

Major Problems in European History Series

*Major Problems in the
History of Imperial Russia*

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in 45 volumes. The legislation printed here, as edited and translated for this volume, illustrates both the comprehensive content and the didactic style of the various Petrine reforms. It also illustrates Peter's preoccupation with state, especially military, concerns and his striving to catch up with the more advanced European countries. These documents are followed by excerpts from Peter's legislation of 1721 enacting his reform of the Russian church, whereby the autonomous office of patriarch was abolished and replaced by a Holy Synod appointed by the tsar.

The main author of Peter's church reform was Feofan Prokopovich (1681–1736), a Ukrainian divine from the Kiev Academy who had studied in the West and in 1715 had been called to St. Petersburg to assist the tsar in various projects. His speech at Peter's funeral in 1725, praising the first emperor in terms that were to become part of the official Petrine myth, comes next.

Petrine Reform Legislation

PETER CHANGES THE CALENDAR, 1699

It is known to the Great Sovereign [Peter] that not only in many European Christian countries, but also among the Slavic peoples who are in full accord with Our Eastern Orthodox Church . . . [as well as among] the Greeks, from whom we received our faith: that all of these peoples count their years from eight days after the birth of Christ, that is, from January 1 [rather than September 1, as did the Russians], and not from the creation of the world [as did the Russians, the present year by this method being 7208]; wherefore there is a great difference in these [two calendars]. It is now 1699 years since the birth of Christ, and this coming January 1 will begin the new year 1700 and a new century. So the Great Sovereign has decreed, for this good and beneficial matter, that henceforth in all government offices beginning this January 1 the year is to be counted as 1700 from the birth of Christ. And in recognition of this good beginning and of the new century [there shall be] in the royal city of Moscow, after solemn prayers of thanksgiving to God, appropriate festivities. . . .

PETER'S DECREE ON WEARING GERMAN CLOTHES, 1701

[All ranks of the service nobility, leading merchants, military personnel, and inhabitants of Moscow and the other towns, except the clergy] are to wear German clothes and hats and footwear and to ride in German saddles; and their wives and children without exception are also so to dress. Henceforth nobody is to wear [traditional] Russian or cossack clothes or to ride in Russian [i.e., Tatar-style] saddles; nor are craftsmen to make such things or to trade in them. And if contrary to this the Great Sovereign's decree some people wear such Russian or cossack clothes and

ride in Russian saddles, the town gatekeepers are to exact a fine from them, [so much] for those on foot and [much more] from those on horseback. Also, craftsmen who make such things and trade in them will be, for their disobedience, severely punished.

PETER'S DECREE ON SHAVING, 1705

All courtiers and officials in Moscow and all the other towns, as well as leading merchants and other townsmen, except priests and deacons, must henceforth by this the Great Sovereign's decree shave their beards and mustaches. And whosoever does not wish to do so, but to go about with [traditional Russian] beard and mustache, is to pay a [hefty] fine, according to his rank. . . . And the Department of Land Affairs [in Moscow] is to give [such persons] a badge in receipt, as will the government offices in the other towns, which badges they must wear. And from the peasants a [small] toll is to be exacted every day at the town gates, without which they cannot enter or leave the town. . . .

PETER'S DECREE ON ENTAIL, 1714

We Peter the First, All-Russian Tsar and Autocrat, etc., etc., etc., promulgate this decree to all subjects of Our State, of whatever rank and dignity they may be.

Whereas by the division of immovable property [real estate] among children after [the death of their] fathers great harm is done in Our State, both to State interests and to the ruin of subjects and the families themselves. . . .

[And whereas] should the immovable property pass to one son alone and the others [inherit] only the movable property [furniture, clothes, etc.], state revenues would be more regular . . . [noble] families would not decline . . . [and] the other sons would have to earn their bread through state service, education, trade, or something else . . . which would be beneficial to the State. . . .

We therefore ordain

1. that all immovable properties, that is, family, service, and purchased estates as well as homesteads and shops, are not to be sold or mortgaged but retained by one family member, in such manner:

2. Whoever has sons is to bequeath the immovable property to one of them alone, whomever he wishes, and that one will inherit [the said property]; the other children of both sexes will be awarded the movable properties, which their father or mother is to divide among them as he or she sees fit, leaving out the one who will inherit the immovable. And if somebody does not have sons, but does have daughters, he must do likewise. And if no such designation is made in his lifetime, then the immovable is to be designated by [government] decree the inheritance of the big son by primogeniture [*po pervenstvu*], and the movable will be divided in equal portions among the others; and the same is to be understood about daughters.

3. Whoever is childless may leave the immovable to one of his family [or clan, *rod*], as he wishes, and give the movable as he wishes to his relatives or even to strangers. But if he does not do so during his lifetime, then all of his property will be divided by decree among his family [or clan]: the immovable to a near [the nearest] one, and the rest to the others, as appropriate, in equal fashion. . . .

The laws of Peter I printed here are taken from the PSZ, in this order: vol. 3 no. 1736; vol. 4 nos. 1887, 2015; vol. 5 nos. 2789, 3151; vol. 6 nos. 3711, 3770, 3840, 3890, 3893; vol. 7 nos. 4378, 4443. Translated by James Cracraft.

16. And should some matter henceforth arise that cannot be settled by this decree, it is to be reported in writing to the Senate, where special points [clarifications or additions] will be made and published, as with this decree. And without such a further decree no action is to be taken, under pain of loss [confiscation] of all one's goods and banishment. . . .

MANIFESTO DEPRIVING TSAREVICH ALEKSEI OF THE THRONE, 1718

We [Peter I] hope that the great part of Our loyal subjects . . . know with what diligence and care We tried to raise Our firstborn son, Aleksei. To which end [We] gave him from his childhood tutors both Russian and foreign, and ordered them to instruct him not only in the fear of God and Our Christian faith of the Greek confession, but in the best of military and political (or civil) knowledge and foreign affairs, and to read in other languages History and all the military and civil sciences appropriate to a worthy ruler, so that he might be a worthy heir to Our All-Russian throne.

But We have seen that all Our above-mentioned efforts for the upbringing and education of Our said son were in vain, for he was ever disobedient to Us and paid no attention to what is proper for a good heir, and neither studied nor listened to the tutors assigned to him by Us, but rather went about with certain useless people from whom no good could have come to him. And though We treated him repeatedly with warmth and tenderness, and sometimes with paternal punishment, and took him with Us on many military campaigns, so as to teach him the military business, which is the first of the secular matters [needed] for the protection of his fatherland, but always withdrew him from harsh battles for the sake of the succession, though We did not spare Ourselves, and sometimes left him in Moscow, entrusting to him the governance of certain State affairs, for his instruction; and then sent him into foreign lands, believing that the sight of such regular States would inspire him and incline him to goodness and industry. Yet all this Our zeal availed nothing, and these seeds of learning fell on stone. For not only did he fail to act in this, but he hated it, and showed no inclination whatsoever for either military or civil affairs. Rather did he ceaselessly cavort with useless and base persons of coarse and disgusting habits. . . .

And though Our son, for his hostile deeds over many years against Us, his father and Sovereign . . . deserves to lose his life, nevertheless in paternal love We deeply sympathize with him, and forgive him his transgressions, and free him from punishment. Yet in consideration of his unworthiness and of all the above-mentioned useless behavior We cannot, in good conscience, leave him heir after us to the Russian throne, knowing that through this dishonorable conduct he would forfeit all the glory of Our people and benefit to the State acquired by God's mercy and Our unceasing labors. . . .

We therefore . . . by paternal authority . . . and as Autocratic Sovereign, for the good of the State, deprive him, Our son Aleksei, because of his faults and crimes, of the succession after Us to Our All-Russian throne, even if not one person of Our family should survive Us. . . . [Note: Peter I's baby son by his second wife,

also named Peter, who was born in 1715, is then proclaimed heir; but the child died in 1719, leaving Peter I with two daughters. See further below, Peter's succession law of 1722.]

PETER'S DECREE ON THE PURCHASE OF PEASANT VILLAGES FOR FACTORIES, 1721

Whereas by former decrees it was forbidden to merchants to buy [peasant] villages because such persons, except for their commercial ventures, had no other enterprises of benefit to the State; so now, following Our decrees, as all can see, many merchants have companies and many especially have founded various industrial works augmenting the State's benefit, namely silver, copper, iron, coal, and such like as well as silk, linen, and wool factories, many of which are already in operation. Therefore it is permitted by this Our decree, for the increase of such factories, for both nobles and merchants to buy [peasant] villages for these factories with the permission of the College of Manufactures [a government department recently created by Peter; see below the College's "Regulation" of 1723], but only on this condition: that these villages should remain permanently assigned to these factories. Therefore neither nobles nor merchants may sell or mortgage these villages to anybody without the factories, nor by any schemes enserf or redeem [these peasants]; except that in cases of dire necessity these villages may be sold with the factories with the permission of the College of Manufactures. And should anybody act contrary to this [decree], everything will be confiscated. . . .

DECREE ON THE SALE OF SERFS, 1721

It was customary in Russia, and still is, that the petty nobility [*melkoe shliakhetstvo*] sells peasants and workers and domestics separately, like cattle, to whoever wants to buy [them]; which is not done in the whole world, and especially when the landlord sells father or mother, son or daughter [separately] from the [rest of the] family, whence comes much grief. His Majesty the Tsar has ordered a halt to this selling. But if a complete halt is impossible, then they should be sold as needed by whole families, and not separately. This [matter] is to be clarified in the compilation of the new law code [*Ulozhenie*], as the High-Ruling Lord Senators judge right. [Note: no new law code was ever issued under Peter I.]

PETER ACCEPTS THE IMPERIAL TITLE, 1721

On the 20th day of this October, after council in the Senate together with the Holy Synod, the intention was adopted to beg His Majesty, in the name of the whole Russian people, in proof of their due gratitude for His high mercy and the Paternal care and pains which He has been pleased to show throughout His most glorious Reign, and especially during the war with Sweden; and [to acknowledge that] through His leadership alone, as is well known to all, He has brought the All-Russian State to such a strong and good condition and His subject people to such glory before the whole world: that He be pleased to accept from them, on the example of other [rulers], the title Father of the Fatherland, All-Russian Emperor, Peter the Great. . . .

Thereupon His Imperial Majesty was pleased to reply in short but very strong words . . . : "(1) I very much wish that all Our people clearly recognize what the Lord God by the late war and conclusion of this peace [with Sweden] has done for us. (2) It is right to thank God with all [our] strength; nevertheless, hoping for peace, it is not right to slacken in military matters, so that what happened to the Greek [Byzantine] Monarchy [it fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453] does not happen to Us. (3) It is right to labor for the general benefit and profit, as God lays it before Our eyes, both inside [Russia] and outside, whence the people will gain relief."

And the Senate, with most humble bows, thanked His Majesty for such Imperial mercy and paternal admonition. . . .

THE TABLE OF RANKS, 1722

The Table of Ranks [*Tabel o rangakh*] of all the ranks [*chinov*] Military, Civil [*Statskikh*] and Court, [indicating] which ranks are in which class [*klasse*] and which of those in one class have seniority according to time of entrance into rank, although the Military are above the others, even if they [the others] were promoted into said class earlier. . . .

[The Table follows, divided into three vertical columns headed "Military," "Civil," and "Court" (meaning the ruler's court), with the Military column subdivided into "Land Forces," "Guards," "Artillery," and "Naval." Each column contains 14 "Classes": for example, Class 1 under Military/Land Forces contains the rank "General-Fieldmarshal" while the corresponding rank in the Civil column is "Chancellor." Class 8 in the same two columns begins with "Major" and "Senate Secretary" respectively, each followed by the several other ranks in this class ("Lieutenant-Captain of the Fleet," "College Assessor," etc.). The lowest class in the two columns, Class 14, includes the rank of "Ensign" under Military/Land Forces and "College Commissar" under Civil. Thus all officer ranks and civil or court positions of any importance are listed, hierarchically, in the 14 classes of the Table of Ranks. One oddity of the Table is that officers of the Guards regiments consistently rank higher than officers in the Land, Artillery, or Naval services: thus a colonel of Guards (Class 4) is equivalent to a major general in the Land Forces or the Artillery and to a rear admiral in the Navy. At the same time, as indicated above, all military officers take precedence over civil or court officials of equivalent rank.]

[The following 19] points are appended to the above-instituted Table of Ranks so that everybody knows how to act regarding these ranks.

1. Princes of Our [Peter's] Blood and those married to Our Princesses have in all cases precedence and rank above all other Princes and high servitors of the Russian State.

2. Naval and Land [officers] are appointed to command in the following manner: when they are of the same rank, although one is senior in service, the Naval commands the Land [officer] at sea, and the Land the Naval on land.

3. Whoever shall demand honor higher than his rank, or take a position higher than the rank given to him, shall be fined two months' pay for each offense. . . .

4. Under [pain of] the same fine, nobody is to demand a rank for himself who cannot show the appropriate patent.

5. So also nobody is to assume rank according to a character which he received in foreign services so long as We have not confirmed said character, which confirmation We will be glad to grant to each according to his merit.

6. Without a patent, a document of release [from service] does not give rank to anybody, unless the said release shall be signed by Our hand.

7. All married women assume rank according to their husbands'; and should they do so contrary to this [Table and supplementary points], they are to pay the same fine as would their husbands for the same offense.

8. Although We grant free entry to public assemblies where the Court is present to sons of Princes, Counts, Barons, and the most distinguished Nobility and servitors of the Russian State before others of lower station, and gladly wish to see that on all occasions they are distinguished from such others by [their filial] dignity, nevertheless We do not thereby grant any rank to anybody so long as they do not render any service to Us and the Fatherland and receive a character for said service. . . .

11. All Russian or foreign [state] servitors who are or actually were in the first eight [classes of] ranks [i.e., from major in the Land Forces to general-fieldmarshal, and their civil and court equivalents, inclusive], their legitimate children and descendants in perpetuity, are to be considered equal to the best old Nobility though they might be of low birth, and were never promoted to Noble status by Crowned Heads nor granted a coat of arms. . . .

15. Military officers not from the Nobility who achieve senior rank [major or above] shall thereupon become Noblemen, as shall their children born thereafter; but if they had children before [said promotion], one son only may be granted Nobility upon the father's petition. Civil or court officials who achieve such rank but are not from the Nobility, their children are not [to be] Nobles. . . . [Thus non-noble military officers are granted special access to hereditary noble status, with its associated right to own serfs.]

STATUTE ON THE SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE, 1722

We Peter the First, Emperor and All-Russian Autocrat, etc., etc., etc.

Whereas Our Son Aleksei's sin of Absalom [detailed above in the Manifesto of February 3, 1718; Peter here refers to Abalom's betrayal of his father, King David, as related in the Bible] is known to all [and then citing various precedents from Muscovite times as well as Peter's own decree on entail of March 23, 1714, also printed above, which supposedly was designed to prevent "private houses from coming to ruin from unworthy heirs"]. . . . We therefore establish this statute: that it should always be in the will of the Ruling Sovereign to designate whomever he chooses as heir, and moreover, perceiving some inadequacy, to set the designated one aside; this so that His children and descendants should not fall into such evil as [did Aleksei], having this restraint upon them. We therefore command all Our loyal subjects, clerical and lay without exception, to affirm this Our statute before God and His Gospel [according to the form of oath attached]. And whosoever shall be opposed to this or misinterpret it shall be considered a traitor liable to capital punishment and ecclesiastical excommunication.

PETER ESTABLISHES THE COLLEGE OF MANUFACTURES, 1723

His Imperial Majesty most mercifully ordains this Regulation [*Reglement*] of the College of Manufactures, in accordance with which it shall administer its affairs.

Whereas His Imperial Majesty, for the creation and increase of manufactures and factories, has been pleased to establish this special College. . . . He has therefore been pleased to grant it guidance according to the following points. . . .

1. The College of Manufactures has supreme direction over all manufactures and factories and other matters relating to its administration throughout the Russian Empire, and must act in loyalty and zeal as it is here laid down. . . .

6. Whereas His Imperial Majesty has sought diligently to establish and disseminate in the Russian Empire, for the common good and profit of His subjects, various manufactures and factories such as are found in other states, the College is hereby ordered diligently to seek ways in which to introduce these and other curious arts into the Russian Empire, especially those for which materials can be found within the Empire; and to introduce the appropriate privileges for those people who want to create places of manufacture.

7. His Imperial Majesty permits everybody, of whatever rank and quality, in any and all positions, to found manufactories wherever they find it right. This [permission/invitation] is to be published everywhere. . . .

8. The College must be careful, when granting privileges to somebody to found a factory, that others who might later want to found such are not excluded; for from the zeal [competition] between manufacturers can come not only growth, but quality, and the manufactured goods will be sold at a moderate price, which would benefit His Majesty's subjects. Nevertheless, the College is to see that where [existing] factories are sufficient, the creation of other such factories does not corrupt manufacturing, especially by the making of [goods of] poor quality, even though they be sold cheaply.

9. The College must diligently inspect manufactories that are formed into [joint stock] companies, that they be maintained in good condition. . . .

10. Factories founded or henceforth to be founded at His Majesty's expense, having been brought to a good condition, are to be made over to private persons; the College is to be diligent in this endeavor. . . .

17. [This point repeats Peter's decree of January 18, 1721, printed above, on the purchase of peasant villages for factories.] . . .

23. So that master craftsmen of all sorts should voluntarily come to the Russian Empire from other States and establish manufactories as they wish at their own expense, the College is to send Manifestos to His Majesty's Ministers at foreign Courts inviting such craftsmen to settle in Russia. And whoever wants to come is to be assisted, with both free entry into Russia and free exit with his properties, and to bring needed materials and instruments without payment of customs [etc.]. . . .

PETER FOUNDS AN ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, 1724

His Imperial Majesty has decreed the formation of an Academy in which languages would be studied, also other sciences and fine arts, and books would be translated.

On January 22, being in the Winter Palace [in St. Petersburg] and having heard a Project about the formation of this Academy, His Imperial Majesty was pleased to note on it with His own hand: "Designate for its support the revenues from the customs and excise duties collected from the [conquered Baltic] towns of Narva, Dorpat, Pernau and Arensburg, [an annual sum of] 24,912 rubles"; and in this decree of His Imperial Majesty the Ruling Senate concurred. . . . [The text of the Project follows:]

For the disposition of the arts and sciences two kinds of institution are usually used: the first kind is called a University; the second, an Academy or society of arts and sciences.

1. A University is an assemblage of learned people who teach the high sciences like Theology and Jurisprudence, Medicine and Philosophy, to young people, to the level, that is, that such [sciences] have now reached. An Academy is an assemblage of learned and expert people who not only know these sciences to their present level, but through new inventions (publications) strive to perfect and increase them; and they have no care for the teaching of others.

2. Although an Academy comprises the same sciences and the same members as a University, nevertheless in other states these two institutions have no connection between them, as there are numerous learned people from which various [such] assemblages can be formed. And [this is so] in order that the Academy, which strives only to conduct the arts and sciences to the best level by speculation (reflection) and investigation, whence both professors in Universities and students derive benefit, is not distracted by teaching; and [in order that] the University is not deflected from teaching by clever investigations and speculations, and the young people are thus neglected.

3. Whereas in Russia an institution for promoting the arts and sciences is now to be founded, it is impossible to do so after the example of other States; rather the situation in this State must be considered regarding both those teaching and those to be taught, and an institution formed that by the growth of the sciences [through research] would not only spread the glory of this State at the present time, but through teaching and disseminating them [these sciences] would benefit the people in the future.

4. Both of these intentions will not be fulfilled by the establishment alone of an Academy of sciences, for although it would promote and disseminate the arts and sciences, they would not soon take root among the people; still less [would they be fulfilled] by the establishment of a University, for when you consider that there are still no [secular] primary or secondary schools [in Russia], in which young people could learn the basics and then move on advantageously to the higher levels of science: in such a situation a University would be of no benefit.

5. Thus what is needed most of all [in Russia] is the establishment of an institution in which some of the most learned people would do the following: (a) Conduct and perfect the sciences, but in such a way that (b) Young people (those who can profit from it) could be publicly taught by them, and (c) Some people could be trained by them to teach the fundamentals of all the sciences to [other] young people.

6. In this way one institution with minimal losses would do as great a benefit [in Russia] as do three different ones in other states [secondary school, university, and academy]. . . .

7. And since this institution is similar to the Academy which is in Paris (except for this difference and advantage, that this Academy is also to do what is appropriate to a University or College), I [Peter] therefore would hope that this institution could most conveniently be called an Academy.

The sciences which could be done in this Academy can be freely divided into three classes: (1) all the Mathematical sciences and those that depend on them; (2) all the parts of Physics; (3) the Humanities, History, and Law. . . .

The duties of the Academicians [members of the Academy] are: (1) to investigate everything already done in the sciences; to promote what is needed for their correction and growth; to report anything found in such an event and give it to the Secretary, who must record it as appropriate. . . . (5) If His Imperial Majesty requires that an Academician investigate some matter [that lies] within his science, then he must do it with all diligence, and report on it in due course. . . . (6) Every Academician is obliged to prepare a system or course in his science for the benefit of students. . . . (8) Lest the Academicians lack the necessary facilities, a Library and a cabinet [museum] of natural objects should be opened. . . . [Note: The St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences, with its library and museum, and staffed mainly by German scholars, opened for business in August 1725, some six months after Peter's death.]

Reforming the Church

MANIFESTO CREATING THE HOLY SYNOD, 1721

We, Peter the First, Tsar and All-Russian Autocrat, etc. Among the heavy responsibilities We bear, in virtue of the authority bestowed on Us by God, for the reformation [*ispravlenie*] of Our people and those others subject to Our rule, Our attention has been drawn to the ecclesiastical order [*chin*: the clergy]; and having observed therein much irregularity and great deficiency in its affairs, We should indeed be anxious lest We appear ungrateful to the Most High if, having received such great assistance from Him in reforming both the military and the civil orders, we should neglect to reform the ecclesiastical; anxious lest when the Impartial Judge shall demand an accounting of His Trust to us, We shall have no reply.

Reforming the Church: from PSZ, vol. 6 no. 3718, compared with draft texts in P. V. Verkhovskoi, *Uchrezhdenie Dukhovnoi Kollegii i Dukhovnyi Reglament* [Establishment of the Ecclesiastical College and the Ecclesiastical Regulation] (Rostov-on-Don, 1916), vol. 2, pp. 6–11, 27–33. Translated by James Cracraft.

Therefore, mindful of the example of the pious kings in both the Old and the New Testaments, and having assumed responsibility for reforming the ecclesiastical order, and seeing no better means to this end than government by council, because this [governing the church] is too great a burden for a single person [that is, the patriarch] whose power is not hereditary: We hereby establish an Ecclesiastical College, that is, an ecclesiastical governing council which shall have authority, by the Regulation [*Reglament*] here following, over all spiritual affairs in the All-Russian Church. And We command all our loyal subjects of both the ecclesiastical and secular orders to consider this an important and powerful body; to bring to it their most serious spiritual concerns for direction, resolution, and conclusion; to be content with its decisions and judgments; and to obey its decrees in all things under pain of the severe punishment dealt those who defy or disobey the other Colleges [recently established by Peter in the state administration, namely the colleges of War, Foreign Affairs, Manufactures, etc.].

The Ecclesiastical College must hereafter supplement its Regulation with new rules, as shall be required by the varying circumstances of different cases; however, the College must not do so without Our consent.

We further determine that this Ecclesiastical College shall be composed [like the state colleges] of one president, two vice-presidents, four councillors, and four assessors. . . . And upon taking office [they] must make an oath or promise on the Holy Gospels according to the attached form. [Note: At its formal opening, on February 14, 1721, the Ecclesiastical College was officially renamed "Most Holy Governing Synod." The president and other members of the Holy Synod, all appointed by Peter, were all clergymen of various ranks and included, as second vice-president, Archbishop Feofan Prokopovich.]

OATH OF THE HOLY SYNOD

I, the undernamed, hereby promise and swear by Almighty God and on His Holy Gospels that I am in duty bound, and by my duty wish, and in every way shall endeavor, always to seek in the counsels and judgments and all business of this ecclesiastical governing council the very essence of truth and justice, and to conform in all things to the rules prescribed in the Ecclesiastical Regulation or hereafter decreed by agreement of this council with the consent of His Majesty the Tsar. In all this shall I act out of sincere love of God and neighbor, according to my conscience and without hypocrisy, envy, malice, or obstinacy, suffering naught but the fear of God for having always in mind His incorruptible judgment. I am resolved that the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the edification of the entire Church shall be the end of all my thoughts, words, and deeds; that I shall labor not for myself but for the Lord Jesus. . . . In case of doubt I shall not feign ignorance but shall diligently seek knowledge and right understanding in Holy Scripture, in the decrees of the church councils, and in the teachings of the holy fathers.

I swear by Almighty God that I wish to be, as I am in duty bound to be, a loyal, true, obedient, and devoted servant of my natural and true Tsar and Sovereign Peter the First, All-Russian Autocrat, etc.; and after Him to His Majesty's august and lawful successors, who by the will and autocratic power of His Majesty have

Peter I's Table of Ranks¹		
The Civil Service	The Army	The Navy
1. Chancellora	Field Marshall	General-Admiral
2. Active Privy Counselor	General	Admiral
3. Privy Counselor	Lieutenant General	Vice-Admiral
4. Active State Councilor	Major General	Rear Admiral
5. State Counselor	Brigadier	Captain-Commander
6. Collegiate Counselor	Colonel	First Captain
7. Court Counselor	Lieutenant Colonel	Second Captain
8. Collegiate Assessor	Major	Lieutenant Captain
9. Titular Councilor	Captain	Staff Captain
10. Collegiate Secretary	Staff Captain	
11. Naval Secretary		
12. District Secretary	Lieutenant	Midshipman
13. Provincial Secretary	Sublieutenant	Constable
14. Collegiate Registrar	Guidon Bearer	

The 8th rank conferred hereditary nobility on those who achieved it.

¹ Adapted from <http://www.bucknell.edu/x20181.xml>, accessed 14 July 2009.