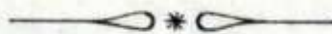


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RURAL EDUCATION

IN

MACEDONIA



TRANSLATION OF AN ARTICLE BY
PROF. GEORGE SOTERIADES D. PH.

RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SALONICA

PUBLISHED IN "NEA ALETHEA" (New Truth),

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Thessalonica Agricultural and Industrial Institute

FOREWORD

To those of our friends who are familiar with developements in classical study and Archeology, the name of Professor George Soteriades will be quite familiar. For our American supporters, it will be interesting I am sure to read the translation of what Professor Soteriades has to say as to the work of the School. As Rector of the newly established University of Salonica, Professor Soteriades is finding scope for his tremendous zeal for the extension of practical education for the rural communities. We have therefore obtained his permission to publish a translation of portions of articles published in the Salonica daily newspaper "Nea Aletheia". The translation given below is taken from the second of two articles under the title of "Seventeen High Schools (Imigymnasiums) and one Agricultural School".

SEVENTEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND ONE AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

The excellent American School situated a little outside of Salonica is one of the important things of which the Macedonian

people may be proud as being of their own making, although those who helped the Macedonians to create the school and give it the breath of life were Americans, and these Americans are still continuing to direct, keep alive and feed the organization with the most wholesome and dynamic food. I have called it American only for differentiation because even its own Director made me understand that it is not American but Macedonian, and I myself from everything I saw in it, felt that this work is purely Macedonian. The teachers of the Greek language and of some of the theoretical studies are Greeks, and six teachers of the practical instruction of the students, which necessarily is of great importance in such a school, are Macedonian-Greeks.

Every farmer's son who goes to this school for five years learns all of the branches of work which any general farmer must cope with, such as the cultivation of the fields; sowing, and harvesting; the upkeep and sanitary care of the animals (oxen, sheep, goats, cows, and hogs); poultry raising (hens, turkeys, ducks, and geese); and the use of plows, tools, and machinery in general. These are all so arranged in this school that the student learns thoroughly both the theory and practice. This is taught in five or six years as the case may be. The years, the months, and the days are planned for each kind of work separately or in sequence, as a whole or in part, so that the final practical objective may be obtained.

The school is not a representation of realities, but is itself a reality.

And how far does this reality go ?

It reaches to the very last details, foreseen or unforeseen, which a farmer encount-

ers in his work and which every cultivator of the soil knows.

The soil, the fruit, the grain, the plant, the tree, the vegetable, all have their enemies—even the farmer himself has a great enemy—the pernicious mosquito. For each of these there is a lesson and its application, teaching its prevention and control because the Macedonian farmer meets all of these pests every day on the Macedonian soil, whatever its quality or condition. At this school, the student learns his work and he learns it well, because he not only watches the natural order of farm life, but he actually does the things with his own hands; first under the direction of the teacher or supervisor, and then alone, to demonstrate his practical ability. A farmer does not live alone, isolated in a remote place, but lives with others in his village, no matter how small it is, possibly only a neighborhood of three or four houses together; and every farmer must realize that he is a member of a community where every one has need of his neighbor and must therefore know what mutual aid and co-operation mean; he must realize the responsibility of being a member of a good, honest, Christian, Macedonian community. For this reason the whole school life is organized like an actual community.

For the school is a little village, a small neighborhood. As there, the priest, the older people, the experienced and the cleverest people are the examples for the rest, so at this school the boys live as children, but learn how to live later on as young men, and as heads of families in the larger national society.

For this reason during their course in the school, the students are trained for this period of their after life when they will be leaders of families, and must leave living

examples to their successors. They are taught as responsible citizens and not as peasants (as we commonly characterize villagers). They are given the culture which we hear of at a distance or read about, which has been developed to the highest degree by most of the great peoples of Europe, such as the happy Swiss and Scandinavians.

These good Americans accept students in this school as boarders at an age of not less than 12 nor greater than 15, only after a careful and thorough examination, but not a formal and superficial one. For the first two years they must study intensively the Greek language and Greek culture under the tutelage of serious and dignified Greeks and Americans; arithmetic for all of its practical uses; the Bible; national history and geography. They also learn English which no one will say is a luxury for the Macedonian farmer. During the five or six years which the students have to spend in this school, it is very easy for them to learn a foreign language, which will be most useful to them, and they are thus enabled to get practical help as farmers from agricultural publications in English, such as we do not have in quantity and variety in Greek, and will not have for a long time.

I will not take my reader from one building of this agricultural school and community of ours to another in order to show him what it contains and what it is used for. For this description it would need two more columns and that is too much.

But if one wishes to learn in a few words what there is to see there let him understand this only: that all of this beautiful, well built, well cared-for and well arranged net work of houses, school buildings, stables (for twelve cows and a magnificent English bull) infirmaries for both students and

animals. poultry yards, engine rooms and shops, hog pens, (for the propagation of pure stock of British hogs, little pigs have been distributed in many Macedonian villages from here), a museum of animals and insects from Macedonian territory, etc. etc. All of this net work began in 1903 with a little farm and ten orphans with a teacher and a farmer. Its present developement with all its fruition and its accomplishments in all enterprises, was reached several years ago. and ever since the Macedonian people have been eagerly sending eighty students a year to it.

And who succeeded in accomplishing all of these wonderful things?

Well, here is the great mystery. I will not try to solve it, but I feel under the spiritual necessity and moral obligation to proclaim it.

It has been accomplished by a man now 82 years old who is still working and directing and caring for all. He, with his wife and his son (who was an engineer in America and came as an assistant and co-worker with his father to live as a Greek with his knowledge of the Greek language, as a Macedonian with his love of the country and with his hope and enthusiasm for the future of the Macodonian agricultural people) has accomplished all of this.

And how did he accomplish it? With faith, with love, with perserverance, with patience. with good friends, with economy, with work, and with debts. Yes, with debts, which are, of all the debts which one may make, the most sanctified because they are contracted for the love of others, which love in turn makes those others help to pay these obligations little by little.

For all of this undertaking is a work of philanthropy, of mutual love, of Phil-Hel-

lenism, and further of Macedonian friendship, which as I know, is a recent form of the old, Christian, Phil - Hellenism of America.

The great America of the Anglo - Saxons is a group of co - workers in philanthropic and Christian enterprises, as I heard from the mouth of one of the Metropolitans of Macedonia, who had seen with his own eyes that great democratic land.

What else is left for me to say? We need such schools for Macedonia, and when I learn from an agriculturalist that the refugees alone without the initiative or help of anyone, planted two million trees recently in Macedonia, I say in the name of the Lord, this people is worth something, and it is worth a great deal for us to take care of them. Only, in the name of God, let us not give them seventeen more high schools, but ten-twenty agricultural schools like the Americo - Macedonian school we have near Salonica.

And the Macedonian people will not only accept these with much gratitude but will give to them the breath of life, which I said in the beginning is much needed by such institutions

In this Americo - Macedonian school the Macedonian farmers pay fees (for food) for their boys although these fees are greatly augmented by self-denial, sacrifice and work on the part of the students, and by philanthropy, Phil - Hellenism and love for Macedonia on the part of Americans.

But the Greeks and the Macedonians are certainly not less Phil-Hellenes and lovers of Macedonia than the Americans.

What are the Macedonian communities which have done wonders in the past not able to do now!

Nor are Macedonian bequests lacking for such purposes.

If we are still lacking something it is the men. Men who resemble the Americans, not to the extent of their self denial, but at least resembling them in their recognition of their moral obligation in regard to their philanthropic, Christian attitude, their love of work, their zealous enthusiasm, their ability, their loyalty, and their concentrated devotion to their work.

But in regard to this what shall I say ?

Make such people if you have not got them!

GEORGE SOTERIADES

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