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THE

# METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW.

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OCTOBER, 1857.

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ART. I.—THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE CHURCH.

*The American Sunday School and its Adjuncts*, by JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D.  
18mo., pp. 342. Philadelphia: 1857.

A CERTAIN general of antiquity demanded of the Spartans, after a battle, fifty children as hostages. They offered him instead fifty men of years and distinction. In their eyes, fifty children, capable of training for the public service, were of more value to the state than the same number even of eminent and worthy citizens. Yet the Spartan discipline aimed at nothing higher than earthly ends. It was a stern and severe *drill*, beginning with the earliest infancy, and tending to make the body elastic, vigorous, and firm to the last degree. For the mind and heart it cared nothing. A young man who could neither read nor write might yet be the flower of Spartan youth, if he could hurl the discus further than his fellows, or wield the javelin with more vigor and grace; or if he could endure without a groan the savage discipline of the lash, inflicted, not in punishment, but as a test of honor, and with all the sanctions of religion, before the altars of the gods.

Nor was the Athenian culture, with all its boasted superiority of refinement, intrinsically better. It was an intellectual discipline, to be sure, and, as such, in many respects superior to our own; but it took little heed of the *spiritual* nature, and left the culture of the heart to accidental agencies to a great extent. The Persians, more, perhaps, than any other nation of antiquity, took pains to implant moral principles in the minds of children; yet even their morality was of the earth, earthy. It sought rather the advantages of virtue than its beauty.

It was, as might be expected, among that chosen people whom God selected as the depository of his truth, that we find the earliest

These three idioms, to wit, the Sanscrit, the Greek, and the Latin, he has contrasted in their earliest known, if not their quite original, construction. He has shown that this construction, although formed independently, was in all three almost the same amid its multifarious complications. Then, again, when these complications began to drop away in each successively, the manner and the order were found equally analogous. Besides, they were alike accompanied by popular dialects, or stunted remnants of the primitive idioms of the country, and into which they partly dropped upon their fall from power and polish. Finally, their very fall had been occasioned by the same cause, the invasion, violent or pacific, of a new religion; as if some destiny would push the parallel into the very accidents of history. But history has no accidents; what we so call are but the fragments of a whole too ample for the paltry compass of our conception.

Again, the dialects which they left to substitute them, are not only products of like catastrophes, but are phenomena themselves identical in nature. The modern Greek, the Bengali, and the neo-Latin dialects were shown to be not mere derivatives from three languages of the same origin, but dialects which have followed in their derivation the same tendency, and have adopted in their renovation the same grammatical constitution. All this has been exhibited by M. Fauriel with fair ability, and with much learning, although less profundity than polish. Enough has been, however, done to press an answer to the question put by him: What are the laws that must have steered those vast yet regular phenomena? We have endeavored, for our humble part, to re-enforce, in this analysis, at once the argument and interrogatory by addition and arrangement. It seems time that the philologists should leave off burrowing in vocabularies, and ascend to see what they have been about for the past century.

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ART. VI.—PHARMAKIDES AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL  
INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE.

Ἐ Συνοδικὸς Τόμος, ἢ Περὶ Ἀληθείας. *By Professor Pharmakides, Athens.*

THE ecclesiastical revolution by which that part of the Greek Church at present included in the Hellenic kingdom has, within our own day, shaken off the yoke of subjection to the patriarch of Constantinople, is one of the most significant occurrences of this eventful period. As an evidence of advancement, and a triumph of en-

lightened policy, we cannot but consider it worthy of attention; while its results may prove most important in their bearing upon the final success of the efforts now made for the evangelization of the East.

In the history of this branch of the Christian Church, we look in vain for any recent convulsion, similar to that which, in the sixteenth century, visited the western portion, and effected the separation of the purer elements from the mass in which they had hitherto been exerting merely a resistance to prevailing corruption. With less departure from the type of primitive Christianity than the Latin Church exhibits, we yet behold little tendency toward reformation. Not only have the same doctrines and practices prevailed for upward of a thousand years, through the entire body of the Greek Church, but even the form of external unity (if we leave out of the account the insignificant successes of Romish proselytism) has only been partially disturbed in two instances, and these in great measure rendered necessary by political revolutions. It is to the more recent of these that we shall confine ourselves, after a cursory view of the well-known circumstances that led to the present attitude of the Russian Church.

From the year 1072, when the Patriarch John Xiphinus sent George as metropolitan to the court of the Czar Isyaslafl, the Russian Church continued for several centuries to be governed by a succession of prelates of the same rank, who, according to the vicissitudes of the empire, resided at Kieff, Vladimir, or Moscow. The fall of Constantinople in 1453, and the entire subjugation of the Eastern Christians that either preceded or followed it, induced a new and anomalous condition in the Russian Church. The metropolitans of Moscow, for nearly a century and a half after that calamitous event, continued to be elected by a synod of native bishops; but their nominations were not confirmed by the Patriarchs of Constantinople, whose spiritual authority they still acknowledged. This "irregularity in that subordination of the hierarchy, which is so necessary to the unity of the Catholic Church," while it is lamented, is also palliated by the native ecclesiastical historians,\* who urge, as a partial excuse, the acquiescence of the patriarchs, and the troubled condition of the East.

It was evident that the new posture of affairs demanded a corresponding change in the relations of the Church. A patriarch of reduced consideration, and subject to an anti-Christian ruler, was ill-qualified to govern the Church of Russia, a distant country of vast extent, and of daily growing importance. To the Czar Theodore

\* Mouravieff, *History of the Church of Russia*, p. 126.

is generally attributed the first entertainment of a plan to elevate the Metropolitan of Moscow to the highest rank in the Eastern Church, as a fifth patriarch, to occupy the place of the Bishop of Rome, who was regarded as having fallen away. It happened in the year 1586, that Joachim, Patriarch of Jerusalem, visited the imperial city of Moscow; but when consulted in reference to the czar's favorite scheme, his reply was, that a matter of such vital importance could only be decided by an œcumenical council, or a synod at which the four œcumenical patriarchs should be present. But the Patriarch of Constantinople, Jeremiah, who came in person in 1588, to beg assistance from the czar, either being of a more pliable disposition, or having previously consulted his colleagues of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, was less scrupulous; and, while he refused Theodore's offer to transfer his own residence to the old capital Vladimir, he consented to elevate the metropolitan Job to the Patriarchate of all the Russias. The pompous ceremonial of the Greek Church was taxed to its utmost extent in order to grace the consecration; and to enhance its solemnity, the entire service for Episcopal ordination was repeated over the candidate, already a bishop, but now to be invested with supreme dignity. By this means, it was imagined that "the double portion of grace requisite for the chief pastor of the church" was secured to the patriarch elect.\* At the same time extraordinary precautions were taken by the Czar Theodore, lest the primate of Russia should in any way yield in point of rank to the consecrating prelate. Jeremiah and Job were seated on thrones of equal elevation in the Church; Job was instructed not to lay his crozier aside, unless Jeremiah did the same; and when, after the termination of a splendid pageant, the two patriarchs withdrew from the church, they issued from separate doors, lest either should be compelled to yield the precedence to the other.

The Russian Church, in this manner, became independent of the Greek Church of Constantinople; for the individual act of the œcumenical patriarch was ratified by the other patriarchs of the Eastern Church, (with the exception of the Patriarch of Alexandria, who had recently died,) and by a full synod of metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops. The primate of Russia was assigned the fifth place in the hierarchy, much against the wishes of the Czar Theodore, who desired for him the *third* rank, only yielding to the pretensions of the Patriarch of Alexandria in his quality of *œcumenical Judge*.† There were not wanting those who maintained that

\* Mouravieff, History of the Church of Russia, p. 129.

† The frivolous origin of this title is narrated at great length in a note to Mouravieff's History, pp. 390-391.

Jeremiah had been an unwilling instrument in the consecration, and that his return to Constantinople would have been impossible had he refused submission to the will of Theodore. Be this as it may, the unanimous consent of the Greek Church removed all objections to the validity of the consecration arising from this source, and ratified what might have been viewed as an unauthorized act on the part of Jeremiah.

For a century or more, the Russian Church continued to be governed by its patriarchs; but on the death of Adrian, the tenth dignitary, in the year 1700, Stephen Yavorsky was appointed guardian of the patriarchate, an office which he occupied twenty years. Peter the Great, who had ascended the imperial throne, and was now firmly seated upon it, became convinced by his success in the establishment of a senate, of the superior efficiency of a single executive body intrusted with political power. He determined to model the ecclesiastical government after the same pattern. Accordingly, in 1721, he created "the Most Holy Governing Synod" in place of the patriarch, inserting its name in those passages of the public litanies where his had been previously made the subject of prayer. This alteration of the established form of Church government was acquiesced in without a murmur by the devout of Russia, and was formally sanctioned, two years later, by the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the other heads of the Eastern Church. That prelate, who, by a singular coincidence, bore the name of Jeremiah, wrote in the following terms, respecting the Russian Synod, in a letter dated September 23, 1723:

"Our humility, by the grace and authority of the all-holy and life-giving Spirit, the sole author of governance, ratifies, confirms, and proclaims the Synod established in the great and holy kingdom of Russia, by the most pious and pacific autocrat, the holy king, etc., etc., the Lord, Lord Peter Alexævitch, emperor, beloved in the Holy Ghost, to be and to be styled 'our sister in Christ, the Holy and Sacred Synod,' by all pious and orthodox Christians, both clergy and laity, rulers and subjects, and by all official persons. And it has authority to do and perform all that is done and performed by the four apostolic and most holy patriarchal thrones. Moreover, we put it in remembrance, we exhort and enjoin upon it, to preserve and hold fast the customs and canons of the seven holy and Catholic Councils, and all other things which the Holy Eastern Church observes; and may it stand unshaken forever."\*

Such being the independent position obtained by the Russian Church through the sagacious policy of the Czars Theodore and Peter the Great, we turn to Greece, which, at the commencement of the present century, acknowledged the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople, as it had done ever since the first enlargement of the powers of that see in the fourth century of the Christian era.

\* Mouraviëff, pp. 287-288. Pharmakides, pp. 143, 144, where the original Greek is given.

The outbreak of the Revolution in 1821 proved at once, to every reflecting mind, the necessity of some modification of the ecclesiastical relations of the new Hellenic state. Germanos, Archbishop of Patras, heading the inferior clergy, unfurled the standard of revolt in Peloponnesus. During the conflict, the Church of Greece was cut off from all communication with the Synod at Constantinople, which arrogated the title of the "Great Church of New Rome," and claimed the oversight of the whole body of orthodox Eastern Christians. But the cessation of intercourse was due not to the necessities of the times alone. The Archbishop of Constantinople had, for centuries before the fall of the empire, enjoyed extensive civil power, together with the ambitious appellation of Œcumenical Patriarch, and the first rank in the hierarchy. The Turkish sultans were unwilling to dispense with an office which, from the sanctity attaching to it in the eyes of the masses, might become a powerful engine in the government of the most important Christian communion. The patriarch, soon after the capture of Constantinople, was constituted the political head of the millions of Greeks under the Ottoman sway, and became responsible to the government for their good order and submission. From that moment until the present, the patriarchs have served as ready tools in the hands of their Mohammedan ruler, deriving their authority from him, and liable to be removed at his pleasure. As an indication of the entire subjection of the patriarchate to the infidel power, it may be mentioned, that to a document emanating from the "Great Church" in the year 1850, to which we shall have occasion to allude frequently in the course of this examination, there were appended, besides the signature of the acting patriarch, the names of five others who had formerly enjoyed that dignity for a longer or shorter period.

When the first tidings of the revolution reached Constantinople, the patriarchal throne was occupied by Gregory, a man, it is said, of a mild disposition and unaffected piety, and possessed of great abilities, which had more than once been exhibited in the service of the Turks. Being an ardent lover of his country, he was suspected, no doubt with good reason, of sympathy with the insurgents; and on Easter Day, 1821, at the conclusion of the most august religious service of the year, the white-haired old man of four score and ten was seized in his palace, to which he had just returned, and ignominiously hung from the lintel of his own door.\* A man far in-

\* A most graphic and faithful description of the tragic fate of the beloved patriarch, and of the subsequent atrocious massacre of Christians at Constantinople, is contained in *Tricoupes'* admirable History of the Greek Revolution,

ferior was appointed his successor. At the dictation of his master, the new patriarch issued proclamations to the inhabitants of Greece proper, as well as the islands of the Archipelago, summoning them, upon pain of the highest ecclesiastical censure, to return to their former allegiance. We have before us the decree of the "Great Church," dated May 1, 1821, pronouncing sentence of degradation upon the seven bishops of Patras, Kernitza, Euripus, Talanti, Samos, Nauplia, and Ægina, who had actively espoused the cause of their nation's liberty. They are declared "with Jewish unthankfulness and ingratitude to have lifted up their heel against our common benefactress, the potent government, and to have filled their provinces with disturbances and scandals." They are stigmatized as the most abandoned of men, unworthy not merely of the episcopal, but even of the Christian profession; and the faithful are warned to abstain from any recognition of their sacerdotal character, either by kissing their hands, or by officiating with them, "under pain of irrevocable interdict and unpardonable excommunication from Almighty God." The patriarch closes by pronouncing the most fearful curse that can well be imagined, upon all their followers that shall persist in the rebellion against the sultan.\*

Nor did these denunciations cease even when the cause of Hellenic independence was well-nigh won. As late as the 20th of February,

now in course of publication. It may be found also among the valuable *Selections from Modern Greek Writers* by Professor C. C. Felton, pp. 33-47. This account differs essentially from that given by Col. Gordon and others.

° The entire decree is republished in the Athenian *Ἐφημερίς τοῦ Λαοῦ* of May 17, 1852. We cannot better give an idea of its general character than by stating that the compiler gratified his petty malice by the incorporation of the epithet *bad* (κακός) with the proper name of each of the revolted towns; and by transcribing a few sentences from the imprecation with which it terminates. "Let their possessions and their goods go to destruction and complete ruin. In one generation let their name be blotted out with a noise, and let there not remain to them one stone upon another. Let them be cut off before their time from this life, and be damaged also in that which is to come. When they shall be judged, let them be condemned, and let their prayer become sin, and let Satan stand at their right hand. Let their wives become widows, and their children fatherless. Let their dwelling be laid waste, and let there be no inhabitant in their tents. Let the heavens over their heads be brass, and the earth iron under their feet. Let the Lord smite them with cold, fever, blight, and pallor. Let them be groaning and trembling upon the earth, like Cain. Let the earth cleave and swallow them up, like Dathan and Abiram. Let the angel of the Lord pursue them with a fiery sword, and let them never see prosperity. Let them, like Nebuchadnezzar, be turned into oxen. Let them have the curses of all the saints that have been from the beginning, and of the holy and inspired fathers of Nice and the other holy councils, if they perform not resolutely that which we have written."

(March 3d, N. S.,) 1828, the patriarch was put forward anew to try the weight of his authority, where the arms of the Turks had proved unsuccessful. A letter which he now addressed to the rulers, clergy, and laity of Peloponnesus and the islands of the Ægean Sea, opens with the assurance that he had lost none of his solicitude for the salvation of the Greeks, notwithstanding their previous indifference to his reproof and counsel. From the time when the sentence of excommunication had been issued, "the Church, that common mother," had been anxiously awaiting their return. Accordingly, no sooner did she detect a disposition to repent, among the inhabitants of the parts outside of Poloponnesus, than she received them into her maternal embrace, freed them from ecclesiastical censure, and obtained for them "repose beneath the shadow of the ever-green tree of the sultan's mercy and justice." Reminding the Greeks of the happiness and security they once enjoyed, the patriarch entreats them to put no confidence in the deceitful support of foreign powers, which have seduced them from "the allegiance due to the *lawful Ottoman Empire protected by God.*"

The ostensible object of this communication, however, was to assure the Greeks of the readiness of the Turkish government to pardon their past offenses and restore them to its favor. The patriarch, therefore, states that, in order to be better able to allay their fears, he had ventured into the royal presence, and presented an humble petition in behalf of his misguided countrymen. In reply he received from the sultan himself a document officially signed and sealed, which, after recapitulating the "*mild measures*" that he had continually employed during the war, to bring back the Peloponnesians to dutiful submission, offers full amnesty to all who should lay down their arms within three months. Their property, although rightfully forfeited to the state, shall be secured to them. No indemnity will be required for injuries inflicted upon the Turks, nor will the arrears of taxes due for six or seven years be demanded. They are, in a word, to be permitted to enjoy the same laws, institutions, and religious toleration as before the revolution. The patriarch concludes by once more reminding the Greeks that this is the time of grace and repentance, and warning them not to squander precious moments which they may afterward seek in vain to recover. "But if," he exclaims, "we should again meet, which GOD forbid! with stubbornness and disobedience, arising from the delusive notions that mislead you, *the ax is laid at the root of the tree. . . . See you to that.*"

If the menaces of the Great Church, as it proudly styled itself, had proved ineffectual at the commencement of the revolutionary

struggle, when the success of that movement was involved in doubt and gloomy forebodings, it is not astonishing that they were equally abortive when Hellenic independence had been firmly established by a war almost unparalleled in ferocity. The *people* of Western Europe had at length vindicated the sincerity of their professions of sympathy with bleeding Greece, and compelled their unwilling governments to interfere in behalf of a nation as brave now as in remote antiquity. During the previous summer, a treaty of pacification had been entered into between England, France, and Russia; and four months had elapsed since the entire annihilation of the Turco-Egyptian fleet in the land-locked bay of Navarino. Under such circumstances, it is almost superfluous to say that the efforts of the patriarch completely failed of accomplishing their end; but they served a useful purpose in augmenting the disgust already entertained by the Greeks for the ecclesiastics who could so prostitute their high calling as to become willing instruments in the attempt to renew the bondage of their brethren.

The ecclesiastical independence thus acquired in fact, was formally proclaimed by law, on the 23d of July, 1833, and a synod was constituted the highest authority in the Hellenic Church under the sovereignty of the king.\* The principle there asserted became the fundamental law of the land in the Constitution of March 18, 1844, whose second article is as follows: "The Orthodox Church of Greece, acknowledging our Lord Jesus Christ as Head, is inseparably united in doctrine to the Great Church of Constantinople, and every other Church of Christ that holds the same faith; observing, precisely as they do, both the holy canons of the apostles and councils, and the holy traditions; yet it is independent, exercising its sovereign functions free from the control of every other Church, and governed by a holy synod of prelates." This synod was constituted by a law of the same year, to consist of five members, four of whom are bishops or archbishops, taken consecutively for the term of three years from the entire body of prelates. Two alternates are also chosen; but the president or moderator is selected by the king.†

No attempt seems to have been made, until the beginning of the year 1850, to renew the intercourse between the Church of Greece and that of Constantinople, which had been interrupted by the revolution. On the 16th of December of the previous year, Jacob Rizos, the Hellenic ambassador at the Sublime Porte, died at Constantinople, and his remains were accompanied with great pomp to their

\* Pharmakides, p. 309.

† Pappadoukas, Commentary on the Greek Constitution, p. 140.

last resting-place. A remarkable feature in the funeral ceremony was the presence of the Patriarch Anthimus, by permission of the sultan. Such extraordinary condescension was deemed worthy of signal reward on the part of the Greek government. Accordingly, in February, 1850, the archimandrite, Misael Apostolides, was appointed by the king to carry to Anthimus the honorary cross of the Order of the Holy Saviour, with which it had been resolved to invest him. This was a rare opportunity for endeavoring to obtain from the first bishop of the Oriental Church a recognition of the independence of that of Greece; and forthwith the same royal messenger was provided with a letter from the Holy Synod of the Hellenic kingdom to the œcumenical patriarch. By this cunning device, that party, which for nearly thirty years had been sadly troubled with the fears of schism, hoped to obtain such an indirect acknowledgment of their churchly position as would quiet their disturbed consciences. But Anthimus was too astute a politician to be entrapped by arts in which he himself knew no superior. Prevailed upon by the importunity of the ambassador, he was allowed by the sultan to accept the honorary decoration, the gift of King Otho; while he respectfully declined so much as to touch the missive of a synod whose erection he was accustomed to represent as uncanonical.\*

— Undaunted by the failure of its first attempt, the ministry of Londos was induced, by the representations of its agents at Constantinople, to hope for better success in a second. A draught of a letter from the ministry to the patriarch was forwarded to the Greek ambassador, and the special messenger, Misael Apostolides, by whom it was modified to meet with favor from the Great Church, and returned to Athens. There it was engrossed, signed, and again dispatched in a single night, accompanied by a letter from the Greek Synod. Respecting the latter, it is worthy of note, that the stated clerk of the synod, although at the time present in the capital, neither was summoned to the session nor signed this official document, being purposely neglected because of his well-known hostility to the entire scheme. The two letters were signed on the 30th of May, (O. S.,) 1850, and were received by the Greek ambassador, who hastened to announce the fact to the patriarch, on the 4th of June. The latter consequently convened "the Great Synod in the great council chamber of the patriarchate of the Great Church of Christ," on the sixteenth day of the same month; at which time the newly-arrived documents were read, and formed the subject of deliberation.

\* Pharmakides, p. 13, etc.

What were the contents of these letters? What did the ministry seek to obtain from the patriarch and his associates? The inquiry is important, as it affects the question of ecclesiastical independence. After an introduction expressive of reverence for the patriarch as first pastor (*ποιμενάρχης*) and spiritual father of the Catholic Orthodox Church, the ministry advert to the establishment of the independence of the Hellenic Church, a step dictated by the political events of 1821. The need of a national synod, they proceed to remark, next made itself felt, and it was accordingly constituted by law, similar to that which exists in Russia, to watch over the interests of the Church. It is composed of five prelates, who, when inducted into office, swear to preserve the doctrinal unity of the Church. This legislation was also confirmed by the second article of the Constitution of 1844. Under these circumstances the ministry, in the name of the king, the clergy, and the laity, request the Great Church, "having approved this ecclesiastical legislation, and recognized the Holy Synod of the Hellenic kingdom erected in accordance with it, to receive it as a sister in Christ, blessing the work of the pious Greek nation, and to notify the other most blessed patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, of the same, that . . . . they may acknowledge and receive our Holy Synod as a sister of the same faith and to be held in equal honor." The letter of the Holy Synod was conceived in very similar terms, but at less length.

From the record of the proceedings of the "Great Church," which lies before us, we learn, that after an examination, in secret session, "of the *grounds* on which it was proper that the Orthodox Church of Greece should be honored with the *privileges possessed by Independent Churches* according to the canons," "it seemed good to the Great and Holy Synod to *free* the metropolitan, arch-episcopal, and episcopal sees at present forming the Hellenic realm, dependent until now upon the most holy oecumenical see of Constantinople, from such dependence in future, and to proclaim them an independent Church on certain most just and necessary conditions." A committee of three archbishops was appointed to draw up these conditions, which were reported, seven in number, to a subsequent meeting. They were approved, and the same committee was charged with the drafting of a *Synodical Tome*, or official decree, proclaiming the independence of the Hellenic Church, in which the same conditions were inserted. To the principal provisions of this highly interesting document we shall advert hereafter.

The precious missive, engrossed on parchment, was signed by all the members of the Great Church that were present; Anthimus, Patriarch of Constantinople, with five of his predecessors in that

office, Cyril, Patriarch of Jerusalem, and thirteen other prelates. It was received by the Greek envoys with the greatest demonstrations of veneration, and carried in triumph to Athens. It was made the subject of panegyric by clergy and laity alike. Some styled it "the holy tome," others, "the most holy" or "the most holy and worshipful tome." A considerable party, it is true, opposed its reception as degrading to the dignity, and subversive of the independence of the Hellenic Church; but a change of administration happening at this time, placed its advocates in power. Mr. Deliannes, the new minister of foreign and ecclesiastical affairs, so firmly espoused its adoption, as even to violate the 25th article of the Constitution, which ordains that treaties of the nature of the Tome shall be of no force until they receive the concurrence of both branches of the national legislature. Assuming the previously existing law respecting the church to be annulled, a royal proclamation was issued conflicting with it, and carrying out many of the provisions of the Tome. The appointment of members of the Holy Synod was made in an illegal manner. A letter of thanks was written to the patriarch, and a solemn service was celebrated in one of the principal churches of Athens, expressive of gratitude to the Most High for his goodness to the kingdom of Greece. Nothing now remained to complete the success of the Tome, but its approval by the senate and house of representatives; and although every step thus far taken had been a gross violation of the fundamental law of the realm, it seemed not improbable that a large majority in both chambers could be secured in its favor.

It was at this juncture that a new and formidable opponent arose. Early in May, 1852, an anonymous volume appeared, entitled, "*The Synodical Tome; or, Concerning Truth.*" Upward of six hundred pages were here devoted to an analysis of the Tome, and to the discussion of the various topics it had started. In its masterly treatment of the subject was visible the hand of Theocletus Pharmakides, a man of liberal culture and ripe scholarship, and Professor of Theology in the University of Otho. Although he held the post of clerk to the holy synod, he had long been known to be hostile to the party advocating close union with Constantinople. Entertaining the views which he did of the hierarchy of the Eastern Church, he resolved not merely to act on the defensive, but to strike a blow at the corruptions which had gradually crept into the government of the church. He arraigns them at the bar of Scripture, reason, and ecclesiastical history. No longer can they take refuge in the prescriptive rights acquired during ages of ignorance and superstition. They must stand and be judged upon their own merits.

Whatever the hierarchy has gained by an alliance with the civil power, or usurped contrary to the clear dictates of the word of God, is exposed with fearless determination. Every one in Athens was amazed at the hardihood of the old professor who ventured, single-handed, to oppose, or rather attack, the interests of so powerful a class. Many confidently expected that a decree of excommunication would be hurled at the book and its author; and his friends, he tells us in the preface, had attempted to dissuade him from its publication. But he laughed at their fears. "The book, we answered, contains nothing deserving of excommunication and cursing. But if it be indeed excommunicated and cursed, its anathematizers themselves will repent of it; because, *first*, we shall show, from the holy canons, to all the body of the orthodox, who those are that excommunicate and anathematize; and, *secondly*, we shall explain what excommunication and the anathema are, upon whom they are inflicted, what are their results, etc., and this does not suit their interests, for these are their means of subsistence."\*

Our limits will not permit us to examine in much detail this valuable production, whose claims to a careful perusal are not confined to its important influence in determining the present posture of the Hellenic Church. Professor Pharmakides maintains, in the first place, that the Tome was not what the Greek ministry and synod had sought. They asked a friendly acknowledgment of the independence which they had enjoyed for nearly thirty years, and of the validity of the rites that had been performed, and the enactments that had been framed. Far from granting such a recognition, the patriarch had impliedly denied their validity, and re-affirmed that, until the publication of the Tome, the Hellenic Church was still subject to his ecclesiastical authority. Presuming on these premises, he had proceeded, in virtue of the rights he claimed, to constitute this portion of his jurisdiction independent. Even this concession, however, was not absolute, but was made upon certain "most necessary conditions." These were principally the following: 1. The establishment of a perpetual synod consisting of bishops, succeeding one another according to seniority of ordination, to be the highest ecclesiastical authority, and to govern the affairs of the church, free from all secular interference. 2. The sending of the customary communication to the Patriarch by the President of the Synod when elevated to that station. 3. The insertion of prayers for the patriarch and the whole body of the orthodox in the public litanies. 4. The "holy anointing oil" used in baptism to be brought from Constantinople as often as required. 5. The framing

\* Pharmakides, p. ix.

of regulations by the Synod of Greece respecting the number and choice of bishops, priests, and deacons, and respecting marriage, divorce, monasteries, the education of the clergy, the preaching of the word of God, and the censure of improper books. 6. The consultation of the patriarch and his council in all difficult matters where advice was needed.\*

It was evident to the Athenian Professor that the turning point in this discussion was the claim of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Synod over which he presided, to a superior rank and authority in the Christian Church. For if that claim were founded on an adequate basis, the Hellenic Church, in declaring itself independent, assumed a schismatical attitude, and nothing but his sanction could give validity to any of its acts. To the examination of this subject therefore, our author devotes a considerable portion of his work, from which we shall make a few extracts.

The Synodical Tome, in a preamble wherein the unity of the Christian Church is set forth, thus discourses respecting the origin of its officers: "The Holy Ghost which gave some, apostles; some, prophets; some, pastors and teachers; as by the imposition of hands of the holy apostles He hath appointed in the ministry of the faith, some, bishops; some, elders; and some, deacons: so the same Spirit, by the determination of the holy œcumenical councils, hath also in the dispensation of Unity established some, patriarchs; some, archbishops and metropolitans; some, arch-presbyters and arch-deacons," etc. "What, therefore," exclaims Professor Pharmakides, "all sensible men, of former ages and of this, all that are familiar with the ancient polity of the church and with ecclesiastical history, attribute to human vain-glory and ambition, this the senseless [compiler of the Tome] impiously ascribes to the Holy Ghost."†

Our author enters fearlessly into an extended examination of the constitution of the Christian Church, beginning at the time of its foundation. "The government introduced into the church by the holy apostles was democratic, and this is acknowledged by sacred history itself."‡ "No other form of government befitted the Church of Christ, founded on equality and fraternity. At that time there were neither metropolitans, nor archbishops, nor exarchs, nor patriarchs, nor popes. Each church, whether ministered to by a bishop and an elder or elders, or by an elder or elders alone, was then independent and governed by itself. The subjection of one church to another was unknown in the time of the apostles. None had any authority over another. But equality and brotherly kindness are displeasing to human vain-glory and ambition. Wherefore,

\* Pharmakides, pp. 33, 34.

† *Ibid.*, p. 174.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

scarce had the apostles died, when these [vices] overturned the primitive form of government, and changed it into an aristocracy. This occurred probably at the commencement, or in the first half of the second century."\*

In this revolution, Professor Pharmakides represents the bishops of the cities as the chief instruments. Besides the influence which the greater size of their spiritual flocks naturally gave to them, they were favored in their attempts to subject the neighboring inferior churches, by the councils or synods, which began to be convened between the years A. D. 160 and 170, first in Phrygia, and afterward in other provinces of the Roman Empire. As these bodies met in the principal city, the bishop of that church obtained without opposition the office of permanent president; and hence, in process of time, a certain superiority came to be accorded to him. The powers of the archbishop or metropolitan were not *derived*, says our author, from the canons of any council; but after they had been conceded by custom, they were *confirmed* by the councils. To prove this assertion, he cites the express words of the Council of Antioch, A. D. 341: "The bishop residing in the metropolis should know (or recognize) the bishop in each province, and assume the care of the entire province, *because all that have business assemble from all quarters to the metropolis.*" "The reason, therefore," says Mr. Pharmakides, "for the creation of metropolitans was not divine, but human. Habit led the way, and the canon was subsequently framed."†

Yet even after this period, Professor Pharmakides proceeds to remark, while each metropolitan possessed a certain superiority over the other bishops of his province, he was himself independent of all other metropolitans. This is proved by a quotation from Balsamon, Patriarch of Antioch, one of the great authorities of the Greek Church on canon law; who in the 2d canon of the 2d Œcumenical Council observes, "that it will be seen from the present canon, that of old all the metropolitans were independent, and were consecrated by their own synods." The very name *metropolitan* was unknown during the first three centuries, and appears for the first time in the records of the Council of Nice, A. D. 325.‡

The Athenian professor traces the progress of the hierarchy, in the distinctions of rank that arose in the next place between the metropolitans. To this result, he tells us, various circumstances contributed. The Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth, on account of the superior political importance of those cities, assumed authority over other metropolitans, and thus extended their own jurisdiction. "Again we say, and shall often have oc-

\* Pharmakides, p. 177.

† *Ibid.*, 180.

‡ *Ibid.*, 183.

casation to repeat the remark, that vain glory and ambition know no bounds. This fraudulent appropriation of more extensive authority and jurisdiction occurred in accordance with usage. But usage is readily changed into law, when opportunity is afforded it. An opportunity *was* afforded, and this usage actually became a law." Taking the Archbishop of Alexandria as an instance, we find that he had, of his own accord, seized upon the ecclesiastical government of the whole of Egypt, and that all the churches were subject to him. When a single bishop ventured to question his right, and dared to ordain without his consent, the Council of Nice was called upon to settle the dispute between the two prelates. Its decision was given in these words: "Let the *ancient usages* prevail in Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, so that the Bishop of Alexandria shall have authority over these; since this also is *customary* for the Bishop of Rome." Professor Pharmakides well observes, that "the prerogative of the Apostle Peter is not even taken into consideration in this canon. The precedence of the bishopric of Rome is due to the precedence of the city, and not to the fabulous precedence of Peter, who never was Bishop of Rome, or even of Antioch."\*

The changes introduced into church polity consequent upon the remodeling of the civil government of the empire by Constantine the Great, constitute the next topic of inquiry. The bishops of the capitals of provinces and exarchies assumed powers analogous to those of the governors, and even mimicked their titles; "acting," says Professor Pharmakides, "as though our Lord had said, 'Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them: so shall it also be among you.'"† The second General Council found these alterations already consummated; and, making a virtue of necessity, recognized their existence, only that it might set bounds to the ambition of those higher dignitaries, who were simultaneously seeking to aggrandize themselves by invading the provinces of their neighbors.

The growth of the power of the Bishop of Byzantium was singularly rapid, and this again is made the subject of special investigation. At first subject to the spiritual authority of the metropolitan of the Thracian city of Heraclea, when Constantinople succeeded imperial Rome as the seat of government, he became independent of his former superior; and not long after, the second General Council, by request of the Emperor Theodosius the Great, exalted him to a rank inferior only to that of the Bishop of Rome. But by this decree he obtained no jurisdiction. "What he did not obtain

\* Pharmakides, p. 185.

† *Ibid.*, p. 187.

at that time in a canonical manner, he afterward obtained uncanonically. And what is uncanonical is readily changed into canonical, when an opportunity is offered, and the violator of the canons is powerful.\* During the seventy years that intervened between the Councils of Constantinople and Chalcedon, the newly-elevated archbishop succeeded in securing a practical superiority over his neighbors; and, at the latter, it was no difficult thing to obtain an acknowledgment of his supremacy over the three provinces of Pontus, Asia, and Thrace.

The title of patriarch, which the author of the Synodical Tome ascribes to the Holy Ghost, manifesting his will through the holy oecumenical council, Professor Pharmakides demonstrates from ecclesiastical history to be of much later invention; citing the words of the distinguished historian and metropolitan of Athens, Meletius, who says of the titles of patriarchs, archbishops, etc., that "they were invented—as would they had not been—by the vain-glory and ambition of subsequent ages."†

"If, therefore," observes Professor Pharmakides in conclusion, "the oecumenical councils did not appoint patriarchs, archbishops, and metropolitans, how did they appoint arch-presbyters and arch-deacons, according to the silly compiler of the Synodical Tome? Is not all this evidently empty babbling? How does he venture to attribute to the Holy Ghost what is the invention of man, the offspring of human vain-glory?" "If we too possessed the impiety of the compiler of the Synodical Tome, we would say that he also wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. But far be from us such blasphemy! He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness."

Having thus disposed of the arrogant pretensions of the see of Constantinople, in virtue of which it claimed the right to exercise authority over the universal church, Mr. Pharmakides proceeds to a minute examination of the circumstances attending the drafting of the Tome, of its own character, and of the condition it contains respecting the recognition of the independence of the Hellenic Church. The latter he condemns as destined, if acquiesced in, to establish an *imperium in imperio*. He justly ridicules the synod which, while it directs the government of the Church of Greece to be administered by a *perpetual* synod of prelates, permits this very decree to be signed by five *ex-patriarchs* of Constantinople. But when the Tome goes on to stipulate that this synod is to be supreme, and free from all secular interference, it is shown to array itself in direct opposition to the national law of July 23, 1833, which places

\* Pharmakides, p. 191.

† *Ibid.*, p. 203.

it "under the sovereignty of the king;" and to the constant teachings of ecclesiastical history in reference to the practice of the church. Professor Pharmakides considers this point of so great importance, that he devotes over one hundred pages to the illustration of the immense influence which, from the days of the first Christian emperors, the civil government has exerted in the Church. Respecting the obligations imposed by the Tome upon the Synod of Greece, our author shows that they are unwarranted by the customs of the Church, and derogatory to the dignity of an independent body. For instance, the patriarch directs the Hellenic Synod to submit to his judgment all difficult cases in which counsel is required, but makes no mention of reciprocity on his own part. The holy anointing oil, which, according to the Tome, must be obtained from Constantinople, is proved to be destitute of a Biblical origin, though its use is now necessary in the Greek rite of baptism; but its composition has never by any canon been forbidden to the priesthood, much less to all except the patriarch.

• We consider worthy of special attention the remarks of Professor Pharmakides on pages 570-577, in reference to the deplorable neglect of the preaching of the word of God in the Oriental Church. This duty he conceives as belonging exclusively to bishops, one of whose great qualifications, according to St. Paul, is aptness to teach; and to such presbyters and deacons as are authorized by them. And he states that while the Church of Constantinople has made no efforts to remedy the almost total neglect of this essential obligation, steps have been taken in that direction by that of Greece.\*

The work of Professor Pharmakides was destined to prove the final blow to the Synodical Tome against which it was directed. The fruit of so much artifice and priestly craft was quietly dropped, and a law completely at variance with its provisions was introduced,

\* We cannot forbear transcribing a few sentences from the indignant description of the Oriental hierarchy given by Professor Pharmakides in this connection. "But, unfortunately, the word of God is bound among these pastors! The tongue of these holy pastors cleaves, dry and immovable, to the roof of their mouths! Why? Is it because the spiritual authority is in captivity to the civil, as some wise dignitary foolishly asserts? But the word of God has never been bound by the secular power among the pastors either of Greece or of Turkey. The mouth of the teachers of the faith has, therefore, been stopped, and their tongue has cleaved, dry and immovable, to the roof of their mouths, not because the spiritual authority is in captivity to the civil, but because the teachers are wholly ignorant and unlearned. . . . The so-called bishops of the Eastern Church being of such extraction as this for the most part, having generally no education, and having as their sole occupation the amassing of gold to minister to their luxury, how can they preach the word of God according to their sacred obligations?"—Page 174.

and passed by both chambers of the legislature, with scarcely a dissentient voice. The entire kingdom was now to be divided into twenty-four dioceses, to be filled by one metropolitan, ten archbishops, and thirteen bishops. The Holy Synod retained its former constitution, and new bishops were to be chosen and consecrated as soon as practicable, the king, in each instance, selecting one of the three candidates presented by the Synod.\*

By the rejection of the Tome, the ecclesiastical independence of the Hellenic kingdom has been established on a firm and, humanly speaking, immovable foundation. The yoke of the patriarch had, indeed, been shaken off nearly thirty years before, and the independence of the church formally proclaimed by the law of 1833, and re-affirmed in the constitution of 1844. But the emission of the Tome was designed to renew its subjection to a foreign court and an alien primate. In proportion as the attempt was adroit and insidious, the rebuff was signal. Where so many in the community were at first disposed to favor its acceptance, in the end it numbered a very few supporters.

The principal agent in the accomplishment of this result was, as we have seen, Theocletus Pharmakides. Having studied in his youth for several years in a Protestant University of Germany, under the influence of evangelical professors, he there imbibed more correct views than most of his countrymen possess, of the nature and government of the Christian Church. A profound study of ecclesiastical history has opened to him an exhaustless arsenal from which to draw weapons for demolishing the baseless fabric of superstition and priestly assumption. In their use he is free and almost reckless. His opponents are treated with an unsparing severity that is justly deserved, but not always necessary. Not a flaw in their arguments remains unnoticed, and so complete and thorough is his demonstration, that the candid reader rises from a careful perusal of his work fully persuaded of the impregnability of his more important positions; a persuasion which none of the numerous rejoinders by G. A. Mavrocordatos and others can shake.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that Pharmakides is a reformer only in respect to some externals. While, from his education, we cannot doubt his personal conviction of the correctness of that system of truth which, in its essential features, is common to the whole Protestant Church, on doctrinal points he maintains an entire and significant silence. We are not aware that a single corruption of the Christian faith is unmasked, and when we watch the

\* *Ἐφ. τοῦ Λαοῦ*, pp. 999, 1002.

masterly ability with which the growth of a lordly hierarchy from primitive equality is exhibited, we regret that the still more important doctrinal defections and loss of spiritual life are left untouched. The place of a Luther in the Christian Church can be filled only by one who, like him, has been led by the Divine Spirit from dependence on forms and works of righteousness, to a clear and vital apprehension of the doctrine of justification by faith. This, not learning or native talent, is the test of the reformer, as it has been said to be that of the church. May men trained in the school of Luther soon arise, to commence in Greece, by the blessing of God, a work similar to the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century in Western Europe!

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#### ART. VII.—FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH BY FIRE.

THE final destruction of our world by fire is a doctrine of revelation. Nothing can be more clear or definite, nothing more unequivocal, than the language used by St. Peter touching this subject: "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" 2 Peter iii, 7-12. Although no clear statement is made of this doctrine in the Old Testament Scriptures, yet the Jews held it among their traditions. According to Josephus, it was revealed to Adam, who predicted that the world would be twice destroyed, once by water, and ultimately by the force of fire.—*Antiquities*, book I, chap. ii, sec. 3.

That such a revelation was made by Jehovah to some of the antediluvians, is probable from the tradition which prevailed quite generally among the ancient nations, among all the history of whose opinions have come down to us. It was believed and taught by the Greek philosophers, especially the Stoics and Epicureans.