

PHOTIUS FISK: A BIOGRAPHY

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Photius Fisk: A Biography by Lyman F. Hodge

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LYMAN F. HODGE

**PHOTIUS FISK: A
BIOGRAPHY**



*Yours Truly,
Photius Fisk.*

PHOTIUS FISK.

A Biography.

BY LYMAN F. HODGE.

"For his bounty,
There was no winter in 't; an autumn 't was,
That grew the more by reaping."

— *Shakespeare.*

BOSTON, MASS.

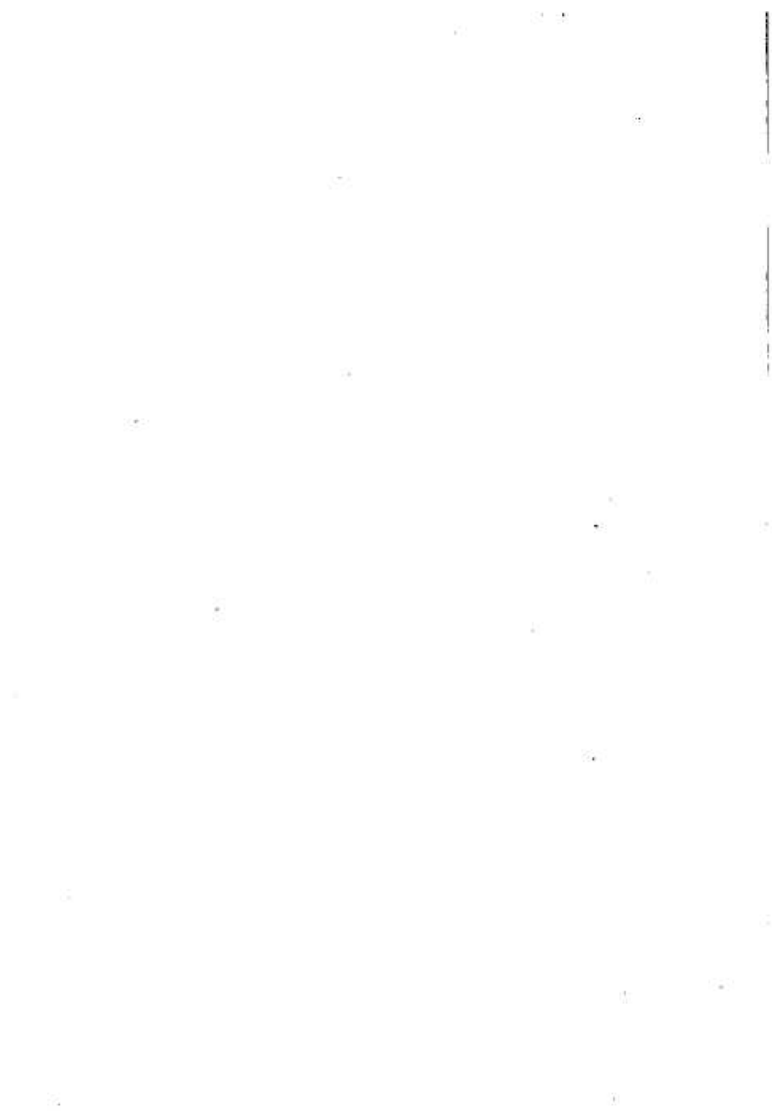
1891.

PREFACE.

To perpetuate the memory of a life devoted to the cause of universal freedom from the bonds of slavery and tyranny, and to unselfish acts of generosity and charity, this book is written. The example of a life so worthy of the emulation of mankind, indeed, may pass from the remembrance of the race, but the results that spring from noble deeds flow onward, like a rivulet, forever. — The man with all his acts of charity may be forgotten, but the good resulting from his life endeavors, will live on in the improved conditions of the social state.

That such examples may be multiplied, and happiness thereby increased, is the earnest wish of

THE AUTHOR.



PHOTIUS FISK.

CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY LIFE.

PHOTIUS FISK, whose ancestral name was *Kavasales*, was born in classic Greece; but he was not to fill the measure of his days amidst the ruins of her ancient grandeur, nor to share the adverse conditions of her modern state. He was removed in infancy or early childhood from the land of his nativity to Smyrna, in Asia Minor, where his father was employed as an accountant in a mercantile house.

His earliest recollections, therefore, were not of his native Morea, but of Smyrna; and prominent among those recollections were the ravages of that desolating scourge, the plague, which laid its deadly hand alike upon all classes, ages, and conditions. For, in the year 1814, when the child Photius was seven or eight years of age, the pestilence raged in the city, sparing not the loved ones of his family group. In one short week his

father, mother, two brothers, and two sisters were all numbered with the thousands of the dead; and he, himself infected with the plague, found refuge in a Grecian hospital, where he was kindly cared for by the people of his nation, until he had recovered. His elder brother, Athanasius, being not in Smyrna but in Malta at the time, escaped the infection.

They nursed the little sufferer tenderly; but when he called in agony and childlike sorrow for his mother, they said to him: "She has gone out for a little while. She will come soon, if you keep quiet." But still he called aloud with frantic cries and tears, and still they sought to quiet him with the delusive hope that she would quickly come. At length, exhausted by his grief and paroxysms of distress, he fell into a dreamy, troubled sleep to wake again to consciousness of suffering, and craving for the presence of his mother whom he loved so dearly, and whose ministrations, he imagined, could relieve or mitigate his pangs. Thus day followed after day, until the crisis of his malady was passed, and vital forces rallied to the work of reconstruction. Still, his eager questionings elicited evasive and conflicting answers, until they could conceal the truth no longer. Then they revealed to him, as cautiously as possible, that his loved father, mother, brothers, sisters, were all dead, and he alone was left of all their household.

Child though he was, he comprehended the full import of their words. The announcement of the fearful truth fell with a crushing weight upon his heart ; and mental anguish, loneliness, and desolation led him to the verge of dark despair. His kind attendants proffered him their sympathies and consolations ; but their words were powerless to bring consolation in so great a sorrow. He remembered their kind offices with gratitude through all his after life, but he never could forget their falsehood, although it was inspired by their commiseration.

His home made desolate, friends of the family administered to all his wants, while he remained in Smyrna ; but, in due time, after the dread pestilence had ceased its work of death, his maternal uncle, Panages Maneses, a merchant of the island of Malta, provided for the transportation of the boy to that island, and received him gladly as a member of their household. But Maneses' wife, averse to the adoption of a child into their family, urged that two children of their own required her constant, undivided care ; that the intrusion of another would increase her household duties ; and that in her attendance to his wants she must neglect her obligations to their own.

In reply to her objections, Maneses, more considerate and humane than was his wife, said to her : " He is the child of my own sister, — orphaned, homeless, des-