
Tolstoy and "Resurrection"

Author(s): Constance Garnett and Edward Garnett

Source: *The North American Review*, Apr., 1901, Vol. 172, No. 533 (Apr., 1901), pp. 504-519

Published by: University of Northern Iowa

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25105149>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The North American Review*

JSTOR

TOLSTOY AND "RESURRECTION."

BY CONSTANCE GARNETT AND EDWARD GARNETT.

I.

IN looking at the countless ranks of writers to-day, writers of every degree, of genius, of talent, of excellence, of mediocrity, and at the ever-thronging crowd of imitators following close behind them, we see that here and there a writer stands out, whom men of different nations with one voice hail as a great figure of the age. These few men, proclaimed by common consent great, cast strangely vivid conceptions of life into the minds of their fellow men by summing up for them, in their creative intensity, the creeds of vital import to their own age, creeds re-embodying the great human truths of all the ages. These rare great writers transfigure the common life of man by breathing into it a new spirit. And these great writers will speak for their age to posterity, not because they have followed present-day paths and tendencies, but because the light which they raise aloft, for men to journey by, lights up the path on which the generation is actually going. Such is the great writer's function—by his own attitude to be in himself a revelation, an interpretation, or a deep-searching criticism, of the spirit of his epoch.

Leo Tolstoy is one of these giants among writers, to whom future ages will turn for their interpretation of nineteenth century Europe. The greatest novelist, perhaps, of his age, he will, one ventures to think, be studied not so much for the strength and beauty of his great art, as for the challenge flung at modernity by his creed and his spirit, making his life-work of greater significance to humanity than that of any of the great European artists since Byron's day. Tolstoy's development is well-known. The novelist, of whom the great artist Turgenieff said: "He is the greatest of contemporary novelists; Europe does not contain his

equal;" the creator, whose analysis of the human soul, in every relation to life, shows a vaster range and deeper insight than is to be found in the work of any nineteenth century writer; the author, whose "War and Peace" and "Anna Karénina" sum up and typify the life of all classes of modern Russia; this man was brought to abandon this art, announcing that his old theory of life was meaningless, asserting that he had slowly gained a new perception of truth—the truth of Christ's Christianity—and he gave as his watchword, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within You."

Tolstoy's full acceptance and proclamation of the Christian precept, "Resist not evil," was a challenge to modernity, inasmuch as it attacks the whole structure of the modern state, and leads logically to the abolition of all such social institutions of civilization as military service, civil justice, taxation, and the Established Church, and would fundamentally alter the relation of the European governing classes towards the people.

Naturally, Tolstoyism was received as pure chimera. The educated public of the European world, the representatives of art and science, of the official classes, and of society generally, deplored the "strange delusions" of so remarkable a man, and declared that Tolstoy's mystical doctrines negate the ideal of progress, and would lead back humanity from civilization to barbarism. Polite society in Russia has tersely set Tolstoy down as mad. Statesmen, politicians, priests, military men, philosophers, and members of the learned professions generally have, with Turgenieff, looked on Tolstoy's philosophy as "mystical, childish and uncompromising," and as the ruin of his art. Nevertheless, indifferent to the almost unanimous verdict of contemporary educated Europe, Tolstoy, for over twenty years, has held to his own path, and has devoted his life to spreading, by his personal example and by his religious writings, his self-developed creed of "Christ's Christianity" as the ideal life for all humanity to follow.

Of late years, however, partly through Tolstoy's action in the Russian famine, and especially through the publication of his last work, "Resurrection," a certain number of men have come to ask themselves whether this educated European opinion in condemning Tolstoy and Tolstoyism was using science truly to determine what the appearance of Tolstoyism indicates, and what its value, what its significance, actually is in the development

of the Russian soul. If Tolstoy's special value to humanity can be shown to turn on his life-creed's being a challenge to modernity, then the cultured and educated opinion that has condemned his action and his gospel may be said to have shown great blindness of understanding. In declaring that Tolstoyism is a "chimera," composed of "the first prattlings of rationalism in religion and of communism in social matters, the old dream of the Millennium, the tradition preserved since the earliest Middle Ages by the Vaudois, the Lollards, and the Anabaptists;"* "a negation of civilization, corrupting in its social and religious influence, leading to a dismemberment of society;"† "perilously near utter materialism and opposed to the very idea of progress," and "an encouragement of Russian indolence"‡—the critics have forgotten to ask themselves whether the spirit of Tolstoy's teaching may not rather be, (1.) the protest of the genius of the Russian people against ineffectual or misdirected progress; (2.) the healthy recoil of the national instinct against the materialism of modern civilization; (3.) the re-awakening of the Russian conscience to the dark history of the people's oppression, the stirring of the Russian soul in mysterious racial depths—depths that the general Slavophil movement and the rival revolutionary campaign of the Liberal and Progressive political parties of the latter half of the century never succeeded in touching. If Tolstoyism be truly a reassertion, a fresh manifestation, of the Russian people's religious attitude to life—that deep religion of faith which has come out of the whole environment and fate and outlook of the people's life—then we may find, after all, that the "cultured European world," in declaring that "Tolstoyism is opposed to the very idea of progress," has naively confused material and intellectual progress with spiritual growth—a very different thing. Have we not sad reason to know that the inventions and discoveries of science that led to the factory and industrial system of the early nineteenth century, helped to degrade and brutalize whole generations of English workers, destroying utterly the roots of their old-world culture, and reducing masses of the population in town and country, through "civilization's" agency, below the level of many fine, barbarous races? Often, in the world's history, a nation's material progress has

*M. de Vogüé.

†Prince Volkonsky.

‡K. Walliszewski.

brought along with it its spiritual degradation. And the scientists, the critics, and the intellectual men, in trying to lay down the hard, arbitrary lines of Western civilization for the spiritual development of the Russian people, have essayed a dangerous task, for the soul has its own laws of growth.

Even if Tolstoy's teaching could be defined as a decadent force, and traced to fatalism and passivity springing from the old roots of Russian serfdom still in the soil, its appearance should, for the critic, be as significant, as to the healthy state of the community, as the breaking out of old ulcers is as to the health of a man's body. But, with few exceptions, the "world of culture" has preferred to see in Tolstoy's teaching simply the mystical aberrations of a great genius. So much for the perspicuity of latter-day "science!"

II.

This mistaken verdict on Tolstoy's teaching arises largely from the idea, propagated by Tolstoy himself, of regarding his life, work and career simply as divided between two antagonistic halves—(1.) artist and man of the world, and (2.) Christian and ascetic teacher. Now, though it is quite true that the artist of "The Cossacks" and of "Anna Karénina" (1873) views the world from a standpoint different from that of the moral teacher of "The Kingdom of God Is Within You" (1894), nevertheless the whole tendency of Tolstoy's novels and tales is ethical; and, though the artist is always strong enough to state life impartially, the reader always feels that, behind these pictures of life, there is the author with his secret goal, faith in God, in goodness, in love of one's fellow-men. Thus, in "Anna Karénina" Levin's search for a moral basis for joy and satisfaction in life is the secret standard against which most of the characters—Anna, Vronsky, Stepan, Kitty, Dolly—are measured, defined, adjudged; in "War and Peace" again, the whole marvellous analysis of modern war—war as a great, hypnotizing force, generated by fraud, vanity, vainglory, destructive of man's moral instincts, debauching the masses by the contagion of its cruel senselessness and far-reaching depravities—is really inspired by Tolstoy's central thought, Why is all this evil delirium and lust of cruelty, this senseless brutality, *glorified* by mankind?

"The Cossacks" enforces Tolstoy's favorite theme of the

superiority of the simple, rude life of the peasant, or Cossack, over the cultured, artificial, complex outlook of the upper-class officer. "Childhood, Boyhood and Youth" is the most remorseless scrutiny of the affectation and self-consciousness of youth and youth's sentimentalism; and, already in this early book, the author is seeking the why and wherefore of life, seeking what can be found worthy under all these veils of illusions and worldly pretences. In "The Death of Ivan Ilyitch" we find again an extraordinarily acute analysis of the life of worldly success, and of the artificiality of the cultured, upper-class conception of life. "Family Happiness," with its presentation of the poetic glamor of romantic love, is as a half-way house of disillusionment on the road to Tolstoy's ascetic ideal of sexual relations, an ideal which we find, years afterward, developed into the absolute asceticism of the "Kreutzer Sonata."

In fact, if we were to deduce a set of clear, simple, practical laws of morality from Tolstoy's novels to guide us in our life on earth, we should find embodied in them nearly all Tolstoy's inner aspirations toward the carrying out of the teaching of the Gospels. But the artist, seeing the inevitability of the characters, and circumstances, and appetites of men, presents us with a clear statement as to how it is that evil and vanity and materialism are perpetually inherent in the worldly scheme of things. The morality is not yet, in the novels, crystallized into a definite code; but it is there in solution. The chief difference between the Tolstoy of 1875 and the Tolstoy of 1895 is not that they are working toward a different goal, but that the latter alone thinks it his duty to tell all men the necessity of trying to reach it. The world, indeed, would like to see Tolstoy keep at the same stage as we see Levin is kept at in "Anna Karénina"—seeking the truth, but sceptical as to the use of teaching it to others. But the critics do not explain to us how it was possible that so great a hatred of war as Tolstoy's, so great a zeal for honesty and simplicity of life, so burning a desire for brotherliness and charity among all men, could find perpetual expression in the artist's mere joy in the representation of life as a spectacle. If we once grant that "Anna Karénina" and "War and Peace" owe their force and grandeur to the keenness of the moralist's vision, examining critically the great panorama of life moving inevitably onwards, then in Tolstoy's further development, either the moral-

ist must have died down—in which case we cannot conceive what his art would have become—or else the moralist must have striven to apply his creed to actual life, finding pure contemplation of life, apart from this ideal, less and less satisfactory.

III.

This last is what actually happened in Tolstoy's development. The ethical teacher came into possession of his kingdom. That this was inevitable, we have hinted above. What literature may have lost, is an open question. In the first place, his criticism and experience of the Russian world, and his peculiar method of analyzing life, he had already given to humanity; in his twenty years of literary work, he had pronounced on History, War, Woman, Love, the relation of the peasant world to the official classes. It was unlikely that a realist of his stamp should deliberately find greater worlds to envisage, having so nearly reached to his spiritual conclusions.

For ourselves, we see Tolstoy's ideas, life and work as forming a continuous, though irregular, advance down a series of commanding slopes, leaving behind the high vantage grounds of art, but finally reaching his destination in the vast plain stretching beneath, the common ground of the brotherhood of men. And it is our contention that "Resurrection" both demonstrates and vindicates the inner necessity of his life's final phase—as a great moral teacher.

IV.

In looking at the list of Russia's chief writers since Pushkin's day, we are struck by one tone common to all of them. While passionately occupied with expressing the Russian soul, they are all more or less accusers of Russian life. Thus Pisemsky, Nekrasov, Shtchedrin, cynics and satirists; thus Ostrovsky, Dostoyevsky, Garshin, Tchehov, Gorky, painters chiefly of the world of darkness; thus even Gogol's and Gontcharov's chief subject matter is the amusing follies and weakness natural to the Russian's life. Even the inaugurators of the new age of Emancipation—Turgenieff, Herten, Tchernyshevsky, Bielinsky and Dobrolinov—are only half-believers in man's ability to conquer for himself a new fate. Tolstoy is the least pessimistic and the least disbelieving of them all, in his pictures of Russian life.

But what does Tolstoy's optimism rest upon? Not faith in man's energy and character—the Anglo-Saxon's stronghold against despair—for the Russian, if we are to believe his delineators, has profound reason to know his own incurable sloth, and inertia, and lack of will; but upon the very foundation of the Russian's moral nature, upon his peculiar sense of the brotherhood of man, of his kinship with his fellows who are beaten down, with the afflicted and the unsuccessful in life's struggle. We find in nearly all Russian writers that their intensely keen and biting criticism of human shortcomings, and their despairing consciousness of men's failure to carry out their aspirations toward the good, are rooted in a feeling of self-accusation, and in their vivid recognition of their own weakness. They, these critics and accusers of Russian life, are no better than anybody; nay, they exalt the sinner, the beggar, the peasant, the victim of vice, and in so doing they manifest their deep sense of human equality and of men's brotherhood, and raise human compassion and charity high as the ideal to be followed. This ideal is never absent from the satirists—Shtchedrin, Pisemsky, Nekrasov—even when they are most bitter, ferocious or despairing, in their pictures of life. But Tolstoy, after Dostoyevsky, of all the great writers is the one who has most cast himself forward in pure faith that to attain to self-renunciation is the one blessed solution—with its rule, "Do to others as ye would that they should do to you." Accordingly, when Tolstoy, after analyzing life, came to the clear conviction that love of humanity is the one great ideal for men on earth to strive after, he was plunging into the deepest depths of the Russian's spiritual nature; and his renunciation of the world, as an æsthetic spectacle of human energy and passion, became symbolic of the aspiration that redeems the national life itself, became symbolic of the process by which Russian spirituality is evolved out of the hard pressure of nature on man, out of the hard legacy that the bitterness of Russian history has left from generation to generation.

What is the strongest quality of the Russian mind? The intellectual sincerity which we call his *realism*, acquired through contact with perpetual sorrow, through never being able to escape the perception of the nothingness of the individual life beside the power of the Earth, of Nature, of the Will of God in decreeing the lines of man's fate. Nothing keeps a man so scrupulously

honest with himself, so bitterly free from illusions and sentimentalities and romanticism, as feeling constantly within him his own weakness and ineffectualness in facing the stern, harsh facts which dominate life around him. Accordingly, the Russian nature has, in self-defence, to find *in the very recognition of the harsh reality* crushing it, the elements of its chief strength; and its feeling of its own weakness it is which creates its comprehension and love and idealization of the sufferer. This comprehension and deification of suffering is the deepest, the richest, possession of the Russian nature. It is this spirituality, arising from *unworthiness*, which forbids it to pass judgment. Without this national consciousness of suffering, this tenderness of perception and instinctive sympathy, the Russian soul could not exist; it is its way of escape from hardening into the monstrous inhumanity of acquiescence in evil. And thus Tolstoyism, as the expression of Christ's Christianity, may be said to be the long accumulating outcry of a people's accusing conscience, of their bad conscience, of the perception of the seas of human suffering, poverty, sorrow, disease, stagnation, in Russian history, in the Russian earth, and in the modern Russian state. The "cultured and educated European world," therefore, that serenely pushes forward science, education, progress as the panacea for the evils of life in Holy Russia, are like physicians called in to prescribe material remedies for the soul's anguish. Schools, science, free political institutions may be, and are, one side of the "progress" necessary; but, through the immense difficulty of introducing foreign institutions into the life of the people, this treatment, though backed by the ceaseless propaganda of two generations of Russian social and political reformers, cannot be said to have shown great results. And therefore may we not argue that to call forth, as Tolstoy does, fresh floods of the love, the brotherhood, the charity that the Russian by the necessity of his life carries ever within him, points to one of the most natural, the most simple, paths of progress that the people's development can take? Is not Tolstoyism, in this sense, the sign of a national movement in Russia of the deepest significance?

V.

Fortunately for humanity, Tolstoy has in "Resurrection" revealed his gospel, so that no thoughtful reader can possibly mis-

take it. In attacking the main institutions of the organized state, the government, the army, the law-courts, he is again giving expression to what lies at the root of the genuine Russian outlook upon life. All the modern state's complex institutions, such as the law, are in a sense opposed to the Russian genius, because they substitute for the living impulse toward the communal virtues of the individual a frigid, systematized code-morality. Now Tolstoy's life-work has been one long struggle against the sway over men's minds of rote ideas, or words of command from abstract authority in any shape—from Church dogma, class convention, the assumption of superiority of the classes, the particular science or education in fashion. To them he opposes the simple, instinctive morality of the people, the morality that has grown up out of the actual facts of life itself. The artificiality, pretentiousness, falsity, mechanical morality of cultured society, which borrows its patchwork of authoritative ideas from many heterogeneous civilizations, and does not derive them from its own work and joy in life, is shown by Tolstoy to afford but poor soil from which any fine national life, or, indeed, any deep philosophy of life, can spring.

The one question that Tolstoy, like all great creators, asks, is: What does the individual man *think and feel* amidst the imposing appearances of a society based on worldly success and power? The amazing triumph of "Resurrection" is that it demonstrates that official Russia, and the European upper classes generally, have elaborated a complex structure of state-regulated morality, equally false in relation to the facts of the people's life and the needs of their soul. In "Resurrection," we have the whole imposing machinery of State-Justice sketched for us, and we behold it at work distorting the humane instincts, the common sense, the very impulse of justice in every living man and woman brought within reach to assist at its triumph. The great state that perpetually manufactures criminals by its organization of compulsory military service, its drink traffic, its grinding taxation of the peasant, its legalized corruption among officials, its suppression of the private individual's efforts to organize education—the state that has exiled the finest flower of its intellectual youth—fabricates a false state-morality out of the very mouths of those whose livelihood depends upon keeping themselves in perpetual power.

In this sense, the modern state and state-morality are like two great wheels, continually turning men by their irresistible force from exercising their simple human instincts of justice and mercy toward their fellows. The upper classes will continue to exploit the peasants for the benefit of the state. The officials will continue to judge and persecute the victims of state-manufactured vice for the sake of governmental security. Society will continue to explain that "science," "progress," and "reform" depend upon the machinery of the state being kept in the hands of the bureaucracy—to continue the caste system *ad infinitum*. And to an outsider it would, indeed, seem that an administrative system, whereby the official world throws responsibility for evil on the machinery itself, is peculiarly calculated to foster from generation to generation the national malady of indolence. Thus the growth of state domination, and the extension of state-morality, may actually mean the *gradual putting to sleep of the national conscience*. If, for example, the governing world makes it inevitable that whole peasant communities should rot with syphilis (through the state's returning infected recruits straight back to their native villages), and science is only called in to assist in the perpetration of such enormities; and, further, if the bureaucracy devise a severe code of punishment for the Progressives who combine to introduce social reforms, may not Tolstoy's "Bind not yourself to the state" be a preservative of the moral ideas of the race, against the misapplication of Western civilization? And in a wider sense applying to the life of all European communities, Tolstoyism may signify the protest of the individual soul against the subjugation of the community's sense of right and wrong by that aggressive Spirit of the Age, which, under the plea of "civilization," would exploit nineteen-twentieths of humanity for the benefit of its masters—capitalists, commercialists, militarists, imperialistic statesmen, empire-builders.

Is not that what Tolstoy's work has always done for us, in "War and Peace" as in "Resurrection"—viz: to arraign before the judgment of each man's heart the community's dogmas, the dogmas which mankind generates whenever it gathers itself together in bodies, coteries or masses, whether as aristocratic society, or commercial classes, or democracy, or caucuses, or an army on the march, or as the churches and their flocks? Perpetually Tolstoy shows us that the oracular pronouncement of the official, or

priest, or general, or diplomatist, before which men bow their heads in awed reverence, is for the most part but an imposing falsehood to dupe the average man, stifling and strangling the human impulse, the sense of right and wrong, and the very common sense of the magnate himself. Mankind is taken in by these impressive shams, by the pomp and prestige of office, by the "glory" of military life, by the "reputation" of politicians, by the material shows of commerce, by the ceremonial of royalty, by the "scientific" laws by which economists dignify the exploitation of the multitude for the gain of the few. And if men, as Tolstoy does, could pierce through these cunningly built-up appearances by which worldly power decrees the course each generation shall take, they would be amazed at the sham sense, the sham thought, sham feeling which leads and directs the average human mind to acquiesce and assist in the world's constant folly and wrong-doing.

Examine Tolstoy's method of analysis:

THE PEASANT WORLD.

"Nekhlúdoff asked the foreman to let the women take the cows, and went back into the garden to go on thinking out his problem, but there was nothing more to think about.

"Everything seemed so clear to him now that he could not stop wondering how it was that everybody did not see it, and that he himself had for such a long while not seen what was so clearly evident. The people were dying out, and had got used to the dying out process, and had formed habits of life adapted to this process; there was the great mortality among the children, the over-working of the women, the under-feeding, especially of the aged. And so gradually had the people come to this condition that they did not realize the full horrors of it, and did not complain. Therefore, we consider their condition natural and as it should be. Now it seemed as clear as daylight that the chief cause of the people's great want was one that they themselves knew and

THE OFFICIAL WORLD.

"Count Iván Micháelovitch had been a minister, and was a man of strong convictions. The convictions of Count Iván Micháelovitch consisted in the belief that, just as it was natural for a bird to feed on worms, to be clothed in feathers and down, and to fly in the air, so it was natural for him to feed on the choicest and most expensive food, prepared by highly-paid cooks, to wear the most comfortable and most expensive clothing, to drive with the best and fastest horses, and that, therefore, all these things should be ready found for him. Besides this, Count Iván Micháelovitch considered that the more money he could get out of the treasury by all sorts of means, the more orders he had, including different diamond insignia of something or other, and the oftener he spoke to highly-placed individuals of both sexes, so much the better it was.

"All the rest Count Iván Micháelovitch considered insignificant and uninteresting beside these

always pointed out, *i. e.*, that the land which alone could feed them had been taken from them by the landlords.

"And how evident it was that the children and the aged died because they had no milk, and they had no milk because there was no pasture land, and no land to grow corn or make hay on. It was quite evident that all the misery of the people or, at least, by far the greater part of it, was caused by the fact that the land which should feed them was not in their hands, but in the hands of those who, profiting by their rights to the land, live by the work of these people. The land so much needed by men was tilled by these people, who were on the verge of starvation, so that the corn might be sold abroad and the owners of the land might buy themselves hats and canes, and carriages and bronzes, &c. He understood this as clearly as he understood that horses when they have eaten all the grass in the inclosure where they are kept will have to grow thin and starve unless they are put where they can get food off other land.

"This was terrible and must not go on. Means must be found to alter it, or at least not to take part in it. 'And I will find them,' he thought, as he walked up and down the paths under the birch trees.

"In scientific circles, Government institutions and in the papers we talk about the causes of the poverty among the people, and the means of ameliorating their condition; but we do not talk of the only one means which would certainly lighten their condition, *i. e.*, giving back to them the land they need so much."

"Resurrection" (Chapter vi.)

* * * * *

"When they came nearer the prison, and the *isvóstchik* turned

dogmas. All the rest might be as it was, or just the reverse. Count Iván Micháelovitch lived and acted according to these lights for forty years, and at the end of forty years reached the position of a Minister of State. The chief qualities that enabled Count Iván Micháelovitch to reach this position were his capacity of understanding the meaning of documents and laws and of drawing up, though clumsily, intelligible State papers, and of spelling them correctly; secondly, his very stately appearance, which enabled him, when necessary, to seem not only extremely proud, but unapproachable and majestic, while at other times he could be abjectly and almost passionately servile; thirdly, the absence of any general principles or rules, either of personal or administrative morality, which made it possible for him either to agree or disagree with anybody according to what was wanted at the time. When acting thus his only endeavor was to sustain the appearance of good breeding and not to seem too plainly inconsistent. As for his actions being moral or not, in themselves, or whether they were going to result in the highest evil or greatest welfare for the whole of the Russian Empire, or even the entire world, that was quite indifferent to him. When he became a Minister, not only those dependent on him (and there were a great many of them) and people connected with him, but many strangers, and even he himself were convinced that he was a very clever statesman. But after some time had elapsed, and he had done nothing and had nothing to show, and when in accordance with the law of the struggle for existence others, like himself, who had learned to write and understand documents, stately and unprincipled officials, had displaced

off the paved on to the macadamized road, it became easier to talk, and he again turned to Nekhlúdoff,

“‘And what a lot of these people are flocking to the town nowadays; it’s awful,’ he said, turning round on the box and pointing to a party of peasant workmen who were coming towards them carrying saws, axes, sheepskins, coats and bags strapped to their shoulders.

“‘More than in other years?’ Nekhlúdoff asked.

“‘By far. This year every place is crowded, so that it’s just terrible. The employers just fling the workmen about like chaff. Not a job to be got.’

“‘Why is that?’

“‘They’ve increased. There’s no room for them.’

“‘Well, what if they have increased? Why do not they stay in the village?’

“‘There’s nothing for them to do in the village—no land to be had.’”

“Nekhlúdoff felt as one does when touching a sore place. It feels as if the bruised part was always being hit; yet it is only because the place is sore that the touch is felt.

“‘Is it possible that the same thing is happening everywhere?’ he thought, and began questioning the isvóstchik about the quantity of land in his village, how much land the man himself had, and why he had left the country.

“‘We have a desiatin per man, sir,’ he said. ‘Our family have three men’s shares of the land. My father and a brother are at home, and manage the land, and another brother is serving in the army. But there’s nothing to manage. My brother has had thoughts of coming to Moscow, too.’

“‘And cannot land be rented?’

“‘How’s one to rent it nowadays? The gentry, such as they

him, he turned out to be not only far from clever but very limited and badly educated. Though self-assured, his views hardly reaching the level of those in the leading articles of the Conservative papers, it became apparent that there was nothing in him to distinguish him from those other badly educated and self-assured officials who had pushed him out, and he himself saw it. But this did not shake his conviction that he had to receive a great deal of money out of the Treasury every year, and new decorations for his dress clothes. This conviction was so firm that no one had the pluck to refuse these things to him, and he received yearly, partly in form of a pension, partly as a salary for being a member in a Government institution and chairman of all sorts of committees and councils, several tens of thousands of roubles, besides the right—highly prized by him—of sewing all sorts of new cords to his shoulders and trousers, and ribbons to wear under and enamel stars to fix on to his dress coat. In consequence of this Count Iván Micháelovitch had very high connections.”

“Resurrection” (Chapter xv.)

* * * * *

“Vladimir Vasilievitch Wolf was certainly *un homme très comme il faut*, and prized this quality very highly, and from that elevation he looked down at everybody else. He could not but esteem this quality of his very highly, because it was thanks to it alone that he had made a brilliant career, the very career he desired—i. e., by marriage he obtained a fortune which brought him in 18,000 roubles a year, and by his own exertions the post of a senator. He considered himself not only *un homme très comme il faut*, but also a man of knightly honor. By honor he understood not accepting secret

were, have squandered all theirs. Men of business have got it all into their own hands. One can't rent it from them. They farm it themselves.'"

"Resurrection" (Chapter xii.)

bribes from private persons. But he did not consider it dishonest to beg money for payment of fares and all sorts of travelling expenses from the Crown, and to do anything the Government might require of him in return. To ruin hundreds of innocent people, to cause them to be imprisoned, to be exiled because of their love of their people and the religion of their fathers, as he had done in one of the governments of Poland when he was governor there."

"Resurrection" (Chapter xiv.)

The broad justice of this analysis of the life of the rich and the poor is indisputable. These two pictures, true to every age, might be paralleled in the literature of every people, and especially in the Old Testament, which is continually inveighing against the rich man who grinds the faces of the poor. Where Tolstoy's peculiar genius comes in, however, is in explaining how it is that, when the facts of life have been crystallized into a particularly evil system, the community, one and all, invent a special doctrine by which it is sanctioned and maintained. Against collective human greed and the contagious ideas it generates in the crowd, Tolstoy shows us there is only one weapon—the moral indignation of the heart. It is useless to enter into argument with society, for society forthwith calls upon the scientists and economists and professors to show that any particular manifestation of human lust and cruelty is, in fact, for the ultimate good, and not for the harm, of humanity at large. To combat the vice and folly and stupidity of human society, Tolstoy presents a final resource for the individual, in his simple refusal to take any part in the organization of the state.

VI.

In our judgment, Tolstoyism, as a moral force, cannot be summed up or estimated from the number of its actual adherents. It is the idea, the moral idea, it brings—the great state as a collective organization works to stultify the moral sense of its individual members—that may hereafter help intelligent men to loosen the over-tight bonds the community imposes on its members. The danger of bodies of men being led to support, collectively, acts which, in their individual judgment, each condemns,

grows in proportion to numbers, as America lately has reason to know.

And as public opinion becomes more and more cosmopolitan, and ideas are interchanged swiftly and easily among all groups, all nations and all communities, mankind may well grow more and more skeptical as to the special sanctity of each state's decrees which set the patriots of one nation busily slaughtering the patriots of the next. Tolstoyism, construed as the individual's right to act on the moral impulse of his heart, and to refuse to kill his fellow man at the dictates of State or Church, at the suggestion of politician or journalist, this may yet be a force in progress which future ages, disputing our modern scientists' dicta, may come to count as an "advance."

VII.

Leaving on one side the question of the force Tolstoyism may exercise in man's development in the future, let us state in a few words Tolstoy's place as a great representative man. It must be allowed that, at this epoch, the civilized world is in a curiously chaotic state in all that concerns its moral beliefs. The standards of science, hastily introduced, have half-destroyed for the average mind the old standards of religion; and it is very doubtful whether men can ever guide themselves by, or master, a real science of morals. Tolstoy makes his final appeal to the heart of the individual man.

Tolstoyism is not "the old dream of the millennium, the tradition of the Lollards and the Anabaptists," because, though half-resting on the faith that the altruistic life is best for man, it rests partly on the intellectual theory that man's immorality is determined by the hypnotic influence of the mass on its members, and that, where the individual man shall dare to bring into action his innate morality, he will gain in intelligence as he more and more escapes being the passive tool of others.

On the side of its propaganda of moral asceticism, Tolstoyism may, perhaps, be summed up as a reversion to primitive Christianity; but, on the side of its destructive criticism of state-morality, it must be looked upon as an emancipating intellectual movement.

Anyway, Tolstoy's significance to Russia is not to be challenged. The enormous and rapid expansion of the Russian Empire over Central Asia, from Siberia to the gates of China, her

building of great railways, subjugation of barbarous tribes, and advance to the Pacific—how has all this immense work been paid for? By the blood and sweat of the Russian peasant. Unborn Russian generations and the inhabitants of new territories may reap ultimately the benefit of Russia's advance, as the high priests of "civilization" affirm. But if the vast system is inevitable, is it well that the cry of distress from the exploited Russian workers should call forth no answering cry of indignation from those who speak for the people? We see that while Russia's masses are still kept in semi-mediæval ignorance and suffering, while the compensations of mediæval life have vanished long ago, while the discoveries of science load fresh burdens on the workers' backs, the great thinker who stands for the conscience of his race is driven deep into his own soul, into the national soul, into the depths of faith in the brotherhood of man.

Tolstoy is like a giant striding two worlds; he brings together the upper-class world, with its routine official work, its ineffectual fatherliness and dilettantism, and the peasant world, with its primitive faith, its bitter sorrows, its naïve credulity. For "culture" and for the critics to say of Tolstoy's gospel, "This ought not to be," or "This ought to be different," is like putting the question, "Do I approve of the history of Russia?" As we have said, the really great representative men stand each for the human embodiment of centuries of their people's tendencies, and centuries of their character and outlook necessitated by their history and environment. They are as great rivers of inherent nationalism, which, rising, show to the eye the rush and swollen volume of the torrent of present-day questions, but rivers whose bed, whose banks, whose course, have been carved by past ages, and cannot be otherwise than they are. For Tolstoy, the great artist and great moralist, to adequately represent his people, it was necessary for him to return to the deepest wells of their faith, and bring again before the Russian mind the vital import, to the great world of workers, of the brotherhood of men. And the protest of "Resurrection" against the onrush of humanity's materialism and greed will seem to future generations as a rescuing hand releasing the flesh of suffering men from the ordered mechanism of our modern society's vast and complex machine.

CONSTANCE GARNETT,
EDWARD GARNETT.