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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER. INSANITY OF THE DOUKHOBORS.

VARIOUS are the forms of insanity or mental unbalance. The whole world of mankind is mentally unbalanced some to one degree some to another degree, as the result of original sin and its death sentence which assails all the energies – mental and moral as well as physical. All are not wicked to the same degree or in the same manner. Some are insanely jealous, some insanely cruel, some insanely covetous or selfish, and the Doukhobors furnish an illustration of insane unselfishness. The lesson is that none of us have good sense enough to direct our own courses. All need the divine aid provided for us in the Word of God. Those who do accept this divine guidance by full consecration and submission to the holy spirit are Scripturally said to possess "the spirit of a sound mind," and to be "wise" with a wisdom which cometh from above.

It will be remembered that about three years ago the public press gave detailed accounts of the arrival in Canada of about 4,000 Russian peasants styled Doukhobors, who were emigrating on account of their religious convictions – refusal to serve in the Russian army, etc., etc. Next we learned that they were in conflict with Canadian marriage laws because [R3098 : page 323] averse to perpetual marriage obligations and ceremonies. Now we learn that their false conceptions of liberty have taken a new form and that they have concluded that *it is not right* to deprive horses and cattle of *their liberty*, making them servants and menial slaves. In consequence their fields are idle and their good harvests unreaped while their horses and cattle disport themselves at liberty. Consequently many are likely to die of privation during the approaching winter. Truly conscience is a dangerous thing unless instructed by God's Word and thus guided by the spirit of a sound mind. Concerning these people and their troubles we give some extracts below.

The Boston *Transcript* remarks that it is "a religious mania, the like of which has perhaps never been seen in this country," and continues: –

"Fully four thousand Doukhobors, who settled in the Yorkton district, Northwest Territory, will starve or freeze to death, or be on the verge of starvation this year, if the Dominion Government does not take active steps to prevent their present religious mania from going further.... Nearly every one of the Doukhobors seen was clad in the lightest of cotton garments. They would afford no protection from an October breeze, to say nothing of a severe winter blast; and they say they will wear no other. In many of the houses visited a bag of flour was the only food visible. The Doukhobors will eat a few vegetables; but in few instances had they even brought them into their homes. Men originally strong were gaunt, hungry wrecks; and on a recent trip into Yorkton for flour a dozen big men, harnessed like mules to a heavy wagon, almost fell by the roadside through exhaustion and starvation. The women, so far, have escaped any of the work that must fall on the men since they have discarded the use of animals; but, if this year's crop is to be harvested, they will soon have to harness themselves up to the heavy wagons as the men do. They have made absolutely no provision for the future; and, what is perhaps worse, the religious mania that possesses them is becoming more intense and is spreading. The attempt by the Dominion Government to help these people has apparently had no effect. How it will end will probably be told when the intense cold of that district sets in."

The London *Morning Journal* says of this matter: –

"These 'maniacs' are apparently simply a gentle Christian sect who have been suddenly seized with the question which Buddhists answered trenchantly enough many a century ago. Asking themselves by what right they dared to exploit any living and sentient creature with capacities of pleasure and independence as great as their own, they became strict vegetarians. But the Russian idealist is capable of a fierce

consistency. Be he tyrant or nihilist, Tolstoyan or Doukhobor, he makes no pact with ideas. Having ceased to slay animals for food, the Doukhobors could find no sanction for [R3098 : page 324] subjecting them to the servitude and mutilation of the farmyard. They released their horses and cattle, renounced eggs and milk, wool and leather, and now they are attempting to live on bread and water – clad, we suppose, in cotton. It is a hardy enterprise, but, unless indeed, like Pythagoras, they have scruples about beans, there is no reason why they should fare worse than the millions of good Buddhists who even strain water lest there should be life in it."

Quite true, millions of Buddhists died in the recent famine in India, refusing to eat animal food – the animals starving also. We regret to note a similar delusion and false conception of holiness creeping in amongst "*Vegetarians*"; – a disposition to consider the eating of meat "unclean" and "unholy"; a disposition to consider themselves superior to meat-eaters, and to despise them; – to call them "cannibalistic," etc. We offer no objection to those who claim that they have better health as a result of a purely vegetable diet: it is every man's duty to supply to his system the diet which will in his judgment yield the largest degree of comfort and efficiency in his case. But we do object to the claim of special sanctity and acceptableness with God on account of a purely vegetable diet. Those who take that position are distinctly setting themselves up as wiser than God, and holier than our Lord Jesus who not only ate animal food (lamb and fish at least) but who miraculously created fish for food. (John 6:11; 21:6-11.) The inspired Apostle "bound" the question and settled it (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; Acts 15:28,29): the Apostle Paul declaring: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from *the* faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; ...forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth." (I Tim. 4:1-4.) Realizing man's natural unsoundness of judgment, Christians should "not lean to their own understanding" but should seek the wisdom of God, and nowhere is this wisdom better illustrated than in

him who was "holy, harmless and separate from sinners." Whatever our Master did and taught it would be blasphemy for us as his disciples to call wrong or sinful for us or for others.

Mr. A. St. John, an Englishman who became converted to Tolstoyan philosophy instead of Christianity, and who recently visited America in the interest of the Doukhobors, gives his views of their present craze in the "Midland Herald" (England) as follows: –

"The time of emigration, of change of circumstances, of unsettlement and resettlement, proved to be a perhaps severer strain on the character of these peasants than all their sufferings in the Caucasus and Siberia. They were worn out to some extent, I think, in body and spirit, and they came into circumstances where the work was new to them, and they came into an atmosphere – well, perhaps where a little materialism prevailed. At one time some of them seemed lazy and unreliable – and then some of them seemed to become demoralized and materialized. There were cases of quarreling and fault-finding here and there. The leading men were mostly in Siberia. The state of affairs was lamented. 'I don't know what has come over our people. They are quite changed. If only we had our Siberian exiles here; then it would be quite different.' This is the sort of thing I heard occasionally. Many were sad and ashamed.

"But the old spirit was there still. And now it has revived, I think. And I suppose that, in reaction from the period of materialism, has come a time of heightened spirituality (what shall we call it?). Some have gone to great extremes. One letter told me of a man who had fasted thirty-six days, and was not expected to live. But for the most part it has been evident from their letters that they have been for some time quietly and carefully thinking out the problems of living in their present surroundings while fulfilling the highest demands of conscience. Thus, tho some feel inclined to give up milk and butter, yet they do not want their children and old and sick folk to suffer in consequence. And while they feel compunction in making animals

work for them, those same animals whom they can see enjoying so immensely the free life on the prairie, yet they do not wish to sell them to others, nor by giving up old habits too suddenly, or too wholesale, to entail suffering on the weak, or unpreparedness for emergency...

"What I want to impress upon people here is that these are – a great many of them at least – thinking peasantry. They are not all the same. That is one of the points in which I am so proud of them. They have their conservative old stagers and their moderates and their progressives. They have their formalists and their broad freethinkers. And they are human, oh, so human! Of course the Canadians don't understand them. But if the Canadian Government goes on with the kind and sympathetic forbearance that it has hitherto pursued, and if we will wait and watch what comes of it all, we may learn a lot."

"Let your moderation be known unto all men," says the Apostle. A live conscience needs to be "taught of God" in order that moderation and not mental unbalance shall result. The truth in its purity will seem erratic enough to worldly people who cannot comprehend it, and every other peculiarity should be carefully avoided. Conscientious blunders are amongst the most injurious. Note the mistaken conscientious conviction of Saul of Tarsus that he ought to persecute Christians. Note also the claim of Seventh Day Adventists that they *must work* on the first day of the week if they would have divine approval and everlasting life. As an illustration of a misguided conscience and its baneful effect in social affairs we mention the case of an editor's wife. She at one time took pleasure in assisting him in his work. By and by a deluded and misguided conscience told her that God wished her to be editor in chief and publish what she pleased. When the editor demurred that he dare not abandon his stewardship, the deluded conscience told its owner that she should no longer co-operate, but more, that she should break her marriage covenant in deserting her husband and home, and that she should say all manner of evil against him falsely, until such time as he would yield to her the liberties of the journal – which her *conscience* told her was God's will.

The moral of all such lessons is, "Be not wise above what is written." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, – rightly dividing the Word of truth." [R3099 : page 325]

"AWAY FROM ROME" MOVEMENT IN ENGLAND.

The Fortnightly Review contains an article from the pen of Rev. Arthur Galton, a clergyman of the Church of England, who formerly went over to the Roman Catholic communion but returned. Rev. Galton in serious vein declares "that he has been made the spokesman for one hundred and fifty secular clergymen" of the Roman Catholic church, pledged "to work jointly as a corporate body, by constitutional means and through canonical methods, for the reformation they desire" in the Roman Catholic Church and its "unlawful authority." He declares: "It is obvious to everyone who studies history with an impartial mind, that the English people and the Roman court are incompatible," and adds:

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"Between the Norman conquest and the middle of the fourteenth century, when our rulers generally were strong, when our sense of a national and an independent life was growing, that incompatibility and the friction caused by it are manifest in contemporary annals. The grievances then complained of were dealt with by legislation in the century that followed. These grievances, to sum them up shortly, were all attributed to the misgovernment, the cupidity, and the ever-growing usurpations of the Roman court. Some of our forefathers entered the Christian Church with a grateful and generous devotion for the Roman bishops, which continued until their sentimental affection was destroyed by the scandalous reality. Their practical experience of the methods and officials of the Roman court forced them to repudiate its authority, for political, financial and ethical reasons. In spirit, in aims, in methods and institutions, the English people and that narrow oligarchy of Italians, which pretends to be the Catholic Church, are by their respective qualities necessarily opposed to one another. Religious

questions enter much less into the mutual estrangement between Rome and England than most theological controversialists imagine. Numerous and flagrant individual cases, as well as the general effects of the Roman system in political and ecclesiastical affairs, must compel serious thinkers to ask themselves whether the Papal Government, as such, has any religion at all, except in phrases; or whether it can have had any, as a corporate institution, since the pontificate of Nicholas the First. The most prominent and abiding impression conveyed by the papacy, since the ninth century, is that it has been a political and financial organization masquerading in a theological disguise for the attainment of temporal domination."

"The writer and his friends see no hope of a reform by any ordinary means. Their plan is to combine, and to act together. They do not wish to make a new sect, nor do they wish to be merged into the Church of England. They intend to set up a bishop of their own, the validity of whose orders cannot be challenged by the papal theologians, or doubted by any Catholic. They wish to work still among and for their own people. The details for this are all arranged. For the lawfulness of this course, they appeal to ancient precedent and to the regulations of canon law. It is admitted, as they argue, that in a case of necessity, if lawful requests be denied by the existing authorities, the sufferers may provide an alternative authority for themselves. Few people, who know and face the facts, can deny the existence of grave abuses, which are a danger to faith and morals, as well as a violation of constitutional and canon law. Few, probably, can say with any truth that they expect a reformation by ordinary means, and through the Curia. The utterances of the Pope, the declared policy of his advisers, the growth of the religious orders, the whole condition of affairs in the Papal Church, proclaim surely a state of necessity. This of itself clears the reforming movement from that charge of schism to which it might be liable in ordinary times. These reformers look upon themselves as Englishmen by inheritance and birth, but not quite as Englishmen in church affairs. Their attitude, both with regard to Rome and Canterbury, is similar to that of certain communities in early days who were allowed, without

any taint of heresy or schism, to be ministered to by their own bishop, and not by the local bishops where they happened to reside. These reformers, then, propose to establish a subsidiary or strangers' bishop. They mean to repudiate the jurisdiction of bishops who are merely delegates and nominees of the Roman court. By severing themselves from the abuses and the usurped authority of that mundane organization, they do not abdicate their rights in the Catholic Church, they do not give up their reverence for the lawful and primatial authority of the Roman bishops, nor do they forget the precedence which is due by right to the historical position and the long services of their venerable See. If the papacy will only accept an unreasonable service, and continue to assert an unlawful authority, the charges of heresy and schism recoil of necessity upon itself. The position of these new reformers, with regard to Rome, is precisely the position and attitude of our own reformers in the sixteenth century."

"The reformers, for whom this article is written, have no drawing toward these neo-Anglicans, whom they consider more Romanized and narrow than the Romans. They bid them remember the position, the traditions, and the history of the English Church which they appear so strangely to have sophisticated or forgotten. They implore them to realize that the existing Curia may be broken to pieces, or may be broken away from lawfully, but it will never yield to persuasion, or grant any constitutional reform. Those who know it are compelled to give up all hope of reformation and reunion by means of it. Those who have only a theoretical imagination of it, who dream about it as an ideal, are surely ill-advised and worse, not to profit by the experiences and warnings of those who knew it only too well through its mundane, arbitrary, scheming, and un-English administration."

JEWISH WOES IN ROUMANIA.

"It is the time of Jacob's trouble," as the prophets foretold. The poor Jews are subjected to tribulations in one country after another by so-called Christians who are totally ignorant of real Christianity. Now

it is Roumania that persecutes, and all right-minded people are pleased to note that Mr. Hay, U.S. Secretary of State, has addressed a communication to the great powers of Europe calling attention to the fact that the "Berlin Conference" of European Powers (1878) created Roumania a separate State upon condition that its laws should maintain religious liberty, and that this arrangement is being violated. Whether the appeal will bear any [R3099 : page 326] fruit is doubtful; but it can surely do no harm to thus lift up a voice for Justice.

Concerning the persecutions the *Roumanian Bulletin* (London) says: –

"These conditions of life, humiliating tho they be, would not in themselves have sufficed to render the lot of the Roumanian Jews desperate, for it is conceivable that even without civil rights and opportunities of culture human beings may still manage to live with some degree of comfort. It soon became clear to the Roumanian Government, however, that a large and increasing unassimilated element in the country would inevitably lead to serious social and economic complications, and accordingly measures were taken to guard against this fresh danger. These measures have had for their object the increase of misery and of the difficulties of life among the Jews, with the ultimate view of keeping their numbers stationary.

"In pursuance of this terrible policy, almost every form of Jewish economic activity has been the subject of restrictive legislation aimed ostensibly at aliens in general, but in reality affecting only the Jews. They have been expelled from the revenue service, the tobacco regime, and the railway organization. They are excluded from government tenders and contracts. They are placed at the mercy of their Christian competitors in trade, who alone are allowed to be members of chambers of commerce. Their participation in the management of financial corporations and joint-stock companies is severely limited. They may not act as brokers in any trade, and they and their agents are excluded from grain and cattle markets. Their expulsion from the drink

traffic has ruined thousands of them. It is calculated that 20,000 were reduced to beggary by the law of 1884, which prohibited them from trading as pedlars."

The Roumanian government evidently desires to force the Jews to emigrate, and the Jews are doing so as rapidly as possible. On this point the *Spectator* (London) says: –

"They wish to reach America, but the Americans will not receive them unless they can prove that they are not paupers; and as they are two hundred thousand in number, the collection of the necessary funds is a work of difficulty and time. In Roumania they have absolutely no rights, and live at the mercy of a population which hates them to such a degree that their parliament has declared all Jews to be foreigners, altho they have been resident for centuries. Neither Germany nor Austria will do anything for them, and it seems impossible for Western Europe, which is more tolerant, either to protect them or to find them a new habitat."

