

Cons'ple, March 16, 1893

Rev. Judson Smith D. D.

Dear Sir,

I wrote you on the 8th of the strong indirect evidence against Turkish officials as incendiaries of the Marsovan building. Since then affairs have gone from bad to worse. There is evidently to be a very strong effort to wipe out the college and the mission station there unless our Government will take high ground and demand reparation for the insults and outrages offered to its representatives and its citizens. All of Mr. Thompson's dispatches to Consul Jewett have been suppressed by the Turkish Government. Our letters sent by the same mails have been received at Marsovan at last, but all of the official dispatches have been stopped in order to embarrass our Minister in handling the case. At the same time the Turkish Government has opened and read Jewett's letters to Mr. Thompson before delivery. Breaking open a seal of a government is an unpardonable insult in these regions, but the Turks have broken open three or four seals on every one of several dispatches and then clumsily gummed the envelope together again. If I were in the place of Mr. Thompson I would have reparation or leave the country on that insult alone. But he does not evidently attach the gravity to the act that the Turks themselves do. No instructions have yet come from Washington to Mr. Thompson and the Porte regarding this as a sign of weakness have plucked up courage wonderfully, and are now pressing a charge against the College of having arms and ammunition stored in the building and of having been the source of the placards. This charge is preferred by the officers probably guilty of firing the building and is pressed by the Porte in order to divert attention from the real issue, the Grand Vezir telling Dr. Thompson he has no idea of the truth of the charge. Because our Gov't has not taken the ground that the burning of that house and the violation of the premises by Khosref and his Gendarmes is an outrage that must be redressed before any further relations can take place, the Turks have actually been threatening Mr. Thompson, and under these threats he has now made an agreement with the Porte that the inquiry into the fire is to be made a secondary issue, and this preposterous gun and ammunition and placard story is to be seriously investigated before anything else is done. One positive word from Washington would have stopped the whole proceeding and would have brought the arrest for trial of the ex-brigand Khosref. Now we are held up before the community as culprits, and cannot easily recover from the disgrace of having the premises at Marsovan searched before having redress for the burning. The Porte has today sent in writing to the Legation a charge that two Mohammedans having entered the mission premises at Marsovan the Consul's men with 60 students armed with revolvers attacked and beat them while the missionaries with eight Martin-Henry rifles kept at bay those who sought to get them out of the premises. We cannot say that nothing happened for the Turks will not allow us to get telegrams or letters that displease them. But we can say that nothing of this sort has happened, for our missionaries do not have rifles and do not attack men. It is probably the case that some attempt at fresh incendiarism has been made and foiled by the vigilance of the night watchman. Whatever the case is, there is desperate need of help from Washington and need that they act without listening to the declarations of the Turkish Minister at Washington, and need that they insist on an investigation into this affair of the incendiarism by respectable officials personally known to the Legation as qualified to conduct it. I am now urging Mr. Thompson to send Mr. Newberry to Marsovan to help Mr. Jewett, but he says, just as he says when I urge him to send a

special messenger to carry dispatches to Jewett, "I cannot do it without instructions from Washington." I have offered to pay the expenses of the messenger if he will send one, for Jewett's position is most difficult, without a word in a month's time. I have also offered to go with Newberry if he will send him to Marsovan. You will see that not only lives and property in Marsovan are at stake, but the whole existence of the mission work in Turkey is to be decided by the course taken up by Mr. Cleveland [here.] The Turks are hoping that we are to be deserted. The church at Vozgat was set on fire a couple of weeks ago, and only saved by direct interposition. The Protestant chapel and school at [Fatsa?] on the Black Sea were closed by the Gov't last week. The chapel and school at Ordoo have been closed five months, during which time the 300 Protestants of the place have not been allowed so much as to have prayer meetings or to sing in family prayers.

Yours in grief and perplexity
(signed) H.O. Dwight