

Tolstoy Leo

The Kingdom of God is Within You; What is Art?



Лев Толстой

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Within You; What is Art?**

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Lyof N. Tolstoi

The Kingdom of God is Within You What is Art?

INTRODUCTION

The present volume contains two contrasting treatises. The first is religious, and shows in Count Tolstoi's earnest and eloquent manner the meaning of Christ's words which he takes for his text, – "The Kingdom of God is within you." The outward forms of religion, however helpful they may be to some souls, are not essential; the superstitions with which Faith sometimes clothes or masks herself may or may not be uplifting; but the foundation of Christianity is the truth contained in Christ's words, his simple, plain, undogmatic commands and prohibitions.

One word sums it all up, and that word is Love. If the world should take love for its guiding star, it is evident that all the evils of the world would cease, – wars, crimes, poverty, ambitions; the millennium would come! Count Tolstoi shows how that blessed period may begin in every man. The translation of this beautiful and inspiring book has been made by Mrs. Aline Delano of Boston.

In answering the question, "What is Art?" Count Tolstoi analyzes and tests the various definitions given by other writers. He shows up with merciless severity what he considers the fallacy in the popular delusion that the fetish of Art pardons bestiality, obscenity, and whatever conduces to stimulating the passions. The work is strongly controversial, and attacks unsparingly many of the popular notions of the day, as, for instance, that "Art is the manifestation of some mysterious idea of God," or "the expression of man's emotions by external signs," or the production of pleasing objects. He believes that art has a loftier function, and he proceeds elaborately to argue in favor of this universal activity, which should be to effect a union among men so that they may have the same noble feelings and progress together toward universal and individual well-being. "Art for art's sake" is meaningless to him. It is interesting to notice that the most original and independent of the French critics has recently taken practically the same ground in a lecture, in which he asserts that it is the critic's business to test art and literature, and that art has a most intimate relation with morality.

Much of the book is racy and amusing; much of it is abstruse, and requires close attention. But whether one follows the author in his individual opinions or not, it cannot be denied that the general tone of the treatise is helpful and uplifting, and that it is based on sound common sense. Mr. Aylmer Maude of England is the translator of this work, and has had the benefit of Count Tolstoi's own suggestions in regard to certain points. As the special preface explains, the translation accurately represents the author's views, while the edition published in Russia was in many ways garbled and distorted. The translators of both treatises have seized the opportunity of carefully revising their work.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In this book I have endeavored to show that our modern Christianity has been tried and found wanting, that the armed camp of Europe is not Christian, but Pagan, as is latter-day religion, of which the present state of affairs is the outcome. The book contains three principal ideas, – the first, that Christianity is not only the worship of God and a doctrine of salvation, but is, above all things, a new conception of life, which is changing the whole fabric of human society; the second, that from the first appearance of Christianity there entered into it two opposite currents, – the one establishing the true and new conception of life, which it gave to humanity, and the other perverting the true Christian doctrine and converting it into a Pagan religion, and that this contradiction has attained in our days the highest degree of tension which now expresses itself in universal armaments, and on the Continent in general conscription; and the third, that this contradiction, which is masked by hypocrisy, can only be solved by an effort of sincerity on the part of every individual endeavoring to conform the acts of his life, – independent of what are regarded as the exigencies of family, society, and the State, – with those moral principles which he considers to be true.

The above is an extract (slightly adapted) from an article on Count Tolstoï which appeared in the London Daily Chronicle of 26th December, 1893. Sent by Miss Tatiana Tolstoï, on behalf of her father, to the publishers of this edition of his work, it is inserted here as a Preface at the suggestion of Count Tolstoï.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." – John
viii. 32.*

*"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but
rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." – Matthew
x. 28.*

*"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." – I Corinthians
vii. 23.*

INTRODUCTORY

In 1884 I wrote a book entitled "My Religion," wherein I formulated my creed.

While affirming my faith in the doctrine taught by Christ, I could not refrain from manifesting at the same time the reason why I look upon the ecclesiastical doctrine commonly called Christianity as erroneous, and to me incredible.

Among the many deviations of the latter from the doctrine of Christ, I called attention to the principal one; namely – the evasion of the commandment that forbids man to resist evil by violence, as a striking example of the perversion of the doctrine of Christ by ecclesiastical interpretation.

I knew but little, no more than other men, of what had been taught or written on the subject of non-resistance in former times. I was familiar with the opinions of the Fathers of the Church, Origen, Tertullian, and others; and I also knew of the existence of certain sects called Mennonites, Herrnhuters, and Quakers, all of which forbid Christians the use of arms, and will not submit to conscription, but I never knew the arguments by which these sects sought to maintain their views.

My book, as I had anticipated, was prohibited by the Russian censors, but partly in consequence of my reputation as a writer, partly because it excited curiosity, it had a circulation in manuscript, and while, on the one hand, it called forth from those persons who sympathized with my ideas, information concerning works written on the same subject, on the other, it excited criticisms on the opinions therein maintained.

These two results, together with the historical events of recent years, made many things clear to me, and led me to many new deductions and conclusions which I now desire to set forth.

I shall speak in the first place of the information I received in regard to the history of this matter of non-resistance to evil; and in the second place, of the arguments upon the subject offered by religious critics, that is, by critics who profess the religion of Christ, as well as those of secular critics, that is to say, of men who make no such profession; and finally, the conclusions which I drew from the arguments of both parties, as well as from the historical events of later years.

CHAPTER I

DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL FROM THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY, HAS BEEN, AND STILL IS, PROFESSED BY THE MINORITY OF MEN

Concerning the book "My Religion" – Information called forth by this book – Letters of Quakers – Professions of Garrison – Adin Ballou, his works and Catechism – "The Net of Faith" of Helchitsky – Relations of men toward works that explain the teachings of Christ – The book of Dymond "On War" – Assertion of Non-resistance by Musser – Relations of government in 1818 toward those who refuse to join the military service – General inimical attitude of governments and liberal men toward those who refused to take part in the violence of governments and their conscious effort to conceal and ignore these demonstrations of Christian Non-resistance.

Among the early responses called forth by my book were letters from American Quakers. In these letters, while expressing their sympathy with my ideas in regard to the unlawfulness of violence and war where Christians are concerned, the Quakers made known to me many details in relation to their sect, which for more than two hundred years has professed the doctrine of Christ in the matter of non-resistance, and which never has, nor does it now use weapons for self-defense. Together with the letters, the Quakers sent me many of their pamphlets, periodicals, and books. From these publications I learned that already, many years ago, they had demonstrated the Christian's duty of keeping the commandment of non-resistance to evil by violence, and the error of the church which countenances wars and executions.

Having shown by a succession of arguments and texts that war – the slaughter and mutilation of men – is inconsistent with a religion founded on peace and good-will to men, the Quakers go on to assert that nothing is so conducive to the defamation of Christ's truth in the eyes of the heathen, or so successful in arresting the spread of Christianity throughout the world, as the refusal to obey this commandment, made by men who call themselves Christians, and by the sanction thus given to war and violence. The doctrine of Christ, which has entered into the consciousness of men, not by force or by the sword, as they say, but by non-resistance to evil, by humility, meekness, and the love of peace, can only be propagated among men by the example of peace, love, and concord given by its followers.

A Christian, according to the teaching of the Lord, should be guided in his relations toward men only by the love of peace, and therefore there should be no authority having power to compel a Christian to act in a manner contrary to God's law, and contrary to his chief duty toward his fellow-men.

The requirements of the civil law, they say, may oblige men, who, to win some worldly advantages, seek to conciliate that which is irreconcilable, to violate the law of God; but for a Christian, who firmly believes that his salvation depends upon following the teaching of Christ, this law can have no meaning.

My acquaintance with the activity of the Quakers and with their publications, with Fox, Paine, and particularly with a work published by Dymond in 1827, proved to me not only that men have long since recognized the impossibility of harmonizing Christianity and war, but that this incompatibility has been proved so clearly and irrefragably, that one can only wonder how it is possible for this incongruous union of Christianity with violence – a doctrine which is still taught by the church – to remain in force.

Besides the information obtained from the Quakers, I also received from America about the same time advices on the subject from another and hitherto unknown source. The son of William Lloyd Garrison, the famous anti-slavery champion, wrote to me that, having read my book, wherein he had found ideas similar to those expressed by his father in 1838, and taking it for granted that I

should be interested to know that fact, he sent me a book written by Mr. Garrison some fifty years ago, entitled "Non-resistance."

This avowal of principle took place under the following circumstances: – In 1838, on the occasion of a meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Peace, William Lloyd Garrison, while discussing means for the suppression of war, arrived at the conclusion that the establishment of universal peace can have no solid foundation save in the literal obedience to the commandment of non-resistance by violence (Matthew v. 39), as understood by the Quakers, with whom Garrison was on friendly terms. Having arrived at this conclusion, he wrote, offering to the Society the following proclamation, which at that time, in 1838, was signed by many of its members: —

"Declaration of Sentiments adopted by the Peace Convention, held in Boston, September 18, 19, and 20, 1838: —

"Assembled in Convention, from various sections of the American Union, for the promotion of Peace on earth and Good-will among men, We, the undersigned, regard it as due to ourselves, to the cause which we love, to the country in which we live, and to the world, to publish a Declaration, expressive of the principles we cherish, the purposes we aim to accomplish, and the measures we shall adopt to carry forward the work of peaceful, universal reformation.

"We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government; neither can we oppose any such government by a resort to physical force. We recognize but one King and Lawgiver, one Judge and Ruler of mankind. We are bound by the laws of a Kingdom which is not of this world; the subjects of which are forbidden to fight; in which Mercy and Truth are met together, and Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other; which has no state lines, no national partitions, no geographical boundaries; in which there is no distinction of rank or division of caste, or inequality of sex; the officers of which are Peace, its exactors Righteousness, its walls Salvation, and its gates Praise; and which is destined to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity only as we love all other lands. The interests, rights, liberties of American citizens are no more dear to us than are those of the whole human race. Hence, we can allow no appeal to patriotism to revenge any national insult or injury; the Principle of Peace, under whose stainless banner we rally, came not to destroy, but to save, even the worst of enemies. He has left us an example, that we should follow His steps. God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

"We conceive that if a nation has no right to defend itself against foreign enemies, or to punish its invaders, no individual possesses that right in his own case. The unit cannot be of greater importance than the aggregate. If one man may take life, to obtain or defend his rights, the same license must necessarily be granted to communities, states, and nations. If *he* may use a dagger or a pistol, *they* may employ cannon, bombshells, land and naval forces. The means of self-preservation must be in proportion to the magnitude of interests at stake, and the number of lives exposed to destruction. But if a rapacious and bloodthirsty soldiery, thronging these shores from abroad, with intent to commit rapine and destroy life, may not be resisted by the people or magistracy, then ought no resistance to be offered to domestic troubles of the public peace or of private security. No obligation can rest upon Americans to regard foreigners as more sacred in their persons than themselves, or to give them a monopoly of wrong-doing with impunity.

"The dogma, that all the governments of the world are approvingly ordained of God, and that the powers that be in the United States, in Russia, in Turkey,

are in accordance with His will, is not less absurd than impious. It makes the impartial Author of human freedom and equality unequal and tyrannical. It cannot be affirmed that the powers that be, in any nation, are actuated by the spirit or guided by the example of Christ, in the treatment of enemies; therefore, they cannot be agreeable to the will of God; and therefore their overthrow, by a spiritual regeneration of their subjects, is inevitable.

"We register our testimony not only against all wars, whether offensive or defensive, but all preparations for war; against every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification; against the militia system and a standing army; against all military chieftains and soldiers; against all monuments commemorative of victory over a fallen foe, all trophies won in battle, all celebrations in honor of military or naval exploits; against all appropriations for the defense of a nation by force and army, on the part of any legislative body; against every edict of government requiring of its subjects military service. Hence we deem it unlawful to bear arms, or to hold a military office.

"As every human government is upheld by physical strength, and its laws are enforced virtually at the point of the bayonet, we cannot hold any office which imposes upon its incumbent the obligation to compel men to do right, on pain of imprisonment or death. We therefore voluntarily exclude ourselves from every legislative and judicial body, and repudiate all human politics, worldly honors, and stations of authority. If we cannot occupy a seat in the legislature or on the bench, neither can we elect *others* to act as our substitutes in any such capacity.

"It follows that we cannot sue any man at law, to compel him by force to restore anything which he may have wrongfully taken from us or others; but if he has seized our coat, we shall surrender up our cloak, rather than subject him to punishment.

"We believe that the penal code of the old covenant, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' has been abrogated by Jesus Christ; and that under the new covenant, the forgiveness instead of the punishment of enemies has been enjoined upon all His disciples, in all cases whatsoever. To extort money from enemies, or set them upon a pillory, or cast them into prison, or hang them upon gallows, is obviously not to forgive, but to take retribution. 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.'

"The history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful disposition of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness; that it is not safe to rely upon an arm of flesh, upon man whose breath is in his nostrils, to preserve us from harm; that there is great security in being gentle, harmless, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy; that it is only the meek who shall inherit the earth, for the violent who resort to the sword are destined to perish with the sword. Hence, as a measure of sound policy – of safety to property, life, and liberty – of public quietude and private enjoyment – as well as on the ground of allegiance to Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, we cordially adopt the non-resistance principle; being confident that it provides for all possible consequences, will insure all things needful to us, is armed with omnipotent power, and must ultimately triumph over every assailing force.

"We advocate no jacobinical doctrine. The spirit of jacobinism is the spirit of retaliation, violence, and murder. It neither fears God nor regards man. We would be filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ. If we abide by our principles, it is impossible for us to be disorderly, or plot treason, or participate in any evil work; we shall

submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; obey all the requirements of government, except such as we deem contrary to the commands of the gospel; and in no case resist the operation of law, except by meekly submitting to the penalty of disobedience.

"But while we shall adhere to the doctrine of non-resistance and passive submission, we purpose, in a moral and spiritual sense, to speak and act boldly in the cause of God; to assail iniquity in high places and in low places; to apply our principles to all existing civil, political, legal, and ecclesiastical institutions; and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever.

"It appears to us a self-evident truth, that, whatever the gospel is designed to destroy at any period of the world, being contrary to it, ought now to be abandoned. If, then, the time is predicted when swords shall be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall not learn the art of war any more, it follows that all who manufacture, sell, or wield those deadly weapons do thus array themselves against the peaceful dominion of the Son of God on earth.

"Having thus briefly stated our principles and purposes, we proceed to specify the measures we propose to adopt in carrying our object into effect.

"We expect to prevail through the foolishness of preaching, – striving to commend ourselves unto every man's conscience, in the sight of God. From the press we shall promulgate our sentiments as widely as practicable. We shall endeavor to secure the coöperation of all persons, of whatever name or sect. The triumphant progress of the cause of Temperance and of Abolition in our land, through the instrumentality of benevolent and voluntary associations, encourages us to combine our own means and efforts for the promotion of a still greater cause. Hence, we shall employ lecturers, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition our state and national governments, in relation to the subject of Universal Peace. It will be our leading object to devise ways and means for effecting a radical change in the views, feelings, and practices of society, respecting the sinfulness of war and the treatment of enemies.

"In entering upon the great work before us, we are not unmindful that, in its prosecution, we may be called to test our sincerity even as in a fiery ordeal. It may subject us to insult, outrage, suffering, yea, even death itself. We anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, calumny. Tumults may arise against us. The ungodly and violent, the proud and pharisaical, the ambitious and tyrannical, principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, may contrive to crush us. So they treated the Messiah, whose example we are humbly striving to imitate. If we suffer with Him we know that we shall reign with Him. We shall not be afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Our confidence is in the Lord Almighty, not in man. Having withdrawn from human protection, what can sustain us but that faith which overcomes the world? We shall not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us; but rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. Wherefore, we commit the keeping of our souls to God, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. For every one that forsakes house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for Christ's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

"Firmly relying upon the certain and universal triumph of the sentiments contained in this declaration, however formidable may be the opposition arrayed

against them – in solemn testimony of our faith in their divine origin – we hereby affix our signatures to it, commending it to the reason and conscience of mankind, giving ourselves no anxiety as to what may befall us, and resolving in the strength of the Lord God calmly and meekly to abide the issue."

Later on, Garrison founded a Non-resistance Society and started a periodical entitled *The Non-resistant*, wherein the full significance and consequences of the doctrine were plainly set forth, as has been stated in the proclamation. I gained, subsequently, further information concerning the fate of this society and the periodical from a biography of William Lloyd Garrison, written by his sons.

Neither the periodical nor the society enjoyed a long life. The majority of Garrison's associates in the work of liberating the slaves, apprehensive lest the too radical views expressed in the *The Non-resistant* might alienate men from the practical business of the abolition of slavery, renounced the doctrine of non-resistance as expressed in the declaration, and both periodical and society passed out of existence.

One would suppose that this declaration of Garrison, formulating, as it did, an important profession of faith in terms both energetic and eloquent, would have made a deeper impression on men, and have become a subject for universal consideration. On the contrary, not only is it unknown in Europe, but even among those Americans who honor the memory of Garrison there are but few who are familiar with this.

A similar fate befell another American champion of the same doctrine, Adin Ballou, who died recently, and who for fifty years had preached in favor of non-resistance to evil. How little is known in regard to the question of non-resistance may be gathered from the fact that the younger Garrison (who has written an excellent biography of his father in four large volumes), in answer to my inquiry whether any society for the defense of the principles of non-resistance was yet alive and possessed adherents, wrote me that, so far as he knew, the society had dissolved and its members were no longer interested, while at this very time Adin Ballou, who had shared Garrison's labors, and who had devoted fifty years of his life to the teaching of the doctrine of non-resistance, both by pen and by tongue, was still living in Hopedale, Massachusetts. Afterward I received a letter from Wilson, a disciple and co-worker of Ballou, and subsequently I entered into correspondence with Ballou himself. I wrote to him, and he sent me his works, from one of which I made the following extract: – "Jesus Christ is my Lord and Master," says Ballou in one of his articles, written to show the inconsistency of Christians who believe in the right of defensive and offensive warfare. "I have covenanted to forsake all and follow Him, through good and evil report, until death. But I am nevertheless a Democratic Republican citizen of the United States, implicitly sworn to bear true allegiance to my country, and to support its Constitution, if need be, with my life. Jesus Christ requires me to do unto others as I would that others should do unto me. The Constitution of the United States requires me to do unto twenty-seven hundred thousand slaves" (they had slaves then; now they could easily be replaced by workmen) "the very contrary of what I would have them do unto me – viz., assist to keep in a grievous bondage... But I am quite easy. I vote on. I help govern on. I am willing to hold any office I may be elected to under the Constitution. And I am still a Christian. I profess on. I find difficulty in keeping covenant both with Christ and the Constitution.

"Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evil-doers by taking 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blood and life for life.' My government requires the very reverse, and depends, for its own self-preservation, on the halter, the musket, and the sword, seasonably employed against its domestic and foreign enemies.

"In the maintenance and use of this expensive life-destroying apparatus we can exemplify the virtues of *forgiving our injuries, loving our enemies, blessing them that curse us, and doing good to those that hate us*. For this reason we have regular Christian chaplains to pray for us and call down the smiles of God on our holy murders.

"I see it all" (that is, the contradiction between profession and life), "and yet I insist that I am as good a Christian as ever. I fellowship all; I vote on; I help govern on; I profess on; and I glory in being

at once a devoted Christian and a no less devoted adherent to the existing government. I will not give in to those miserable non-resistant notions. I will not throw away my political influence, and leave unprincipled men to carry on government alone.

"The Constitution says – 'Congress shall have power to declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal,' and I agree to this, I indorse it. I swear to help carry it through. I vote for men to hold office who are sworn to support all this. What, then, am I less a Christian? Is not war a Christian service? Is it not perfectly Christian to murder hundreds of thousands of fellow human beings; to ravish defenseless females, sack and burn cities, and enact all the other cruelties of war? Out upon these new-fangled scruples! This is the very way to forgive injuries, and love our enemies! If we only do it all in true love nothing can be more Christian than wholesale murder!"

In another pamphlet, entitled "How many does it take?" he says – "One man must not kill. If he does, it is murder; two, ten, one hundred men, acting on their responsibility, must not kill. If they do, it is still murder. But a state or nation may kill as many as they please, and it is no murder. It is just, necessary, commendable, and right. Only get people enough to agree to it, and the butchery of myriads of human beings is perfectly innocent. But how many does it take? This is the question. Just so with theft, robbery, burglary, and all other crimes. Man-stealing is a great crime in one man, or a very few men only. But a whole nation can commit it, and the act becomes not only innocent, but highly honorable."

The following is, in substance, a catechism of Ballou, compiled for the use of his congregation:

THE CATECHISM OF NON-RESISTANCE.¹

Q. Whence comes the word non-resistance?

A. From the utterance: "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." – Matthew v. 39.

Q. What does this word denote?

A. It denotes a lofty Christian virtue, commanded by Christ.

Q. Are we to understand the word non-resistance in its broad sense, that is, as meaning that one should offer no resistance to evil whatsoever?

A. No; it should be understood literally as Christ taught it – that is, not to return evil for evil. Evil should be resisted by all lawful means, but not by evil.

Q. From what does it appear that Christ gave that meaning to non-resistance?

A. From the words which he used on that occasion. He said: "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."

Q. Whom did he mean by the words: "Ye have heard that it hath been said"?

A. The patriarchs and the prophets, and that which they spoke and which is contained in the Old Testament, that the Jews generally call the Law and Prophets.

Q. To what laws did Christ allude in the words: "Ye have heard"?

A. To those in which Noah, Moses, and other prophets grant the use of personal violence against those who commit it, for the purpose of punishing and destroying evil deeds.

Q. Mention such commandments.

A. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." – Genesis ix. 6.

¹ From the Russian version, which Count Tolstoï calls a free translation made with some omissions. After diligent search and inquiry I have been unable to find this catechism among Ballou's works. – Tr.

"He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death. And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." – Exodus xxi. 12, 23, 24, 25.

"And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbor; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." – Leviticus xxiv. 17, 19, 20.

"And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother. And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." – Deuteronomy xix. 18, 19, 21.

These are the injunctions of which Jesus speaks.

Noah, Moses, and the prophets taught that he who murders, mutilates, or tortures his neighbor doeth evil. In order to combat and destroy this evil, the evil-doer must be chastised by death, mutilation, or some personal torture. Transgressions are to be avenged by transgressions, murder by murder, torture by torture, evil by evil. Thus taught Noah, Moses, and the prophets. But Christ forbids all this. The gospel says: "I say unto you, resist ye not evil, avenge not one transgression by another, but rather bear a repetition of the offense from the evil-doer." That which has been allowed is now forbidden. Having understood what resistance we have been taught, we know exactly what Christ meant by non-resistance.

Q. Did the teaching of the Ancients admit of resisting transgression by transgression?

A. Yes; but Christ forbade it. A Christian has no right in any case to take the life of, or to offend against, the evil-doer.

Q. May he not kill or wound another in self-defense?

A. No.

Q. May he enter a complaint to the magistrates for the purpose of chastising the offender?

A. No. For that which he does through others, he practically does himself.

Q. May he fight in the army against foreign or domestic enemies?

A. Certainly not. He can take no part in war, or in the preparation therefor. He cannot make use of weapons. He cannot resist one transgression by another, whether he is alone or in company, either personally or through other agents.

Q. May he voluntarily select or drill soldiers for the government?

A. He cannot do this, if he wishes to be *faithful* to the law of Christ.

Q. May he voluntarily contribute money to assist a government which is supported by military power, executions, and violence in general?

A. No; unless the money is to be used for some special purpose, justifiable in itself, where the object and the means employed are good.

Q. May he pay taxes to such a government?

A. No; he should not pay taxes on his own accord, but he should not resist the levying of a tax. A tax imposed by the government is levied independently of the will of the citizens. It may not be resisted without recourse to violence, and a Christian should not use violence; therefore he must deliver his property to the forced damage caused by authorities.

Q. May a Christian vote at elections and take part in courts of law or in the government?

A. No. To take a part in elections, courts of law, or in the administration of government is the same thing as a participation in the violence of the government.

Q. What is the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance?

A. To show that it is possible to extirpate evil from one's own heart, as well as from that of one's neighbor. This doctrine forbids men to do that which perpetuates and multiplies evil in this world. He who attacks another, and does him an injury, excites a feeling of hatred, the worst of all evil. To offend our neighbor because he has offended us, with ostensible motive of self-defense, means but to

repeat the evil act against him as well as against ourselves, – it means to beget, or at least to let loose, or to encourage the Evil Spirit whom we wish to expel. Satan cannot be driven out by Satan, falsehood cannot be purged by falsehood, nor can evil be conquered by evil. True non-resistance is the only real method of resisting evil. It crushes the serpent's head. It destroys and exterminates all evil feeling.

Q. But admitting that the idea of the doctrine is correct, is it practicable?

A. As practicable as any virtue commanded by the law of God. Good deeds cannot be performed under all circumstances without self-sacrifice, privations, suffering, and, in extreme cases, without the loss of life itself. But he who prizes life more than the fulfilment of God's will is already dead to the only true life. Such a man, in trying to save his life, will lose it. Furthermore, wherever non-resistance costs the sacrifice of one's life, or of some essential advantage of life, resistance costs thousands of such sacrifices.

Non-resistance preserves; resistance destroys.

It is much safer to act justly than unjustly; to endure an offense rather than resist it by violence; safer even in regard to the present life. If all men refused to resist evil, the world would be a happy one.

Q. But if only a few were to act thus, what would become of them?

A. Even if but one man were to act thus, and the others should agree to crucify him, would it not be more glorious for him to die in the glory of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than live wearing the crown of Cæsar, besprinkled with the blood of the murdered? But whether it be one man or thousands of men who are firmly determined not to resist evil by evil, still, whether in the midst of civilized or uncivilized neighbors, men who do not rely on violence are safer than those who do. A robber, a murderer, a villain, will be less likely to harm them if he finds them offering no armed resistance. "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," and he who seeks peace, who acts like a friend, who is inoffensive, who forgives and forgets injuries, generally enjoys peace, or if he dies, he dies a blessed death.

Hence, if all were to follow the commandment of non-resistance, there would manifestly be neither offense nor evil-doing. If even the majority were composed of such men they would establish the rule of love and good-will even toward the offenders, by not resisting evil by evil nor using violence. Even if such men formed a numerous minority, they would have such an improving moral influence over society that every severe punishment would be revoked, and violence and enmity would be replaced by peace and good-will. If they formed but a small minority, they would rarely experience anything worse than the contempt of the world, while the world, without preserving it or feeling grateful therefor, would become better and wiser from its latent influence. And if, in the most extreme cases, certain members of the minority might be persecuted unto death, these men, thus dying for the truth, would have left their doctrine already sanctified by the blood of martyrdom.

Peace be with all ye who seek peace; and may the all-conquering love be the imperishable inheritance of every soul who submits of its own accord to the law of Christ.

Resist not evil by violence.— Adin Ballou.

For fifty years Ballou wrote and published books chiefly on the subject of non-resistance. In these writings, remarkable for their eloquence and simplicity of style, the question is considered in all its aspects. He proved it to be the duty of every Christian who professes to believe that the Bible is a revelation from God, to obey this commandment. He enumerates the arguments against the commandment of non-resistance, drawn from the Old as well as the New Testament, the expulsion from the Temple, among others, and answers each one in turn. Setting the Bible aside, he points out the practical good sense on which this principle is founded, sums up the arguments against it, and refutes them. For instance, in one chapter of his work he treats of non-resistance to evil in exceptional cases, and affirms that granting the truth of the supposition that there are cases to which the rule of non-resistance cannot be applied, that would prove that the rule in general is inconsistent. Citing such exceptional cases, he proves that these are the very occasions when the application of this rule is both wise and necessary. The question has been viewed from every side, and no argument, whether

of opponent or sympathizer, has been neglected or left unanswered. I mention this in order to call attention to the deep interest which works of this class ought to excite in men who profess Christianity; and it would seem therefore that Ballou's zeal should have been recognized, and the ideas he expressed either accepted or disproved. But such was not the case.

The life-work of Garrison, the father, his founding the society of the Non-resistant, and his declaration, convinced me, more even than my intercourse with the Quakers, that the divergence of the Christianity of the State from Christ's law of non-resistance by violence has been long since noticed and pointed out, and men have labored and still do labor to counteract it. Thus Ballou's earnestness has fortified my opinion. But the fate of Garrison, and particularly that of Ballou, almost unknown, notwithstanding fifty years of active and persistent work in one direction, has confirmed me in the belief that there exists a certain inexpressed but fixed determination to oppose all such attempts by a wall of silence.

In August of 1890 Ballou died, and his obituary appeared in the *American Religio-Philosophical Journal* of August 23d.

From this obituary we learn that Ballou was the spiritual leader of a community, that he had preached from 8000 to 9000 sermons, married 1000 couples, and written 500 articles, but in regard to the object of his life's devotion not a word is said; the word "non-resistance" is never mentioned.

All the exhortations of the Quakers for 200 years, all the efforts of Garrison, the father, the foundation of his society, his periodical, and his declarations, as well as the life-work of Ballou, are the same as if they had never existed.

Another striking example of the obscurity into which a work written for the purpose of explaining the principle of non-resistance, and to denounce those who refuse to recognize this commandment, may fall, is the fate of a book by the Czech Helchitsky, which has only recently been discovered, and which up to the present time has never been printed.

Shortly after the publication of my book in German, I received a letter from a professor of the Prague University, who wrote to tell me of a book which had never been printed, a work written in the fifteenth century by the Czech Helchitsky, and entitled "The Net of Faith." In this work, written four centuries ago, Helchitsky, as the professor tells me, has expressed exactly the same opinion in regard to true and false Christianity that I did in my work entitled "My Religion." The professor wrote that the work of Helchitsky was to appear in print for the first time in the Czech language in one of the publications of the St. Petersburg Academy of Science. As I was unable to obtain the book, I endeavored to ascertain all that was known of Helchitsky himself, and this knowledge I gained from a German book sent to me by the same professor in Prague. Besides that I learned something from Pipin's "History of Czech Literature." Pipin says: —

"'The Net of Faith' is the doctrine of Christ, wherewith man is to be raised from the gloomy depths of the social sea of iniquity. True faith is to believe the words of God; but we are living in times when men call the true faith heresy; hence it is upon our own reason that we must rely to discover the truth if we possess it not. Darkness has concealed it from men, and they no longer recognize the true law of Christ.

"As an illustration of the law, Helchitsky cites the original social organization of Christian society, which is considered by the Church of Rome of the present time as rank heresy.

"This primitive church was his own ideal of a social order founded upon equality, liberty, and fraternity. Christianity, according to Helchitsky, still preserves this foundation, and has but to return to its pure teaching to render any other social order, whose existence requires the authority of pope or king, quite superfluous. The law of love will suffice for all...

"Historically, Helchitsky assigns the decadence of Christianity to the time of Constantine the Great, whom the Pope Silvester received into the Church in spite of his pagan life and morals. Constantine, in return, rewarded the Pope by endowing him with riches and temporal power. Since then these two forces have played into each other's hands, seeking only outward glory. Doctors, men of learning, and the clergy, caring only to maintain their influence over the world, excited the nations one against the other, encouraging the crimes of murder and rapine, and thus destroying Christianity, both in faith and practice. Helchitsky totally denies the right of man to wage war or to exact the penalty of death. According to him, every soldier, even if he be a 'knight,' is only a transgressor, a criminal, and a murderer."

All this, with the addition of some biographical details and extracts from the correspondence of Helchitsky, is related in the German book.

Having thus become acquainted with the essence of Helchitsky's teachings, I waited with still greater impatience the appearance of "The Net of Faith" in the Academy's periodical. But one, two, three years passed, and the book was not forthcoming. It was only in 1888 that I learned that the printing had been suspended. I obtained the proof-sheets of what had been printed, and read them. In many respects it was a wonderful book.

Its contents have been accurately summarized by Pipin. Helchitsky's principal idea is that Christianity, in league with sovereignty during the reign of Constantine the Great, and continuing to develop under these conditions, became corrupted, and ceased to be Christianity. He called his book "The Net of Faith" because he had chosen for his motto that verse from the New Testament which speaks of the disciples as fishers of men. He carries on the simile thus: "Through His disciples, Christ caught the world in the net of His faith, but the larger fishes, breaking the net, escaped; then others followed through these same holes made by the large fishes, and the net was left almost empty." By the big fish he means the popes, emperors, and sovereigns who, without giving up their authority, accepted Christianity, not in its reality, but in its semblance.

Helchitsky teaches the same doctrine that is now taught by the non-resistant Mennonites and Quakers, and in former times by the Bogomiles, the Paulicians, and other sects. He teaches that Christianity, requiring, as it does from its followers, humility, gentleness, a forgiving spirit, the turning of the other cheek when one is struck, and the love of one's enemies, is not compatible with that violence which is an essential element of authority. A Christian, according to Helchitsky, should not only refuse to be a commander or a soldier, but he should take no part in government, neither should he become a tradesman, nor even a landowner. He might be an artisan or a farmer. This book is among the few which have been saved from the flame into which books denouncing official Christianity were commonly cast. As all such so-called heretical works were usually burned with their authors, very few of those which denounce official Christianity have been preserved – and for this reason the book of which we speak has a special interest.

But apart from its interest, concerning which there may be differences of opinion, it is one of the most remarkable results of human thought, both on account of its profundity and the wonderful power and beauty of its language, not to mention its antiquity. And yet this book has remained unprinted for centuries, and continues to be unknown except to a few specialists.²

One would think that works like these of the Quakers, of Garrison, of Ballou, and of Helchitsky, – which affirm and prove by the authority of the Bible that the world misinterprets the teaching of Christ, – would arouse an interest, would make a sensation, would give rise to discussions between the clergy and their flocks.

² "The publication of this book ('The Net of Faith') was ended [completed] by the Academy in the last months of the present year (1893)." —*Note received by the Publisher from Count Tolstoi while this work was going to press.*

One might suppose that works which deal with the very essence of the Christian doctrine would be reviewed, and either acknowledged to be just, or else refuted and condemned.

Not at all. Every one of these works suffers the same fate. Men of widely differing opinions, believers, and, what is still more surprising, unbelieving liberals, as though by common consent, preserve an obstinate silence in regard to them. Thus every attempt to explain the true meaning of Christ's doctrine goes for nothing.

And more astonishing still is the ignorance concerning two works whose existence was made known to me after the publication of my own book. One is a work by Dymond, "On War," printed for the first time in London in 1824, and the other by Daniel Musser, entitled "Non-resistance Asserted," was written in 1864.

The ignorance in regard to these books is amazing; the more so, that apart from their merit, both treat, not so much of the theory as of its practical application to life; of the relations of Christianity to military service, which is particularly interesting in view of the system of conscription. It may be asked, perhaps, what action is befitting for a subject who believes that war is incompatible with religion when his government calls upon him for military service?

One would take this to be a vital question, whose answer, in view of our present system of conscription, becomes one of serious importance. All men, or the majority of mankind, are Christians, and every male is required to do military duty. How man, in his Christian character, is to meet this demand, Dymond gives the following reply: —

"It is his duty, mildly and temperately, yet firmly, to refuse to serve."

"There are some persons who, without any determinate process of reasoning, appear to conclude that responsibility for national measures attaches solely to those who direct them; that it is the business of governments to consider what is good for the community, and that, in these cases, the duty of the subject is merged in the will of the sovereign. Considerations like these are, I believe, often voluntarily permitted to become opiates of the conscience. I have no part, it is said, in the councils of the government, and am not, therefore, responsible for its crimes. We are, indeed, not responsible for the crimes of our rulers, but we are responsible for our own; and the crimes of our rulers are our own, if, whilst we believe them to be crimes, we promote them by our coöperation...

"Those who suppose that obedience in all things is required, or that responsibility in political affairs is transferred from the subject to the sovereign, reduce themselves to a great dilemma. It is to say that we must resign our conduct and our consciences to the will of others, and act wickedly, or well, as their good or evil may preponderate, without merit for virtue or responsibility for crime."

It is worthy of notice that the same is expressed in a maxim to soldiers, which they are required to memorize. Dymond says that only a commander answers for the consequences of his order. But this is unjust. A man cannot remove the responsibility for his actions from himself. And this is evident from the following: "If your superior orders you to kill your child, your neighbor, your father, or your mother, will you obey? If you will not, there is an end of the argument; for if you may reject his authority in one instance, where is the limit to rejection? There is no rational limit but that which is assigned by Christianity, and that is both rational and practicable...

"We think, then, that it is the business of every man who believes that war is inconsistent with our religion, respectfully, but steadfastly, to refuse to engage in it. Let such as these remember that an honorable and an awful duty is laid upon them. It is upon their fidelity, so far as human agency is concerned, that the cause of peace is suspended. Let them, then, be willing to avow their opinions and to defend them. Neither let them be contented with words, if more than words, if suffering also, is required. It is only by the unyielding fidelity of virtue that corruption can be extirpated. If you believe that Jesus Christ has prohibited slaughter, let not the opinions or the commands of a world induce you to join in it. By this 'steady and determinate pursuit of virtue,' the benediction which attaches to those who hear the sayings of God, and do them, will rest upon you, and the time will come when even the world will honor you as contributors to the work of human reformation."

Musser's work, entitled "Non-resistance Asserted; or, Kingdom of Christ and Kingdom of this World Separated," was published in 1864.

This book deals with the same question, drawing its illustrations from the drafting of the United States citizens during the time of the Civil War. In setting forth the reasons why men should have the right to decline military service, his arguments are no less applicable to the present time. In his Introduction the author says: "It is well known that there are great numbers of people in the United States who profess to be conscientiously opposed to war. They are mostly called non-resistants, or defenseless Christians, and refuse to defend their country, or take up arms at the call of the government and go forth to battle against its enemies. Hitherto this conscientious scruple has been respected by the government in this country; and those claiming it have been relieved or excused from this service.

"Since the commencement of the present civil war in the United States the public mind has been unusually agitated on this subject. It is not unreasonable that such persons as feel it to be their duty to go forth and endure the hardships of camp life, and imperil health, life, and limb in defense of their country and government, should feel some jealousy of those who have, with themselves, long enjoyed the protection and benefits of the government, and yet, in the hour of its need, refuse to share the burden of its defense and protection. Neither is it strange that such a position should be looked upon as most unreasonable and monstrous, and those who hold it be regarded with some suspicion. "Many able speakers and writers," says the author, "have raised their voices and pens to refute the idea of non-resistance, as both unreasonable and unscriptural. This is not to be wondered at, seeing that those who profess the principle and do not possess it, or correctly understand it, act inconsistently, and thereby bring the profession into disrepute and contempt. However much misapplication or abuse of a principle may prejudice the minds of those who are unacquainted with a subject, it is yet no argument against its truth."

The author at first proves it to be the duty of each Christian to obey the rule of non-resistance. He says that the rule is perfectly explicit, and that it has been given by Christ to all Christianity without any possibility of being misinterpreted. "Judge for yourselves, whether it is right or wrong to obey man more than you do the Lord," said both Peter and John; and in exactly the same way every man who wishes to be a Christian should regard the requirement of his nation to be a soldier, remembering that Christ has told him, "Do not resist evil."

This, in the opinion of Musser, decides the question of principle. Another point, as to the right of declining military duty while one enjoys the advantages accruing through violence, the author considers in detail, and arrives at the conclusion that should a Christian who follows the teaching of Christ refuse to go to the war, he must also decline to take any position under the government or any part in the elections, neither must he have recourse to any officer of the law for his own personal advantage. Our author goes on to consider the relation between the Old and New Testaments, and the significance of government for non-Christians; arguments against the doctrine of non-resistance are enumerated and refuted. The author closes his book with the following words: – "Christians need no governments: for they ought not to obey it in those matters wherein Christ's teaching is set at naught, and still less should they take an active part in it. Christ has chosen His disciples out of the world. They have no promise of temporal good or happiness, but the contrary. Their promise is in the world to come. The spirit which they possess renders them happy and contented in any sphere of life. So long as the world tolerates them, they are contented; but if it will not let them dwell in peace, they flee to another city or place; and so they are true pilgrims and strangers on earth, having no certain abiding place... They are well contented that the dead may bury their dead, if they are only permitted to follow Christ."

Without deciding upon the merits of this definition of a Christian's duty in regard to war, which we find set down in these two works, we cannot fail to see the urgent need for a decision in regard to the question itself.

There are men – hundreds of thousands of Quakers, Mennonites, our own Duhobortzi, Molokani, men who belong to no sect whatsoever – who believe that violence and therefore military service is incompatible with Christianity; every year, for instance, we see in Russia a number of men refusing to obey the conscription because of their religious opinions. And how does the government deal with them? Does it release them? Oh, no!.. Does it use force, and in case of disobedience punish them? Not exactly... In 1818, government managed the affair in this wise.

The following is an extract, hardly known to any one in Russia, from a letter of Muraviev-Karsky, which was prohibited by the Russian censor: —

"Tiflis, October 2d, 1818.

"This morning the commander of the fortress told me that five peasants belonging to the landowners of the government of Tambov had been recently sent into the province of Grusia. These men were intended to serve as soldiers, but they refused to obey. They were flogged several times and made to run the gantlet, but they were ready to give themselves up to the most cruel tortures, yea, even to death itself, to escape military service. 'Let us go our way and harm us not; we do no harm ourselves. All men are equal. The sovereign is a man like one of us, why should we pay him taxes, and wherefore should we risk our lives to kill in battle those who have never done us any harm? Draw and quarter us, if you will, and we shall never change our minds; we will never wear the uniform, nor mess at the soldier's table. Some pitying soul may give us alms but from the government we neither have had nor will have anything whatsoever.' Such are the words of these peasants, who assure us that there are many men in Russia like themselves. Four times they were brought before the Committee of Ministers, and it was finally decided that a report be made to the Czar, who ordered them to be sent to Grusia for discipline, and desired the Commander-in-Chief to forward a monthly report of the progress made in bringing these peasants to a proper frame of mind."

The final result of this discipline is not known, for the matter was kept a profound secret, and the episode may never have been made public.

This was the conduct of the government seventy-five years ago in the greater number of cases, always carefully hiding the truth from the people; and it pursues the same policy at the present day, except in regard to the German Mennonites, who live in the government of Kherson, and who in lieu of military duty serve a corresponding term as foresters, – the justice of their refusal to obey the conscription being recognized.

But they are the sole exception; all others who, from religious scruples, refuse to perform military duty are treated in the manner just described.

At first the government employs all the methods of coercion now in use to discipline and *convert* the rebels, while at the same time the most profound secrecy envelops all these proceedings. I know of a process which was begun in 1884 against a man who had declined to serve, – a long-drawn-out trial which was guarded by the Ministry as a great secret.

The first step is usually to send the accused to the priests, and, be it said to their shame, they always try to win over the insubordinate. But as the influence exercised in the name of Christ is generally unsuccessful, the delinquent is sent from the clergy to the gendarmes, who, finding in him no political offense, send him back; whereupon he is despatched to the scientists, the doctors, and thence into the insane hospital. While he is thus sent to and fro, the delinquent, deprived of his liberty like a condemned convict, is made to endure every kind of indignity and suffering. Four such cases have come to my knowledge. The doctors generally release the man from the insane hospital, and then every underhanded and crafty device is employed to delay the accused, because his release might encourage others to follow his example. He is not allowed to remain among the soldiers lest

they discover from him that conscription is not, as they are taught to believe, in accordance with the law of God, but opposed to it. The most satisfactory arrangement for a government would be either to execute the delinquent, or beat him with rods until he died, as was done in former times. But it is awkward to condemn a man to public execution because he is true to the doctrine which we all profess to believe. Nor is it possible to take no notice of a man when he refuses to obey. So the government either tortures the man in order to compel him to deny Christ, or tries to rid itself of him by some means which will hide both the man and the crime from the eyes of the world, rather than resort to public execution. All sorts of cunning manœuvres and tricks are employed to torment the man. He is either banished to some remote province, or exasperated to disobedience and then imprisoned, or sent to the reform battalion, where he may be subjected to torture without publicity or restriction; or he is pronounced insane and locked up in the insane asylum. For instance, one was exiled to Tashkent; that is to say, a pretense was made of transferring him thither. Another was sent to Omsk, a third was court-martialed for disobedience and imprisoned, and a fourth was put into a house for the insane. The same thing is repeated on every side. Not only the government, but the majority of liberal free-thinkers, as though by preconcerted agreement, carefully avoid alluding to what has been said, written, or done in this matter of denouncing the inconsistency of violence, as embodied in its most shocking, crude, and striking form, in the person of a soldier, – this readiness to commit murder, – not only with the precepts of Christianity, but with the dictates of mere humanity, which the world professes to obey.

Hence all the information that I have gathered concerning what has been accomplished, and what is still going on in this work of explaining the doctrine of Christ and the light in which it is regarded by the ruling powers of Europe and America, has confirmed me in the conviction that a spirit inimical to true Christianity dwells in these authorities, exhibited chiefly by the conspiracy of silence with which they enshroud any manifestation of it.

CHAPTER II

OPINIONS OF BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS IN REGARD TO NON-RESISTANCE

The fate of the book, "My Religion" – The evasive answers of religious critics to the questions propounded in that book – 1st answer, Violence does not contradict Christianity – 2d answer, Necessity of violence for the purpose of repressing evil-doers – 3d answer, Necessity of violence for the defense of one's neighbor – 4th answer, The violation of the commandment of Non-resistance regarded as a weakness – 5th answer, Evasion of the answer by a pretense that this matter has long since been decided – The cloak of church authority, antiquity, the holiness of religious men, explain for many the contradictions between violence and Christianity, in theory as well as in life – Usual attitude of the clergy and authorities in regard to the profession of true Christianity – General character of Russian secular writers – Foreign secular critics – Incorrectness of the opinions of the former and the latter caused by a failure to understand the true meaning of the doctrine of Christ.

All the criticisms of the statements contained in my own book have given me a similar impression of a wish to ignore the subject.

As I had anticipated, no sooner was the book published than it was prohibited, and should, according to law, have been burned. But instead of being consumed by the flames, every copy was taken by the government officials and circulated in large numbers, both in manuscript and in the lithographed sheets, as well as in translations which were published abroad. It was not long before criticisms began to appear, not only from the clergy, but from the secular world, which the government, so far from forbidding, took pains to encourage. Hence the very refutation of the book, the existence of which they assumed to be unknown, was made the theme of theological controversy.

These criticisms, both foreign and domestic, may be divided into two classes, religious and secular; the former by persons who consider themselves believers, and the latter by free-thinkers. I shall begin by considering the former. In my book I accuse the clergy of inculcating doctrines contrary to the commandments of Christ, plainly and clearly expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, and particularly in regard to the commandment of non-resistance to evil, thereby depriving the doctrine of Christ of all its significance. Do the ministers of the gospel believe the Sermon on the Mount, including the commandment of non-resistance, to be of divine origin? Having felt themselves obliged to review my book, it would seem as if they must first of all answer the principal charge, and declare at once whether they do or do not consider the Sermon on the Mount and the commandment of non-resistance obligatory upon a Christian. Instead of making the usual reply, couched in words such as, "Though one cannot deny, neither can one affirm, the more so as," etc., let them give a categorical answer to my question: Did Christ practically require his disciples to do that which he taught in the Sermon on the Mount, and therefore may a Christian appeal to a legal tribunal, either for defense or prosecution, and still remain a Christian? May he consistently take a part in a government which is the instrument of violence? And that most important question, which, since the introduction of the general conscription, concerns us all: May a Christian remain a Christian and still disobey the direct command of Christ; may he promise to conduct himself in a manner directly opposed to the doctrine of Christ, by entering into military service and putting himself in training to be a murderer?

The questions are put plainly and directly, and would seem to call for plain and direct answers. But no; my book has been received just as all previous denunciations have been, those denunciations of the clergy who have deviated from the law of Christ, with which history abounds since the time of Constantine the Great. Many words have been expended in noting the errors of my interpretation of this or that passage of the Scriptures, of how wrong I am in referring to the Trinity, the Redemption, and the Immortality of the soul, but never a word of that vital question: How are we to reconcile

those lessons of forgiveness, humility, patience, and love toward all mankind, our neighbors as well as our enemies, taught us by the Teacher, which dwell in the heart of each of us, with the necessities caused by military aggressions against our own countrymen as well as against foreigners? All that deserves the name of a response to these questions may be summed up under five headings. I have endeavored to bring together in this book not only the criticisms upon my book, but everything that has ever been written on this subject.

The first criticisms with which I deal come mostly from men of high position, either in Church or State, who feel quite sure that no one will venture to combat their assertions; should any one make the attempt, they would never hear the arguments. These men, intoxicated for the most part by their authority, have forgotten that there is a Christianity in whose name they hold their places. They condemn as sectarian all that which is truly Christ-like in Christianity, while on the other hand, every text in both Old and New Testaments which can be wrested from its meaning so as to justify an anti-Christian or pagan sentiment – upon these they establish the foundation of Christianity. In order to confirm their statement that Christianity is not opposed to violence, these men generally quote, with the greatest assurance, equivocal passages from the Old and New Testaments, interpreting them in the most anti-Christian spirit – the death of Ananias and Sapphira, the execution of Simon the Sorcerer, etc. All of Christ's words that can possibly be misinterpreted are quoted in vindication of cruelty – the expulsion from the Temple, the words "... it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city" (Luke x. 12), and other passages. According to these men, a Christian is not at all obliged to be guided by the spirit of humility, forgiveness, and love of his enemies. It is useless to try to refute such a doctrine, because men who affirm it refute themselves, or rather they turn away from Christ Himself, to invent an ideal and a form of religion all their own, forgetful of Him in whose name both the Church and the offices they hold exist. If men but knew that the Church preaches an unforgiving, murder-loving, and belligerent Christ, they would not believe in that Church, and its doctrines would be defended by none.

The second method, somewhat more awkward, consists in affirming that though Christ did, in point of fact, teach us to turn the other cheek, and to share our cloak, and that these are indeed lofty moral laws, still ... the world abounds in evil-doers, and if these wretches are not subdued by force, the righteous will perish and the world will be destroyed. I met with this argument for the first time in St. John Chrysostom, and have called attention to its unfairness in my book entitled "My Religion."

This argument is groundless, because if we allow ourselves to look upon our fellow-men as evil-doers, outcasts (Raka), we sap the very foundations of the Christian doctrine, which teaches us that we, the children of the Heavenly Father, are brothers, and equal one to the other. In the second place, if the same Father had permitted us to use violence toward wrong-doers, as there is no infallible rule for distinguishing the good from the evil, every individual or every community might class its neighbors under the head of evil-doers, which is practically the case at the present time. In the third place, if it were possible to distinguish the righteous from the unrighteous, even then it would not be expedient in a Christian community to put to death, to cripple, or to imprison the evil-doers, as in such a community there would be no one to execute these sentences, since every man in his quality of Christian is forbidden to do violence to a malefactor.

The third mode of reply, more ingenious than the preceding ones, consists in affirming that while to obey the commandment of non-resistance is every Christian's duty, when the injury is a personal one, it ceases to be obligatory when harm is done to one's neighbor, and that in such an emergency a Christian is bound to break the commandment and use force against the evil-doer. This assertion is purely arbitrary, and one finds no justification for it throughout the whole body of the doctrine of Christ.

Such an interpretation is not only a narrow one, but actually amounts to a direct negation. If every man has the right to employ violence whenever his neighbor is threatened with danger, then the question becomes reduced to this: How may one define what is called danger to one's neighbor?

If, however, my private judgment is to be arbiter in this matter, then any violence which I might commit on any occasion whatever could be excused by the declaration that my neighbor was in danger. Magicians have been burned, aristocrats and Girondists put to death, because the men in power considered them dangerous.

If this important condition, which destroys the significance of the commandment, ever entered into the thought of Christ, it would have been formulated somewhere. Not only is no such exception to the commandment to be found throughout the Teacher's life and lessons, but there is on the other hand a warning against an interpretation so false and misleading.

The error and the impracticability of such a definition is vividly illustrated in the Bible story of Caiaphas, who made use of this very same interpretation. He admitted that it was not well to put to death the innocent Jesus, but at the same time he perceived the existence of a danger, not for himself, but for all the people, and therefore declared it better for one man to die, rather than that a whole nation should perish.

And we have a still more explicit proof of the fallacy of this interpretation in the words addressed to Peter, when he tried to revenge by violence the attack upon Jesus (Matthew xxvi. 51). Peter was defending not himself, but his beloved and divine Master, and Christ distinctly forbade him, saying, "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matthew xxvi. 52). One can never justify an act of violence against one's fellow-man by claiming to have done it in defense of another who was enduring some wrong, because in committing an act of violence, it is impossible to compare the one wrong with the other, and to say which is the greater, that which one is about to commit, or the wrong done against one's neighbor. We release society from the presence of a criminal by putting him to death, but we cannot possibly know that the former might not have so changed by the morrow as to render the execution a useless cruelty. We imprison another, we believe him a dangerous man; but no later than next day this very man may have ceased to be dangerous, and his imprisonment has become unnecessary. I see a robber, a man known to me, pursuing a girl; I hold a gun in my hand; I wound or perhaps kill the robber, and save the girl. The fact that I have either wounded or killed the robber remains, but I know not what might have happened had I not done so. And what a vast amount of harm must and does accrue from the assurance that a man feels of his right to provide against a possible calamity. Ninety-nine parts of the world's iniquity, from the Inquisition to the bomb-throwing of the present day, and the execution of tens of thousands of political criminals, so called, result from this very assurance.

The fourth and still more ingenious reply to this question of the Christian's responsibility in regard to the commandment of Christ concerning non-resistance to evil by violence, consists in asserting that this commandment is not denied, but acknowledged, like all the others; it is only the special significance attributed to it by sectarians that is denied. Our critics declare that the views of Garrison, Ballou, and Dymond, as well as those professed by the Quakers, the Shakers, the Mennonites, the Moravians, the Waldenses, Albigenses, Bogomiles, and Paulicians, are those of bigoted sectarians. This commandment, they say, has the importance, no more and no less, of all the others; and one who through weakness has transgressed against any of the commandments, whether that of non-resistance or another, does not for that cause cease to be a Christian, provided his creed be true.

This is a very cunning and persuasive subterfuge, especially for those who are willing to be deceived, reducing the direct negation of the commandment to its accidental infraction. One has, however, but to compare the attitude of the clergy toward this or any of the other commandments which they do acknowledge, to be convinced that it is quite different from their attitude toward this one.

The commandment against fornication they acknowledge without reservation, and in no case will they ever admit that this sin is not an evil. There are no circumstances mentioned by the clergy when the commandment against fornication may be broken, and they always insist that the occasions

for this sin must be avoided. But in regard to non-resistance it is a very different matter. Every clergyman believes that there are circumstances wherein this commandment may be held in abeyance, and they preach accordingly. So far from teaching their parishioners to avoid the temptations to this sin, chief among which is the oath of allegiance, they take the oath themselves. Clergymen have never been known to advocate the breaking of any other commandment; but in regard to the doctrine of non-resistance, they distinctly teach that this prohibition must not be taken too literally, that so far from always obeying this commandment, one should on occasion follow the opposite course – that is, one should sit in judgment, should go to war, and should execute criminals. Thus in most of the cases where non-resistance to evil by violence is in question, the preachers will be found to advocate disobedience. Obedience to this commandment, they say, is difficult, and can only be practicable in a state of society whose members are perfect. But how is it to become less difficult, when its infraction is not only condoned, but directly encouraged, when legal tribunals, prisons, the implements of warfare, the cannon and muskets, armies and battles, receive the blessing of the Church? Therefore this reply is not true. Evidently the statement that this commandment is acknowledged by the clergy to be of equal validity with the other commandments cannot be true.

Clergymen do not really acknowledge it, yet, unwilling to admit this fact, they try by evasion to conceal their non-acknowledgment.

Such is the fourth method of answering.

The fifth, more ingenious than its predecessor, is the popular one of all. It consists in quietly evading reply, pretending that the question was solved ages ago, in a cogent and satisfactory manner, and that it would be a waste of words to reopen the subject. This method is employed by all the more cultured authors, who, if they made answer at all, would feel themselves bound to be logical. Realizing that the inconsistency between that doctrine of Christ, of which we make a verbal profession, and the scheme of our daily lives, is not to be solved by words, and that the more it is talked the more glaring this inconsistency becomes, they evade it with more or less circumspection, pretending that the question of union between Christianity and the law of violence has either been already solved, or else that it cannot be solved at all.³

Most of my clerical critics have made use of this method. I might quote scores of criticisms of this class, wherein everything is discussed except the vital principle of the book. As a characteristic specimen of these criticisms I will quote from an article by that well-known and scholarly Englishman, the writer and preacher, Canon Farrar, who, like so many other learned theologians, is an expert in the art of silently ignoring and evading a statement. The article appeared in an American magazine, *The Forum*, for October, 1888.

After briefly but conscientiously setting forth the subject-matter of my book, Farrar says: – "After repeated search the central principle of all Christ's teaching seemed to him [Tolstoi] to be, 'Resist not evil' or 'him that is evil.' He came to the conclusion that a coarse deceit had been palmed upon the world when these words were held by civil society to be compatible with war, courts of justice, capital punishment, divorce, oaths, national prejudice, and indeed with most of the institutions of civil and social life. He now believes that the Kingdom of God would come if all men kept these five commandments, which he holds to be the pith of all Christ's teaching – viz.: 1. Live in peace with all men. 2. Be pure. 3. Take no oaths. 4. Never resist evil. 5. Renounce national distinctions... Most of the Bible does not seem to him to reflect the spirit of Christ at all, though it has been brought into

³ I know of but one criticism, or rather essay, for it can hardly be termed criticism, in the strict sense of the word, which treats of the same subject, having my book in view. It is a pamphlet by Troitzky, called "The Sermon on the Mount" (printed in Kazan). Evidently the author acknowledges the doctrine of Christ in the fullness of its meaning. He declares that the commandment of non-resistance to evil means what it says, and the same with the commandment as to taking an oath. He does not deny, as others have done, the meaning of Christ's teaching, but unfortunately neither does he draw those inevitable conclusions which must result from a conception such as his own of Christ's doctrine. If one is not to resist evil by violence, nor to take an oath, it is but natural to ask: Then what is the duty of a soldier? And what is to be done about taking the oath of allegiance? But to these questions the author makes no reply, and surely a reply should have been given. If he had none to make, it would have been better to have said nothing at all.

artificial and unwarrantable connection with it. Hence he rejects the chief doctrines of the Church: that of the Atonement by blood, that of the Trinity, that of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles and the transmission to the priesthood by laying on of hands, that of the need of the seven sacraments for salvation. He sets aside the authority of Paul, of councils, of fathers, popes, or patriarchs, and believes himself to be the immediate disciple of Christ alone... But we are compelled to ask, Is this interpretation of Christ a true one? Are all men bound, or is any man bound, to act as this great writer has done?"

One might naturally expect that this vital question, which alone could induce a man to write a dissertation on the book, would be answered either by admitting that my interpretation of the doctrine of Christ is correct and should be accepted, or declaring that it is erroneous, proving his point, and offering a more correct interpretation of the words which I have misconstrued. But no; Farrar merely expresses his belief that "though actuated by the noblest sincerity, Count Tolstoi has been misled by partial and one-sided interpretations of the meaning of the gospel and the mind and will of Christ." In what this error consists he does not explain, but says: "*To enter into the proof of this is impossible in this article, for I have already exceeded the space at my command.*" And concludes with equanimity: "Meanwhile the reader who feels troubled lest it should be his duty also to forsake all the conditions of his life, and to take up the position and work of a common laborer, may rest for the present on the principle, 'Securus judicat orbis terrarum.' With few and rare exceptions the whole of Christendom, from the days of the Apostles down to our own, has come to the firm conclusion that it was the object of Christ to lay down great eternal principles, but not to disturb the bases and revolutionize the institutions as well as all inevitable conditions. Were it my object to prove how untenable is the doctrine of communism, based by Count Tolstoi upon the divine paradoxes, which can be interpreted on only historical principles in accordance with the whole method of the teaching of Jesus, it would require an ampler canvas than I have here at my disposal." What a pity that he has no space! And, wonderful to relate, no one for fifteen centuries ever had the space to prove that the Christ whom we profess said one thing and meant another. And of course they could prove it if they would! But it is not worth while to prove what everybody knows to be true. It is enough to say: "Securus judicat orbis terrarum."

The criticisms of all educated believers are very much alike, because realizing as they must the danger of their position, they feel that their only safeguard lies in the hope that by sheltering themselves behind the authority and holiness of the Church, they may succeed in intimidating their readers, or diverting them from any idea of reading the Bible for themselves or using their own reason to solve this question. And this is a method that succeeds. To whom would it ever occur, indeed, that all these assurances, repeated with so much solemnity, century after century, by archdeacons, bishops, and archbishops, synods and popes, are a base falsehood, a calumny against the character of Christ, uttered for the purpose of assuring to themselves the money they require to lead a life of ease at the expense of others, – a falsehood and a calumny so palpable, particularly now, that the only chance of perpetuating this falsehood lies in holding the people in awe by their arrogance and audacity?

The very same thing has been going on of late years in the Bureau of military conscription. A number of aged officials, decorated and self-important, are at a table, a full-lengthed portrait of the Emperor with the mirror of justice before them, and, while leisurely chatting with each other, they write, call out the names, and give their orders. Here also, with a cross upon his breast, his hair blowing over his stole, a genial and venerable-looking priest dressed in a silk robe sits before a pulpit on which is placed a golden cross and a Bible with gilt clasps.

Ivan Petrov is called. An untidy, poorly clad youth, with a frightened expression, twitching muscles, and gleaming eyes that have a wandering look, steps forward, and in a hesitating, broken voice almost whispers: "I ... according to law ... as a Christian ... I ... I cannot..." "What is he muttering?" asks the chairman, impatiently, squinting and making an effort to hear, as he raises his head from the book. "Speak louder!" exclaims the colonel with the glittering shoulder-straps. "As a

Christian ... I ... I ..." And at last it becomes plain that the youth refuses to enter the military service because he is a Christian. "Don't talk nonsense! Measure him! Doctor, be kind enough to look at the measure. Will he do?" "He will do." "Holy Father, let him take the oath."

Not only is there no uneasiness on the part of the officers, but no one pays the least attention to the muttering of this frightened, pitiable youth. "They always mutter, and we are in a hurry; we have still so many more to receive."

The recruit tries to speak again. "This is against the law of Christ!" "Move on! move on! We know what is lawful and what is not! Move on! Father, make him understand! Next! Vassili Nikitin!"

Then the trembling youth is led away. Now which of all these men, the soldiers, Vassili Nikitin, the new man on the list, or any other witness of the scene, – which of these would ever dream that the unintelligible, broken utterances of the youth, silenced forthwith by the magistrates, embodied the real truth, while the loud, arrogant speeches of the officials, of the priest, uttered with authority, were actually false?

The same impression is made not only by Farrar's essay, but by all those grandiloquent sermons, reviews, and other publications which spring into existence on every side wherever truth is found combating the arrogance of falsehood. At once these orators and writers, subtle or bombastic, begin by dwelling upon points closely allied to the vital question, while preserving an artful silence on the question itself.

And this is the fifth and most efficacious method of accounting for the inconsistent attitude of ecclesiastical Christianity, which, while professing Christ, with its own life denies, and teaches others to deny, this doctrine in the practice of daily life. They who employ the first method of justification by boldly and distinctly affirming that Christ sanctioned violence, meaning wars and murders, put themselves beyond the pale of Christ's teaching; while they who defend themselves according to the second, third, and fourth methods soon become entangled, and are easily convicted of falsehood; but the fifth class, they who condescend not to reason, use their dignity for a screen, and insist that all these questions were settled ages ago, and need no reconsideration; they, apparently invulnerable, will maintain an undisputed authority, and men will repose under the hypnotic suggestion of Church and State, nor seek to throw off the yoke.

Such were the views of the clergy, of the professors of Christianity, in regard to my book, nor could anything different have been expected: they are in bonds to their inconsistent position, believers in the divinity of the Teacher, and yet discrediting His plainest words, – an inconsistency which they are bound to reconcile in some way. Hence it is not to be supposed that they would give unbiased opinions in regard to the essential question of that change which must take place in the life of one who makes a practical application of the doctrine of Christ to the existing order. From secular critics and free-thinkers, who acknowledge no obligation to the doctrine of Christ, and who might be expected to judge them without prejudice, I had prepared myself for criticisms such as these. I thought that the Liberals would look upon Christ not only as the founder of a religion involving personal salvation (as understood by the ecclesiastics and their followers), but, to use their own expression, as upon a reformer who tears down the old foundations to make way for new ones, and whose reformation is not even yet complete.

To set forth that conception of Christ and his doctrine has been the object of my book. But to my surprise not one out of the many criticisms, Russian or foreign, that have appeared, has accepted my view, or even discussed it from my standpoint, which is, that the teaching of Christ is a philosophical, moral, and social doctrine. (I use the phraseology of the scientists.) The Russian secular critics, conceiving the sum and substance of my book to be a plea in favor of resistance to evil, and taking it for granted (probably for the sake of argument) that the doctrine forbade any struggle whatsoever against the wrong, made a virulent, and for several years, most successful attack upon this doctrine, proving that the teaching of Christ must be false, since it forbids any effort to overcome evil. Their refutations of this so-called *false* doctrine had all the more chance of success, because the censorship

had prohibited, not only the book itself, but also all articles in its defense, and consequently they knew beforehand that their arguments could not be assailed.

It is worthy of note that here in Russia, where not a word against the Holy Scriptures is allowed by the censor, for several years in succession the distinct and unmistakable commandment of Christ (Matthew v. 39) was criticized, distorted, condemned, and mocked at in all the leading periodicals.

The Russian secular critics, apparently ignorant of all that had been said and done in regard to non-resistance to evil, seemed to think that I had invented the principle myself, and attacked it as if it were my idea, first distorting and then refuting it with great ardor, bringing forward time-worn arguments that had been analyzed and refuted over and over again, showing that the oppressed and downtrodden should be defended by violence, and declaring the doctrine of Christ concerning non-resistance to be immoral.

All the significance that the Russian critics saw in Christ's preaching was, that it seemed expressly intended to hamper them in their struggles against what they believe to be an evil in the present day. Thus it came about that the principle of non-resistance to evil by violence was attacked from two opposite camps; the Conservatives, because this principle interfered with them in their efforts to suppress sedition, and as opposed to all persecution, as well as to the punishment of death; the Revolutionists, because this principle forbade them to resist the oppression of the Conservatives, or to attempt their overthrow. The Conservatives were indignant that the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by violence should thwart an energetic suppression of revolutionary elements, which might imperil the welfare of a nation; the Revolutionists in the like manner were indignant because this same doctrine averted the downfall of the Conservatives, who, in their opinion, imperil the welfare of the people. It is a circumstance worthy of notice that the Revolutionists should attack the principle of non-resistance to evil by violence; for of all the doctrines dreaded by despotism, and dangerous to its existence, this is the chief one. Since the creation of the world the opposite principle of resistance by violence has been the corner-stone of every despotic institution, from the Inquisition to the fortress of Schlüsselburg.

Moreover, the Russian critics declared that the progress of civilization itself would be checked were this commandment of non-resistance applied to everyday life, by which they mean the civilization of Europe, which is, according to them, the model for all mankind.

Such was the substance of Russian criticism.

Foreign critics start from the same premises, but their deductions differ somewhat from those of the Russian critics; not only are they less captious and more cultivated, but their modes of analysis are not the same.

In discussing my book, and more particularly the gospel doctrine as it is expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, the foreign critics affirmed that the latter could not really be called Christian doctrine (they believe that the Christian doctrine is embodied in Catholicism or Protestantism), and that the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount are only a series of the delightful but unpractical visions of the "charmant docteur," as Renan says, suited to the artless, half-civilized Galileans who lived 1800 years ago, or to the Russian and semi-barbarous peasants, to Sutaev and Bondarev, and to the Russian mystic Tolstoi, but which are by no means adapted to the lofty plane of European culture. The foreign secular critics, in a courteous way, in order not to wound my feelings, have endeavored to show that my belief that mankind may be guided by so simple a doctrine as the Sermon on the Mount arises partly from my limited knowledge of history and ignorance of the many vain attempts to carry out in daily life the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, which history tells us have always proved an utter failure, and partly from my misconception of the significance of our modern civilization, with its Krupp guns, its smokeless powder, its African colonization, its Home Rule, its parliaments, journalism, strikes, and constitutions, not to mention the Eiffel Tower, – on which the entire population of Europe is at present reposing.

Thus wrote Vogüé, thus wrote Leroy-Beaulieu, Matthew Arnold, the American writer Talmage, who is also a popular preacher, the free-thinker Ingersoll, and others.

"The teaching of Christ is no longer practicable, because it does not suit our industrial times," Ingersoll ingenuously remarks, and thereby he no doubt gives utterance to the views which this cultured generation holds in regard to the doctrine of Christ. The doctrine has no affinity with the industrialism of the present age, as though industrialism were a sacred institution which can suffer no change. A drunkard might thus reply to one who calls upon him to be sober, that a man in liquor finds such advice absurd.

The arguments of all secular writers, Russian as well as foreign, however varied in form or expression, are substantially alike; they all agree in misapprehending the doctrine of Christ, with its outcome of non-resistance, and in affirming that it is not expedient because it implies a need of a change of life.

The doctrine of life is inexpedient, because if we lived up to it our lives could not go on as they have done hitherto; in other words, if we were to begin to live like righteous men, as Christ bids us, we must abandon the wicked ways to which we have grown accustomed. So far from discussing the question of non-resistance of evil by violence, the very mention of the fact that the precepts of Christ include such a command is considered as sufficient proof of the inexpediency of the whole doctrine.

And yet it would seem necessary to offer some solution of this question, as it lies at the root of all that most interests us.

The question is how to settle these differences among men, when the very action that is considered evil by one man is considered good by another. It is no answer to say that I think an action evil although my adversary may consider it a good one. There are but two ways of solving the difficulty. One is to find a positive and indisputable standard of evil, and the other is to obey the command, resist not evil by violence.

Men have tried to achieve the former from the earliest historical ages, and we all know with what unsuccessful results.

The second solution – that is, the non-resistance of what we must consider evil until we have found a universal standard: that solution has been suggested by Christ himself.

It might be thought that the solution suggested by Christ was the wrong one, and a better one might be substituted after the standard had been found which is to define evil once and for all. One might not know of the existence of such a question, as is the case with the barbarous races, but no one can be permitted to pretend, like the learned critics of the Christian doctrine, that no such question does exist, or that the recognition of the right of certain individuals or groups of individuals, and still less of one's own right, to define evil, and to resist it by violence, decides the question, because we all know that such a recognition does not decide it at all, for there are always persons who will refuse to admit that such a prerogative can exist.

And yet this very acknowledgment, that anything that seems evil to us is evil, or else an utter misconception of the question, affords a basis for the conclusions of secular critics concerning the doctrine of Christ; hence not only the utterances of the clerical, but also those of the secular critics in regard to my book, have made it evident to me that most men totally fail to comprehend either the doctrine of Christ, or the questions which it is intended to decide.

CHAPTER III

MISCONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY BY NON-BELIEVERS

The meaning of the Christian doctrine, which is clear for the minority, has become unintelligible for the majority of men – The cause of it is the false conception of Christianity and the misguided assurance of believers, as well as of unbelievers, that they apprehend it – The apprehension of Christianity for believers is concealed by the Church – The apprehension of Christianity – Its essence and its unlikeness to the pagan doctrines – Misunderstood at first, it has grown clear to those who embrace it owing to its correspondence with the truth – Contemporaneously with it arose the assertion that the true meaning of the doctrine was understood, and had been confirmed by miraculous transmission – The Council of Disciples according to the Acts – Authoritative and miraculous assertion of the true conception of Christ's doctrine has found its logical conclusion in the acknowledgment of the Credo and the Church – The Church could not have been established by Christ – Definition of Churches according to the Catechism – There are various Churches, ever antagonistic to one another – Where is heresy? – The work of Mr. Arnold concerning heresies – Heresies are the sign of activity in the Churches – Churches always divide mankind, and are ever inimical to Christianity – In what the activity of the Russian Church consists – Matthew xxiv. 23 – The Sermon on the Mount, or the Credo – The Orthodox Church conceals from the people the true meaning of Christianity – The same is done by other Churches – All the contemporary external conditions are such that they destroy the doctrine of the Church, and therefore Churches use all their efforts to defend it.

The knowledge which I obtained after the publication of my book in regard to the views which the minority of mankind have held, and still hold, concerning the doctrine of Christ in its simplicity and real significance, as well as the criticisms of clerical and secular writers, who deny the possibility of apprehending it in its actual meaning, have convinced me that while the minority has not only always possessed a true conception of this doctrine, and that this conception has grown steadily more and more clear, for the majority, on the other hand, its sense has become more and more vague, reaching at last such a degree of obscurity that men fail to understand the simplest commands expressed in the Bible, even when couched in the plainest possible language.

The inability that prevails at the present time to comprehend the doctrine of Christ in its true, simple, and actual meaning, when its light has penetrated into the remotest recesses of the human understanding, when, as Christ said, they proclaim from the roofs that which He whispered in the ear; when this doctrine penetrates every phase of human life, domestic, economical, civil, politic, and international, – this failure to apprehend it would be inexplicable, if one had not discovered the reasons for it.

One of the reasons is, that believers as well as unbelievers are perfectly sure that they long ago understood the doctrine of Christ so completely, unquestionably, and finally, that it can have no other meaning but the one which they attribute to it. That is because the tradition of this false conception has been handed down for ages, – and therefore its misconception.

The most powerful stream of water cannot add one single drop to a vessel that is already full.

One might succeed in explaining to the dullest of men the most difficult of problems, if he had no previous conception in regard to them; but it is impossible to explain to the cleverest man even the simplest matters, if he is perfectly sure that he knows everything about it.

The Christian doctrine appears to men of the present times to be a doctrine of that kind, known for ages, and never to be questioned in its most trivial details, and which is susceptible of no other interpretation.

At the present time Christianity is conceived by those who profess the doctrines of the Church as a supernatural, miraculous revelation of all that is expressed in the Credo; while unbelievers look upon it as an affair of the past, a manifestation of the demand of humanity for a belief in the supernatural, as an historical fact, which has found its fullest expression in Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Protestantism, and which has for us no vital meaning. For the believers the real significance of the doctrine is concealed by the Church; for the unbelievers it is hidden by science.

Let us begin by considering the former.

Eighteen hundred years ago, in the pagan world of Rome, there appeared a strange and novel doctrine, unlike any of its predecessors, which was ascribed to the man Christ.

It was a doctrine wholly new in form as well as in substance, both for the Hebrew world, from whose midst it had sprung, as well as for the Roman world, in whose midst it was preached and promulgated.

Among the accurately defined religious precepts of the Jews, where, according to Isaiah, there was precept upon precept, and among the highly perfected Roman legislative assemblies, there appeared a doctrine that not only repudiated all deities, all fear of them, all augury and all faith in it, but also denied the necessity for any human institutions whatsoever. Instead of the precepts and creeds of former times, this doctrine presented only an image of interior perfection, truth, and love in the person of Christ, and the attainment of this interior perfection possible for men, and, as a consequence, of the outward perfection foretold by the prophets: the coming of the Kingdom of God, when all enmity shall cease, when every man will hear the word of the Lord and be united with another in brotherly love, and when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. Instead of threats of punishment for the non-observance of the commandments of the old laws, religious no less than secular, instead of tempting men by promise of rewards to observe these laws, this doctrine attracted mankind only by proclaiming itself to be the truth.

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." – John vii. 17.

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" – John viii. 46.

"But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth..." – John viii. 40.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." – John viii. 32.

God must be worshiped in truth. All the doctrine will be made plain by the Spirit of Truth. Do as I command you, and you will know whether what I say is the truth.

No evidence was brought to prove the doctrine, except the truth and its harmony therewith. The whole substance consisted in learning the truth and in following its guidance, drawing nearer and nearer to it in the affairs of everyday life.

According to this doctrine, there is no mode of action that can justify a man or make him righteous; as regards interior perfection we have only the image of truth, in the person of Christ, to win our hearts, and outward perfection is expressed by a realization of the Kingdom of God. In order to fulfil the doctrine it needs but to take Christ for our model, and to advance in the direction of interior perfection by the road which has been pointed out to us, as well as in that of exterior perfection, which is the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The degree of human happiness, whether it be more or less, depends, according to this doctrine, not on the degree of perfection at which it arrives, but on the comparative rate of progress toward that perfection.

The advance toward perfection of Zacchæus the publican, of the adulteress, of the thief on the cross, is, according to this doctrine, better than the stagnation of the righteous Pharisee. The shepherd rejoices more over the one sheep which was lost and is found than over the ninety and nine which are in the fold. The prodigal returned, the piece of money which was lost and is found, is more precious unto God than that which was never lost.

According to this doctrine, each state is but a step on the road toward the unattainable interior and exterior perfection, and therefore it has no significance in itself. The progress of this movement toward perfection is its merit; the least cessation of this movement means the cessation of good works.

"Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth," and "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

The fulfilment of the doctrine lies in a continual progress toward the attainment of a higher truth, and in the growing realization of that truth within one's self, by means of an ever increasing love; as well as in a more and more keen realization of the Kingdom of God in the world around us. It is evident that the doctrine that appeared in the midst of the Hebrew and pagan world could not be accepted by the majority of men, who lived a life so totally unlike the one prescribed by this new doctrine; and even those who did accept it could not comprehend its full meaning, because of its contradiction of all former ideas.

It is only through a series of misapprehensions, errors, one-sided explanations, corrected and supplemented by generations of men, that the meaning of the Christian doctrine has become more and more plain. The Christian world-conception and that of the Hebrew and pagan peoples mutually acted and reacted upon each other, and the Christian principle being the more vital, it penetrated deeper and deeper into the Hebrew and pagan principles that had outlived their usefulness, and became more clearly defined, freeing itself from the spurious admixtures imposed upon it. Men understood its meaning better and better, and realized it more and more unmistakably in life.

The older the world grew, the more lucid became its apprehension of Christianity, as must always be the case with any doctrine relating to human life.

Successive generations rectified the mistakes of the preceding ones and approached nearer and nearer to the apprehension of its true meaning. Thus it was from the very beginning of Christianity. And it was then that certain men came to the front who affirmed that the only true interpretation was the one which they themselves proclaimed, adducing the miracles as a proof thereof.

This was the principal cause of its misapprehension in the first place, and of its complete perversion in the second.

The doctrine of Christ was supposed to be transmitted to mankind not like any other truth, but in a peculiar, supernatural manner; hence they propose to prove its authority, not because it satisfies the demands of reason and of human nature in general, but because of the miraculous character of its transmission, which is supposed to be an incontrovertible proof of the validity of its conception. This idea sprang from a misconception, and the result was that it became impossible to understand it.

It originated at the very beginning, when the doctrine was so imperfectly understood and often so erroneously construed; as, for example, in the Gospels and the Acts. The less men understood it, the more mysterious it appeared, and the greater need was there for visible proof of its authenticity. The rule for doing unto others as you would wish them to do unto you, called for no miraculous proof, neither did it require faith, because the proposition is convincing in itself, both to reason and to human nature. But the proposition that Christ was God needed miraculous testimony.

The more mystical grew the apprehension of Christ's teaching, the more the miraculous element entered into it; and the more miraculous it became, the farther it was from its original meaning; and the more complicated, mystical, and remote from its original meaning it came to be, the more necessary it was to declare its infallibility, and the less intelligible it became.

From the very beginning of Christianity one could see from the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles how the misapprehension of the doctrine called forth the necessity of proofs – miraculous and beyond human intelligence.

It dated from the time mentioned in the Acts, when the disciples went up to Jerusalem to consult with the elders in regard to the question that had arisen as to whether the uncircumcised and those who abstained not from the meat offered to idols should be baptized.

The very manner of asking the question showed that those who discussed it misconceived the doctrine of Christ, who rejected all external rites, such as the washing of the feet, purification, fasts, and the Sabbath. It is said distinctly: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man." And therefore the question in regard to the baptism of those not circumcised could only arise among men who, loving their Teacher and with the intuitive perception of the grandeur of his doctrine, could not as yet comprehend its exact meaning. And so it was.

And in proportion as the members of the assembly failed to comprehend the doctrine, did they stand in need of an outward affirmation of their incomplete conception. And in order to decide the question, whose very proposal proves the misconception of the doctrine, it was that in this assembly for the first time, according to the description given in the Acts, were uttered those awful words, productive of so much harm, by which the truth of certain propositions has been for the first time confirmed: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us;" that is to say, it was a declaration that the truth of what they said was witnessed by a miraculous participation of the Holy Ghost, that is – of God.

But the assertion that the Holy Ghost – that is to say, God – had spoken through the apostles, in its turn required proof. And therefore it became necessary to declare that on the fiftieth day the Holy Ghost, in the shape of fiery tongues, descended on those who had made this assertion. [In the description the descent of the Holy Ghost precedes the council, but the Acts were written much later than either.] But the descent of the Holy Ghost must also be proved, though it would be difficult to say why a fiery tongue hovering over a man's head should be a proof of the truth of what he says any more than the miracles, the cures, the resurrections, the martyrdoms, and all the rest of those persuasive miracles with which the Acts are filled, and which serve rather to repel than to convince one of the truth of the Christian dogmas. The results of these methods were such that the more pains they took to confirm their statements, accumulating stories of miracles, the more the doctrine itself deviated from its original meaning, and the less intelligible it became.

Thus it was from the beginning of the Christian era, and thus it continued to increase, until in its own time it has reached its logical consummation in the dogma of transubstantiation, the infallibility of the Pope, the bishops, and Scriptures, which is something utterly incomprehensible and nonsensical, requiring a blind faith, not in God or Christ, nor even in the doctrine, but a faith either in one person, as in Catholicism, or in many persons, as in Orthodoxy, or in a book, as in Protestantism. The more widely spread Christianity became, and the larger the number of uninstructed men it received, the less it was understood, the more the infallibility of its conceptions was insisted upon, and the more slender grew the possibility of understanding its true meaning. Already, about the time of Constantine, the entire conception of the doctrine amounted to the *résumé* formulated by the temporal power, – the outcome of discussions that took place in the council, – to the Credo, in which it is said: I believe in this and that, etc., and at the end, "in the one holy, Apostolic and Œcumenical Church," that is, in the infallibility of the persons who constitute it; so that it all amounted to this, that a man believed not in God, nor in Christ, as they revealed themselves to him, but in that which was believed by the Church.

But the Church is holy, and was founded by Christ. God could not allow men to interpret His doctrine as they chose, and therefore He established the Church. All these propositions are so unjust and unfounded, that one is actually ashamed to refute them. In no place, and in no manner whatsoever, save in the assertion of the Church, is it seen that either God or Christ can ever have founded anything like the Church in its ecclesiastical sense. There is a distinct and evident warning in the New Testament against the Church, as an outside authority, in the passage which bids the disciples

of Christ call no man father or master. But nowhere is there a word in regard to the establishment of what the ecclesiastics call the Church. The word "church" is used in the New Testament twice, once in speaking of the assembly which is to decide a dispute; the second time in connection with the obscure words in regard to the rock, Peter, and the gates of hell. From these two references, where the word is used only in the sense of an assembly, men have derived the institution which we recognize at present under the same of the Church.

But Christ could by no means have founded a church, that is, what we understand by that word at the present time, because nothing like our Church, as we know it in these days, with the sacraments, the hierarchy, and above all the establishment of infallibility, was to be found either in the words of Christ, or in the ideas of the men of those times.

Because men have called something which has been established since, by the same word that Christ used in regard to another thing, by no means gives them a right to assert that Christ founded only one true Church.

Moreover, if Christ had it in his mind to establish a church which was to be the depository of the whole doctrine and faith, He would surely have expressed this so plainly and clearly, and would have given, apart from all stories of miracles which are repeated with every variety of superstition, such signs as would leave no doubt as to its authenticity; yet this was not the case, and now, as always, one finds different institutions, each one calling itself the only true Church.

The Catholic catechism says: "L'Eglise est la société des fidèles établie par N. – S. Jésus-Christ, répandue sur toute la terre et soumise à l'autorité de pasteurs légitimes, principalement notre S. – P. le pape," – meaning by "pasteurs légitimes,"⁴ a human institution made up of a number of men bound together by a certain organization of which the Pope is the head.

The Orthodox catechism says: "Our Church is a society established on earth by Jesus Christ, united by the divine doctrine and the sacraments under the government and direction of a hierarchy established by the Lord," – those words, "established by the Lord," signifying a Greek hierarchy, composed of certain men who are ordained to fill certain places.

The Lutheran catechism says: "Our Church is a holy Christian society of believers under Christ, our Master, in which the Holy Ghost, by means of the Bible and the sacraments, offers, communicates, and dispenses the divine salvation," – meaning by that, that the Catholic Church is in error, and has fallen away from grace, and that the genuine tradition has been preserved in Protestantism.

For Catholics the divine Church is identified with the Pope and the Roman hierarchy. For the Orthodox it is identified with the institution of the Eastern and Russian hierarchy.⁵ For Lutherans the divine Church signifies a congregation of men who acknowledge the Bible and the Lutheran catechism.

When those who belong to any one of the existing churches speak of the beginnings of Christianity, they generally use the word "church" in the singular, as though there had never been

⁴ The Church is the society of the faithful, established by our Lord Jesus Christ, diffused throughout the world, subject to the authority of its lawful pastors and our holy father the Pope.

⁵ The definition of Homiakov, which had a certain success among the Russians, does not help the case, if one believes with him that the Orthodox is the only true Church. Homiakov asserts that a church is a society of men (without distinction between the ecclesiastics and the laity) united by love, and to whom the truth is revealed ("Let us love one another, that we may unanimously profess," etc.), and that such a church is, in the first place, one that professes the Nicene creed, and, secondly, one which, after the division of the churches, refused to recognize the authority of the Pope and the new dogmas. With such a definition as this, the difficulty of identifying a church which is united by love with a church professing the Nicene creed, and the accuracy of Photius, as Homiakov would have it, is still greater. Hence the statement of Homiakov that this church united by love, and therefore holy, is the same as that of the Greek hierarchy, is still more arbitrary than the assertions of the Catholics and the old Greek Orthodox believers. If we admit the existence of the Church according to the idea of Homiakov, that is, as a society of men united by love and truth, then all that any man can say in regard to it, is that it would be most desirable to be a member of that society, – if such an one exists, – that is, to live in the spirit of love and truth; but there are no outward manifestations by which one could either acknowledge one's self, or recognize others as members of this holy society, or exclude one's self from it, for there is no outward institution to be found which corresponds to that idea.

but one church. This is quite unfair. The Church, which as an institution declares itself to be the depository of infallible truth, did not arise until there were already two.

While the faithful still agreed among themselves, the congregation was united, and there was no occasion for calling itself a church. It was only when it separated into two hostile parties that each party felt obliged to assert its possession of the truth by claiming infallibility.

During the course of the controversies between the two parties, while each one claimed infallibility for itself and declared its opponent heretical, arose the idea of the one church.

We know that there was a church in the year 51, which granted the admission of the uncircumcised, and we know it only because there was another, the Jewish Church, which denied their right to membership.

If at the present time there is a Catholic Church which asserts its infallibility, it is because there are other churches, namely, the Greek Orthodox and the Lutheran, each one asserting its own infallibility, and thus disowning all other churches. Hence the idea of one church is but the product of the imagination, containing not a shadow of reality.

It is an historical fact that there have existed, and still continue to exist, numerous bodies, each one of whom maintains itself to be the true Church established by Christ, declaring at the same time that all the others who call themselves churches are heretical and schismatic.

The catechisms of those churches which possess the greatest number of communicants, the Catholic, the Orthodox, and the Lutheran, express this in the plainest language.

The Catholic catechism says: "Quels sont ceux qui sont hors de l'Eglise? Les infidèles, hérétiques, et schismatiques."⁶ By schismatics it means the so-called Orthodox, and by heretics the Lutherans; so that, according to the Catholic catechism, the Church is composed only of Catholics.

In the so-called Orthodox catechism it says: "The name Church of Christ means only the Orthodox Church, which has remained in perfect union with the universal Church. As to the Roman Church and the Protestant creeds" (they are not even called a church), "they cannot belong to the one true Church, for they have separated themselves from it."

According to this definition the Catholics and the Protestants are outside of the Church, and only the Orthodox are in it.

The Lutheran catechism says: "Die wahre Kirche wird darein erkannt, das in ihr das Wort Gottes lauter und rein ohne Menschenzusatz gelehrt und die Sacramenten treu nach Christ Einsetzung gewartet werden."⁷

According to this definition, those who have added anything whatsoever to the teaching of Christ and the apostles, as the Catholic and Greek Churches have done, are outside the Church, and the Lutherans alone are in it.

The Catholics assert that the Holy Ghost dwells perpetually with their hierarchy; the Orthodox assert that the same Holy Ghost resides also with them; the Arians claim that the Holy Ghost manifests itself to them (and they have the same right to assert this as have the prevailing religions of the present day); all the denominations of Protestants – Lutherans, Reformed Presbyterians, Methodists, Swedenborgians, and Mormons – assert that the Holy Ghost manifests itself only with them.

If the Catholics assert that the Holy Ghost during the separation of the Arian and Greek Churches withdrew from the separating churches and remained in the one true Church, then the Protestants of any denomination whatsoever may assert with as much right that during the separation of their Church from the Catholic, the Holy Ghost left the Catholic Church and entered into their own. And this is exactly what they do say. Every church professes to derive its creed by an unbroken tradition from Christ and the apostles. And certainly every Christian creed derived from Christ must

⁶ Who are those outside the Church? The infidels, heretics, and schismatics.

⁷ Thereby may be the true Church known that in it the word of God is taught plainly and clearly, without human additions, and that sacraments are administered faithfully according to the teaching of Christ.

have reached the present generation through tradition of some sort. But this is no proof that any one of these traditions embodies infallible truth, to the exclusion of all others.

Every branch proceeds from the root without interruption; but the fact that each one comes from one root, by no means proves it to be the only branch. And so it is in regard to the churches. The proofs which each church offers of its apostolic succession, and the miracles which are to prove its authenticity, are the same in every case; consequently there is but one exact definition of what is called a church (not the imaginary church which we may desire, but the actual church which has really existed). The Church is a body of men which lays claim to the exclusive possession of the truth. All these various societies which were afterward transformed by State authority into powerful organizations have really been the chief obstacles to the diffusion of true Christianity. It could not be otherwise: for the principal characteristic which distinguishes the doctrine of Christ from those of earlier times is that the men who accepted it strove to understand and to fulfil it more and more perfectly; whereas the doctrine of the Church affirmed that it was already thoroughly understood and also fulfilled.

However strange this may seem to us, reared as we have been in the false doctrine of the Church, as if it were a Christian institution, and taught to despise heresy, it is nevertheless in that which men call heresy that true progress, that is, true Christianity, was manifested, and it only ceased to be such when these heresies were checked, and it was, so to speak, stamped with the immutable imprint of the Church.

What, then, is heresy? Read all the theological works which treat of heresies, of that subject which above all others calls for an exact definition, for every theologian speaks of the true doctrine in the midst of the false ones by which it is surrounded, and nowhere will you find even the shadow of a definition of heresy.

As an instance of the complete absence of the definition of what is understood by the word heresy, we will quote the opinion of a learned Christian historian, E. de Pressensé in "Histoire du Dogme," with its epigraph, "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia" (Paris, 1869). This is what he says in his preface (p. 4): —

"I know that they dispute our right to qualify thus" (that is, to pronounce them heretical) "the tendencies which were so actively resisted by the early Fathers. The very name of heresy seems an attack upon liberty of conscience and thought. We cannot share these scruples, for they would simply deprive Christianity of any individual character."

And having said that after Constantine the Church did in fact abuse its authority to describe the dissenters as heretics and to persecute them, he says, in speaking of the early ages of Christianity: "The Church is a free association; there is an advantage to be gained in separating from it. The controversy against error is based on feelings and ideas; no uniform body of dogma has as yet been adopted; differences of secondary importance appear in the East and West with perfect freedom; theology is not limited by unalterable formulas. If amid these varying opinions a common groundwork of faith is discerned, have we not the right to see in this, not a definite system devised and formulated by the representatives of a school, but faith itself in its most unerring instinct and spontaneous manifestation? If this very unanimity which is revealed in the essential matters of faith is found to be antagonistic to certain tendencies, have we not the right to infer that these tendencies disagreed with the fundamental principles of Christianity? Will not this supposition become a certainty if we recognize in the doctrine rejected by the Church the characteristic features of one of the religions of the past? If we admit that gnosticism or ebionitism are legitimate forms of Christian thought, we must boldly declare that Christian thought does not exist, nor does it possess any specific characteristic by which it may be recognized. We should destroy it even while pretending to enlarge its limits. In the time of Plato no one would have dared to advocate a doctrine which would leave no room for the theory of ideas, and he would have been subjected to the well-deserved ridicule of Greece, if he attempted to make of

Epicurus or of Zeno a disciple of the Academy. Let us then admit that if there exists a religion or a doctrine called Christianity, it may have its heresies."

The writer's argument amounts to this, that every opinion which does not accord with the code of dogmas that we have professed at any given time, is a heresy. At a certain time and in a certain place men make a certain profession, but this profession can never be a fixed criterion of the truth. All is summed up in the "Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia," and Christ is wherever we are.

Every so-called heresy which claims that what it professes is the actual truth, may likewise find in the history of the Church a consistent explanation of the faith it professes, and apply all the arguments to its own use. Pressensé simply calls his own creed Christian truth, precisely as every heretical sect has done.

The primary definition of the word heresy (the word ἑρέσις means a part) is the name given by a society of men to any opinion contradicting any part of the doctrine professed by the society. A more specific meaning is an expression of an opinion which denies the truth of the creed, established and maintained by the temporal power.

There is a remarkable, although little known, work entitled "Unpartheyische Kirchen und Ketzer-Historie," 1729, by Gottfried Arnold, which treats of this subject, and points out the illegality, the perversity, the lack of sense, and the cruelty of employing the word heresy in the sense of refutation. This book is an attempt to relate the history of Christianity in the form of a history of heresies.

In his introduction the author asks a series of questions: (1) Of those who make heretics (Von denen Kettermachern selbst); (2) Of those who have become heretics; (3) Of the subjects of heresy; (4) Of the ways of making heretics; and (5) Of the aims and consequences of the making of heretics. To each of these points he adds scores of other questions, giving the answers from the works of well-known theologians, but principally leaving it to the reader to draw his own deductions from the contents of the book. As instances of questions which are to a certain extent their own answers I will quote the following: – Concerning the 4th question, of the methods for making heretics, he asks in one of the questions (the 7th): "Does not all history tend to show us that the greatest makers of heretics, the adepts in the art, were those very wiseacres from whom the Father concealed his secrets – that is, the hypocrites, the Pharisees, and the Scribes, or utterly godless and evil-minded men? (Question 20-21) And in the corrupted times of Christianity did not the hypocrites and envious ones reject the very men, talented and especially indorsed by the Lord, who would have been highly esteemed in periods of pure Christianity? (21) And, on the other hand, would not those men who during the decadence of Christianity rose above all others, and set themselves up as teachers of the purest Christianity, would not they, during the times of the apostles of Christ and his disciples, have been considered as the shameful heretics and anti-Christians?" Among other things, while expressing the idea that the verbal declaration of the essence of faith which was required by the Church, the abjuration of which was regarded as a heresy, could never cover all the ideas and beliefs of the faithful, and that hence the requirement that faith shall be expressed by a certain formula of words is the immediate cause of heresy, he says in the 21st question: —

"And supposing that holy acts and thoughts appear to a man so high and so profound that he finds no adequate words wherewith to convey them, should he be considered a heretic if he is unable to formulate his conception? (33) And was not this the reason why there were no heresies in the early times of Christianity, because Christians judged each other, not by their words, but by their hearts and by their deeds, enjoying a perfect freedom of expression, without the fear of being called heretic?" "Was it not one of the convenient and easiest methods of the Church," he asks in the 31st question, "when the ecclesiastics wished to rid themselves of any one, or ruin his reputation, to excite suspicion in regard to the doctrine he held, and by investing him in the garment of heresy, condemn and cast him out?"

"Although it is true that among so-called heretics sins and errors have been committed, it is no less true, as the numerous examples here quoted bear testimony" (that is to say, in the history of the Church and of heresies), "that there has never been a sincere and conscientious man of any importance whose safety has not been endangered through the envy of the ecclesiastics."

This was the interpretation of heresy almost 200 years ago, and the same meaning is attached to it to-day, and so long as the idea of the Church shall exist it will never change. Where the Church exists there must also exist the idea of heresy. The Church is a body of men claiming possession of indisputable truth. A heresy is the opinion of men who do not acknowledge the truth of the Church to be indisputable.

Heresy is the manifestation of a movement in the Church; it is an attempt to destroy the immutable assertion of the Church, the attempt of a living apprehension of the doctrine. Each advance that has been made toward the comprehension and the practice of the doctrine has been accomplished by heretics: Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, and Luther, Huss, Savonarola, Helchitsky, and others were all heretics. It could not be otherwise.

A disciple of Christ, who possesses an ever growing sense of the doctrine and of its progressive fulfilment as it advances toward perfection, cannot, either for himself or others, affirm, simply because he is a disciple of Christ, that he understands and practises the doctrine of Christ to its fullest extent; still less could he affirm this in regard to any body of men. To whatsoever state of comprehension and perfection he may have arrived, he must always feel the inadequacy both of his conception and of its application, and must ever strive for something more satisfactory. And therefore to claim for one's self, or for any body of men whatsoever, the possession of a complete apprehension and practice of the doctrine of Christ is in direct contradiction to the spirit of Christ's doctrine itself.

However strange this statement may appear, every church, as a church, has always been, and always must be, an institution not only foreign, but absolutely hostile, to the doctrine of Christ. It is not without reason that Voltaire called it "*l'infâme*"; it is not without reason that all so-called Christian sects believe the Church to be the Scarlet Woman prophesied by the Revelation; it is not without reason that the history of the Church is the history of cruelties and horrors.

Churches in themselves are, as some persons believe, institutions based upon a Christian principle, from which they have deviated to a certain extent; but considered in the light of churches, of bodies of men claiming infallibility, they are anti-Christian institutions. Between churches in the ecclesiastical sense and Christianity, not only is there nothing in common except the name, but they are two utterly contradictory and hostile elements. One is pride, violence, self-assertion, inertia, and death. The other is meekness, repentance, submission, activity, and life.

No man can serve these two masters at the same time; he must choose either the one or the other.

The servants of the churches of every creed, especially in these modern times, strive to represent themselves as the partisans of progress in Christianity; they make concessions, they try to correct the abuses that have crept into the Church, and protest that it is wrong to deny the principle of the Christian Church on account of these abuses, because it is only through the medium of the Church that unity can be obtained, and that the Church is the only mediator between God and man. All this is untrue. So far from fostering the spirit of unity, the churches have ever been the fruitful source of human enmity, of hatred, wars, conflicts, inquisitions, Eves of St. Bartholomew, and so on; neither do the churches act as the mediators between God and man, – an office, moreover, quite unnecessary, and directly forbidden by Christ himself, who has revealed his doctrine unto each individual; it is but the dead formula, and not the living God, which the churches offer to man, and which serves rather to increase than diminish the distance between man and his Creator. The churches, which were founded upon a misconception, and which preserve this misconception by their immutability, must of necessity harass and persecute any new conception, because they know, however they may try to conceal it, that every advance along the road indicated by Christ is undermining their own existence.

Whenever one reads or listens to the essays and sermons in which ecclesiastical writers of modern times belonging to the various creeds discuss the Christian truths and virtues, when one hears and reads these artificial arguments, these exhortations, these professions of faith, elaborated through centuries, that now and then sound sincere, one is almost ready to doubt if the churches can be inimical to Christianity. "It cannot be possible that men like John Chrysostom, Fénelon, Butler, and other Christian preachers, could be inimical to it." One would like to say, "The churches may have gone astray from Christianity, may have committed errors, but they cannot have been hostile to it." But one must first see the fruit before he can know the tree, as Christ has taught, and one sees that their fruits were evil, that the result of their works has been the distortion of Christianity; and one cannot help concluding that, however virtuous the men may have been, the cause of the church in which these men served was not Christian. The goodness and virtue of certain individuals who served the churches were peculiar to themselves, and not to the cause which they served. All these excellent men, like Francis of Assisi and Francis de Sales, Tichon Zadònsky, Thomas à Kempis, and others, were good men, even though they served a cause hostile to Christianity; and they would have been still more charitable and more exemplary had they not yielded obedience to false doctrines.

But why do we speak of, or sit in judgment on, the past, which may be falsely represented, and is, in any event, but little known to us? The churches, with their principles and their works, are not of the past; we have them with us to-day, and can judge them by their works and by their influence over men.

What, then, constitutes their power? How do they influence men? What is their work in the Greek, the Catholic, and in all the Protestant denominations? and what are the consequences of such work?

The work of our Russian so-called Orthodox Church is visible to all. It is a factor of primary importance, which can neither be concealed nor disputed.

In what manner is the activity of the Russian Church displayed, – that vast institution which labors with so much zeal, that institution which numbers among its servants half a million of men, and costs the people tens of millions?

The activity of the Church consists in forcing, by every means in its power, upon the one hundred millions of Russian people, those antiquated, time-worn beliefs which have lost all significance, and which were formerly professed by foreigners, with whom we had nothing in common, beliefs in which nearly every man has lost his faith, even in some cases those very men whose duty it is to inculcate them.

The endeavor to force upon the people those formulas of the Byzantine clergy, marvelous to them and senseless to us, concerning the Trinity, the Virgin, the sacraments, grace, and so forth, embraces one province of the activity of the Russian Church; another function is the encouragement given to idolatry, in the literal sense of the word: the veneration of holy relics and holy images, the sacrifices offered to them in the faith that they will hear and grant prayers. I will pass over in silence what is written in the ecclesiastical magazines by the clergy who possess a semblance of learning and liberality, and will speak only of what is really done by the clergy throughout the immense extent of Russia, among its one hundred millions of inhabitants. What is it that is taught to the people with such unrelenting pains and endeavor, and with so much earnestness? What is required of them for the sake of the so-called Christian religion?

I will start at the beginning, with the birth of the child. When a child is born, we are taught that a prayer must be read over the mother and child, in order to purify them, for without that prayer the mother remains unclean. For that purpose, and facing the ikons of the saints, whom the common people simply call gods, the priest takes the infant in his arms, reads the exhortation, and by that means he is supposed to cleanse the mother. Then the parents are instructed, nay, even ordered, under penalty of punishment in the event of non-compliance, to christen the child – that is, to let the priest immerse it three times in the water, while words unintelligible to all present are read, and still less

intelligible ceremonies are performed, such as the application of oil to different parts of the body, the cutting of the hair, the blowing and spitting of the sponsors at the imaginary devil. All this is necessary to cleanse the child, and make a Christian of him. Then the parents are told that the child must receive the holy sacrament – that is, he is to swallow, in the form of bread and wine, a particle of the body of Christ, by which means the child will receive the blessing of Christ, and so on. Then they are told that as the child grows it must be taught to pray, which means that he is to stand in front of boards upon which the faces of Christ, the Virgin, and the saints are painted, bow his head and body, while with his right hand, his fingers being folded in a peculiar manner, he touches his forehead, his shoulders, and his stomach, and utters certain Slavonic words, the commonest of which, those which all children learn, are the following: "Mother of God, ... Virgin, rejoice," etc. Then the child is taught that he must repeat this – that is, that he must make the sign of the cross whenever he sees a church or an ikon. Furthermore, he is taught that on a holiday (holidays are either the day on which Christ was born, although no one knows when that took place, or the day of his circumcision, or that on which the Virgin died, or when the cross or the ikon was brought, or when some fanatic beheld a vision, etc.) he should array himself in his best clothes, go to church, buy candles, and set them up before the ikons of the saints, give to the priest memoranda bearing the names of the dead who are to be prayed for, receive bread with triangular pieces cut out of it, pray repeatedly for the health and welfare of the Czar and bishops, as well as for himself and his own affairs, and then kiss the cross and the hand of the priest.

Thus is he taught to pray; and besides this, he is also taught that he must perform his devotions once a year. To perform one's devotions means to go to church and tell one's sins to the priest, it being assumed that this recital of one's sins to a stranger will have a purifying effect on a man; then he is to swallow a spoonful of bread and wine, which will purify him still more. Moreover, men are told that if a man and woman desire to have their sexual relation sanctified they must come to church, put crowns of metal upon their heads, swallow some wine, walk three times round a table, accompanied by the sound of singing, and this will make their sexual relation holy and entirely different from any others.

In daily life the observation of the following rules is enjoined: to eat no meat nor drink no milk on certain days, to say *Te Deums* and *Requiems* on certain other days, to invite the priest to one's house on holidays and present him with money; to take from the church several times a year boards upon which are painted the images of the saints, and to carry them on towels through fields and houses. Before death a man must without fail receive a spoonful of bread and wine; and if there be time to be anointed with oil, that is still better, for it insures his welfare in the future life. After his death his relatives are told that, in order to save his soul, it is well to place in his hand a printed prayer; it is also a good thing to read a certain book over the dead, and for his name to be mentioned in church at stated times.

This is what constitutes every man's religious obligation. But if any one wishes to take a special care of his soul, this creed teaches that the greatest amount of happiness may be secured in the next world by bequeathing money for churches and monasteries, thereby obliging the saints to pray for one. According to this faith it is also well to visit monasteries and kiss the miraculous ikons and the relics.

These are believed to impart a peculiar holiness, strength, and grace; and to be near these objects, as one must be in kissing them, placing tapers before them, crawling under them, and repeating *Te Deums* before them, greatly promotes salvation.

And this is the faith called Orthodox, this is the true faith, the one which, under the garb of a Christian religion, has been energetically taught to the people for many centuries, and is inculcated at the present time more vigorously than ever.

Let it not be said that the Orthodox teachers look upon all this as an ancient form of faith which it was not considered worth while to abolish, and that the essence of the doctrine abides elsewhere. This is not the truth. Throughout Russia, and lately with increased energy, the entire Russian clergy teaches this faith, and this alone. Nothing else is taught. Men may write about other doctrines and

discuss them in the capitals, but among the hundred million inhabitants this, and only this, is taught. The ecclesiastics may discuss other doctrines, but only this is what is taught.

All this – the worship of relics and shrines – is included in theology and the catechism; the people are carefully instructed in all this, theoretically and practically, by every kind of solemnity, splendor, authority, and violence; the people are compelled to believe in it all; they are hypnotized, and the faith is jealously guarded against any attempt to deliver them from these foolish superstitions.

As I said in my book, I have during the course of many years had frequent opportunities to remark the ridicule and rude jests that have been applied to Christ's words and doctrine, and the ecclesiastics not only failed to condemn it, they even encouraged this scoffing; but let a man venture to say one disrespectful word of the ugly idol called the Iverskaya,⁸ sacrilegiously carried around Moscow by intoxicated men, and a groan of indignation will rise from these same Orthodox ecclesiastics. In fact, it is only an external worship in the form of idolatry that is propagated. And let it not be said that the one does not exclude the other, that "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew xxiii. 3). This is said concerning the Pharisees, who fulfilled all the outward commands of the law, and therefore the words, "whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do," refer to acts of benevolence and charity; whereas the words, "do not ye after their works, for they say and do not," refer to their observances of the rites and their indifference to works of charity, and directly contradicts the clerical interpretation of this passage, which explains it as a commandment which has to do only with the rites. An external worship is hardly compatible with the service of charity and truth; one is apt to exclude the other. It was so with the Pharisees, and the same may be said of our professing Christians.

If a man is to be saved by redemption, the sacraments, and prayer, good works are no longer of any value to him. It must be either the Sermon on the Mount or the Credo. No man can believe in both, and the ecclesiastics have chosen the latter. The Credo is taught and recited as a prayer in the churches, while the Sermon on the Mount is excluded even from selections from the Bible which are read in churches, so that the congregation never hear it, except on the days when the entire Bible is read. It is inevitable; the men who can believe that a cruel and unreasonable God had condemned humanity to eternal death and sacrificed his own Son, and who had destined a certain portion of mankind to everlasting torture, cannot believe in a God of love. A man who believes in God, in the Christ who is coming in his glory to judge and punish the dead and the living, cannot believe in a Christ who commands us to turn the other cheek to the offender, who forbids us to sit in judgment, and who bids us to forgive our enemies and to love them. A man who believes in the inspiration of the Old Testament and in the holiness of David, who on his deathbed ordered the murder of an old man who had offended him, and whom he could not kill himself because he was bound by an oath (1 Kings ii. 8,9), and many other horrors of a similar character, in which the Old Testament abounds, cannot believe in the moral law of Christ; a man who believes in the doctrine and sermons of the Church, wherein the practice of war and the penalty of death are reconciled with Christianity, cannot believe in the brotherhood of humanity.

But, above all, a man who believes in salvation through faith, in redemption, and in the sacraments, cannot strive with all his might to live up to the moral precepts of Christ. A man who has been taught by the Church the sacrilegious doctrine that he is to be saved through a certain medium, and not by his own efforts, will surely have recourse to that medium; he will not trust to his own efforts, on which, he has been assured, it is sinful to rely. Every Church, with its doctrines of redemption and salvation, and above all, the Orthodox faith, with its idolatry, excludes the doctrine of Christ. But it is said, "This has always been the faith of the people, and that they will continue to hold it is proved by the whole history of the Russian nation. It would be wrong to deprive them of

⁸ The ikon of the Virgin which stands in a chapel in the heart of Moscow, and which is the object of a special veneration to the Russians. – Tr.

their traditions." Herein lies the fallacy. The people, it is true, did once upon a time profess something like what is at present professed by the Church; but besides this worship of images and relics, the people had always a profound moral conception of Christianity never possessed by the Church, and only met with in her noblest representatives; but the people, in the better class, and in spite of the obstacles raised by the State and the Church, have long since abandoned the cruder phase of belief, a fact that is proved by the rationalistic sects that are beginning to spring up on every side, sects that Russia is filled with at the present day, and against which the ecclesiastics wage so hopeless a warfare. The people are beginning to recognize the moral, vital side of Christianity more and more plainly. And now the Church appears, failing to give them a moral support, but forcibly teaching old-time paganism, – the Church, with its immutable formulas, endeavoring to thrust men back into the gloom from which they are struggling so earnestly to escape.

The ecclesiastics say: "We are teaching nothing new; it is the same faith which the people already hold, only we teach it in a more perfect manner." It is like binding a chicken and trying to put it back into the shell from which it came. I have often been struck by the spectacle, which would be simply absurd were not its results so terrible, of men traveling, so to speak, in a circle, deceived and deceiving, but wholly unable to escape from the charmed circle.

The first question, the first doubt, that enters the head of every Russian when he begins to reason, is a suspicion of the miraculous ikons, and principally of the relics: is it true that they are incorruptible, and that they perform miracles? Hundreds and thousands of men ask these questions, and are at a loss for an answer, especially since bishops and metropolitans and other eminent persons kiss both the relics and the miraculous images. Ask the bishops and other personages of importance why they do this, and they will tell you that they do it in order to impress the masses, and the masses do it because the bishops and other magnates do it.

The activity of the Russian Church, despite the veneer of modernity and the scientific and spiritual standards which its members have begun to establish by their essays, their religious reviews, and their sermons, consists not only in encouraging the people in a coarse and grotesque idolatry, but in strengthening and promulgating superstition and religious ignorance, and in endeavoring to destroy the vital conception of Christianity that exists in the people side by side with this idolatry.

I remember being once in a book-shop of the monastery of Optinæ Desert while an old peasant was selecting spiritual reading for his educated grandson. The monk was offering him a description of relics, of holy days, of miraculous ikons, the Book of Psalms, and the like. I asked the old man if he had a Bible. "No," he replied. "Give him a Russian Bible," I said to the monk. "We don't sell that to them," said the monk. This, in short, is the activity of our Church.

But the European or American reader may say, "That only happens in barbaric Russia," and the remark will be correct, but only so far as it applies to the government, which supports the Church to maintain in our land its stupefying and demoralizing influence.

It is true that there is nowhere in Europe a government so despotic, or that is in more perfect accord with the established Church. Therefore in Russia the government authorities play an important part in demoralizing the people; but it is not true that the Russian Church differs from other churches in respect to its influence over the people.

Churches are everywhere alike, and if the Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran have not at their beck so submissive a government as the Russian, we may be sure that they would not fail to take advantage of it were it within their reach.

The Church as a church, whether it be Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, or Presbyterian, or any denomination whatsoever, inasmuch as it is a church, cannot help striving after the same object as the Russian Church – namely, to conceal the true meaning of the doctrine of Christ, and to substitute a meaning of its own, which imposes no obligations, which excludes the possibility of understanding the true, living doctrine of Christ, and which above all justifies the existence of a priesthood living at the expense of the people.

Do we not find Catholicism with its prohibition against reading the Bible, and with its demand for implicit obedience to the clergy and the infallible Pope? Wherein does Catholicism differ in its preaching from the Russian Church? The same external worship, the same relics, miracles, and statues, miracle-performing Madonnas and processions; the same vague and mystical utterances concerning Christianity in books and sermons, and all in support of the grossest idolatry.

And is it not the same in the Anglican or in the Lutheran, or in any other Protestant denomination with an established form of church?

The same demands that the congregation shall acknowledge a belief in dogmas which were defined in the fourth century, and which have lost all meaning for the men of our time; the same call for idol worship, if not of relics or ikons, at least of the Sabbath and the letter of the Bible; the same endeavor to conceal the real requirement of Christianity and the substitution of exterior rites, and "cant," as the English so happily define the tendency which finds such sway among them.

This activity is more noticeable in Protestantism, because that creed has not even the excuse of antiquity. And is not the same thing going on in the present "Revivalism," a regenerated Calvinism, which has given birth to the Salvation Army? Inasmuch as the attitude of all ecclesiastical dogmas toward the doctrine of Christ is very much the same, so are their methods of a similar character.

The attitude they have taken obliges them to make every effort to conceal the doctrine of that Christ in whose name they speak.

The disparity between ecclesiastical creeds and the doctrine of Christ is so great that a special effort is required to keep mankind in ignorance. Indeed, one needs but to consider the position of any adult, I do not say educated, but one who has assimilated superficially the current notions concerning geology, physics, chemistry, cosmography, and history, when for the first time he actually reflects on the faith impressed upon him in his childhood, and maintained by the Church, concerning the creation of the world in six days, the appearance of light before the sun was created, the story of Noah's ark and the animals preserved in it, – concerning Jesus and his divine origin as the Son of God who created all things before time existed; that this God came down to earth because of Adam's sin; that he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; that he will come in the clouds to judge the living and the dead, etc.

All these ideas evolved by the men of the fourth century, which had for them a certain meaning, have none whatever for us. The present generation may repeat these words, but it can never believe in them, because the statements that God dwells in heaven, that the heavens opened and a voice was heard to utter certain words, that Christ arose from the dead and ascended into heaven, that he will come again from some place in the clouds, etc., have no meaning for us.

It was possible for a man who believed that heaven was a substantial arch of limited dimensions to believe or to disbelieve that God created it, that it opened, and that Christ ascended thither, – but for us there is no sense in such ideas. Men of our time can only affirm that it is one's duty to believe all this, – which they do. But they cannot really believe in what has no meaning in it for them.

But if all these utterances are supposed to have an allegorical signification and are only intended as similes, then we know in the first place that all the churchmen will not agree to this – on the contrary, the majority insist on taking the Scriptures literally; and in the second place, that these interpretations differ greatly, and are supported by no reliable authority.

And even if a man wished to believe the doctrine of the Church as it is taught, the increase of culture, the reading of the Bible, and the intercourse among the members of different churches, form a greater and more insurmountable obstacle to belief.

Nowadays a man has but to buy the Bible for threepence, and to read the simple, indisputable words of Christ to the Samaritan woman, that the Father seeketh worshipers neither in Jerusalem nor in this or that mountain, but worshipers in spirit and truth; or the words, that a Christian should pray not like the heathen in the temples, nor at the corners of streets, but in the secrecy of his closet; or, that a disciple of Christ may call no one father or mother, – one has but to read these words to be

indubitably convinced that priests who call themselves teachers in opposition to the teaching of Christ, and dispute among themselves, cannot be authorities, and that that which they teach is not Christian.

But this is not enough. If the modern man were to go on believing in miracles and never read the Bible, the fellowship with men of other creeds and professions, which is so much a matter of course in these days, will compel him to question the truth of his religion. It was natural enough for a man who had never met a believer in a creed different from his own, to think that his was the only faith; but an intelligent man has but to encounter – and that is an everyday occurrence – good and bad men of all creeds, who criticize each other's beliefs, in order to question the truth of his own religion. Now, only a man either totally ignorant or indifferent to the problems of life as dealt with by religion can remain in the faith of the Church.

What shrewdness is needed, and what efforts must the churches make, in order to go on, in the face of all these faith-destroying influences, building temples, saying masses, preaching, instructing, converting, and above all receiving for this the large compensations which all those priests, pastors, stewards, superintendents, abbots, archdeacons, bishops, and archbishops receive!

A special and supernatural effort is called for, and to this the Church responds, exerting herself more and more. In Russia, besides many other measures, they employ a simple, rude violence, by virtue of the power invested in the Church. People who shrink from an outward observance of faith and who do not conceal the fact are simply punished or deprived of their civil rights; and to those who strictly comply with the rites, privileges and rewards are granted.

So much for the Orthodoxy; but every church, without exception, makes the most of the means at its disposal, and hypnotism is one of the chief agents.

Every art, from architecture to poetry, is enlisted, in order to move and intoxicate the human soul. This hypnotic and mesmerizing influence is markedly displayed in the activity of the Salvation Army, which employs novel, and to us abnormal, methods, such, for instance, as drums, horns, singing, banners, uniforms, processions, dancing, outbursts of tears, and dramatic gestures.

Still, these methods are startling simply because of their novelty. Is not the familiar form of worship in cathedrals, with their peculiar illumination, the golden pomp, the candles, choirs, organs, bells, vestments, the weeping preachers, etc., of a similar nature? And yet, however powerful may be the influence of this hypnotism, it is by no means the chief or most harmful form which the activity of the Church assumes. Its most malign activity is that which is devoted to deceiving the children – those little ones of whom Jesus has said, "Woe be unto him who tempts the least of these." From the earliest awakening of a child's intelligence he is deceived and formally taught that which his teachers no longer believe themselves, and this goes on until the delusion becomes from habit a part of his nature. A child is systematically deceived concerning the most important affair in life, and when this deception has become so incorporated with his being that it is difficult to uproot it, then the world of science and reality is opened to him – a world that is wholly at variance with the faith which he has imbibed from his teachers – and he is left to reconcile those contradictions as best he may.

Given the problem of how to muddle a man so that he will be unable to discriminate between two antagonistic conceptions that have been taught to him since his childhood, one could never have devised anything more effectual than the education of every young man in our so-called Christian society.

Shocking as it is to contemplate the work of the churches among men, still, if we consider their position, we shall see that they cannot act otherwise. They are face to face with a dilemma: the Sermon on the Mount or the Nicene creed; the one excludes the other. If a man sincerely believes the Sermon on the Mount, the Nicene creed must inevitably lose all its meaning for him, and the same would hold true as regards the Church and its representatives; but if a man accepts the Nicene creed, that is to say, the Church, or those who call themselves its representatives, then he will find no use for the Sermon on the Mount. Hence it is incumbent on the churches to make every effort to obscure the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount and to endeavor to draw the people toward them. It is only due

to their intense activity in that direction that the influence of the churches has not decreased. Let the Church but pause in this effort to influence the masses by hypnotizing men and deceiving children for ever so short a time, and men will comprehend the doctrine of Christ, and this comprehension will do away with churches and their influence. Therefore the churches cease not for one moment their compulsory activity through the hypnotism of adults and the deception of children. And it is this activity of the churches that gives people a false conception of Christ's doctrine, and prevents the majority of men, the so-called believers, from understanding it.

CHAPTER IV

MISCONCEPTION OF CHRISTIANITY BY SCIENTISTS

The relation of scientists to religions in general – What are religions, and their significance to human life – Three conceptions of life – The Christian doctrine is the expression of the divine life-conception – The misconception of Christianity by scientists who study its outward manifestations due to the fact that they consider it from the standpoint of the social life-conception – Opinion resulting therefrom, that the teaching of Christ is exaggerated and unpractical – The expression of the life-conception of the gospel – Erroneous judgments of scientists concerning Christianity are based upon the assurance that they possess an infallible criterion of knowledge – Hence arise two misapprehensions in regard to the Christian doctrine – The first misapprehension concerning the impracticability of the doctrine arises from the fact that the Christian doctrine presents a conduct of life different from that of the social life-conception – Christianity offers not a rule, but an ideal – Christ adds the consciousness of a divine power to that of an animal power – Christianity seems to exclude the possibility of life only when the indication of the ideal is taken for the rule – An ideal cannot be belittled – According to the doctrine of Christ, life is movement – The ideal and the commandments – The second misapprehension arises from the attempt to replace the love of God and His service by the love and service of humanity – Scientists believe that Christianity and their doctrine concerning the service of humanity are identical – The doctrine of love toward humanity has for its foundation the social life-conception – The love for humanity which springs logically from love for the individual has no meaning, because humanity is a fiction – Christian love springing from the love of God has for its object not only humanity but the whole world – Christianity teaches a life in accordance with its divine nature – It indicates that the essence of a man's soul is love, and that its good is obtained from its love of God, whom he feels to be within him through love.

Let us now turn our attention to another fallacious conception of Christianity, which is antagonistic to its actual principles, – the scientific conception.

The Christianity of the churchmen is something which they have evolved for themselves, and which they believe to be the only true interpretation of Christian doctrine.

The scientists take the professions of faith of the various churches for Christianity, and assuming that these dogmas embody an exhaustive definition of Christian doctrine, they affirm that Christianity has had its day.

One needs but to take into consideration the important part which all religions, and especially Christianity, have played in the life of man, and the significance which science attaches to them, to see at once how impossible it would be to obtain any just apprehension of Christian doctrine through these conceptions. As each individual must possess certain impressions in regard to the meaning of his life, and, though often unconsciously, conform his conduct thereunto, so mankind in the aggregate, or groups of men living under the same conditions, must likewise possess a conception of the meaning of their common life and its consequent activities. As an individual passing from one period of life to another inevitably changes his ideas, the point of view of a grown-up man differs from that of a child, so also mankind in the aggregate – the nation – inevitably, and in conformity with its age, changes its views of life and the activity that springs therefrom.

The difference in this respect between an individual and mankind in general lies in the fact that while the individual, in forming his conception of the significance and responsibilities of that new

period of life upon which he is about to enter, may avail himself of the advice of his predecessors who have already passed that stage, mankind can have no such advantage, because it is advancing along an unbeaten track and there is no one of whom it can ask for the clue to the mystery of life, or how it shall demean itself under these unfamiliar conditions to which no nation has ever yet been subjected.

The married man with a family of children will not continue to view life as he did when he was a child; neither is it possible for mankind, with the many changes that have taken place, – the density of the population, the constant intercourse of nations, the perfected means of combating the forces of nature, and the increase of knowledge generally, – to view the life of the present day in the light of the past; hence it becomes necessary to evolve a life-conception from which activities corresponding with a new system which is to be established will naturally develop.

And this need is supplied by that peculiar capacity of the race for producing men able to impart a new significance to human life, – a significance developing a different set of activities.

The birth of the life-conception, which always takes place when mankind enters upon new conditions and its subsequent activities, is what we call religion.

Therefore, in the first place, religion is not, as science regards it, a phenomenon which formerly traveled hand in hand with the development of mankind, and which has since been left behind; on the contrary, it is a phenomenon inherent to human existence itself, and never more distinctly manifested than at the present day. In the second place, religion defines future rather than past activities; therefore it is evident that an investigation of the phenomena of the past can by no means touch the essence of religion.

The longing to typify the forces of nature is no more the essence of religion than is the fear of those same forces, or the need of the miraculous and its outward manifestations, as the scientists suppose. The essence of religion lies in the power of man to foreknow and to point out the way in which mankind must walk. It is a definition of a new life which will give birth to new activities.

This faculty of foreknowledge concerning the destiny of humanity is more or less common, no doubt, to all people; still from time to time a man appears in whom the faculty has reached a higher development, and these men have the power clearly and distinctly to formulate that which is vaguely conceived by all men, thus instituting a new life-conception from which is to flow an unwonted activity, whose results will endure for centuries to come. Thus far there have been three of these life-conceptions; two of them belong to a bygone era, while the third is of our own time and is called Christianity. It is not that we have merged the various conceptions of the significance of life into three arbitrary divisions, but that there really have been but three distinct conceptions, by which the actions of mankind have been influenced, and save through these we have no means of comprehending life.

These three life-conceptions are – firstly, the individual or animal; secondly, the social or pagan; and thirdly, the universal or divine.

According to the first of these, a man's life is his personality, and that only, and his life's object is to gratify his desires. According to the second, his life is not limited to his own personality; it includes the sum and continuity of many personalities, – of the family, of the race, and of the State, and his life's object is to gratify the will of the communities of individuals. And according to the third, his life is confined neither to his personality nor to that of the aggregate of individuals, but finds its significance in the eternal source of all life, – in God Himself.

These three life-conceptions serve as the basis for the religions of every age.

The savage sees life only through the medium of his own desires. He cares for nothing but himself, and for him the highest good is the full satisfaction of his own passions. The incentive of his life is personal enjoyment. His religion consists of attempts to propitiate the gods in his favor, and of the worship of imaginary deities, who exist only for their own personal ends.

A member of the pagan world recognizes life as something concerning others besides himself; he sees it as concerning an aggregate of individuals, – the family, the race, the nation, the State, and

is ready to sacrifice himself for the aggregate. The incentive of his life is glory. His religion consists in honoring the chiefs of his race, his progenitors, his ancestors, his sovereigns, and in the worship of those gods who are the exclusive patrons of his family, his tribe, his race, and his State.⁹

The man who possesses the divine life-conception neither looks upon life as centered in his own personality nor in that of mankind at large, whether family, tribe, race, nation, or State; but rather does he conceive of it as taking its rise in the eternal life of God, and to fulfil His will he is ready to sacrifice his personal, family, and social well-being. Love is the impelling motive of his life, and his religion is the worship, in deed and in truth, of the beginning of all things, – of God Himself.

History is but the transcript of the gradual transition from the animal life-conception of the individual to the social, and from the social to the divine. The history of the ancients for thousands of centuries, culminating in that of Rome, is the history of the evolution from the animal life-conception of the individual to that of society and the State. From the advent of Christianity and the fall of Imperial Rome we have the history of that change which is still going on from the social to the divine life-conception.

The latter, together with the Christian doctrine which is based upon it, and by which our lives are shaped, and our activities, both practical and scientific, are quickened, is regarded by the pseudo-scientists, who judge it only by its outward signs, as something outlived, which has lost all meaning for us.

According to scientists this doctrine is embodied in the dogmas of the Trinity, the Redemption, the miracles, the Church and its sacraments, etc., and is only one of the many religions which have arisen during the progress of human history, and now, having played its part and outlived its time, is vanishing before the dawn of science and true enlightenment.

The grossest of human errors spring in most cases from the fact that men who stand on a low intellectual plane, when they encounter phenomena of a higher order, instead of trying to rise to the higher plane from which these phenomena may be fitly regarded, and making an effort to understand them, judge them by their own low standard, and the less they know of what they speak, the more bold and determined are their judgments.

Most scientists, who treat of the moral doctrine of Christ from the lower standpoint of a social life-conception, regard it as nothing more than an amalgam without cohesion of the asceticism of India with the doctrine of the Stoics and Neo-Platonists, and of vague anti-social dreams, devoid of all serious meaning in these latter days; they simply see its outward manifestation in the form of dogmas in Catholicism, in Protestantism, and in its struggle with the powers of the world. Interpreting the design of Christianity from its outward aspects, they are like unto deaf men, who judge of the meaning and excellence of music by the movements of the musicians.

Hence it is that all such men, from Comte and Strauss to Spencer and Renan, not understanding the purport of Christ's words, knowing nothing whatever of their intention, ignorant of the question to which they serve as an answer, and taking no pains to learn it, – such men, if they are inimical to Christianity, utterly deny the sense of the doctrine; but if they are leniently inclined, then, from the height of their superior wisdom, they amend it, taking for granted that Christ would have said what they think He meant, had He known how to express himself. They treat His doctrine just as men of overweening self-conceit treat their inferiors, correcting them in their speech: "You mean so and so." And the spirit of emendation is always such as to reduce the doctrine of the higher, the divine life-conception, to that of the lower and the social conception.

It is usually admitted that the moral teaching of Christianity is good but exaggerated; that in order to make it perfect, its hyperboles, which are incompatible with our present mode of life, should

⁹ The unity of this social and pagan life-conception is by no means destroyed by the numerous and varied systems which grow out of it, such as the existence of the family, of the nation, and of the State, and even of that life of humanity conceived according to the theory of the Positivists. These multifarious systems of life are based upon the fundamental idea of the insignificance of the individual, and the assurance that the meaning of life is to be sought and found only in humanity, taken in its broadest sense. – Author.

be discarded. "A doctrine which requires so much that is impracticable is more hurtful than one which demands of men only what is in proportion to their strength." Thus declare the learned interpreters of Christianity, thus unwittingly reiterating the assertion of those who misunderstood the Christian doctrine long years ago, and crucified the Master.

The Hebrew law, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," the retributive justice known to mankind thousands of years ago, seems far better suited to the court of contemporary scientists than the law of love which Christ preached 1800 years ago, and which was to replace this identical law of justice.

It would seem that every action of those men who accepted the teaching of Christ in its literal sense, and lived up to it, all the words and deeds of sincere Christians, and all the agencies which, under the guise of socialism and communism, are now transforming the world, are merely exaggeration, not worth discussing. Nations which have lived under Christian influences, and which are now represented by their advanced thinkers, the scientists, have arrived at the conclusion that the Christian doctrine is a matter of dogma; that its practical teaching has been a mistake and an exaggeration, inimical to the just requirements of morality that are in accord with human nature, and that the very doctrine which Christ repudiated, and for which he substituted a dogma of his own, is far better suited to us. The scientist considers the commandment of non-resistance to evil by violence an exaggeration, and even an act of folly. It would be far better, in his opinion, to reject it, never dreaming that it is not the doctrine of Christ which he is controverting, but something which he assumes to be the doctrine in question. He does not realize when he says that the commandment of non-resistance in the doctrine of Christ is an exaggeration, that he is like one who, teaching the theory of the circle, declares that the equality of the radii is an exaggeration. It is just as if one who has no idea of the form of a circle were to affirm that the law which requires that each point of its circumference shall be equidistant from its center, is an exaggeration. As a suggestion to reject or modify the proposition concerning the equality of the radii of a circle signifies an ignorance in regard to the circle itself, so also does the idea of rejecting or modifying, in the practical teaching of Christ, the commandment of non-resistance to evil by violence signify a misunderstanding of the doctrine.

And those who entertain these views do not really comprehend the doctrine. They do not understand that it is the unfolding of a new conception of life, corresponding to the new phase of existence upon which the world entered 1800 years ago, and a definition of the new activity to which it gave birth. Either they do not believe that Christ said what He meant to say, or that what is found in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere He said either from His enthusiasm or lack of wisdom and simplicity of character.¹⁰

Matt. vi. 25-34. – 25. *Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

26. *Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*

27. *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*

¹⁰ Here, for example, is a characteristic expression of opinion in the American periodical, *The Arena*, for November, 1890, from an article entitled "New Basis of Church Life." Discussing the significance of the Sermon on the Mount, and especially the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, the author, having no reason for obscuring its meaning as the ecclesiastics do, says:—"Devout common sense must gradually come to look upon Christ as a philanthropic teacher, who, like every enthusiast who ever taught, went to an Utopian extreme in his own philosophy. Every great agitation for the betterment of the world has been led by men who beheld their own mission with such absorbing intensity that they could see little else. It is no reproach to Christ to say that he had the typical reformer's temperament; that his precepts cannot be literally accepted as a complete philosophy of life; and that men are to analyze them reverently, but, at the same time, in the spirit of ordinary truth-seeking criticism," etc. "Christ did in fact preach absolute communism and anarchy; but," and so on. Christ would have been glad to have expressed Himself in more fitting terms, but He did not possess our critical faculty in the use of exact definitions, therefore we will set Him right. All He said concerning meekness, sacrifice, poverty, and of taking no thought for the morrow, were but haphazard utterances, because of His ignorance of scientific phraseology.

28. *And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*

29. *And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

30. *Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

31. *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

32. *(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

33. *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Luke xii. 33-34. – 33. *Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.*

34. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Matt. xix. 21. – "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

Mark viii. 34. – "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

John iv. 34. – "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

Luke xxii. 42. – "Not my will, but thine, be done."

Not what I wish, but what Thou wishest, and not as I wish, but as Thou wishest.

Life consists in doing not your own will, but the will of God.

All these doctrines are regarded by men who adhere to the lower life-conception as expressions of enthusiastic exaltation, with no special reference to daily life. And yet these doctrines are no less the natural outcome of the Christian life-conception than is the idea of giving one's labor for the common good, or of sacrificing one's life to defend one's country, the outcome of the social life-conception.

As the believer in the social life-conception says to the savage: "Rouse yourself! Consider what you are doing! The life that man lives for himself alone cannot be the true one, for life is fleeting and full of woe. It is the life of the community at large, the race, the family, the State, that endures: therefore a man must sacrifice his personality for the life of the family and the State;" Christianity in like manner says unto him who believes in a social life-conception of the community: "Repent, μετανοεῖτε, that is, arouse yourself, consider your ways, else shall you perish. Know you that this bodily, animal life is born to-day and dies to-morrow; nothing can assure its permanence, no outward expedients, no system whatsoever can give it stability. Consider your ways and learn that the life you live is not the real life, that neither family, social, nor State life will save you from perdition. An honest rational life is possible for man provided that he be, not a participant of the life of the family or life of the State, but a partaker of the source of all life – that of the Father Himself; then his life is united to the life of the Father." Such is beyond a doubt the meaning of the Christian conception of life, clearly set forth in every maxim of the New Testament.

One may not share such a conception of life, one may deny it, or prove it to be inaccurate and fallacious; but no man can possibly judge a doctrine without having first made himself familiar with the life-conception which forms its basis; and still more impossible is it to judge a lofty subject from a low standpoint, to pronounce upon the belfry from a knowledge of the foundation. Yet this is precisely what is done by contemporary scientists. And this is because they are laboring under an

error similar to that of the clergy, in believing that they possess such infallible methods of studying their subject that, if they but bring their so-called scientific methods to bear upon the subject under consideration, there can be no doubt as to the accuracy of their conclusion.

The possession of a guide to knowledge, which they believe to be infallible, is really the chief obstacle to the comprehension of the Christian doctrine among unbelievers and so-called scientists, by whose opinions the great majority of unbelievers, the so-called educated classes, are guided. All the errors of the scientists concerning Christianity, and especially two strange misapprehensions that avail more than anything else to blind men to its real signification, arise therefrom.

One of these misapprehensions is that the doctrine of a Christian life not being practical, it remains optional with the individual whether he take it for his guide or no; and if he chooses to do so, it may then be modified to suit the exigencies of our social life. The second misapprehension is that the Christian doctrine of love of God, and therefore of the service due to Him, is a mystical requirement, neither clearly expressed nor offering any well-defined object of love: consequently the more definite and intelligible doctrine of love of man and of the service of humanity may be substituted for it.

The first misapprehension which relates to the impracticability of the Christian doctrine arises from the fact that men who believe in the social life-conception, not comprehending the rule obeyed by men who hold the Christian doctrine, and mistaking the Christian standard of perfection for the guiding principle of life, believe and declare that it is impossible to follow the teaching of Christ, because implicit obedience to this doctrine would end by destroying life. "If man were to fulfil the precepts of Christ, he would destroy his life; and if all the world were to fulfil them, the human race would soon become extinct. If you were to take no thought for the morrow, neither of what ye shall eat or drink, nor what ye shall put on; if one may not resist evil by violence or defend one's life, nor even give up one's life for his friend; if one is to preserve absolute chastity, mankind could not long exist;" so they believe and affirm.

And they are right, if one takes the incentives to perfection offered by the teaching of Christ as laws which each man must obey, just as, for instance, in the social order every man must pay his taxes, and some must serve in the courts of law, and so on.

The misapprehension consists in overlooking the fact that the doctrine of Christ, and the doctrine formulated by a lower life-conception, guide men in very different ways. The doctrines of the social life-conception guide men in fulfilling the requirements of the law. The doctrine of Christ guides men by manifesting the infinite perfection of the Heavenly Father, to which it is natural for every man to aspire, whatever may be his shortcomings.

The misconception of those who judge the Christian doctrine by the standard of the state or civil doctrine is this, – that they imagine that the perfection of which Christ speaks may be attained in this life, and ask themselves just as they would ask concerning some law of the State, what will happen when all this shall be fulfilled? This hypothesis is fallacious, because the perfection indicated by Christianity is infinite and can never be attained; and Christ promulgates his doctrine, knowing that although absolute perfection will never be attained, yet the aspiration toward it will ever contribute to the welfare of mankind, that this welfare may by this means be everlastingly increased.

Christ is not teaching angels, but men who live and move in an animal life, and whose impulses are of an animal nature. And to this animal impulse Christ, so to speak, adds another force by communicating to man a sense of the divine perfection, guiding the current of life between these two forces.

To take it for granted that human life is to follow the direction indicated by Christ would be like expecting the boatman, who, crossing a swift river, steers almost directly against the current, to float in that direction.

Christ recognizes the fact that a parallelogram has two sides, and that a man's life is controlled by two indestructible forces: his animal nature and his consciousness of a filial relationship to God. Disregarding the factor of the animal life, which never looses its hold, and is beyond man's

control, Christ speaks of the divine consciousness, urging man to its fuller recognition, its complete emancipation from all that fetters it, and to its utmost development.

Man's true life, according to the precepts of Christ, is only to be found in this emancipation and in the growth of the divine consciousness. According to the old dispensation, a true life meant the fulfilment of the precepts of the law; but according to Christ, it means the closest approach to the divine perfection which has been manifested to every man, and which every man recognizes, – a closer and closer union of his will to the will of God; a union which every man is striving to attain, and which would utterly destroy the life we now lead.

God's perfection is the asymptote of human life, toward which it is forever aspiring and drawing nearer, although it can only reach its goal in the infinite.

It is only when men mistake the suggestion of an ideal for a rule of conduct that the Christian doctrine seems at odds with life. Indeed, the reverse is true, for it is by the doctrine of Christ, and that alone, that a true life is rendered possible. "It is a mistake to require too much," men usually say, when discussing the demands of the Christian religion. "One ought not to be required to take no thought for the morrow, as the Bible teaches, but of course one should not be over-anxious; one cannot give all that he possesses to the poor, still he should bestow a certain portion of his goods in charity; one ought not to remain unmarried, but let him avoid a dissolute life; one need not renounce his wife and children, although one must not idolize them."

These arguments are equivalent to telling a man who is crossing a swift river and steering his boat against the current, that no one can cross a river by steering against the current, but that he must direct his boat in a straight line toward the point he wishes to reach.

The doctrine of Christ differs from former doctrines in that it influences men, not by outward observances, but by the interior consciousness that divine perfection may be attained.

It is this illimitable and divine perfection that absorbs the soul of man, not restricted laws of justice and philanthropy. It needs but the aspiration toward this divine perfection to impel the course of human life from the animal to the divine, so far as may be humanly possible.

In order to land at any given point one must steer beyond it. To lower the standard of an ideal means not only to lessen the chances of attaining perfection, but to destroy the ideal itself. The ideal that influences mankind is not an ingenious invention; it is something that dwells in the soul of each individual. It is this ideal of utter and infinite perfection that excites men and urges them to action. A possible degree of perfection would have no appeal to the souls of men.

It is because the doctrine of Christ requires illimitable perfection, that is to say, the blending of the divine essence, which is in each man's soul, with the will of God, the union of the Son with the Father, that it has authority. It is only the emancipation of the Son of God, who dwells with each one of us, from the animal element within us, and the drawing near to the Father, that can, in the Christian sense of the word, be called life.

The presence of the animal element in man is not enough of itself to constitute human life. Neither is a spiritual life, which is guided only by the will of God, a human life. A true human life is composed of an animal and of a spiritual life united to the will of God, and the nearer this component life approaches to the life of God, the more it has life.

According to the Christian doctrine, life is a condition of progress toward the perfection of God; hence no one condition can be either higher or lower than another, because each is in itself a certain stage in human progress toward the unattainable perfection, and therefore of equal importance with all the others. Any spiritual quickening, according to this doctrine, is simply an accelerated movement toward perfection. Therefore the impulse of Zachæus the publican, of the adulteress, and the thief on the cross, show forth a higher order of life than does the passive righteousness of the Pharisee. This doctrine, therefore, can never be enforced by obligatory laws. The man who, from a lower plane, lives up to the doctrine he professes, ever advancing toward perfection, leads a higher life than one who may perhaps stand on a superior plane of morality, but who is making no progress toward perfection.

Thus the stray lamb is dearer to the Father than those which are in the fold; the prodigal returned, the coin that was lost and is found again, more highly prized than those that never were lost.

Since the fulfilment of this doctrine is an impulse from self toward God, it is evident that there can be no fixed laws for its movement. It may spring from any degree of perfection or of imperfection; the fulfilment of rules and fulfilment of the doctrine are by no means synonymous; there could be no rules or obligatory laws for its fulfilment.

The difference between social laws and the doctrine of Christ is the natural result of the radical dissimilarity between the doctrine of Christ and those earlier doctrines which had their source in a social life-conception. The latter are for the most part positive, enjoining certain acts, by the performance of which men are to be justified and made righteous, whereas the Christian precepts (the precept of love is not a commandment in the strict sense of the word, but the expression of the very essence of the doctrine), the five commandments of the Sermon on the Mount, are all negative, only meant to show men who have reached a certain degree of development what they must avoid. These commandments are, so to speak, mile-stones on the infinite road to perfection, toward which humanity is struggling; they mark the degrees of perfection which it is possible for it to attain at a certain period of its development.

In the Sermon on the Mount Christ expressed the eternal ideal to which mankind instinctively aspires, showing at the same time the point of perfection to which human nature in its present stage may attain.

The ideal is to bear no malice, excite no ill-will, and to love all men. The commandment which forbids us to offend our neighbor is one which a man who is striving to attain this ideal must not do less than obey. And this is the first commandment.

The ideal is perfect chastity in thought, no less than in deed; and the commandment which enjoins purity in married life, forbidding adultery, is one which every man who is striving to attain this ideal must not do less than obey. And this is the second commandment.

The ideal is to take no thought for the morrow, to live in the present, and the commandment, the fulfilment of which is the point beneath which we must not fall, is against taking oath or making promises for the future. Such is the third commandment.

The ideal – to use no violence whatsoever – shows us that we must return good for evil, endure injuries with patience, and give up the cloak to him who has taken the coat. Such is the fourth commandment.

The ideal is to love your enemies, to do good to them that despitefully use you. In order to keep the spirit of this commandment one must at least refrain from injuring one's enemies, one must speak kindly of them, and treat all one's fellow-creatures with equal consideration. Such is the fifth commandment.

All these commandments are reminders of that which we, in our striving for perfection, must and can avoid; reminders, too, that we must labor now to acquire by degrees habits of self-restraint, until such habits become second nature. But these commandments, far from exhausting the doctrine, do not by any means cover it. They are but stepping-stones on the way to perfection, and must necessarily be followed by higher and still higher ones, as men pursue the course toward perfection.

That is why a Christian doctrine would make higher demands than those embodied in the commandments, and not in the least decrease its demands, as they who judge the Christian doctrine from a social life-conception seem to think.

This is one of the mistakes of the scientists in regard to the significance of Christ's doctrine. And the substitution of the love of humanity for the love and service of God is another, and it springs from the same source.

In the Christian doctrine of loving and of serving God, and (as the natural consequence of such love and service) of loving and serving one's neighbor, there seems to the scientific mind a certain mysticism, something at once confused and arbitrary; and, believing that the doctrine of love for

humanity rests on a firmer basis and is altogether more intelligible, they utterly reject the requirement of love and service of God.

The theory of a scientist is that a virtuous life, a life with a purpose, must be useful to the world at large; and in a life of this kind they discover the solution of the Christian doctrine, to which they reduce Christianity itself. Assuming their own doctrine to be identical with that of Christianity, they seek and believe that they find in the latter an affirmation of their own views.

This is a fallacy. The Christian doctrine, and the doctrine of the Positivists, and of all advocates of the universal brotherhood of man, founded on the utility of such a brotherhood, have nothing in common, and especially do they differ in that the doctrine of Christianity has a solid and a clearly defined foundation in the human soul, whereas love of humanity is but a theoretical conclusion reached through analogy.

The doctrine of the love of humanity has for its basis the social life-conception.

The essence of the social life-conception consists in replacing the sense of individual life by that of the life of the group. In its first steps, this is a simple and natural progression, as from the family to the tribe; from the family to the race is more difficult, and requires special education, – which has arrived at its utmost limits when the State has been reached.

It is natural for every man to love himself, and he needs no incentive thereto; to love his tribe, which lends both support and protection; to love his wife, the delight and comfort of his daily life; the children, who are his consolation and his future hope; his parents, who gave him life and cherished him, – all this, although not so intense as love of self, is natural and common to mankind.

To love one's race, one's people, for their own sake, although not so instinctive, is also common. To love one's ancestors, one's kinsfolk, through pride, is also natural and frequent; and a man may feel love for his fellow-countrymen, who speak the same language and profess the same faith as himself, although the emotion is less strong than love of self or love of family. But love for a nation, Turkey, for instance, or Germany, England, Austria, Russia, is almost impossible, and notwithstanding the training given in that direction, it is only a fictitious semblance; it has no real existence. At this aggregate ceases man's power of transfusing his innermost consciousness; for such a fiction he can feel no direct sentiment. And yet the Positivists and all the preachers of the scientific fraternity, not taking into consideration the fact that this feeling is weakened in proportion to the expansion of its object, continue to theorize on the same lines. They say: "If it were to the advantage of an individual to transfuse his consciousness into the family, and thence into the nation and the State, it follows that it will be to his further advantage to transfuse his consciousness into the universal entity, mankind, that all men may live for humanity, as they have lived for the family and for the State."

And theoretically they are right.

After having transferred the consciousness and love for the individual to the family, and from the family to the race, the nation, and the State, it would be perfectly logical for men, in order to escape the strife and disasters that result from the division of mankind into nations and states, to transfer their love to humanity at large. This would appear to be the logical outcome, and it has been offered as a theory by those who forget that love is an innate sentiment, which can never be inspired by preaching; that it must have a real object, and that the entity which men call humanity is not a real object, but a fiction.

A family, a race, even a State, are no inventions of men; these things have formed themselves like a hive of bees, or a colony of ants, and possess an actual existence. The man who loves his family, after a human fashion, knows whom he is loving – Ann, Maria, John, or Peter. The man who loves his ancestors, and is proud of them, knows that he loves the Guelphs, for instance, or the Ghibellines; the man who loves his country knows that he loves France from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, that he loves its capital, Paris, and all its history. But the man who loves humanity, what is it that he loves? There is a State, there is a people, there is the abstract conception of man. But humanity as a concrete conception is impossible.

Humanity? Where is its limit? Where does it end and where does it begin? Does it exclude the savage, the idiot, the inebriate, the insane? If one were to draw a line of demarcation so as to exclude the lower representatives of the human race, where ought it to be drawn? Ought it to exclude the Negro, as they do in the United States, or the Hindoos, as some Englishmen do, or the Jews, as does another nation? But if we include all humanity without exception, why should we restrict ourselves to men? Why should we exclude the higher animals, some of whom are superior to the lowest representatives of the human race?

We do not know humanity in the concrete, nor can we fix its limits. Humanity is a fiction, and therefore it cannot be loved. Indeed, it would be advantageous if men could love humanity as they love the family. It would be very useful, as the communists say, to substitute a community of interests for individual competition, or the universal for the personal; in a word, to make the whole world a mutual benefit society, – only that there are no motives to bring about such a result. The Positivists, communists, and all the exponents of the scientific fraternity exhort us to extend the love which men feel for themselves, their families, their fellow-countrymen, over humanity at large, forgetting that the love of which they speak is a personal love, which may be kindled for the family, and even extend to include one's native country, but which expires altogether when it is appealed to in behalf of an artificial state, such as Austria, England, or Turkey; and when claimed for that mystical object, humanity in general, one cannot even grasp the idea.

"A man loves himself, his physical personality, he loves his family, he even loves his country. Why should he not also love mankind? It would seem such a happy consummation! And it so happens that Christianity inculcates the same precept." These are the opinions of the Positivist, the communist, and the socialist fraternities.

It would indeed be fortunate, but it is impossible, because love founded on a personal and social life-conception can go no further than the love of country.

The flaw in the argument arises from the fact that the social life-conception, the basis of family love and of patriotism, is itself an individual love, and such a love, in its transference from a person to a family, a race, a nation, and a State, gradually loses its efficiency, and in the State has reached its final limit, and can go no further.

The necessity for widening the sphere of love is not to be denied, and yet it is the very attempt to satisfy this requirement that destroys its possibility, and proves the inadequacy of personal human love.

And here it is that the advocates of the Positivist, communist, and socialist brotherhood offer as a prop to the humanitarianism that has proved its inefficiency, a Christian love, not in its essence, but only in its results; in other words, not the love of God, but the love of man.

But there can be no such love; it has no *raison d'être*. Christian love comes only from a Christian life-conception, whose sole manifestation is the love and service of God.

By a natural sequence in the extension of love from the individual to the family, and thence to the race, the nation, and the State, the social life-conception has brought men not to the consciousness of love for humanity, – which is illimitable – the unification of every living creature, – but to a condition which evokes no feeling in man, to a contradiction for which it provides no reconciliation.

It is only the Christian doctrine which, by lending to human life a new significance, is able to solve the difficulty. Christianity presents the love of self and the love of the family, as well as patriotism and the love of humanity, but it is not to be restricted to humanity alone; it is to be given to every living creature; it recognizes the possibility of an indefinite expansion of the kingdom of love, but its object is not to be found outside itself, in the aggregate of individuals, neither in the family, nor in the race, nor in the State, nor in mankind, nor all the wide world, but in itself, in its personality, – a divine personality, whose essence is the very love which needed a wider sphere.

The distinction between the Christian doctrine and those which preceded it may be thus defined. The social doctrine says: Curb thy nature (meaning the animal nature alone); subject it to

the visible law of the family, of society, and of the State. Christianity says: Live up to thy nature (meaning the divine nature); make it subject to nothing; neither to thine own animal nature, nor to that of another, and then thou shalt attain what thou seekest by subjecting thine outward personality to visible laws. The Christian doctrine restores to man his original consciousness of self, not the animal self, but the godlike self, the spark of divinity, as the son of God, like unto the Father, but clothed in a human form. This consciousness of one's self as a son of God, whose essence is love, satisfies at once all those demands made by the man who professes the social life-conception for a broader sphere of love. Again, in the social life-conception the enlargement of the domain of love was a necessity for the salvation of the individual; it was attached to certain objects, to one's self, to one's family, to society, and to humanity. With the Christian world-conception love is not a necessity, neither is it attached to any special object; it is the inherent quality of a man's soul; he loves because he cannot help loving.

The Christian doctrine teaches to man that the essence of his soul is love; that his well-being may be traced, not to the fact that he loves this object or that one, but to the fact that he loves the principle of all things – God, whom he recognizes in himself through love, and will by the love of God love all men and all things.

This is the essential difference between the Christian doctrine and that of the Positivists, and all other non-Christian theorists of a universal brotherhood.

Such are the two chief misapprehensions in regard to the Christian doctrine, and from those most of the false arguments on the subject have originated.

One is, that the doctrine of Christ, like the doctrines which preceded it, promulgates rules which men must obey, and that these rules are impracticable. The other, that the whole meaning of Christianity is contained in the doctrine of a coöperative union of mankind, in one family, to attain which, leaving aside the question of love of God, one should obey only the rule of love of one's fellow-men.

Finally, the mistake of scientists, in supposing that the doctrine of the supernatural contains the essence of Christianity, that its life-teaching is not practicable, together with the general misapprehensions that result from such a misconception, further explains why men of our time have so misunderstood Christianity.

CHAPTER V

CONTRADICTION OF OUR LIFE AND CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Men consider that they may accept Christianity without changing their life – The pagan life-conception no longer corresponds to the present age of humanity, which the Christian life-conception alone can satisfy – The Christian life-conception is still misunderstood by men, but our life itself necessitates its acceptance – The requirements of a new life-conception always seem unintelligible, mystical, and supernatural – Such, for the majority of men, seem the requirements of the Christian life-conception – The acceptance of a Christian life-conception will inevitably be accomplished both through spiritual and material agencies – The fact that men, conscious of a higher life-conception, continue to entertain the lower forms of life, causes contradiction and suffering, which embitter life and require its alteration – Contradictions of our life – The economical contradiction, and the suffering it causes to the working-men and to the rich – The contradiction of State, and the sufferings that arise from obedience to State laws – The international contradiction, and its acknowledgment by contemporary writers: Komarovsky, Ferri, Booth, Passy, Lawson, Wilson, Bartlett, Defourny, Moneta – The military contradiction the extreme.

Many causes have contributed toward the misunderstanding of the teaching of Christ. One of these is that men assumed to understand the doctrine, when, like the faithful of the Church, they accepted the statement that it had been transmitted in a supernatural manner; or, like the scientists, after having investigated certain of its outward manifestations. Another reason may be found in the conviction that it is impracticable, and that it may be replaced by the doctrine of love of humanity. But the principal reason of all such misconceptions is that men look upon the doctrine of Christ as one that may be accepted or rejected without any special change in one's life.

Men, attached by habit to the existing order, shrink from attempting to change it, hence they agree to consider this doctrine as a mass of revelations and laws that may be accepted without making any change in one's life: whereas the doctrine of Christ is not a doctrine of rules for man to obey, but unfolds a new life-conception, meant as a guide for men who are now entering upon a new period, one entirely different from the past.

The life of humanity continues its course and has its stages, like the life of an individual; each age has its own life-conception, which a man must adopt whether he will or no. Those who do not adopt it consciously, adopt it unconsciously. The same change that takes place in the views of the individual, as life goes on, occurs also in the existence of nations and of humanity in general.

If a father were to conduct his affairs like a child, his life would certainly become so unbearable that he would cast about for a different plan of life, and would eagerly grasp at one better suited to his years.

And the human race is at the present time passing through a similar experience, in its transition from a pagan to a Christian life-conception. A man of the society of the present day finds that the pagan life-conception is no longer suited to the times, hence he is induced to submit to the requirements of the Christian religion, whose truths, however misunderstood and falsely interpreted they may be, are yet familiar to his ears, and seem to offer the only practical solution of the contradictions that beset his path. If the demands of the Christian doctrine seem unintelligible, peculiar, and dangerous to a man who has hitherto held the social life-conception, the demands of the latter seemed none the less so to a savage of a previous age, who neither fully apprehended them, nor was able to foresee their consequences.

The savage reasoned thus: "It would be folly for me to sacrifice my peace or my life to defend an incomprehensible, intangible, and uncertain ideal, family, race, country, and, above all, it would

be dangerous to deliver myself into the hands of an unknown power." But there came a time in the life of the savage when, on the one hand, he had begun, although vaguely, to understand the meaning of social life, as well as that of its chief incentive, – social approval or condemnation: glory, – while, on the other hand, the sufferings of his personal life had become so severe that it was no longer possible for him to go on believing in the truth of his former life-conception; whereupon he accepted the social and State doctrine and submitted to its laws.

And he who holds the social life-conception is now undergoing a similar experience.

"It is madness" – thus reasons the man holding such views – "to sacrifice one's interests or those of one's family and of one's country, in order to fulfil the requirements of a law that would compel one to renounce the most natural and praiseworthy feelings toward one's self, one's family, and one's country, and, above all, the guarantee of protection afforded by the State."

But there comes a time when, on the one hand, a vague awakening consciousness stirs the soul, the consciousness of the higher law, love of God and one's neighbor, and the sufferings a man endures from the contradictions of life, compel him to renounce the social life-conception and to adopt the new Christian life-conception which is offered him. And this time has now arrived.

To us, who underwent the transition from the individual to the social life-conception thousands of years ago, this transition appears to have been both natural and inevitable, just as the present transition, through which we have been passing these last 1800 years, seems arbitrary, unnatural, and overwhelming. But it seems so for the simple reason that the former change is a thing of the past, and has fixed in us certain habits, whereas we are still practically accomplishing the present transition, and have to accomplish it consciously.

It was centuries, indeed thousands of years, before the social life-conception was adopted by all mankind; it passed through various phases, and we ourselves possess it through heredity, education, and unconscious habit; hence it seems natural to us. But 5000 years ago it seemed as strange and unnatural to men as the Christian doctrine in its true meaning seems to them now.

The universal brotherhood of man, the equality of races, the abolition of property, the anomalous doctrine of non-resistance, all these requirements of the Christian religion seem to us impossibilities. But in olden times, thousands of years ago, not only the requirements of the State, but even those of the family, as, for instance, the obligation of parents to feed their children, of children to support their aged parents, and that of conjugal fidelity, seemed equally impossible. And still more unreasonable seemed the demands of the State, requiring citizens to submit to established authority, to pay taxes, to perform military duty in defense of their country, etc. We find no difficulty in comprehending these requirements now; they seem perfectly simple and natural, with nothing mystical or alarming in their aspect; but five or even three thousand years ago, such demands seemed intolerable.

Thus the social life-conception served as a foundation for religion, for at the time when it was first manifested to men it seemed to them to be utterly incomprehensible, mystical, and supernatural. Now that we have passed that phase of human life, we can understand the reasons for the aggregation of men into families, communities, and states. But in the early ages the demand for these aggregations was made in the name of the supernatural, and its fulfilment assured by the same authority.

The patriarchal religion deified the family, the race, the people. State religions deified the sovereigns and the State. Even at the present day the uneducated masses, the Russian peasants, for instance, who call the Czar a God upon earth, obey the laws from religious instinct, not because their reason counsels them to do so, nor because they have the least idea of a State.

And to those men of our own times who hold the social life-conception, the Christian doctrine seems to be a supernatural religion, whereas in reality there is nothing mystical or supernatural about it; it is only a doctrine concerning human life, corresponding with the degree of development which man has attained, and one which he cannot refuse to accept.

The time will come, and it is already near at hand, when the Christian foundations of life – equality, brotherly love, community of goods, non-resistance of evil by violence – will seem as natural and simple as the foundations of family, social, and State life appear to us at the present time.

There can be no retrogression for humanity. Men have outgrown the lower life-conception of the family and the State, and must press forward to embrace the next higher conception, as they have already begun to do.

This movement is accomplished in two ways: consciously, by moral causes; unconsciously, by material ones. It rarely happens that a man changes his mode of life at the dictates of reason; however conscious he may be of the new design and purpose revealed to him by his reason, he goes on in the old fashion until his life has become intolerably inconsistent, and therefore distressing. Likewise, the larger portion of mankind, after learning through its religious teachers a new conception of life and its objects, to which it has yet to adjust itself, will for a long time pursue its wonted course, and only make the change in the end because its former life has become impossible.

In spite of the necessity for a change of life, acknowledged and proclaimed by our religious guides and admitted by the wisest men, in spite of the religious respect entertained for these guides, the majority of men continue to be influenced in life, now additionally complicated, by their former views. It is as if the father of a family, knowing well enough how to conduct himself properly, should through force of habit or thoughtlessness continue to live as if he were still a child.

At this very moment we are experiencing one of these transitions. Humanity has outgrown its social, its civic age, and has entered upon a new epoch. It knows the doctrine that must underlie the foundations of life in this new epoch; but, yielding to inertia, it still clings to its former habits. From this inconsistency between the theory of life and its practice follow a series of contradictions and sufferings that embitter man's life and compel him to make a change.

One needs but to compare the practice of life with its theory to be horrified at the extraordinary contradictions between the conditions of life and our inner consciousness.

Man's whole life is a continual contradiction of what he knows to be his duty. This contradiction prevails in every department of life, in the economical, the political, and the international. As though his intelligence were forgotten and his faith temporarily eclipsed, – for he must have faith, else would his life have no permanence, – he acts in direct opposition to the dictates of his conscience and his common sense.

In our economical and international relations we are guided by the fundamental principles of bygone ages, – principles quite contradictory to our mental attitude and the conditions of our present life.

It was right for a man who believed in the divine origin of slavery, and in its necessity, to live in the relation of a master to his slaves. But is such a life possible in these days? A man of antiquity might believe himself justified in taking advantage of his fellow-man, oppressing him for generations, merely because he believed in diversity of origin, noble or base, descent from Ham or Japheth. Not only have the greatest philosophers of ancient times, the teachers of mankind, Plato and Aristotle, justified the existence of slavery and adduced proofs of its legality, but no longer than three centuries ago those who described an ideal state of society could not picture it without slaves.

In ancient times, and even in the Middle Ages, it was honestly thought that men were not born equal, that the men worthy of respect were only Persians, only Greeks, only Romans, or only Frenchmen; but no one believes it now. And the enthusiastic advocates of the principles of aristocracy and patriotism at this present day cannot believe in their own statements.

We all know, and cannot help knowing, even if we had never heard it defined and never attempted to define it ourselves, that we all possess an inherent conviction deep in our hearts of the truth of that fundamental doctrine of Christianity, that we are all children of one Father, yea, every one of us, wheresoever we may live, whatsoever language we may speak; that we are all brothers, subject only to the law of love implanted in our hearts by our common Father.

Whatever may be the habits of thought or the degree of education of a man of our time, whether he be an educated liberal, whatsoever his shade of opinion, a philosopher, whatsoever may be his system, a scientist, an economist of any of the various schools, an uneducated adherent of any religious faith, – every man in these days knows that in the matter of life and worldly goods all men have equal rights; that no man is either better or worse than his fellow-men, but that all men are born free and equal. Every man has an instinctive assurance of this fact, and yet he sees his fellow-beings divided into two classes, the one in poverty and distress, which labors and is oppressed, the other idle, tyrannical, luxurious; and not only does he see all this, but, whether voluntarily or otherwise, he falls in line with one or the other of these divisions, – a course repugnant to his reason. Hence he must suffer both from his sense of the incongruity and his own share in it.

Whether he be master or slave, a man in these days is forever haunted by this distressing inconsistency between his ideal and the actual fact, nor can he fail to perceive the suffering that springs therefrom.

The masses – that is to say, the majority of mankind, who suffer and toil, their lives dull and uninteresting, never enlivened by a ray of brightness, enduring numberless privations – are those who recognize most clearly the sharp contrasts between what is and what ought to be, between the professions of mankind and their actions.

They know that they work like slaves, that they are perishing in want and in darkness, that they may minister to the pleasures of the minority. And it is this very consciousness that enhances its bitterness; indeed, it constitutes the essence of their suffering.

A slave in old times knew that he was a slave by birth, whereas the working-man of our day, while he feels himself to be a slave, knows that he ought not to be one, and suffers the tortures of Tantalus from his unsatisfied yearning for that which not only could be granted him, but which is really his due. The sufferings of the working-classes that spring from the contradictions of their fate are magnified tenfold by the envy and hatred which are the natural fruits of the sense of these contradictions.

A working-man in our period, even though his work may be less fatiguing than the labor of the ancient slave, and even were he to succeed in obtaining the eight-hour system and twelve-and-sixpence a day, still has the worst of it, because he manufactures objects which he will never use or enjoy; – he is not working for himself; he works in order to gratify the luxurious and idle, to increase the wealth of the capitalist, the mill-owner, or manufacturer. He knows that all this goes on in a world where men acknowledge certain propositions such as the economic principle that labor is wealth, that it is an act of injustice to employ another man's labor for one's own benefit, that an illegal act is punishable by law, in a world, moreover, where the doctrine of Christ is professed, – that doctrine which teaches us that all men are brothers, and that it is the duty of a man to serve his neighbor and to take no unfair advantage of him.

He realizes all this, and must suffer keenly from the shocking contradiction between the world as it should be and the world as it is. "According to what I am told and what I hear men profess," says a working-man to himself, "I ought to be a free man equal to any other man, and loved; I am a slave, hated and despised." Then he in his turn is filled with hatred, and seeks to escape from his position, to overthrow the enemy that oppresses him, and to get the upper hand himself.

They say: "It is wrong for a workman to wish himself in the place of a capitalist, or for a poor man to envy the rich." But this is false. If this were a world where God had ordained masters and slaves, rich and poor, it would be wrong for the working-man or the poor man to wish himself in the place of the rich: but this is not so; he wishes it in a world which professes the doctrine of the gospel, whose first principle is embodied in the relation of the son to the Father, and consequently of fraternity and equality. And however reluctant men may be to acknowledge it, they cannot deny that one of the first conditions of Christian life is love, expressed, not in words, but in deeds.

The man of education suffers even more from these inconsistencies. If he has any faith whatever he believes, perhaps, in fraternity, – at least in the sentiment humanity; and if not in the sentiment humanity, then in justice; and if not in justice, then surely in science; and he cannot help knowing all the while that the conditions of his life are opposed to every principle of Christianity, humanity, justice, and science.

He knows that the habits of life in which he has been bred, and whose abandonment would cause him much discomfort, can only be supported by the weary and often suicidal labor of the down-trodden working-class – that is, by the open infraction of those principles of Christianity, humanity, justice, and even of science (political science), in which he professes to believe. He affirms his faith in the principles of fraternity, humanity, justice, and political science, and yet the oppression of the working-class is an indispensable factor in his daily life, and he constantly employs it to attain his own ends in spite of his principles; and he not only lives in this manner, but he devotes all his energies to maintain a system which is directly opposed to all his beliefs.

We are brothers: but every morning my brother or my sister performs for me the most menial offices. We are brothers: but I must have my morning cigar, my sugar, my mirror, or what not, – objects whose manufacture has often cost my brothers and sisters their health, yet I do not for that reason forbear to use these things; on the contrary, I even demand them. We are brothers: and yet I support myself by working in some bank, commercial house, or shop, and am always trying to raise the price of the necessities of life for my brothers and sisters. We are brothers: I receive a salary for judging, convicting, and punishing the thief or the prostitute, whose existence is the natural outcome of my own system of life, and I fully realize that I should neither condemn nor punish. We are all brothers: yet I make my living by collecting taxes from the poor, that the rich may live in luxury and idleness. We are brothers: and yet I receive a salary for preaching a pseudo-Christian doctrine, in which I do not myself believe, thus hindering men from discovering the true one; I receive a salary as priest or bishop for deceiving people in a matter which is of vital importance to them. We are brothers: but I make my brother pay for all my services, whether I write books for him, educate him, or prescribe for him as a physician. We are all brothers: but I receive a salary for fitting myself to be a murderer, for learning the art of war, or for manufacturing arms and ammunition and building fortresses.

The whole existence of our upper classes is utterly contradictory, and the more sensitive a man's nature the more painful is the incongruity.

A man with a sensitive conscience can enjoy no peace of mind in such a life. Even supposing that he succeeds in stifling the reproaches of his conscience, he is still unable to conquer his fears.

Those men and women of the dominant classes who have hardened themselves, and have succeeded in stifling their consciences, must still suffer through their fear of the hatred they inspire. They are quite well aware of its existence among the laboring classes; they know that it can never die; they know, too, that the working-men realize the deceptions practised upon them, and the abuses that they endure; that they have started organizations to throw off the yoke, and to take vengeance on their oppressors. The happiness of the upper classes is poisoned by fear of the impending calamity, foreshadowed by the unions, the strikes, and First of May demonstrations. Recognizing the calamity that threatens them, their fear turns to defiance and hatred. They know that if they relax for one moment in this conflict with the oppressed, they are lost, because their slaves, already embittered, grow more and more so with every day's oppression. The oppressors, though they may see it, cannot cease to oppress. They realize that they themselves are doomed from the moment they abate one jot of their severity. So they go on in their career of oppression, notwithstanding their affectation of interest in the welfare of the working-men, the eight-hour system, the laws restricting the labor of women and children, the pensions, and the rewards. All this is mere pretense, or at best the natural anxiety of the master to keep his slave in good condition; but the slave remains a slave all the while, and the master, who cannot live without the slave, is less willing than ever to set him free. The governing classes find

themselves in regard to the working-men very much in the position of one who has overthrown his opponent, and who holds him down, not so much because he does not choose to let him escape, but because he knows that should he for one moment lose his hold on him, he would lose his own life, for the vanquished man is infuriated, and holds a knife in his hand.

Hence our wealthy classes, whether their consciences be tender or hardened, cannot enjoy the advantages they have wrung from the poor, as did the ancients, who were convinced of the justice of their position. All the pleasures of life are poisoned either by remorse or fear.

Such is the economic inconsistency. Still more striking is that of the civil power.

A man is trained first of all in habits of obedience to state laws. At the present time every act of our lives is under the supervision of the State, and in accordance with its dictates a man marries and is divorced, rears his children, and in some countries accepts the religion it prescribes. What is this law, then, that determines the life of mankind? Do men believe in it? Do they consider it true? Not at all. In most cases they recognize its injustice, they despise it, and yet they obey it. It was fit that the ancients should obey their law. It was chiefly religious, and they sincerely believed it to be the only true law, to which all men owed obedience. Is that the case with us? We cannot refuse to acknowledge that the law of our State is not the eternal law, but only one of the many laws of many states, all equally imperfect, and frequently wholly false and unjust, – a law that has been openly discussed in all its aspects by the public press. It was fit that the Hebrew should obey his laws, since he never doubted that the finger of God Himself had traced them; or for the Roman, who believed that he received them from the nymph Egeria; or even for those peoples who believed that the rulers who made the laws were anointed of God, or that legislative assemblies have both the will and the ability to devise laws as good as possible. But we know that laws are the offspring of party conflicts, false dealing, and the greed of gain, that they are not, and can never be, the depository of true justice; and therefore it is impossible for people of the present day to believe that obedience to civil or state laws can ever satisfy the rational demands of human nature. Men have long since realized that there is no sense in obeying a law whose honesty is more than doubtful, and therefore they must suffer when, though privately denying its prerogative, they still conform to it. When a man's whole life is held in bondage by laws whose injustice, cruelty, and artificiality he plainly discerns, and yet is compelled to obey these laws under penalty of punishment, he must suffer; it cannot be otherwise.

We recognize the disadvantages of custom-houses and import duties, but we are yet obliged to pay them; we see the folly of supporting the court and its numerous officials, we admit the harmful influence of church preaching, and still we are compelled to support both; we also admit the cruel and iniquitous punishments inflicted by the courts, and yet we play our part in them; we acknowledge that the distribution of land is wrong and immoral, but we have to submit to it; and despite the fact that we deny the necessity for armies or warfare, we are made to bear the heavy burden of supporting armies and waging war.

These contradictions, however, are but trifling in comparison with the one which confronts us in the problem of our international relations, and which cries aloud for solution, since both human reason and human life are at stake, and this is the antagonism between the Christian faith and war.

We, Christian nations, whose spiritual life is one and the same, who welcome the birth of every wholesome and profitable thought with joy and pride, from whatsoever quarter of the globe it may spring, regardless of race or creed; we, who love not only the philanthropists, the poets, the philosophers, and the scientists of other lands; we, who take as much pride in the heroism of a Father Damien as if it was our own; we, who love the French, the Germans, the Americans, and the English, not only esteeming their qualities, but ready to meet them with cordial friendship; we, who not only would be shocked to consider war with them in the light of an exploit, – when we picture to ourselves the possibility that at some future day a difference may arise between us that can only be reconciled by murder, and that any one of us may be called upon to play his part in an inevitable tragedy, – we shudder at the thought.

It was well enough for a Hebrew, a Greek, or a Roman to maintain the independence of his country by murder, and even to subdue other nations by the same means, because he firmly believed himself a member of the one favored people beloved by God, and that all the others were Philistines and barbarians. Also, in the times of the Middle Ages men might well have held these opinions, and even they who lived toward the end of the last century and at the beginning of this. But we, whatever provocation may be offered us, we cannot possibly believe as they did; and this difficulty is so painful for us in these times that it has become impossible to live without trying to solve it.

"We live in a time replete with contradictions," writes Count Komarovsky, the Professor of International Law, in his learned treatise. "Everywhere the tone of the public press seems to indicate a general desire for peace, and shows the need of it for all nations. And the representatives of the government, in their private as well as in their public capacity, in parliamentary speeches and diplomatic negotiations, express themselves in the same temper. Nevertheless, the governments increase the military force year after year, impose new taxes, negotiate loans, and will leave as a legacy to future generations the responsibilities of the present mistaken policy. How are the word and the deed at variance!

"By way of justification the governments claim that all their armaments and the consequent outlay are simply defensive in their character, but to the uninitiated the question naturally suggests itself: Whence is to come the attack if all the great powers are devoting themselves *to a defensive policy*? It certainly looks as if each one of them lived in hourly expectation of attack from his neighbor, and the consequence is a strife between the different governments to surpass each other in strength. The very existence of this spirit of rivalry favors the chances of war: the nations, no longer able to support the increased armament, will sooner or later prefer open war to the tension in which they live and the ruin which menaces them, so that the slightest pretext will avail to kindle in Europe the conflagration of a general war. It is a mistake to suppose that such a crisis will heal the political and economic ills under which we groan. The experience of late wars shows us that each one served only to exacerbate the animosity of the nations against each other, to increase the unbearable burden of military despotism, and has involved the political and economic situation of Europe in a more melancholy and pitiable plight than ever."

"Contemporary Europe keeps under arms nine millions of men," says Enrico Ferri, "and a reserve force of fifteen millions, at a cost of four milliards of francs a year. By increasing its armament it paralyzes more and more the springs of social and individual welfare, and may be compared to a man who, in order to obtain weapons, condemns himself to anæmia, thereby depriving himself of the strength to use the weapons he is accumulating, whose weight will eventually overpower him."

The same idea has been expressed by Charles Booth, in his address delivered in London, July 26, 1887, before the Association for the Reform and Codification of National Laws. Having mentioned the same numbers, – over nine millions in active service and fifteen millions in reserve, and the enormous sums required to support these armies and armaments, – he says, in substance: "These numbers represent but a small part of the actual expenditure, because outside of the expenses enumerated in the budgets of the nations we must take into consideration the great losses to society from the removal of so many able-bodied men, lost to industry in all its branches, and moreover, the interest on the enormous sums spent in military preparations, which yield no returns. As might be expected, the constantly increasing national debts are the inevitable result of these outlays in preparation for war. By far the greater proportion of the debt of Europe has been contracted for munitions of war. The sum total is four milliards of pounds, or forty milliards of roubles, and these debts are increasing every year."

Komarovsky, whom we lately quoted, says elsewhere: "We are living in hard times. Everywhere we hear complaints of the stagnation of commerce and industry, and of the wretched economical situation. They tell us of the hard conditions of life among the laboring classes and the general impoverishment of the people. But regardless of this, governments, determined to maintain their

independence, go to the utmost limits of folly. Additional taxes are levied on every side, and the financial oppression of the people knows no bounds. If we glance at the budgets of European states for the last hundred years, we shall be struck with their constantly increasing figures. How can we explain this abnormal condition that sooner or later threatens to overwhelm us with inevitable bankruptcy?

"Most assuredly it is caused by the expense of maintaining armies, which absorbs one-third, or even one-half, of the budget of all European nations. The saddest part of it, however, is that there is no end to this increase of budgets and consequent impoverishment of the masses. What is socialism but a protest against the abnormal situation in which the majority of mankind of our continent finds itself?"

"We are being ruined," says Frédéric Passy, in a paper read before the last Peace Congress in London (1890), "to enable us to take part in the senseless wars of the future, or to pay the interest of debts left us by the criminal and insane wars and contests of the past. We shall perish with hunger, to have success in murder."

Going on to speak of the opinion of France in regard to this matter, he says: "We believe that now, a hundred years after the proclamation formulating the belief in the rights of men and citizens, the time has come to declare the rights of nations and to repudiate once and for all time those undertakings of fraud and violence, which, under the name of conquests, are actually crimes against humanity, and which, however much the pride of nations or the ambition of monarchs may seek to justify them, serve only to enervate the conquerors."

"I am always very much surprised at the way religion is carried on in this country," says Sir Wilfred Lawson before the same Congress. "You send a boy to the Sunday-school, and you tell him: 'My dear boy, you must love your enemies; if any boy strikes you, don't strike him again; try to reform him by loving him.' Well, the boy goes to the Sunday-school till he is fourteen or fifteen years of age, and then his friends say, 'Put him in the army.' What has he to do in the army? Why, not love his enemies, but whenever he sees an enemy, to run him through the body with a bayonet is the nature of all religious teaching in this country. I do not think that that is a very good way of carrying out the precepts of religion. I think if it is a good thing for the boy to love his enemy, it is a good thing for the man to love his enemy."...

And later!

"In Europe great Christian nations keep among them 28,000,000 of armed men to settle quarrels by killing one another, instead of by arguing. This is what the Christian nations of the world are doing at this moment. It is a very expensive way also; for in a publication which I saw – I believe it was correct – it was made out that since the year 1812 these nations had spent the almost incredible amount of 1,500,000,000 of money in preparing and settling their quarrels by killing one another. Now it seems to me that with that state of things one of two positions must be accepted, – either that Christianity is a failure, or that those who profess to expound Christianity have failed in expounding it properly."

"So long as our men-of-war are not disarmed and our army not disbanded, we have no right to be called a Christian nation," said Mr. F. L. Wilson.

In a conversation in regard to the duty of Christian ministers in the matter of preaching against war, Mr. G. D. Bartlett remarked, among other things: —

"If I understand the Scriptures, I say that men are only playing with Christianity when they ignore this question... I have lived a long life, I have heard many sermons, and I can say without any exaggeration that I never heard universal peace recommended from the pulpit half a dozen times in my life... Some twenty years ago I happened to stand in a drawing-room where there were forty or fifty people, and I dared to make the proposition that war was incompatible with Christianity. They looked upon me as an arrant fanatic. The idea that we could get on without war was regarded as unmitigated weakness and folly."

A Catholic priest, the Abbé Defourny, has spoken in a similar spirit. "One of the first commandments of the eternal law, engraved in every man's conscience," says the Abbé Defourny,

"forbids a man to take his neighbor's life or shed his blood" (without sufficient cause, being forced to it by stress of circumstance). "This is a commandment more deeply engraved in the human heart than all the others... But as soon as it becomes a question of war, that is, a question of the wholesale shedding of human blood, men in these days do not wait for a sufficient cause. Those who are active in war forget to ask themselves if there is any justification for the numerous manslaughters that take place, whether they are just or unjust, legal or illegal, innocent or criminal, or whether they break the principal law that forbids us to commit murder" (without just cause). "Their conscience is silent... War has ceased to be a matter connected with morality. The soldier, amid all the fatigues and dangers he undergoes, knows no joy but conquest, no sorrow but defeat. Don't tell me that they serve the country. A great genius has long ago answered this statement in words that have since become a proverb: 'Take away justice, and what is then a nation but a great band of robbers? And is not a band of robbers in itself a small state? They, too, have their laws. They, too, fight for booty, and even honor.'

"The aim of this organization" (it was a question of establishing international tribunals) "is to influence the European nations until they cease to be nations of thieves, and their armies bands of robbers. Yes, our armies are nothing less than a rabble of slaves belonging to one or two monarchs and their ministers, who, as we all know, rule them tyrannically and without any responsibility other than nominal, as we know.

"It is the characteristic of a slave that he is a tool in the hands of his master. Such are the soldiers, officers, and generals, who at the beck of their sovereign go forth to slay or to be slain. There is a military slavery, and it is the worst of all slaveries, particularly now, when by means of conscription it forges chains for the necks of all the free and strong men of the nation, in order to use them as instruments of murder, to make them executioners and butchers of human flesh, since that is the sole reason why they are drafted and drilled...

"Two or three potentates in their cabinets make treaties, without protocols, without publicity, and therefore without responsibility, sending men to the slaughter.

"'Protests against increased armaments began before our time,' said Signor E. G. Moneta. Listen to Montesquieu: 'France' (for France we might now substitute Europe) 'is perishing from an overgrown army. A new disease is spreading throughout Europe. It has affected kings, and obliges them to maintain an incredible number of troops. It is like a rash, and therefore contagious; for no sooner does one nation increase its troops than all the others follow suit. Nothing can result from this condition of affairs but general calamity.

"'Each government maintains as many troops as it would require if its people were threatened with destruction, and this state of tension is called peace. Europe is in truth ruined. If private individuals were reduced to such straits as these, the richest man among them would be practically destitute. The wealth of the world and its commerce are in our hands, and yet we are poor.'

"This was written almost 150 years ago. It seems like a picture of the present. One thing alone has changed – the form of government. In the time of Montesquieu it was said that the reason for the maintenance of large armies might be found in the unlimited power of kings, who carried on war in the hope of increasing their private property and their glory.

"Then it was said: 'Ah! if the people could but choose representatives who would have a right to refuse the governments when they called for soldiers and money – there would be an end of a military policy.' Now, almost everywhere in Europe there are representative governments, and still the military expenditure in preparation for war has increased in frightful proportion.

"It looks as though the folly of the rulers had passed into the ruling classes. Now they no longer fight because one king has been rude to another king's mistress, as in the time of Louis XIV., but by exaggerating the importance of national dignity and patriotism, – emotions which are natural and honorable in themselves, – and exciting the public opinion of one country against the other, until they have arrived at such a pitch of sensitiveness that it is enough to say, for instance (even were the report to prove false), one country has refused to receive the ambassador of another, to precipitate

the most frightful and disastrous war. Europe maintains under arms at the present time more soldiers than were in the field during the great wars of Napoleon. Every citizen on our continent, with a few exceptions, is forced to spend several years in the barracks. Fortresses, arsenals, men-of-war are built, new firearms are invented, which in a short time are replaced by others, because science, which should always be devoted to the promotion of human welfare, contributes, it must be regretfully acknowledged, to human destruction, inventing ever new means of killing greater numbers of men in the shortest possible time.

"In these stupendous preparations for slaughter, and in the maintenance of these vast numbers of troops, hundreds of millions are yearly expended – sums that would suffice to educate the masses, and to carry on the most important works of public improvement, thereby contributing toward a perfect solution of the social problem.

"Therefore, notwithstanding all our scientific victories, Europe finds herself in this respect not one whit better off than she was in the most barbarous times of the Middle Ages. Every one laments a state of things which is neither war nor peace, and longs to be delivered from it. The heads of governments emphatically affirm that they desire peace, and eagerly emulate each other in their pacific utterances, but almost immediately thereafter they propose to the legislative assemblies measures for increasing the armament, asserting that they take these precautions for the preservation of peace.

"But this is not the sort of peace we care for, and the nations are not deceived by it. True peace has for its foundation mutual confidence, whereas these appalling armaments show, if not a declared hostility, at least a secret distrust among the different nations. What should we say of a man who, wishing to show his friendly feelings to his neighbor, should invite him to consider a certain scheme, holding a loaded pistol while he unfolds it before him?

"It is this monstrous contradiction between the assurances of peace and the military policy of the governments, that good citizens wish to put an end to, at any cost."

One is amazed to learn that there are 60,000 suicides reported in Europe, not including Turkey and Russia, every year, and these are all well-substantiated cases; but it would be far more remarkable if the number were less. Any man in these times who investigates the antagonism between his convictions and his actions, finds himself in a desperate plight. Setting aside the many other contradictions between actual life and conviction which abound in the life of a man of the present day, to view the military situation in Europe in the light of its profession of Christianity is enough to make a man doubt the existence of human reason, and drive him to escape from a barbarous and insane world by putting an end to his own life. This inconsistency, which is the very quintessence of all the others, is so shocking, that one can only go on living and taking any part in it, by dint of trying not to think about it, – to forget it all.

What can it mean? We are Christians, who not only profess to love one another, but are actually leading one common life; our pulses beat in harmony; we meet each other in love and sympathy, deriving support and counsel from our mutual intercourse. Were it not for this sympathy life would have no meaning. But at any moment some demented ruler may utter a few rash words, to which another gives reply, and lo! I am ordered to march at the risk of my life, to slay those who have never injured me, whom I really love. And it is no remote contingency, but an inevitable climax for which we are all preparing ourselves.

Fully to realize this is enough to drive one to madness and to suicide, and this is but too common an occurrence, especially among soldiers.

A moment's reflection shows us why this seems an inevitable conclusion.

It explains the frightful intensity with which men plunge into all kinds of dissipation, – wine, tobacco, cards, newspaper reading, travel, all manner of shows and pleasures. They pursue all these amusements in deadly earnest, as if they were serious avocations, as indeed they are. If men possessed none of these distractions, half of them would kill themselves out of hand, for to live a life that is

made up of contradictions is simply unbearable, and such is the life that most of us lead at the present day. We are living in direct contradiction to our inmost convictions. This contradiction is evident both in economic and in political relations; it is manifested most unmistakably in the inconsistency of the acknowledgment of the Christian law of brotherly love and military conscription, which obliges men to hold themselves in readiness to take each other's lives, – in short, every man to be at once a Christian and a gladiator.

CHAPTER VI

ATTITUDE OF MEN OF THE PRESENT DAY TOWARD WAR

Men do not endeavor to destroy the contradiction between life and consciousness by a change of life, but educated men use all their power to stifle the demands of consciousness and to justify their lives, and thus degrade society to a condition worse than pagan, to a state of primeval savagery – Uncertainty of the attitude of our leading men toward war, universal armament, and general military conscription – Those who regard war as an accidental political phenomenon easily to be remedied by external measures – The Peace Congress – Article in the *Revue des Revues* – Proposition of Maxime du Camp – Significance of Courts of Arbitration and Disarmament – Relations of governments to these, and the business they pursue – Those who regard war as a cruel inevitable phenomenon – Maupassant – Rod – Those who regard it as indispensable, even useful – Camille Doucet, Claretie, Zola, Vogüé.

The contradictions of life and of consciousness may be solved in two ways: by change of life, or by change of consciousness; and it would seem as if there could be no hesitation in a choice between the two.

When a man acknowledges a deed to be evil he may refrain from the deed itself, but he can never cease to regard it as evil. Indeed, the whole world might cease from evil-doing, and yet have no power to transform, or even to check for a season, the progress of knowledge in regard to that which is evil, and which ought not to exist. One would think that the alternative of a change of life to accord with consciousness might be settled without question, and that it would therefore seem unavoidable for the Christian world of the present day to abandon those pagan forms which it condemns, and regulate its life by the Christian precepts which it acknowledges.

Such would be the result were it not for the principle of inertia (a principle no less unalterable in human life than in the world of matter), which finds its expression in the psychological law defined in the gospel by the words: "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John iii. 19). Most persons, in conformity to this principle, do not use their reason in order to ascertain the truth, but rather to persuade themselves that they possess it, and that their daily life, which is pleasant for them, is in harmony with the precepts of truth.

Slavery conflicted with all the moral principles taught by Plato and Aristotle, and yet neither of them perceived this, because the disavowal of slavery must have destroyed that life by which they lived. And the same thing is repeated in our times.

The division of mankind into two classes, the existence of political and military injustice, is opposed to all those moral principles which our society professes, and yet the most progressive and cultivated men of the age seem not to perceive this.

Almost every educated man at the present day is striving unconsciously to preserve the old-time conception of society, which justifies his attitude, and to conceal from others and from himself its inconsistencies, chief among which is the necessity of adopting the Christian ideal, which is subversive of the very structure of our social existence. It is this antiquated social system, in which they no longer believe, because it is really a thing of the past, that men are trying to uphold.

Contemporary literature, philosophical, political, and artistic, – all contemporary literature affords a striking proof of the truth of my statement. What wealth of imagination, what form and color, what erudition and art, but what a lack of serious purpose, what reluctance to face any exact thought! Ambiguity of expression, indirect allusion, witticisms, vague reflection, but no straightforward or candid dealing with the subject they treat of, namely, life.

Indeed, our writers treat of obscenities and improprieties; in the guise of refined paradox they convey suggestions which thrust men back to primeval savagery, to the lowest dregs, not only of pagan life, but animal life, which we outlived 5000 years ago. Delivering themselves from the Christian life-conception, which for some simply interferes with the accustomed current of their lives, while for others it interferes with certain advantages, men must of necessity return to the pagan life-conception and to the doctrines to which it gave rise. Not only are patriotism and the rights of the aristocracy preached at the present time as they used to be 2000 years ago, but also the coarsest epicureanism and sensuality, with this difference only, – that the teachers of old believed in the doctrines they taught, whereas those of the present day neither do nor can possess any faith in what they utter, because there is no longer any sense in it. When the ground is shifting under our feet, we cannot stand still, we must either recede or advance. It sounds exaggerated to say that the enlightened men of our time, the advanced thinkers, are speciously degrading society, plunging it into a condition worse than pagan, – into a state of primeval barbarism.

In no other matter has this tendency of the leading men of our time been so plainly shown as in their attitude toward that phenomenon in which at present all the inconsistency of social life is concentrated, – toward war, universal armament, and military conscription.

The equivocal, if not unscrupulous, attitude of the educated men of our time toward this question is a striking one. It may be stated from three points of view. Some regard this phenomenon as an accidental state of affairs, which has sprung from the peculiar political situation of Europe, and believe it to be susceptible of adjustment by diplomatic and international mediation, without injury to the structure of nations. Others look upon it as something appalling and cruel, fatal yet unavoidable, – like disease or death. Still others, in cold blood, calmly pronounce war to be an indispensable, salutary, and therefore desirable event.

Men may differ in their views in regard to this matter, but all discuss it as something with which the will of the individuals who are to take part in it has nothing whatever to do; therefore they do not even admit the natural question which presents itself to most men; viz., "Is it my duty to take part in it?" In the opinion of these judges there is no reason in such a question, and every man, whatever may be his personal prejudices in regard to war, must submit in this matter to the demands of the ruling powers.

The attitude of those in the first category, who expect deliverance from war by means of diplomatic and international mediation, is well defined in the results of the London Peace Congress, and in an article, together with letters concerning war from prominent writers, which may be found in the *Revue des Revues* (No. 8, 1891).

These are the results of the Congress.

Having collected from all parts of the globe the opinions of scientists, both written and oral, the Congress, opening with a *Te Deum* in the cathedral, and closing with a dinner and speeches, listened for five days to numerous addresses, and arrived at the following conclusions: —

Resolution I. The Congress affirms its belief that the brotherhood of man involves as a necessary consequence a brotherhood of nations, in which, the true interests of all are acknowledged to be identical. The Congress is convinced that the true basis for an enduring peace will be found in the application by nations of this great principle in all their relations one to another.

II. The Congress recognizes the important influence which Christianity exercises upon the moral and political progress of mankind, and earnestly urges upon ministers of the gospel and other teachers of religion and morality the duty of setting forth these principles of Peace and Good-will, which occupy such a central place in the teaching of Jesus Christ, of philosophers and of moralists, and *it recommends that the third Sunday in December in each year be set apart for that purpose.*

III. The Congress expresses its opinion that all teachers of history should call the attention of the young to the grave evils inflicted on mankind in all ages by war, and to the fact that such war has been waged, as a rule, for most inadequate causes.

IV. The Congress protests against the use of military drill in connection with the physical exercises of schools, and suggests the formation of brigades for saving life rather than any of quasi-military character; and it urges the desirability of impressing on the Board of Examiners, who formulate the questions for examination, the propriety of guiding the minds of children into the principles of Peace.

V. The Congress holds that the doctrine of the universal rights of man requires that aboriginal and weaker races shall be guarded from injustice and fraud when brought into contact with civilized peoples, alike as to their territories, their liberties, and their property, and that they shall be shielded from the vices which are so prevalent among the so-called advanced races of men. It further expresses its conviction that there should be concert of action among the nations for the accomplishment of these ends. The Congress desires to express its hearty appreciation of the conclusions arrived at by the late Anti-Slavery Conference, held in Brussels, for the amelioration of the condition of the peoples of Africa.

VI. The Congress believes that the warlike prejudices and traditions which are still fostered in the various nationalities, and the misrepresentations by leaders of public opinion in legislative assemblies, or through the press, are not infrequently indirect causes of war. The Congress is therefore of opinion that these ends should be counteracted by the publication of accurate statements and information that would tend to the removal of misunderstanding amongst nations, and recommends to the Inter-Parliamentary Committee the importance of considering the question of starting an international newspaper, which should have such a purpose as one of its primary objects.

VII. The Congress proposes to the Inter-Parliamentary Conference that the utmost support should be given to every project for the unification of weights and measures, of coinage, tariffs, postal and telegraphic arrangements, means of transport, etc., which would assist in constituting a commercial, industrial, and scientific union of the peoples.

VIII. In view of the vast moral and social influence of woman, the Congress urges upon every woman throughout the world to sustain, as wife, mother, sister, or citizen, the things that make for peace, as otherwise she incurs grave responsibilities for the continuance of the systems of war and militarism, which not only desolate but corrupt the home-life of the nation. To concentrate and to practically apply this influence, the Congress recommends that women should unite themselves with societies for the promotion of international peace.

IX. This Congress expresses the hope that the Financial Reform Association and other similar societies in Europe and America should unite in convoking at an early date a conference to consider the best means of establishing equitable commercial relations between States by the reduction of import duties as a step toward Free Trade. The Congress feels that it can affirm that the whole of Europe desires Peace, and is impatiently waiting for the moment when it shall see the end of those crushing armaments which, under the plea of defense, become in their turn a danger, by keeping alive mutual distrust, and are, at the same time, the cause of the general economic disturbance which stands in the way of settling in a satisfactory manner the problems of labor and poverty, which should take precedence of all others.

X. This Congress, recognizing that a general disarmament would be the best guarantee of *Peace*, and would lead to the solution, in the general interest, of those questions which now must divide States, expresses the wish that a Congress of Representatives of all the States of Europe may be assembled as soon as possible to consider the means of effecting a gradual general disarmament, which already seems feasible.

XI. This Congress, considering that the timidity of a single Power or other cause might delay indefinitely the convocation of the above-mentioned Congress, is of the opinion that the Government which should first dismiss any considerable number of soldiers would confer a signal benefit on Europe and mankind, because it would oblige other Governments, urged on by public opinion, to

follow its example, and by the moral force of this accomplished fact would have increased rather than diminished the conditions of its national defense.

XII. This Congress, considering the question of disarmament, as well as the Peace question generally, depends upon public opinion, recommends the Peace Societies here represented, and all friends of Peace, to carry on an active propaganda among the people, especially at the time of Parliamentary elections, in order that the electors should give their votes to those candidates who have included in their programme Peace, Disarmament, and Arbitration.

XIII. This Congress congratulates the friends of Peace on the resolution adopted by the International American Conference (with the exception of the representatives of Chili and Mexico) at Washington in April last, by which it was recommended that arbitration should be obligatory in all controversies concerning diplomatic and consular privileges, boundaries, territories, indemnities, right of navigation, and the validity, construction, and enforcement of treaties, and in all other causes, whatever their origin, nature, or occasion, except only those which, in the judgment of any of the nations involved in the controversy, may imperil its independence.

XIV. This Congress respectfully recommends this resolution to the statesmen of Europe, and expresses the ardent desire that treaties in similar terms be speedily entered into between the other nations of the world.

XV. This Congress expresses its satisfaction at the adoption by the Spanish Senate, on June 18th last, of a project of law authorizing the Government to negotiate general or special treaties of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes, except those relating to the independence and internal government of the States affected; also at the adoption of resolutions to a like effect by the Norwegian Storting on March 6th last, and by the Italian Chamber on July 11th.

XVI. That a committee of five be appointed to prepare and address communications, in the name of the Congress, to the principal religious, political, economical, labor, and peace organizations in civilized countries, requesting them to send petitions to the governmental authorities of their respective countries, praying that measures be taken for the formation of suitable tribunals for the adjudication of international questions, so as to avoid the resort to war.

XVII. Seeing (1) that the object pursued by all Peace Societies is the establishment of juridical order between nations:

(2) That neutralization by international treaties constitutes a step toward this juridical state, and lessens the number of districts in which war can be carried on:

This Congress recommends a larger extension of the rule of neutralization, and expresses the wish: —

(1) That all treaties which at present assure to certain States the benefit of neutrality remain in force, or, if necessary, be amended in a manner to render the neutrality more effective, either by extending neutralization to the whole of the State, of which a part only may be neutralized, or by ordering the demolition of fortresses, which constitute rather a peril than a guarantee for neutrality.

(2) That new treaties, provided that they are in harmony with the wishes of the populations concerned, be concluded for establishing the neutralization of other States.

XVIII. The Committee Section proposes: —

(1) That the next Congress be held immediately before or immediately after the next session of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference, and at the same places.

(2) That the question of an international Peace Emblem be postponed *sine die*.

(3) The adoption of the following resolutions: —

(a) Resolved, that we express our satisfaction at the formal and official overtures of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, addressed to the highest representatives of each church organization in Christendom, inviting the same to unite with itself in a general conference, the object of which shall be to promote the substitution of international arbitration for war.

(b) That this Congress, assembled in London from the 14th to the 19th July, desires to express its profound reverence for the memory of Aurelio Salfi, the great Italian jurist, a member of the Committee of the International League of Peace and Liberty.

(4) That the memorial to the various heads of the civilized States adopted by this Congress, and signed by the President, should, so far as practicable, be presented to each Power by an influential deputation.

(5) That the Organization Committee be empowered to make the needful verbal emendations in the papers and resolutions presented.

(6) That the following resolutions be adopted: —

(a) A resolution of thanks to the Presidents of the various sittings of the Congress.

(b) A resolution of thanks to the chairman, the secretary, and the members of the Bureau of this Congress.

(c) A resolution of thanks to the conveners and members of the sectional committees.

(d) A resolution of thanks to Rev. Canon Scott Holland, Rev. Dr. Reuan Thomas, and Rev. J. Morgan Gibbon, for their pulpit addresses before the Congress, and that they be requested to furnish copies of the same for publication; and also Stamford Hall Congregational Church for the use of those buildings for public services.

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