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TOLSTOY :  
HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

## TOLSTOY'S WORKS

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John Kenworthy. Kocis. Crimea.

Dear friend,

I Thank you heartily for <sup>sending me</sup> your writings and especially for your kind letter.

I can say quite sincerely that I never forget and never will the gladness that I felt in knowing you and your work, and the joy that I get from my communion with you. I can not help saying that I am sorry for the importance that you attach to spiritualism. Your true and pure christian faith and life are much more reliable than all that the spirits can say to you.

Your true friend, Leo Tolstoy  
17 Jan. 1902.

# TOLSTOY:

## HIS LIFE AND WORKS.

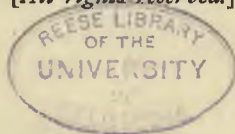
BY

JOHN COLEMAN KENWORTHY,

AUTHOR OF "THE ANATOMY OF MISERY," ETC., ETC.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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## PREFACE.

THIS book contains completed studies of the life and work of Leo Tolstoy, the product of several years of intimate relations of principle, and of personal friendship and correspondence, with him. The whole makes, to my knowledge, the only sincere and thorough estimate of Tolstoy that has as yet been given to the public, and I claim the attention such a book should deserve.

The man who tells the truth, *l'enfant terrible du monde*, is the most dangerous of men for the dishonest to encounter. His words are, like the little book of the Gospel mentioned in *The Book of Revelation*, sweet to swallow and bitter to digest. They are taken up with delight, as every man's prey; but they are like razors to play with, and the shining things cannot even be laid down without cutting the hands of the children of folly who take them up. Tolstoy is such a man; the only way of safety for those who would deal with him is,

to deal honestly with him. Otherwise, some small word of his will lodge in the truthless soul, and at last wreck it. He speaks the word or the *Bhikkhu*, which fulfils itself.

Amid a literature and a journalism of men and women who are mental sharks, devouring the bodies of idea of any whom they find to swallow, and acknowledging no debt of gratitude, or of honourable confession of their source of food,—amid this, Tolstoy has consistently acknowledged his sources of enlightenment and information. Whether it be Kant, Jesus, or Confucius, he has always “honoured the teacher,” and sought to make known, not himself, but the other. For that, I honour him as the greatest of living men, and I ask the victims of habits of literary piracy into whose hands this volume will come for criticism on its way to the public, to treat Tolstoy as I have done, and at least be honest to him and to me, and study to not minimise his meanings and not slur his actions.

JOHN C. KENWORTHY.

THE GREY HOUSE,  
PURLEIGH, ESSEX,  
12th February, 1902.



## *MY RELATIONS WITH TOLSTOY.*

THE present publishers deserve thanks for faithfulness in following the progress of Tolstoy's voluminous writings, by producing English translations entirely as good as the peculiar difficulties of the case permit. Nowhere outside their volumes is there to be found anything like a fair and adequate English representation of the great European. In those volumes, the reader and the student will find all that is necessary to a complete grasp of his life-work. I am happy to join hands with the publishers, in acceding to the request of Mr. Crowest, their editor, that I should prepare a small volume, to serve as biography, and to give some true insight into the life of the author whom I have, in my time, most of all found necessary to make acquaintance with.

My friendship with Tolstoy is now of about eight years standing. My first notable acquaintances in literature were with John Ruskin, whom I met seventeen years ago, and William Morris, of whom I may say that I enjoyed his intimacy for a number of years, though distance and occupation prevented much personal intercourse. From the circles of thought and life created by these great men, I at last saw Tolstoy, a man whom neither Ruskin nor Morris understood. The former looked upon him, I think, as a too-distant Russian; the latter, I know, took him for an ascetic. But the three were separated by little, and will, in time, be seen as a great trinity of idealists inducting a new era. As I think of it, I feel astonished that they were not intimately related in life. What keeps such men apart?

Tolstoy's works did not come into my hands until about 1890. Some time before business took me to America (at the Christmas of that year), I read *My Religion* and part of *What to do*. I was surprised and glad to

find a mind working on my own lines, but in advance, with a wider and maturer discussion. Affairs prevented me from energetically following up the discovery, but during eighteen months in the United States I came across *The Kreutzer Sonata*, and was wonderfully impressed with its powerful diagnosis of the baser side of the relation between man and woman. I knew myself to be at one with, and indebted to, the man who had understood the Gospels as I also had done.

A few years later, after distressing experiences of elementary social effort in the East End of London, I felt able to reduce to writing my conclusions in political economy, and wrote *The Anatomy of Misery*. The book, no doubt from having a forerunner in *Unto this Last*, had a quite singular success in winning approval from critics widely sundered by creed and party; contrary to all expectation of mine, because of its frankly damnatory clauses upon our social system in parts and as a whole. After some months, a Russian friend, Mr. Rapoport, advised me to send the book to

Count Tolstoy. This I did, and shall be ever thankful for the result. An answer came by return, a first sentence in which was, "I recognise in you a kindred spirit." The writer further said he had already procured the book through a bookseller, and had had it translated into Russian. I may here mention that *From Bondage to Brotherhood* and other writings of mine have since been similarly translated, and the introductory note to my recent re-issue of *The Anatomy of Misery* is by Leo Tolstoy.

This, and what follows, I adduce to so far support the present publishers' choice of an exponent. In the early years of our intercourse, numerous letters reached me from Tolstoy. Of a criticism of mine upon his *The Four Gospels Harmonised and Translated*, he wrote, "Your criticism is perfectly just, if it were not too flattering." Again he wrote, after his own examination of certain writings of mine, "I criticise your work as though it were my own." Upon such terms he committed to me the representation of his English literary interests. I feel that more need not be said.



It is a great disappointment to me that, after these years, I am left personally to say so much. But others, who well knew of all this, and to whom I trusted to save me from the indignity of self-advertisement—these, careless of any interests of mine, have wholly suppressed the facts as to these relations with a man whom it is an honour to call friend.

During this correspondence, at the turn of the years 1895-96, I visited Tolstoy at Moscow. Nothing need here be said of this journey, as it is written of in "A Pilgrimage to Tolstoy," contained in this volume. But a year after that visit, the Mr. Tchertkoff whom I had so much necessity to mention, because of his intimate literary relations with Tolstoy, was exiled by the Russian authorities, for his interest shown to the persecuted Doukhobors; and he came to England. For every reason, I welcomed him to my whole circle of work, then centred at the Brotherhood Church, Croydon; and put myself and my friends, as far as possible, at his disposal. Naturally, I immediately surrendered all my control of Tolstoy's literary

interests to him, Tolstoy's old and valued friend in these matters. At the same time, knowing how easily misunderstandings arise in relations among publicists, I put my whole correspondence with Tolstoy into Mr. Tchertkoff's hands. It is hardly too much to say that that correspondence virtually disappeared. Certain it is, that much concerning my own interests passed between Tolstoy and Mr. Tchertkoff, of which to this day I am ignorant. For this I accept the responsibility, and mention the fact to account for the defect of letters on both sides for three or four years, until recently.

The work of Tolstoy—and my work—is no dilettantism, but the inspiring of the human soul and the remodelling of human life. A large part of the practical interest of our relationship lies in the effort to form new social ties, of industry, of maintenance, and of ideas, among amenable people. Our efforts in England, always keenly watched by Tolstoy, about four years ago resulted in the formation of a "Colony" at Purleigh, in Essex, where I, with others, came to reside. It is no part of

the purpose here to describe the history and fate of the venture. Two years ago, it began a process of disintegration. My place was simply to exhaust my resources, and begin afresh when the end came. Not want of means, not want of recruits, but want of *character*, brought the crash. And not merely from Tolstoy's warnings, but from prior experience, I knew what to expect, and was prepared, as well as one can be, for a certain kind of ruin. When that came, despite Mr. Tchertkoff's pressure to the contrary, I determined to again visit the one friend who understood. A telegram came from Tolstoy, in answer to my letter to him, and I once more made the journey to Russia. Of that I have written briefly, and my remarks upon it are towards the end of this volume. During the few precious and happy days at Pierogorvo, Tolstoy and I talked hardly one sentence of trouble, but all was of the life of spirit we share in common. May I not say that, at his own desire, and at his own initiative, Tolstoy arranged with me to resume our correspondence; that he put all the necessary documents for a

special English selection of his works at my disposal; that twice he earnestly counselled me to live for my ideas; that he wholly approved my purposes of work in metaphysics and upon the ancient religions of East and West; that by his hospitality, after leaving him, I saw his life's home at Yasnaya Polyana? Yes, I must say it, in duty to the public for whom I work.

A set biography may be at last wearisome; living portraits of a man, of his soul, written as the subject springs to life, if worthily done, cannot fail of interest. This much I may say with certainty: that in no language will such another representation of Tolstoy as this volume contains be found; a representation made by one who has shared his principles, his surrenders, his experiences, to the full. It is a not small fashion, now, to praise Tolstoy; I have met no man who claims to have done as he does. An honest opponent may give us a partly true Tolstoy; an impostor, deflected by his self-impositions, can only misrepresent. Especially at this time, we need the truth about Tolstoy.

## *TOLSTOY'S TEACHING AND INFLUENCE IN ENGLAND.*

IT seems to me that at the present time there is not living a more commanding personality and profounder spiritual influence than Leo Tolstoy, the Russian. His writings appear in every language; and just because he has wholly stripped himself of rank, fortune, and power, from the possession of which the fame of most men arises, he, of all men, has come to be valued the more purely for what he in himself is, and says, and does. In claiming for him this high position, I make due allowance for the fact that most people know of him only to misunderstand him, and that by many he is supposed to be an enemy of true morality and social order. On the other hand, there is an increasing number of people who profess to find in his teaching inspiration and guidance of the truest kind.

These opponents and these adherents of Tolstoy are, perhaps, more numerous in England than in any country outside Russia. As examples of their respective views, I may cite on the one hand that gentleman who wrote of Tolstoy as a worn-out libertine, who had made of the dregs of his old age a hypocritical offering to religion,—a description which *The Christian World* applauded as “fearless and outspoken ;” and on the other hand, a well-known woman writer, who in a private letter has referred to Tolstoy as “that great master who has brought so much peace and security into my soul as into the souls of so many.”

Nothing is further from any purpose I have than the establishment of a Tolstoy *cult*. But, as every honest student of Tolstoy must do, I recognise a high and welcome duty in the task of promoting the truer understanding of a man about whom such conflicting estimates are afloat. If the prejudice created by such people as the writer quoted above, whom *The Christian World* praises, and the publishers who, to push its sale, put *The Kreutzer Sonata* before the



public as an immoral book, were once broken through, there are in this country, I am sure, multitudes of earnest souls, now fearful to venture upon Tolstoy, who would read and find in his pages the spiritual food and instruction they most need and desire.

Since the great change which came over the life and work of Tolstoy, eighteen or twenty years ago, a corresponding change has come over the world's attitude towards him. Whereas he was before applauded by the literate and the learned, he is now mainly pitied and opposed by these classes; and whereas he was formerly estranged from "the common people," it is now for their sakes that he labours and writes, and it is among them that his spirit is best understood. This is clearly manifest, I understand, in his own country, and certainly begins to come in evidence here in England. The reason is, that Tolstoy is one of those rare minds who take all life for their province; and the high specialisation of the scholars and the scientists precisely unfits them to follow him in that simple and broad appreciation of the facts of life which is



more easily attained by the less sophisticated peasant and labourer.

Those who have not seen him may picture Tolstoy as a broad, strong man, still robust under his now sixty-eight years (1896). In his portraits, we have been shown a strong face with irregular features, and mass of long hair and long beard. Every visitor from him tells us of his peasant-dress, his extreme simplicity of life, and his efforts to make himself "worth his keep" by ploughing fields, making shoes, or carrying the domestic water-supply. Curiosity as to such personal details is rife about every noted man; but in Tolstoy's case, the curiosity is of double intensity, for his teaching is wholly concentrated upon the conduct of life, upon how men ought to live. His peculiar power and influence as a teacher arise from the fact that he has harmonised his conduct with his belief. The curious world has found a man who practises what he preaches, and has, therefore, taken him seriously, as it does not every theorist in morals, philosophy, and religion. To "DO the Will" is his

insistence, and Matt. vii. 21-27 is his great theme. Let no one approach him except on this understanding.

In considering the highly aristocratic ancestry of Tolstoy, I am most struck by the fact of his descent, at several removes, from St. Michael, Prince of Montenegro, whom he is said to much resemble in feature. I cannot help laying the same stress on this circumstance as we in England lay upon the Scotch ancestry of Ruskin and Carlyle. The spirit of freedom, and great souls, are of the mountain; not of the plain.

I have frequently heard our labouring men object to the notion that Tolstoy, in his renunciations, has made any great sacrifice: "Ah, yes," they say, "but he is always sure of his living." Though it be true that no danger of death by starvation lay at the bottom of Tolstoy's social descent, still this rich, noble, and famous author's so complete surrender of position and property must have been accompanied by efforts and pains in some proportion to the height at which he stood above "the

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common people." Lifelong habits and prejudices were to be surrendered, the supposed interests of his family pressed upon him; the opposition, wonder, and even scorn of his circle were to be faced. The whole process of the relinquishment of his estates and of his property, down to the property in his writings and the adoption of a simple and laborious life, has proved sufficiently dramatic and startling to men's minds, and it is perfectly true that Tolstoy's example behind them has been even more powerful than his writings themselves. A deep interest must necessarily attach to the life in which this striking passage occurs.

The dominant characteristics of Tolstoy's mind are largeness and sincerity. We must imagine him as a boy,—the Ivan Irteneff of *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth*,—observant, sensitive, lively, shy, and vigorous; accustomed mainly to life in and about the great country-house of a Russian noble family; there becoming familiar with the simple Russian peasant-folk, and with deepest love absorbing the spirit of nature from field, forest, sky, and

the earth life about him. Presently he is taken to Moscow, grows into the life of the town, passes through a University. Leaving there, he joins the army, and, by-and-by, is a man among men. The earlier passages of this life, up to the University period, are pictured in the story of Ivan Irteneff with that largeness and sincerity of which I have spoken.

The years spent in the army, in the Caucasus, and in the Crimea, and the years of his first literary effort are to be noted for the fact that, on his own confession, Tolstoy followed the way of the world. "Lying, robbery, adultery of all kinds, drunkenness, violence and murder, all committed by me, not one crime omitted," is his description of the life into which he was led, and held for ten years, clearly against his better nature, by the whole force of the society around him. Upon this passage, those calumniators have seized who would present Tolstoy's later religion as that of a worn-out sinner. They overlook the sentence, actually part of the passage I have just quoted, in which he says, "and yet I was not the less considered by my

equals a comparatively moral man." There is abundant evidence to show that during these years of boyhood and early manhood, notwithstanding the conduct into which fashion, inexperience and youth betrayed him, the Gospel ideas were penetrating his mind; unconsciously for the most part, perhaps, but surely. Even in the stories written during this evil period, there is a superior sense of honour, as in *The Two Hussars*, and an acute sympathy with the oppressed, as in *Lucerne*. All these earlier writings bear the clear promise of Tolstoy's later developments.

Nor do those peculiarly English critics of Tolstoy draw attention to the fact that, in the midst of the success of his earlier writings (*War and Peace*, that "realistic" story which is, they say, like life itself, belongs to this period), he married in happy fashion when thirty-four years of age; withdrew to his inherited estate, and there set himself earnestly to the fulfilment of the duties, as he then conceived them, of a landed proprietor. The story of Levine in *Anna Karénina* is the story of Tolstoy himself,

and shows how strongly the sense of duty urged him to the care of his estates and of those upon them. The government of his labourers, the improvement of cultivation and crops, the establishment of schools, social and economic experiments and labours of many kinds,—these, with his literary pursuits, filled in a life of what is called “philanthropy.” Space forbids that I should say what many critics have already said of the writings belonging to this, Tolstoy’s mid-period. But it has not yet been remarked, so far as I know, that all these works have the general character of being deliberate and unbiassed *studies in life*, executed with the insight and breadth of genius. They record the observations from which the conclusion of *What shall we do then? What I Believe*, and *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, are derived. For the mind of Tolstoy is eminently “scientific,” truly methodical in its operation, while artistic in expression.

He was famous, rich, successful, happy in his family, yet at fifty years of age found himself so miserable that he had to avoid temptations



to suicide. Why? The cause and the solution are made fully plain in *My Confession* and *What shall we do then?* A spiritual crisis came upon him, such as appears to come upon every man whom God destines for a saviour of souls. A sense of the nothingness of his life, of his unfitness, overwhelmed him. The sum of his experiences and his varied knowledge were cast into doubt, and the one question pressed irresistibly and incessantly upon him. What does it all mean? What is the end of life? Quite clearly, the cause of this crisis in Tolstoy's soul was a profound sense of the wrongness of his relations, as a rich man, with the poor and labouring part of humanity. It was in the righting of those relations that he "found peace."

The discovery he made, so convincingly set forth in *My Confession*, is, that mankind is the creation of a God who is Love, and that love and service to one another are the only relations in which men can exist happily. A doctrine this, incessantly preached in all churches called Christian, but never there carried to the



logical conclusion found by Tolstoy. He, in short, has faithfully returned to the principles of conduct taught by Jesus Christ. His great work, *The Four Gospels Harmonised and Translated*, is the evidence of the energy and thoroughness with which he has swept aside all dogmas, creeds, and conventionalities, in the supreme desire to recover the teaching of Jesus. Any one who desires "the latest thing" in scholarship will be disappointed in this book; but any one who is concerned to know just what Jesus and His teaching stand for to-day in the estimation of a man of proved genius and goodness, will find in this book what he seeks.

With that largeness which we have noted, Tolstoy works out the new truth in every direction. In *What shall we do then?* he describes the process by which he applied Christian ethics to economics, and practically to his own life. He discovers, by experiment, the failure of so-called "charity" (that is, almsgiving as ordinarily practised) to relieve distress. By a searching and unique analysis of the nature and use of money, he discovers in it the instrument of

monopoly, the power by which the possessors of it command the labour of others; and he concludes that the only serviceable way in which he can serve the labouring poor, is, not by making presents to them of money or goods to which he has no moral right, but by *working to keep himself*; so relieving others of the burden of keeping him.

From this standpoint, he proceeds to pass in review the general arguments in support of the existing order of society, advanced by those who are interested in its maintenance. He inquires, What services do governments, armies, ministers of religion, scientists, artists, even organisers of business and trade, render to the people at large, seeing that, in return for their labours, they take nearly everything, only leaving to the people the barest subsistence, which would be quite obtainable by the people without the aid of these classes? And he asks, Are not their power and luxury harmful even to the classes themselves, seeing that a fair examination of their lives shows them to be enervated, perverted, and hardened, as a result

of their false relation to the mass of people? To the consideration of these questions and their answers, Tolstoy brings an amazing sweep of knowledge. He speaks and writes, well knowing what has been said and done before him; his appeal is to no fashion of thought, to no sect, but to mankind; he draws upon nature, philosophy, and history at large for his material. And this, never in an academic way, but with a direct and vital appreciation. He goes to the heart of the matter. His understanding of the speech and ideas of other countries and other times is not so much dependent on dictionaries, but is illuminated by a profound insight into the heart and thought of man. The sum of all his discussion is (the passage is quoted from *What I Believe*):—

“I believe that true happiness will only be possible when all men begin to follow Christ’s doctrine.

“I believe that the fulfilment of this doctrine is easy, possible, and conducive to happiness.

“I believe that, even if it be left unfulfilled by all around me, if I have to stand alone

among men, I cannot do otherwise than follow it, in order to save my own life from inevitable destruction."

The significance of these declarations turns wholly upon the questions, What is Christ's doctrine? It is in answering this that Tolstoy's singularity becomes manifest.

He has cast aside every creed of every church; he has refused credence to every point of theology and every story of miracle which he could not verify for himself from the fact and experience of life. By this method he has practically identified Christianity with the philosophy, the metaphysics, of John's Gospel, and the rules for conduct of life contained in the Sermon on the Mount. The key to this position is the doctrine that men must act in accordance with their beliefs; that it is worse than useless to believe a truth and not to do it. If then, he says, the society round about you is following evil principles, it is your duty, who know the right principles, to follow the right in your own lives. This leads him to the enunciation (in *What I Believe*) of five points of conduct

necessary for immediate and strict observance by each individual—namely, (1) Entire avoidance of anger; (2) Purity of heart and life in the sex relation; (3) Avoidance of oaths and pledges; (4) Evil is not to be resisted by violence; (5) Equal love to all men, even to foreigners and enemies.

A brief examination will show that these five points are simply a re-statement of principles from the Sermon on the Mount. But how vast a gulf they have opened between Tolstoy and both the upholders and the enemies of our present social system! On the one hand, orthodoxy and conservatism reject his standard as an impracticable and impossible one; they accuse him of wresting all authorities to support a far-fetched and fanatical doctrine of human life and society. On the other hand, the extremists who wholly agree with Tolstoy's criticism of society as it is, protest vehemently against the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by violence. "By this rule," they say to him, "you would make men a prey to every oppressor; you are but renewing the forces of

ecclesiasticism, which persuade the poor and the enslaved to tolerate present conditions for the sake of a heaven which is to come."

To both of these oppositions Tolstoy replies in effect, "I have simply recovered the plain and unmistakable teaching of Jesus. And the heart of the teaching of Jesus is this very rejected and despised doctrine, which says that the methods of self-defence and violent resistance can never establish justice among men; self-surrender, truth, and perfect love to all, being the only powers which can bring about this end. Our Creator, our God, is love; love leads to equality of service among men, for all men are brethren, and equals before their Father; such a life of love is peace and satisfaction; and all these things I have proved and know by actual experience, which you also may do, if you will."

Such teaching as this is, after all, not singular in our, or in any, age; and it is not impossible to find others to-day who, like Tolstoy, have harmonised their lives with such belief. But rarely indeed in history do teaching and ex-



ample, as in Tolstoy's case, receive advertisement in the person of one man, a world-genius. Tolstoy's standing and fame have made him a rallying-point for like spirits everywhere. At the time of the great famine in Russia, a few years since, people all the world over turned to him as the instrument of their benevolence; and we are told how twenty thousand lives were saved through his direct agency, and further twenty thousand indirectly through him. At that very time priests were preaching against him as "Anti-Christ," and telling the starving people that his bread would poison them!

A word must here be said about those later short stories in which Tolstoy has sought to simply yet dramatically convey the truth of life to "the people." Upon reading such tales as *Where Love is, there God is also*; *What Men live by*; and *Master and Man*, one is not surprised to hear that their circulation in Russia goes by tens of thousands, somewhat as "the penny dreadful" does with us. In one at least of those stories, *The Godson*, there are rarely-sounded depths of spiritual experience and



truth put into parable in a way for which I know not where to find a parallel. In *Work while ye have the Light*, the Christian life in its relation to the great social problems of property, government, labour, the sexes, the family, art—in short, to conduct and existence generally,—is pictured and discussed under the form of a story of early Christian times.

The writer who most resembles Tolstoy in his general attitude of mind, great range of feeling, thought, and knowledge, and in his intense vitality, is our English Ruskin. In distinguishing the two, one would, I think, ascribe to Ruskin, fineness; to Tolstoy, robustness. But their general harmony is complete: both are world-prophets. If we concede a greater power to Tolstoy, it is because he has gone the further in practice, in example. Ruskin sought for the heart of the people; he is finding it through the medium of others, the people of culture whom he has taught. Tolstoy also seeks for the heart of the people; and he is finding it more directly.

In all this, I would not think disproportion-

ately of Tolstoy's place and work in the world. Righteousness is, as yet, only a little leaven, working through the ignorance, selfishness, and apathy of the vast human mass. In now treating of Tolstoy's influence in England, we must remember that our subject occupies only a small place in outward public regard, and becomes of high importance only to those who know that spiritual life in individuals and nations is the true and only life. The sap and its flow are among the least evident of the tree's parts and functions ; yet they are the life of the tree.

England is known as peculiarly the country of the Bible. Since we became a nation, all our great national reform movements have been inspired from that literature of the Hebrews. The religious and social movement of Wicklif's time, and Puritanism, Quakerism, Nonconformity, Wesleyanism, Salvationism, are links in the chain of proof that the heart of our people has always concerned itself with the Bible as a repository of truth. So that Tolstoy's reversion to "the Christianity of Christ"

has a peculiar force of appeal in England. It may, perhaps, be said, that men of our nation, of all others, have most and best witnessed for the extreme truths which Tolstoy now declares. Our Quakerism has founded itself upon the doctrine of non-resistance. Regeneration, the new birth, upon which Tolstoy so much insists, and his experience of which he tells in *My Confession*, has been, and feebly still is, the cardinal doctrine of our Evangelicalism. Our Puritan morality represents a national effort after the Gospel purity of life. Comparative freedom of speech and of person are ours in England, because we have in some dim way, and more than other nations, felt the principle of liberty that lives in the teaching of Jesus. Not that our national wrong-doing is less, but perhaps greater than that of other peoples. We are probably the nearest of all nations to the crisis and destruction that waits the world's "civilisation," because our concessions to freedom have given our national life a more rapid movement. And what hope of national regeneration there is for us, lies, I am convinced,

in such solid and simple convictions as to the truth of life, which may have become part of our popular instinct, as the result of centuries of familiarity with, and use of, the Old and New Testaments. Above all things, I am sure that he does best work among us who best learns for himself, and most helps others to understand, the true meaning of that great life of Jesus, the Christ-life.

To such sentiment in our midst, Tolstoy, speaking out of the heart of the simple and kindly Russian peasant-people, a people formed, like ourselves, under the Christian tradition, appeals most movingly. His books are English books, for they are human and Christly. To-day, his social and religious works are in the hands of thousands of our people, largely those of that lower middle-class who have so much reason to desire a social change, and whose lives afford them some means of information and some liberty of thought. I hold, from personal knowledge, that in the minds which provide what religion England has, Tolstoy touches the same springs that were reached by Wicklif, Fox,

Bunyan, and Wesley. His more obvious work is done in Russia, but his inspiration is working here, and will work. The so-called "Christian" Churches and Sects, here as everywhere, are lost to vital Christianity; they are, at their best, more concerned with the maintenance of their own organisations than with the spread of the Christ-life; therefore the earnest Christian souls more and more look outside them for the realisation of their Christianity. And so looking, they see Tolstoy, who is teaching and *living* the Christ-life, to whom they listen, and from whom they learn. Through mists of calumny and misunderstanding, the light of his message is clearing its way, and directly, or subtly, in purity or alloy, through him, revived truth is largely entering minds and lives of men. How far the influence of Tolstoy in England will hereafter be identifiable in history, one cannot predict; but his work will be done, and it will not be small in God's reckoning.

In seeking "the Kingdom of Heaven" of Jesus, Tolstoy, of course, contemplates the

entire supplanting of the existing social system by a better, the ideal, one. But his methods for bringing this about are—how different from those of the revolutionaries! I have in my mind at this moment, a man who has made great sacrifices and performed vast labours for English Socialism. Through it all, he earns his living by what he himself clearly exposes as the most nefarious of social practices upon the Stock Exchange. To the audiences he addresses, he says, "Your system allows this, indeed, compels me to it; and while you enable me to thus live in comfort by cheating you, I shall do it. But when you consent to change the system, then no one will be more pleased to become honest than I."

As compared with this, Tolstoy would say: "I perceive that men are miserable in society because they will not be honest and brotherly one to another. I see that any change can only come by men changing their conduct. Quite clearly, I myself must therefore become honest and loving to all my fellows. I must not consent to live by dishonesty, nor must I



do that which I know is injurious both to others and myself."

These two attitudes are those of the Materialist and the Mystic. The former recognises nothing beyond what is obvious in physical nature, and he therefore says, "There is nothing for me more than this earth-life, of which I must make the best for myself. Morality has no higher authority than as being the principles whereby man may obtain most satisfaction during the passage from the cradle to the grave; therefore I accommodate my morality to my conception of life, to my desires and my surroundings."

But the Mystic says, "I recognise in the material universe around me, the outward manifestation of an indwelling Life. I feel that Life moving, operating in my reason and conscience, persuading me that Truth and Love are the laws of my being, to which I must at all costs conform. For no cause must I infringe those laws. Thus conforming, I find I obtain that happiness which I seek elsewhere and fail to find. I have learned the secret of life. I am



now without fears, and without doubts, assured that my true life does not depend upon material things, and that, whatever Death may mean, it must be something good, and not evil. The only terrible thing is, to live in dishonesty and wrong-doing." And this is the sum of Tolstoy's philosophy.

At the beginning of his book, *Life*, Tolstoy quotes this basic thought from Kant:—

"Two things fill my spirit with ever fresh and increasing wonder and awe, the oftener and the more steadfastly my thoughts occupy themselves therewith—the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. . . . The first begins from the place which I occupy in the world of space, and extends the connection in which I stand, to invisible space beyond the eye of man, with worlds on worlds, systems on systems, to their periodical movements in endless time, their beginning and continuance. The second begins with my unseen self, my personality, and places me in a world which has true eternity, but which is perceptible only to the understanding, and with which I am

conscious of being, not as in the former case, in accidental, but in universal and indispensable connection."

For all these reasons of Philosophy and Religion, and in the name of Jesus Christ, one greater than himself, Tolstoy, by precept and example, invites us to renounce all we hold from the world on other terms than those of Truth and Love. If we will not equivocate, that proposal means for us, as for him, the surrender of property held by force of law, and positions of mastership and power; obedience to conscience only; the strict control of our animal appetites; and readiness to suffer for Truth's sake. But if you fear to make this heroic renunciation, says Tolstoy, you can at least "keep from speaking falsely before yourself and others—this you are always able to do, and not only able, but in duty bound to do, because in this alone—in freeing yourself from falsehood, and in working out the truth,—lies the highest duty of your life. And do but this, and it will be sufficient for the situation to change at once of itself."

For all this, what is offered to us in return? According to Tolstoy, everything for which we have, so far in ignorance and error, longed and striven—all summed up in "satisfaction of life." Paul calls the same thing "the peace of God, which passeth understanding;" the peace to which no mere process of reasoning can lead us.

In his writings, Tolstoy does not record his speculations, but only that which he has, or believes he has, verified. For this reason, I suppose, he makes no clear utterance as to the life hereafter. But those who have understandingly read *Master and Man*, will have noted the significance of the tale's ending. The dying merchant, who has rescued his last moments from the service of self, and gives his life in restoring life to his despised servant; he, dying, disappears, as it were, into the infinite of Love. And Nikita, the man, rescued to live another twenty years of simple, toilsome peasant-life, at last passes away in peace, satisfied to be gone. Of him, Tolstoy asks:—

"Is he better, or worse off, there, in the place where he awoke after that real death?

Is he disappointed? or has he found things there to be such as he expected?"

And Tolstoy answers only:

"That, we shall all of us soon learn."

We may add, it is not to annihilation at death that Tolstoy looks forward. Rather, one may be sure, having obtained peace by living the truth, he awaits with gladness and without fear, the coming of an end of life that shall be a beginning of life. And it is this, after all, which constitutes the power of the Christian doctrine over the hearts and lives of men—namely, that it is the promise, not only of the life which now is, but of that which is to come.

The chief influence of Tolstoy in every country that has heard the Gospel, springs from his nearness to the truth of life, and thus to Jesus. I have found no fault in him, because he is one of those who, by their lives, disarm our criticism and demand our love.



WITHIN THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW.



## *PILGRIMAGE TO TOLSTOY.*

THESE are the last days of 1895. I am going to Russia; and that for the first time. Business, and not the mere curiosity of travel (though I have that strongly), takes me on this journey; business of a kind which seems to me entirely good and pleasant. For I am to see Leo Tolstoy, and friends of his; to arrange with them ways and means of carrying forward in England the work to which they in Russia give themselves. Years ago, when I was in the bitter service of commerce, learning the Christian truths which Tolstoy, above all men, repeats to our age, all this present affair would have seemed a delightful and impossible dream.

I remember how, just upon five years since, I took another long journey westward, across America, upon well-paid business of everyday commerce, buying and selling. How did I feel



then? A little elated, having some position, money, and freedom of movement. But beyond that, beneath that, what anxiety about business, what discussion of the future, what efforts of business tact and diplomacy, filled my mind! And more than all, how I was possessed by the knowledge that all was wrong; that no man (myself a man) can serve mammon *and* God! And now, when my life has wholly changed its current, and I am to travel in this business which is not mammon's, what do I feel? No anxiety whatever for any moment between this and death; conscience in the main (but far from wholly) quiet and satisfied; and gladness in the hope of meeting a great soul into whose bodily eyes I can look without equivocation or afterthought, as I trust.

Two hours' ride through the dark winter evening, across northern Kent, and one steps upon the deck of the steamer to cross the North Sea to Flushing. There are but few passengers; Dutch, English, and two or three Germans. The night is calm, starlit. For the first hour of

the swift voyage, the passing lights on shores and sandbanks are interesting enough to keep one on deck ; after that, everybody sleeps, down below.

Five o'clock, and Flushing—that is to say, the great, new-looking railway station there, for the Dutch customs-officers have passed the baggage, the train moves out in a very few minutes, and in the darkness one sees nothing of the town. All this is but little change from England. The railway carriages are not unlike the new corridor carriages of the great English railways, except as to the painted and printed notices about them, which are in three languages, Dutch, German, and French. Dutch and German are the languages spoken by the officials and by most passengers.

Even in the darkness, one can see that the country flying past the windows is flat with a flatness unknown in England. Sheets and ribands of half-frozen water stretch and wind everywhere, and trim rows of trees, leafless now, make straight lines of horizon. Occasionally, a small building flashes under the lights from the

windows of our train, and the little Dutch bricks and the Dutch squareness and trimness of it, catch the eye.

When the full daylight comes, Holland is passed, and the German frontier is reached at the small station of Goch. Here the few scattered buildings seem roomier, less neat, and are largely wooden. Peasants in wooden shoes and heavy cloth caps and blouses stand or move about. A score of State railway officials and soldiers, in almost as many different uniforms, all looking equally military, move about, attending to the business and interests of the German Fatherland. An officer with swinging sword, red-banded cloth hat with stiff and shiny peak, and long, sweeping, handsome coat of light grey cloth, hastens through the station towards the great barracks near by, and is much saluted in passing. He is dressed in the highest fashion for men, according to the taste which prevails from the Dutch frontier to the Ural Mountains.

One need not ask to know the creed of these countries; its first article is that the earth was

for the Kaiser, for the Tzar, who has given it to his children of the army, particularly to the soldier-officers. To them even the bureaucracy bows. This is the faith, shown by their works, of the nations whose bounds are fixed, not by God, but by the sword and diplomats. We modify this a little in England ; thanks to the English Channel and the North Sea, and to nothing else. We, too, live by the sword.

As the day and the swift journey wear on, one begins to understand the significance of the term "the great plain of Europe," which is to be found in the geographies. This plain stretches from the North Sea eastward, and eastward, until—until one's spirit is broken with despair, and one doesn't care how far it goes. They say this plain ends at the Ural Mountains; but that (I speak from experience) is a matter for grave doubt ; it seems hardly likely to end anywhere. About fifty miles from Hanover we passed a sand-hill, and once at least the train went through a cutting which rose higher than the carriage roofs. These, Heine's lyrics, the higher criticism, and the Kaiser's notions of his

authority, are the most elevated things to be discovered in North Germany; for the rest, all is flattened by nature and government. We also passed a number of large towns, mostly built of wood, with some handsome houses in that material, and many unhandsome ones. And one large centre of manufacture exhibited itself in chimneys and smoke; this was Krupp's establishment at Essen, which supplies the world with those excellent tools for wholesale murder. All that day, and the two days after, as a vegetarian of alien tongue, I had great difficulty in getting food other than flesh; some innocent-looking pastry I got was filled with meat; and I ate, and was not thankful.

Evening brought us to Berlin, to the Friedrichstrasse Bahnhof—a great station with no advertisements displayed in or about it. So much there is to the advantage of State Railways.

Over two hours to wait.

Snow lies cold and white in the streets of Berlin, and the stars of winter glitter in the

blue-black night above. The shops of the Friedrichstrasse are all alight, their windows filled with the objects and colours of Regent Street. Men, women, officers and soldiers, stream this way and that, and the sleighs glide noiselessly along. Everybody is well wrapped up, some with furs ; for the cold has that brisk, intense touch unknown in England. Singularly orderly and quiet the streets are ; only now and then some one shouts to another who is on the opposite pavement or driving past, in a loud way that would be surprising in London. Public order is much insisted on, as is evidenced by the restraint and timidity which accompany the looks of inquiry the women who walk alone turn into the faces of men. Sometimes the hussar hat of a coachman, or the Tyrolese hat of a passer-by, vividly reminds one that there are other foreign fashions than those of Paris. All this is in the Friedrichstrasse ; beside which, the streets that open to the right and left seem dark and silent. Even that great street of Berlin, Unter den Linden, stretches right and left in gloom, the shadowy rows of trees rising

darkly from the snow that whitens the wide ways between the dim ranks of imposing building.

One other glimpse of Berlin I have, as the train leaves the closed-in galleries of the station, and passes out level with the roofs of the city. It is a panorama of a frozen river, and a vast, snow-silvered square, illumined with sparks and streams of electric light; great pillared, winged and domed buildings, clustered or outspread; one bright dome floats over all, clear and pale against the dark sky; and out of heaven shine the stars. And the stars see "with equal eye" what I cannot see—the dense and dark abodes of the poverty and misery which marshal the ranks of German Socialism and threaten the Kaiser's throne.

That second night of travel I slept, waking to more hours of inspection of the snow-covered great plain of Europe. As the day wore on, villages of little log huts became frequent. At noon we passed the Russian frontier, and there I was much relieved to also pass inspection



in the custom-house, for I was afraid certain books I carried might be seized. Miseducated officials are empowered to decide what literature may go into Russia, and to them the learned works of Driver, Robertson Smith, and Westcott, which I had, might well seem dangerous, because incomprehensible. However, my luggage was not even searched.

At three o'clock we came to Warsaw. Here, in the heart of ancient Poland, is this capital of a conquered people. Russian military officers swarmed even more thickly than their class does in Germany; their grey coats (the uniform differs but little from the German one) were often lined with thick furs, or they wore about them the great fur-lined *shuba*—half coat, half cloak. The sky was brighter, and the frost keener than ever. We stayed here not long, leaving by a bridge over the Vistula. The frozen river, seemingly as wide as the Thames at London Bridge, swept in a wide curve about the base of the rounded slope on which stands the many-domed and many-spired city. The bright afternoon sun shone on Warsaw—a

lovely scene. This, and the French advertisement which a French perfumer of "Varsovie" had placed in the carriage, brought the feeling that all is not "barbarism" behind the Russian frontier.

But I must not prolong the account of this journey in an express train which took quite long repose, seemingly at every station. That evening, somewhere upon the great plain of Europe beyond Warsaw, a Russian officer of infantry, with his wife, came into the compartment where I sat alone. A tall, robust, spectacled man of about thirty-five, and a rather tall, slender, pale young woman. They had with them a fender wrapped in canvas, a bed and all its bedding, and many baskets and parcels of household affairs, which they bestowed in the racks and upon the seats of the luxurious compartment. Later on, they produced kettle, tea-pot, glasses (not cups), and everything necessary for a meal, the lady going to the stove at the other end of the carriage to boil the water the porter provided. All this, while the train slid on. When the tea was

made, the kindly souls took counsel, and the infantry officer spoke to me in French. I have only noticed one man speak worse French than he; that is myself. And I have only been able to comfortably understand the French spoken by one other man than myself; and that man is the infantry officer. I will not, I cannot repeat our language; but it resulted in my making one of a Russian family travelling-party. For over twenty-four hours we travelled together: Brest, Minsk, Smolensk, towns in abundance, snow-hidden leagues of plain, countless forests of pine, birch and larch, and many clusters of log-huts, we passed; but more interesting than all this, was the society of these Russians, and of others who joined us at Smolensk. An excellent and clever fellow was that infantry officer; more fit to play with children than kill men; and devoted to his wife. He was a Pole; she, as he explained, was "*de pur sang Russe*." Everybody in Russia travels as they were doing, he said; and so it seemed. In the third-class waiting-rooms at the great stations,

crowds of peasants were gathered out of every tribe that Russia contains, from Germans to Tartars ; men, women, and children, in strange-shaped hats of felt and wool, sheepskins, enormous boots, long coats and girdles, stood or sat about among their packages and bales of household goods. Wild, savage-looking creatures they were, and not clean ; yet orderly and peaceable to the last degree.

The infantry officer has Tolstoy's works (at least, those not prohibited in Russia) in his library. He likes the novels and stories, but both he and his wife seem doubtful as to the rest.

Late in the evening, they leave us. In every way, by words and looks, their farewell shows goodwill to the stranger. I give to him a copy of *Le Chanson de Roland*, which I have been reading. He is evidently pleased ; and after they have disappeared, as one might think for ever, he returns with a copy of Tolstoy's *Master and Man* in Russian, which I must accept from him. His friendliness is delightful ; if ever I learn Russian it shall be from his book.

Midnight, in a crowded compartment, where

sleep is impossible. Ennui, indigestion, a host of discomforts, destroy one's interest in everything; except in this thought,—Moscow, with to-morrow's daylight.

How will the reality compare with my anticipations? For these five years, now, there has grown upon me the knowledge of Leo Tolstoy as novelist, writer of *Anna Karénina*, master in knowledge of the hearts and lives of men; as follower of Jesus, discovering in the Gospel the joyful solution of all problems of life; as revolutionist, renouncing for himself, as follower of the Christ, his property, title, friends, and fame; and as teacher, sending book after book out into the languages of the world, to weave about him a far-spread web of new thought and life. I think of the world-movement which carries and echoes Tolstoy's message, and I say to myself, "Now I am to see the centre of this, resting, as it does, in the body and the bodily behaviour of the man himself. Shall I find this centre worthy of all that issues from, and rests upon, it?"

I make no severe demands. Do I not myself know how poorly my actual life shows in the light of my own best thought, that which I most try to speak and to write? Great words and works, coming out of lives which, by contrast, may seem small, sometimes even mean,—does not history prepare us for such possibilities? As to Tolstoy, rumour, tattle and scandal everywhere, tell of his failure to live up to his lofty preaching; as much as to say, with a wise nod of the head, “Ah, well, we told you so; this sort of teaching is neither Christianity nor common-sense; it only leads to humbug, and Tolstoy is no better than the rest of us; he follows another whim, which pleases him, that is all.” What is the truth as to this?

One may feel assured beforehand that such scandal represents the failure of narrow minds to follow understandingly a great life. And our business is greater than merely to examine into such matters—namely, to find ways and means of making clearer, stronger, wider, that far-spread web of true Christian thought and life



upon which Tolstoy and now so many others labour.

Early forenoon, and Moscow. Clear sunlight, intense cold, and snow ankle-deep. My friend Tchertkoff (we are known to each other only by letters) meets me, recognisable by the handkerchief tied round his arm. A very tall, well-bodied man of middle age, with brown beard and moustache, lofty forehead, and hair worn as low as his collar. In his tanned coat of sheepskin strapped round the waist, thick grey-cloth cap like a fez, and long leathern boots, he well represents the style of the men I meet later, who, agreeing with Tolstoy, practise simplicity of life. With him is Beriukoff, short in stature, long-bearded, and dressed wholly in cloth. Tchertkoff, I find, is of high aristocratic family, heir to a large property in land, an ex-officer of the guards, and a publisher of ten years' standing; his present business consists in the collection and publication of Tolstoy's writings, and the diffusion of good literature for all classes, particularly for the peasants.

He speaks excellent English. Beriukoff is an ex-naval officer, who, like Tchertkoff, has for the sake of conscience relinquished his rights of property and the profession of murder; I have a few words with him in broken French and English. Their greeting is quiet, but more than kind; it is fraternal; for we know something of each other's thought and purpose. Tolstoy has sent down an enormous *shuba*, the lining of which is dense, soft, black fur; this, I find, is wholly called for by the keen frost in the quiet air.

What are the chief impressions Moscow makes on my foreign eyes, as Tchertkoff and I slide over the snow in the small sleigh which he hires? The first glance will reveal all the strangeness; after this, I shall only discover the universal sameness of the life called "civilised." This town, then, of nearly a million souls, stands half on low, broad hills, marked undulations in the great plain of Europe; from the higher grounds, as we pass, fine views of the city and the snow-covered levels and low hills open out. The streets are wide, great open

spaces are frequent, and the buildings are substantial, low and out-spread, as compared with those of English towns. The sound of wheels is abolished for the winter in the noiseless rush of the sleighs which follow the fast-trotting, rough little horses. Thick cloth coats with girdles on the poor men, great collars of astrachan and fur, or the immense fur *shuba*, on the well-to-do, and thick fez-like caps of one material or another on everybody, give novelty to the street scenes. The uniforms of flat-capped officers and officials are mostly hidden under the *shuba*. Rarely, a squad of soldiers in long brown coats passes. The women, rich and poor, are wrapped up in coarse or fine clothes, over body and head; the well-to-do ones have their furs also. The signs over the shops are in style just those of any great western city; but they are gilded in the thirty-six letters of the Russian alphabet, some of which are our western letters, others Greek, and others original Russian. In the puzzles they make one can only guess at a rare word. But, above all, the churches strike the eye;

each with its group of bulbous-topped towers of various heights ; these crests being gilt or painted in colours, blue, green, red, yellow, vivid against the clear, pale sky.

We have first a call to make ; then we pass through the ancient, perfectly-preserved city-wall of old Moscow, by a gateway thirty feet deep. We drive into the busy city, then through the gate of another ancient military wall, built high round the city's centre, the citadel, the Kremlin ; in the circle of which, a quarter-mile across, stand ancient and modern churches, palaces, and government buildings ; built mostly of brick plastered over, and tinted in stone-colour, brick-red, white, ochre, or even pale blue. Passing out, we must take off our hats under the gate, for it is the " holy gate " ; miraculously preserved, so superstition says, by the *ikon*, the painted, brass-enshrined image set in the wall above it, when Moscow was burned in Napoleon's time. Soon we have crossed the city on the other side ; we pass the gate, and presently reach the house of Maude, an Englishman whose friendship I owe to Tolstoy, and



THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW.



with whom I am to stay. But this afternoon, Tchertkoff will have me to his own lodging, near to Tolstoy, where he and his household are living for a while.

It has grown strange in my ears, the continual sound of a language wholly incomprehensible; but in Tchertkoff's study, talking with him, I might be back in England. We discuss various matters of translation, selection of writings, and so forth, relating to our business; with occasional lapses into matters of our common beliefs and experiences, and of our different lives.

This man with whom I talk is one whose property, life, and thought are given in love to the service of that truth of life which Jesus Christ brought into the world. And all those in Russia who thus seek to be followers of peace and doers of good, he explains to me, are under the ban of the government. He tells me of sufferings threatened to, and even now as he speaks endured by, friends who refuse to obey government in order that they may obey the word—"resist not evil, but love your enemies."



This evening we are to call upon Tolstoy.

The lamp-lit white ground is under our feet and the black night above us, as together Tchertkoff and I walk down a broad avenue. Beneath our conversation, I think of the friends in England of whom I may speak to Tolstoy. The faces of the four or five score who gather at our Croydon Brotherhood Church rise before me; I think of the beliefs and purposes which bring them together. Their co-operative store, associated home, dressmaking society, printing press—all their efforts towards "honest labour" ordered so that the injustices of "rent, interest, and profit" may be brought to an end in a communal society—all these represent themselves to my mind. The earnestness and goodness of some of those friends whom I best know, the happiness and free enjoyment of our Christmas gathering just past,—if Tolstoy could but feel the spirit of these, he would know that he, and all who with true hand scatter the seed of the truth, do not labour in vain! And if he could but know (indeed, he will know how

it must be) the imperfection of knowledge, the insubjections of habit and temper, the old evil thoughts, desires, and fears, which yet divide and hinder us, he would be sure that we are not bold and satisfied about our work; but do no more than trust that we have made some small beginning in outward realisation of a growing rightness of the inner spirit.

The frost, creeping over the edges of the fur, bites my exposed forehead, and I feel the strange situation as we walk on.

A long suburban lane or street; a dark, enclosed garden, and a large square villa, almost a mansion, standing therein. We push through the double folding-doors at the side of the house, and in a small, well-lighted hall, out of which a large room opens, a man-servant takes the great *shuba* off me. Tchertkoff leads the way upstairs, through a long, narrow side-passage of the first floor, and across an ante-room, into a somewhat large room with bare floor, and with chairs, bookracks, and papers about it. In the light of one candle, beside a round wooden table at the farther end, a dark,

bent man's figure, with loose, iron-grey hair, is sunk in an arm-chair. He rises; a seemingly tall, spare form, somewhat stooping, covered with a long, loose, dark-blue blouse; the strong and rugged features, deep eyes, and prominent brow, are there; it is Leo Tolstoy. He looks, advances, knows one; his eyes brighten; our hands are together; he also is glad. He speaks slowly in English. What did we say? I hardly know. Of his first words I gladly remember these, or such as these:

"I have read your books. You are one of those who most think as I do."

Of my own words I remember nothing; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth spoke, perhaps foolishly, perhaps wisely.

I meet the family at five o'clock dinner. By young and old, a large table is surrounded. The whole repast is vegetarian, simple enough, and served without formality by a man-servant or two. Much more elaboration is observed in many English families of the middle class. The Countess is tall, carries her years most lightly, is brisk, vigorous, and dominant. She, the

middle-aged eldest son, the two elder daughters, a younger boy and girl, and the two or three visitors, show plainly that the head of the house has swept far beyond the others' sphere, and that they variously follow him in degree only, as varying dispositions lead them. They all speak French apparently, which language I must not, in such publicity, venture; several speak English more or less well; and sitting at the right of "Leof Nicolai'tch" (so they call him), I am not prevented from taking part in such talk as might be expected—about England, the social movement, Russia, and Russian life and art.

Would you know the truth about those stories of Tolstoy's weaknesses, alleged small betrayals of his large principles? It is impossible they should be true; as impossible as would be a story of the editor of the *Times* acting as principal in a prize-fight, or of the Queen of England dancing before a street organ. Even to seriously read Tolstoy's books would enable one to feel sure of that.

I am going to put a case to some middle-aged, widely-respected, and rich father of a family. Let us suppose that you, my friend, at this time of your life, become converted to the doctrine of Jesus, to the conception and laws of life embodied in the Sermon on the Mount. You have come, then, to believe that it is wrong to be rich while others are poor; that you must never be angry for any cause; much less use violence, or be a party to violence, upon your fellow-men; that you even must not protect yourself or your property by the help of the law; that you must not accumulate property, but trust to God to give you your bread day by day; that you must always speak full, simple truth, and do every deed in the spirit of love. You realise that this belief, however "respectable" you have so far been, means entire revolution in your way of living, and makes you an utter opponent to the present system of society, with all its methods of business and government, and all its corruptions and woes. Well, so much has happened; what will happen next? You know very well.

Believing all this to be the command of God to your soul, you honestly try to put it in practice. At once, your relatives and friends are up in arms against you; a thousand to one your wife and your children lead the attack upon you. They ask, "Will you rob us, desert us, to gratify your own whim?" The world begins to call you mad, really believing you to be so. You are beset with a thousand difficulties, seeming impossibilities. Amid them all you see clearly only this: that you must live no longer as a master, but as a servant of men, and that you must strip yourself of the last shred of complicity in the existing state of society. You have experienced precisely that which Francis of Assisi, George Fox, and every one who has believed, not in Churches, but in Jesus, has experienced. You have become spiritually sane; while others remain in their spiritual insanity. Quite certainly, the hosts of critics and enemies around you will be on the watch to examine your conduct and pick holes in it. "A man's foes shall be they of his own household."



This, my friend, is the story of every true follower of Jesus, and it is Tolstoy's.

Meeting him, as I do often in these weeks, and listening to his quiet, clear speech, I feel myself in the presence of a master-mind; one who must be true to what he sees, for the truth is life to him. I think that the chief charm in meeting him comes of the feeling that, with him, all mists of pretence have vanished in a clear noon light of sincerity.

The other evening I went to a private meeting (public meetings of such a kind are not permitted, and private ones are liable at any time to police visitation) of those who are of Tolstoy's way of thinking and living. Twenty-five or thirty people, four-fifths of them men, sat or stood around among the furniture of the office where we met, and listened while, through an interpreter, I told them something of how things go with their "spiritual brethren" in England. Their attention seemed close and deep as I spoke to them of people I know who, like themselves, believe in God and His





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righteousness, and in the teaching and example of Jesus, and who are seeking the way to right living. I explained how, in Russia, it seems a man can, with comparative ease, find a life of labour, poor though it be, among the peasantry on the land somewhere ; while in England, there is no land to be had without money, and even if one could buy land, only exceptionally able or fortunate people could at all live by it. So that in England we are compelled to organise ourselves to carry on shopkeeping and such industries as become convenient to us, hoping thus to build up a round of industries in which we can, some day, work for one another, freeing ourselves, and all who choose to come with us, from the present wrong conditions of work and commerce.

In the questions and criticisms which one and another of these friends offered afterwards, the same differences of opinion which one meets in England showed themselves. There spoke a lady who holds that Jesus was more than man ; an ex-officer who considers him as not more than human ; a man who receives the Bible as

inspired, and another who treats it historically. But all believed that men should work honestly, and divide the fruits of labour as brothers. Taking them all together, they were more absorbed in their ideas, more concerned with the inner workings of their own minds, less disposed for action and contention in their cause, than a similarly gathered group in England would be. "Dreamers," our English temperament would call them ; forgetting, as we too much do, that the world has a way of shaping itself according to the dreams of the dreamers. I shall not forget those high-browed, straight-haired, bloused and collarless dreamers, who, out of pale-blue eyes, looked so wistfully upon the foreigner as he spoke of truths which they themselves, perhaps, understood better than he.

In practical works, the people seem before their fellow-believers in England. I meet S——, from the Caucasus, a ruddy, brisk, peasant-clad man, once a landed proprietor; but he has given up his former life, and his property, and he and his wife are now living in community with four or five other people. He,

by his labour as a carpenter, is the group's main support ; his present business in Moscow has, I gather, some connection with the acquisition of land upon which the community can profitably expend labour-power which now goes to waste among them. Others I meet who have also experience of the communal life. V——, again, is a business man of wealth, whose life is absorbed in the effort to establish these communities of right life ; he makes of me many inquiries as to what we know about such business in England. This excellent V—— tells me of L——, another man of wealth, who has now established, in South Russia, a community of more than two hundred souls. All these men whom I meet seem to entirely agree with the conclusion of our English experience, which tells us that lasting examples of the new life can only be furnished by people who are truly religious, serving God with their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and loving their neighbours as themselves.

I have just seen Tolstoy's peasant-drama

*The Powers of Darkness*, performed at a people's theatre. It is a tragedy of unlawful love, greed, drink, murder—and other common horrors such as fill the newspapers of “civilisation.” In the English translation, the play seems a mere charnel-house of incident, and one hardly likes to be seen reading it; on the boards, it seems not so much revolting, for in action it is so convincing, so true to life! The moral of the play is possibly lost upon the fine people who sniff at the coarse crimes and plain words in it, and say, “How disgusting!” then go home, and with other manners and speech, enact or connive at the very same crimes among themselves. The moral of the play, as I see it, is that all the motions of the animal in man must be ruled by the fear of God; not our own gratification, but the welfare of others, is man's chief concern; and that sin, in some place, and at some time, must bring bitter repentance, when the higher nature shall be born out of the lower. I can understand that people who know no sin might, in wonder, turn their backs upon this plain tale of wrong and repentance; but as

to why ordinary people should dislike it—perhaps it is they shrink from seeing their own likeness.

Surely the want of printing never blighted authorship so much as the censorship does in Russia. Tolstoy, for instance, except in his early novels, is only put before his countrymen in pieces and scraps, as the officials think fit; for a considerable part he is suppressed. And his own renunciation of property in his writings causes their hurried publication, in imperfect translation, by publishers abroad who are each eager to be first in the market. One book published in some such way is nothing else than a travesty (not translation) of *Life*, which reduces a valuable piece of philosophic writing to nearly gibberish; it is a public wrong, and plainly the work of our conscienceless modern "journalistic enterprise." One cannot laugh over that harmful piece of exploitation, as one can over the German translation of the motto to *Anna Karénina*. Tolstoy had written in old Slavonian (the ecclesiastical Russian, which stands to modern Russian as Cædmon's language



to Ruskin's), this motto, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." The German's conflict with the language of the Orthodox Church resulted in, "Revenge is sweet; I play the ace."

Day by day there grows upon me an impression of the country. My thoughts go wandering north, south, east, and west, over these vast Russian plains; there creeps over me a sense of the life of eighty million dumb, patient peasants, whose poor days alternate between the fierce heats and labour of the summer, and the bitter hardships of the long, frozen winter. And in the far-separated cities I see the splendid Tzar, the vestmented priests, the prying officials, the mechanical soldiery, the swollen traders, all of whom make the burden of grief which the peasant bears; but the nature and laws of whose being he does not understand, saying of the misery they work upon him, merely this, "It is God's will." I have seen the same thing in England, under other economic conditions; and for the people of our own, and all countries, the cry still arises—

“ When wilt Thou save the people,  
O Lord of mercy—when ?  
The people, Lord, the people,  
Not thrones and crowns—but men ! ”

To-morrow, I am going far into the real, open country of Russia, to see the life there, to see more of the reality.

I must here note a really important conversation with Tolstoy. He called yesterday, and almost at once put a question upon a subject which, of all others, one would, I think, most wish to discuss with him. He said, “ Your writings are strong and exact on the practical side of life, on matters of conduct ; but you do not seem to have written upon the metaphysical side of thought. Not that I find your writings vacant on the metaphysical side,—you evidently have such thought in your mind ; but I want to know what you most deeply hold as to the real nature of life, and as to the future life, and its nature.”

In answer, I told him how, years ago, I concluded that this bodily life is worthless if there

be no future life for the soul, after the death of the body; how I came, by degrees, to see that in the infinitude of Nature there is an ample possibility of such a future life, and that psychology already gives to us, or restores to us, knowledge of facts which show something of the actuality and nature of that life; and how, finally, it seems to me that the effort to follow out the teachings of Jesus, sooner or later brings the settled conviction, one may say knowledge, that there is such a life. "All fear of death disappears in this conviction," I said.

With that I understood him to mainly agree. "For," said he, "this is all-important. Without this, life is devoid of meaning and reason. But the true proofs of the reality of a future life are not to be found in spiritualistic manifestations, but in that witness, that conviction, which arises in oneself as one follows the laws of right conduct in life."

He went on, "If I saw Christ walking towards us from that next room, I should want to be taken to a hospital for treatment. I should

think myself disordered in some way. But I know his truth by my reason, by the inner light and conviction it brings."

So I understood him, concerning "the life everlasting;" as to which he is supposed by many people in England to be an unbeliever, or at best a kind of Buddhist, who anticipates annihilation.

This journey to the country is taken by the particular advice of Tolstoy and other friends, in whose eyes the true Russian is the Russian peasant, the *moujik*, and the true life of Russia is the life of the *moujik*.

Another railway ride for a whole night, and then my guide, Simeonoff, an educated peasant who speaks Russian only, and I arrive at Kostroma, two hundred and fifty miles north-east from Moscow. Again the snowy plain. A sleigh speeds us from the station over the fields; suddenly I notice the road goes smoother, and boats and barges are lying about us; near at hand is a river steamer; we are crossing the frozen Volga. Then through the straggling

town to a house on the farther side, where lunch is given us, and a *kibitka*, or covered sleigh, comes to the door, to carry us over the remaining twenty-two miles of road. In this rough construction, like a rude coach short of the wheels, without seats, but floored with hay, for four mortal hours we slide and jolt across the white plain and past the dark stretches of forest. Every mile or two comes a village of twenty or thirty log huts, with perhaps a church or a "proprietor's" mansion. Little of this scenery, however, is visible through the frosted small windows, high up in the ill-fitting doors of the *kibitka*, and I am literally in a stupor of weariness when at last the door flies open, and in the grey light of the early evening our friend Beriukoff stands outside, dark against the snow. In a moment we are in the warm hut; the two thick fur coats, woollen hood, and felt boots are off me, and I revive.

In this place, upon his paternal property, Beriukoff has begun an attempt to realise the Christian life among, and with, the peasants. On a rising ground, beside a sunken stream

which turns a mill, he has built, so far, four huts for dwellings, barn, and stable. He acts as doctor and adviser to the neighbourhood; Government forbids him to teach. Under his guidance I am given to see what may be seen of the true Russian peasant life.

Picture a steep-roofed, wooden cottage of one room, say twenty feet square and nine feet high, the walls inside showing the dressed logs stuffed between with moss or tow; the ceiling is of boards. A vestibule opens out at the side, built on to the cottage; through this necessary first defence against the bitter winter the open air is reached. Round the room, on three sides at least, runs a wooden bench, used to sit, sleep, or work upon; a small table stands in the middle; over part of the room, at about six feet from the ground, something like a ship's hatch is suspended, on which articles of all kinds are stored, and on which some of the folk also sleep. In a corner stands the heart and life of the house—the stove, or oven. It is a little room in itself, usually about eight feet long, five wide, and six high; with a ledge about three

feet high along its side to serve as seat, table, or step to help one climb to the top. The flat top to this stove is, in winter, the sleeping place of the privileged old people and children. To keep this stove burning, and the bread in it baking, may be said to be the life's labour of the peasant family. The struggle is hard, because of the oppression which robs the poor; and the spirit it breeds in the people speaks in their proverb, which resignedly says, "Our hut is no contender with God; when it is warm outside, we are comfortable inside."

In such housing, a family of it may be two, but more likely twelve, people, young and old, will live. In winter the live stock, fowls, pigs, and goats must also sometimes share the inside warmth. There is no privacy; young and old never undress, except for the weekly bath at the village bath-house. To take off the boots, loosen a girdle, and lie down at the first vacant spot, is the whole process of "going to bed." They eat little meat; rye-bread, porridge of millet or other grain, cucumbers, and a brown oil which they make, are the staple food of



such peasants. Clothes they must have, or die in the winter's cold; sheepskin coats, with girdles and felt hats, for the men, and thick woollen wraps for the women. The material for dresses, kerchiefs, and for summer wear is cotton, oftenest bright red, or patterned in colours.

In one corner, six feet or so up from the ground, is fixed the *ikon*, the little shrine holding a rude picture of some saint. It is the sign of that orthodoxy which the Russian Government labours to impose upon all its subjects. But though before the priest and *ikoni* in the church, and before the *ikon* at home, the peasant bows, crosses himself, and mumbles in seeming idolatry, yet there is more than mere idolatry in his heart. There is a deep patience, a child-like submission to the Father, to God, whose word he hears in the Gospel. Evangelical dissent, of the Puritan and Quaker kind, is the religion to which the peasant turns by force of nature. Ten or fifteen years ago *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *The Holy War* of Bunyan were translated into Russian,

and they have had a great acceptance among the Russian dissenters.

S——, from the Caucasus, told a characteristic story. Where he lives, Russians of a dozen or a score of these dissenting sects are thrown together, exiled to those parts by the Government. The religious mixture is so great that the first greeting when two strangers meet is, "What is your religion?" S—— described the following conversation between himself (I think himself) and a Mohammedan, a native of the country:—

*M.*—What is your religion?

*S.*—I am a Christian.

*M.*—Oh, then you make your God with an axe?

*S.*—No, my God is a spirit, He is not an image.

*M.*—Ah, that is good. But is He three Gods?

*S.*—No, one God, only one—Our Father.

*M.*—What does your God teach you?

*S.*—To live according to one's conscience, and for men to love one another.

*M.*—And that is good. That is the very best

God of all. Have you any mollah (priest) in your religion?

S.—No; we don't need mollahs. It is between God and ourselves.

M.—Ah, that is very good. Mollahs cost a deal of money.

So that, it would appear, vital religious discussion occurs in countries which most Englishmen think of as answering to the eighteenth century French cartographer's description of the Scotch Highlands—" *Terre inculte et sauvage.*"

Eighty millions of these peasants spread north, south, east, and west, in their little villages, over the interminable plains; living solely by field and forest. Only here and there a city or town gathers itself together, or a mine or factory forms a degraded industrial group. Blot all these out, and Russia were yet left entire,—save for the centres and the mechanism of her oppression, which would be destroyed with the cities: One can forecast a time when the hand of bureaucracy and militarism, which now filches these peasants' subsistence in taxes

direct and indirect, will become paralysed; when their wood, hay, corn, and cattle will not be swept away in State, Church, and landlords' revenue, but will remain with them. Their huts shall then grow into houses of several rooms, with fuel to warm them through; their wool, spun on the hand-looms which they use, shall clothe them cleanly and well; and their ancient communal institutions, freed from the pressure of landlord and official, shall provide the swordless law whereby they shall dwell as brethren, in unity. This may be—when the Spirit of religion, which now works in them, has fulfilled its labours, and the truth has made them free. But now—they sweat and toil through all the pleasant weather, in the hope, not the certainty, of gaining wherewithal to survive the hard months of frost. They mow the fields in the hot summer, and in the cold winter are themselves mown down by plague and famine, let loose on them by their rulers. Their curse is not from Heaven, but from the hands of their fellow-men.

More peaceable creatures than these one

would not expect to find on earth. It is this very Christian quietness of spirit, wanting enlightenment, and imposed upon, which makes them the docile tools of the vastest military system the world knows, or has known. But they begin to understand their own souls, and in due time their protest will come. It seems to me that Leo Tolstoy is no more (it is a great deal to be so much!) than the mouthpiece of the Russian people, uttering the deep things of its own spirit. His concern, their concern, is not the spread of empire, and the desires and intrigues of politicians—of all that the Russian peasant knows and thinks absolutely nothing; the storms of political Europe, the concerns of Tzars and rulers, break harmless, unknown, over his head. The tax-collection and the conscription are all he knows of politics. He merely wishes to get his own home and life in better order, to satisfy his conscience, and see his children and neighbours fed. The war-spirit is not his; with a deep sadness, in resignation to authority, he tears his labour from the fields and is taught to fight.

It is noon. We are gliding through the forest. Dark green snow-laden firs, tall red-stemmed pines, and leafless silvery birches, rise round us, their feet standing in snow, their taper tops lancing the cold, pale-blue sky. All is still, solemn, in clear light.

I am told of a day that will come in April, a day of the rush of spring, when the last snow will fade away, and the river will break the last ice, to leap again beneath the creaking mill-wheel; when the carts will struggle over the soft fields and roads, and the labour of the year will begin gladly amid the new green of buds and springing grass. And I think with joy of that coming of spring; I am inspired with the thought that if this change of the year brings youth, and hope, and earnestness into the heart of man, how much more shall a deeper blessedness come when comes to man the spring-time of the new spiritual life!

Yesterday evening I said farewell to Leo Tolstoy. My host, Maude, and myself dined with the family. After dinner, the conversation

turned upon the question as to whether Jesus used physical force in the affair with the money-changers in the Temple. Tolstoy brought a large English Bible and a Greek Testament, and showed that any statement as to Jesus using physical violence on the money-changers is not in the text. (Our English Revised Version of John ii. 15 shows this also.) He uses and discusses the words of the Gospel as closely and intensely as any old-time Puritan or Quaker; but with the light of modern "freethought" and scholarship.

Presently we went to his room, three of us. There our conversation turned again upon the problems and difficulties which arise with one's family when one comes under the necessity of simply and literally adopting the commands of the Christ.

"It is the most serious matter of all our life," he said. "It is easy to give up friends and other associations—but one's family—that is different. To find that all our acts, which we intend for true and loving acts, seem to lead to anger, bitterness, and even malice, in those we



love, is hard to understand. But one can only persevere, acting always in the Spirit of Christ; and then all is for the best, finally. That will conquer; it does conquer."

The Countess came in for a moment. "Perhaps," she said, laughing, "when the Government sends us away, we may all come to England."

"Well," said Tolstoy, himself smiling, "I have done what I could to deserve it, to deserve persecution. But they do not touch me yet."

More than once he expressed his wish to visit England and the friends there. But difficulties stand in the way, which will probably remain insuperable. For one thing, he does not feel it his duty to travel.

Afterwards he asked many questions as to the steps in life and experience by which I had come to my present position. As I answered him, he compared my experiences with his own. In this he showed himself a true scientist, a true physician of the soul; no sentimentalist, but a dealer in facts, in realities. Two expressions of

his in this discussion I will record. The first concerned the Russian dissenting Christians, peasants, who come to him. "I find," he said, "that when they have received the real spiritual life of the Gospel, they always become rationalists, freethinkers." (I pointed out that this was also the case with our first English Quakers.) The second remark was to this effect: "I find agricultural work, above all other occupations, to be the true basis of a healthy and joyous life."

So, in the candle-light, we talked of things spiritual and material, of England, of Russia, of the return to the Gospel. My friend and I would have left him an hour before we did; but he said to me, "No, stay; I want to see as much of you as I can; we may not meet again, until we meet in the world of spirit."

He endorsed the belief that in Russia a great religious movement is preparing, is on the way. This movement, he considers, is in no sense political, for Russia has no political life. "There are hundreds of thousands, millions, of these true Christians in Russia," he said,

"and they are growing." He spoke of the movement in other countries; for everywhere he has correspondents; he knows, for instance, more truly of English affairs than most Englishmen. Especially he spoke of, and inquired about, the revolt against war, against militarism.

At last the time of departure comes. He speaks his good wishes for the spread of our work in England. "Now I know you," he says, "I can correspond with you to better purpose."

There is no sadness in such a farewell. He (as I begin to do, if I know my own heart) lives in the eternal. For him there is no death, but unbroken continuance in life. And the thought in my mind as we walk away is this: "When the body is stripped from each of us, we shall meet soul to soul, and understand each other as we cannot now do." And I am content that the many things yet in my mind shall go unspoken; for they are, after all, but small things beside the great business in which we are agreed, the business of following the Christ-life, of spreading the Christ-spirit. All

sense of "foreignness" with respect to Leo Tolstoy has passed from my mind; I know that to him and to me life has the one meaning; and I am clearer, stronger, abler, for having found in him the large and sure embodiment of the truths which Jesus taught, and which the world chiefly denies.

What shall I here finally say of him? It were a true comparison, I think, to speak of Tolstoy as the Wicklif of Russia. Like the learned Oxford doctor, he speaks with all the knowledge his times afford; he understands the hearts of men and the affairs of states; by sheer force of genius, of personality, he maintains a position which the enemy has not dared to violently assail; and he has devoted his whole life, his entire possessions, in carrying on the work begun by the "common man's" Saviour, nineteen centuries since. Like Wicklif, he has written philosophically, academically, for the learned, and simply, movingly, for "the common people." And as the preaching friars of Wicklif carried the doctrines of the revolution into the

homes and hearts of the awakening peasantry in England, just so men and women, disciples of the Christ-life, moved by Tolstoy, begin to spread those same plain doctrines in the quickening souls of the Russian people.

As yet, mostly owing to the restrictions of the Russian censorship, and to indifferent translation and editing abroad, the world has little idea of the immense range and splendid unity of Tolstoy's writings. More and more the conviction grows upon me, that he, of all men of our age, has produced, not "works" merely, but a literature in itself, which the world will not, cannot, let die. It will be unfolded, will become known, as time goes on. As the teaching of Jesus increases its triumphs, so will the worth and wisdom of Tolstoy grow in the remembrance and the love of humanity. To Russia he will stand as Dante to Italy, Shakespeare to England, Goethe to Germany; and greater than these, I believe, inasmuch as he is more the follower of the Christ.

This man finds, at last, that he has nothing greater or better to say to humanity than what

is already taught in the Gospel. And, because of this, many people say that he has become deranged, that he is a fanatic. To my way of thinking, he is the simplest and sanest man I have met.

My friend Tchertkoff and I are together in St. Petersburg. The famous city by the Neva spreads round us its palaces, wide vistas, and splendid streets; the squalor and miseries it holds we do not see; but they are here. I realise once more that in peasant Russia those cancers of civilisation, the great cities, are doing their ill work. Here is a centre to which flow the taxes wrung from the exploited peasant millions; here the fearful extravagances and debaucheries of imperialism, aristocracy, bureaucracy, militarism, are organised and operated; here capitalist manufacture and commerce debase the workers, men and women, old and young; here sits the censorship, suppressing inconvenient passages even in the Sermon on the Mount; here the Emperor is exhibited as the head of the myriads of officials who really

rule over him; the apex, he is, of the pyramid of oppression which crushes the people. A young, ignorant man, the tool of this vast conspiracy of government, housed in splendour, and bowed down to by hosts of lackeys—I compare him with that wise, gentle, strong old man in Moscow, the prophet of meekness and poverty, who speaks and does the truth revealed by the Christ, the truth which shall at last sweep away the whole structure of the world's oppression.

Have I made too much of Tolstoy? I do not think so.

The mountain-top, which first takes the morning, is but a needle-point—yet what attraction it has for the eyes and feet of men! Leo Tolstoy is singled out among men because upon him, at his height, the light of the dawn shines and glows. From him, and those like him, the light creeps down towards the dark places of the earth; prophetic of, assuring, the time when upon the whole world the Sun of Righteousness shall rise with healing in His wings.



## TOLSTOY AND ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS.<sup>1</sup>

### LITERATURE ON TOLSTOY'S "WHAT IS ART?"

*To the Editor of "The Ethical World."*

SIR,—The *Times* is our leading newspaper. It is a class organ, devoted from its origin to the interests of the landed classes, but now favouring the successful capitalist class also; read by the leisurely and comfortable, but

<sup>1</sup> This contribution appeared in *The Ethical World* on 27th August, 1898. I could not hope for *Literature* itself to publish such an epistle, however deserved, so I sent the letter to *The Ethical World*, where it duly appeared. While serving a purpose of criticism of the book, the subject of the letter, it may also serve to expose the readiness of superficiality with which Tolstoy has been treated by writers who must be authoritative—or nothing.

scarcely ever seen by any one of the poor, the working class. Recently the *Times* has mothered a new journal called *Literature*, intended to serve the class which reads the *Times*, with information about current books and kindred matters. Dr. Traill is *chef* of the new *cuisine*, and uses, we may be sure, a high-class staff of assistants to provide the weekly feast. He has, for instance, employed Mr. Spielmann to kill and dress down Tolstoy's *What is Art?* and on July 30th Mr. Spielmann's dish was tabled with a bold trimming in the form of a leading article, we may assume by Dr. Traill himself.

Dr. Traill is a respectable gentleman of education, who has made some polished and scholarly books, one or two of which I have read in, without any impression being left on my mind, except that they were nicely written about nothing of importance to serious people. Mr. Spielmann is one of those gentlemen who have sunk their lives in "Art," and practised to write profoundly and cleverly about things which nobody clearly understands, though

"critics" and people with money to buy pictures and go to the theatre, assume to. What these two have written about *What is Art?* is exactly what was to be expected from them, and from current *Literature*, and from the spirit of the *Times*.

A sense of hopelessness comes over me as I contemplate the absolute incapacity of these two to imagine that possibly—possibly only—Leo Tolstoy may know more and see more clearly than they do. I will not stop now to characterise their work, but will simply show a few specimens of what they have done.

Dr. Traill says, speaking of "the commanding qualities" shown, for instance, in Tolstoy's "masterpiece," *Anna Karénina*:—"There never was any reason for inferring from the powers revealed in this and other works of fiction that Count Tolstoy's opinions on the philosophy of art would be worth the paper on which they were written; and the history of his opinions on other subjects, political and religious, affords the strongest ground for expecting that they would be unreasonable and unsound."

Now, this is to say that the man who has dominated his generation with wide, impartial, searching, irresistibly convincing demonstrations of life as it is lived, is an utter fool when he comes to consider the very business of his own life—namely, Art. And it is further to say that, because Tolstoy has come to a plain understanding of the teaching of Jesus, and seriously believes that human society can, ought to, and will, be organised in the spirit of love to God and man, and on the lines of the Sermon on the Mount, therefore he cannot reasonably and soundly conclude upon Art! I ask Dr. Traill, does he seriously believe this, when he thinks about it, as he has not yet done?

Dr. Traill says Tolstoy contends that "to the extent to which art gives pleasure at all to the cultivated taste, it condemns itself as bad or false."

What has Dr. Traill been reading? Tolstoy nowhere says, nowhere infers, any such thing. What Tolstoy conveys is this: "To the extent to which art gives pleasure to the corrupt

taste of the idle rich, and of all others corrupted by our falsely-ordered society, it condemns itself as bad and false." Dares Dr. Traill, facing his own conscience, to say there is a shadow of error here?

Dr. Traill continues, and imputes to Tolstoy this further statement: "True art is that which approves itself as edifying to intelligences of the rudest order."

Strange as it may seem, Tolstoy nowhere indicates this conclusion thus thrust upon him, but precisely an opposite conclusion. What he does contend is that true art must necessarily be such as would commend itself, for instance, to "a respected, wise, and educated country labourer." Dr. Traill at once instinctively concludes that such a man as Tolstoy instances is an intellect "of the rudest order." This perverted and incapable (speaking from a truly human point of view) "man of letters" believes himself and his kind to be judges of the good and true, when honest, serviceable, unsophisticated men, the strongest and sanest of their kind, are no judges at all! Really it is time

Dr. Traill knew that the appreciation of life to be found in a man who knows it as "a respected, wise, and educated country labourer" is serious, while the drawing-room and South-of-France notions of bookmen like himself are not even interesting to people who live, not desiring to play at living.

As to *technique* in art, Dr. Traill makes these two statements, saying they are Tolstoy's own conclusions: "Technical excellence is, in its very nature, bad and corrupt. Artistic performance will be truer, better, greater—in fact, can only be true, good, and great art at all—on condition that the symphony violate the rules of harmony, and the statue the laws of proportion; that the picture be out of drawing, and the poem refuse to scan."

I challenge Dr. Traill to produce a chapter, a paragraph, a line from *What is Art?* which will give any colour, even the merest, to this flat libel. Is Tolstoy a fool, to say that men are to convey their souls to each other in forms of art chosen for their inadequacy rather than for their adequacy? Nothing of the kind.

But Tolstoy distinguishes the corrupt over-elaboration of *technique* which always accompanies corrupt art, and he says we shall be well and necessarily rid of that which is unattainable by, and confusing and useless to, men of just life.

Again, Dr. Traill says that Tolstoy "took up, at about the age of fifty, with Socialism of the crudest sort." To say that, is to display an absolute ignorance of what "Socialism of the crudest sort" may be, and of what that something with which Tolstoy "took up" really is. This is a cheap, smooth untruth, adapted to current *Literature* and the spirit of the *Times*. "Socialism of the crudest sort" involves talk of armed revolution; the less crude sort involves proposals to make Socialist laws. But Tolstoy has "taken up" with Jesus Christ, and proposes that men shall "love one another," and find "the kingdom of God *within* them," for it cannot come by Acts of Parliament. True, if men were to follow Jesus—and Tolstoy—in theory and practice, they would cease to get their livelihood by unjust means—by any other means,



in fact, than honest work, or the gifts of those who love them. This, I suppose, is why Dr. Traill so rudely and truthlessly opposes Tolstoy.

Dr. Traill further says that "[Tolstoy] has embraced Socialism on much the same grounds of conviction as a Sunday afternoon listener to a Hyde Park orator, and 'found religion' in much the same spirit as one of the 'Hallelujah lasses' of the Salvation Army."

Now, the writer of this evidently does not know the broad ground of motive which has drawn men and women to Socialism and the Salvation Army, or he would not speak contemptuously of it as he does. But I do know, and I will tell him. That broad ground of motive is, in the one case, a desire for fair play, or justice, however rudimentarily conceived; in the other case, a desire to realise, to touch, the Over-soul, the Being "in whom we live and move and have our being." And I think such motive is worthy of the most distinguished following—however foreign to current *Literature* and the spirit of the *Times*. I think that such motive

is likely to inspire any intelligent man with correct instincts, if not with correct articulate conceptions, as to art and as to every other subject in life. But there is no such hope—rather a contrary certainty—for those who make current *Literature* in the spirit of the *Times*.

As to Mr. Spielmann's *critique*, which his *chef* so greatly commends, it is impossible to take the twists out of it. Like Dr. Traill, Mr. Spielmann has a wrong standpoint. Tolstoy's standpoint is Jesus Christ's, who, I am sure, could be nothing but a foolishly bad judge of art—in the view of our artists and critics. If the two "leaders of thought" who have written in *Literature* will just try to imagine that Jesus meant what he said, and that he was possibly right in his teaching as to how life should be lived: then, in this idea, read the Sermon on the Mount, and apply the teaching they find there to life: then, after they have settled some startlingly more important matters than art, and have time and judgment to think seriously about art—then they will discover that it is not Tolstoy who has been foolish.

Mr. Spielmann, while by no means sharing Dr. Traill's incapacity to understand Tolstoy at any point, still shares (or has he not, perhaps, furnished?) the latter's radical misconception of the subject. For instance, Mr. Spielmann, distinguishing the "life-conceptions" of Art held by Ruskin, Watts, Morris, and Tolstoy, says: "Tolstoy's is rights of man and brotherly love . . ." Now, none but an externalist to Tolstoy's meaning could ever suppose that Tolstoy advocates "rights of man." That phrase embodies the very opposite to the Christian idea held by Tolstoy, which is that men have no rights as against each other, but only the privilege of loving and serving each other. Until Mr. Spielmann can appreciate this radical difference, he is, in discussing Tolstoy's attitude to anything in life, as much at a loss as is a man who should discuss steam-engines in ignorance of the nature of steam.

The piece of assumed "reasoning" by which Mr. Spielmann ranks Tolstoy, "in appearance at least," among "the decadents, the mystics, and the rest," is indeed remarkable. Because

sincerity (as Tolstoy asserts) is the quality most important to art, and because those qualities which give works of art their claim upon us, originality and novelty, have their source in sincerity, and because "the decadents, mystics, and the rest . . . revolt in the name of novelty from every previous demonstration of Art;" therefore "Tolstoy is brought, in appearance at least, into rank with those artists whom he most despises and condemns at the present day." Amazing! By a similar "reasoning," it would appear that I, who believe in religion, and believe that the religious aspiration results in love and truth, am therefore brought into rank with certain materialist scientists, who, for (what they call) truth's sake, would put an end to religious aspiration! Which is precisely the reverse of anything that is reasonable or possible. The decadents would, and do, deliberately end sincerity for novelty's sake.

There is the same perverse (one had almost said malign) misunderstanding of what Tolstoy holds as to "technique," in Mr. Spielmann as in Dr. Traill. But enough of attempt to set-right

these many large inversions of truth; let it suffice to challenge Mr. Spielmann to produce from *What is Art?* a single pair of the "several self-contradictory passages" he says he finds there.

Dr. Traill and Mr. Spielmann are heathens—flat enemies of the view of life taken by Jesus Christ. Let them once for all understand this, and let them frankly tell the public that, in fighting Tolstoy, they are contending against the Christian truth of life. For all that Tolstoy says in *What is Art?*—his conception of his subject, his historical retrospect, his estimate of æsthetic literature, his distinction of good and bad in art and artists—all is the simple and inevitable outcome of the whole-hearted acceptance of the life-doctrine of love to God and to one's neighbour. The more confidence, the blinder perversity, with which Dr. Traill and Mr. Spielmann reject Tolstoy's foundation, and lightly maintain their temple of idols over against the Christian house of life, is so much addition to their sin. With their weekly dishes of stones they come between the public

and those who have really the bread of life to give.

I have wished to speak with profound and studied disrespect of the views held and the functions assumed by our conventionally-received "leaders of thought." Publicans and harlots, extortioners and prostitutes, Jesus said, would enter the kingdom of heaven before such "leaders of thought," before men of such views and functions. And yet, lost in coldness of heart and perversity of intellect as these men may be—denying that God is Love, denying the nature and need of justice, righteousness, among men—it yet remains true that the life of God moves in them also. I appeal to the latent God-nature in Dr. Traill and Mr. Spielmann, and say to them: "Friends, is it nothing to you that picture, music, poem, building, serve to-day to convey from soul to soul sensations chiefly of the pleasures desired by lust, of sex-indulgence, of war, of idleness, of pomp, of pride, of contentment with injustice—of, at best, such sympathy with suffering as determined selfishness permits itself? Is it nothing to you that, while you are



discussing current *Literature* in the spirit of the *Times*, millions, millions of your flesh and blood are agonising, stupefying, in slum and hovel, held there by misconceptions of life which *you* fight for, by chains which *your* hands rivet? Every line you write is a blow aimed at, or a support denied to, masses of men who might have been—but for you and such as you—‘respected, wise, and educated country labourers,’ the makers and supporters of an art, the dream, the hope of which, sickens one of the rubbish-heaps which you are defending against Tolstoy, the man of sanity, the man of light. Do you think that you, who have floated or struggled into notoriety, security, and comfort out of the perishing mass—you, who are in the class which lives out of, on top of, the mass—can by any possibility be other than darkeners of religious counsel, blind leaders of the socially and politically blind? Who, loving his fellow-men, and desiring welfare for them and rightness of life for himself, can fail to see that a man in your position, beautiful—respectable, well-informed, decent, urbane—outwardly, is, like a whited



sepulchre, hypocrisy set up over dead men's bones and all uncleanness? Listen to Paul: 'We speak wisdom among the full-grown, yet a wisdom not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, which are coming to nought; but we speak God's transcendent wisdom, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God fore-ordained at the beginning of the ages for our splendour of life: which none of the rulers of this age knoweth: for, had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of splendid life' (1 Cor. ii. 6-8). You are again crucifying the Lord of splendid life by opposing that conception of life which was his, and is anew presented to you by Tolstoy."

But Dr. Traill and Mr. Spielmann may say that I, who write this, am no fit instructor or monitor for them, who, with so much distinction, edit and contribute to current *Literature* in the spirit of the *Times*. I would answer to them: "It is, indeed, unfortunate that that which your own conscience and reason should urge upon you, should need to be urged through the difficult and repellent medium of another

personality, to which you will feel antagonism. But put the medium aside; consider the message; which is surely the message of your own conscience and reason, when you re-discover these under the mass of misfortunes in the way of 'learning,' serious trifling, and unjust habits of thought and life with which your environment has loaded you down."

I would continue to them: "I ask no forgiveness for any rudeness, or hurt to your feelings; I mean no rudeness, but only well-disposed truthfulness, which is the only politeness. I would gladly hurt all the feelings in and underlying your two pieces of writing, with utmost possible intensity; and should wish all such feelings to be hurt in myself. I simply ask that, if you can, or do, believe in a God, a Supreme Love and Truth, who is equally concerned for all men as for you, and for you as for all men: you shall, as in presence of that God, judge whether you have done well in lightly trying to turn men from the light given by Jesus Christ, and now shining through a man of our own day, whose capacity for life,

whose heart and intellect, so far transcend your own that you are incompetent, as yet, to judge of any position he may take. And believe me that those who oppose you do so, not from the literary notions of a *dilettante*, but from clear views of life, from known fact and experience, which you possess not, because, as is plain, you have never sought them seriously.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In reconsidering the above (to which no reply was forthcoming, clearly because none was possible), it occurs to me that both Dr. Traill and Mr. Spielmann were put off the track of Tolstoy's real thought by the, in the strict sense, Preface to *What is Art?* which Mr. Aylmer Maude thrust between Tolstoy and Tolstoy's readers. By that Preface, Tolstoy's spirit is dissipated.

## *PROPHET OF EUROPE.*

“JUDGE of a tree by its fruit.” Looking backward through history, along the line of the world’s great names, whom do we see to have been the world’s great benefactors? These: the men who have most deeply discerned, and most effectively conveyed to others, the truth of life. They are such as Lao-tze, Buddha, Zoroaster, Moses, Socrates, Jesus; from whom epochs are dated, and by whose teachings thousands of millions, age after age, suppose themselves to live. And, indeed, it is by such men and their teachings that mankind do live; for these “prophets” reveal the ideal towards which those who come after them must necessarily strive, though it be through all manner of ignorance and hypocrisy. The sign of a prophet is that he, of all men, deals with the simple and vital questions of life which are

every man's problem, and agitates, revolutionises, renews, society by his solutions. Only the ages that come after him can estimate the worth and power of a prophet, but even his own day can judge whether or not a man be a prophet. And all over the world, by the few who believe with him, by the many who reject him, by multitudes who cannot or will not understand him, it is felt and known that Leo Tolstoy, the Russian, is indeed a prophet, a revealer.

That spare, strong-looking old man with Socrates-like face and long grey hair and beard, who lives so quietly in Moscow or in the country near, it is not too much to say, is the greatest power in the world to-day. "What," you ask, "the greatest power in the world?" And I answer, Yes. He is, for instance, the declared opponent of the wielders of the largest militarism in the world, and they do not dare to lay hands on him. His power is moral power, his rule is the rule of ideas; the enlightened consciences of men everywhere are with him. The mere circulation of his

writings evidences that there is no man living who is so dominant over the thoughts of men to-day; even his enemies are influenced and moved by him.

The prophet deals with the simple and vital questions of life which are every man's problem. And all these questions are, and for men in society always have been, summed up in one—the Social Question; the question, *How shall we live in Society?* Even the matter of “personal salvation” is involved in this prior question. Our Christian religion declares this when it shows that salvation for the individual depends upon his obedience to the principle, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” All history, with its rise and fall of nations and states, growth and decay of religions, strifes for power and against oppression, pageantry and misery, war, murder, devotion and sacrifice—all history may be best understood as the effort of humanity to rightly grasp in meaning and justly apply in practice, this great social principle, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

The obvious and all-embracing practical implications of that principle are well expressed in that great cry of the French Revolution for "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." To be in order, however, with the instinctive working and historic progress of the mind of man, let us change the positions of the words, and say, "Equality, Fraternity, Liberty." Then, looking upon the social struggle that is rending civilisation through its foundations, we may detect the general and ancient movement towards Equality, growing and spreading under its present-day name of Socialism. "*Equality of opportunity*" is the conscious demand of millions of people, revolted by experience of the inequality which gives the power of property, with leisure and luxury, to the rich, and slavery, overwork, and want to the poor.

Within this wide range of Socialism is a less wide but deeper movement, which has for its hope Fraternity. Turning from the prevalent state of war—open war of the battle-field, veiled war of armed peace, and trade war called competition,—the conscience of man desires even



more than equality of opportunity — namely, co-operation, brotherly treatment of man by man. Communism, the movement arising hence is called.

And yet again, within these others is a less wide, still deeper movement, for Liberty. Men ask, "What restrains us from Equality and Fraternity?" And the answer is given, "An evil principle, accepted as right in theory, and applied ruthlessly in social practice; the principle, namely, that it is right and necessary for some men to rule others by force, by law which rests on armed violence, military power." Those who give this answer are called Anarchists,<sup>1</sup> and their movement, Anarchy or Anarchism. The

<sup>1</sup> The word must be freed from misunderstanding. It stands for no other idea than its Greek meaning of "no government." It is *not* used by Anarchists to mean "no order." Anarchism looks to a better order of society which is to arise with freedom from force-government. That most professed Anarchists advocate violent rebellion, bombs and assassination, is true; but that is no part of the idea which creates the movement. It proves only how bitter is the hatred of, and how disgusted many are with, the existing social system.

complete Anarchist is the perfect idealist ; the man whose goal is entire freedom of action for all, knowing this to be the only possible condition in which equality and fraternity can exist. And this perfect freedom is seen to be compatible only with a perfect morality.

The true place and power of Tolstoy are not to be appreciated by those who are unaware of the vast area and true nature of all this social movement. Those who limit their thought and outlook to newspapers and novels, Piccadilly and Parliament, the office and the suburban residence, the factory and the beershop, must necessarily remain unaware of what and where the heart and brain of the social body are prompting and leading. To them, Socialism is to-day's craze of the unavoidable percentage of fanatics in society, Communism is folly, Anarchism is crime, Tolstoy is a dim, vague figure of genius, very noble (no doubt), but not to be taken seriously, a little mad ; they do not, they cannot, know that they themselves are the dullards, the deadweights of humanity ; that the Social Movement is of men, better and wiser

than they, whose foremost prophet is Tolstoy, a prophet of the ages. This man, who acts and speaks so peaceably in the name of the Christ, has practised and taught the last doctrines of Socialism, Communism, Anarchism, and finds them summed up in the rediscovered Gospel.

Our British "piety" has, on the whole, felt itself compelled to reverence the pure teaching and consistent life of Tolstoy. But the more it has spoken this reverence, the more it has rejected his doctrine. A first reason given for this rejection is that Tolstoy's teaching and example are a natural product of Russia, but do not apply in England. To at all benefit from Tolstoy, this illusion must be taken for what it is, and put aside. As far as any matter of Christian principle goes, the conditions of life are the same in Russia as in England. In both countries men need food, clothing, and shelter, which need hand-and-head labour to produce. In both countries men buy and sell in the same way, hold property by similar laws; they put the same power of government in control of

society, with emperor or queen at the head, with supporting legislative councils and parliaments, law-courts and judges, tax-gatherers and officials, police, army and navy. In both countries an orthodox religion prevails, which approves the system of government, declares the existing state of things to be the will of God, and discountenances change.

It is hard to persuade the mass of people, to whom the foreigner remains so very foreign, of the identity of life, in all but some superficial aspects, in all civilised countries. The slight dissimilarities between English and Russian habits must be understood and seen in their proper proportions to the whole of life, and Tolstoy will then be read in England as a man appealing equally to all men. And we must come to see that the ballot, absence of a literary censorship, freedom of speech, and voluntarism in the army, have not created different issues of life for Englishmen and Russians.

A difference that has importance, lies in the fact that while in Russia over eighty per cent. of the people are peasant-agriculturists, and the

rest are city-dwellers and the rich, in England eighty per cent. are of the town, and the rest are of the country. On their great plains, amid their forests, the Russians are nearer nature than we, and therefore simpler in habit and thought. The opposition of the two classes, rich and poor, oppressors and oppressed, is more readily seen in such a society than in ours, where the middle classes break the contrast. This character of the national life about him has undoubtedly given a certain shape and quality to Tolstoy's work ; it has also helped him to that searching simplicity and directness which is more difficult to attain in the greater complication and confusion of our western life.

The Tolstoy family is of high aristocracy, dating from Peter the Great's time. On his mother's side, Leo Tolstoy has for ancestor a Prince of Montenegro, whom he is said to greatly resemble in feature. The principal estate of the family is at Yasnaya Polyana, eighty miles or thereabout south from Moscow, and near Tula. There Leo Tolstoy (who, as

every one knows, is hereditarily a Count) was born, now seventy-four years ago, on 28th August, 1828. To understand his childhood one must read *Boyhood* (otherwise known in English as *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth*), written by him in his early twenties; not actually, but essentially, this book is autobiography, as is so much in his other stories and novels. Let us at once remark that Tolstoy's method and power consist in entire devotion to truth in life and nature; this devotion, born in him as a master-impulse, having been consciously adopted and followed from reading Rousseau in his youth. It results that, of all writers, Tolstoy is the most consistently self-revealing; and one will in vain seek through literature for such another record of the gradual, inevitable, convincing, illuminating, unfoldment of a soul, as the record he has given us. He is Rousseau with a difference; difference of the age, and of his own superior spirituality. The age has led him to apply to human life the accurate method applied by science to physical nature; his spirituality has enabled him to

enter the sphere and proclaim the realities of the spirit.

His early years, spent out on those great plains, among rich relations, servants and peasants, exercised the deep love of nature which informs all his writing. Picture the "great estate" with its varied life of peasant and aristocrat; the expanses of sky, plain, and forest; the mansion, and the wooden huts of the village; the idle pleasures of "the family," and the toil of the peasants. All these made the first deep impressions in the child's mind, and gave material for the work of the man. One need not enlarge upon this; it suffices to say that, amid these surroundings, he was a child, full of life and animation, deeply observant, in many ways extraordinarily, even awkwardly, sensitive, with a great power and habit of introspection—the especially Russian faculty of "self-picking." It is said that in these early years his disposition towards goodness, rightness of life, was shown in such ways as the keeping of a diary to note his faults and guide him in their correction.



In his teens he saw something of life in Moscow, that city, half a capital; and was entered at the Kazan University. There he learned—what he chose, and no more; consequently, from a professorial point of view, his career was not distinguished. However, he unquestionably took thence much of his own choosing; for instance, “At eighteen I became a free-thinker,” he says. The easy, indifferent, and in the fullest sense immoral, life of his class, and the evident absence of reality in the profession and teaching of religion around him, thus early produced their effect, inevitable with a sincere and well-disposed mind. At about twenty he entered the army, and while with his brother serving against the tribes of the Caucasus, he wrote the pieces which compose *Boyhood*. At twenty-six he was in the Crimea serving against the allies. His great talent and liveliness wrought upon all about him; his sayings “went the round,” and a song of his was sung by the whole army. But his real employment then was to gather from experience data for his last, ripe teaching upon the world-crime

of war. Not yet seeing clearly, still his book of the period, *Sevastopol*, is so simple, so thrilling, so obviously matter-of-fact, that it is in itself sufficient to turn one from war for ever. The Tzar, hearing something of what Tolstoy was doing, had the promising author taken from danger and put to serve in a place of safety.

And now let me direct attention to a second "criticism" of Tolstoy, put up as a defence against the power of his doctrine. The first criticism, which sets up an assumed essential difference between life in England and in Russia, may be termed feeble; this second criticism can only be termed base. It is, that Tolstoy is a reformed libertine, one who in his age repents the crimes of his youth and manhood in order to gain heaven. "The excesses of his youth have produced old-age asceticism in him," is said in so many words. (And the people who so speak are nearly always ready to call Tolstoy "saint" and "prophet," while they say, "We need not follow his exaggerations;" they forget, or will not see, that those so-called "exaggerations" make him precisely

what he is, and distinguish him from them, who do not wish or who fear to be "saints" and "prophets.") That a man's past affects his present is a truism. But is John Bunyan less true in his Puritan Evangel, because of his bitterly-repented evil youth? Is Francis of Assisi less holy in life because of his bitterly-repented first manhood? Is Paul less a Christian because he first murdered Christians? And, in any case, it is not to his own personal worth that Tolstoy calls our attention; but to solid reasons, actual experiences, verifiable truths, which, once discovered, are, and must be, the same for all human perception, whatever the individual's past may be.

This accusation against Tolstoy is the echo of his own declaration in *My Confession*, a book which, truly read, yields the key to his life. His words are :—

"I put men to death in war, I fought duels to slay others, I lost at cards, wasted my substance wrung from the sweat of peasants, punished the latter cruelly, rioted with loose women, and deceived men. Lying, robbery,

adultery of all kinds, drunkenness, violence, and murder, all committed by me, not one crime omitted, and——”

His accusers omit what follows—

“Yet I was not the less considered by my equals a comparatively moral man. Such was my life during ten years.”

He speaks of his early manhood. We are apt to forget that he accuses himself of living as the great majority of our own English army officers and fashionable men are accustomed to live—indeed, he says, he lived not quite so badly as his class. Tolstoy tells us of his early desire for virtue, his struggles for virtue, the laughter and opposition he met, the applause he found for his evil deeds; “not one word was spoken, not a finger lifted, to help.” All his books are the faithful record of that struggle, thus early begun, and of his errors and his attainment. It is not well to speak of him as has been done. Those who know him as he is can gauge the shallowness of the accusers.

Living between Moscow and St. Petersburg,

moving in fashionable, literary, and generally "cultured" (as it is called) society, and traveling abroad occasionally, Tolstoy's fame as a writer grew. Though he more and more felt himself to be without any certain guidance in life, still his writings ("studies by the way," these earlier pieces may be called) show more and more of large purpose, seriousness, and moral direction. *Albert*, *Lucerne*, *The Two Hussars*, *A Russian Proprietor*, exhibit this growth.

At last he married the daughter of a German physician in Moscow. The courtship is told as that of Kitty and Levine in *Anna Karénina*; the history of Levine in that story being Tolstoy's own history up to this period of his life. Now thirty-four years old, he settled at Yasnaya Polyana, and the course of his life for fifteen years may be briefly described. He managed his estates and increased their value and income; sought to improve the condition of the peasants; experimented with schools for his peasants and their children; wrote largely of these labours and the novel ideas

and principles he discovered and applied ; became known as "a practical philanthropist," his writings upon the children's schools, which he practically yielded to the children to conduct in their own way, being found especially interesting and useful ; gave himself heartily to the large family of sons and daughters which grew up to him. And all this while he laboured in succession upon the great novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karénina*.

Tolstoy now desires no one to read those books, though they contain the germs of all he has since developed. The material for his argument upon life is gathered there, but the all-important conclusions are wanting. If I now dwell upon these works it is only briefly to affirm the qualities of the writer discovered in them ; qualities attested by the criticism, not of one circle or one country, but of all circles and countries. The note of all criticism of Tolstoy is that "his novels are *life itself*." In other writers one may find colour and distortion of the medium ; in Tolstoy, the reader powerfully feels the absence of these. "Life



itself" moves before him. We are given the life Tolstoy has felt and seen, the people he has known, the motives he has discerned. The pre-eminent qualities of his work are three; these we may well consider in some detail, and as to them critics generally are agreed.

Let us first put sincerity. There is in Tolstoy's writing, from first to last, one clear purpose of truth-telling. No improbable romance, no artificial situations; only ordinary people, ordinary affairs, ordinary feelings,—but all made strong, absorbing as "life itself," by this depth of truth. He is a discoverer of reality.

Let us put next, breadth. The theatre of these novels is nothing smaller than all modern society. They are Russian, and yet cosmopolitan. The author has "seen all." We feel that, as they must in life, so all classes of men and women, from emperors to beggars, priests and profligates, the learned and the unlearned, idlers, tradesmen, artists, peasants, rich and poor, move here. And we feel that all this life is, in an especial way, subject to him who



describes it. This author sees the life of man as one, and exposes its unity under all bewildering varieties of outward appearance.

And thirdly, let us say insight. Tolstoy is the farthest from those story-tellers whose automata are only interesting because of the adventures that whirl about and alternately humiliate and glorify their bodies ; he has no part with those who give us invented persons, heroines and heroes ; his faculty is for divining the deep motives of our own hearts ; his people are interesting because we know ourselves in them. Not in the motives we give out to the world, not even in the motives we proclaim to ourselves, but in the real motives, the great currents of desire that sweep us on—in these Tolstoy deals. He shows us our basic selves.

I find no point where any of his contemporaries, his opponents, can justly place a finger and say, "This man fails in this or that qualification to be a judge of life." He has, in regard to his later work, been accused of want of exact scholarship and technical philosophical training, "which," say his critics, "are only

obtainable, each of them, by a life's study; and even a man of genius who becomes a novelist, must forego these other acquisitions, and remain content to leave untouched the work of scholars and philosophers." In this way "the learned" repudiate his conclusions (really without understanding them), not feeling that they have in Tolstoy a man who is their master, and who well knows what to take of their, the scholars' and schoolmen's, results, for the use of his own larger purpose. Before men of genius all life is subserviently departmentised, and the kings of mind draw from their offices of state, from each department, such truth as their kingdom needs.

Readers and critics in all civilisation have established Tolstoy the novelist in the front rank of his order. Now, it is said among these same readers and critics, that Tolstoy the teacher, the "religionist," has sunk into a fanaticism; is, indeed, a little mad. In proceeding to consider his later developments, we may well keep in mind always the question, "Have we in these teachings and this life the

inevitable outcome, the ripe fruit, of great sanity, or the disease and folly of genius? For assuredly, in the case of Tolstoy, it is one or the other.

Inevitably, any exposition of Tolstoy's teaching must follow the course of his life, because of that sincere and consistent development of his mind in his writings already remarked upon. And also, because he always presents his conclusions as drawn from actual experience, from living practice; no mere theory, speculation, word-weaving.

In *My Confession* Tolstoy has told of the great change which came over his life as he drew near fifty years of age. He then found himself rich, famous, prosperous in his family, able to choose what friends he would, and in complete health. Amid all this, there grew upon him a new, strange unrest. It was as though he had found out that his life was without meaning. Continually he asked himself, "Why?" and "What after?" It was no light sentiment, but a life-and-death agony



THE TOLSTOY OF "THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU."

*From an Oil Painting by*

[*Garoshauko, 1894.*



of soul upon which he was entered. He feared to live under this sense of the incomprehensibility, the purposelessness, of life. All his former conceptions of life he now saw to be insufficient, empty, for they did not even suggest what is the end of it all, for himself, for all men. His agony became such that he put ropes and guns out of his way, lest he should at some moment be driven to suicide. He wondered how in the past he could have lived without solving the problem. Surely he must, he considered, in all his reading of ancients and moderns, philosophers and religious teachers, in all his intercourse with his cultured friends, have missed that explanation of life which they surely must have known! Again he read, again he discussed. But he only saw the more clearly that philosophy and culture had no practical and satisfying answer to the problem; they only confessed its existence, and despaired of it. "From Solomon to Schopenhauer," they showed life as a thing incomprehensible; on the whole an evil thing; to be endured while one must, and to be met with the effort to get

from it as much happiness as possible while it is ours. He found the last state of philosophy and culture to be Pessimism. There was no "faith," no confidence in life to be gained, sufficient to carry one on through life.

At last he reflected that the philosophers and men of culture—people of that circle to which he himself belonged, who assumed (as he himself had done) that all possibility of understanding life lay with their own superior intelligence and learning—were, after all, a very small fraction of humanity. Outside them lay the vast mass of mankind, the labouring folk, "the common people." With a renewed interest in those whom he had loved and studied all his life, Tolstoy again examined the life of the mass, the Russian people. And here, despite labours and miseries, despite ignorance, error and sin, here he found *a faith in life*. The peasants are free from the pessimism which rules the cultured; they display a satisfaction in following their seemingly intolerable toils, and they meet death with an ease and confidence, which are not felt by the rich, the com-



fortable, the cultured. *They find something to live for; a current of life that carries them along.* Not as an excuse for keeping the labouring poor in labour and poverty, but as a fact of experience, Tolstoy, the deep observer, announces this.

He perceived that there was in this "faith" something of a religious character; something related to his own boyish recollections of the Gospel, and to his life-long secret instinct that there is in the Gospel a superior truth. He perceived that the basis of this "faith" was acceptance of "God,"—that concept of a Power who overrules all, which belongs to all religions. Again he associated himself with Orthodoxy, sharing the worship, the sacraments, the observances of the church, with the common people.<sup>1</sup> And he envied the unlearned peasants their ability to receive without question the forms and ceremonies with which the Gospel is bound up for them. For himself, he was compelled to discriminate. The injunction,

<sup>1</sup> In Russia there is a certain compulsion upon the peasants to "attend Church."

"love one another in unity," he could receive with joy, reason assenting; but the transubstantiation, the Trinity, and so forth, his reason, as formerly, could not rest in. He made his discrimination. The "living faith" in a God, the Father of all, and the duty of loving and serving all men, our brothers, as ourselves, he detached from the mass of Church accretions, finding this to be the pure, essential Christian doctrine. The Churches—Greek, Romish, Protestant, Dissenting—oppose each other; that is not unity. They countenance war of Christians against Christians; that is not love. He could not be of the Church. And he perceived that all the good he had seen in the life of men, while associated with the simple faith of the Gospel, is yet outside, indeed opposed by, the Churches.<sup>1</sup>

For "the faith" which lives in the people is that confidence in life which enables them day

<sup>1</sup> It is to be emphasised that Tolstoy's attitude towards the Russian Church is equally (and necessarily) his attitude towards all so-called "Christian" Churches, these being at one with the existing social system.

by day to toil on at the labours by the fruit of which all men live. It is *they*, the labouring people, who are the servants of all, duly fulfilling (and under the exactions of the non-producing rich trebly fulfilling) the law, which says for all men, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." In this direction, Leo Tolstoy found the light.

Tolstoy is his own best biographer, and we shall best follow him by reading *What shall we do then?*<sup>1</sup>—a book written to answer the question of men and women in positions like Tolstoy's own; the question of people who come to see the truth discovered in *My Confession*. This work is virtually in three parts, dealing respectively with Charity, Property, and Labour.

It appears that as the light dawned, Tolstoy, feeling himself compelled to walk by it, set himself to discover how he, a non-producing rich man, might enter into right relations with those labouring poor upon whom he had so far been a parasite. In Moscow he applied himself

<sup>1</sup> Or, *What to do?* French, *Que faire?*

to what we in England have learned to call "slumming"; visiting and assisting in all ways the extremely poor, founding a relief society for collecting information and alms, and for distributing the alms. So he attempted to justify himself. He was not satisfied, and came to see the error he was still in by the aid of one Sutaieff, a peasant-preacher who, from being a village merchant, had given himself to a very simple and honest following of the Gospel. In this man's presence, Tolstoy, to gain his opinion, described his own "works of charity." Sutaieff would not approve, and when pressed for his own remedy, told Tolstoy to take into his house two destitute men—he himself would take one—and with these they should live as brothers, eating, working, and speaking together. Tolstoy says he at once saw the truth—that same truth expressed thus by John Ruskin :—

"The mistake of the best men, through generation after generation, has been that great one of thinking to help the poor by almsgiving, and by preaching of

patience or of hope, and by every other means, emollient or consolatory, except the one thing which God orders for them, justice."

This "justice," Ruskin goes on to say, is—

"By the best men denied in its trial time, by the mass of men hated whenever it appears."

And Leo Tolstoy was now to become the preacher of this denied and hated justice.

The failure of "charity" led on to a deeper examination of the relations between rich and poor; to new study of economics, history, philosophy, and life. The result, as shown in the chapters discussing Property, the money-power, is precisely that economic presentment made by Socialists everywhere, but here given in Tolstoy's own way. The rich are in possession of property and the power of government. By exaction of rent, interest, profit, and taxes, they take from the labourer all but that "subsistence-wage" which orthodox economists assert to be his miserable final portion. Sometimes even that is taken. The whole process Tolstoy well describes; but a singular value of these chapters

is the searching examination of the nature and operation of Money—too long to be adequately dealt with here. Money is shown to be the chain of the labourer's slavery; he must have it, to pay rent and taxes, and to buy what he cannot himself produce. To get it, he must sell his labour or his produce, and by the operation of monopoly and competition his labour and produce are made cheap, and the things he must buy are made dear. For any surplus left him, government takes that away, to spend in official salaries and militarism.

Graphic pictures of these things in the doing Tolstoy gives to us. He shows us the rich family in their summer country residence, settled to a life of pianos and picnics, made possible by an array of well-fed, leisurely domestics. Opposite the house are the sloping fields, dotted with black figures of men and women, old people and little children, who come out to work with the morning sun, and cease with the sunset. All day long, having only black bread to eat and *kvass* to drink, they sweat and toil, getting in the hay. And see,



the hay of last year is being trodden into the earth of the road under the feet of the horses at the door of the great house! So it is, says Tolstoy to the rich, that the starved and slavish toil of these poor is wasted upon your idle luxury. "Yes," he says, "you have made the poor into a beast to carry you on its back. And the beast carries you, very easily for yourselves, and when it suffers and groans you say, 'Ah, poor creature, how much we pity you! We would do anything to help you!' And you would," says Tolstoy, "anything—except get off its back." That, according to him, is just the duty to themselves, not less than to the labouring poor, which the rich need to perform.

Again, he describes the life of a rich man of his acquaintance, an "enlightened Liberal," quite "able-bodied." This man rises late, eats elaborately, smokes cigarettes, talks "enlightened Liberalism," takes the play or the opera, sups, talks, smokes, sleeps. To provide his cigarettes, young girls in the factories are preparing early death for themselves; to provide his often-changed white linen, an old woman



in the side street bends over the ironing-board from morning until night. Let my friend, says Tolstoy, give up what does him harm and kills young girls; let him iron his own shirts while the old woman rests,—if he finds the shirts worth doing when done by himself.

How is it that the idle rich justify themselves in thus living on the labour of the poor? By a huge deceit, says Tolstoy, concocted by a false political economy, based upon a perverted philosophy, sanctioned by a venal Church, and enforced by the State's power to kill. That deceit is the current doctrine of the Division of Labour. True, says Tolstoy, it is good that some should plough and others grind; some make bricks, and others build; some make cloth and others coats; and that these workers should exchange what they make. But it is quite another thing to say also, that some should be emperors, kings, presidents, statesmen, property-owners, priests and preachers, organisers of industry, writers and artists, men of science, soldiers and doctors, and so forth. If all the kings, statesmen, priests, preachers,

organisers of industry, writers, artists, men of science, soldiers, doctors, were swept out of existence to-morrow, we perfectly well know that the ploughing, grinding, brick-making, building, weaving, tailoring, would go on just as before—only with this enormous advantage, *that the labourers would be relieved of the burden of supporting in their present colossal luxury all those lives of non-producers.* But take away the ploughman, miller, brickmaker, builder, weaver, tailor—and king, statesman, priest, preacher, organiser of industry, writer, artist, man of science, soldier, doctor, are left to starve, houseless, unclothed—"shown up" in all their cultivated inability to do anything really needful.

"What!" the "cultured" world has exclaimed at Tolstoy, "do you mean to say that *we* are not useful to humanity—we, the intelligent, the orderers of things?"

Precisely that, answers Tolstoy. And he bids these people to take themselves at the valuation put on them by the mass of men, the workers; not at their own deceitful valua-

tion. The whole of their "cultured" society might go, for all the working people care. If brute-force or want of employment did not compel, would any labouring men give their lives as soldiers and police to preserve the precious "State" we live under? Not a man, it is to be believed. And if there were no soldiers and police to compel, would the people pay taxes? The question is ridiculous; the peasant, the labouring man everywhere, would only say "Thank God," if he ceased to be drained by the frightful imposts which go in war, officialism, and civil-lists of kings. And the simplest forms of village labour would be much more productive to the labourer, than work for competitive wages under "organisers of industry" who "organise" so as to sweep the largest part of what other men produce into their own houses and coffers. The workers know that "employers" *come between* the worker and his work; hence trade-unions and strikes. And priests and preachers? The mass of the workers show their appreciation by not going to church, except under some kind of com-

pulsion, as in Russia. And writers and artists? The mass of the people do not read books or look at pictures; they have no opportunity as a rule; but where libraries or galleries give a scant opportunity, not "the people," but "the cultured" and one workman here and there, use them. And doctors? How much have all the schools of medicine done to alleviate the sufferings of the poor? Live in a village or a "slum," and take note. In effect, nothing.

This pretence of usefulness made by the classes has its "reasons." Once the excuse was, and in great part still is, the "religious" one—namely, that things as they are are the will of God, and we must not rebel, but endure. This is interpreted to mean that the masses must bear their privation, and the rich may enjoy their idle luxury, for this is just as God intends. But now the latest excuses are philosophic and scientific. Hegelianism, for instance, arrives at the "immanence of God in nature," and easily finds Him in the State-oppression, the Church-hypocrisy, and the Property-robbery—all which we must therefore take in the neces-

sary order of things. Comte and Spencer are also shown by Tolstoy to take the same view in effect; and modern science and philosophy are shown as teaching us to name "evolution" instead of "the Will of God," and to remain content with living a nice moral life, without criticising or rejecting the unreasonable, maleficent order of society in which our lives are moulded.

"What shall we do then?" says Tolstoy. Learn to understand the law of Labour. Begin by living simply, healthily; making small demands on others' labour for house, food, clothing. Follow Socrates; follow Jesus. Proceed by learning to do something useful and doing it; some genuine "bread-labour," to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, do good to the sick and oppressed. Follow Paul's Christ-like injunction to early and real Christians, that they should "follow honest trades for necessary wants, lest they become unfruitful." And for women, let them take their sisterly part in useful work, ceasing to look upon the sex-relation as a means of getting a living, in or

out of marriage. If married, let them cease from luxury and vanity, and take their burden of motherhood as a duty to be fulfilled as to God, and not to be avoided by artifice for the sake of pleasure.

"Cease to do evil, learn to do well." This is the message of the book we have considered.

Isaiah and the priests, Socrates and the demagogues, Jesus and the Pharisees, Francis and the cardinals, Tolstoy and the clerics—always it is the same story. The "public guardians of religion" are the stout enemies of the prophet; and the Holy Office, "*to do God service*," hands over the "heretic" to the fires lit by the Secular Arm. In *My Religion*, another of those books which may, in their unity, be called his autobiography, Tolstoy has announced what should compel every priest, clergyman, and minister who understands, either to abandon his calling, or to proclaim Tolstoy a dangerous heretic. This announcement is nothing less than a, to our day, new understanding of Christianity; which indeed makes



our orthodox Christianity look like nothing so much as Antichrist.

In *My Religion* we have the account of how Tolstoy recovered the meaning of the Gospel, hidden from him by centuries of ecclesiastical commentary and perversion. At the stage of development described in *My Confession*, a new light shone upon one after another of the Gospel sayings and teachings. Tolstoy discovered that Jesus had *meant what He said*, and had in many instances meant the opposite of what His words have been twisted and obscured into. Entering upon his researches in a spirit of freest criticism, substantially acquainted with all that scholarship has done upon the Gospels, and prepared to accept only what he could plainly understand, he came to see that if the plain, full meaning of the words of the Gospel be taken, a doctrine of life appears in them, at once simple, non-supernatural, complete, and joyful to every soul in whom dwells the love of goodness. But a doctrine, how revolutionary to the world's prevalent conception and practice of life!



It must not be thought that Tolstoy is by any means alone in his understanding of the doctrine of Jesus. A host of men in our own day see Jesus as he sees Him; his singularity here is only superior clearness, reasonableness, courage, completeness. In comparing him with John Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, for instance, one cannot fail to realise this superiority in Tolstoy over men who have so much of his spirit and outlook. Analysing the ground of the repudiations of him, one sees that they are made simply because of this logic and completeness, by men who have neither, and who are afraid of the simple drastic truth.

The discovery, the prophecy, of Tolstoy is, then, that men who would follow the truth revealed by Jesus, must wholly accept and live by the basic principles of Jesus; which are: that there is a God, who is our Father, giving us life because He loves us; whose will is that men should love and care for their fellow-men equally with themselves. Believe and do this, and you are a Christian, says Tolstoy; reject this, or equivocate upon it, and you are no

Christian. He is logical. If we trust God, we must trust Him wholly, and do nothing that is contrary to His love and truth; but obey conscience utterly, despite all outward difficulties. If we love our neighbour, we shall show it by treating him, whoever he may be, just as we should wish to be treated ourselves. Yes, Tolstoy is logical. He shows how, if men really had faith in God the Father, they would not try to secure their lives by taking part in the present competitive and warlike organisation of society, "the kingdom of this world;" but they would "come out of Babylon," live rightly, usefully, and trust God. He shows how, if men really loved their neighbours as themselves, no man could keep his wealth and rest in ease and comfort while another man suffered; there could be no kingship, power, privilege, riches, poverty, among men who loved each other. Love would make a last end of these evils.

To all this "idealism" men accede readily enough. The pressure of Tolstoy's doctrine, however, comes just where it came with Jesus—

namely, in the saying, "*If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them.*" Men answer, "We *cannot* live by these principles; that were suicide." Jesus says, "You must; if you would follow me, you must indeed die to the bodily life, must yield yourselves as already dead." It is the Christian *necrosis*, once more honestly and clearly put to men in our own day, as it was nineteen centuries since, and as it has been many times between. By many methods Tolstoy goes about to prove the point of Jesus. Perhaps his most effective work is the enunciation, in *My Religion*, of those "five points of conduct" enjoined in the Sermon on the Mount, which in themselves involve the whole Christian spirit and life, and are in themselves wholly revolutionary to the existing order of society. They are contained in Matt. v. 21-48,<sup>1</sup> and are understood and remarked upon by Tolstoy in this spirit:—

The whole bearing of the teaching is to show men the error of attempting to bring about

<sup>1</sup> The English Revised Version should be consulted by the reader.

good order in society by force, by other means than goodwill, reason, truth. So Jesus, point by point, contrasts the present method of laws, enforced by punishments, with His own, the ideal method. His followers are not to follow the old fallacy of law, and use compulsion, but to live rightly themselves, from the inward spirit. For instance, where the law says, Thou shalt not kill, for fear of judgment and punishment, Jesus says, Thou shalt not feel anger, which is the root of murder. Where the law sanctions marriage and allows divorce, Jesus says that he whose lust makes him unfaithful even in desire only, is an adulterer, and when divorce leads to remarriage, it causes adultery. Where the law professes to defend person and property, and regulate the affairs of individuals in society, Jesus says we must cease from all such means of defence and regulation, and give the other cheek to the smiter, yield our garment to him who sues at law for our coat, go two miles where required to go one, and give and lend freely to those who ask. Where the law says we must, as a sacred duty, fulfil our oaths,

pledges, contracts, Jesus says we must enter into no such obligations, but deal in plain Yes and No, as honest men. Where the law permits, nay encourages us, to defend ourselves against enemies—criminals, social outcasts, foreigners,—Jesus says, No, you must love them, do them good, as you would do to your friends; just as the Father sends rain and sunshine on good and bad alike.

To understand this teaching as being literally, simply, fully meant by Jesus, is indeed a shock to all orthodoxy. For, says Tolstoy, look what we have done! We have wholly explained away the force of this teaching, and ignorantly called ourselves "Christian," while doing and approving in Christ's very name the very opposite to what He commands! Not feel anger? We actually commit murder, the ripe fruit of anger, in wholesale fashion, and then imagine that we and the hangmen and soldiers we employ may all together "go to heaven" as "good Christians." Not encourage lust between the sexes? Church and Law alike consecrate and sanction *adulteries* which cannot be true mar-

riages, for in most cases it is not the man's first union; divorce is established; marriage is a market for daughters, and looked upon (as is prostitution also) as a way of getting a living for women. Abolish all oaths, pledges, contracts? Tzar, queen, lords, legislators, bishops, clergy, ministers, judges, witnesses, police, soldiers,—all take oath on coming to office, and take it on the very book which says, "Swear not at all"! Thus we put duty to, we know not what—king, country, government—in place of duty to our own knowledge of what is good, right, and true. And doing that, we proceed to make it our duty to—*love* our enemies? Not in the least; but to gather armies and fleets to *murder* them, when "our country" calls! And so "fellow-Christians" go to war, and "ministers of God in the name of Christ" and chaplains of regiments and warships in each country, pray that the "Christians" of their own nation may be successful in murdering other children of the same Father!

At least, Tolstoy would say to our pretended Christians, have the decency to own



that you are what you are—heathens, and not Christians. You *may* think your methods and your reasons for acting as you do, to be very good ones, but remember, Jesus Christ's methods and reasons are just the reverse of yours.

“Blessed are ye poor,” Tolstoy understands to be a necessary part of Christ's teaching to His disciples. “You, who from your principles cannot hold property, can assert no rights of your own,—with you,” says Jesus, “all is eternally well.” From the full meaning, the practical sense, of this, Tolstoy turns not one whit. And he knows that to-day many people feel that the voice of God, *the necessity of their own spirit*, calls them to this Christian poverty. He knows of the agony of soul endured by men in power, men under responsibility, men of wealth, and poor labourers who know their work to be useless, base or destructive: agony caused by the knowledge that they are violating the life of their spirit, their true life. Many such have turned to him, saying, “What are we to do? There seems no way of escape.” He, in effect, answers simply, “Acknowledge the truth.



Do not deceive or excuse yourself. Confess to the world what your conscience and reason tell you. Lose no opportunity to cease to do evil, and learn to do well. Then He who is Love and Truth will lead you into rightness of life."

And what has been Tolstoy's practical conduct, in response to these principles? Those who are in a position to know can speak of the faithfulness with which he has, at each step taken by his spirit, followed with his body. So soon as he saw the truth and the full implication of Christ's doctrine, he abandoned his property; which his family, not by his desire, but by their own insistence, took over. For this he was called mad by his own family and circle, and that thought spread in the world that held him famous. On the other hand, it has been said that he took care to provide for his family, and has thus only nominally "given up all." People say, "He still lives in luxury with his family, and all this proves, in his own person, that his doctrine is impossible."

The fact is, that he has simply followed the

principles he professes. He felt no obligation to force the property from his family, just as he felt no obligation to force his neighbour's property from his neighbour. It was sufficient that he himself surrendered all property. He felt no obligation to live apart from his family, but rather to endure conditions he had come to abhor, in order that he might live the Christian life in presence of those whom he had drawn to himself. There never had been any fear (and there could not be with such a man) of his wanting friends to support him and his family, in case of need, so that there was no temptation of fear to lead him to cling to his former position. For this reason, some say, "Ah, it was easy for Tolstoy to make the sacrifice. But *I* cannot." Such people forget that the Christian life is the *necrosis*, the dying to live again, for all who enter it. Tolstoy faced death in facing the Russian Church and State. *There* was, and is, his trial.

When he surrendered his ownership of property, he simplified his already simple life, and step by step became an abstainer from alcohol,

a non-smoker, a vegetarian, and his own servant. To repay mankind for what he still took of the produce of other men's labour, he ploughed the fields, did other agricultural labour, and made boots. It is a small item in the opposition to him from the powers-that-be, that, when he put up over his wooden hut the legend "House of Leo Nicolaevitch Tolstoy, Shoemaker," and began business, the authorities ordered the sign down, as being unsuitable for a nobleman, a count, and tending to bring aristocracy and the State generally into disrepute.

He refuses all money-traffic; perceiving, with Shelley, that money is "the mediative sign of selfishness," impossible in that "commerce of good words and works" which is the ideal state of human relations. Since the change in his conception of life, he has neither desired nor received payment for his writings. "But," say some, "it is necessary to live, and we must take payment for work done." Tolstoy answers, "I know of no necessity for me to live, but I do know of a necessity for me to utter the truth I perceive, and to give it freely to all men. Its

value I do not know, and I am content to do useful (and healthy) work with my hands for my living, and in return take what men freely give me." "Ah, but," people say again, "that is easy for a man of genius, but *we* cannot do that." I would again refer to the Russian Government, as a standing threat against the life of any such reformer as Tolstoy. He braved that threat, made his sacrifice as all must do.

When Leo Tolstoy began to write in this new spirit, State and Church, confronted with militant Nihilism, thought the revived Gospel of Peace would be a help to them. For some time the authorities rather encouraged the spread of Tolstoy's new books. But presently, they began to see and feel the real effect of the new spirit. Then the censorship began its work; and now, but little of Tolstoy's writing is allowed to be circulated in Russia. Persecution has fallen, not directly on Tolstoy himself, but on his friends. Ordinary persons found reading the prohibited works are arrested and sent to prison, even to Siberia. His special friends and co-workers are removed or exiled. The purpose of the author-

ities is to isolate him, and make him thus less powerful. They will not touch himself: deeming that to suffer for the truth is precisely the fate Tolstoy might, for Truth's sake, most desire. Indeed, just lately he wrote to the Ministry of the Interior, asking why, if they punished those who read his books, they did not deal with himself, their source.

Of his views upon government, there could from the first be little mistake. Five years ago, *The Kingdom of God is Within You* removed any possibility of mistake. There, Tolstoy explained the doctrine of Christ as a new conception of life, which makes *love* the spring of all human action, and *truth* the only method of action. From this standpoint he showed how the States, in all their laws and institutions, and the established and propertied Churches with them, rest on a foundation of *organised physical force*, a basis which is precisely anti-Christian.

The proof of this position as to the Gospel teaching, Tolstoy has worked out at great length in *The Four Gospels Harmonised and Translated*,

two out of the three volumes of which exist in English translation. Dealing with the Greek text, and making a new translation of his own, he has here been accused of insufficient scholarship, violence to the Greek, and other deficiencies, the sum of which is only trifling, and makes not at all substantially against his understanding of the Gospel. Notwithstanding all he has written and done, all these years, in all civilisation *there has not yet appeared a serious opposing critic of Tolstoy*. Why is this? Cannot our European Churches and Universities provide us a man who will truly state and truly refute the teaching which is turning from them the minds of the most spiritual and most intelligent men everywhere? Why are we given only the feeble "magazinings" of such men as Canon Farrar or a casual secularist? It is, one must believe, that each profounder mind feels that there is no effective refutation.

I have said little or nothing of such work of Tolstoy's earlier period as his treatment of the physiology of war, in *War and Peace*, or the essay, *Power and Liberty*, or the later and



important quasi-philosophical work, *Life*. It must suffice to say, that while his work is always philosophical in the sense of being true to fact and reason, he has written in several quite different styles, terms, and methods, obviously aiming to state his position by every possible means, "if by any means he might win some." It is not wise to suppose that any known "school of thought," or tradition, or fashion of argument or language, has vital secrets unknown to this man, grown old in search into such matters. Indeed, the work of his later years has included the production in Russian of simple treatises conveying the essential doctrine of teachers so remote from us in place and time as Lao-tze, Mentzius, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Diogenes, Francis of Assisi.

I have not spoken of the stories of Tolstoy's later years. Simple, strong, beautiful in every aspect of goodness, they show forth the one spirit. He himself is right in laying little stress on these, however, for they serve little purpose but to rouse emotion, soon to pass. Not mere emotion, but the illumination of emotion by



reason, is our need; and Tolstoy's power is to fulfil this need. And yet one of these stories, *Work while ye have the Light*, is most effective both in wakening emotion and in directing it by reason. It is a tale of the second century, and in its incidents and discussions gives an account of primitive Christian life and thought which powerfully impresses one as necessarily true in spirit and form.

A word must be said about *The Kreutzer Sonata*. Few people *read* books, or so many would not have missed the teaching of this one. No doubt the strong, tragic incidents of the story of jealousy and murder overshadow the reasoned statements and conclusion it conveys, and leave superficial minds with an impression of horror, as though all that is holy had been dragged in the mud, rather than with the conclusion that only one way of escape from the temptations and disasters of sex is open to mankind: the way, namely, of purity of thought and life. This, chastity as an ideal, is the substance and the sum of Tolstoy's mind on the sex-relation. Mainly for his expositions of

"Non-resistance" and "Chastity," Tolstoy has earned the opposition of many who suffer from want of comprehension of that which, and him whom, they condemn.

What, then, is this "faith" of Leo Tolstoy? A simple setting-forth of it is in *The Gospel in Brief*. It is not a superstition, but *a reasoned conviction as to the nature and possibilities of human life*.

This faith has existed always. The world's great teachers have all held it, and have been great by teaching and living it. A belief in a Supreme Power of Righteousness; a belief that welfare lies in doing only Righteousness; a belief that life consists not in the Body but in the Spirit; that the Righteous Spirit is eternal; and that the Nature of the Spirit is at variance with the Nature of the Body, which would draw it, by power of needs and appetites, into unrighteousness. That is all. "Live to the Spirit, die to the body"—the *necrosis* of the Gospel.

Here, in our day once more, is a widely-

heard man *who believes this, and so lives*. He is not alone. Thousands of his obscure countrymen who, in seclusion from the world, have held the same faith for generations, are being at this time slain by the Government of "Holy Russia." And he, near the end of his bodily life, speaks across the continents the Truth for which martyrs, ancient and modern, have died and are dying. He is called a "pessimist"! He who tells us that the world's ice is breaking because the Sun of Righteousness is gathering power, as does the sun in spring; he who waits his end in peace and tranquillity, though become an alien to his former friends and condition, deprived by exile of his spiritual friends, and wholly obnoxious to a terrorist government and a church whose pretensions and deeds he has exposed to the utmost. No, he is no pessimist; rather let us call him the supreme optimist. Such an optimist as Jesus, who said, in view of the cross, "My joy is fulfilled."

The greatness of Tolstoy is, that he has recognised a greater than himself—namely, the

Jesus in the Gospel. How differently from Strauss or Renan has Tolstoy conceived that teacher, "mild and sweetly reasonable," yet the destroyer of priesthood and kingship! No "second person of the Trinity," but a living "Son of God"; no miraculously-born prodigy, but "a man like unto ourselves," though of holy and just life; not an innocent bearing the punishment of the guilty, but "the holy one and the just," slain as a heretic and a rebel by our ignorant sin,—this is the man Christ Jesus, as seen by Tolstoy. This Jesus is the arch-opponent of the "Social System" that prevailed in His day, and prevails in ours. He cares nothing for our vested interests, ancient institutions, venerable traditions, art and culture of centuries. "Sweep all away," He would say, "and begin again from the root. [The property, the institutions, traditions, art and culture, of your Society are poisoned at the root. You have made 'getting,' and not 'giving' the maxim of your whole economy. Repent, enter the kingdom of heaven, which is ready to your hand; and you shall find,—not the parody of

good which is the infrequent best your Society possesses, not riches extorted from poverty, not institutions which perpetuate oppression and delusion in the names of justice and religion, not traditions which make vain the truth, the law, of God, not art and culture which minister to idleness and debauchery,—not these, but the commonwealth of the kingdom of heaven on earth, the freedom and enlightenment which truth brings, the beauty of reasonable labour and the ‘mildness and sweet reasonableness’ which are the culture and art of the kingdom of heaven,—all these you shall find as the sincere fruit of a tree of life, healthy at the root. And you who are now voices crying in the wilderness, who must cast your lives into the scale against the leaden iniquity of the times,—remember that you truly perish, not in withstanding the iniquity, but in submitting to it. Die, that you may live.”

Such is the message of Jesus, repeated by Tolstoy; a message for all men. Yet, strange! there are, as we have seen, those in England who tell us that Tolstoy’s method and example

are for Russia more particularly, where they have military conscription and no franchise; and while Tolstoy is very true, very heroic,—for Russia,—he has no meaning for England! These people have not reflected upon what I have already pointed out—namely, that among all modern societies, states, the differences are superficial only; all equally rest on that same basis of organised violence, rights of property, war, competition, which Jesus discovered and opposed utterly with His life and His death, in the old Roman and Jewish world. John in Patmos heard the voice saying against Babylon, “Come out of her, O my people, lest ye become partakers of her iniquities, and lest her plagues come upon you.” And Tolstoy, bidding men return to, and have faith in, the Spirit of Love which works by Truth, is again proclaiming our civilisation to be the prophetic Babylon, from which we must come out, and enter into newness of life. Peace, goodwill, truth spoken in love,—these must draw those who have the spirit of Christ into true social relations, drawing them out of their present relations in society.



In doing this there is a *necrosis* for Englishmen not less than for Russians.

The faith of Tolstoy reasons thus. Either our life proceeds from Nothing, or from a Power of Evil, or from a Power of Good. It is inconceivable that Something has come from Nothing; but for the man who so thinks, there is only, for him, to eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow he dies. If such a life satisfies a man, let him take it, but of him the Spirit of Life says, "Thou fool!" That we proceed from a Power of Evil is the world's actual faith and orthodoxy. For do we not say, "*The Power that made us, has put us where we are COMPELLED to do evil; to avoid the evils of pain and death, we must (if only a little) compete, fight, take part in, compromise with, wrong*"? This is only to say that the Life which gives us our Life, the Reason reflected in our Reason, the Love that inspires our Love, is a cheat, a mocker. Indeed, we are Devil-worshippers; believing that the most dangerous thing in life is Love, and the most unreasonable, Truth. So we say of Tolstoy, who surrenders to these,



"Very fine and heroic ; the man is a saint, a prophet ; but a little mad, and not for us."

We ask for his proof of what he teaches,—just as Jesus was asked for His authority. And the reply can only be, "Be good, and you will do good ; be good and do good, and you will get good—full measure, pressed down, running over. Do not fear for your lives ; have faith in the Power of God, and He will prove Himself to you."

The entrance to the good life is strait and narrow ; few there be that find it. But those few are the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the city, the society, set on a hill. Emperors and kings, statesmen and soldiers, priests and pedants, leaders and masters, think the world holds together by them ; in truth, they are the world's incubus, the preventers of peace, the perversion of wisdom, the darkening of light. Our prophets, our saviours, are the men of conscience and courage, who die to the body, and live to the Spirit, in which is the only true, reasonable, enduring life ; and who by word and example inspire mankind with man's

own, already born, growing, proper soul, the new nature of the Sons of God. Of these prophets and saviours, by proof plain in the lives of many at this moment, Leo Tolstoy is one.

## *THE NOVELS AND THE LIFE.*

I AM asked to write something about Tolstoy, something that shall kindle people's personal interest in him and his work. To do this, I am more than willing, and in seeking the best way to set about it, it occurs to me I cannot do better than write as to you, dear M., and for you. If you are interested and helped, I am sure the public will be. After these years of personal friendship with Tolstoy, and of work (such as you know of) done in the one cause with him, you, at least, will take me seriously in what I say, as writing with authority.

But, indeed, no one has yet written upon Tolstoy with the authority that competence to understand, sufficient information, and entire fairness — these only — can give. Matthew Arnold in England, Dumas *fils* in France, and W. D. Howells in America, have written upon him with a true sympathy, and with the

fairness of sympathy; and along their lines the future's judgment must go. For the rest, Tolstoy has merely been exploited by journalists, makers of books, and would-be disciples. But a man is yet wanting who, *living by the principles Tolstoy has adopted*, also possesses the qualities that make a critic. After all that I have written about Tolstoy (which you can have in print, with this letter), I need hardly say that I seek to fill this place of truly exhibiting him in the light of another and a competent mind.

That Tolstoy needs such service, from some one, is obvious. He has passed through a long, long life, and in his works produced practically an immense diary. The mass of men will never read through and study the vast accumulation of novels, treatises, stories, discussions, *brochures*, letters, of his, which now are in print, translated everywhere. Scholars following scholars, for centuries, are certain to make this their business; but that Tolstoy may be heard in his true meaning, and survive in his real heart, interpreters of to-day are needed to do for him

what he has not done—namely, to identify his principal works, to relate them to each other, and to make out their net significance as shown in his own life and example. The last of these three needs is a demand Tolstoy especially and primarily makes. In the century before him, Kant, the philosopher, taught that belief can only be established through experience. Last century, Tolstoy came, putting his beliefs to the test of practice that gives experience, in a manner that has made him the cynosure of Europe. These two, Kant and Tolstoy, have agreed upon the correct understanding of that doctrine of Jesus, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Sixteen years ago, Matthew Arnold, in an article in *The Fortnightly Review*, proclaimed Tolstoy to England. Arnold's French reading, I imagine, brought him acquainted with the Russian novelist's reputation in a serious way, and caused him to justly insist upon the message of the new works, *My Religion* and *What to do*, that followed *War and Peace* and *Anna Karénina*.

You and I know something of the insincerity and silliness of what in all Europe is (presumptuously enough) called "Society." Well, even "Society" people themselves are aware of this insincerity and silliness, being not wholly without reason and conscience, and capacity for *ennui*. And so, many of those who rush to the library for the last book, rushed for Tolstoy. To find what? A man who tells "Society" to its face that in its mansions and parks, its theatres and its carriages, its busy idleness and cloaked debaucheries, it is living, preying, upon the lives and labours of the mass of the people, who with hand and brain make, produce, all that is eaten and drunken, worn and inhabited. Carlyle and Ruskin had been saying the same things; but here was a man to repeat them with a novel addition. He, Tolstoy, born to aristocracy and wealth, had cast both to the winds, defied the religion and government of the autocrat of Russia, and set to work as a common labourer, that he might be his own man and honest.

They called him a fanatic, and supposed

him to be courting the pains of a new kind of crucifixion. Well, as one who can myself do a day's work as a carpenter, or on the soil, or in music, painting, literature, I can only say that, to the man who *can* use his hands, those who *cannot* are pitiable to the last degree. I like to be clean and well-dressed for dinner and the evening, and for my friends in the daytime on occasion ; but during the daylight working hours, I like to be dressed to swing my limbs fearlessly over work that *may* be dirty. I assure you that, in addition to the hatred which injustice breeds, working people feel also a contemptuous pity for the life of ease, servant-helped ; so that in a pinch of work on ship-board, or in a railway wreck, they will say, "Oh, he's a gentleman ; he's no good," or "She's a lady ; she's no good." I like to see women well-dressed, but when in the fire of their diamonds you see the horrors of Kaffir mines and the Stock Exchange—when in the shining of their silks you see the fluttering rags of women that wove them—when you hear their refined, leisurely accents answered



by curses of the slums where drink is the only solace to overwork,—well, then you see and hear what Tolstoy saw and heard, causing him to seek to recover his own lost honour by juster, more manly, living. He felt the life of his class, so artificial; so unrelated to nature and the common life of mankind, to be “lighter in the scales than vanity.”

If you wish to really know the kind of life out of which Tolstoy came, you must read and spiritually absorb his *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth*. It is immensely interesting; just the kind of life one sees in Russia to-day,—even in Tolstoy's own homes. It is autobiography in effect, leading him almost out of his teens of years. Why is there such a gap between this and his autobiographical renewals of twenty years later? I will tell you: it is because he led—*was led into*—the life our own young men of the Universities lead. You know what that is. The corruptions of sex, of money, of drinking, which turn out those objects in society, miscalled “men,” pitiable for any angel of woman to be wrecked upon,—these did what

they might upon Tolstoy. His relations with women,—quite normal to “society,”—bitterly repented of during years of groping to recover his own soul, speak perhaps loudest in his last novel, *Resurrection*. Oh me, what a world is gone to waste through “loose living”!

Tolstoy's earliest mind was formed in French literature; later, in English. Rousseau's imperfect sincerity, Tolstoy sincerely adopted as model. Natural disposition prompted him to select such a model; hence flows his whole life's work of sincere reproduction of his own inner feelings as they rise, and of the incidents of life as they pass. This long-drawn method, coupled with the disintegration of the intellect which the life of the world and the flesh causes, is the concomitant of a certain incoherence of structure and final philosophic incompleteness which are the final discriminations to make upon the works of this master in life.

English character is, I think, distinctly seen in the marvellous, dreadful, “Sebastopol” sketches, which every one who desires to study the genesis of Tolstoy's “non-resistance” should

read. Then come, through the years, a succession of pieces and sketches, reminiscent of things and adventures, of native Russian kind, and of the Europe of Heine, and of the literary renaissance emanating from England. In *Lucerne* is a curious (coming from Tolstoy) note of continental resentment of the English and their manners of superiority. It strikes me as being half-invented, and occasioned by a sense of English influences entering him. If I remember rightly, Tolstoy told me he was thirty-six when he visited England. Here he heard of, but did not meet, Carlyle and Ruskin, men with whom the future will see him in constellation. (We may add William Morris, a much younger man, as a fourth star.) But he distributed some packages of tea to the poor, for an East End vicar, and felt thereby that there was something radically wrong in the largest capital in Europe.

The sum of the written product of these years is—poetry (not verse, but the spirit) wrecked in the debauch of “fashion,” attempts (as in the sketches of the billiard-marker and of the poor

musician) to recover the true pathos of life, photographs of life as it moves, and studies of the life opening before himself as landed proprietor. All these are written mainly of Russian material, and in the Russian sense, but distinctly with an eye to Europe. With his marriage, at thirty-six, came the discarding of habits of life never truly his, attention to his estates *and to his peasants*, the care of a rapidly-coming family, and concentration upon the great novels that cost him ten years or so of arduous labour—*War and Peace* and *Anna Karénina*. Of the former, I say, take it, live with it while it can last you, if you wish to follow personal and national histories, moving moodily together under the great hand of a master of “the world.” Human relations and great events are set out, from no beginning, to no end of events; only to get what is in them as they go. But when you have done, you shall know the minds of emperors and kings, of common men and outcast women. And if you will, with this work, read one of the splendid studies made for it or with it—*Power and Liberty*,—you shall understand the springs

of history, apart from control that is called divine, as only one man of last century understood them. Indeed, Tolstoy's broad treatment of the human flow seems, after all, to assert the divine necessity over it, Nemesis ruling all.

*Anna Karénina* has moved me most. The book has a theme—Marriage; and a lost sub-theme—Property. It is Tolstoy's summing up, prior to his "conversion." I have known just such an Anna, and loved her. Warm, truthful, capable, magnetic, doomed in a society that commits marriage in faithless lust and goes through the wedding-rite for property-settlements, Anna Karénina, who has never loved, is married to an affectionate, promotion-seeking, elderly minister of state. The lover comes, good of the kind; a full-blooded military aristocrat. The *liaison* is effected, the husband deserted, and the lovers' "household" set up. But a rabble of libertines who compose "society" are outraged; and social discomfort, the sense of dependence—dependence of two people, themselves only half honourable—merely on each other's honour (as against the protection of the

law which they had renounced), breed misunderstanding, jealousies; and at last Anna is goaded to suicide under an express-engine, and Vronsky, the lover, flies, broken-hearted, to murder Turks.

The "text" to the book is, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." If that be meant to declare that all human insincerities are visited with ruin to the insincere, I say the sermon is perfect. But if (as I fear will be the case with some) it is applied to Anna's violation of her marriage-vow, I ask, why should a woman, betrayed into a loveless marriage by those about her, be condemned to death for flying to the man of her heart? To an innocent woman, to find *him* must mean escape from shame to honour; and a society is accursed, I say, which binds women in relations of living death, and can goad them to suicide for making escape. If it were a case of a woman's faithlessness to any man she has chosen, knowing what love is, then I say, the responsibility is hers; she were better dead than fled. As to the man's part,—Vronsky, the lover in the story, simply steps out of many *amours* into this one; he loves, in a way, but has not



the courage to take up the fight for his mistress against society *on principle*; he simply strives to be tolerated, instead of openly saying—all such a man can say—"We love, we grieve for the hurt we have caused; we are true to each other, and will be."

So far for these two, heroine and hero of the story. By their side run Levine and Katia, lovers of Dickens's kind. Of them, it is enough to say that Levine is Tolstoy himself, without the external literary career. His goodness and his uncouthness are inherited, obviously, from the Ivan Irteneff of *Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth*. Their further fate, after their marriage in the novel, is to be found in the short story, *Family Happiness*—a fleeting ideal of domesticity. Of that I recall a picture, as it were, Rubens-like, of a Russian country-house and demesne resembling Tolstoy's own Yasnaya Polyana, with two parents picnicing with their baby, the former sticking their auric fingers into the too-pink infant. That has for companion-picture the suddenly and swiftly done, the true, the terrible *Kreutzer Sonata*. There, Podzishineff,



the average young *roué*, half in "society," marries a young school-miss fed on false poetry. They have property, position, and a family; but the only tie between them is the fact of marriage, which alternately commits them to each other and drives them furiously apart, pendulum fashion. A music-master appears to administer consolation to the wife, and Podzishineff, returning in a jealous moment, murders her. In prison he comes to understand that there is demanded in marriage something more than he had known. The story is all true; all occurs; it is both Mile End and Belgravia. All occurs, in Belgravia itself perhaps more than anywhere; all murders are not with knives. Only the fashionably blind fail to know all about it.

I think *The Death of Ivan Ilyitch* must belong to this period. It is the long-drawn-out death of a thriving public official, who receives an internal injury while preparing the new house his promotion enables him to take. What need to say more? Read the tale, and earn that commonplace death-bed. The method

of the story's telling is so obviously right, that I found it unescapable when devising the manner of *The World's Last Passage*—a book which Tolstoy wrote me he found good for himself, though he thought it unnecessarily detailed. Well, a master of detail must weary of detail!

Elsewhere I have written about the spiritual, intellectual, and practical change that came upon Tolstoy with his half-century of life, the change that swept him out of his possessions, the affection of his family, the regard of his friends, the conventional fame he had in Russia and in Europe. Now, he becomes the man of simple life, casting himself upon the Gospel to complete his new understanding of it, ransacking literature and philosophy to find what the old world has said upon his new theme. For a long time his writings are personal, like *My Confession* and *My Religion*, or polemical, like *What to do* and *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. This, and the attacks made upon him, broke the habit of story-telling. But presently the old work resumed sway, and a swarm of

short stories brought from Tolstoy's heart the new truth, in living forms. These are the best, because the most concentrated, vital, and sure of all Tolstoy's tales. In them all, only *the common people* move and speak. Simple people they are, men and women of the streets, but angelicised by Tolstoy's ever-new redemption of spirit. Alas! what story-teller ever made aristocratic angels? These stories will ask comparison with Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, with Balzac's *Christ in Flanders*. And they have the advantage in this, that they have the support (as in *What to do*) of a more reasoned understanding of the social structure, the mechanism of human misery, than Dickens, or Balzac, or any other story-teller has ever confessed to. Not new sentiment only, but a change in the social structure, is Tolstoy's demand in the polemic that is substructural to his stories.

They are not long to read, and I will not weary you over them, these short stories,—*Where Love is, there God is also*, *The Godson*, *Master and Man*, and the rest. But let me tell you something about *Master and Man*.

The whole scope of the story is merely a day's ride through the snow—a ride that ends in a man's death. In point of art, technique, I think it the best thing of the kind Tolstoy has done. *What is Art?* is entirely his best in point of construction, and his most masterly work; but that is a book of ideas, arguments, and history. Well, I was asked to prepare an English translation of *Master and Man*, and to this end got from my friend Rapoport a bald English-dictionary translation. With this, I did what can only be done with the work of a master. A master constructs, visualises, sees his story step by step, as it falls out in life by the logic of the inner heart and external event. You may check a master's work by doing the same thing after him; and that I did, following Tolstoy through *Master and Man*. The result you may see in the story as published by the present publishers. The work was done quickly, by a few days' *tour de force*. At the time, my study was half below-ground; the month was April. As I worked through the incidents of the story, the sky outside and the room within

seemed all the while wintry with the snow and the icy wind of the ride. Nowhere did I find a slurred circumstance, a badly reasoned step. All was reality. They said, in Russia, that this English rendering read just like Tolstoy's own work in his own Russian. At least, I will say, the story could not have been felt by the author much otherwise than he made me feel it, pondering it word by word.

And the end of that story? The merchant, saved in soul, through sympathy with the servant who shares his distress, melts away into the unknown, and we, who have gone with him to death, are left behind, doubters still upon human destiny and fate in "the beyond."

Eager souls have searched Tolstoy through for guidance to sure hope in death; and they find nothing clearer than the "Father, I yield my spirit into Thy care," the words of Jesus with which Tolstoy closes *The Gospel in Brief*,—closes it as the Gospels themselves do *not* close. It is Tolstoy's limitation. His large, eager, profound, discursive studies of life during his life, do not cohere into clear relations, to enable him to not

merely pronounce "All is well," but to tell us *how* all is well for us beyond the grave. With a deeper insight than his, into this awfulest of human concerns, John Ruskin told us that all that is art in Christendom was produced by Christendom's belief in the Resurrection. Man cannot live without clear knowledge of a world to come. Tolstoy has too much studied earth, that he should tell the motions of the mystic stars. Though all religions have told us of a spirit-world, though the Gospel is only deprived of its "supernatural" content by irrational violence, Tolstoy, deflected by Russo-Greek superstitions of *ikoni* and creeds, has left the actuality out of his teaching.

So you will find that in his last novel, *Resurrection*, as in his old play, *The Fruits of Enlightenment*, Tolstoy has supplied a (truthful enough) picture of a silly séance of a "spiritualist" kind, such as is common among idle West End people. He has not, as I would have hoped, pointed to the evidence, immense in quantity, and now "scientifically" presented and even approved, which points to our con-



tinued existence after the death of the body. In ceasing here, he fails to plainly show the source of strength that humanity needs to carry into successful practice the Gospel teaching he himself has recovered. That is why you find the world sprinkled with "followers" of his, who declare they believe as he believes, but are not strong, as he is, to give up what they believe to be evil in their lives. But this matter, vast in importance, and my own intimate interest, calls for another book for adequate treatment. I have to prove my case at length, you see.

Tolstoy's own criticism of the last novel, *Resurrection*, is the truth. The book is not of highest place in his work, because it is a reversion to his early methods, the methods of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karénina*, which he, by his later light, came to see as his time-serving in literature. It is, in the main, an endeavour, a successful one, to lay bare the squalid horrors of governmental crimes, and with that, to exhibit the process of corruption, conversion, and renewal in two lives, especially a man's and a woman's. I fail



to love it, great though the good of it may be. I hoped that at last Tolstoy would give us a hero. Surely there *has* lived a man who has kept his own inner purity and integrity, who has seen through the scheme of evil and cast his life in the scale against it? Or a woman? But no hero or heroine of the kind moves among the figures of Tolstoy,—save and except, perhaps, the Jesus of *The Gospel in Brief*. I say, “perhaps,” because even that Jesus is, with Tolstoy, little more than a body of divinest doctrine. Are *all* men weaklings of morality, shamefaced repentants at best? I think not. Those who have become pure to themselves in marriage, and truthful in all things to themselves and the world, are of another order of spirit than the world, and heroes and heroines are to be found among them. Or is society so especially corrupt in Russia that such a soul of man or woman is unimaginable there? Or has Tolstoy left us to find the hero in himself?

My friend, a man looks for a woman who is heroine, who needs neither excuse nor commiseration, but takes our love and praise. And

I see that your sex, still more, looks for such a man (or why do women so much more than men depend upon the Gospel and its Christ?). And there is, I repeat, no picture of such heroine or hero in Tolstoy. There is no Beatrice to his Dante. I am more reminded of Byron and his Astarte in *Manfred*. If there be one thing for which an Englishman may be grateful to his country, it is that she, despite all violations, still permits him an ideal of woman. I am glad that mine is the language in which *Sesame and Lilies* could be written; the latter half of which book may serve as antidote, or complement, to Tolstoy's polemic on Woman. I sometimes give *Sesame and Lilies* to some dear woman friend, and say to her, "Be of that spirit, and you shall be man's salvation." Women (some women) say Ruskin wrote romantic bosh about women. Does that mean they prefer to be poor Anna, or poorer Katushka of *Resurrection*? If that be so, I wish them all, and myself, a good death; there is nothing better.

## *TOLSTOY'S "NON-RESISTANCE."*

I HAVE written something about Tolstoy's novels and stories and life, taken together, and I feel I must make completion by telling about him and his "non-resistance." Now, "an enemy of society" (as some people count me to be) is usually supposed to be moved by envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness; and as "non-resistance" is the completest form of attack upon society at large, as society has been organised these thousands of Pagan-Christian years, I think there is this further advantage in writing to *you*, M—, about "non-resistance"—namely, that no one can imagine any ill spirit going into such a letter.

Ruskin, in *Sesame and Lilies*, asks the question, How many souls of clowns, digging and ditching, and generally stupefied, are we entitled to suck the souls from, to make one of

those great, beautiful, even glorious productions, a highly bred and trained European gentleman, or, still better, lady? Well, I answer, *None*. Though I have all Ruskin's love for a kindly, cultured, beautiful woman of the aristocracy; and would, indeed, win her back to the root of aristocracy, which was struck in working kingship, over-lordship, of agriculture. I am sure that if you could once see the moral and practical reasons for living at one with nature and man, you would dash aside every obstacle to that life of light and energy, in which man is truly himself and woman herself. (Ah me, these souls of ours are jewels in the heads of venomous toads, as things go in the world, yet!) And I am sure that nothing will help your vision better than a right understanding of Tolstoy about "non-resistance."

The three books of his to be read for this, are: *My Confession*—his marvellous self-revelation of the change that came over his life at fifty (read this, until you feel to be living it over again); *My Religion*—the account of his first, all-important, and quite simple studies in the

Gospel ; and *The Kingdom of God is Within You*—a valuable, though incompletely seen through by him, discussion of “non-resistance” as affecting the Government, the State. (I say, incompletely seen through, because the necessary mechanisms, the institutions by which the new society is to be established, and their evolution, are not considered from the point of view of practice. We need to understand the existing, the old, institutions, philosophically, historically and practically, that we may handle them, perhaps to their destruction, in the interests of the new.) If, in reading these, you fail to understand, then the worse fortune for you. But if you do understand, then you are made into a rebel of His kind, who was crucified on Calvary for seeking to fulfil His own prayer, and bring the kingdom of heaven down to earth ; and you are called to a war in which there is no discharge.

You must picture Tolstoy at fifty ; master of all the lore of his great novels ; lord of estates, master of peasants ; bound round with family, friends, and fame ; and wearied and anguished

in soul because of human misery, and the poverty of his own life amid that misery. I have seen the straggling village of one-roomed (at most, two-roomed) wood huts, set on a swell of the boundless steppe, which holds the peasantry by whose labours his family live. The problem his own village presented to him was exactly that which a south-Irish village presents to us. And in Moscow and St. Petersburg he saw exactly the problem of the masses of the city, which is at its intensest in Paris, its hugest in London, and its crudest in Chicago. He saw "*la misère*"; of which Carlyle said that if you stop to brood upon it, that way madness lies; and of which Ruskin said, that if the curtain were drawn from it before you at your dinner, you would eat no more.

Serious minds must of necessity make this state of awful human disaster their own to understand, for hope of remedy. So Tolstoy did, and found that to be true which "Socialists" ancient and modern have been, and are, saying—namely, that it is all needless, and is caused by errors, injustices, in our social institu-

tions. But I have written all about this, the economic analysis of things-as-they-are, elsewhere, in talking of *What to do*. What I have here to do is to show how Tolstoy, like Carlyle, Ruskin and Morris, went deeper than "Socialism" does, and found, and showed, how the errors and injustices of our social institutions are rooted in evils of character; evils existent in rich and poor alike, but chiefly in the rich, the successful in the conflict of injustice. Precisely here Tolstoy saw the immense significance of Matt. v. 38-43.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you, Love your enemies."

This passage is a theme repeated again and



again in the New Testament, and nowhere weakened in its insistence; meant to be implicitly obeyed by all men up to the point of their spiritual education becoming complete, when "all things are lawful," and spiritual expediency can be known and followed. The spirit, the teaching, the policy of it, were levelled against a society—that of the Roman Empire in Judæa—which, in its militarism, its property-inequalities, its legal perversions of all that is justice, was the Pagan analogue of our *soi-disant* Christian civilisation. This once understood, a clean sweep, an entire abandonment, of the whole of society as he knew it, was inevitable to Tolstoy. If, he in effect said, my whole property is secured to me by legal violence, my whole property must be renounced, for I can be no party to being kept in possession of my estates and "rights" by the force of police and soldiers. Well, you know how his family took the property, by law, and how he has been a beggar to their generosity and that of his friends, to the peasants, and to the world at large. Can one even ask

which is the nobler, his life, or that of King Edward VII.?

'Tis a heroic teaching; and when professed, produces either a Christ or an infernal humbug. Tolstoy quietly and unostentatiously *does* what he says men ought to do, and leaves the world to call him "humbug" if it likes. Some who call themselves his "disciples" say publicly, and without shame, "Tolstoy and Jesus are right; but, alas, I am weak, and need estates, and rents, and interest, and competitive business, to keep me, or I (and my family, if there be one) must die." Personally, I have had years of experience with some such people, and have nothing but contempt for their weakness of reason and of character (however sorry I feel for them as the worst sufferers from that weakness). They assert that the Right has no backing, no safety in it, no power, save in exceptional cases like that of Tolstoy. And they even, calling themselves admirers and friends of Tolstoy, turn round on him, and accuse him of inconsistency, saying it is impossible for a man to be consistent. I can

point you to books in which this is done. You know something of the story of the Purreleigh "Colony"? Well, some day, I am going to tell the full story of that adventure, to make it plain and sure, from life, what "Tolstoyanism" really means—which is, in brief, that "he that seeketh his life, shall lose it; but he that loseth it for the Gospel sake, shall find it to life eternal." There can be no compromise, as Tolstoy has well figured in that best of little pieces, *The Demands of Love*.

Some refuge for these quasi-Tolstoyans is provided in Tolstoy's occasional discursiveness in presenting the final Christian principles. He presents them at times with accompaniments of argument, so that these "followers" of his dodge them. Let us put their elusions in form of a catechism, as thus:—

*Tolstoy.* You are all children of one Father, therefore be like the Father; that is, make no distinction between men, treat all as brethren.

*Disciple.* I believe this is right, and I will do this, as far as I can without inviting the discomfort of poverty.

*Tolstoy.* You shall be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

*Disciple.* But you yourself are inconsistent, and eat bread made by poor peasants, who need it themselves.

*Tolstoy.* Whoever you are, you can at least, in all things, speak and do the truth you see.

*Disciple.* This is noble and beautiful teaching. But you yourself do not know all the truth, so how can even *you* always do it and speak it?

I exaggerate nothing of this. You will find this rubbish at length, interlarded with long praises, in various books concerning Tolstoy and his writings. It arises, of course, from perversion of Tolstoy's meaning by men who are not prepared to follow Tolstoy's sacrifice.

The simple summation of the Christian ethic, the ethic known to, and practised by, Tolstoy, is this:—Your whole life, in its inner processes and its outward acts, shall be guided by equal consideration for all other beings, with yourself. ("Love thy neighbour as thyself," or, as I have elsewhere phrased it, "Society must be organised for the *equal welfare* of ALL its

members.") In thought, word, and deed, under all circumstances, observe absolute truthfulness. ("Speaking the truth in love," and "Let love be without dissimulation.")

These principles are plain Christian teaching. They are themselves simplicity and intelligibility. They are, as Kant has shown, that "categorical imperative" which the search for the absolute in philosophy has attained; as demonstrated<sup>1</sup> in Kant, and so far, in Kant only. Tolstoy has brought men to some sense of this. And men see, as he sees, that these principles will revolutionise any life of man whom they enter, and will destroy all government of the kind the world has yet known. But men, led on by Tolstoy, are afraid, some of them, to become *all* love, *all* truthfulness. "Leave us," they say, "a little protection of violence, a little privilege of exploitation, a little refuge of dissimulation, diplomacy, compromise (don't be unkind and say 'lying')."

<sup>1</sup> Both implied and stated in the systems of Aristotle and Confucius, but, outside Kant, not demonstrated in strict intellections.

Well, this (saving your ladyship's ears) is the "infernal humbug" which I mentioned earlier. You know the kind of place, deep down in the earth, which Dante explored; the place paved with good resolutions? I am talking about that, the Hades, or hell, of expiation, where, after the body's death, men who have seen the light and not walked by it, are taught better.

I, with Tolstoy, believe in the "non-resistance to evil men" which is born of these principles. And I am often confronted (as he has been) by opponents who ask what I would do with the awful villain (the awfulest you can invent) who is outraging the innocent little girl (the innocentest and littlest you ever saw). I am, by this time, so tired of their humbug, that I answer, "I would fill my heart with God's own view of the situation, with God's own love of the man and the child, and then—as soon as I found it possible—cut the villain's throat with the largest razor you can think of." I know it looks blasphemous to laugh in this way; but these inquirers have



to learn that goodwill, the calmness that goodwill gives, and the habit of entire truthfulness, are in themselves an almighty power, and in any situation are, compared with brute force, as the sun to a rushlight.

A couple of years ago, I threw a man out of the seat I had secured in a railway carriage. I told the story (to learn its proper shame), and a lady to whom it was repeated, wished to know how I dared preach "non-resistance," and set up for an example, and then so disgracefully attack, etc., etc. I sent her word to say, I lost my head. I understand she was much surprised, and remarked, "Well, I never thought of it!" Let that go as an example of how plain truthfulness solves a situation.

I find that the real, the complete, the awful sacrifice the Christ-life demands, is to live day by day, year by year, calculating all your acts to the equal welfare of every creature with yourself, and meanwhile to be accused of selfishness, by some, for doing it, and by others, for not doing it; to tell always the plain truth to others, as you know it yourself, and then



to be called a liar by men who are deceived by your truth, because they expect the conventional untruths. But all comes right in the end; with Tolstoy, and with every man who lives by this "white magic."

Comes right—but how? Well, you will find the answer in Plotinus, who somewhere beautifully says that when men elevate their reason above the plane of the animal life, the life of the world, and use it for the service of the spirit first, making the body an instrument: then, the individual comes under the governance of another and higher stratum of law, and is above the former dangers, superior to the old necessities. So Paul said, "All things work together for good to them that love God." And the orderers of that higher law, the conductors of that work for good, are those beings of whom it is written, "He maketh His messengers spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire." All which is fact, not fancy.

## *VISIT OF 1900.*

UNQUESTIONABLY, there is not in our time a personality more interesting and commanding to the world of European civilisation, than Count Leo Tolstoy. This I say, not rhetorically, but duly recognising the claims to celebrity of kings and statesmen, much talked-of, whose elevation is without greatness and their craft without the fruit that wisdom gives. With heart stirred and intelligence awakened, the best lives of our time look to the great Russian as to a king of the world of spirit, a statesman of the kingdom of heaven.

In the relationships that shine abroad among souls in whom the fire of the Christian life is lit, there is a certain sacredness, unknown to the ill-mannered gentry who perpetrate interviews and criticisms with an eye to profits

and prestige. There is that in one's intercourse with such a spirit as Tolstoy's, which produces a preference for keeping to oneself the precious interchanges of thought, so foreign to the spirit of the world, to share which is yet the world's deepest need. To say, "I have seen the great man," and "He said this," and "He did that," may so easily be seen as the cheapest and commonest form of self-advertisement, that only strictest compulsion can conquer the desire for reticence in one who values the communication for the communication's sake.

Yet there is that demand, the world's need. As we gain knowledge of a great spirit, it is marvellous to see how, while there is this sacredness, remoteness, profundity, in and around the feeling and thought expressed by him, that feeling and thought is yet the simplest, the most easily communicable, and the meat and drink of the soul, to those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

There is, again, that common curiosity which urges people to inquire into the superficial

aspects and details of a great man's life. This, like every human effort, however poorly conceived and ill-directed, is yet aimed at a right mark. It arises from an instinct that the worth of a great man is not, after all, in the disquisitions, the productions, which make his fame, but in his own inner spirit which has yielded these. And people are naturally concerned to know how that inner spirit is expressed in the common acts of life, so familiar to themselves, who can only long for and aspire to the conquest which the greater soul achieves.

My own relation with Tolstoy arose in this way. Twenty years—half my life—ago, through experience gained in business, experience taken in the light of the New Testament, and then through the writings of Henry George and John Ruskin, I accepted the most drastic principles that are called Socialist. Land Nationalisation and the Abolition of Interest seemed to me then (as they now do) to furnish a sufficient programme for social reform. The programme is not new; to establish it in practice would be simply to revive the laws of Moses and of

Lycurgus; not to mention other legislators, earlier and later. But nothing in modern teachings, nothing in the labours of Socialists and others for social reform, satisfied the demand in me for a *sufficient truth*, and for a line of activity that should be felt as *finally right*. At last I found both these desiderata; I found them in the Christian Gospel, and that in a quite singular way. In my experience of business, I saw that an amazing honesty and reliability lived among men in business, where the business was done by simple word of mouth, and a man's power to buy and sell consequently rested wholly upon his reputation for honesty. But, on the other hand, an amazing—a studied and accepted—dishonesty ruled in the whole region where legal contract, the black and white of the law, was supposed to give a greater protection to the fool and disability to the rogue. It was in my mind the overthrow of the whole existing system of property and of society. I understood, literally in one moment, fourteen years ago, the meaning of the saying: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive those who are in-

debted to us." *That prayer, truly made, is for the abolition of all laws and powers of coercion by which debts are secured and collected.*

John Ruskin, in his famous "Letters to the Clergy," had said as much. But nowhere had he urged the problem to its complete solution. That solution I found in the Quaker doctrine of "*non-resistance*." But how hopeless a prospect I beheld! Of all people, the Quakers upheld the present property system; of all people, the most advanced Socialists misunderstood and denounced "*non-resistance*." I found myself alone, in amazement. Amid a whirl of change in business, and travel abroad, I came across Tolstoy's *What I Believe, What to do*, and *The Kreutzer Sonata*, and found in these books, wrought out in ample detail of personal experience and theoretic discussion, the very conception to which I had been led.

At last, nine years ago, I left commerce, settling in the East End of London, to study social conditions and possibilities of work for a cause in which, save for the knowledge of Tolstoy in Russia, I felt myself absolutely alone.

During this time, I wrote and published *The Anatomy of Misery*, in which I sought to present a final and simple statement of economic truth, in such a form that he who ran might read. Shortly after publication, a Russian friend suggested that I should send the book to Tolstoy. I did so, and received from him an almost immediate reply, saying that he had already obtained the book through a bookseller, and was having it translated into Russian. (I learned afterwards that the important review in the *Daily Chronicle* had brought this about.) I make no exaggeration in saying that this was like the stretching down of a hand from heaven. I had found the one living man to whom I could make whole surrender, for in penetrating farther and farther into his work (then only beginning to be fully known in English), I found myself, in everything he touched, in unreserved accord with Tolstoy. Any difference I felt with him was merely upon such detail as might arise among scholars who discussed the most approvable way of writing the Greek uncials. The meaning of the text is not in



dispute. Incidents of its setting-out are uncertain.

Intimate correspondence followed ; Tolstoy's work through the world, and my own in the Brotherhood Church at Croydon and from the press and platform up and down England, forming the basis ; while our supreme subject was naturally that of the working-out of the spiritual life in practice. This led to a first visit to Russia and Tolstoy, more than four years ago, which I have described in "A Pilgrimage to Tolstoy." In the spring of this year, finding that certain entanglements connected with the Purleigh Colony (which arose out of my work at the Brotherhood Church at Croydon) were strangling all my efforts, destroying my relations in literature, and wearing me down towards physical extinction, I felt myself compelled to break with the past associations, and begin anew. As a first step, I once more visited Tolstoy.

From Moscow, a friend, Mr. Boulanger, who, by his recent residence in England is dearly remembered among friends of Tolstoy here,

piloted me through the long night journey by rail, and the drive of twelve miles over the rolling steppe, to the country-house where Tolstoy was staying. Five days I spent there; my affairs in England forbidding that I should stay longer. Three other days I spent at Yasnaya Polyana; losing there the companionship of Tolstoy, but enjoying the contemplation of the very surroundings in which the great life had been lived, the great work of that life brought together.

Would that I could, for the reader's sake, convey the joy of that intercourse! Singular it was, that so little seemed to need saying. It was as though the mere external phenomena of this life had been already, in books and in experience, so amply discussed, that at last the spirit was able to end discussion, and rest in the joy of its own self-realisation. No conversation I might retail could reproduce the sensation of this; the green world of early summer, the river beneath its deep banks, the villages of wood huts and their peasantry, the perfectly simple life of Prince Obolensky's house—how uplifted

and glorified all seemed in the spirit for which all uncertainty and anxiety of life are ended, the bitterness of death passed, and the reality of an eternal life made sure !

How Tolstoy has won this state of soul, is set out in his books. It is to be regretted that, as yet, no good order has been observed in the editing of his works, so that the reader might follow his life, step by step. For to understand Tolstoy aright it is necessary to *follow his growth*; the revelation of his own spiritual new birth and of his development year by year, being the supreme gift he has for us. He is the self-revealer. Two lives he has so displayed to us ; his earlier life, the life of the world, wherein he is artist ; and his later life, of the spirit, wherein he is prophet. I told him of my own effort and hope in this respect ; which is that I may be able to gather his work together in English in the intelligible order of his life, so that at least so much may be done to save the misunderstanding which may, and does, arise from taking his books in a wrong order. How absurd is that habit of reading which, for-

getting that a serious author's books simply make one book, leaps from end to beginning, from middle to side, never to realise that coherence of the whole which is given by the life, and by the life only! The power of the Gospels themselves consists absolutely in this, that the teachings are strung together upon the story of the life of Jesus, in the light of which they become intelligible.

One subject of supreme importance we talked upon. The world to-day is exhibited to us of the West who choose to see, *as a whole*. Its place in the heavens, its seas and continents, races and ages, are mapped. A general world-history is set out in literature; above all, in religions and philosophies we have the world-record of man's efforts to discover the truth about himself, to arrive at satisfaction of life. We can no longer urge upon ourselves or others the claims of any particular teaching or sect to represent universal truth. We are compelled, all that is earnest in the literature of the day standing as proof of the assertion, to compare religion with religion; to acknowledge that

truth is not the exclusive property of any system ; to accept all religious cults as measure of the heights to which races and ages have raised themselves in development ; and to construct our own religion, receive our own inspiration from the world's teachings, *tried and proved in our own personal experience*. This necessity is upon us. The working out of it is leading us to a new "dispensation," in which love will be, by demonstration of reason, *known* as God, and God as love ; in which clear intellection will displace superstition ; and in which the darkness of materialism, that horror of insanity wherein arises the delusion that our existence begins with the cradle and ends with the grave, will be dissipated by the shining of that light of which the founder of the Christian religion said : "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

And who is this "Son of Man"? Not the figure upon the crucifix, or in the stained glass window. In the mind of Jesus was the vision of an Ideal Humanity ; the Son, the offspring,

of man as he now is, but richer by the life, the development, that has gone before him. The Son of Man is he who shall be lifted up to the stature of the Ideal. Age by age, the growth (evolution we call it now) has advanced. Who to-day best, most worthily, represent the highest attainment towards that Immortal Sonship? Surely, such men as Tolstoy, who have absorbed the wisdom of the past, penetrated history by the light of experience of men and things to-day, and lost selfishness in discovery of the True Self, living not by convention and under authority, but by conscience reason-guided. Men are to be measured, not by their errors, crimes even, committed in the course of their development in this earth-life, but precisely by the degree to which they have succeeded, through darkness and contentions, in unfolding this *true self* from within. I am not with those who find the extent of criticism in discovering the limitations of its subject; I am wholly with those who use the critical faculty to discriminate the essential from the inessential in a life, in a work, and to

explore the good which is the essential, recognising there the manifestation of that divinity, that perfection, the attainment of which is the good set before every child of Adam. And I have found no man of our day who has so powerfully and consistently expounded *himself* in this sense, as has Leo Tolstoy. The "new dispensation" which is coming, must and will point backward to him as a first of its prophets.



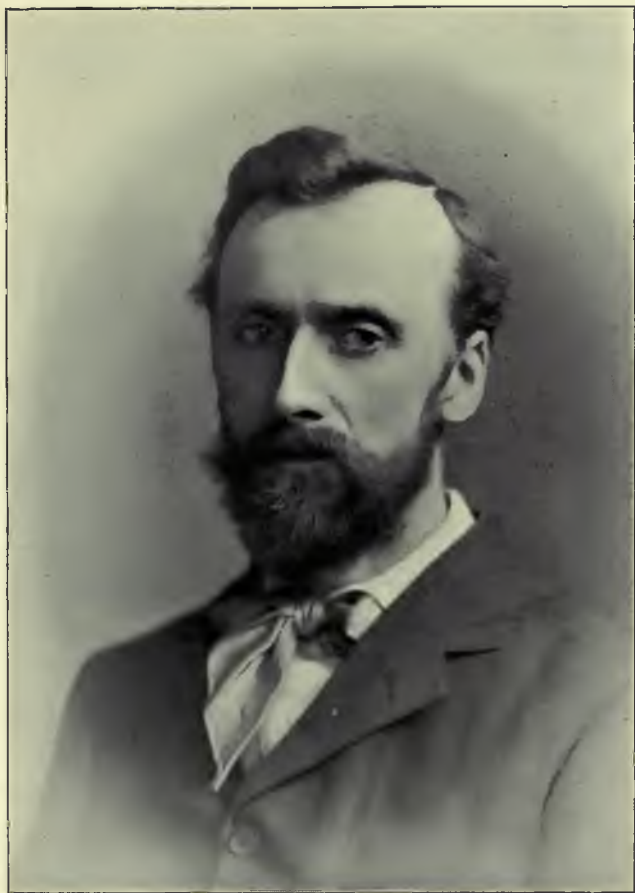
## *THOUGHTS UPON A RECENT VISIT TO TOLSTOY.*

ONE of the singular and searching rectifications of the thoughts of my younger years, that more maturity has compelled upon me, concerns the world's estimate of its great men. As a youth I read with much profit and enjoyment numbers of those by no means ill-done monographs upon men great in letters and art, which introduce the occasional volumes of good literature that the swollen press of our time yields. How charming to read of the struggles and agonies for hearing and understanding of Byron and Shelley, Goethe and Heine, and the others of genius crushed and misjudged in their earlier days! How excellent to feel that all the so amiable biographers were of a new world, so enlightened above its fathers that with these

biographers for its eyes, it must immediately discern genius, and couple the discernment with the utmost willingness to provide genius, immediately on its appearance, with feather-beds and rose-water!

But alas, it is not so. The new world is the old world, and these same monographists, so appreciative of the dead prophet (who has ever been the only good prophet), are men who lead the conspiracy to crush the genius of to-day. They build the sepulchres of the dead prophets, and by harrying the living ones, do what they can to provide material for those who shall follow themselves in the labour of earning a modest income by sepulchre building.

Such is the crushing conviction established in my mind by knowledge of the lives of men of our own time, whom I have known or know, such as John Ruskin, William Morris, and Leo Tolstoy. To one hearing of such reputations at a distance, the reputation appears as a great firmly-founded temple, built with pious care, by souls of admiration and hands of love, wherein "the little god of this world" fills his place with



THE AUTHOR  
AT THE TIME OF HIS LAST VISIT TO LEO TOLSTOY.

*From a Photo by]*

*[Elliott & Fry, 55 Baker Street, W.*



dignity and in calmness, rich in all offerings. But far from this, the genius in his place is exactly to be likened to a rock in a rough sea, towering up in whatever of power, dignity, and calm he may have in himself, and swept about, now hidden to his height, now revealed to his depths, by the rush and fret and fume of "the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

For many years I have been entirely reconciled to this state of things, as inevitable and indeed proper. The work of a genius is, to stand in his place. The muling and puking exponents of their own woes, who claim, or for whom the claim is made, that their failure to move the world through verse or paint or a novel is a kind of persecution of genius, have as little conception of the true inwardness of the life and work of genius as small vestrymen have of statesmanship. Startling as the word may seem, the genius, whether he be of Religion as Buddha, Socrates, Isaiah, Jesus; of Art, from Orpheus to Michael Angelo or Morris; is first and last a man of affairs, compelled thereto by

the magnificence of his heart and brain, and persuading, singing, carving, painting, building, conducting his sweeping activities as the best way of forwarding those affairs ; which are ever for the interests of humanity, the love of God and man. There is no work that has lived to move the hearts and shape the lives of men through the centuries but has been in this way achieved.

The most nobly constructed and splendidly effective of all the works of Leo Tolstoy, his *What is Art ?* demonstrates this as truth which must remain truth while man is man. In modern literature no better example of the truth can be found than Tolstoy himself. His devotion to the art of the novel, wholly sincere from the earliest, arises from this, that always, at first with little consciousness, at last with large self-consciousness, he has followed his Art as a means to an end, never as an end in itself. One spends the days with him in intimate talk ; never once in his word or in his look is there a sign of the small desire of the small mind, that his work should be applauded

as *his* work; yet that his deepest enthusiasm is concerned in his work is as sure as that he possesses a soul; but the enthusiasm is in this regard, that his work shall stand, as well as it may, for the universal truth, for God's truth.

We talked together upon the old-world classics, the Tao-teh-king of China, the Buddhist Scriptures, the Christian Gospel. In whom else on earth to-day shall a man experienced and learned be found with whom spirit joined to spirit may rise to so full a degree of simplicity, height and intensity of the spiritual life—the life which agelong has been poured into the world through the prophets and revealers of peoples and continents, the men who have become like little children, and risen to the height and powers of rulers of the destinies of the race?

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.” He of the perfect nature, to whom God, not man, commits the cure of souls, commands no armies, and forces none by his will or intellect. To convey to others the inspiration he has himself received



is his sole resource ; a resource of such a kind that no other is needed, for to live in the spirit is to live by love. And when love rules from spirit to spirit, then the separated wills become as one, the animal strength is no longer divided in individual enmities, but is as the power of one body, whereof we all are members.

## TOLSTOY IN LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE.

SERIOUS material is not yet gathered for a biography of Tolstoy, in the sense of a narrative of his family and friendly affairs. Europe has been flooded with servants' and governesses' gossip, and journalists' *canards*, about him; misrepresentations which must be put aside by the reader who wishes to justly know the man. The main incidents of his life I have already given; they are, indeed, public property. To supplement these by reading his books, in the spirit and somewhat in the order in which they are displayed in the preceding pages, and to read them as virtual autobiography, is to know Tolstoy far better than the usual biography would enable.

I have said, the books are virtual autobiography. At first, they are fictional autobio-

graphy; after the great change, the illumination of mind, that produced *What I Believe*, *My Confession*, and *What to do*, they become plainest and directest accounts of Tolstoy's life and thought. There is a true magnificence in the passage, of nearly half a century, from the sincerity of childhood that seeks honesty but cannot see through society, and spells itself out in half-ashamed stories and novels, to the later plain speech of the man who at last walks by knowledge.

There remains that most lawful curiosity of people to know how the men who rule in ideas behave in practice. And most truly a man's work is part of his life, and books will not live—they have no substance—unless they are born of a life that is in earnest to be what the books would seem to be. The kind of fame a man earns, that fame which passes current undisputed, is always the measure of the man. Whatever charges of heresy, rebellion, fanaticism, inconsistency to his own principles, or asceticism, fluctuate round Tolstoy, this always remains certain and unquestioned in every mind—namely,

that he is a good man, true, and one to whose contentions all Europe has found no ghost of a refutation.

Tolstoy's "friends for *prestige*," quondam disciples, have been his worst enemies. These have a tendency to swear by his ploughing and his peasant's blouse, and to give him a certain air of mere eccentricity which is not his. Externalists to his spirit, such people look to the outside of what he does, and think to be consistent to his principles by imitating him. Finding this fail, they admit their failure, and accuse him of similar failure. Time and again I have heard "Tolstoyans" (a name he himself most rightly repudiates as any man's) declare that his principles are true, but impossible to themselves. Then, "to save their faces," they proceed to show that the principles are impossible to Tolstoy, as to themselves, and they go on to systematically accuse him of various inconsistencies. Against all this, I say, it is impossible to tax Tolstoy with inconsistency. His teaching is, unquestionably, heroic. And he is heroic, for his teaching has

been his own life. Let those weaklings who have failed, at least not try to shield their modestly immodest heads by belittling him.

Every life of a great man is conditioned by the same circumstance. Tolstoy, for instance, finds himself, on the one hand, related to all Europe by serious exchange of thought, by his own obvious effect on the lives of men. His cogitations, his activities, are necessarily employed upon this; a single sentence he is about to write must absorb him, for it may make or unmake souls. But his immediate and constant *entourage* is of people to whom he is simply husband, father, or friend, and to whom his life's work is at heart incomprehensible, and may stand for either an ornament or a nuisance. More or less—principally more—of this state of things is pathetically visible in similar men of our country, as Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris. Not possibly can the average natures who are about such a man understand that he follows, and, being himself, must follow, quite other ways than theirs. It is his, *to be himself*, to stare the fact in the face, to speak plain truth to all

people, and to suffer the range of attentions, from abuse to flattery, that his mastery of life draws upon him. It is every man's trouble, the penalty of being among imperfect humanity. Only, in these great cases, the trouble is of nobler cause and greater depth.

Picture to yourself again, that world of Russia; that life of now seventy-four years, beginning with the excitements of wealth and position, expanding into literary fame, and emerging in the prophet of Europe. Only a little mind, a mind of no knowledge (in Plato's sense), can think that such a life can permit inconsistency within itself. Behaviour wide of the mark set by principle causes an inner failure of spirit, of heart, of eye, of hand, which prevents any building up of great achievement.

The last moment I saw Leo Tolstoy is now nearly two years since. He had turned to walk back over the three or four versts of steppe, green with May, which we had crossed together. The *telega* two of us had climbed into, to leave him, slid and jolted over the earthen track just dried into something like a road, as we drew

away from the most influential personality in Europe, the figure out there in the wilderness of Southern Russia. A grey cloth cap, a dark blue belted blouse, and dark greyish trousers, a grey loose beard, with bushy iron-grey hair, and a stride as brisk as middle-age's—that was the Tolstoy who has given Europe a new atmosphere. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord," was understandable in him.

I thought of his life, and its one great and salient fact—the abandonment, complete, as I see it to have been, of house and lands, family, friends and fame, for the sake of man's inward oneness with himself, which is the world's need to be taught and to teach. And he has won himself to himself; a man fearless and at home anywhere; to whom death of the body promises as a welcome home to the soul.

Such a conquest is not easy, nor quick. Years upon years, decade upon decade, of growth, and of difficult and doubtful experiment, are necessary to the man who will live, not by social conventions, but by his own conscience. And when conscience demands the surrender of



all that men hold to as basically necessary to be held, and when that surrender threatens the comfort, the very subsistence, of wife and family—then the life becomes a Christ-life, and is, at last without cant, lived "in the shadow of the Cross." Then, the very men and women for whose highest welfare the life is thus given, are those who interpret it as heartless, cruel, egotistic, lunatic. All this has been said against Tolstoy, both in the world, and in his own home. More than once, attacked by his own in his own house, he has walked out, thinking never to return. A man, in such case, may well ask, Why should I, here or anywhere, endure such blind insult, when there is peace to be found? But always he remembered that his duty was first to his family; and he returned. These endurances, this patience, this humility, are what others need to know about in the lives that are to be their examples.

Tolstoy's large family is much like any other such group, and the members of it go their ways in life and society much as others do; with, however, such leaven as their father's

spirit and influence kneads into them as character. And that is much. Among them, he moves from the country in summer, to the town, Moscow, in winter. He sees such society as they see, and has his own visitors, frequently foreigners, from any country where books are read. The curious traveller drops in upon him occasionally, and the exploiting journalist. To all, he is one and the same; considerate, serviceable, always discussing within himself (you can see it in his eyes as he talks) how to give the best of his soul. I imagine, however, that there are people to whom plain-speaking has made him seem a terror of rudeness. At least, I hope so, for it ought to be so.

As to Tolstoy's personal habits: they are simply those of common-sense as to health and beauty of life. Long ago, for his mind's and body's sakes, he gave up the use of intoxicants, made so extreme a habit earlier in last century. Tobacco followed, for kindred reason,—it dulls the intellect. Vegetarianism came upon him about twenty years ago, I

believe; as the compulsion of a soul grown finer in all things, through the spiritual life. To a humane sense, the eating of animal corpses is not pleasant, and there is no need for men to suffer the reek of the slaughter-house. In *The First Step*, Tolstoy has written most admirably on this matter of diet. That brief essay is an excellent introduction to Tolstoy's general sentiment of life.

As to his habit of manual work (now largely relinquished because of his years),—what can be more reasonable than that a man should, even for mere amusement and bodily health, do something *real*, as ploughing for bread-making is: something to make him feel that he has earned nature, and her earth, air and sunshine, and earned the kinship with common humanity, in which is peace of life? The young Tolstoy enjoyed hunting and adventure; his older self found enjoyment, with settled peace, in doing something at once useful to others and costless to them. No beaters of game are needed to waste their

days about you when your pleasure is with the plough! For myself, I have to say that in doing my own carpentering and joinering, or gardening, or painting and decorating, I have found a pleasure that compels contempt of the ordinary sports of the field and the house that are all some men know as means of recreation. Work *is* pleasure, if men will only be wise to claim their freedom to do it honestly and happily: as Ruskin, Morris, and Tolstoy have taught. At proper times to turn one's sleeves up and sweat and be dirty over a piece of common work, such as we debase clodhoppers and charwomen to do, is wine of life. When circumstances put me where I cannot do this, for real and necessary uses, I suffer from nothing more. So with Tolstoy, who cleans out his own room, for the pleasure and duty of it.

The occupation of Tolstoy's days is most accurately describable as a large and minute watch kept upon himself and upon the world, to report all in his books and letters. A particular and excellent illustration of this is

his *Patriotism and Christianity* of five or six years ago. I suppose there have been men to leave greater literary accumulations to the world, because he has matured all, written nothing in haste ; nothing, therefore, to recall as wilfully false or harmful. But the books, *brochures*, diaries, and correspondence of so long a life make a great mass. Much that is profoundly interesting and important will become public when the correspondence shall be faithfully dealt with ; for Tolstoy has corresponded upon vital topics, matters of the soul, and matters of European affairs, with many distinguished and good men and women. In literary affairs, his relations with Turgenieff, for instance, are well known, and are interesting. Every one knows how the latter endeavoured to win him back from the life of *What I Believe* to that of *Anna Karénina*. But all that genius is vitally concerned with is interesting, and this is matter for the strict biographer.

For now many years, Tolstoy's ideas, so personal to every man concerned for his own better nature, have brought him many letters

from all kinds of people, mostly, I imagine, of the poorer, the working, classes. To these he gives strictest (but not mechanical as to punctuality) attention, and I have seen and heard of numerous letters, answers from him, deeply thought and to the point. I have by me a bundle of letters, written to myself during years past, which may well serve as examples of his interest in the world. I take some examples almost at random, in Tolstoy's own English, where it is his.

A letter is here which reached me on 24th March 1894. I give it in full:—

DEAR SIR,—I have only just finished the two books that you have sent me, and wish to express to you my gratitude for the books and their contents.

I cannot express to you the joy that I experience in seeing a man of your ability and sincerity working at the same work in which I have put my life—and not because I choosed this vocation, but because it is the sole work in this our life that is worth to work for.

I guess that you are in the same position, and I think that our task is to let people feel that in this life they have nothing else to do—as to help in the establishment of the kingdom of God, which cannot be established otherwise than by establishing it in our own hearts by trying to be as perfect as is our Father in heaven.

Tell me, please, if you have many co-workers. Is the religious feeling alive in the English workmen? Is it not stifled by Socialistic doctrines? I like very much the difference that you establish between Socialism and Christianity. We cannot too much insist upon it. Christianity for to be powerful must be pure from all *mélange*—of Dogmatism, Sentimentalism, Evangelism, as well as of Socialism, Anarchy, or Philanthropism.

Excuse my bad English, and believe me,

Yours with hearty sympathy,

LEO TOLSTOY.

And this, a letter dated 28th July 1896, dealing with our common propagandist and literary interests, is so typical that I give it also entire :—



DEAR FRIEND,—I have received your very interesting letter, and am very anxious to answer you, especially about the transformation, or rather spiritual growth, that is going on in our friends of the "Brotherhood Church." (I don't like those names; they promise too much. It would be well if in the transformation they would drop this name.)

I think that a great deal of the evil of the world is due to our wishing to see the realisation of what we are striving at, but are not yet ready for, and therefore being satisfied with the semblance of that which should be. Compulsory government organisation is indeed nought else than the semblance of good order, which is maintained by prisons, gallows, police, army, and workhouses. Of real order there is none; only, that which infringes it is hidden from our view in prisons, penal settlements, and slums. And I think the disease remains so long uncured because it is concealed.

So likewise with brotherhood or church communities. They also are semblances. There cannot be a community of saints among sinners. I think that the members of a community in order to keep the semblance of sainthood must necessarily commit many new sins. We are all created that we cannot

become perfect either one by one or in groups, but (from the very nature of the case) only all together.

The warmth of any one drop (or particle) is transmitted to all the others. And were it possible to conserve the heat of one particle so that it should not pass to the others, and therefore did not cool, it would only prove that what we took for heat was not true heat.<sup>1</sup>

And I therefore think that were one's friends to direct towards their inner spiritual growth all the portion of attention and energy which they devote to the sustainment of the outer form of a community amongst themselves, it would be better both for them and for God's cause. Communities and external organisations seem to me to be lawful and useful only when they are inevitable consequences of a corresponding inner state. For instance, if two men from a calculation that it is more profitable to live in one house and eat one dinner, were to say to each other, "Let us live in one house and eat one dinner," there would be very little chance that they would stay and live together without subjecting themselves to many disadvantages and much disagreeableness, which would outweigh the expected advantages and pleasures; but if two men who often met, came to

<sup>1</sup> Note this, of *external* relations only.

love each other, and also became utterly indifferent to the accommodation they had and the dinner they ate, and would like to live together, then there is every chance that such men would live together until death. More than that, if only one of these men were indifferent to his comfort and dinner and left the other, then, also, these men would get on together. Therefore, the chief work for the organisation of communities is in the love of every man. Human beings are naturally drawn one towards another (therein is the mystery of the God of Love), and therefore in order to unite, one need only make oneself capable of union, and then union will follow. If even we admit that union is attained by our own effort, in that case also we must as a preliminary to union, become ready for union.

I am also greatly interested in what you say about anarchists and their approach towards us. God grant it may be so. Tell me more fully what you know about the matter.

Now about your book.<sup>1</sup> The book is not an artless narrative in which one man imparts his feelings to an intimate friend, neither is it a work of art in which

<sup>1</sup> *The World's Last Passage.*

the author intentionally puts forth his ideas, feelings, and observations in such a way as to make the deepest impression on his reader. This is the reason why your book does not produce the desirable impression. It seems as if the author too vividly felt that which he wished to transmit, and was too sure that the reader would feel the same, and therefore he fails to excite in the reader that feeling which he himself had. There are many excellent details which seem to be superfluous. A work of art requires strict artistic fashioning, of which there is here not sufficient. For me the book was good, and the fundamental idea—expressed in the paraphrase of Paul—is very fine.

This book, like every manifestation of your soul, more and more connects mine with yours.

May God help you in the path you are treading.

Yours truly,

LEO TOLSTOY.

*28th July, 1896.*

A letter received just recently, his last to me at the moment of writing, I give in facsimile, to serve at least as evidence of the health and spirits of Tolstoy at the time it was written.

The last paragraph in this latest letter, the reference to "spiritualism," is deeply significant, and marks the difference in outlook that I find to discuss with Tolstoy just now. For him, materialism and annihilationism are conquered by his own inner victory over the animal nature; life has expanded beyond the bounds of mortality, and sweeps about him, a sunlit space, the dwelling-place of the spirit for ever. He has the inward assurance born of devotion to goodwill and truthfulness, which is the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. But there is more. Studying the worlds of experience still ours in and from the ancient religions: following the philosophers of so-called "mysticism," as Plato, Iamblichus, Plotinus: penetrating the nature of mediæval magic: considering the psychological disclosures and the phenomena of current "spiritualism" at the living moment: and latterly, having direct personal experience: with all this, I find a "world of spirit" to be not merely a sure hope, but an ascertainable and usable reality. And as primitive Christianity

drew its power directly from the spirit-world, by knowledge of and intercourse with it, so, I say, the new life of principle which Tolstoy has awakened must, to accomplish itself, also find its way to the spirit-world. I know (no one better) all that lies in the way; but I find myself, by pressure of fact and experience, compelled to this direction, as the way of final victory or defeat for the cause I serve with the great Russian.

As a last vision of him, there come to my mind words spoken of a prophet of ages bygone. It is Jehovah Elohim, the God of Life in the midst of His angels, who speaks: "Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me." Civilisation will find this true of Tolstoy. Men and women who command in society must learn to live like men and women, and not like milliners', tailors', and hairdressers' puppets; they must learn to live on terms of modest equality with the rest, and to find their honour in being chosen for social office and distinction by free people, who hold themselves to be as human as their governors.

Ruskin, Morris, Tolstoy, and the ancient sages—men who have compelled their times though their times hated their doctrine—are not fools in making this main insistence. I say, then, to any wise man or woman,—If you have the equipment of brain and education in any competent measure : if you value bread for your soul at even as low a price as you value bread for the perishing body : then throw yourself into the arms of this man, take the heart of genius he offers to you, and learn what you are in your better self, by learning what he is. And the secret of such a man's being is, that he learns to, at all costs, submit his life to the rule of the truth as he sees it. He knows, in a word, that GOD IS IN THE FACT.



## THE GAUGE OF PHILOSOPHY.

THROUGHOUT literature, a few men challenge judgment by the highest standard; a few only. But criticism is at fault in, as yet, not having found the standard to measure the world's greatest by. The gauge criticism is yet seeking is nothing less, and can be nothing less, than the *organon* of intellection as furnished forth by completed philosophy. For thousands of years man has been consciously struggling for complete self-consciousness in mentality; for a conception, knowledge, and use of *intellect* as an instrument through which to discriminate upon the universe without and within. That *organon*, intellect as a realised instrument of the human consciousness, has been known for long. It is applied, with magnificent results, by Confucius, as in *The Doctrine of the Mean*, by Aristotle, as in *The Logic* and *The Ethics*. These knew of

it and used it, but they did not discuss the instrument in itself, for the work of the instrument, which should bring it under discussion, remained to be produced and considered by the centuries. At last the necessary mass of material lay ready before Europe, and Immanuel Kant, in *The Critique of Pure Reason*<sup>1</sup> (rightly relating himself to Bacon, his precursor in the work), disclosed the true nature and use of the intellect. The demonstration given by Kant was, that the human intellect remains untrustworthy until the consciousness employs it with perfect, undeflected veracity. When the intellect is formed to that habit, facts may then be accurately discriminated upon, first as discrete, then as related,—so soon as relations become established as valid cognitions. Always, the test of fact, and the proof of relations, is in experience—a bar before which Kant, of necessity, brings God Himself, Immortality and Morality, for proof of their existence and values.

<sup>1</sup> The *Prolegomena* is a superior rendition of the theme of *The Critique*.

It is simply making man, the individual, the judge of his own state of consciousness. That is all.

But what results the instrument yields to the competent minds that have used it! To Kant it gave that inner vision of Eternal Righteousness which he connected, poetically, with the external vision of the heavens by night.<sup>1</sup> Within that concept of All-Space which Astronomy furnishes to us, he beheld that

"Worlds on worlds are rolling ever  
From creation to decay,"<sup>2</sup>

and articulations, dimensions, natures—of worlds on worlds were unfolded to him. The whole universe presented to man's five senses fell into order before the eye of Kant, and he gave metaphysical direction, compulsory because real,

<sup>1</sup> See, on page 43, the passage quoted by Tolstoy, from Kant.

<sup>2</sup> See the vastly beautiful chorus in Shelley's *Hellas*, and compare the magnificent hymn of the three Archangels in the *Prologue in Heaven* to Goethe's *Faust*, nobly done into English by Shelley.

to the world in its labours of physical research. All true discrimination and organisation in science has been made possible by Kant, by whose labours we are where we are.

But the *organon* has not yet been applied by man at large to his own inner consciousness. It has been used only (and even here only by the limited world of materialist science) as the instrument of consciousness to master the external world. Tolstoy, by his sacrifice of all to the maintenance of his own veracity, equipped himself to the work of searching out states of human consciousness, for comparison with his own, and he takes in Practical Ethics the step beyond Kant to enable the next step again, which is, to turn the instrument of intellection upon the consciousness itself, and determine what are man's present conditions, and his indicated possibilities, of consciousness. On all hands, men are labouring to produce the material for this process. But the men who, in strict psychology and pseudo-metaphysics, labour to this end, do so instinctively rather than consciously, and we yet await the great synthesis in

consciousness which shall be the universal, true, and therefore infallibly working, philosophy of man's earth-life. When that comes, we shall then simply have found the complete intellectual proof of all that true saints and mystics have affirmed as to their states of consciousness.

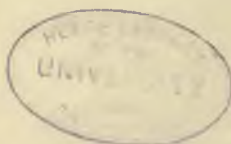
The magnificence of Tolstoy's work will here be seen. He has sought and faced every obstacle of mind and life that arose in his own thought and experience; he has found principles of a nature which he, with Kant, proclaimed as universal; principles of Love and Truthfulness. Serving these, he has swept away diseases of himself and of society, and shown in himself *an honest human life* that knows itself to be in the care of a power, visible in the external universe and felt in the universe within,—a power worthy to be worshipped as God.

But there is a whole region of human experience to which Tolstoy has not applied himself. It is the region that looms before a materialist age in discredited mythologies, mysticisms, miracle and ghost stories. That region must yet be swept, by some man with the equipment

of a Kant, a Tolstoy,—an equipment of faithfulness in life to truths intellectually appreciated—who knows and can use the *organon* of correct intellection. The result will be another advance in the process of bringing “life and immortality to light,” which leaped forward two thousand years ago, in the “revelation” made through Jesus of Nazareth.

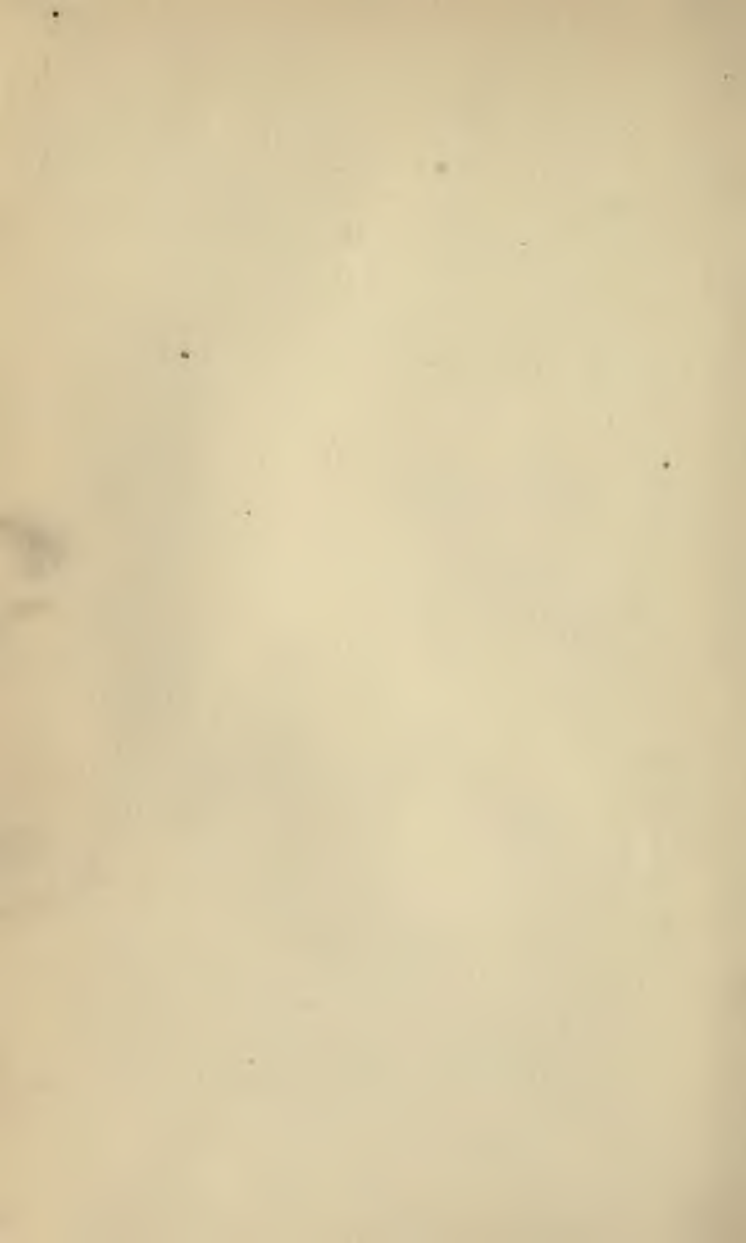
This intellection, this correct method of using intellect, will, I say, result in currency of articulated cognitions of the phenomena of the spirit-world (now abandoned to empiricists among hypnotists, spiritualists, theosophists, and charlatans), such as exist in physical science respecting the material world. Between these two kingdoms conquered to science—that is, between metaphysics (which will be found to be known and established in the real world of spirit) and physics, man’s proper domain of intellect correctly applied to the affairs of the world, will be opened up. By corrected knowledge of his own nature and destiny, there will come to man the power to love, the courage to be just. And by no other process discoverable to reason can

there come the solution of the awful problems of man's present soul, the problems of sex, property, death, the terrors of which did rend Tolstoy with agony, and do rend all who do not find his solution, the Christ solution, which is, to cast oneself into the ocean of Love.



THE END.







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