existed a sort

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24. *Ibid.*, pp. 126-129; 134.

25. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1872*, 239 - 240 (Francis to Fish, May 4, 1872).

26. R. Jenkins, *The Dilessi Murders*, London : Longmans, 1961.

27. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1870*; 439-443 (Tuckerman to Fish, May 14, 1870).

of "forced fellowship." To secure their own safety against possible revenge the peasants supplied the bandits with food and never betrayed them—they even warned in case of pursuit. On their side, the bandits mingling freely with the village people, gave money to the peasants in exchange. But that was not all. Certain politicians, to further their own ambitious ends, found the bandits particularly useful at election times and, therefore, courted their favor. The candidate for an election in the rural areas discovered it was politically more desirable to keep on good terms with a person who could with such facility do him good or harm than to antagonize him and run personal, family, and property risks. If he were to remain just neutral, his political opponent was liable to secure the services of the brigand, who could influence the voting. Finally, the landholder often found it was to his interest to conciliate the brigand chief. Why expose his own people to capture, and his property to robbery by refusing to give bread to a wandering band of suspicious characters reported by his servants to be concealed on his grounds? Indeed, it was still wiser to prepay, as it were, ransom, by giving a few thousand drachmas a year to the leaders, so as to secure permanent immunity from danger. As Tuckerman noted, the police annals of most cities would show that systems of blackmail—or, let it be added, of co-operation between politicians and gangsters—were not confined to brigandage in Greece. Even though a Greek law existed for the prosecution and punishment of those who, in any way, directly or indirectly, contributed to the support of the outlaws, it was, in most cases, extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prove the fact. The party who paid the tribute would not betray himself, and the last man to violate the secret was the brigand.

In this report, Tuckerman also noted that in times of crisis, of revolution at home or of war with the Turks brigands often played a "useful" role, some had enlisted in the Cretan insurrection. At other times, when seized and taken to court, they were seldom sentenced to death, or their death sentences were commuted. "In the popular mind, an absurd halo of heroism surrounds the mountain chieftain." And, he noted, Greek brigands were not necessarily bloodthirsty monsters. A large proportion of them had been forced by circumstances to take to the mountains to escape worse trials at home, because of a quarrel, a homicide, a tavern brawl, escape from arrest for petty offense, desertion from the Army. The lust for gold, the temptation to make even a moderate fortune, the mere love of adventure had motivated others to adopt the brigand's mode of life. The disposition to shed blood was foreign to their purpose, but their prestige was only preserved by taking the life of their captive, if the ransom, or an equivalent of it, was not forthcoming. The Greek brigand,

in Tuckerman's view, could not be placed in the same category as the desperadoes of southern Italy, Sicily, Spain, or Hungary.

In conclusion, Tuckerman expressed his conviction that Greece eventually would rid itself of this scourge. He predicted, however, great difficulties as long as the neighboring Turkish provinces swarmed with "those lawless rascals, whose character for ferocity cannot be compared with those of Greek nationality and who enjoy a freedom of action denied to the brigand in Greece." It was clear, in his opinion, that to utterly exterminate brigandage in Greece, the work had to begin in Turkey — a remark to which his colleague in Constantinople, MacVeagh, apparently took violent exception.<sup>28</sup>

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It would be utopian to expect that this first phase of U. S.-Greek diplomatic ties remained altogether without those frictions which are an inevitable concomitant of relations, diplomatic or other. First, in the sphere of trade, the Greek Government, noting the beneficial effects of the reduction of the U. S. tariff on Greek currants in 1870, requested a further reduction two years later.<sup>29</sup> Second, missionary troubles—perhaps inevitable in relations between a state which has an established religion and an almost Erastian system in state-church relations, on the one hand, and a state which maintains a wall of separation between church and state on the other—erupted in 1872 and again in 1876.<sup>30</sup> Third, within a sphere in which the future would witness a great deal of controversy, the first immigration question arose, concerning a *New York Times* report to the effect that the Greek Ministry of Justice had freed nine criminals, on condition they emigrated to the United States. In the Vouli on June 26, 1872, the Minister of Justice denied the veracity of this report, and the matter was closed with an official communication of this démenti to the U. S. Minister.<sup>31</sup>

The missionary troubles of 1872 involved a request by the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece to the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs that proceedings be commenced against three missionaries for "heterodox teaching" and preaching. The first articles of the Greek Constitution of 1864 (like those of all the preceding and succeeding constitutions) prohibited proselytism against the established church. Two of the accused were American citizens. Some of the leading Athens newspapers and prominent Greeks believed this

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28. Tuckerman, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

29. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1872*. 234-235 (Francis to Fish, March 2, 1872).

30. *Ibid.*, 1872, 246-248; 1876, 309-311 (Francis to Fish, June 29, 1872); Read to Fish, August 3, 1876).

31. *Ibid.*, 1872, 249-252 (Francis to Fish, June 29, and July 3, 1872).

move unfortunate and unjustifiable, and a blow to liberty and toleration guaranteed by the Constitution. Minister Francis, however, decided to take no action nor meddle unless a contingency should happen, hoping that the rights of U. S. citizens would not be assailed. In the second case, of 1876, a prohibition had been issued against the publication or dissemination in communal or private schools of certain books — translation into modern Greek of the Old and New Testament, of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, of Koraes's commentaries on the Epistles of Timothy and Titus. The American and British Bible Societies had protested. John M. Read, the successor of Francis at the U. S. Legation, intervened, and, pointing out that Article 14 of the Greek Constitution prohibited prior censorship, managed to get the prohibition rescinded. It is impossible, he wrote to Washington, "to describe the jealousy entertained by the Greeks toward anything which has the slightest appearance of leaning toward proselytism. This feeling lies at the base of their political and religious existence, and few public men would dare even to seem to run counter to it."<sup>32</sup>

In his *The Greeks of Today* Tuckerman had some shrewd remarks to make on this matter, the historical explanation of which partly lies in the millet mentality, that fusion of religion and national identity, which was the mirror-image of the Muslim system that prevailed during three hundred years of Ottoman rule. The Greeks, he observed, were suspicious of the motives and the sincerity of preachers. They wondered why men were sent thousands of miles from America, supported by foreign money, to preach to them, if the purpose was not to proselytize. Other hindrances for the missionaries: the nonconformity of the Protestants with certain immemorial and sacred customs of the Greeks; and Protestant sectarianism. The Greeks could be hardly tempted to abjure their own consolidated faith for the new school of teachers who were divided among themselves on questions of tenets and religious forms. To illustrate the inveterate opposition of the Greeks to the introduction of what to them were schismatic views, Tuckerman quoted from Greek religious newspapers and mentioned the sort of caricatures used to ridicule the missionaries. The Greeks, on the other hand, he recognized, were not ungrateful to the general education which the missionaries in Athens provided.

Tuckerman's conclusion was that proselytism was worse than futile, because it excited suspicion, ridicule, or hatred. It interfered with "the teaching of religion pure and simple — the duties between man and man, and his obligations to his Creator." At least among Christian countries, it was better

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32. *Ibid.*, 311 (Read to Fish, August 3, 1876).

to abandon all attempts, overt or covert, to proselytize. Ministers should confine their work exclusively to the intellectual and moral education of those who wished to hear them, letting tenets, forms, doctrines, and usages quite alone. He referred to an early example of the friction generated by missionary efforts in Greek society, to the trial of Dr. Jonas King twenty years earlier on the charge of "publicly and contemptuously mocking the doctrines, the ordinances, and the customs of the Eastern Orthodox Church, and expounding principles contrary to its fundamental doctrines; of inveighing against the Orthodox Greeks as worshipping the divinity after the wrong manner, and mocking and reviling the sacrament and the rites, calling the worship of the Holy Mother of God idolatry, and the Holy Fathers of the Greek Church heretics and idolaters." The Areopagus, or Supreme Court, had affirmed the judgment against Dr. King who had been sentenced to a fifteen-day imprisonment and expulsion "beyond the bounds of the kingdom," on the ground that, though the Constitution sanctioned liberty of speech and tolerated the worship of foreign religions, it did not permit the condemnation of the principles, customs, doctrines, and ordinances of the established religion. The sentence had not been executed, however, and Dr. King lived in Athens until his death in 1879. In Tuckerman's opinion, the court proceedings had shown prejudice, haste, errors in judgment and insufficient cause, yet Dr. King, he acknowledged—even though in the United States he had acquired the aura of a religious martyr—was intolerant and dogmatic.<sup>33</sup>

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In spite of the sources of friction, the reports of American Ministers on Greece during this first phase of diplomatic relations were, judging from diplomatic documents as well as from Tuckerman's book quite sympathetic toward the new little kingdom. "Heathen Greece was great; Christian Greece may become greater," wrote John M. Read, the last U. S. envoy to Greece in this period. The three radical defects that should be remedied to progress consisted of : 1, the lack of proper transit means within Greece ; 2, the absence of daily communications with the outer world ; and, 3, the political instability, because of the constant change of ministers. In spite of what Americans were taught at school about Greece, that country had nothing in common with the European system. The busy currents of life and trade swept past its shores, touching them only incidentally at two or three points. Athens however — with a population of 48,000 — was an exceptional indication of the future possibilities of Greece. It was an exclamation point for every tra-

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33. Tuckerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-214; 215-217.

veller arriving from farther East, including even Constantinople. It showed abundant evidence of European taste and culture — which represented a remarkable contrast to the ruder life of the remote Orient. Athens, nevertheless was not a fair specimen of the condition of the country at large. Within twenty miles of the Acropolis and the Parthenon, modern civilization vanished like a dream. Agricultural life engaged more than half of the population. It was of primitive simplicity, though compatible with honor and honesty, frugality and economy, hospitality and the kindest dealings with strangers, but it was lacking in many elements which seemed absolutely necessary for the welfare of mankind.<sup>34</sup>

Tuckerman, who was present at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Greece's independence, in 1871 — the Zapeion building was set up in Athens for the very purpose of this celebration — makes the following remarks in his *The Greeks of Today* on the economic, financial and social problems of Greece in the seventies of last century. Noting that self-government was not really started until 1830, when Greece's independence was internationally recognized, hence that the political critic was called upon to pass judgment about the country's achievement in a period of thirty-six not fifty years, he underlined that the population of the kingdom had doubled during that span of years; that its revenue had increased five hundred per cent; that eleven new cities had been founded and over forty restored, enlarged, and rebuilt; that eight to ten ports had been cleared, deepened, and opened to communications; that a telegraphic network extended over the kingdom. A few roads, too, had been built, and lighthouses set up. Shipping had risen from 61,410 tons to 330,000 tons. The number of vines, fig-trees and olive-trees had greatly increased<sup>35</sup> and the value of imports and exports reached \$25 million. The Army, newly organized in 1867, consisted of 14,300 men, "but every Greek is a soldier the hour of need." The navy consisted of a 50-gun frigate; two corvettes, together of 48 guns; 1 sidewheel steamer of 6 guns; 6 screw steamers, together of 10 guns; two new ironclads; and 26 smaller vessels and gunboats.

Like Read, Tuckerman pointed out the crying need for more roads and for railway communications between cities and connections with the chief lines of central Europe. Another need he mentioned was the piercing of the isthmus of Corinth—which was to start in 1881. Nor could the primitive state of agriculture escape his notice. It had not thrown off "the shackles of Oriental

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34. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1875*, 664 (Read to Fish, July 5, 1875).

35. Tuckerman, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 148-149. The vines had increased from 25,000 stremmas to 700,000; fig trees from 50,000 to 300,000; olive trees from 2,300,000 to 7,500,000.

servitude" and everything was primitive and backward as in Turkish times. To introduce a modern plow into Greek soil would be far more difficult than to affect a political revolution. Yet the peasant appeared to him "a tolerably happy man." Temperate and frugal, he neglected neither his religious observances nor his children's education. Food, though the coarsest in kind, was abundant, and the traveller in Greece would find that such a thing as absolute poverty did not exist. There was more domestic contentment and domestic virtue, temperance and chastity in peasant life than in all the greater part of England. Mechanized industry, of course, was in its infancy. In Greece of 1871 there were but twenty steam-powered factories.

The problem of youth, of its future, also concerned Tuckerman, because of its social and political effects. From the gymnasium to Athens, to the University; then a law degree, and a surplus of lawyers without much possibility of making a living out of the practice of law. Efforts to get a position in the government service; dreams of one day becoming a prime minister! Athens thus, Tuckerman observed, became "surcharged with an element, for the most part unproductive and unwholesome to the body politic, and yet one which seems to result from natural causes, for which there is no immediate remedy." Lamenting that "so much culture and absolute talent should be squandered in the political arena," he noted that, as a result of generations of foreign domination during which labor was a synonym of servitude, the Greeks did not believe in the nobility of labor," and that they were unmindful that in their own arms—awkward metaphor—"lie the germs of national prosperity."<sup>36</sup>

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During this period, it should be added, the United States played insignificant role in Greek trade. It largely supplied the country with salted goods, and had almost entirely absorbed the petroleum market (formerly, petroleum had been obtained from Austria and Russia): Canned fish and lobsters, as well as sewing machines were other American imports. Greece, on its side, exported to the United States currants, olives, rags, wool, and wine. Among importers to Greece, England came first, and was followed by Turkey, Austria, France, Russia, and Italy, all six absorbing about 94 per cent of Greece's exports. Since the larger part of grain imports came from Turkey and Russia, and, because of the Eastern crisis of 1877-1878, the Black Sea ports had cut off the principal sources of supply, Read suggested to Washington that the moment had arrived for the United States to secure the Greek grain market.<sup>37</sup>

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 158, 162, 151, 155-157.

37. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1878*, 358-359 (Read to Evarts, November 30, 1877).

But that crisis, which seemed to augur a blow to the "Great Idea" and led to demonstrations in Athens on the news of the proposed peace terms and to incursions of military groups into Epirus and Thessaly, prompted Read to propose to his government that a U. S. vessel be sent off Athens, for the protection, if necessary, of U. S. nationals. And on February 1, the USS *Marion*, under commander Bradford, arrived there. The feared contingency, however, did not occur.

On March 8, just after the Treaty of San Stefano had been signed, a distinguished visitor and former President of the United States, General Ulysses—note the Greek name—Simpson Grant, on his world tour as a private citizen, arrived at Piraeus aboard the *Vandalia*.<sup>38</sup> Political feeling at the time was running high in Athens, as Grant's *fidus Achates*, John R. Young observed. The suddenness of the Treaty of San Stefano had brought all thoughts and hopes for an extension of Greek territory to a standstill. Yet, though the excitement was immense, this in no way tended to make the General's visit "less than a most delightful one."<sup>39</sup> The streets of Piraeus were brilliantly decorated with flags and large crowds gathered in the streets to welcome the General. The Mayor of Piraeus, in his address of welcome, played on the familiar theme—American aid during the struggle for Independence.<sup>40</sup> A grand reception was offered to the General by the king and queen and "the peculiar graceful costumes of the country" impressed his party because of their elegance. "Nothing can exceed the distinction of the more aristocratic of the Greeks," Young observed.<sup>41</sup>

One of the last festive events that the American minister in Athens was to witness, until a new envoy was sent to the capital of Greece five years later in 1883, was the Acropolis illuminated on the occasion of the former President's visit. Grant, it seems, in spite of his reputation for imperturbability greatly appreciated this spectacle as well as the greatness of the past of Greece, and did not fail to visit Marathon and other Greek battlefields. Besides, members of his party were impressed by the "coming prosperity of Greece" and were amazed at the activity and business-like qualities of the Greek temperament.<sup>42</sup>

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38. *Ibid.*, 364-358 (Read to Evarts, January 29; February 2 and 5, 1878).

39. J. R. Young, *Around the World with General Grant*, 1, New York: The American News Company, 1879, p. 355.

40. *U.S. Foreign Relations 1878*, 359-370 (Read to Evarts, March 9, 1878).

41. Young, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 357, 359.