

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

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

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

ARTICLE VII.

CRITICAL NOTES.

THE "WE" PASSAGES IN ACTS.

1. No doubt others¹ have thought of the same thing before myself; and perhaps have worked it out fully, which I cannot claim at present to have done. But it may, nevertheless, not be out of place for me to propose that Timothy wrote the documents from which the author of Acts made use of the "we" passages. This thought has come to me purely through an inductive study of the book of Acts. I was somewhat surprised, not to say startled, when the thought first came to my mind. Let us consider the various "we" passages in order.

2. The Bezan "we" of Acts xi. 27 (28) need not be taken into consideration. The text is as follows: "In these days there came prophets down from Jerusalem to Antioch, and there was great rejoicing; and when we had assembled, one of them, Agabus by name, said," etc. (Codex Bezae, D, Acts xi. 27f.). Ramsay says, as to the value of the Bezan text at this point: "The Bezan 'we' in [Acts] xi. 28 [27] will satisfy those who consider the Bezan text to be Lukan; but to us it appears to condemn the Bezan text as of non-Lukan origin" (St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen, p. 210; see McGiffert, *Ibid*, p. 238. n. i.).

3. Passing on, the first use of the first person plural which need receive our special notice is to be found in the sixteenth

¹The present note is the result of a wholly original and independent investigation of the topic in hand. Since writing it, I have learned that Meyer (Comm. on Acts, Eng. Edit., p. 4) denies that Timothy wrote the "we" passages in Acts; he says further that Schleiermacher, Bleek, Ulrich and de Wette agree in saying that he did write them; while Mayerhoff ascribes the whole book to him. McGiffert (History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, p. 434f.) denies that Timothy could have written these passages.

chapter. This chapter opens with a short account of Paul's finding Timothy at Derbe, on his second missionary journey. This is the first mention of Timothy. He accompanies Paul and Silas as they proceed westward on their journey until they arrive at Troas. Here Paul has his vision and the call into Macedonia. This account is followed immediately by the use, for the first time, of the first person plural: "And when he [Paul] had seen the vision, straightway **WE** sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts xvi. 10). So far as we know, the company consisted of but the three,—Paul, Silas, Timothy. We have no record of anyone's having joined them before they came to Troas, or at Troas. The atmosphere of the first person is retained until verse 17; from here the narrative concerns especially Paul and Silas, until the fourteenth verse of chapter seventeen. Paul and Silas, as the instigators of a disturbance, had been imprisoned at Philippi. Having been released, they went to Thessalonica, where they lodged with one Jason, and where they again got into trouble. As security was demanded of Jason for the keeping of the peace, Paul and Silas, fearing that they might bring more trouble to their host, departed by night for Berea. Here they are joined by Timothy, who had evidently remained in the background in order to avoid unnecessary trouble. No doubt it was not only to his own personal advantage, but more especially to the great advantage of their enterprise, to have a sympathizer outside the circle,—outside the number liable to arrest,—as a private messenger, informer of friends, etc. Paul goes on from Berea to Athens, Silas and Timothy remaining at Berea. It is a notable fact that Timothy is always mentioned last in order in these lists; no doubt due to his modesty and regard for his superiors. It is also noticeable what a vivid account is given of the experiences narrated in chapters xvi. 1–xvii. 14.

4. Paul leaves Athens and goes to Corinth. Here he is again joined by Silas and Timothy (xviii. 5). From this point on for a ways, the narrative concerns Paul alone (of the three), or until his departure for Jerusalem, spoken of in verse 18.

Silas and Timothy are evidently left in Greece, and do not again see Paul until he has visited Jerusalem and has come to *Ephesus* on his third journey westward. After remaining at Ephesus for some time, Timothy, along with Erastus (evidently a slave), is sent to Macedonia. They no doubt carry with them one of the Corinthian letters (either our 1 Corinthians or ? Corinthians x.-xiii.). Throughout this section the first person does not appear until Paul has left Ephesus and come into Macedonia. Passing through Macedonia, he comes into Greece. Here he remains three months, and no doubt is joined by Timothy and Erastus, though nothing further is said of Erastus throughout Acts. (But see 2 Tim. iv. 20. The Erastus of Rom. xvi. 23 is probably not the same, though possibly so.) On his way to Syria, there accompany Paul from Greece (Westcott and Hort omit "as far as to Asia," and insert it in the margin) Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy (mentioned last in the list again); at Troas they are joined by two from Asia; viz., Tychicus and Trophimus (Acts xx. 4-5). Immediately we have the use of the first person plural again (ver. 6). All but Paul (Timothy among the number) go by ship to Assos, whither Paul is to go by land from Troas. Notice the use of the first person plural all through this account; and we know that Timothy was among the number (Acts xx. 6 (two times), 13, 14, 15 (three times)). The remainder of the chapter has to do with Paul, but we notice that upon their taking their leave of Miletus the first personal construction is again resumed (I use the R. V. xxi. 1, 2, 3, 5 (seven times), 6, 7 (three times), 8 (two times), 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 (two times), 16 (two times). Thus we have Paul and his companions (among whom is Timothy), in Jerusalem. Then follow Paul's experiences in Jerusalem and in Cæsarea, until the departure of Paul and his companions for Rome (Acts xxvii. 1). Here we notice that the "we" passages are again found and remain throughout the account of the journey. It is more difficult to determine whom the "we" means here—whether more than one besides Paul or whether but one. In xxvii. 2 we learn that Aristarchus, one of

the two Thessalonians who had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, was on board the ship (Acts xx. 4f.). Ramsay thinks (consistently with his position) that Luke was in the company and that he wrote the narrative which we now have before us. The inertia produced by the evidence as to Timothy's presence during all the former experiences recorded in the "we" passages seems to me great enough to give him to us in this voyage as a companion of Paul, and the writer of the "we" document. We notice all through this account the vividness which we have seen in former "we" passages (xxvii. 1, 2 (two times), 3, 4, 5 (two times), 6, 7 (four times), 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 20, 27, 29, 37; xxviii. 1, 2 (two times), 7 (two times), 10 (three times), 11, 12, 13 (two times), 14 (two times), 15 (two times), 16). Thus we see Timothy with Paul in Rome.

5. From this study of Acts we have seen that Timothy was with Paul on all occasions where the "we" passages occur until we come to the first part of chapter xxvii., where no mention is made of him as a companion of Paul; that there is no objection whatever to supposing that Timothy was with Paul on this journey; while, as I shall show later, the evidence is that he was with him; that there is mention of no one else who was so uniformly with Paul on the occasions described by the "we" passages (an important point); that there is no mention whatever in Acts of Luke, whom Ramsay (St. Paul, etc., pp. 315-316) and others credit with having written the "we" documents.

6. Supposing that Timothy was not with Paul on his voyage to Rome, then we have left him in Jerusalem. But we know that he was later with Paul at Rome, since Paul includes his name, as an associate and present, in his salutation in the Epistle to the Colossians (i. 1), written while Paul was in Rome; and in the salutation in the Epistle to the Philippians (i. 1), and farther on in the same letter (ii. 19). Hence it seems most natural to suppose that he accompanied Paul on the voyage to Rome.

7. Again, Paul makes but three references to Luke (Col. iv. 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11); while he mentions Timothy thirteen times, fourteen times if he wrote the Hebrews (Rom.

xvi. 21; 1 Cor. iv. 17; xvi. 10; 2 Cor. i. 1, 19; Phil. i. 1; ii. 19; Col. i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Thess. i. 1; iii. 2, 6; Philem. 1; Heb. xiii. 23). Besides this, so far as we are aware, Paul wrote no epistle to Luke; while he wrote at least two to Timothy. And still further, to indicate the regard Paul had for Timothy, and the place the latter held in the old missionary's heart as compared with Luke, we notice the longing in Paul's breast for Timothy, even while Luke was with him—as though Luke were unable to fill the want which he had of sympathy and fellow-feeling; for he says to Timothy: "Hurry up and come to me as soon as you possibly can. Demas and Crescens and Titus have all deserted me. Only Luke is with me; I need your presence, he is not enough" (2 Tim. iv. 9-11). In but one place does Paul speak of Luke as a fellow-worker (Philem. 24); while in ten places he speaks of Timothy as being such (Rom. xvi. 21; 1 Cor. xvi. 10-11; 2 Cor. i. 1, 19; Phil. i. 1; Col. i. 1; 1 Thess. i. 1; iii. 2 (R. V. margin); iii. 6; Philem. 1). To be sure, Paul speaks of Luke as the "beloved physician" (Col. iv. 14); but in nine places, in ten if he wrote Hebrews, he uses as endearing terms concerning Timothy,—even more endearing in some cases (1 Cor. iv. 17; xvi. 10-11; 2 Cor. i. 1; Phil. ii. 19f. 1 Thess. iii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 2, 18; 2 Tim. i. 2; Philem. 1; Heb. xiii. 23). The argument, of course, is that one more near and intimate with Paul would have been that much more apt to have written an account of Paul's experiences.

8. There is, therefore, very strong internal evidence in the New Testament to show that Timothy wrote the "we" passages contained in the Acts; perhaps the documents from which the "we" passages were taken by the author of the Acts. There is, so far as I am aware, no evidence, equally conclusive, to indicate that he did *not* write those passages. Hence, our conclusion must be very palpable to all.

E. B. TREFETHREN.

Waubay, South Dakota.

"THE SIMPLICITY OF WILL."

I.

THE article on the above subject, in the January number of this Review, ought not to pass unchallenged. It closes with the implication that an act of free-will would not be doubtful if we had "all knowledge," i.e. if we knew all that preceded the moment of decision. Some of the writer's assumptions we may accept, but others he seems to confuse, or rather to misapprehend. He asserts that will-action is the moving of the self toward an end. We may well accept this as a definition of will in general, and animals have this, as he claims. But will in man is very different from will in animals, although they may be alike included in this definition. An animal's action is determined by heredity and environment. There are certain impulses to action from these two sources, and the action follows from necessity, and, because we know there is no alternative, we do not blame the animal. But when we speak of free-will we mean that when heredity and environment have presented their impulses, as they do in man also, there is an alternative before the man to do or not to do, and that it is impossible to tell beforehand what he will do. If it were possible to predict, the man is not free, in the philosophical sense.

The writer says: "Deliberation is not essential to will-freedom. With, or without, deliberation there may come the decision to act; and this decision, being unforced and unhindered, is free." But in what is usually regarded as free will, there is the consideration of "to do" or "not to do," before the choice; and this is what is called "deliberation," even though it may seem instantaneous. He says again: "Freedom of will does not require the presence in the mind of two or more objects of choice." It is a matter of definition. *To do* or *not to do* are usually regarded as two objects of choice, both present before the mind, and both essential to choice, or what is called free-will. He says again very truly: "The crucial test of any theory of the will is found in its view of character and moral freedom"; and he quotes: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," and adds, "This looks quite the other way

from freedom." Who would deny this? Christ evidently does not mean to say, "Whosoever transgresses does so because he is a slave of sin," but, "Whosoever makes the supreme choice of sin, by that becomes a slave of sin." John explains this in 1 John iii. 9: "Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin," using the very same words. No sane man would presume to dispute Christ, and say that any man whose character is formed is still exercising the full metaphysical free-will. There are two kinds of freedom, and no one can intelligently discuss the subject without discriminating the two. "True freedom is perfect obedience to perfect law." But this is not metaphysical free-will. The one who has made the supreme choice has used up his free-will, and is no longer free in that sense. His character is fixed. He is a "servant" to the choice he has made. Paul says the same in Rom. vi. 16: "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness." The yielding is free; but when the yielding has taken place, bondage follows, whether to sin, or to holiness. But this bondage to holiness is freedom in a higher and different sense.

The writer says again: "The self at any moment of mature life is the result of heredity and the whole life history, including an incalculable number of volitions in the sphere of morals, each one of which, by the law of habit, has left its mark, and helped to form the moral character." We may agree to this, but not to the conclusion drawn from it. As said before, an animal's action at any time is the result of heredity and environment. A man has a similar influence from these sources, and yet his action may be determined by his moral character, which is the result of previous choices. But, if so, he is not metaphysically free. He is, however, held responsible for the act, because he is responsible for previous choices which resulted in the character. He is only free to act according to his character. We soon find ourselves in error and confusion if we do not distinguish this freedom from the properly called free-will.

The law of cause and effect which holds in the natural world or world of necessity, does not hold in the sphere of spirit, or

rational being, or free-agency. We modify it to say: "The cause must be *competent* to the effect," instead of saying: "This cause necessarily produces this effect, and no other." On this same subject, a writer in "notes" in the July number for 1905 says of the average of choices, that if the average is changing, and the mass progressing, that progress must be determined, and that the same power that controls the changing average controls the individual, and concludes: "If there is a fixed purpose in the universe, individual contributions must be determined" (p. 565), and so he denies free-will.

But this conclusion does not follow. We may illustrate individual uncertainty as consistent with certainty in averages, even when there is progress. In throwing dice, we are uncertain what number will come at the next throw; yet we know that, if the dice are perfectly made, in a million throws each side will turn up an equal number of times. And we know, too, that, if one side be loaded, the opposite side will turn up as much oftener as that loading requires. So an individual's choice may be indeterminate and uncertain; and yet, applying a certain motive to all, like loading one side of a die, the result will be seen in the average. This illustration is faulty, because purely mechanical; but it shows that certainty in the average is consistent with uncertainty in the individual. In the case of dice, the next throw is uncertain, because modified by unknown causes; but, in the case of the free-will, there is a certain added push in a given direction on each one, which is manifest in the average result. When we say that the free-will is not determined by the impulses that act upon it, we do not mean that it acts without regard to those impulses. The determining self chooses among the various impulses that act upon it, and acts in accord with one of them. If among these impulses another is introduced acting in the same way in every case, the effect of this will be manifest in the average result. Even though each individual is free and his action uncertain, we know that there is a degree of probability, which is measured by the average result. This is seen by all in the constant pressure of the inherited impulse to sin, which is so strong that it would take away the sense of

personal responsibility, were it not that the Holy Spirit practically restores the freedom, making the result uncertain in the individual. Likewise, added common impulses may be noted in their effect upon free-agents whose acts are uncertain.

Atlanta, Georgia.

S. W. HOWLAND.

II.

THE foregoing fair and pertinent criticism can be answered indirectly by my going over in outline the whole question of Free Will, and its relation to Cause.

What is freedom? We commonly think of it, in a negative way, as the opposite of bondage. We imagine all sorts of fetters and obstacles and coercions, and then sweep them all away, and call it freedom. We even extend the term to lifeless matter. Water is free from impurities; a road is free from obstructions. In this usage, that from which a material thing is free is something that interferes with its best and purest condition. We do not say that a rose is free from fragrance, but *destitute* of that quality, while it may be free from thorns. When we come to sentient beings, we say that they are free from pain, from fear, etc., and we see in this freedom a contribution to their better selves. Rising to rational and moral beings, we recognize a freedom from interference with their wishes, aspirations, strivings. We call a man free who can do as he pleases, and as his best self demands. He is "free indeed" in a high practical meaning when the inner fetters of evil are gone.

But all this is not freedom of will. There is a question underlying this relative and character freedom. Is all volition itself free? And, if so, from what is it free? Certainly not from the man's self or nature, for it is the outcome of that nature. It seems idle to try to go back of the spontaneous act of self, in our search for the foundation of freedom. Locke found "the liberty of intellectual beings" in the power to *suspend* decision. The objection to this is too obvious to have escaped general notice; for if the volition to suspend is free, then suspension is not necessary to freedom, and if it is not free it

cannot be the basis of freedom. There is nothing you can *do to yourself* to give you free will, although there is no limit to what may be done to promote what I have called character freedom. Volition, also, is not free from the opportunities that constitute motive, for without such opportunities it can find no object, and no possibility of action.

Can we also say that volition is not free from the law of cause and effect? Causation is not coercion, and, abstractly considered, is not the opposite of freedom. Further, if the whole realm of voluntary action is to be excluded from causation, what does the law of cause and effect amount to in the interpretation of the universe? The causal links of lifeless matter are of small account compared with the linked activities of myriad minds and countless generations.

But, aside from general presumptions, what are the facts of volitional experience? Opportunity is a cause of volition; is opportunity incompatible with freedom? An attractive offer from a buyer is a motive and cause of sale, but the sale is free. I am using the word cause in its most general sense, as that to which something owes its existence.

Again, the character of a man is a cause of his choices, but the causal influence of character is not incompatible with freedom, because the character is the man himself. Character is cumulative. Trace it back as far as you please, every step marked by freedom, but every step is, through habit, causal of the one that follows. If, then, volition is not free from one's self and character, not free from opportunity, motive, and environment, and not free from causation, from what is it free? What is there left for freedom? The answer is simple. *Volition is absolutely ONE'S OWN, and is free from whatever interferes with its being in origin one's own.* No drawing of motive, and no pushing of character, can make volition otherwise than free in this sense.

What does this freedom amount to in ethics and philosophy? In ethics it is the foundation of responsibility. It makes conduct strictly personal, and therefore open to praise and blame. In philosophy can I not say that it offers a basis of harmony

between free-will and true determinism? This to many minds is as far astray as to propose harmony between light and darkness, good and evil, truth and error, something and nothing. But let us see. In the first place, is there anything to which a determinist can object in the idea that every voluntary act is absolutely one's own, and free from coercion? What kind of act different from this does determinism require or imagine? There is little need of argument on this line.

The difficulty is rather on the side of the "free-willist." He wants something that cannot be *determined*. He distrusts a freedom that is, in the last analysis, but the opportunity of spontaneous volition. And yet he must admit a large measure of truth in determinism. As a matter of fact, he knows that, in practical life, character determines particular acts. And he knows too—and he would die rather than deny it—that these particular acts are free. Is there any way to convince him that the free will advocated in this paper is the genuine thing, and that there is no other?

This is not the time to expose what I believe to be the fancies of strict indeterminism.¹ True determinism is based on rational or moral causation. Personal causation, which flows from the character and nature of the agent, meets object-causation, which flows from opportunity, motive and environment, and both *determine* the act. Do they *compel* it? No, forever No. Why? Because the act thus determined is the agent's own, wholly and absolutely his own; and if the volition is one's own it is free. Let it be brought into being in whatever way you please, it is free or it is nothing. There comes to the moment of decision the "I," filled with forces of thought and feeling. The "I"

¹As seen, for example, in Dr. Whedon's book with its old-fashioned title "The Freedom of the Will as a Basis of Human Responsibility and Divine Government, elucidated and maintained in its issue with the Necessitarian theories of Hobbes, Edwards, the Princeton Essayists, and other leading advocates." This book, though published more than forty years ago, is to-day, I am assured, the standard in Methodist circles. It was reviewed, in part, in the *New Englander* for April, 1865, and the review was criticised in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* soon after.

is causative. It meets the *defining* cause of opportunity with its own *decisive*, or, if you choose, producing, efficient, creative, cause. The act is determined, but it is free.

Is the determining of volition a sufficient basis for prediction? I should answer that no mere man can always foresee the action of the human will. And this not merely because of our ignorance in estimating character, but because we cannot rely on the permanence of human character. Permanence is the rule, but with many exceptions. Character can be revolutionized. Multitudes have been "born again" who had been given over to hopeless perdition. We cannot tell beforehand what changes of character will take place around us or within us. Nor, as a matter of philosophy, does it seem important. The point is that, if we predict volitions at all, we predict them as free.

Cleveland, Ohio.

L. S. POTWIN.

POLITICS AND POPULAR DELUSIONS.

It is not wise to be oblivious to the dangers of democracy. The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. No oppression is so hopeless as that which has its origin in the selfish interests of the majority. Nothing is so blind as a deluded populace, and nothing is more dangerous. We are happy, however, to be able, with Lincoln, to believe that "while some of the people may be deluded all the time, and all of the people some of the time, all of the people cannot be deluded all of the time."

It was the fear of the sweeping delusions of a fickle public which led the framers of the Constitution of the United States to insert into that document so many checks upon the popular will. The House of Representatives, except at the special call of the President, is not permitted to make any laws until more than a year has elapsed since the excitement of the election; and then the hasty action of the House is checked by the Senate, which responds more slowly to the changes in public sentiment; while over both houses the President holds the restraint of his veto power. More impressive than all is the power given to

the Supreme Court, a body appointed for life, whose decisions can render nugatory the action of all the legislative departments.

In many quarters much discontent is expressed in view of these restrictions of the popular will. But in fact there is probably nothing else which gives more hope for the permanence of our institutions than the readiness with which the people accept the restrictions of the Constitution. In more than a century only fifteen amendments to the Constitution have been made, while the enactment of future amendments grows less and less likely.

The most prevalent form of popular delusion is a belief in the omnipotence of statute law and in the omniscience and integrity of the legislature elected by the people. Slight reflection will show, however, that nothing is more disappointing than this public confidence in the elective representatives of the people. The great majority of the members of our successive legislatures are new and untried men, who have but an imperfect knowledge of the laws already in existence, or of the great principles through which justice between man and man has been preserved amid the complicated social forces in continuous operation about them. As a result, crude legislation is enacted without restraint. It is estimated that fifteen thousand new laws are annually enacted in the United States. The safety of the people lies in the fact that the most of these are practically dead letters. In the efforts of the legislators of Ohio to make more effective the common law respecting conspiracy, a statute was placed upon our books which, if strictly enforced, we are told, would send to the penitentiary almost every business man in the State; and this, not because they are transgressing any natural law of justice, but because they are, by coöperation, attempting to correct the evils of unrestrained and cutthroat competition.

One of the most unfortunate features in connection with a government through representative democracy is the extent to which politicians are compelled to fall in with, if not to foment, popular delusions, in order to secure election to responsible

offices, and the enactment of desirable laws. An interesting illustration of this occurred during the past season in connection with the passage by Congress of the law freeing denatured alcohol from the revenue tax. This certainly was a law desirable in itself. But, in order to secure its passage, the whole country was worked up to believe that this would reduce the price of the article to ten or twelve cents per gallon, so that it would compete with gasoline, which is chiefly produced by the Standard Oil Company, and force the price of that commodity down to a lower level. For a brief period almost every periodical in the country teemed with articles to this effect, and at last the President almost forced the passage of the law by urging these considerations upon Congress. The fact, however, all the while, was, that there is no prospect that denatured alcohol can be manufactured for much less than forty cents per gallon, or that it can take the place of gasoline at all in the motor engines, where its consumption was most rapidly increasing. How it was that this delusion could be made to take such sudden possession of the people is to us an insoluble mystery. But it remains an illustration of the fact that an appeal to the supposed self-interest of the people is the most effective instrument for the use of that most dangerous enemy of republics—the demagogue.

A parallel, however, occurred in connection with the declaration of war by the United States against Spain for the liberation of Cuba. President McKinley and his wise advisers resisted the popular movement to the extent of their ability, well knowing the disappointing results which would follow such a war, even if apparently successful; while they had confidence that diplomacy would, in due time, accomplish all that could be reasonably hoped for under existing conditions. But suddenly the war fever grew into a flame, and secured the advocacy of almost every periodical in the United States, so that the war was looked upon throughout the country as one of the most remarkable outbursts of disinterested benevolence that had ever been exhibited in national affairs. That it was a benevolent impulse we may not deny, but that the war was entered upon

thoughtlessly, and without counting the cost, and that it was not a wise method for accomplishing desired ends is becoming more and more evident. It has entailed upon the nation the endless disappointments of Philippine government, and it has established at our doors a so-called republic, where the minority appeals to arms whenever it is defeated at the polls, and where complete anarchy seems likely to ensue, unless it is taken in charge by some stronger government, when very likely the old conditions of Spanish rule will recur.

The delusion most in danger of prevailing in the United States at the present time pertains to the Government regulation of railroad rates. The first law which the Reform Legislature of Ohio recently passed was one requiring all the railroads of the State to carry passengers at the rate of two cents per mile,—a rate which might be proper enough to prescribe for the main through lines on which great numbers of passengers are carried, but which is obviously unjust in the case of a large number of the shorter lines which have been built for the accommodation of the people at great risk, in many cases, of much pecuniary loss. Yet all parties joined in favoring this law, and scarcely any politician dared to vote against it, while the voters in general hailed it as a new stand which had been taken for righteousness in the State. Its violation of the rights of property at the behest of a selfish and wicked desire of the people to get service for less than it was worth seemed not to suggest itself to any one. And so in the whole matter of regulating railroad rates the country is in imminent danger of being swept off its feet into the enactment of laws which are both unwise and unjust. Common carriers have still some property rights in their business, and the Constitution of the United States is not wholly a dead letter. Yet a few months ago we had the spectacle of almost all parties in the country clamoring for the regulation of rates by a commission whose decisions should be exempt from revision by the courts; while a desperate effort was made to discredit and disgrace one of the oldest and ablest members of the Senate, because he ventured, almost alone, to

oppose the bill and to vote against it, on the ground that it was unjust, unwise, and unconstitutional.

But it is in Russia that the reign of popular delusions is most rampant. Since the abolition of serfdom fifty years ago, the population has doubled, and under the communal system of agriculture the production of the land is not equal to the wants of the people. The late Duma was carried away with the idea that the evils could be remedied by giving to the peasants the portion of arable land still in the hands of the Government and of the large landed proprietors. But to any one cognizant of the real state of affairs it is as clear as day that such a division of land, aside from its violation of the rights of private property, would be but throwing a sop to Cerberus, and would at once largely diminish the agricultural products of the country; for the communal system fosters slovenly modes of agriculture and the rapid impoverishment of the land. What the agricultural population of Russia needs is the breaking up of this communal system and the introduction of the higher modes of cultivation, to which private ownership in land has so far been the only successful incentive.

Another delusion was that assassination and bomb-throwing are lawful for revolutionists, while the inflicting of capital punishment upon traitors and assassins is murder in the first degree. So a second demand was that universal amnesty should be proclaimed, and that the death penalty should be abolished in the army and navy and amid the exigencies calling for military rule, as it long has been in cases tried before the civil courts.

A year ago I was in Moscow, at the time of the meeting of the zemstsvos, when Mr. W. T. Stead came to the city to act as an intermediary between the Czar and the members of the Liberal party. After two or three meetings with them, Mr. Stead said to me that the Liberals of Russia were as ignorant as children concerning the principles of constitutional government: they had no conception of the compromises and mutual concessions which must be made if a constitution were to regulate both the executive and legislative powers of government.

The discussion of all practical measures was tabooed in their assembly, and all plans were considered by the way they might be expected to work in the millennium. The Duma fulfilled the gloomy predictions of Mr. Stead. It was unwilling to do anything unless it could do everything. The desire to clear the field of all the institutions of a thousand years' growth, and depend upon the harvest which should spring up, amidst the stubble, from seed of its own sowing, prevailed; so that again we have the delusion of supposing that statute law is omnipotent, and that ripe fruit can be plucked from a green tree. The worst service the press of this country can render the cause of freedom in Russia is to applaud the misguided heroism of the anarchists, and to abuse the Czar for his every effort to preserve order and prevent the horrors of a complete collapse of the existing government.

Oberlin, Ohio.

G. FREDERICK WRIGHT.