

Rev. and Mrs. A. V. Andrews, Martin,
With compliments of
Joseph M. Greene

My dear Sons, JOSEPH, EDWARD, FREDERICK, GEORGE and SAMUEL:

Your loving congratulations to your father on the fiftieth anniversary of his arrival in Turkey deserve a reply.

On Tuesday, Jan. 11, 1859, with the thermometer at 10 degrees below zero, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Meriam, Dr. and Mrs. Henry S. West, your dear little mother and I with baby Joseph embarked from Long Wharf, Boston, on the Andrew Carney, a barque of 337 tons, George C. Prior, captain. After a brief religious service, conducted by Rev. Dr. Blagden, pastor of the Old South church, we said Good-bye to the dear friends who had come to see us off. At one o'clock, however, Capt. Prior told us that on account of the east wind and a snow storm he had concluded not to put to sea, and that we should probably be delayed for some days. So we all took carriages and returned, as worn and weary missionaries, to our friends; your mother, baby Joseph and I, to the dear hospitable home, at 18 Ash Street, where Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hobart, Mary, Ellen, Henry and Isabella lavished on us kindnesses which will never be forgotten.

On Monday, Jan. 17, we embarked again, and strong westerly winds swept us across the Atlantic to Gibraltar — 3300 miles — in fifteen days and sixteen hours. Baffled by contrary winds and storms, with a dangerous fight all one night in the narrow Doro Passage, at last we cast anchor before Smyrna in the early morning of Tuesday, Feb. 22, and found a happy welcome in the dear missionary home of Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Dodd and their three little girls.

After passing two delightful and instructive weeks in Smyrna we were happy to continue our voyage by steamer to Constantinople, where we arrived on Thursday, March 10, and were entertained in the lovely home of Dr. and Mrs. William Goodell at Haskeuy, on the Golden Horn. For another two weeks we had pleasant interviews with the veteran missionaries of Constantinople, Messrs Goodell, Dwight, Schauffler, Hamlin and Bliss, visiting from house to house and attending services conducted in five languages, while on two Sundays I preached in English in the Dutch chapel, Pera. Finally the Committee ad Interim — that is, the missionaries at Constantinople — voted to designate us as associates of Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Parsons of Nicomedia, at the head of the Gulf of Nicomedia, some sixty miles east from Constantinople. We reached this place on Wed. March 23, and, after weeks of waiting to find a residence and get our goods, we began to keep house on Sat., April 30. What a privilege it was in this remote land to have a home, a family altar, our own table, and to eat the food which the blessed hands of your dear little mother prepared!

Time permits only a brief reference to the varied experiences of the past fifty years.

First of all, I must make mention of the great mercy of God in sparing me all these years. My dear fellow-traveller Mr. Meriam, an able man whose life was full of promise, was

killed by robbers on July 3, 1862, while on his return to Philippopolis from the Annual Meeting, and Mrs. Meriam died from premature confinement on the 25th of the same month. Dr. West, after seventeen years of most successful medical practice in Sivas, died there on April 1, 1876. Your own dear mother "fell asleep" on Jan. 27, 1894, after nearly thirty five years of devoted and loving service, and went to join her three little girls who had preceded her. Mrs. West soon after her husband's death returned to America, and of the company of six who started together from Boston I alone have remained on the field. Of all the missionaries of the Board, now in active service, only two preceded me, namely Rev. Stephen C. Pixley, who went to Africa in 1855, and Rev. H. N. Barnum D.D., who came to Turkey in 1858.

The past fifty years have been a period of great political changes. The Crimean war and the signature of the Treaty of Paris had ushered in a period of religious liberty, during which there was no hindrance to evangelistic tours, to the opening of schools and to the erection of houses of worship. Indeed up to Aug. 1864 there was a special religious service for Turks in Pera, Constantinople, and during a period of eight years (1856-1864) probably as many as a hundred Mohammedans were baptized in various parts of the Turkish Empire. The long reign of Sultan Aziz was inglorious, marked by reckless borrowing and prodigal expenditure, during which the country was saddled with a debt of some two hundred millions of pounds, with nothing to show save useless ironclads and unnecessary palaces. The reign of Sultan Hamid up to July 24, 1908 was one of ever-increasing tyranny, marked by unlimited corruption, cruel repression, the banishment of thousands of liberal-minded men and the massacre of tens of thousands of Armenians. During the period under review the country has suffered from two wars, two epidemics of cholera, repeated famines and numerous and destructive conflagrations, and, wholly or in part, has lost hold of Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Cyprus, Crete and Egypt. It has, however, gained by the completion of the Roumelian railway connecting with Vienna, and by the extension of lines of railway in Asia Minor, Syria and Arabia; by the construction of many lines of macadamized road; by the adjustment of its foreign debt, scaled down to the extent of fifty per cent., and the establishment of several banking institutions; by the construction of tramway lines, water-works and illuminating plants in various cities, and by the opening of military, medical and technical schools. For its material advancement the country is indebted almost entirely to foreign capital and enterprise, while to a wretched government it is due that the agriculture and natural resources of the country are all undeveloped, that native industries have largely died out, that trade has languished, and that the people of the land generally are in a state of chronic and almost hopeless poverty. Thanks to the merciful Providence of God the wonderful revolution of July, 1908 has given to the people of Turkey the hope of recovery, though, through want of experience, the lack of able and trustworthy men and conflicting racial and religious interests, the task of establishing a liberal and just government is truly herculean. In view, however, of the wisdom, moderation and courage hitherto shown by the leaders of the new movement, in view of the ardent longing of the whole people for liberty, and in view of the newly awakened appreciation of their common interests we do not despair, but await the issues of the future with hope and unceasing prayer for Divine guidance.

My missionary life has been a happy one, and I bless God for the work he has given me, and, were it permitted me, I would choose the same service again. With almost uninterrupted good health, with the free and enjoyable use of Turkish and Armenian—the two principal languages of Turkey in Asia—during my residence of three years in Nicomedia, six years in Brousa, one year in Manisa and thirty seven years in Constantinople, with twelve years of editorial work (1872-1884), I have ever been a visiting and preaching missionary, in close touch with the people in their homes and public meetings. I have found good in all classes of the people and in all nationalities, and the more I have known the people the more I have loved them. The first year of my missionary life was the hardest, and at its end I was

so depressed with a sense of limitation and inefficiency that I prepared a letter of resignation, which my brethren at the annual meeting of 1860 kindly advised me to hold over for a year, and which, though still in hand, it is quite too late to present now. My missionary associates, always kind and forbearing, have been true brothers and most highly esteemed friends, and among my native fellow-ministers there have been not a few — like pastors Jijizian, Der Sdepanian, Marderos Schmavonian, Asadourian, Tashjian and Bedigian — who by reason of a lovely temper, good judgment, ability and piety were true yoke-fellows and brethren beloved. One converted Turk, Keiffi Effendi, who for several years was my assistant in editorial work, whose father was an Arab sheikh living near Mosul and whose mother was a Kurdish woman, was remarkable for his sweet and gentle disposition and his love of the truth. Not only have I had a happy life in Turkey, but also during three visits in America, namely in 1868, 1884 and 1894, I had the delightful opportunity of meeting either in their homes and churches or in the annual meetings of the Congregational Associations of eleven Western States at least a thousand pastors. I felt then, as now, that in order to secure a lively interest in the foreign missionary work on the part of the home churches, a lively interest on the part of the pastor is an indispensable condition. The missionary flame must be fed, and who shall feed it but the pastor?

In fifty years the one mission of the American Board in Turkey has become five missions, including the mission to Syria, set off to the Presbyterian Board in 1870, and there has been a large increase in the number of missionary laborers, especially of ladies. The remarkable increase in churches, native ministers, schools and colleges, hospitals, publications and native contributions will be set forth in a sermon which, God willing, I shall preach at the time of the Annual Meeting in May. Wars, massacres, emigrations, tyranny and poverty have greatly retarded the growth of the Protestant churches, yet so far as statistics indicate progress there is good reason for encouragement. It is a severe test of the hold of evangelical truth on the people that the existing churches hold their own even to the third and fourth generation. The rock which threatens shipwreck to the evangelical work is the difficulty which our Christian brethren find in harmonizing their differences and pulling together. Self-control, a supreme regard for the main issue, which is the growth of the kingdom of God, and co-operation in spite of differences — herein is the severest test of the piety both of individuals and churches. Our hope rests on the assurance that the evangelical work could never have attained its present dimensions save through the power of God, and that Christ has still many faithful witnesses in the land. Surely we too, like Paul, may be confident that He who has begun a good work in Turkey will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. Surely He who so long has shown mercy to these ancient Bible Lands will still make use of those who love him, both for the enlightenment of the national churches and the salvation of the Mohammedan and Jewish population. O that the coming fifty years may witness the triumph of the Gospel in Turkey! May others be found to enter into the labor of those who have gone before, that both they who sow and they who reap may rejoice together!

Your loving and grateful father

*Bible House, Constantinople, Turkey,
February 22, 1909*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph H. Greene". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then loops back under the name.

in department and a sense of position and inefficiency, but I pointed a letter of resignation
 which my father at the annual meeting of 1853 kindly advised me to hold over for a year
 and which I hope will in time be put to rest. My missionary associates
 always kind and generous have been my brothers and what they esteemed friends, and
 any opportunity of being united with them have been most a law-illuminator. My father
 and Mother's - my dear - American, English and Belgian - were my early friends. One
 Father, good, bright, able and pious was my guide, friend and brother. One
 converted, long since deceased, who for several years was my assistant in editorial work, whose
 father was an Englishman living near Boston and whose mother was a Spanish woman, was
 remarkable for his warm and gentle disposition and his love of the truth - My only wife
 had a happy life in Turkey, but she died there while in America, namely in 1867, just one
 1864. I had the privilege of meeting her in her home and district in
 the annual meeting of the Congregational Association of the Western States at least
 thousand persons. I do not know that in order to secure a few minutes in the evening
 mission work on the part of the home churches a weekly tract on the part of the mission
 is an indispensable condition. The missionary duty that he has performed has been
 the pastor's.

It has been the one mission of the American Board in Turkey has become the one
 one, including the mission to Syria, as set off in the Presbyterian Board in 1810 and has
 been large in the number of missionary laborers, especially of laborers. The converts
 and the native churches have had a share in the education, the school and other important
 native churches will be set forth in an ample way. God willing, I shall continue at the
 time of the annual meeting in May. We are mutual religious friends and have done
 greatly towards the growth of the Turkish churches, yet so far as the Turkish language
 that is good work for every one to do in a world of unevangelized
 men and women. It is a great blessing to the Turkish people that they have
 for the work which is being done in the Turkish world is the Christian work of the
 Christian Board. It is harmonizing their differences and policy, tension, self-control,
 and in spite of differences - born in the several part of the part of friends and
 church. Our hope was on the ground, but the Turkish work could never have attained
 its present dimensions were it not for the power of God, and that God has still many faithful
 witnesses in the land. Surely we may be confident that the work here is
 good work in Turkey will persevere until the day of Jesus Christ. Surely the work here
 has shown many a time in the Christian Bible that will set out to those who are
 bold for the enlightenment of the national churches and the education of the Mohammedans
 and Jewish population. O that the coming day were when the trumpet of the Gospel
 in Turkey. No others be found to enter into the labor of love, who have good hearts,
 both they were few and they who may yet be called.

Fifth Street, Constantinople, Turkey
 February 22, 1864