

S.P. Cockrell
to
H. Gen. Turner
Sent to
Brit. M.

19882-3

A.A. No. 126

Sir

Having already been honoured with your attention on the subject of the Marbles discovered at Egina, I hope you will permit me the liberty of this letter, and will have the goodness to mention the purport of it in such quarters as you may think useful. — My object in writing it being to remove an erroneous Impression which I have heard thro' different Channels has been felt, concerning these Marbles, — namely, that absolute Engagements had been made on the part of the Discoverers for their disposal to this Government which they have since declined to perform. — The fact being, that the proposal which I suggested on their part for the consideration of the Government was conditional, — leaving the proprietors to accept or decline it in case the marbles should not be appropriated, before directions, which might be given here, should reach Athens; and optional on the part of Government to accept or decline them if brought here, according to their merit upon Inspection. —

The Account of the Discovery, which I had the Honour to transmit to you on its receipt in July last, stated that the purchase of the Marbles had been proposed to Mr. St. Canning at Constantinople for the British Government and by the German Coproprietors to their Ministers. that they were valued at from six to eight Thousand Pounds, and that Mr. C. R. Cockerell and Mr.

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and Mr. Foster were so desirous to secure them to this Country, that they were willing to relinquish all advantage from their half share in them, rather than let them be removed to any other.

In the communications I afterwards had with the foreign Office, it was perfectly well understood that I had no direct Authority relative to their disposal. I therefore could only suggest a means of their being brought to England, and of their Eventually becoming British property, provided the Proprietors should accept the proposal forwarded to them from hence.

Unfortunately however the Discoverers, not foreseeing the probability of any such arrangement here, and judging the collection too interesting to be separated, being themselves of different Nations, whilst they felt themselves bound by no specific Engagement to dispose of their property in one way more than other, entered into a bond to each other, not to divide it: but to offer it Entire to the different Courts and Public of Europe, at public Sale, on the 7th of November next and this Agreement had been accordingly made public before any Intimation reached them of the measures taken here.

Under these Circumstances It was impossible for Mr. C. R. Cockerell and Mr. Foster, the English proprietors, however disposed they might have felt to sacrifice their individual Interests in the Property, to force their Co-proprietors to recede from their Common Engagement which was at this time become universally known in those Countries, and in which were intimately concerned the Sovereign Princes at whose Expence the German Artists were travelling and these refusing their

Consent.

Consent to any alteration in the plan agreed on,
 were with great difficulty persuaded to permit
 the marbles to be conveyed to Malta, under
 the condition of the Sale not taking place
 'till the first of November next.

I hope however, being now there, they will
 ultimately be secured to the British Nation.

I have the honor to be
 Sir
 Your most obed^t
 & affecⁿ
 Servant
 J. B. Lockhart
 Norwich House
 8 July 1812

My Dear Turner

10 July 1842

M^r Cockerel

Marbles from Algiers