
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE IX.

NOTES.

PROBLEMS CONFRONTING RUSSIAN STATESMEN.

THERE are no social, political, or theological problems in the world more important than those now confronting the statesmen of Russia, but they cannot be discussed except from a broad consideration of the history of the Russian people, the peculiarity of their geographical position, and the condition and character of the surrounding nations. Altogether the subject involves the entire body of social, political, and theological questions which are now everywhere agitating the world. A discussion of the Russian situation, therefore, cannot fail to bear upon the problems which confront Western Europe and America.

There cannot be any proper understanding of Russia's problems without first considering the inheritance which she has received from the past. For many centuries Russia suffered from an excess of liberty. She consisted of an incoherent conglomeration of republics each more jealous of one another than it was of outside enemies. This resulted in a long-continued domination of the Tartar races of Asia during the Middle Ages. In the fourth century of our era the Huns, moving westward from Asia, crossed the Volga and the Don, and permanently established themselves in the fertile plains of Hungary. In the thirteenth century the Mongol hordes of Jenghiz Khan, under the leadership of his son Ogdai, swarmed over the steppes of Southern Russia, and captured Moscow and all the other great centers of population. From Sarai, in the southern part of Russia, the Mongols exercised dominion over all the Russian republics, collecting tribute from them for more than two centuries. It was only in 1480, under the leadership of Ivan the Third, that this domination was finally thrown off, and Russia freed from the Tartar yoke.

The success of this revolt against the Tartars was largely due to the unity of popular feeling brought about by the influence of the church and its leaders. Russian patriotism was roused to the highest pitch by the cry of "The Cross against the Crescent,"—of "Christ against Mohammed." The unity of action that led to the overthrow of the Mongol invaders and tyrants was therefore largely of a military character, which interfered as little as possible with local affairs. So long as the various individual elements composing the units of this new empire were loyal to the main purpose, little attention was paid to minor matters of private concern.

It therefore has come about that, under the most autocratic form of

government, there has to this day been preserved in Russia the largest amount of liberty of action on the part of local organizations. The village commune, or as it is technically called the "mir," is still the most important social, religious, and political factor in the empire. After the analogy of the New England town-meeting, but with far larger power, the villagers in Russia annually assemble, and upon every needful occasions are convened, to distribute the land which is either owned or rented by the commune, to each family in proportion to its working units. They also have control over various minor offenses and over the movement of their individual members; no person being allowed to depart from the organization, even temporarily, without obtaining the consent of his associates. The village assembly also has absolute authority to banish to Siberia any objectionable member, and to prevent the return of any discharged criminal. As a matter of fact, more than one-half of the exiles to Siberia, amounting to something over five thousand annually, are thus banished by the sole authority of these town-meetings. The general government simply takes charge of such banished persons, transports them to Siberia, keeps them under police surveillance, and endeavors to give them a chance for a new start in the world.

This village organization, with its great power, is not an institution which has been imposed upon them from without, but is an inheritance from the past, to which they are most strongly attached, and which they carry with them as they emigrate to Siberia. Indeed, the most of this emigration is done by the villages as a body. When the question of emigration is raised, the villagers send out their most trusted elders to find a locality where land is abundant and other conditions favorable, who, upon their return, make their report to their fellow-villagers. If this is favorably received and acted upon, the entire village disposes of its property, and sets out as a completely organized body to transfer itself to the new field. It is thus that millions of loyal Russians have passed over the great thoroughfare leading to Eastern Siberia, which is most generally known through the lugubrious reports that are given of the hardships endured by exiles who are passing over it. The fact, however, that twenty times as many free settlers as exiles have endured these physical hardships may be made to show that the hardships are more sentimental than real.

For many decades before the building of the railway the great highway through Siberia has been occupied, not so much by exiles, as by free emigrants, moving with their village organizations across the broad prairies and majestic river valleys of Western and Central Siberia, on their way to the attractive region beyond Lake Baikal; and now, within the last fifty years, to the broad plains bordering the Amur and Ussuri rivers, on the Pacific coast. A familiar method of emigration has been for the village to start in the autumn after harvest, and proceed eastward until seedtime, when they would pause in some advantageous spot, and

spend the summer in raising a crop of grain and increasing their horses and cattle, to go on again the next year in the same manner, until, on reaching the headwaters of the Amur River, they would build ample rafts, on which they would embark, and float down with all their belongings a distance of fifteen hundred or two thousand miles, where, with the timber from their raft, they would erect a village of loghouses after the pattern brought from their home in Russia; and suddenly there would rise a church, and the whole village organization would be complete in this new world.

The advantages of this method of emigration over that which has characterized emigration in America are manifold, but need not be enumerated. For one thing, it prevents that isolation from one's acquaintance which is driving so many, women especially, in our Northwestern States into insanity, and is filling our insane asylums with them. An important effect upon the national character has been to secure a unity of feeling which makes the Siberian emigrant a most loyal subject of the Tzar. It should be added, also, that the government in every way looks after the interests of these emigrants, sending supplies of food to them when they come to want, furnishing hospitals and nurses for them on their way, and lending them money on most liberal terms to get started on their new career.

The disadvantages of this system are, however, not to be overlooked, but they are connected largely with the discouragement of individual initiation of effort, and with the cultivation of an undue dependence both upon the local community and upon the general government. It has resulted, however, in the cultivation of a loyalty on the part of the peasant population that is probably more intense than that of the citizens of any other government of the world. Every peasant looks upon the Tzar as his father. In every log cabin there is a picture of the Tzar and Tzarina, before which every one is expected to stand with uncovered head. Every Russian subject has the privilege of appealing directly to the Tzar. Even the meanest prisoner can send a letter to the Tzar with a certainty that it will be opened and read, and his petition considered by some of the great body of clerks deputized for that purpose. Every one, therefore, has a chance, small though it be, of getting his case directly to the notice of the supreme ruler of the land. Of course this is practically of little account, because of the great multitudes of petitions, and it is a pathetic proverb in Russia, that "God and the Tzar are high up and far off." There is little chance that the specific petitions to either will be directly answered. Still there is the possibility, which cheers the heart of all faithful subjects.

The great obstacle to all revolutionary efforts in Russia lies in the attachment of the people to the existing order of things. Nine-tenths of the population are still agriculturists, spread out over a vast territory, where there can be little variety in the conditions, and where any effort

in producing changes is met in detail by the inertia of these compact village organizations. The anarchists and nihilists have made no progress among the peasant population of the Russian Empire; while, at the same time, the measures initiated by the government for increasing the educational privileges of the people are largely futile, because of the difficulty of securing a hearty coöperation of these most important political units.

The uniformity of sentiment upon social and political questions in Russia has been greatly favored by the geographical conditions. European Russia and Western Siberia are little else than a vast prairie, where there is little chance for diversity of labor, and the facilities for general manufacturing are comparatively insignificant. European Russia has no deposits of coal; while those of Asiatic Russia have been almost untouched. The mineral deposits of the Ural Mountains are small compared with the wants of a great nation. On the south, Russia has everywhere been confronted with the imperfect civilization of Asiatic nations, with which she could not deal on terms of equality, because of their diverse standards of social and political morality. The expansion of Russia into Asia till she should control the territory north of the great mountain chain that passes diagonally through the continent from the south end of the Caspian Sea to the Pacific Ocean has been an absolute necessity for the preservation of peace. When, thirty years ago, Khiva was captured by the Russians, hundreds of slaves were found who had been carried off across the Russian border by roving Turcoman bands, while there were thousands more who had been carried into captivity from Persia. The dependence of the whole area of Central Asia upon irrigation has furthermore rendered it necessary that the whole northern watershed should be under the firm control of one political organization. Under the anarchical conditions which prevailed in Turkestan previous to Russian occupation, a favorite method of bringing a tribe to terms was to tap the canals furnishing them water, and divert it to other fields.

The constant effort of the Russian people to extend their borders in Asia to the scientific frontier determined by the direction of the mountain chains and the flow of the great rivers, and to obtain an available outlet to the Pacific Ocean, has been a most important element in maintaining the national unity and keeping at white heat the patriotism of the people. In all this great movement it is the government following the people, rather than the people following the government. From the outset the settlement of Siberia has been secured by bold adventurers and hardy pioneers who have gone before, and then looked back to the government for aid and support.

The gigantic contest which is now approaching a crisis in Manchuria is the result of a popular movement which has been going on for two hundred and fifty years. Already there are about two million *bona fide*

Russian settlers, in the portion of Eastern Siberia bordering upon China, clamoring for and greatly needing free access to an open port upon the Pacific coast. The right to this was secured by the Treaty of Peking in 1895. Whereupon with a vigor almost unprecedented the Chinese Eastern Railroad was constructed across Manchuria to Vladivostok, with a branch from Harbin to Port Arthur, upon the Chinese Sea. Its total length is nearly eighteen hundred miles. The treaty by which this railroad was built and the construction of the railroad were accomplished with the silent consent of all the Western Powers. One provision of the treaty was that one-half of the military protection of the road should be furnished by China. This provision of the treaty was notably violated during the Boxer Revolution in 1900, when the Chinese government did everything in its power to destroy the road and all the great vested interests that had grown up around it. There was then nothing for Russia to do but send in troops to restore and protect these interests. And there she has been compelled to remain up to the present time. The Boxer Revolution so changed the conditions that Russia would be recreant to duty if she again exposed those interests to the hazards that proved so fatal during that revolution.

And this leads finally to the consideration of the conflict of races which is culminating at this point. In Manchuria the irresistible progress of the eastward movement of Russian population meets the immovable mass of Chinese population which has been in possession from time immemorial; while Japan, in its new career, is frantically struggling to secure enlarged opportunities for the emigration of her rapidly increasing numbers. In the nature of things something must give way. Of these three conflicting forces, Japan is evidently the weakest and the least able to maintain a prolonged contest for superiority. How Russia and China can secure a *modus vivendi* remains to be seen, and will depend largely upon the rapidity with which China shall yield herself to the influences of Western civilization, and feel their uplifting power, as Japan has already done.

Meanwhile the reflex influence upon Russia itself it is impossible to estimate. No doubt the continued existence of the Russian Empire depends upon the granting of a larger amount of liberty to the various provinces than is now given to them; for it is essential to the maintenance of the central government of Russia, as it is of all other governments, that it maintain the good-will of the great mass of its population. And this it can do only by judiciously distributing to the local governments the control of all those affairs which are not strictly of national concern.

How this shall be done it is difficult for an outsider to determine. But one thing is clear, that there are no greater enemies to progress in Russia than those who are wildly attempting to tear down the present political, social, and religious structure without having any well-considered

plan or reasonable prospect for substituting something practicable in its place. Anarchy in Russia would be the destruction of all hope. Meanwhile the careful observer cannot fail to see that Christian ideas are fermenting in the whole body politic, and leading slowly, but surely, toward a better permanent condition of things. The emancipation of the serfs was one of the most significant Christian acts ever carried out by a government. The persistent and successful struggle of the so-called "Raskolniks" or Schismatics from the Russian Church to maintain their separate organizations and their peculiar principles is a striking witness to the capacity of the Russian people to defend their private opinions and to resist the encroachments of the established church upon the private rights of conscientious conviction. The hope of Russia is not in revolution, but in the gradually accelerating influence of the Christian ideas which have long been at work and have already produced a civilization which only lags a little behind that of Western Europe and America.

G.F.W.

MUST WE CENTRALIZE?

No question of the theory of government has wider practical importance than that of the boundary between local and central authority. The proper dividing-line cannot be fixed once for all. At one time human progress demanded the multiplication of immunities from the tyranny of kings, and this feature of feudalism then served the interests of liberty. At a later time liberty itself just as clearly demanded the suppression of these immunities. Local tyranny could be prevented only by the reign of a common law emanating from a strong central government and securing equal rights over the whole realm. Increase of central authority was then as essential to human welfare as the emphasis of local independence had been at another period.

Only anarchists will maintain that limitation of the larger authority is the sole requisite for progress. Local autonomy is a large element in the governmental ideas of the United States. But the very constitution which made us a nation took some things out of the hands of all lesser authorities and put them under control of the central authority. The original Confederation had no other means of revenue than the gifts of the colonies, and it was bankrupt from the start. The United States could levy taxes over all its territory, and by this means took a self-respecting place among the nations. If there are other things which the States are now doing inefficiently or even doing badly, it is conceivable that the remedy lies in the increase of national functions. Other methods of reforming evils should be thoroughly tried before we resort to centralization. Local liberty is a precious possession. Only when it obstinately stands in the way of progress or nullifies individual equal rights should it be overborne by the weight of the nation's authority.

Massachusetts learned long ago that it could not wisely trust educa-

tion entirely to the towns, and adopted the policy of compelling every town to maintain schools of a certain standard. The great inequalities in the educational systems of the different States show that it is not yet certain that satisfactory schools will be maintained in every part of our wide territory without some sort of pressure from the nation. This is made emphatically evident by the recurring agitation here and there of plans to spend on the schools for certain classes only the money they pay in taxes.

The confusion of our divorce laws has long been a scandal, some States granting divorces for such trivial reasons that other States refuse to recognize their validity. Something has been accomplished by local agitation in abating the worst features in the more lax States, but uniformity in this fundamental matter seems beyond hope until the laws of marriage are made a function of the national government.

Another matter in which local autonomy leaves us behind the rest of the English-speaking world is our labor legislation, especially in regard to child labor. This has been left wholly to the States; and, while some of them are abreast of the most civilized countries, others have no restrictions at all, or practically useless restrictions, on the employment of children. The entire nation suffers injury so long as the children of even a single State are robbed of the education and the playtime that belong to childhood. Local agitation to correct this condition is often blocked by the lack of national uniformity on the subject. Short-sighted legislatures have again and again yielded to the fallacious fear that the prohibition of child labor would drive some industry to a neighboring State that permitted its children to be put to work without restriction.

More serious than any of these is the subject of personal security against mob violence. The States are lamentably failing to suppress lynch law. These outbursts of anarchy are occurring in more of our States than formerly. The community where a lynching has taken place is generally too much excited to deal with the perpetrators judicially. At this point more than any other, local self-government proves inefficient. It is doubtful whether anything less than the national power is at once impartial enough and strong enough to suppress this form of violence and deliver us from the reproach it has brought upon us in the eyes not only of Christendom but of Japanese and Chinese and Turks. When mobs take the lives of foreign citizens, and the local courts fail to punish the lynchers, the whole nation is exposed to the breaking off of diplomatic relations and may any day be exposed to foreign war. If local sentiment for law and order in dealing with crime cannot soon be developed in all parts of the nation we shall be driven in self-defense to find a way for a wider exercise of national police authority.

It is true that the permanent correction of all these evils will not be secured until a right local sentiment is everywhere developed in regard

to them. It is also true that a wise exercise of national authority is often the most effective of all instrumentalities for educating public sentiment. This has been shown in the Alabama peonage cases. Negroes who had been convicted of petty offenses were sold into practical slavery without arousing any sentiment against such an outrage on American citizens. Some feeble attempts of the local courts to deal with the offenses were entirely without results. No doubt Judge Jones as a citizen of Alabama detested these crimes, but it was only as a judge of the United States court that he could successfully deal with them. The successful prosecutions in his court have resulted in arousing the public opinion of the State to the suppression of peonage. Similar educative results may be hoped for from national activity in correcting other evils.

If some of the subjects named lie outside the constitutional boundaries of federal authority it is not impossible to amend the Constitution. The question of legalizing slavery was left to the States in the original Constitution. Some of the States emancipated their slaves. When other States made a desperate effort to perpetuate slavery even at the price of disunion, local self-government on that subject was swept away forever by constitutional amendment. Unless the States do better than they are doing with some of the matters touched on above, a way must be found to have the nation deal with them, or the United States will fall behind in the race for the leadership of the civilized world. W.R.C.W.

NOTES ON BRITISH THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY.

A WORK on "Old Testament Critics," which appeared immediately after the sending of my last notes for the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA, is receiving considerable attention here, as being the strongest and most able pronouncement, from the traditional side, that has yet come from a single writer. The author is an accomplished divine, the Rev. Thomas Whitelaw, M.A., D.D., well known for the excellent exegetical work he has done in connection with the Pulpit Commentary, the Preacher's Commentary, etc. Published by Kegan Paul, of London,[1] it is well printed, and pleasant to read. Dr. Whitelaw is thoroughly competent to speak on equal ground with the critics themselves, as having devoted himself to the study for over a quarter of a century, at any rate. Though free to confess myself more sympathetically affected towards criticism than the author, I think the only worthy and really scientific attitude is to preserve a perfectly open mind to all that may be advanced from the traditional side. Nor should it be overlooked that Dr. Whitelaw's aim is not so much to establish the traditional position as to show that the critics are wrong. And his book certainly leaves the mind impressed with a sense of the unsatisfactoriness and flimsiness of a great deal of the critical superstructure. It will be great gain if his hale and hearty skep-

[1] 7s. 6d.

ticism of the disintegrating results of criticism helps to recall criticism to sanity of mind and sobriety of judgment. The work is scrupulously fair, with an occasional banter of the critics which all who are not narrow-minded partisans will quite enjoy. Dr. Whitelaw's work represents that conservative wing in the United Free Church of Scotland which is dissatisfied with the teachings of Dr. George Adam Smith and others. Among the subjects treated are, "The Truth of Old Testament History"—one of the chapters in which the critical views figure very badly, I honestly think—"The Idea of a Supernatural Religion," "The Notion of an Inspired Bible"—in which I take a freer view of the inspirational process than that which dominates the mind of the author—and an effective setting forth of "The Improbabilities of Criticism." Many here do not feel, as this author does, that the divinity of our Lord – in a Trinitarian, not a Ritschlian, sense—is imperilled in the views of the critics, and I personally think if the author had left this aspect and the inspirational one more alone, and kept to the sphere of Old Testament criticism proper, his work would have told more powerfully with theological scholars of moderate position in such matters. But Dr. Whitelaw's position is more moderate, in some respects, than is always observed. He does not deny that in the Hexateuch, e.g., different documents may have been used; what he does deny is, that the critics have discovered and marked off the different documents out of which it was composed. There is neither room nor call in these notes to traverse the ground of Dr. Whitelaw's manifold reasonings, my main purpose being to recommend readers to procure and peruse the work itself, which shows a remarkable acquaintance with the literature of the subject, and presents the conclusions of an independent and convinced mind.

A Summer School of Theology has been held at Aberdeen. The reports show the papers to have been useful and seasonable in character.

Professor Flint's work on "Agnosticism" to which I alluded in my last notes, is, when one has had time to go through it, a work which gives one the impression of being a contribution to theological thought of the highest merit. Dr. Flint presents, as a thinker, a rare combination of caution and courage, circumspection and incisive skill, insight and rational force. The results are, at many points in this volume, of great suggestiveness and value, for Dr. Flint is certainly at his best in this latest product of his pen. There was real room for a book on the subject, and there is so little to which one wishes to take exception, that one cannot but feel grateful that the need has been so admirably met.

One of the best-known figures in British religious literature has passed away in the sudden demise of the Rev. Hugh Macmillan, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E., of the United Free Church. Dr. Macmillan was a man of great catholicity of spirit, and of the widest culture. The spiritual significance of Nature he deeply felt, and finely set forth in his analogies of the natural and the spiritual. Among his many works may be recalled his "Bi-

ble Teachings in Nature," "The Ministry of Nature," "The True Vine," "The Garden and the City," "Two Worlds are Ours," "Roman Mosaics," etc. The prevailing feeling here has been one of the charm both in the man and his books, and he has been deeply mourned.

The new Kerr Lecture has just been issued by Messrs. T. and T. Clark[1] and is concerned with "The Sacraments in the New Testament." It is by the Rev. J. C. Lambert, B.D., a scholarly minister of the United Presbyterian Church, who has, unfortunately, had to give up his charge through loss of voice.

Some interest has been aroused in Britain by Lord Kelvin's recent pronouncements on Science and Theism. Among other things Lord Kelvin declares that "Science positively affirms Creative Power"; that "we are absolutely forced by Science to believe with perfect confidence in a Directive Power"; and that "if you think strongly enough, you will be forced by Science to the belief in God." I recollect to have heard Lord Kelvin speak to his students slightingly of metaphysics, as the manner of scientists is, so it is gratifying to find the noble Lord and famous scientist grown so metaphysical. He seems clearly to perceive that the purely mechanical philosophy of nature, in which many scientists rest, does not reflect on the need and room for some non-spatial and non-perceptible element to enter as causal factor in the problem, and he evidently has a strong sense of how teleological nature has become to the thought of our time. In which respects science has gone far on the road to joining hands with true philosophy.

There is a dearth of notable works in philosophy at present. The volume on "David Hume" has just been issued in "The World's Epoch-Makers" series.[2] It is from the competent hands of Professor *Orr*. Hume has certainly come to his own in these days. Dr. Flint has lately said of him, in his work on "Agnosticism," "Probably he is, of all the eminent Scotchmen of the eighteenth century, the one who has most affected the general course and character of British and European thought," and he thinks his influence, taken in whole, "may reasonably be held to have been decidedly for good." And it is certainly true that Hume's influence has been astonishingly great.

A Sociological Society has been formed in London.

One of the subjects engaging the minds of British philosophers is the subconscious,—that elusive element of mental life which merits more attention than it has ever received. The researches of the late F. W. H. Myers gave some stimulus in this direction. The subconscious *is*, of course, no new thing in psychology. The merit of giving clear and explicit recognition to the subconscious belongs first to Leibnitz of the great philosophers. He made "obscure unconscious perceptions" the means of "continuity" between the mental and the material worlds. In less explicit ways, however, the idea of the subconscious dates back to

[1] 10s. 6d. [2] T. & T. Clark, 3s., *net*.

Plato and the Sophists. It was expressly recognized by Hamilton (in his "Metaphysics"). What has in our time been more clearly recognized is the coming of that content, or datum, which consciousness calls for, out of the sphere of the subconscious. The tendency of discussion has been towards showing the significance of the subconscious to be the systematic character of knowledge or the unity of thought throughout. The subconscious self seems likely to come to be thought of less as a mysterious and inexplicable entity than as something which draws its significance from the conscious, while these latter psychical or conscious states are derived from the subliminal consciousness. The subconscious must be taken as absolutely continuous with the conscious, the self being thus the totality of conscious and subconscious. The subconscious, therefore, points, albeit in a negative but not unrelated and independent way, to the systematic unity of consciousness or the universality of thought, though the grounds for this cannot be here set forth in detail.

KILMARNOCK, SCOTLAND. JAMES LINDSAY.