

# LEO TOLSTOY

THE JOURNAL OF LEO  
TOLSTOI FIRST.

VOLUME—1895-1899

**Leo Tolstoy**  
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**First. Volume—1895-1899**

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# **Leo Tolstoi**

## **The Journal of Leo Tolstoi**

### **(First Volume—1895-1899)**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The ultimate meaning of the Russian Revolution which took place in March, 1917, can be best understood through the pages of the Journal of Leo Tolstoi which is here printed. The spiritual qualities which make up the mind and personality of Tolstoi are the spiritual qualities which make up the new era among men which is being waged so painfully and so uncompromisingly at the present moment on the soil of Russia. One holds the key to the other, for no land but Russia could have produced a Tolstoi, and in no land but Russia could Tolstoi have been so embraced and so absorbed.

They are both flesh of each other's flesh, and I place them equally in greatness against each other. Great and wonderful as is the Russian people, so Tolstoi was as great and wonderful as the Russian people. I say this knowing well the pain and impatience both felt for each other in the long eighty-two years of Tolstoi's life here, but it was the pain and the impatience of great love and infinite understanding, of feeling and knowing each other's

pulse-beats, and not the misunderstanding of strangers. It was the wise father doubting the impatient methods of his children; it was the ardent children desiring and struggling to accomplish the wishes of the father and being lost in the maelstrom of an insistent reality.

The youth went faster than the father, and yet so infinite and universal were the words of the latter that when the last summings-up are made both stand together in total harmony and agreement. Tolstoi at thirty took no part in the great educational agrarian movement of the latter Fifties, and even had a fine scorn for their exponents which did not leave him in his later years – witness the phrase against Herzen and Chernishevsky, “raised to great men,” he said, “and who ought to be grateful to the government and the censorship, without which they would have been the most unnoticed of sketch-writers.” And yet it was Herzen and Chernishevsky and Dobrolubov, these “sketch-writers,” who kept up the fire of agrarian reform and who practically forced the issue upon Alexander II. Tolstoi ignored the whole revolutionary movement of that time; even more than ignored it; threw himself seemingly into the opposite camp, leading the life of a gay fêted hero returned from the Crimean War. But his *Morning of a Landed Proprietor* shows that he was thinking deeply even at that time of the social problems around him, only he was thinking more slowly than the rest. He was just waking up to the fact that the peasant conditions needed improvement, at the time when all around him the youth had

passed to the idea that it was not an improvement that they needed, but an absolute change in the fundamental ideas of property. It took him forty years to say, that you might as well ask him how to make use of the ownership, or the labour or the rent of a bonded slave as to ask him for advice as to the problem of owning of land. Here was no reformer speaking, but one who was united with the revolutionary thought around him.

But when the men of the Sixties were making that answer for themselves, and had won the first great step toward the change – the abolition of serfdom – Tolstoi was away altogether from his native land writing that great epoch of the War of 1812 — *War and Peace*. It was because this great soul was undogmatic, and reached out into the world not by mass thinking, but marvellously enough entirely by himself, laying his roots far and deep, that he seemed so slow moving. Yet it was the direction and the end that counted, and the end finds him, like the race between the tortoise and the hare – that he is still ahead.

Even Russia will have far and long to travel to come to that kingdom of God on earth, to that conception of the manifestation of the will of God on earth, which is the spiritual ideal of Tolstoi, and toward which, express it in any materialistic or naturalistic terms it may, the Russian nation has with one mind been working with such marvellous self-consciousness.

Again, after the emancipation of the serfs, Tolstoi seemed to fail the New Russia, interesting himself only at this moment with the education of the youth and the need of reform – ever the

need of reform, when already for over a decade the cry of Russia was for new forms entirely, new land arrangements, new relations between man and man, and man and his property. The time had come, they said, for the Will of the People to be made manifest.

But before Tolstoi could decide on that, he had to decide on a more fundamental problem of what his relation was to God, as well as what his relation was to man. In other words, what were the true spiritual relations between man and man, not only the economic, political and social ones. And it is this attempt to solve the real fundamental meaning to all relationship, the very reason for the youth's outbursts against the economic, political and social injustices that existed, that kept him moving forward so slowly. For he moved whole worlds at a step.

The only reason for life, he said, is the universal desire for well being, which in man, whose reason has awakened, is expanded into a desire for universal welfare; in other words, for love. For he knows that he is not a separate being, but a part of a whole, and therefore it is meaningless to think that he can obtain anything for himself alone. It is only in struggling and attaining for the Whole that he can find his true life.

The Russian youth agreed with him entirely. To their logic, the struggle for universal welfare led to terrorism; to Tolstoi, to the absolute non-resistance to evil by violence. The youth said the will of God is being thwarted by a band of oppressors. If we do away with the oppressors we can get together in mutual love. Tolstoi said that he who thinks he can violate the will of God for

an immediate good is only short-sighted. Never at any moment can the will of God be thwarted and the good attained.

For a while the Russian Government rather approved of the Tolstoyan attitude of non-resistance to evil. The one who used the greatest amount of violence and evil of all, was pleased to meet the philosophy which advised non-resistance to it. But Tolstoi grew and travelled in his long years and he had to change his conclusions, so that his logic led him to that most self-conscious and difficult of all revolutionary movements, passive-resistance. Take no part in violence, he said; therefore, pay no taxes that support a government which violates, and do not serve in the army which is an act of violence in itself. It was then that Tolstoi was looked upon with askance by the Russian authorities and formerly anathematised from the church. It was to his followers that the more drastic punishment of imprisonment and exile was meted out.

Toward the latter years of his life, his great human heart could not remain quite closed to the violence around him, and religious thinker that he was, he had to stop his meditations to cry out against the Kishineff massacres of the Jews and against the raising of the scaffolds and the tying of the "Stolypine's neckties," that most telling nick-name of the Russian people for the noose, which was tied even for school children on the crossroads of Russia after the bitter failure of the revolution of 1905.

It was only in *What Is Art?* that the Russian people and Tolstoi were unanimously at one. Art is to serve the people, to



be of the people, to be something understandable by all people. There were to be no dogmas for art, no German metaphysics for art. It was merely the means of expressing to his neighbour the mysteries that went on in the soul of the artist. There was no quarrel here between his fellow countrymen and the great thinker. Everything was to be for the people; the spiritual manifestations of life as well as the material.

How to make clear that for all this seeming lack of harmony, there existed the greatest bond of all between this teacher and his children. Thousands in Russia took his life as an example and left the vainglories of the city with all its false standards and went to live among the people. They went not only to serve them but to be one of them, to live by the sweat of their brow as the masses did, because it was the only moral thing to do, and because the greatest happiness lay in the spiritual values of life, and because, as Tolstoi himself says, "It is good with them, but with us it is shameful."

I remember so well the deep-set eyes and the long shaggy eyebrows of that all-knowing seer, as he sat on the veranda of his home in Yasnaya Polyana one May afternoon in 1906, and told us that he was a religious thinker and not a political one but that to his mind the revolution in Russia would take fifty years to develop. And with that fine scorn for parliamentarism which would have rejoiced the heart of any syndicalist, he added that that which we were witnessing now, the assembling of the first Duma, was only the first scene of the first act of a five act drama

and it was high comedy!

The second scene followed soon and turned out to be bitter tragedy, and before it was quite over Tolstoi wandered off on that last pilgrimage which ended in the little railway station of Ostopova. He succumbed at last to that “temptation” he speaks of so freely in his Journal, to leave his home conditions, negate himself entirely, and find himself again, merged and at one with the Whole. And the Great Deliverer came and offered him even a greater fusion with all, giving him that “other post,” the “new appointment” he so ardently prayed for in life. When that happened he became at once clear and lucid even to those nearest him – who had criticised him the most. The Russian youth was disconsolate. Our spiritual guide is gone, they cried. Who will hold up the candle for us now? What black night is there in the world, and how to grope our way in it alone!

How lonely it was without that spiritual guide!

The first act of the March Revolution was to redecorate the grave of Tolstoi in the forest of Zakaz, to make the sacred pilgrimage to his resting place and tell the father of the good news – the will of God is being established, reason is awakened in man. Love toward neighbour; nay, the greatest of all, love toward enemies, is being accomplished.

It is with a feeling of reverence that I bring this gift of the inner soul of Tolstoi to the English-speaking public. The very formlessness of the phrases of this Journal helps toward a sincerity of thought which shows itself pure by its nakedness.

Tolstoi himself knew the value of these documents, for one man was to him as another, and the sincere gropings of a man's reason toward the understanding of the meaning of life was of value even if they were his own, and especially if they were of one who had lived much and thought much as he did. "It is especially disagreeable to me," he writes, "when people who have lived little and thought little do not believe me, and, not understanding me, argue with me about moral problems. It would be the same for which a veterinary surgeon would be hurt if people who were not familiar with his art would argue with him." And Tolstoi knew that he knew his art, he knew consciously, since the spiritual awakening that came to him in the Eighties, the great mission to which he dedicated his life – to find a moral justification of living – and it is therefore that he laid special stress in the disposal of these documents for the public after his death. The volume here printed is only four years of over sixty years of Journal which he kept since his early twenties. They are published first, because it is only with the Journal beginning 1890 that his editor and friend, V. G. Chertkov, has the copied manuscripts in their entirety – from that date up to Tolstoi's death in 1910.

Over and over again in his life, Tolstoi attempted to make special and legal provision for his journals and notebooks, as he calls them, that they be given and spread free to the public, and he designated his friend and follower, who has edited and published this volume in Russian, as the practical inheritor and executor of these manuscripts. He was to publish them in their entirety,

except for certain revisions so that there should be preserved, as Tolstoi expressed it, that which ought to be preserved and there should be thrown out that which ought to be thrown out.

“I know,” he wrote to Chertkov, February 8, 1900, “that no one bears such an esteem, respect and love for my spiritual life and its expression as you do. I always said it and now I write it in my notes which express my wishes after my death, asking you especially, and only you, to undertake the revision of my papers.”

This Chertkov has done exceedingly well in the original Russian edition, giving in double brackets the number of the words he left out, which seemed to him necessary on account of their too intimate character. These places I have merely indicated by three points. Unfortunately the Russian volume was printed under the old régime and deletions had to be made on account of the censor, which, because of the difficulty of communication during the war, it was impossible to fill in. These places are also designated in this volume by three points, but in the Russian edition they are given in double parenthesis, also enclosing the number of the words left out. So that a record of all omissions have been kept.

The problem of disposing of these documents after his death according to his principles against copyrights, occupied Tolstoi for many years. The Russian law nullified any such disposal of property, for legally the inheritor had to be a fixed person “and works to be disposed of free to all” meant nothing. He therefore wrote many wills, defining and modifying his position in all

possible ways so that his ideas might be carried out, and in such a form that they could not be frustrated by any one.

His plans were threefold:

1. That all his works written after 1881 as well as all his writings written before that year (the year that marks his spiritual regeneration) but not published until later or not published at all up to his death, should be no one's property, but be given free to the public for printing and translation.

2. That all his manuscripts and documents (among that number the journals, first drafts of books, letters, etc.,) which would remain after his death should be given over to V. G. Chertkov, who was to revise them and arrange them in suitable form for publication.

3. That the estate of Yasnaya Polyana should be given over to the peasants.

Tolstoi's first idea was that Chertkov should be one of the legal inheritors, together with the Countess Tolstoi, his wife. But Chertkov refused for various personal reasons, he says, but mainly because he thought that the arrangement for the transfer of property could be best facilitated and could be more delicately managed if some one member of the Tolstoi family was designated instead of an outsider. Tolstoi, therefore, designated as his legal inheritor his youngest daughter Alexandra, who stood in close sympathy with him in his spiritual ideas, and, in case of her death before his own, his eldest daughter Tatiana. He hoped that his daughters, together with the Countess

Tolstoi, would fulfil his requests concerning the disposal of his posthumous documents and the gift of the estate according to his wishes.

After Tolstoi's death the estate was given to the peasants by means of the sale of most of the posthumous documents which enabled his daughter Alexandra to buy back the estate from the family and give it to the peasants as directed by Tolstoi, but in the matter of the journals it was more difficult to arrange from the fact that the Countess Tolstoi placed all these journals and notebooks in the Moscow Historical Museum on the ground that they were a gift of Tolstoi to her during his lifetime and that therefore she had a right to dispose of them as she thought best. The matter would have taken only a legal process in the court to disentangle, a thing which the Countess Alexandra Tolstoi did not wish to undertake as being against the spirit of her father to use legal force to come to an agreement.

Chertkov, therefore, was forced to use only such copies of the original journals and notebooks which he happened to have in his possession. The present volume is made from a copy done by the hands of the Prince and Princess Obolensky, the son-in-law and daughter of Tolstoi, who also stood very near to Tolstoi spiritually, were conscientious in their fulfilment of such tasks for him, and who knew his handwriting very well. The original documents are still in the Moscow Historical Museum, but Chertkov has promised to publish the volumes and journals which he has from the years 1900 to 1910, and has already

brought out a second volume of this series, which dates from Tolstoi's early years in the twenties.

Whatever value this volume has as a historical and exact transcript of Tolstoi's original jottings-down as they came to him, it has much more value as a transcript of the thoughts of a great Russian which have so permeated his people that they are now being rewritten on the pages of Russian history. It is because the blood of his brother calls to him from under the ground, that the Russian has undertaken to advance one step nearer to the fulfilment of the great law – to live together in harmony, to serve his brother and to do the one work – which is the one work for all, to love.

The hundred-years readiness for sacrifice for the common good, the willingness to go to exile and death of four generations of men and women, the red flag now flying over the Winter Palace in Petrograd with the letters of gold, "Proletarians of all Nation Unite," the insistent call to the peoples of the world to overthrow all oppressors and live together in mutual harmony, the trumpet calls of a democracy whose tones are so strange and new, that we across the borders seem not to hear or understand them, all have their spiritual counterpart in the pages of this book. It is Russia that speaks here.

I must give my thanks to Mr. Alexander Gourevich who so carefully compared the original text and English translation, and to Mr. Joseph Peroshnikoff who patiently revised the notes and assisted in the compilation of the index.

*Rose Strunsky.*

New York, May, 1917.



# THE JOURNAL OF LEO TOLSTOI

*I continue*<sup>1 2</sup> October 28. Yasnaya Polyana.

Have been thinking:

Have been thinking one thing: that this life which we see around us is a movement of matter according to fixed, well-known laws; but that in us we feel the presence of an altogether different law, having nothing in common with the others and requiring from us the fulfilment of its demands. It can be said that we see and recognise all the other laws only because we have

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<sup>1</sup> With the words, "I continue," Tolstoi begins a new note-book of the Journal; this note-book presupposes another which the editors have only in separate fragments. The previous note-book ended with the following note: "October 8, 1895, Y. P. "(I am beginning an entry to-day with just what I finished two days ago.) "I have only a short time left to live and I feel terribly like saying so much: I feel like saying what we can and must and cannot help believing – about the cruelty of deception which people impose upon themselves; the economic, political and religious deception, and about the seduction of stupefying oneself – wine, and tobacco considered so innocent; and about marriage and about education and about the horrors... Everything has ripened and I want to speak about it. So that there is no time for performing those artistic stupidities which I was prepared to do in *Resurrection*. "But just now I asked myself: but can I write, knowing that no one will read? And I experienced something of disappointment; but only for a time; that means that there was some love of fame in it. But there was also the principal thing in it – the need before God. "Father, help me to follow the same path of love. And I thank Thee. From Thee flows everything."

<sup>2</sup> These superior figures refer to the editor's notes which begin on [page 299](#).

in us this law. If we did not recognise this law, we would not recognise the others.

This law is different from all the rest, principally in this, that those other laws are outside of us and forces us to obey them; but this law is in us – and more than in us; it is our very selves and therefore it does not force us when we obey it, but on the contrary frees us, because in following it we become ourselves. And for this reason we are drawn to fulfil this law and we sooner or later will inevitably fulfil it. In this then consists the freedom of the will. This freedom consists in this, that we should recognise that which is – namely that this inner law is ourselves.

This inner law is what we call reason, conscience, love, the good, God. These words have different meanings, but all from different angles mean one and the same thing. In our understanding of this inner law, the son of God, consists indeed the essence of the Christian doctrine.

The world can be looked upon in this way: a world exists governed by certain, well-known laws, and within this world are beings subject to the same laws, but who at the same time bear in themselves another law not in accord with the former laws of the world, a higher law, and this law must inevitably triumph within these beings and defeat the lower law. And in this struggle and in the gradual victory of the higher law over the lower, in this only is life for man and the whole world.

*Oct. 29. Yasnaya Polyana. If I live.* <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In the original, merely the initials of the phrase are used. Thus Tolstoi would often

Nov. 5. Y. P.

I have skipped 6 days. It seems to me, I thought little during this time: I wrote a little, chopped wood and was indisposed – but lived through much. I lived through much, because in fulfilling a promise to S.<sup>4</sup>, I read through all my journals for the past seven years.

It seems to me, I am approaching a simple and clear expression of that by which I live. How good that I didn't finish the Catechism!<sup>5</sup> I think I shall write it differently and better, if the Father wishes it. I understand why it is impossible to say it quickly. If it could be said all at once, by what then would we live in the realm of thought? It will never be given me to go farther than this task.

I just took a walk and understood clearly why I can't make *Resurrection* go better: it was begun falsely. I understood this in thinking over again the story: *Who is Right?*<sup>6</sup> (about children). I

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finish what he had written during the day with I. I L. (If I live), marking ahead in this fashion the date of the following day.

<sup>4</sup> Countess Sophia Andreevna Tolstoi, born Behrs, 1844, wife of Tolstoi. In the Journal, Tolstoi calls her S., S. A., or Sonya.

<sup>5</sup> "Catechism" Tolstoi called that systematic exposition of his philosophy in the form of questions and answers which he had begun about this time. In the text, he calls this work, The Declaration of Faith, or simply, The Declaration. (See entries [December 23, '95](#), and further.) In the following year, 1896, Tolstoi abandoning the catechism form, continued and finished the work, which, in 1898, was published under the title *Christian Doctrine* by *The Free Press* (*Swobodnoe Slovo*) issued by A. and V. Chertkov, England, and later in 1905, it appeared also in Russia.

<sup>6</sup> Tolstoi never returned to the continuation and revision of the plot of the story

understood that one must begin with the life of the peasants, that they are the subject, they are positive, but that the other thing is shadow, the other thing is negative. And I understood the same thing about *Resurrection*. One must begin with her.<sup>7</sup> I want to begin immediately.

During this time there were letters: from Kenworthy,<sup>8</sup> a beautiful one from Shkarvan,<sup>9</sup> and from a Dukhobor in Tiflis.<sup>10</sup>

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*Who is Right?* which had been begun by him about this time, and so it has remained unfinished. The beginning of the story as it was written by Tolstoi, is printed in his collected works (see the full collection of works by Tolstoi, edited by P. Biriukov, published by Sytin, 1913).

<sup>7</sup> I.e., with Katiusha Maslov and not with Nekhliudov, as the first form of the novel was begun.

<sup>8</sup> John C. Kenworthy, an English Methodist minister, a writer and lecturer, who shared at that time the opinions of Tolstoi and who founded in England an agricultural colony composed of his co-thinkers. The author of the work, *Tolstoi, His Life and Works*, London, 1902. There was printed abroad in the Russian Language in the journal of *The Free Press* (1899, No. 2, England) his *The Anatomy of Poverty*. They were lectures to the English workingmen on political economy, which struck Tolstoi favourably and which he included in the manuscript which was then being issued under the title of *Archives of L. N. Tolstoi, No. II*, and to which he even wrote an introduction. In later life, Kenworthy fell ill of nervous prostration and was taken to a sanatorium.

<sup>9</sup> Albert Shkarvan, a Slav, who shared Tolstoi's opinions. An army surgeon in the hospital in Kashai (Hungary), he resigned from this service in February, 1895, for religious reasons, for which he was imprisoned for four months.

<sup>10</sup> The Russian sect of Dukhobors, living in the Caucasus in 1895, to the number of several thousand souls, upon the suggestion of their leader, Peter Vasilevich Verigin, who was at that time in exile, gave notice to the authorities that they would no longer take the oath or serve in military service, and, in a word, would no longer take any part in governmental violence, and in the night from the 28th to the 29th of June of that year, burned all their weapons. Cossacks were sent against them and after some

Have written to no one for a long time. General indisposition and no energy. The stage manager and the decorator<sup>11</sup> were here, students from Kharkov against whom I think I did not sin, Ivan Ivanovich Bochkarev,<sup>12</sup> Kolasha.<sup>13</sup>...

*Nov. 6. Y. P. If I live.*

*November 7. Y. P.*

I wrote a little these two days on the new *Resurrection*. My conscience hurts when I remember how trivially I began it. So far, I rejoice when I think of the work as I am beginning it.

I chopped a little. I went to Ovsianikovo, had a good talk with

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executions, two hundred were put in prison, many were exiled from their native land and forced to live in Armenian, Georgian and Tartar villages in the Province of Tiflis; about two or three families in a village, without land and with the prohibition against intercourse among themselves. Those Dukhobors who remained in active service and refused to serve, were sent away to disciplinary regiments. (See *Dukhobors*, by P. Biriukov, 1908, publishers, *Posrednik*; besides there is much material pertaining to the history and the movement of the Dukhobors printed in various issues of *The Free Press*.)

<sup>11</sup> The manager of the Moscow Little Theatre, Walts, used to call on Tolstoi for the purpose of receiving information about the staging of his drama, *The Power of Darkness*.

<sup>12</sup> Ivan Ivanovich Bochkarev (died 1915), former revolutionary Slavophile who suffered much for his convictions. He became acquainted with the group of people around Tolstoi because of his belief in vegetarianism, to which he arrived independently of any one. In his personal conversations with Tolstoi, Bochkarev disputed his religious convictions, heatedly denying all his religious metaphysics. At this time he lived near the village of Ovsianikovo, six versts from Yasnaya Polyana, on the estate of Tolstoi's daughter, T. L. Sukhotin.

<sup>13</sup> Prince Nikolai Leonidovich Obolensky, the grandnephew of Tolstoi – later married to Tolstoi's daughter, Maria Lvovna.

Maria Alexandrovna<sup>14</sup> and Ivan Ivanovich.<sup>15</sup> Waltz's assistant was here and a Frenchman with a poem...

*November 8, 9. Y. P.*

Have written little on *Resurrection*. I was not disappointed, but I was weak.

Yesterday Dunaev<sup>16</sup> came. Chopped much yesterday, overtired myself. To-day I walked. I went to Constantine Bieli's.<sup>17</sup> He is very much to be pitied. Then I walked in the village. It is good with them, but with us it is shameful. Wrote letters. Wrote to Bazhenov<sup>18</sup> and three others. Thought:

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<sup>14</sup> Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt, an old friend, who shared Tolstoi's opinions and whose personality and whole life, Tolstoi esteemed very highly. In the Journal of February 18, 1909, he wrote, "I never knew and do not know any woman spiritually higher than Maria Alexandrovna." In the eighties, when class-teacher in the Nicholaievsky Orphan Asylum in Moscow, Mme. Schmidt made the acquaintance of the forbidden works of Tolstoi, upon which she left the asylum and went to live on the land, and up to her death supported herself by the labours of her own hand. The last ten years of her life she lived near the village of Ovsiannikovo, on the estate of T. L. Sukhotin, procuring her livelihood by the sale of the berries and vegetables from her own garden and the dairy products from her cows. She died October 18, 1911.

<sup>15</sup> With Bochkarev.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Nikiphorovich Dunaev, an old friend of the Tolstoi family, later one of the directors of the Moscow Commercial Bank.

<sup>17</sup> Constantin Nicholaievich Zyabrev, nick-named "Bieli" (White), a peasant from Yasnaya Polyana, who was also called by the villagers, "the Blessed." Tolstoi liked to speak with him. He lived in the greatest poverty and never bothered about the next day. At the time of the visit, mentioned in the Journal, he was already near death and soon passed away. Some years before this, Tolstoi helped him to rebuild his cabin.

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Ivan Romanovich Bazhenov, who lived at this time in Vladivostok, sent Tolstoi his manuscript essay on the necessity of calling an ecumenical council and asked his

1) The confirmation of the fact, that reason liberates the latent love in man for justice is the proverb, “Comprendre c’est tout pardonner.” If you forgive a man, you will love him. To forgive means to cease to condemn and to hate.

2) If a man believes something at the word of another, he will lose his belief in that which he would have inevitably believed in, had he not trusted the other one. He who believes in ... etc., ceases to believe in reason. They even say straight out, one ought not to believe in reason.

3) ...

A very interesting letter from Holland, about what a youth is to do who is called to military service, when he is the sole supporter of his mother.<sup>19</sup>

*November 10. Y. P.*

Slept with difficulty. Weakness both physical and intellectual and – for which I am at fault – also moral. Rode horseback.

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opinion on this question. In the copy of the Journal at the disposal of the editors, and perhaps in the original of the Journal, it was written Bozhanov.

<sup>19</sup> A letter from G. F. Van-Duyf from Amsterdam. In the letter of November 18th, Tolstoi answered his letter as follows: “Once a man has understood and is permeated with the consciousness that his true happiness, the happiness of his eternal life, that which is not limited by this world, consists in the fulfilment of the will of God and that against this will ... then no consideration can force this man to act against his true happiness. And if there is an inner struggle and if, as in that case about which you spoke, family considerations come out on top, it only serves as a proof that the true teaching of Christ was not understood and was accepted by him who could not follow it; this only proves that he wanted to appear as a Christian, but he was not so in reality.”

Posha<sup>20</sup> arrived... A wonderful French pamphlet about war.<sup>21</sup> Yes, 20 years are needed for that thought to become a general one. My head aches and seems to crackle and rumble. Father, help me when I am most weak that I may not fall morally. It is possible.

*Nov. 11. Y. P. If I live.*

I write and think: it is possible that I won't be. Every day I make attempts, and I get more accustomed to it.

*To-day November 15.*

I have been so weak all the time I could write nothing except a few letters. A letter to Shkarvan. There have been here, Dunaiev, Posha, Maria Vasilievna.<sup>22</sup> They left yesterday. Yesterday also I went to see Maria Alexandrovna; she is ill. To-day Aunt Tanya<sup>23</sup> and Sonya came.

I didn't sleep at night and therefore didn't work. But I wrote on the girl *Konefsky*<sup>24</sup> and a little in my journal. I am

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<sup>20</sup> Paul Ivanovich Biriukov, one of Tolstoi's nearest friends and followers, who later wrote his biography (two volumes, published by *Posrednik*, Moscow). Tolstoi often calls him Posha in the Journal.

<sup>21</sup> The editors were unable to discover the title of this pamphlet.

<sup>22</sup> Maria Vasilievna Siaskov, an amanuensis, who was employed for many years in the publishing house of *Posrednik*.

<sup>23</sup> Tatiana Andreevna Kuzminsky (born Behrs), a sister-in-law of Tolstoi, wife of Senator A. M. Kuzminsky.

<sup>24</sup> *Konevski*, this is the way Tolstoi called the novel, *Resurrection*, which he had begun then, the subject of which he adopted at the end of the eighties from stories told by the well-known Court-worker, A. Th. Koni.



reading Schopenhauer's<sup>25</sup> "Aphorisms." Very good. Only put "The service of God" instead of "The recognition of the vanity of life," and we agree.

Now 2 o'clock, I shall write out later what I have noted down.<sup>26</sup>  
*December 7. Moscow.*

Almost a month since I have made any entries. During this time we moved to Moscow. The weakness has passed a little, and I am working earnestly, though with little success, on the Declaration of Faith.<sup>27</sup> Yesterday I wrote a little article on whipping.<sup>28</sup> I lay down to sleep in the day and had just dozed off – I felt as if some one jerked me; I got up, began to think about

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<sup>25</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), the great German philosopher. Tolstoi evidently read the translation by Ph. V. Chernigovitz, *Aphorisms and Maxims*, in two parts, 1891–1892. Tolstoi, as early as 1869, wrote to A. A. Fet: "Do you know what the present summer meant to me? Continual enthusiasm over Schopenhauer and a pile of spiritual pleasures which I never have experienced before... Schopenhauer is one of the greatest geniuses among people."

<sup>26</sup> That which was noted down in his pocket note-book – Tolstoi had the habit of putting down thoughts which came to him and which seemed to him important in a pocket note-book which never left him. Later he copied the most valuable thoughts into his Journal, revising, more or less, as he went along. In rewriting from the note-book Tolstoi often began the entry with these words, "I have been thinking" or "I have it noted."

<sup>27</sup> See [Note 4](#).

<sup>28</sup> This essay, entitled *Shameful*, pointing out the cruelty and senselessness of corporal punishment which the law at that time applied to the peasants, was printed with omissions and alterations in the Russian newspapers and later abroad in full in *Leaflets of The Free Press*, No. IV, England, 1899; later it was printed in *The Full Collected Works of L. N. Tolstoi*, published by Sytin, subscribed and popular editions, volume XVIII.

whipping, and wrote it out.

During this time, I went to the theatre<sup>29</sup> for the rehearsals of the Power of Darkness. Art, beginning as a game, has continued to be the toy of adults. This is also proved by music, of which I have heard much. It is ineffectual. On the contrary, it detracts when there is ascribed to it the unsuitable meaning which is ascribed to it. Realism, moreover, weakens its significance ...

N. refused to serve in the military. I called on him.<sup>30</sup> Philosophov<sup>31</sup> died... Wrote several worthless letters.

I have thought during this time much – in meaning. Much of it I could not understand and have forgotten.

1) I have often wanted to suffer, wanted persecution. That means that I was lazy and didn't want to work, so that others should work for me, torturing me, and I should only suffer.

2) It is terrible, the perversions ... of the mind to which men expose children for their own purposes during the time of their education. The rule of conscious materialism is only explained by this. The child is instilled with such nonsense that afterwards the materialistic, limited, false conception, which is not developed to the conclusions which would show its falsity, appears like an

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<sup>29</sup> In the Moscow Little Theatre.

<sup>30</sup> N, a young artist living in the home of the Tolstois, after refusing military service on account of religious convictions, was placed in the military hospital in Moscow in the ward for the diseases of the heart, where he was visited by Tolstoi. Later, various difficult experiences and spiritual changes led him to agree to military service...

<sup>31</sup> Nikolai Alexeievitch Philosophov, father of Countess S. N. Tolstoi, wife of Count I. L. Tolstoi.

enormous conquest of the intellect.

3) I made a note, “Violence frees,” and it was something very clear and important, and now I don’t remember what it was at all.

*I have remembered. December 23.* Violence is a temptation because it frees us from the strain of attention, from the work of reasoning: one must labour to undo a knot; to cut it, is shorter.

4) A usual perversion of reason, which is made through a violently enforced faith, is to make men satisfied either with idolatry or with materialism, which at bottom is one and the same thing. Faith in the reality of our conceptions is faith in an idol, and the consequences are the same; one must bring sacrifices to it.

5) I can imagine consciousness transferred to the life of the spirit to such a degree that the sufferings of the body would be met gladly.

6) A beautiful woman smiles, and we think that because she smiles she says something good and true when she smiles. But often the smile seasons something entirely foul.

7) Education. It is worth while occupying oneself with education, in order to find out all one’s shortcomings. Seeing them, you will begin to correct them. But to correct oneself is indeed the best method of education for one’s children and for others’ and for grown-up people.

Just now I read a letter from Shkarvan<sup>32</sup> that medical help

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<sup>32</sup> A. A. Shkarvan sent Tolstoi his letter entitled “Why It Is Impossible to Serve as a Military Doctor.” Later this letter, in revised form, appeared in his book, *My*

does not appear to him like a boon, that the lengthening of many empty lives for many hundred years is much less important to him than the weakest *blowing*, as he writes, (a puff) on the spark of divine love in the heart of another. Here then in this *blowing*, lies the whole art of education. But to kindle it in others, one must kindle it in oneself.

8) To love means to desire that which the beloved object desires. The objects of love desire opposing things, and therefore, we can only love that which desires one and the same thing. But that which desires one and the same thing is God.

9) Man beginning to live, loves only himself, and separates himself from other beings in that he constantly loves that which alone constitutes his being. But as soon as he recognises himself as a separate being, he recognises also his own love, and he is no longer content with this love for himself and he begins to love other beings. And the more he lives a conscious life, the greater and greater number of beings he will begin to love, though not with such a stable and unceasing love as that with which he loves himself, but nevertheless, in such a way that he wishes good to everything he loves, and he rejoices at this good, and suffers at the evil which tries the beloved beings, and he unites into one all that he loves.

As life is love, why not suppose that my “self,” that which I consider to be myself and love with a special love, is perhaps the

union I made in a former life of things which I loved, just as I am making a union of things now. The other has already taken place and this one is taking place.

Life is the enlargement of love, the widening of its borders, and this widening is going on in various lives. In the present life, this widening appears to me in the form of love. This widening is necessary for my inner life and it is also necessary for the life of this world. But my life can manifest itself not only in this form. It manifests itself in an innumerable quantity of forms. Only this one is apparent to me.

But in the meantime, the movement of life understood by me in this world, through the enlargement of love in myself and through the union of beings through love, produces at the same time other effects, one or many, unseen by me. As for instance, I put together 8 toy cubes to make a picture on one side of them, not seeing the other sides of the constructed cubes, but on the other sides are being formed pictures just as regular, though unseen by me.

(All this was very clear when it came into my head, and now I have forgotten everything and the result is nonsense.)

10) I have thought much about God, about the essence of my life, and it seemed I only doubted one and the other and believed in my own conclusions; and then, one time, not long ago, I simply had the desire to lean upon my faith in God and in the indestructibility of my soul, and to my astonishment I felt so firm and calm a confidence, as I have never felt before. So that all my

doubts and scrutinisings have evidently, not only not weakened my faith, but have strengthened it to an enormous degree.

11) Reason is not given that we should recognise what we ought to love; this it won't disclose; but only for this: to show what we ought not to love.

12) As in each piece of handiwork, the principal art lies not in the regular making of certain things anew, but in the ever bettering of the inevitable faults of a wrong and ruined work, so even in the business of life, the principal wisdom is not how to begin to act and how to lead life correctly, but how to better faults, how to liberate oneself from errors and seductions.

13) Happiness is the satisfaction of the requirements of a man's being living from birth to death in this world only; but the good is the satisfaction of the requirements of the eternal essence living in man.

14) The essence of the teachings of Christ consists in this, that man ought to know who he is; that he should understand, like a bird which does not use its wings and runs on the land, that he is not a mortal animal, dependent on the conditions of the world, but like a bird which has understood that it has wings and has faith in them, he should understand that he himself was never born and never died and always is, and passes through this world in one of the innumerable forms of life to fulfil the will of Him who sent him into this life.

*Dec. 8. Moscow. If I live.*

Mascha<sup>33</sup> is with Ilia,<sup>34</sup> a loving letter from her to-day.

*To-day December 23. Moscow.*

It is long since I have made an entry. On the 30th, the Chertkovs<sup>35</sup> came. It is two days since Kenworthy arrived. He is very pleasant...

Have continued to write the Declaration – am progressing. Off and on, I think out the drama,<sup>36</sup> and yesterday I raved about it all night. I am not well; a bad cold in the head, influenza. Because of the letter to the Englishman, I began also a letter on the collision between England and America.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Maria Lvovna Tolstoi (1872–1906), second daughter of Tolstoi, afterwards married to Count N. L. Obolensky.

<sup>34</sup> Count Ilya Lvovich Tolstoi (born 1866), second son of Tolstoi. Has written a book, *My Recollections* (Moscow, 1914).

<sup>35</sup> Vladimir Grigorevich Chertkov and his wife, Anna Constantinovna (born Dieterichs). V. G. Chertkov made the acquaintance of Tolstoi in 1883. For biographical information about him see under “Biography of L. N. Tolstoy” by P. Biriukov (Volume II, 1913) and also in the pamphlet, *Tolstoi and Chertkov*, by P. A. Boulanger (Moscow, 1911) and in the essay of A. M. Khiriakov: “Who Is Chertkov?” (*Kievski Mysl*, 1910, No. 333, December 2nd).

<sup>36</sup> Soon Tolstoi began this drama (see entry of [January 23, 1896](#)), which he called *And Light Lights Up Darkness*. This drama, having to a great extent a biographic character, portrays the torturing condition of a man who has gone through an inner religious crisis, and who lives with his family which, not understanding him, interferes with his attempts to change his life according to the truth revealed to him. This was first printed with a great many censor deletions in *The Posthumous Literary Works of L. N. Tolstoi* (edited by A. L. Tolstoi, 1911, Volume II).

<sup>37</sup> The Englishman, John Manson, came to Tolstoi with a request for his opinion on the collision between the United States and England on account of the boundaries of Venezuela. Tolstoi answered by an extensive letter which was published under the

Have been thinking during this time:

1) I have been thinking especially clearly of that which I have already said many times; that all the evil in the world comes only from this, that people look upon themselves, upon their own personality, as a worthy object of their conscious life – upon themselves or upon a group of personalities, it is all the same.

As long as a man lives for himself unconsciously, he does no harm. If there is a struggle, then the struggle is an unconscious one which is ended at once when the struggle with surroundings is ended; man adjusts himself to it or he goes under, and this struggle is neither cruel nor is it an evil one. The struggle begins to be cruel only when man directs his consciousness upon it, prepares it, strengthens and multiplies its energy tenfold and hundredfold.

As Pascal says: there are three kinds of people; one kind know nothing and sit quietly, and just as quiet are those who know; but there are a middle kind who don't know but believe they do; from them comes all the evil in the world. They are the people in whom consciousness has awakened, but they don't know how to use it.

2) The whole thing lies in this – that you should always remember who you are. There is no situation so difficult, from which the way out would not immediately offer itself, if you only would remember that you are not a temporary, material



manifestation, but an eternal omnipresent being. “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die, and though he were dead yet shall he live. Believest thou this?”

I walked on the street. A wretched beggar approached me. I forgot who I was and passed by. And then suddenly I remembered, and just as naturally as the hungry begin to eat and the tired sit down, I turned back and handed him something. It is the same with the temptation to quarrel, to insult, to be vain.

3) One can not voluntarily cease to remain awake, i. e. to fall asleep. Just as little can one voluntarily cease to live. Life is more important than the will, than desire. (Unclear.)

4) Receive with thankfulness the enjoyments of the flesh – all that you meet on the way, if they are not sinful – in short, if they do not go against your consciousness, if they do not make it suffer. But use the efforts of your will, your liberty, only to serve God.

I just wrote a letter to Crosby.<sup>38</sup> He is working in America.

*Dec. 24. Moscow. If I live.*

Yesterday I received the “Open Letter” of Spielhagen, the Socialist, which appeared in the newspapers with regard to

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<sup>38</sup> Ernest Crosby (1856–1907), an American social-worker, a poet and writer. When he was a representative of the United States in the International Court in Egypt, he read Tolstoi's *On Life*, which caused an upheaval in his soul. As a result, he left the Government service and devoted his life to the propaganda of the social-religious views of Tolstoi and the social-economic views of Henry George. He founded The Social Reform League, the object of which was the discussing of the problems of reorganisation of contemporary life on the basis of justice and equality, and the furthering of the actual realisation of this reorganisation.

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<sup>39</sup> E. N. Drozhin, a district school teacher, in 1891, refused military service at the recruiting in the city of Sudzha in the Province of Kursk. He was sentenced to be sent to a disciplinary battalion and stayed fifteen months in the Voronezh disciplinary battalion. Here he fell ill of consumption and the doctors pronounced him unfit to continue military service, upon which he was transferred to the state's prison to finish his sentence. He died in the Voronezh prison on January 27, 1894, from inflammation of the lungs which he contracted at the time of his transfer ... from the disciplinary regiment to the prison. The story of his refusal from military service is described in detail in the book by E. I. Popov: *Life and Death of E. N. Drozhin, 1866–1894*, published by *The Free Press*, England, 1899. Tolstoi wrote an appendix to this book in which he expressed the opinion that such people like Drozhin “by their activity help...” In reference to this article the well-known German writer, Frederick Spielhagen, printed an open letter to Count Leo Tolstoi in the newspapers, in which he considered Tolstoi guilty of Drozhin's death, a useless one, according to Spielhagen, for the abolition of war and the establishment of universal peace. This letter was translated into Russian in 1896 and appeared as a separate pamphlet.

# 1896

*January 23. Moscow.*

Just a month that I made no entries. During this time I wrote a letter about patriotism<sup>40</sup> and a letter to Crosby<sup>41</sup> and here now for two weeks I have been writing the drama. I wrote three acts abominably. I thought to make an outline so as to form a *charpente*. I have little hope of success.

Chertkov and Kenworthy went away the 7th. Sonya went to Tver to Andrusha.<sup>42</sup> To-day Nagornov<sup>43</sup> died. I am again a little indisposed.

I jotted down during this time:

1) A true work of art – a contagious one – is produced only when the artist seeks, strives. In poetry this passion for representing that which is, comes from the fact that the artist hopes that having seen clearly and having fixed that which is, he

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<sup>40</sup> See [Note 36](#).

<sup>41</sup> A voluminous letter devoted to the problem of non-resistance to evil by violence and the relation of contemporary American writers to it.

<sup>42</sup> Count Andrei Lvovich Tolstoi, born 1877, fourth son of Tolstoi. In this year he served in the Tver military as a volunteer (before the prescribed age).

<sup>43</sup> Nicholai Michailovich Nagornov, husband of Tolstoi's niece, Varvara Valerianovna. In the letter to A. K. Chertkov of January 13, 1896, Tolstoi wrote: "We had a death lately. Nagornov died, the husband of my niece. She loved him passionately and they lived together remarkably happily ... no one knows anything of him, but the good... My heart feels solemn and good because of this death."

will understand the meaning of that which is.

2) In every art there are two departures from the way, vulgarity and artificiality. Between them both there is only a narrow path. And this narrow path is outlined by impulse. If you have impulse and direction, you pass by both dangers. Of the two, the more terrible is artificiality.

3) It is impossible to compel reason to examine and clarify that which the heart does not wish.

4) It is bad when reason wishes to give the meaning of virtue to selfish efforts.

Kudinenko<sup>44</sup> was here. A remarkable man. N. took the oath and is serving.<sup>45</sup> A letter from Makovitsky<sup>46</sup> with an article on the Nazarenes.<sup>47</sup>

*Jan. 24. Moscow. If I live.*

*Jan. 25. Moscow.*

During these two days the chief event was the death of

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<sup>44</sup> Fedior Kudinenko, a peasant, a co-thinker of Tolstoi, a former *gendarme*.

<sup>45</sup> See [note 29](#).

<sup>46</sup> Dushan Petrovich Makovitsky (Dušan Makovický), a Slovak, who later became one of the closest friends and followers of Tolstoi, spent six years in Yasnaya Polyana from the end of 1904 to the day Tolstoi left, in the capacity of family doctor, and was near Tolstoi until the latter's death. At this time he lived in his native land, in Hungary, taking part in the publication of translations into the Slavonian of Tolstoi's books and of writers near to him in spirit. The article here mentioned is "Instances of Refusal from Military Service among the Sect of the Nazarenes, in Hungary." Printed in *Leaflets of the Free Press*, England, 1898, No. I.

<sup>47</sup> The Nazarenes, a sect spread in Hungary, Chorvatia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Switzerland and the United States, whose members refuse military service.

Nagornov. Always new and full of meaning is death. It occurred to me: they represent death in the theatre. Does it produce 1/1,000,000 of that impression which the nearness of a real death produces?

I continue writing the drama. I have written four acts. All bad. But it is beginning to resemble a real thing.

*Jan. 26. Mosc. If I live.*

*January 26. Moscow.*

I am alive, but I don't live. Strakhov – to-day I heard of his death.<sup>48</sup> To-day they buried Nagornov – and that is news. I lay down to sleep, but could not sleep, and there appeared before me so clearly and brightly, an understanding of life whereby we would feel ourselves to be travellers. Before us lies a stage of the road with the same well-known conditions. How can one walk along that road otherwise than eagerly, gaily, friendly, and actively together, not grieving over the fact that you yourself are going away or that others are going ahead of you thither, where we shall again be still more together.

To-day I wrote a postscript to the letter to Crosby. A good letter from Kenworthy. Unpleasantness with N. He is a journalist.

*Jan. 26 [27?]. Moscow. If I live.*

Almost a month that I have made no entries. To-day, *Feb. 13, Moscow.*

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<sup>48</sup> Nicholai Nicholaievich Strakhov (1828–1896), a friend of the Tolstoi family, a noted writer and philosopher, highly valued by Tolstoi as a man and a literary critic. He had an extensive correspondence with Tolstoi, which was published by the Tolstoi Museum Society in Petrograd, 1914.

I wanted to go to the Olsuphievs.<sup>49</sup>... There is much bustle here and it takes up much time. I sit down late to my work and therefore write little. I finished somehow the fifth act of the drama and took up *Resurrection*. I read over eleven chapters and am gradually advancing. I corrected the letter to Crosby.

An event – an important one – Strakhov's death, and something else – Davydov's conversation with the Emperor.<sup>50</sup>....

The article by Ertel<sup>51</sup> that the efforts of the liberals are useful,

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<sup>49</sup> The family of the Counts Olsuphiev was very much liked by Tolstoi. This is what he wrote about them to V. G. Chertkov on February 9, 1896: "They are such very simple and good people, that the difference between their opinion and mine, and not the difference but the non-recognition of that by which I live, does not bother me. I know that they cannot, but that they want to be good and that they have gone as far as they could in that direction."

<sup>50</sup> Nicholai Vasilevich Davydov, an old friend of the Tolstoi family, being appointed at this time President of the Tula District Court, was presented to the Emperor and had a long conversation with him about Tolstoi, answering the questions asked him by the Emperor. At present, N. V. Davydov is President of the Tolstoi Society in Moscow.

<sup>51</sup> Alexander Ivanovich Ertel (1855–1908), a well-known writer, author of the novel *The Gardenins* and other stories and novels. The essay by Ertel which Tolstoi mentions was published in *Nedielia* in 1896, No. III, under the title, "Is Russian Society Declining?" He objected to Tolstoi who said in the article "Shameful" that one ought not to *ask* about the abolition of corporal punishment, but "one must and ought only to denounce such a thing." "The way of denunciation and repentance is tested and is being tested –" wrote Ertel, "but in itself it is not sufficient for successful struggle against evil. For the greatest effectiveness in this struggle of changes, the *judicial* path of 'petitions, declarations and addresses,' deserves every kind of sympathy from the side of historical rationalism as well as from the Christian point of view." Later Tolstoi, highly appreciating the popular style of Ertel, wrote a preface to the posthumous edition of his works, Moscow, 1909.

and also the letter by Spielhagen on the same theme,<sup>52</sup> provoke me. But I can not, I must not write. I have no time. The letters from Sopotsko<sup>53</sup> and Zdziekhovsky<sup>54</sup> on the Orthodox Church and on the Catholic, provoke me on the other hand. However, I shall hardly write. But here yesterday I received a letter from Grinevich's<sup>55</sup> mother on the religious bringing up of children. That I must do. At least I must use all my strength to do this.

Very much music – it is useless... As regards religion, I am very cool at present.

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<sup>52</sup> See [Note 38](#).

<sup>53</sup> M. A. Sopotsko, at one time in the beginning of the Nineties shared some of Tolstoi's views in relation to the outer life, but never understood the essence of his religious philosophy. Later Sopotsko became a supporter of Orthodoxy and frequently attacked Tolstoi and his friends in print.

<sup>54</sup> Marian Zdziechowski, a professor in the Cracow University, a well-known social worker. In the *Sievernii Viestnik* for the year 1895, No. 7, under the pseudonym M. Ursin, he contributed an article: "The Religious Political Ideals of Polish Society." In respect to this article Tolstoi wrote him a long letter which was printed abroad and later was reprinted in the *New Collection of Letters of L. N. Tolstoi*, collected by P. A. Sergienko (published by Okto, 1911), from which by order of the Moscow Court it was deleted. After this letter M. E. Zdziechowski wrote several times to Tolstoi on the problems of Catholicism, but to those letters, mentioned in the Journal, Tolstoi evidently answered by a personal conversation during the former's visit to Yasnaya Polyana in the summer of 1896.

<sup>55</sup> In her letter addressed to M. L. Tolstoi, Vera Stepanovna Grinevich touched most seriously and deeply upon the fundamental problems concerning the religious upbringing of children. This letter produced a very strong impression on Tolstoi and he intended to answer it in detail, but other work drew him away from accomplishing this resolution. The letter of V. S. Grinevich and the letter to her by M. L. Tolstoi and V. G. Chertkov are printed in her book: *The New School-family and the Causes of its Origin*.

Thought during this time (much I have forgotten and have not written down):

1) Oh, not to forget death for a moment, into which at any moment you can fall! If we would only remember that we are not standing upon an even plain (if you think we are standing so, then you are only imagining that those who have gone away have fallen overboard and you yourself are afraid that you will fall overboard), but that we are rolling on, without stopping, running into each other, getting ahead and being got ahead of, yonder behind the curtain which hides from us those who are going away, and will hide us from those who remain. If we remember that always, then, how easy and joyous it is to live and roll together, yonder down the same incline, in the power of God, with Whom we have been and in Whose power we are now and will be afterwards and forever. I have been feeling this very keenly.

2) There is no more convincing proof of the existence of God, than the faculty of the soul by which we can transport ourselves into other beings. Out of this faculty flows both love and reason, but neither one nor the other is in us, but they are outside of us and we only coincide with them. (Unclear.)

3) The power to kill oneself is free play given to people. God did not want slaves in this life, but free workers. If you remain in this life, then it means that its conditions are advantageous to you. If advantageous – then work. If you go away from the conditions here, if you kill yourself, then the same thing will be put before you again there. So there is nowhere to go.



It would be good to write the history of what a man lives through in this life who committed suicide in a past life; how, coming up against the same requirements which were placed before him in the other life, he comes to the realisation that he must fulfil them. And in this life he is more intelligent than in the others, remembering the lesson given him.

4) How does it happen that a clever, educated man believes in the nonsensical? Man thinks that which his heart desires. Only if his heart desires the truth, and only if it does, will he think the truth. But if his heart desires earthly pleasures and peace, he will think of that which will bring him earthly pleasures and peace or still something else. But as it is not an attribute of man to have earthly pleasures and peace, he will think falsely; and to be able to think falsely he will hypnotise himself.

(Unclear, not good.)

*Feb. 14. M. If I live.*

*To-day February 22. Nicholskoe, at the Olsuphievs.* <sup>56</sup>

It is already more than a week that I feel depressed in spirit. No life; I can not work on anything. Father of my life and of all life! If my work is already finished here, as I am beginning to think, and the ending of my spiritual life, which I am beginning to feel, means a transfer into that other life – that I am already beginning to live there and that here these remnants are being taken away little by little – then show it to me more clearly that I

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<sup>56</sup> Nicholskoe, an estate of Count Olsuphiev near Moscow, close to the station of Podsolnechnaia on the Nicholai railroad.

may not seek and weary myself. Otherwise it seems to me that I have many well-thought plans, yet I have no means, not only for carrying them through – this I know, I ought not to think of – but even to do something good, something pleasing to Thee as long as I live here. Or give me strength to work with the consciousness of serving Thee. Still, Thy will be done. If only I always felt that life consisted only in the fulfilment of Thy will, I would not doubt. But doubt comes because I bite the bit and don't feel the reins.

It is now 2 o'clock. I am going to dinner. I took a walk, slept in the morning, read *Trilby*. And I want to sleep all the time.

During this time, what has happened? Almost nothing. I thought on the Declaration of Faith.

*If I live. February 23. Nicholskoe.*

*To-day February 27. Nicholskoe.*

Am writing the drama, it moves very stiffly. Indeed I don't even know if I am progressing or not... I am very comfortable here; the important thing – it is quiet.

Read *Trilby* – poor. Wrote letters to Chertkov, Schmidt,<sup>57</sup> Kenworthy. Read Corneille – instructive.

Have been thinking:

1) I made a note that there are two arts. Now thinking it over,

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<sup>57</sup> Eugene Heinrich Schmidt, a German-Hungarian writer, resembling in some respects the philosophy of Tolstoi. In the Nineties he issued a magazine in Budapest: *Die Religion des Geistes*, and a newspaper with a Christian anarchical tendency: *Ohne Staat*. In 1901 he printed a book in Leipzig, *Tolstoi, His Meaning to Our Civilization* (see also his article on the cultural significance of the works of Leo Tolstoi, printed in the International Tolstoi Almanac by P. A. Sergienko, published by *Kniga*, 1909.)

I don't find a clear expression of my thought. Then I thought that there was an art, as they rightly characterise it, which grew from play, from the need of every creature to play. The play of the calf is jumping, the play of man is a symphony, a picture, a poem, a novel.

This is one kind of art, the art of play, of thinking out new plays, producing old ones and inventing new. That is a good thing, useful and valuable because it increases man's joys. But it is clear that it is possible to occupy oneself with play only when sated. Thus society can only occupy itself with art, when all its members are sated. But as long as all its members are not sated, there can not be real art, there will be an art of the overfed, a deformed one, and an art of the hungry ones – rough and poor, just as it is now. And therefore, in the first kind of art – of play – only that part is of value which is attainable to all, which increases the joys of all.

If it is like this, then it is not a bad thing, especially if it does not demand an increase of toil on the part of the oppressed, as happens now.

(This could and should be expressed better.)

But there is yet another art which *calls forth in man better and higher feelings*. I wrote this just now – something I have said many times – and I think it isn't true. Art is only one and consists in this: to increase the sinless general joys accessible to all – the good of man. A nice building, a gay picture, a song, a story give a little good; the awakening of religious feelings, of the love of

good brought forth by a drama, a picture, a song – give great good.

The 2nd thing that I have been thinking about art, is that nowhere is conservatism so harmful as in art. Art is one of the manifestations of the spiritual life of man, and therefore, as when an animal is alive, it breathes and discharges the products of its breathing, so when humanity is alive, it manifests activity in art. And therefore, at every given moment it must be contemporaneous – the art of our time. One ought only to know where it is (not in the decadence of music, poetry, or the novel); and one must seek it not in the past, but in the present. People who wish to show themselves connoisseurs of art and who therefore praise the past classic art and insult the present, only show by this, that they have no feeling for art.

3) Rachinsky<sup>58</sup> says: “Notice that contemporaneous with the spread of the use of narcotics, since the 17th century, the astounding progress of science began, and especially of the natural ones.” Is it not because of this, I say to him, that the false direction of science has come, the studying of that which is not necessary to man, but is only an object for idle curiosity, or when useful, is not the only thing really necessary? Is it not because of this that from that time on there was neglected the one thing

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<sup>58</sup> Sergei Alexandrovich Rachinsky (1836–1902), a celebrated worker for popular education, who sacrificed his lectures in the Moscow University for his favourite occupation of teaching the peasant children in the village schools to write and read. A relative to Tolstoi on account of the first wife of his son, Sergei Lvovich, and personally acquainted with Tolstoi as early as the beginning of the Sixties.

that was necessary, i.e. the settling of moral questions and their application to life?

4) What is the good? I only know a word in Russian which defines this idea. The good is the real good, the good for all, *le veritable bien, le bien de tous, what is good for everybody*.<sup>59</sup>

5) Men, in struggling with untruth and superstition, often console themselves with the quantity of superstition they have destroyed. This is not right. It is not right to calm oneself until all that is contradictory to reason and demands credulence is destroyed. Superstition is like a cancer. Everything must be cleaned out if one undertakes an operation. But if a little bit is left, everything will grow from it again.

6) The historic knowledge of how different myths and beliefs arose among peoples in different places and in different times ought to, it seems, destroy the faith that these myths and beliefs which have been inoculated in us from our infancy, constitute the absolute truth; but nevertheless, so-called educated people believe in them. How superficial then, is the education of so-called educated people!

7) To-day at dinner there was talk about a boy with vicious inclinations who was expelled from school, and about how good it would be to give him over to a reformatory.

It is exactly what a man does who lives a bad life, harmful to his health, and who, when he becomes ill, turns to the doctor so that the latter may cure him, but has no idea that the illness

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<sup>59</sup> Written originally in English.

was given to him as a beneficial indicator that his whole life is bad and that he ought to change it. The same thing is true with the illnesses in our society; every ill member of society does not remind us that the whole life of our society is irregular and that we ought to change it. But we think that for every such ill member, there is or ought to be, an institution freeing us from this member or even bettering him.

Nothing hampers the progress of humanity so much as this false conviction. The more ill the society, the more institutions there are for the healing of symptoms and the less anxiety for changing the entire life.

It is now 10 o'clock in the evening. I am going to supper. I want to work very much, but am without intellectual energy; a great weakness, yet I want to work terribly. If God would only give it to-morrow.

*Feb. 28. Nicholskoe. If I live.*

*To-day March 6. Nicholskoe.*

All this time I have felt weakness and intellectual apathy. I am working on the drama very slowly. Much has become clear. But there isn't one scene with which I am fully satisfied.

To-day I was about to plan something silly: to write out an outline of the Declaration of Faith. Of course it didn't go. In the same way I began and dropped a letter to the Italians.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The letter was called forth by the Italian-Abyssinian war, which was then going on. The rather extensive beginning of this letter has been preserved, but up to now has not been published anywhere.

During this time I jotted down:

1) Corneille writes in his *Préface* to Menteur on art, that its aim is a diversion, “*divertir*,” but that it must not be harmful, and if possible, it ought to be educationally enlightening.

2) At supper there was a discussion on heredity: they say vicious people are born from an alcoholic ... (I can't clearly express my thought and will put it by.)

3) Something very important. I lay and was almost asleep, suddenly something seemed to tear in my heart. It occurred to me: that is the way death comes from heart failure; and I remained calm – I felt neither grief nor joy, but blessedly calm – whether here or there, I know that it is well with me, that things are as they ought to be, just like a child, tossed in the arms of its mother, does not stop smiling from joy for it knows that it is in her loving arms.

And the thought came to me: why is it so now and was not so before? Because before, I did not live the whole of life, but lived only an earthly life. In order to believe in immortality, one must live an immortal life here. One can walk with one's feet and not see the precipice before one, over which it is impossible to cross, and one can rise on one's wings...<sup>61</sup>

(It isn't going and I don't feel like thinking.)

*March 7, 1896. Nicholskoe. If I live.*

*To-day May 2. Yasnaya Polyana.*

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<sup>61</sup> Here follow words that have been crossed out. Note made by Prince N. L. Obolensky in the copy in possession of the editors.

It is almost two months since I have made an entry. All this time I lived in Moscow. Of important events there were: a getting closer to the scribe Novikov<sup>62</sup> who changed his life on account of my books which his brother, a lackey, received from his mistress abroad. A hot-blooded youth. Also his brother, a working man, asked for “What is my Faith?” and Tania<sup>63</sup> sent him to Mme. Kholevinsky.<sup>64</sup> They took Mme. Kholevinsky to prison. The prosecuting attorney said that they ought to go after me. All this together made me write a letter to the ministers of Justice and the Interior in which I begged them to transfer their prosecution to me.<sup>65</sup>

All this time I wrote on the Declaration of Faith. I made little progress. Chertkov, Posha Biriukov were here and went away.

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<sup>62</sup> Michail Petrovich Novikov, a peasant of the Province of Tula, who served a year as an army scribe in one of the regiments stationed in Moscow. After his acquaintance with Tolstoi he suffered much because of his endeavour to realise his beliefs in his life. A gifted writer.

<sup>63</sup> Countess Tatiana Lvovna Tolstoi (born 1864), the eldest daughter of Tolstoi. In the year 1899 she married M. S. Sukhotin.

<sup>64</sup> Maria Michailovna Kholevinsky, a woman doctor, living in Tula. By Administrative order, after the event mentioned in the Journal, she was exiled to Orenburg.

<sup>65</sup> This letter, sent to both ministers (I. L. Goremykin and N. V. Muraviev) and to the same publishing house, was printed at first abroad in the paper *The Free Press*, No. 2, in 1902 (England), afterwards in Russia. (See *Full Collected Works of Tolstoi*, published by Sytin, 1913 – popular edition, Volume XXII. It is known that the request of Tolstoi in this letter: To direct all the prosecutions for the spreading of his forbidden books in Russia to himself and not to his followers and friends, as well as a whole series of subsequent similar petitions to Governmental officials – was not granted.)



My relations with people are good. I have stopped riding the bicycle. I wonder how I could have been so infatuated.

I heard Wagner's *Siegfried*.<sup>66</sup> I have many thoughts in connection with this and other things. In all I have jotted down 20 thoughts in my notebook.

Still another important event – the work of African Spier.<sup>67</sup> I just read through what I wrote in the beginning of this notebook. At bottom, it is nothing else than a short summary of all of Spier's philosophy which I not only had not read at that time, but about which I had not the slightest idea. This work clarified my ideas on the meaning of life remarkably, and in some ways strengthened them. The essence of his doctrine is that things do not exist, but only our impressions which appear to us in our conception as

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<sup>66</sup> The second act of Wagner's opera, *Siegfried*. For the impression produced on Tolstoi, see *What Is Art?* chapter XIII – in the letter to his brother, Count S. N. Tolstoi, on April 20, 1896, Tolstoi under the fresh impression of this opera wrote the following: "Last night I was at the theatre and heard the celebrated new music of Wagner's opera, *Siegfried*. I could not sit through a single act and I fled from the place like mad, and now I cannot talk calmly about it. It is stupid, unfit for children above seven years of age, a *Punch and Judy* show, pretentious, feigned, entirely false and without any music whatever. And several thousand sat and pretended to be fascinated."

<sup>67</sup> Aphrikan Alexandrovich Spier (1837–1890), a remarkable Russian philosopher, who lived many years in Germany and who wrote his works in German: *Thinking and Reality*, *Morality and Religious*, etc. Tolstoi was then reading his principal work, *Denken und Wirklichkeit* (*Thinking and Reality*) – in a letter of 1896 to Countess S. A. Tolstoi, Tolstoi wrote: "I am reading a newly discovered philosopher, Spier, and am rejoicing... A very useful book, destroying many superstitions, especially the superstition of materialism." (*The Letters of Count L. N. Tolstoi to his Wife*, Moscow, 1913, page 510.)

objects. Conception (Vorstellung) has the quality of believing in the existence of objects. This comes from the fact that the quality of thinking consists in attributing an objectivity to impressions, a substance, and a projecting of them into space.

*May 3. Y. P.*

Let me write down anything. Am indisposed. Weakness and physical apathy. But think and feel keenly. Yesterday at least, I wrote a few letters: to Spier,<sup>68</sup> Shkarvan, Myasoyedov,<sup>69</sup> Perer, Sverbeev.<sup>70</sup>

I am reading Spier all the time, and the reading provokes a mass of thoughts.

Let me write out something at least from my 21 notes.

To-day I worked on the Declaration of Faith.

1) "Come and dwell in us and cleanse us of all evil" ... On the contrary: Cleanse thy soul of evil thyself and He will come and dwell in thee. He only waits for this. Like water he flows into thee in the measure as room is freed. "Dwell in us." How agonisingly lonely it is without Thee – this I experienced these days and how peaceful, firm and joyous, needing nothing and no one when with Thee. Do not leave me!

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<sup>68</sup> The philosopher's daughter, Elena Aphrikanovna Spier, who sent her father's works to Tolstoi.

<sup>69</sup> Grigori Grigorevich Myasoyedov (1835–1912). A celebrated artist, the painter of the picture, "The Reading of the Ordinance, of February 19th" and others; one of the principal initiators and founders of the Society of Travelling Expositions.

<sup>70</sup> Dmitri Dmitrievich Sverbeev, the Governor of Courland, an acquaintance of the Tolstois'.

I can not pray. His tongue is different from that which I speak, but He will understand and translate it into His own when I say: "Help me, come to me, do not leave me!"

And here I have fallen into a contradiction. I say you have to cleanse yourself, then He will come. But I, not yet having cleansed myself, call upon Him.

*May 4. If I still live here, Y. P.*

*May 5. Y. P.*

The same general despair. And I am sad. There is one cause; the higher moral requirement that I put forward. In its name I have rejected everything that is beneath it. But it was not followed. Fifteen years ago I proposed giving away the greater part of the property and to live in four rooms. Then they would have an ideal...

To-day I rode past Gill.<sup>71</sup> I thought: no undertaking is profitable with a small amount of capital. The more capital, the more profits; the less expenses. But from this it in no way follows that, as Marx says, capitalism will lead to socialism. Perhaps it will lead to it, but to one with force. The workingmen will be compelled to work together, and they will work less and the pay will be more, but there will be the same slavery. It is necessary that people work freely in common, that they learn to work for each other, but capitalism doesn't teach them that; on the contrary, it teaches them envy, greed, selfishness. Therefore, through a forced uniting brought about by capitalism,

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<sup>71</sup> The cement factory, Gill, within 7 versts of Yasnaya Polyana.

the material condition of the workers can be bettered, but their contentment can in no way be established. Contentment can only be established through the free union of the workers. And for this it is necessary to learn how to unite, to perfect oneself morally, to willingly serve others without being hurt when not receiving a return. And this can't in any way be learned under the capitalistic, competitive system, but under an entirely different one.

I sleep alone downstairs.

*To-morrow, May 6th, Y. P.*

*To-day, May 9, Y. P.*

Up to now, I haven't yet written out all that I had to. Have been continually indisposed. Notwithstanding this, I work in the mornings. To-day, it seemed to me I advanced very much. Our people have gone away, some to the coronation, others to Sweden.<sup>72</sup> I am alone with Masha; she has a sore throat. I am well.

*May 10, If I live. Y. P.*

*To-day, May 11, Y. P.*

Sonya arrived from Moscow. I continue to write the Declaration of Faith. It seems as if I were weakening. To-day I received a letter from N, a tangled up revolutionist. In the evening I rode horseback to Yassenki<sup>73</sup> and thought:

I have not yet written out everything from my notebooks. I

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<sup>72</sup> To the Coronation in Moscow there went: Countess S. A. Tolstoi and Countess A. L. Tolstoi; while Countess T. L. Tolstoi went to Sweden for the coming marriage in Stockholm of Count L. L. Tolstoi and D. Ph. Westerlund.

<sup>73</sup> The branch post office, 7 versts from Yasnaya Polyana.

will jot down at least this, the more so since, when it came into my head it seemed to me very important. Namely:

1) Spier says we know only sensations. It is true, the material of our knowledge is sensations. But one must ask; why variation of sensations (even of one and the same sense of sight or touch). He (Spier) insists too much that corporeality is an illusion, and does not answer the question: why variation of sensations? It is not bodies that make variation of sensations, I agree to this, but it is just such beings as we, who must be the cause of these sensations.

I know that what he recognises as our being he recognises as a unit. Good. Admitting it is a unit, then it is a divided off, broken off unit, and I am a unit being only within certain limits. And these limits of my being are the limits of other beings. Or, one being is outlined by limits and these limits create sensations, i. e., the material of knowledge. There are no bodies, bodies are illusions, but other beings are not illusions and I recognise them through sensations. Their activity produces sensations in me and I conclude that the same effect is produced in them by my activity. When I receive sensations from a man with whom I come in contact, it can be understood; but when I receive sensations from the earth upon which I fall, from the sun which warms me, what is it that produces these sensations in me? Probably the activities of beings whose life I do not understand; but I recognise only a part of them like the flea on my body. Touching the earth, feeling the warmth of the sun, my limits come in contact with

the limits of the sun. I am in the world (I project this into space. I can not do it otherwise though it is not so in reality) like a cell, not an immovable one, but one wandering and touching by his limits, not only the limits of other cells of the same kind, but other enormous bodies.

Better still, not to project this into space; I act and am acted upon by the greatest variety of beings; or, my division of a unit being associates with other divisions of the most various kinds.

(What a lot of nonsense!)

*May 12, Y. P. If I live.*

Pentecost. It is cold, damp, and not a leaf on the trees.

*To-day already, May 16, Y. P. Morning.*

I can not write my Declaration of Faith. It is unclear, metaphysical, and whatever good there is in it, I spoil. I am thinking of beginning it all from the beginning again or to call a stop and get to work on a novel or a drama.

N.<sup>74</sup> was here; it was a difficult love test. I passed it only outwardly and even then badly. If the examiner had gone along thoroughly, skipping about, I would have failed shamefully.

A beautiful article by Menshikov, "The Blunders of Fear."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Died in 1913.

<sup>75</sup> The well-known publisher of *Novoe Vremia*, M. O. Menshikov, a contributor at that time to the liberal magazine, *Knizhki Nedeli*, where among other things, he occupied himself with popularizing Tolstoi's ideas. In the article "The Errors of Fear," printed in that magazine in 1896 (Nos. IV to VI) Menshikov sharply condemned certain governmental repressions of the time. For this article the magazine received a warning. Towards the later journalistic activities of Menshikov, Tolstoi took a critical

How joyous! I can almost die, even absolutely, and yet it always seems as if there is something still to be done. Do it and the end will take care of itself. If you are no longer fit for the work, you will be changed and a new one will be sent and you will be sent to another work. If only one rises in work!

Strakhov Th. A.<sup>76</sup> was here. The other one, N.,<sup>77</sup> came to me in my sleep. I had a talk with him<sup>78</sup> about the Declaration of Faith. In speaking to him I felt how hazy was the desire for the good in itself. And I corrected it this way:

1) A man at a certain period of his development awakens to a consciousness of his life. He sees that everything about him lives (and he himself lived like that before the awakening of his reason) without knowing its life. Now that he has learned that he lives, he understands that force which gives life to the whole world and in his consciousness he coincides with it, but being limited by his separate being (his organism), it seems to him that the purpose of this force which gives life to the world, is the life of his separate being.

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attitude.

<sup>76</sup> Fedor Alexeievich Strakhov, a friend, who shared the views of Tolstoi, author of philosophic articles published by *Posrednik* under the titles *Beyond Political Interests*, *The Search For Truth*. *Posrednik* also published a collection of articles of various thinkers compiled by him under the title *Spirit and Matter* (against materialism). Several of his other articles were issued abroad. For Tolstoi's review of the books of F. A. Strakhov see in *Journal*, August 15, 1910.

<sup>77</sup> Nicholai Nicholaievich Strakhov (died in January of this year).

<sup>78</sup> With F. A. Strakhov.

*(I thought that I would write it clearly and again I am confused;  
— evidently I am not ready.)*

Life is the desire for the good. (Everything that lives, lives only because it desires the good; that which does not desire the good, does not live.)

Man, when awakened to a reasoning consciousness, is conscious of life in himself, i. e. of the desire for the good. But since this consciousness is engendered in the separate bodily being of man, since man learns that life is the desire for the good when he is already separated from others by his bodily being, therefore, in the first awakening of man to a reasoning consciousness, it seems to him that life, i. e. the desire for the good which he recognises in himself, has for its object his separate bodily being. And man begins to live consciously for the good of his separate being, begins to use that reason of his which revealed to him the essence of all life; the desire for the good, in order to secure the good for his own separate being.

But the longer a man lives, the more obvious it becomes to him that his purpose is unattainable. And therefore, while he has not yet made clear to himself his error, even before he recognises by reason the impossibility of the good for a separate personality, man knows by experience and feeling the error of activity which is directed to the good of his own separate personality and he naturally strives that his life, his desire for the good, be drawn away from his own personality and brought over to other things; to comrades, friends, family, society.



This same reason which he desires to use for the attainment of the good for his own separate being, shows man that this good is unattainable, that it becomes destroyed by the struggle between the separate beings for the desired good, destroyed by the unpreventable, innumerable disasters and sufferings which threaten man, and above all, by the unavoidable illnesses, sufferings, old age and death which occur in the individual life of man. No matter how man might expand his desire for the good to other beings, he can not but see that all these separate beings are like him, subject to unavoidable sufferings and death and therefore, they, just as he, can not have real life by themselves.

And it is just this error of men who have awakened to the consciousness of life that the Christian teaching dissipates, in showing to man that as soon as a consciousness of life has awakened in him, i. e. the desire for the good, then his being, his "self" is no longer his separate bodily being, but that same consciousness of life, the desire for the good not for himself, which was born in his separate being. The consciousness, therefore, of the desire for the good, is the desire for the good for everything existent. And the desire for the good for everything existent, is God.

The Christian teaching teaches just this, that His son, who resembles God, and who was sent by the Father into the world that the will of the Father be fulfilled in him, lives in man with an awakened consciousness (the conversation with Nicodemus.)

The Christian teaching reveals to man with an awakened

consciousness, that the meaning and the aim of his life does not consist, as it seemed to him before, in the acquiring of the greater good for his own separate personality or for other such personalities like him, no matter how many they are, but only in the fulfilment in this world of the will of the Father who has sent man into the world – it reveals also to man the will of the Father in regard to the son. The will of the Father in regard to the son is that there should be manifested in this world that desire for the good which forms the essence of his life, so that man living in this world should wish the good to a greater and greater number of beings and consequently he should serve them as he serves his own good.

(Confused.)

*May 17, Y. P.*

Again I am dissatisfied with what I wrote yesterday and which seemed to me true and full. Last night and this morning I thought about the same thing. Here are the new things which have become clear to me:

1) That the desire for the good is not God, but only one of His manifestations, one of the sides from which we see God. God in me is manifested by the desire for the good;

2) That this God which is enclosed in man, begins to strive to free Himself in broadening and enlarging the being in whom He dwells; then, seeing the impassable limits of this being, He tries to free Himself by going outside of this being and embracing other beings;

3) That a reasoning being cannot find room for himself in the life of an individual, and that as soon as he becomes reasoning he tries to go out of it;

4) That the Christian teaching reveals to man that the essence of his life is not his separate being, but God, which is enclosed in his being. This God, therefore, becomes known to man through reason and love ...

I can not write any farther; weak, sleepy.

5) And above all, that the desire for the good for oneself, love for oneself, could exist in man only up to the time when reason had not yet awakened in him. But as soon as reason had wakened in him, then it became clear to man that the desire for the good for himself – a separate being – was futile, because the good is not realisable for a separate and mortal being. Just as soon as reason appeared, then there became possible only one kind of desire for the good; the desire for the good for all, because with the desire for the good for all, there is no struggle but union, and no death but the transmission of life. God is not love, but in living, unreasoning beings He is manifested through a love for oneself, and in living, reasoning beings, through love for everything that exists.

I am now going to write out the 21 points from my notebooks.

1) In order to believe in immortality one has to live an immortal life here, i. e. to live not towards oneself but towards God, not for oneself, but for God. Man, in this life, seems to be standing with one foot on a board and the other on the earth;

and as soon as his reason has awakened, he sees that that board upon which he was just about to step lies over an abyss and it not only bends and creaks, but is already falling and man transfers his weight to that foot which stands on the earth. How not be afraid if one stands on that which bends and creaks and falls; and how be afraid, and of what to be afraid, if you stand on that upon which everything falls and below which it is impossible to fall?

2) Read about Granovsky.<sup>79</sup> In our literature it is customary to say, that during the reign of Nicholas conditions were such that it was impossible to express great thoughts. (Granovsky complains of this and others too.) But the thoughts there were not real. It is all self-deception. If all those Granovskys, Bielinskys,<sup>80</sup> and others had anything to say, they would have said it, no matter what the obstacles. The proof is Herzen.<sup>81</sup> He went away abroad

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<sup>79</sup> Timofei Nikolaievich Granovsky (1813–1855), a Russian historian, a professor at the Moscow University.

<sup>80</sup> Vissarion Grigorevich Bielinsky (1810–1848), the critic – see in Journal, March 7, 1899, a comparison between Bielinsky and Gogol.

<sup>81</sup> Alexander Alexandrovich Herzen (1812–1870), a great writer. From 1847 to his death he lived abroad as an exile. His collected works with censor deletions have been published in Russia only in 1905. Tolstoi as early as August 4, 1860, wrote in his Journal, “Herzen, a scattered mind, sickly ambition. But his broadness, skilfulness, kindness and refinement is Russian.” Soon after, in the beginning of 1861, Tolstoi, being abroad, spent a month in London, where he saw Herzen almost daily. In addition to the opinion expressed in this note of Tolstoi’s about Herzen, it should be noted that afterwards Tolstoi, appreciating him from another point of view, acknowledged a broad educational significance to his works (see, for example, Journal, October 12, 1895). In the letters to V. G. Chertkov of February 9, 1888, and to N. N. Gay of February 13 of the same year, Tolstoi called Herzen “a man remarkable in strength, in

and despite his enormous talent, what did he say that was new, necessary? All those Granovskys, Bielinskys, Chernishevskys,<sup>82</sup> Dobroliubovs, who were raised to great men, ought to be grateful to the government and the censorship without which they would have been the most unnoticed of sketch-writers.

Perhaps the Bielinskys, Granovskys, and the other unimportant ones might have had something real within them, but they stifled it, imagining they had to serve society with the forms of social life and not to serve God by professing the truth and by preaching it without any care about the forms of social life. Let there be contents and the forms will shape themselves.

People acting thus, i. e. adapting their striving for truth to the existing forms of society, are like a being to whom wings have been given to fly, without knowing obstacles, and who used these wings in order to help itself in walking. Such a being would not attain its ends – every obstacle would stop it and it would spoil its wings. And then this being would complain that it had been held back and would tell with sorrow (like Granovsky) that it would have gone far if obstacles had not held it back.

The quality of real spiritual activity is such, that it is impossible to hold it back. If it is held back, then it means only

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mind and in sincerity” and expressed regret that his works were forbidden in Russia, as the reading of them, according to his opinion, would be very instructive to the youth.

<sup>82</sup> Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernishevsky (1828–1889) and Nikolai Alexandrovich Dobroliubov (1836–1861), Russian critics. Tolstoi became acquainted with Chernishevsky when he published his works in *Sovremennik*, which was edited by Chernishevsky.

one thing: it is not real.

3) Man dying little by little (growing old) experiences that which a sprouting seed ought to experience which has not yet transferred its consciousness from the seed to the plant. He feels that he grows less, but he is not conscious of himself there where he increases; in another life.

I am beginning to experience this.

4) I wrote down: "Reason is a tool for the recognition of truth, verification, criticism." I can't remember very well. It seems to me, and I am even certain of it, that it is this:

Under reason is understood many different intellectual activities and very complex ones, and therefore the correctness of the solutions of reason is often doubted. As an answer to this doubt, I say, that there is an activity of the reason which is not to be doubted, namely, the critical activity, the activity of verifying what is told me. They tell me that God ... etc. I submit this to the verification of reason and decide without doubt that that which is not reasonable does not exist for me. It is wrong to say that everything which exists is reasonable, or that everything which is reasonable exists, but it is wrong not to say that that which is unreasonable does not exist for me.

5) It seems to man that his animal life is his real essence and that the spiritual life is the product of his animal one, just as it seems to a man rowing in a boat that he is standing still and that the banks, and the whole earth, are running past him.

6) There is a goodness which wants to make use of

the advantages of goodness and does not want to bear the disadvantages of it. That is animal goodness.

7) Christian truth, they say, can not be proved; it must be believed. As if it were easier to become convinced of the truth of the nonsensical than of the reasonable. Why deprive Christianity of the power of convincing? Why?

8) Nature, they say, is economical of its own forces; by the least effort, it attains the greatest results. So is God. To establish the Kingdom of God on earth, of union, of serving one another – and to destroy hostility, God does not have to do it himself. He has placed His reason in man, which frees love in man and everything which He desires will be done by man. God does His work through us. And there is no time for God – or there is infinite time. When he has placed reasoning love in man, he has already done everything.

Why has He done this in this way through man, and not by Himself? The question is stupid and one which never would have entered one's head if we were all not spoilt by absurd superstition...

9) One of the most torturing spiritual sufferings is the not being understood by people when you feel yourself hopelessly alone in your thoughts. There is consolation in this, that you know that that very thing which people do not understand in you, God understands.

10) To carry over one's "self" from the bodily to the spiritual, that means to consciously wish only the spiritual. My body can

unconsciously strive for the fleshly, but I consciously desire nothing of the fleshly, as when I do not desire to fall, but can not but submit to the law of gravitation.

11) If you have transferred your “self” to your spiritual being, you will feel the same pain in violating love as you will feel physical pain when you violate the good of the body. The indicator is just as direct and true. And I already feel it.

12) Sin is the strengthening of the consciousness of life in one’s separate being, or the weakening of one’s reasoning consciousness, which shows the inconsistency of animal life. For the first end, the activity of reason is directed to the strengthening of the delusion of a separate life: 1, food; 2, lust; 3, vanity, strengthened by reason. For the second end, are used the means of weakening reason: tobacco, opium, wine.

13) Temptation is the assertion that it is permitted to violate love for the greater good: 1, to oneself; it is necessary to feed, cure, educate, calm oneself, in order to be in condition to serve men, and for this it is permitted to violate love; 2, one must secure, preserve, and educate the family, and for this it is permitted to violate love; 3, one has to organise, secure, protect the community, the state, and for this it is permitted to violate love; 4, one has to contribute to the salvation of the souls of people by violent suggestion, through education, and for this it is permitted to violate love.

14) The essay on art has to be begun with a discussion of the fact, that for the picture here, which it has cost the master 1000



working days, he is given 40 thousand working days: for an opera, a novel, still more. And then, some say of these works, that they are beautiful; others, that they are absolutely bad. And there is no incontestable criterion. There is no such argument about water, food, and good works. Why is that so?

15) What is the result of a man recognising as his “self” not his own separate being, but God living in him? In the first place, not consciously desiring the good for his own separate being, that man will not, or will less eagerly, take the good away from others; in the second place, having recognised as his “self” God, who desires the good for all that exists, man also will desire it.

16) Why do people hold on so passionately to the principle of family, the producing and bringing up of children? Because to a man who has not yet transferred his consciousness from his separate being to that of God, it is the only seemingly satisfactory explanation of the meaning of life.

17) The meaning of life becomes clear to man when he recognises as himself, his divine essence which is enclosed in his bodily envelope. The meaning of this lies in the fact that this being, striving for its emancipation, for the broadening of the realm of love, accomplishes through this broadening the work of God, which consists in the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

18) Violence can neither weaken nor strengthen a spiritual movement. To act on spiritual activity by force is just like catching the rays of the sun – no matter how you cover them,

they will always be on top.

19) I have noted down: "Do you imagine your life in the wood which is being burned down or in the fire which burns?"

It is this way: you get the wood ready, and then you are sorry to use it; in the same way you get yourself ready and then you are sorry. But the comparison is not good, because fire comes to an end. A better comparison would be with food; do you imagine your life in food or in that which is being fed? Is not that the meaning of the words of St. John about "my body", which ought to be food? Man is food for God if he gives himself to God.

(Unclear; nonsense.)

20) The principal aim of art, if there is art, and if it has an aim, is to manifest and to express the truth about man's soul, to express those mysteries which it is impossible to express simply by speech. From this springs art. Art is a microscope which the artist fixes on the mysteries of his soul and shows to people those mysteries which are common to all.

21) Love, enclosed in man and freed by reason, manifests itself in two ways: 1, by its expansion, and 2, by the establishment of the Kingdom of God. It is steam which, in spreading, works.

22) Lately, I have begun to feel such firmness and strength, not my own, but that of that God's work which I wish to serve, that the irritation, the reproaches, the mocking people hostile to the work of God, is strange to me; they are pitiable, touching.

23) The world, living unconsciously, and man, in the period of his childhood, performed unconsciously the work of God.

Having awakened to consciousness, he does it consciously. In the collision between the two methods of serving, man ought to know that the unconscious passes and will pass into the conscious and not the opposite and that therefore it is necessary to give oneself over to the future and not to the past. (Stupid.)

24) The delusion of man who has awakened to consciousness and who continues to consider his own separate being as himself, is that he considers a tool as himself. If you feel pain at the disturbing of the good of your separate being, it is as if you felt on your hand the blows on the tool with which you work. The tool has to be taken care of, ground, but not to be considered as oneself.

25) God Himself is economical. He has to penetrate all with love. He has fired man alone with love and has placed him in the necessity of firing all the rest.

26) Nothing affects the religious outlook so much as the way we look upon the world; whether with a beginning and an end, as it was looked upon in antiquity, or infinite as it is looked upon now. In a finite world, one can construct a reasonable rôle for separate mortal man, but in an infinite world the life of such a being has no meaning.

27) (*For Konevsky*) It happens to Katiusha after her resurrection, that she has certain periods in which she smiles slyly and lazily as if she had forgotten all which she considered true before; she is merely joyous and wants to live.

28) To him who lives a spiritual life entirely, life here becomes

so uninteresting and burdensome that he can part with it easily.

29) Natasha Strakhov<sup>83</sup> asks her father, when he speaks of something which happened when she was not yet born: "Where was I then?" I would have answered: "You were asleep and had not yet waked up here." Conception, birth, childhood are only a preparation to an awakening, which we see, but not the sleeping ones.

30) The error in which we find ourselves when we consider our separate beings as ourselves is the same as when a traveller counts only one stage as the whole road, or a man, one day as his whole life.

31) Read about ... and was horrified at the conscious deception of men ...

32) "An eraser." I have forgotten. I shall recall it.

Have written up to dinner. It is now 2 o'clock and I am going to dine.

*May 28, Ysn. Pol. 12 o'clock. noon.*

It is already several days that I am struggling with my work<sup>84</sup> and am making no progress. I sleep. I wanted to scribble it somehow to the very end, but I can't possibly do it. Am in a wretched mood, aggravated by the emptiness, by the poor, self-satisfied, cold emptiness of my surrounding life.

In the meantime I have been to Pirogovo.<sup>85</sup> I have a most

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<sup>83</sup> Five-year-old daughter of F. A. Strakhov.

<sup>84</sup> *Declaration of Faith*, later re-named *The Christian Doctrine*.

<sup>85</sup> The estate of Tolstoi's brother, S. N. Tolstoi, in the district of Krapivensk, in the

joyous impression; my brother Sergei<sup>86</sup> has undoubtedly had a spiritual transformation. He himself has formulated the essence of my faith (and he evidently recognises it as true for himself); to raise in oneself the spiritual essence and to subject to it the animal element. He has a miraculous ikon and he was tortured by his undefined attitude to it. The little girls<sup>87</sup> are very good and live seriously. Masha has been infected by them. Later there were at our house: Salamon,<sup>88</sup> Tanyee.<sup>89</sup>...

A terrible event in Moscow – the death of three thousand<sup>90</sup> – I somehow can not express myself as I ought to. I am indisposed all the time, getting weaker. In Pirogovo, there was the harnessmaker, an intelligent man. Yesterday a working-man came from Tula, intelligent. I think a revolutionist. To-day a seminary student, a touching case.

I am advancing very, very badly in my work. Rather boring

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Government of Tula, 35 versts from Yasnaya Polyana.

<sup>86</sup> Count Sergei Nicholaievich Tolstoi (1826–1904). See for him in *Biography of L. N. Tolstoi* by P. Biriukov and in *My Recollections* by Count I. L. Tolstoi, Moscow, 1914.

<sup>87</sup> The daughters of Count S. N. Tolstoi: Vera, Varvara and Maria Sergievna.

<sup>88</sup> Charles Salomon, the translator of some of Tolstoi's works into French, and a professor of the Russian language in the higher institutions in Paris.

<sup>89</sup> Sergei Ivanovich Tanyeev (1856–1915), composer, at one time director at the Moscow Conservatory, an acquaintance of the Tolstoi family, who lived three summers (1894–1896) in Yasnaya Polyana.

<sup>90</sup> On the Khodinka field at the time of the coronation celebration of May 18, 1896. In the beginning of the year 1910, Tolstoi wrote a little story called *Khodinka*, printed for the first time in his *Posthumous Literary Works*, Volume III, published by A. L. Tolstoi, Moscow, 1902.

letters because they demand polite answers. I have written to Bondarev,<sup>91</sup> Posha, and to some one else. O yes; Officer N. was here too. I think I was useful to him. Splendid notes by Shkarvan.<sup>92</sup>

Yesterday there was a letter from poor N.<sup>93</sup>, whom they have driven off to the Persian frontier, hoping to kill him. God help him. And don't forget me. Give me life, life, i. e. a conscious, joyful serving of Thee.

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<sup>91</sup> Timofei Nicholaievich Bondarev (1820–1898), a peasant of the district of the Don. In 1867 he was exiled to Siberia for conversion to the Jewish faith and lived in the district of Minusinsk, in the Province of Yeniseisk, to the end of his life. Wrote a work called *Industriousness and Parasitism, or The Triumph of the Agricultural Worker* (issued with abbreviations in 1906 in Petrograd by *Posrednik*), in which he proved the moral obligation of each man to do agricultural work. Tolstoi wrote a long introduction to this work. As to the impression which this work produced on Tolstoi, he himself wrote in his book *What Then Shall We Do?* (1884–1886) the following: “In all my life, two Russian thinkers had upon me a great moral influence and enriched my thought and clarified my philosophy. These people were not Russian poets, scholars, preachers – they were two remarkable men who are now living, and who all their life laboured in the *muzhik* labour of peasants, Siutaev and Bondarev.” In his letter here mentioned to Bondarev, Tolstoi touched upon those religious problems which Bondarev asked him. For more details about Bondarev see in the article of C. S. Shokhor-Trotsky: “Siutaev and Bondarev” (in the *Tolstoi Annual*, 1913), Petrograd, 1914, issued by the Tolstoi Museum Society, following which are printed ten letters by Tolstoi to Bondarev and some writings of Bondarev himself.

<sup>92</sup> *My Refusal From Military Service, The Memoirs of an Army Physician*, issued by *The Free Press*, 1898, England. Tolstoi read this work even before, in manuscript, and at this time probably was re-reading it. In his letter to A. A. Shkarvan of December 16, 1895, Tolstoi wrote: “Your memoirs are interesting and important to the highest degree. I read them with spiritual joy and was touched.”

<sup>93</sup> See [Note 29](#).

In the meantime, I thought,

1) It is remarkable how many people see some insoluble problem in evil. I have never seen any problem in it. For me it is now altogether clear that that which we call evil is that good, the action of which we don't yet see.

2) The poetry of Mallarmé,<sup>94</sup> and others. We who don't understand it, say boldly that it is humbug, that it is poetry striking an *impasse*. Why is it that when we hear music which we don't understand and which is just as nonsensical, we don't say that boldly, but say timidly: yes, perhaps one ought to understand it or prepare oneself for it, etc. That is silly. Every work of art is only a work of art when it is understandable, I do not say for all, but for people standing on a certain level of education, on the same level as the man who reads poetry and who judges it.

This reasoning leads me to an absolutely certain conclusion that music before any other art (decadence in poetry and symbolism and other things in painting) has lost its way and struck an *impasse*. And he who has turned it from the road was that musical genius Beethoven. The principal factors are the authorities and people deprived of æsthetic feeling who judge art.

Goethe? Shakespeare?<sup>95</sup> Everything that goes under their

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<sup>94</sup> Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898), French poet, considered one of the most prominent Symbolists. For a more detailed opinion of him by Tolstoi, see his book, *What Is Art?* Chapter X.

<sup>95</sup> Goethe (1749–1832), the German poet. See for Tolstoi's opinion of him in his *Journal*, September 13, 1906. Earlier in 1891, in his letter to Countess A. A. Tolstoi, Tolstoi wrote: "As to Goethe, I do not like him at all. I don't like his

names is supposed to be good and on *se bâte les flancs* in order to find something beautiful in the stupid and the unsuccessful, and taste is entirely perverted. And all these great talents – Goethe, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Michael-Angelo – side by side with exquisite things, produced not only mediocre ones, but disgusting ones. The mediocre artists produce a mediocrity as regards value and never anything very bad. But recognised geniuses create either really great works or absolute stuff and nonsense; Shakespeare, Goethe, Beethoven, Bach, and others.

3) To place before myself the most complex and confused thing which demands my participation. On all sides it seems there exist insoluble dilemmas; it is bad one way and worse the other. And it is only necessary to carry over the problem from the outer realm into the inner, into one's own life, to understand that this is only an arena for my inner perfection, that it is a test, a measure of my moral development, an experiment as to how much I can and want to do the work of God, the enlargement of love, and everything resolves itself so easily, simply, joyously.

4) A mistake (sin) is the use of reason, given me to recognise my essence in the love for everything which exists, in acquiring the good for my separate being. As long as man lived without a reasoning consciousness, he fulfilled the will of God in acquiring the good for himself and in struggling for it and there was no sin; but as soon as reason had awakened, then there was sin.

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conceited paganism."Shakespeare (1564–1616). See Tolstoi's article about him "On Shakespeare" and "On The Drama" and the opinion in his journal March 15, 1897.



5) The harness-maker, Mikhailo, says to me that he does not believe in a future life, that he thinks that when a man dies, his spirit will leave him and will go away. But I say to him: “Well, go off then with this spirit; then you won’t die.”

*May 29, Ysn. Pol. If I live.*

It seems to me, *June 6, Ysn. Pol.*

The principal thing is that during this time I have advanced in my work,<sup>96</sup> and am advancing. I write on sins and the whole work is clear to the end.

Finished Spier – splendid.

The economic movement of humanity by three means: the destruction of ownership of land according to Henry George<sup>97</sup>;

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<sup>96</sup> Declaration of Faith.

<sup>97</sup> Henry George (1839–1897), noted American social worker and writer on economic questions. In his numerous works, chiefly on agrarian questions, he was a warm defender of the destitute and the oppressed. George considered the existence of private land ownership as the principal cause of the existence of poverty; appearing as its opponent, he suggested the abolition of all existing taxes, substituting for them a *single tax* on the value of land; by means of this reform, land would pass into the hands of people cultivating it by their own labour, because for people who did not work it, it would be unprofitable to own great stretches of land, since they would have to pay a large amount of taxes on them. Tolstoi sympathised very much with George’s scheme and wrote much about it (*The Great Sin, The Only Possible Solution of the Land Question, A Letter to a Peasant* and some chapters in *Resurrection* and others). Of the works of George, Tolstoi recognised as the best his *Social Problems*, to the Russian translation of which he wrote a preface. In the last years of George’s life, Tolstoi was in correspondence with him; in his letter to him of 1894 Tolstoi among other things wrote: “The reading of each one of your books clarifies for me much which formerly was not clear to me and convinces me more and more of the truth and practicality of your system” [translated from the Russian from a translation from

the inheritance which would give over accumulated wealth to society, if not in the first generation, then in the second; and a similar tax on wealth on an excess of over 1000 rubles income for a family or 200 for each man.

To-day the Chertkovs arrived. Galia<sup>98</sup> is very good.

The day before yesterday a gendarme came, a spy, who confessed that he was sent after me. It was both pleasant and nasty.<sup>99</sup>

During this time have thought principally the following:

1) When a man lives an animal life, he does not know that God lives through him. When reason awakens in him, then he knows it. And knowing it, he becomes united with God.

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the English. —*Translator's note*]. On the occasion of George's death, Tolstoi wrote to Countess S. A. Tolstoi on October 24, 1897: "Serezha told me yesterday that Henry George was dead. Strange to say, his death struck me as the death of a very close friend. The death of Alexandre Dumas produced the same impression upon me. One feels as if it were the loss of a real comrade and friend." Many works of George's are translated into the Russian; there is a splendid biography of him written by S. D. Nicholaev, and published by *Posrednik: The Great Fighter for Land Liberation, Henry George*, Moscow, 1906.

<sup>98</sup> Anna Constantinovna Chertkov.

<sup>99</sup> In the letter to Count L. L. Tolstoi of June 7, 1896, Tolstoi related the incident as follows: "Yesterday a remarkable event happened to me. Two or three times there came to me a young civilian from Tula asking me to give him books. I gave him some of my articles and spoke with him. He was, according to his convictions, a Nihilist and an Atheist. I told him from the bottom of my heart all that I thought. Yesterday he came and gave me a note: 'Read it,' he said, 'then tell me what you think of me.' In the note it was written that he was a junior officer in the gendarmerie, a spy, sent to me to find out what is going on here, and that he became unbearably conscience-stricken and that is why he disclosed himself to me. I felt pity and disgust and pleasure."

2) Man in his animal life has to be guided by instinct; reason directed to that which is not subject to it, will spoil everything.

3) Is not luxury a preparing for something better, when there is already a sufficiency?

Yesterday was not the 6th, but the 8th. To-day, *June 9, Y. P.*

I have written little and not very well. It seems to me that it is getting clearer. In the morning I had a conversation with the workingmen who came for books. I remembered the woman who asked to write to John of Kronstad.<sup>100</sup>

The religion of the people is this: there is a God and there are gods and saints. (Christ came on earth, as a peasant told me to-day, to teach people how and to whom to pray.) The gods and the saints perform miracles, have power over the flesh and perform heroic deeds and good works, and the people have only to pray, to know how and to whom to pray. But people can not perform good works, they can only pray. Here is their whole faith.

I bathed and don't feel well.

*June 19, Y. P.*

Have been feeling weak all this time and sleep badly. Posha came yesterday. He spoke about the Khodinka accident well, but wrote it badly. Our very idle, luxurious life oppresses me. N. came. A stranger. He is young and he does not understand in the same way as I do, that which he understands, although he agrees

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<sup>100</sup> The priest, John Ilich Sergiev (of Kronstadt) (1829–1908), who enjoyed great fame as “The supplicator for the sick.” In his preaching and his books he many times made sharp attacks against Tolstoi and his views.

with everything. Finished the first draft<sup>101</sup> on the 13th of June. Now I am revising it, but am working very little.

... Struggled with myself twice and successfully. Oh, if it were always so!

Once I passed beyond Zakaz<sup>102</sup> at night and wept for joy, being grateful for life. The pictures of life in Samara stand out very clearly before me; the steppes, the fight of the nomadic, patriarchic principle with the agricultural civilised one.<sup>103</sup> It draws me very much. *Konefsky* was not born in me; that is why it moves so awkwardly.

Have been thinking:

1) Something very important about art: what is beauty? Beauty is that which we love. "He is not dear because he is good, but good because he is dear." Here is the problem; why dear? Why do we love? And to say that we love, because a thing is beautiful, is just the same as saying that we breathe because the air is pleasant. We find the air pleasant, because we have to breathe; and in the same way we discover beauty, because we

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<sup>101</sup> Declaration of Faith.

<sup>102</sup> Zakaz, a piece of Yasnaya Polyana forest, not far from the house. Tolstoi was afterwards buried there.

<sup>103</sup> Tolstoi had the opportunity to closely observe the nomadic life of the Bashkirs in the province of Samara, where he went in the Sixties to drink kumyss, and in the Seventies and Eighties to his own estates (see *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi* written by P. I. Biriukov (Moscow, 1913) published by *Posrednik*, Volume II, Chapter VIII; and also the *Recollections* in the *Children's Magazine*, Mayak, 1913, by V. S. Morosov, a former pupil of the Yasnaya Polyana school in the beginning of the Sixties).

have to love. And he who hasn't the power to see spiritual beauty, sees at least a bodily one and loves it.

*June 26, Y. P. Morning.*

All night I did not sleep. My heart aches without stopping. I continue to suffer and can not subject myself to God... I have not mastered pride and rebellion and the pain in my heart does not stop. One thing consoles me; I am not alone but with God, and therefore no matter how painful it is, yet I feel that something is taking place within me. Help me, Father.

Yesterday I walked to Baburino<sup>104</sup> and unwillingly (I rather would have avoided than sought it), I met the 80-year-old Akime ploughing, the woman Yaremichov who hasn't a coat to her household and only one jacket, then Maria whose husband was frozen and who has no one to gather her rye and who is starving her child, and Trophime and Khaliavka, and the husband and wife were dying as well as the children. And we study Beethoven. And I pray that He release me from this life. And again I pray and cry from pain. I am entrapped, sinking, I cannot alone, only I hate myself and my life.

*June 30, Ysn. Pol.*

Continued to suffer and struggle much, and have conquered neither one nor the other. But it is better. Mme. Annenkov<sup>105</sup> was

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<sup>104</sup> A village within four versts from Yasnaya Polyana.

<sup>105</sup> Leonilla Fominishna Annenkov (1845–1914), an old friend of Tolstoi's and an adherent of his philosophy, the wife of a Kursk landlord, the well-known scholarly lawyer, K. N. Annenkov (1842–1910). She made the acquaintance of Tolstoi in 1886 and from that time on corresponded very much with him. Completely sharing the

here and put it very well ...<sup>106</sup> They have spoiled for me even my diary which I write with the point of view of the possibility of its being read by the living<sup>107</sup> ...

Just now upstairs they began to speak about the New Testament and N. *en ricanant* proved that Christ advised castration. I became angry, – shameful.

Two days ago I went to those who had been burned out; had not dined, was tired and felt well... Yesterday I visited the lawyer who wanted to snatch a hundred rubles from a beggar-woman to decorate his own house with. It is the same everywhere.

During this time I have been in Pirogovo. My brother Serezha has entirely come over to us. The journey with Tania and Chertkov was joyous. To-day in Demenka<sup>108</sup> I gave the last words for his journey to a dying peasant.

I am advancing much on the work.<sup>109</sup> I will try to write out now what I have jotted down in the book.

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opinions of Tolstoi, she applied them with a rare sequence to life and she was noted for her remarkable abundance of love which attracted every one who met her. Tolstoi valued her highly, considering that she had “a clear mind and a loving heart.”

<sup>106</sup> *Farther on one line is crossed out.* A note of Princess M. L. Obolensky in the copy at the disposal of the editors.

<sup>107</sup> It weighed upon him that certain persons to whom he did not want to show his Journal had read it nevertheless. In the last years of his life he was compelled to hide the current Journal somewhere in his rooms, and the finished note-books he gave away in safe keeping.

<sup>108</sup> A village four versts from Yasnaya Polyana, where the Chertkovs lived in summer.

<sup>109</sup> Declaration of Faith.

*To-day, July 19.* <sup>110</sup>

I am in Pirogovo. I arrived the day before yesterday with Tania and Chertkov. In Serezha<sup>111</sup> there has certainly taken place a spiritual change; he admits it himself saying that he was born several months ago. I am very happy with him.

At home, during this time, I lived through much difficulty. Lord, Father, release me from my base body. Cleanse me and do not let your spirit perish in me and become overgrown. I prayed twice beseechingly; once that He let me be His tool; and second that He save me from my animal "self."

During this time I progressed on the Declaration of Faith. It is far from what has to be said and from what I want to say. It is entirely inaccessible to the plain man and the child, but, nevertheless I have said all that I know coherently and logically.

In this time also I wrote the preface to the reading of the Gospels<sup>112</sup> and annotated the Gospels. Had visitors. Englishmen,

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<sup>110</sup> The note of July 19, 1896, he evidently originally inserted in a note-book from which he later wrote it out in his Journal.

<sup>111</sup> Tolstoi's brother, Count S. N. Tolstoi.

<sup>112</sup> This article under the title of "How to Read The Gospels and What Is Its Essence" was printed at first in the edition of *The Free Press*, 1898, and after in 1905 in Russia. (See the complete works of Tolstoi published by Sytin, Popular Edition, Volume XV.) The central thought of this article is that in order to understand the true meaning of the Gospels, one has to penetrate those passages which are completely simple, clear and understandable. Tolstoi advises all those who wish to understand the true meaning of the Gospels to mark everything which is for them completely clear and understandable with a blue pencil and marking at the same time with a red one, around the words marked in blue, the words of Christ Himself as differing from the words of

Americans – no one of importance.

I will write out all that I jotted down:

1) Yesterday I walked through a twice ploughed, black-earth fallow field. As far as the eye could see, there was nothing but black earth – not one green blade of grass, and there on the edge of the dusty grey road there grew a bush of burdock. There were three off-shoots. One was broken and its white soiled flower hung; the other also broken, was bespattered with black dirt, its stem bent and soiled; the third shoot stuck out to the side, also black from dust, but still alive and red in the centre. It reminded me of Hadji-Murad.<sup>113</sup> It makes me want to write. It asserts life to the end, and alone in the midst of the whole field, somehow or other has asserted it.

2) He has a capacity for languages, for mathematics, is quick to comprehend and to answer, can sing, draw correctly, beautifully, and can write in the same way; but he has no moral

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the Apostles. It is those places marked by the red pencil which will give the reader the essence of the teaching of Christ. Tolstoi in his own copy of the Gospels made such marks which he mentions later in the Journal with the words: “Marked the Gospels.”

<sup>113</sup> Hadji Murad, one of the boldest and most remarkable leaders of the Caucasian mountaineers who played a big rôle in the struggle of the mountaineers with the Russians in the Forties of the Nineteenth Century. In 1852 he was killed in a skirmish with the Cossacks. Tolstoi heard much about him as early as the beginning of the Fifties, when he himself took part in the fight with the mountaineers. A month after the above-mentioned note in the Journal, Tolstoi made a rough sketch of his story, *Hadji Murad*, on which he worked with interruptions until 1904. This story was printed for the first time in his *Posthumous Literary Works* (published by A. L. Tolstoi, Volume III, 1912.) It is interesting to compare the introduction to it with the above note of Tolstoi's in his Journal.



or artistic feeling and therefore nothing of his own.

3) Love towards enemies. It is difficult, seldom does it succeed – as with everything absolutely beautiful. But then what happiness when you attain it! There is an exquisite sweetness in this love, even in the foretaste of it. And this sweetness is just in the inverse ratio to the attractiveness of the object of love. Yes, the spiritual voluptuousness of love towards enemies.

4) Some one makes me suffer. As soon as I think about myself, about my own suffering, the suffering continues to grow and grow and terror overcomes me at the thought to where it might lead. It suffices to think of the man on account of whom you are suffering, to think about his suffering – and instantly you are healed. Sometimes it is easy when you already love your torturer; but even when it is difficult, it is always possible.

5) Yesterday in walking I thought what are those boundaries which separate us, one being from another? And it occurred to me. Are not space and time the conditions of these divisions, or rather, the consequences of these divisions? If I were not a separated part, there would be neither space nor time for me, as there is not for God. But since I am not the whole, I can understand myself and other beings through space and time only.

(I feel that there is something in this, but I can not yet express it clearly.)

6) There was an argument about whether being in love was good. For me the conclusion was clear; if a man already lives a human, spiritual life, then being in love – love, marriage – would

be a downfall for him, he would have to give a part of his strength to his wife, to his family, or even at least to the object of his love. But if he is on the animal plane, if he eats, drinks, labours, holds a post, writes, plays – then to be in love would be an uplift for him as for animals, for insects, in the time of ...<sup>114</sup>

7) To pray? They say that prayer is necessary, that it is necessary to have the sweet feeling of prayer which is called forth by service, singing, reading, exclamations, ikons. But what is prayer? A communion with God, a recognition of one's relation to God, the highest state of the soul. Is it possible that this state of the soul can be attained by an action upon the outer senses... Is it not more probable that the prayerful state might be reached only in rare exceptional moments and necessarily in isolation, as even Christ said and as Elijah saw God, not in a storm but in a tender breeze?

8) Yesterday I looked through the romances, novels, and poems of Fet.<sup>115</sup> I recalled our incessant music on 4 grand-pianos in Yasnaya Polyana and it became clear to me that all this – the romances, the poems, the music – was not art,

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<sup>114</sup> As in the copy at the disposal of the editors.

<sup>115</sup> Afanasie Afanasevich Fet (Shenshin) (1820–1892), a Russian lyric poet and translator and friend of the Tolstoi family. Concerning the relations of Tolstoi with him, see *My Recollections*, by Fet (Volume II, 1890) and *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi* by Biriukov. In the letter of November 7, 1866, Tolstoi wrote to Fet: "You are a man whose mind, not to speak of anything else, I value higher than any one of my acquaintances' and who in personal intercourse is the only one who gives me that bread by which it is *not alone* that man lives." Later Tolstoi and Fet became estranged from each other.

something important and necessary to people in general, but a self-indulgence of robbers, parasites, who have nothing in common with life; romances, novels about how one falls in love disgustingly, poetry about this or about how one languishes from boredom. And music about the same theme. But life, all life, seethes with its own problems of food, distribution, labour, about faith, about the relations of men ... It is shameful, nasty. Help me, Father, to serve Thee by showing up this lie.

9) I was going from the Chertkovs on the 5th of July. It was evening, and beauty, happiness, blessedness, lay on everything. But in the world of men? There was greed, malice, envy, cruelty, lust, debauchery. When will it be among men as it is in Nature? Here there is a struggle, but it is honest, simple, beautiful. But there it is base. I know it and I hate it, because I myself am a man.

(I have not succeeded.)

10) When I suffered in my soul, I tried to calm myself with the consciousness of serving. And that used to calm me, but only then when there happened to be an obvious instance of serving, i. e. when it was unquestionably required and I was drawn to it. But what is to be done when it happens neither one way nor the other? Give myself to God, negate myself. Do as Thou wilt, I consent.

(Again, not what I want to say.)

I am going to dinner.

11) Kant,<sup>116</sup> they tell us, made a revolution in the thought of

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<sup>116</sup> Kant, the German philosopher (1724–1804). For the opinions of Tolstoi about

men. He was the first to show that a thing in itself is inaccessible to knowledge, that the source of knowledge and life is spiritual. But is not that the same which Christ said two thousand years ago, only in a way understandable to men? Bow in spirit and in truth; the spirit is life creating, the letter, the flesh, is beneficial in no way.

12) Balls, feasts, spectacles, parades, pleasure-gardens, etc., are a dreadful tool in the hands of the organisers. They can have a terrible influence. And if anything has to be subjected to control, it is this.

13) I walked along the road and thought, looking at the forests, the earth, the grass, what a funny mistake it is to think that the world is such as it appears to me. To think that the world is such as it appears to me, means to think that there can be no other being capable of knowledge except myself with my six senses.<sup>117</sup> I stopped and was writing that down. Sergei Ivanovich<sup>118</sup> approached me. I told him what I was thinking. He said:

“Yes, one thing is true, that the world is not such as we see it and we don’t know anything as it is.”

I said:

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him see the Journal, February 19, and September 22, 1904, and September 2, 1906; August 8th, 1907; March 26, 1909. *Kant's Thoughts*, selected by Tolstoi, were published by *Posrednik*, Moscow, 1906.

<sup>117</sup> As a sixth sense, Tolstoi recognised the muscular sense. See the [note of October 10, 1896](#).

<sup>118</sup> S. I. Tanyeev.

“Yes, we know something exactly as it is.”

“What is it?”

“That which knows. It is exactly such as we know it.”

14) One is often surprised that people are ungrateful. One ought to be surprised at how they could be grateful for good done them. However little good people do, they know with certainty that the doing of good is the greatest happiness. How then can people be grateful to others that these others have drunk themselves full, when that is the greatest enjoyment?

15) Only he is free whom nothing and nobody can hinder from doing what he wants. There is only one such work to do – to love.

16) Prayer is directed to a personal God, not because God is personal (I even know as a matter of fact that He is not personal, because the personal is finite and God is infinite), but because I am a personal being. I have a little green glass in my eye and I see everything green. I can not help but see the world green, although I know that it is not like that.

17) The æsthetic pleasure is a pleasure of a lower order. And therefore the highest æsthetic pleasure leaves one unsatisfied. In fact, the higher the æsthetic pleasure, the more unsatisfied it leaves one. It always makes one want something more and more. And so without end. Only moral good gives full satisfaction. Here there is full satisfaction. Nothing further is wished for or needed.

18) A lie to others is by far neither as important nor as harmful as a lie to oneself. A lie to others is often an innocent play, a satisfying of vanity. A lie to oneself is always a perversion of the

truth, a turning aside from the demands of life.

19) Although seldom, yet it has happened to me that I have done good from pity, a real good. In that case you never remember what you really have done and under what circumstances. You remember only that you were with God (this occurred to me in regard to my favourite boots which I remember I gave away out of pity and for a long time I could not remember where they had gone). It is the same way with all those moments when I was with God, whether in prayer or in the business of life. Memory is a fleshly affair, but here, the thing is spiritual.

20) Man can not live a fleshly life, if he does not consider himself in the right and he can not live a spiritual life if he does not consider himself sinful.

21) ...

I am going to sleep. It is 12:30 in the morning, July 30th.

*July 31, Y. P. If I live.*

*July 31, Y. P.*

I am alive. It is evening now. It is past four. I am lying down and can not fall asleep. My heart aches. I am tired out. I hear through the window – they play tennis and are laughing. S. went away to the Shenshins.<sup>119</sup> Every one is well, but I am sad and can not master myself. It is like the feeling I had when St. Thomas<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> The Shenshins – Tula landlords who lived on their estate, Sudakovo, five versts from Yasnaya Polyana.

<sup>120</sup> Prosper St. Thomas, tutor of Tolstoi and his brothers. The incident mentioned in the Journal produced a tremendous impression on Tolstoi. "It may have been that this incident was the cause of all the horror and aversion to all kinds of violence which

locked me in and I heard through my prison how every one was gay and was laughing. But I don't want to. One must suffer humiliation and be good. I can do it.

I continue to copy:

1) The disbelief in reason is the source of all evil. This disbelief is reached by the teaching of a distorted faith from childhood. Believe in one miracle and the trust in reason is destroyed.

2) ...

3) Christianity does not give happiness but safety; it lets you down to the bottom from which there is no place to fall.

4) I rode horseback from Tula and thought about this; that I am a part of Him, separated in a certain way from other such parts, and He is everything, the Father, and I felt love, just love, for Him. Now, especially now, I not only can not reproduce this feeling, but not even recall it. But I was so joyful that I said to myself: Here I was thinking that I can not learn anything new and suddenly I acquired a wonderful blessed new feeling, a real feeling.

5) What humbug<sup>121</sup>— beauty, truth, goodness! Beauty is one of those attributes of outer objects, like health, an attribute of

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I experienced throughout life," Tolstoi wrote afterwards in his recollections. (See P. Biriukov: *The Biography of L. N. Tolstoi*, Moscow, issued by *Posrednik*, Volume I, pages 99–100.) In Tolstoi's story *Boyhood*, St. Thomas is pictured under the name of Saint Jerome. The incident mentioned here is described in Chapters XIV, XV and XVI of that story.

<sup>121</sup> Written in English in the original.

the living body. Truth is not the ideal of science. The ideal of science is knowledge, not truth. The good can not be placed on the plane with either of these, because it is the goal of life.

(It is unclear, but it was clear and will be.)

6) I do not remember good works, because they are outside of the material man – of memory.

*August 1, Ysn. Pol. If I live.* – which is doubtful. My heart aches very much...

It is dreadful to think how much time has elapsed; a month and a half. *To-day, Sept. 14, Y. P.*

During this time I took a trip to the monastery with Sonya.<sup>122</sup>... I wrote on *Hadji-Murad*<sup>123</sup> very poorly, a first draft. I have continued my work on the Declaration of Faith. The Chertkovs have gone away... All three sons are here now with their wives.<sup>124</sup>

There was a letter from the Hollander who has refused to serve.<sup>125</sup> I wrote a preface to the letter.<sup>126</sup> I wrote a letter also

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<sup>122</sup> Tolstoi, together with Countess S. A. Tolstoi, visited his sister, Countess Maria Nicholaievna, living in the convent of Shamordino near the Optina Desert. In his letter to her of September 13, 1896, Tolstoi wrote, "With great pleasure and emotion I recall my stay with you."

<sup>123</sup> The story, *Hadji Murad*. See [Note 112](#).

<sup>124</sup> Count Sergei Lvovich, with his wife, Countess Maria Constantinovna (born Rachinsky, who died in 1899); Count Ilya Lvovich, with his wife, Countess Sophia Nicholaievna, and Count Leo Lvovich, with his wife, the Countess Dora Fedorovna.

<sup>125</sup> The Dutchman, Van-der-Veer, refused military service, as he declared in his letter to the Commander of the National Guard, on the grounds that he hated every kind of murder of men as well as of animals, especially murder at the order of other



to Mme. Kalmikov<sup>127</sup> with very sharp statements about the Government. The whole month and a half has been condensed in this. Oh, yes; I have also been ill from my usual sickness and my stomach is still not strong.

One thing more. During this time there was a letter from the Hindu Tod and an exquisite book of Hindu wisdom, *Ioga's Philosophy*.<sup>128</sup>

In the meantime I thought:

1) There are many people, especially Europeans and especially women, who not only talk but who write things that appear intelligent, in the same way as dumb people speak; as a matter of fact, it isn't any more natural for them to think than

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people. The military authorities sentenced him to three months' solitary confinement. Later Van-der-Veer for several years published a magazine with a Christian tendency called *Vrede*.

<sup>126</sup> Van-der-Veer's letter, with the appendix by Tolstoi under the title "The Beginning of the End" was printed in the edition of *The Free Press*, 1898, England, later in Russia in the *Obnovleniia*, Petrograd, 1906, which was soon confiscated.

<sup>127</sup> Alexandra Mikhailovna Kalmikov, a noted worker for popular education, who turned to Tolstoi with the request that he express himself in regard to the order then given by the Minister of the Interior to close the committees on illiteracy. In answer to her letter, Tolstoi expressed his opinion about the activity of the Russian Government in general and about the methods of resisting it used by the Liberals. His answer, under the title of "A Letter to the Liberals," in revised form was printed in full in the publication of *The Free Press*: "Concerning the Attitude Towards the State" (England, 1898) and with omissions in the publication of *Obnovleniia* (Petrograd, 1906,) which was confiscated.

<sup>128</sup> *Ioga's Philosophy. Lectures on Rajah Ioga or Conquering Internal Nature*, by Swâmi Vivekânanda, New York, 1896.

for a dumb person to speak, but both one and the other, both the stupid and the dumb, have been taught.

2) To love an individual man, one has to be blinded. Without being blinded one can love only God, but people can be pitied, which means to love in a Godly way.

3) To get rid of an enemy, one must love him, as it is also said in the “Teaching of the twelve apostles.”<sup>129</sup> But to love one has to put to oneself the task for all one’s life of love towards an enemy, to do him good through love and to perfect oneself in love for him.

4) At first, one is surprised that stupid people should have within them such an assertive convincing intonation. But it is as it should be. Otherwise no one would listen to them.

5) I find this note: “A decoration for peasants, our happiness” – I can not remember what that means, but it is something that pleased me. I think it means that to a poor man looking on the life of the rich, it appears as happiness. But this happiness is as much happiness, as cardboard made into a tree or a castle – is a tree or a castle.

6) We are all attracted to the Whole and one to another,

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<sup>129</sup> “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,” discovered in 1883. A document of the Christian literature of the First Centuries. Tolstoi translated it from the Greek and twice wrote a preface to it: in 1885 and twenty years later, in 1905. The passage mentioned in the Journal reads this way: “It is not good to love only those who love you. Heathens do the same. They love their own and hate their enemies and therefore they have enemies, but you should love those who hate you and then you will have no enemies.”

like particles of one body. Only our *roughness*, the lack of smoothness, our angles, interfere with our uniting. There is already an attraction, there is no need of making it, but one must plane oneself, wipe out one's angles.

7) One of the strongest means of hypnotism, of exterior action on the spiritual state of man, is his dress. People know that very well; that is why there is a monastic garb in monasteries and a uniform in the army.

8) I was trying to recall two excellent subjects for novels, the suicide of old Persianninov and the substitution of a child in an orphan asylum.

9) When my weakness tortured me, I sought means of salvation, and I found one in the thought that there is nothing stationary, that everything flows, changes, that all this is for a *while*, and that it is only necessary to suffer the *while* while we live – I and the others. And some one of us will go away first. (The *while* does not mean to live in any way, but means, not to despair, to suffer it through to the end.)

10) I wanted to say that I was grateful, so as to make the other one well disposed, and later to tell the truth. No, I thought, that is not permitted. He will ascribe it to his virtues and the truth will be accepted even less. Man, not acknowledging his sins, is a vessel hermetically closed with a cover which lets nothing enter. To humble oneself, to repent, that means to take off the cover and to make oneself capable of perfection, of the good.

11) Barbarism interferes with the union of people, but the

same thing is done by a too great refinement without a religious basis. In the other, the physical disunites, and in this, the spiritual.

12) Man is a tool of God. At first I thought that it was a tool with which man himself was called to work; now I have understood that it is not man who works, but God. The business of man is only to keep himself in order. Like an axe, which would have to keep itself always clean and sharp.

13) Why is it that scoundrels stand for despotism? Because under an ideal order which pays according to merit, they are badly off. Under despotism everything can happen.

14) I often meet people who recognise no God except one which we ourselves recognise in ourselves. And I am astonished; God in me. But God is an infinite principle; how then, why then, should He happen to be in me? It is impossible not to question oneself about this. And as soon as you question yourself, you have to acknowledge an exterior cause. Why do people not feel themselves in need of answering this question? Because for them, the answer to this question is in the reality of the existing world, whether according to Moses or to Darwin – it is all the same. And therefore, to have a conception of an exterior God, one has to understand that that which is actually real, is only the impression of our senses, i. e. it is we ourselves, our spiritual “self.”

15) In moments of passion, infatuation, in order to conquer, one thing is necessary, to destroy the illusion that it is the “self” who suffers, who desires, and to separate one’s true “self” from the troubled waters of passion.

*Sept. 15. Y. P. If I live.*

*To-day October 10. Y. P.*

It is almost a month that I have made no entries and it seemed to me it was only yesterday. During this time, though in very poor form, I finished the Declaration of Faith. During this time there were some Japanese with a letter from Konissi.<sup>130</sup> They, the Japanese, are undoubtedly nearer Christianity than our church Christians. I have learned to love them very much...

I want to write out the whole Declaration of Faith from the beginning again. Yesterday there was a good letter from Verigin, Peter.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Daniel Pavlovich Konissi, a Japanese, converted to the Greek Church, who studied in the Kiev Theological Academy, then came to Moscow and here made the acquaintance of Tolstoi. Later he became professor in the University in Kioto. Translated *Lao-Tze* from the Chinese into the Russian (this translation was printed at first in *Problems of Philosophy and Psychology* and later in separate pamphlet, *Lao-Se, Tao-Te-King*, Moscow, 1913.) For D. P. Konissi see article of I. Alexeev, "The Skies Are Different – the People Are the Same" (in the paper, *Nov*, 1914, No. 154.) About the Japanese who visited him, Tolstoi wrote to Countess S. A. Tolstoi, September 26th: "This morning the Japanese arrived. Very interesting, fully educated, original and intelligent and free-thinking. One an editor of a paper, evidently a very rich man and an aristocrat there, no longer young; the other one, a little man, young, his assistant, also a literary man" (*Letters of Tolstoi to his Wife*, Moscow, 1913, page 507).

<sup>131</sup> Peter Vasilevich Verigin, the leader of the Dukhobors, when in exile in the town of Obdorsk, in the province of Tobolsk, wrote to Tolstoi about his life and expounded his views on the printing of books. Tolstoi's reply, written on October 14, 1896, in which he answered the objections of Verigin against the printing of books, was printed in the book, *The Letters of the Dukhobor Leader, P. V. Verigin*, published by *The Free Press*, 1901, England. See also the letter of P. V. Verigin on his acquaintance with Tolstoi printed in the International Tolstoi Almanac compiled by P. A. Sergienko

All last night I thought about the meaning of life and though there are other things to note down, I want to note down this:

The whole world is nothing else than an infinite space filled with infinitely small, colourless, silently moving particles of matter. At bottom, even this is not so; I know that they are particles of matter only through their impenetrability, but the impenetrability I know only through my sense of touch and my muscle sense. If I did not have this sense, I would not know about impenetrability or about matter. As to motion, also, I, strictly speaking, have no right to speak, because if I did not have the sense of sight or again muscle sense, I would not know anything about motion either.

So that all that I have the right to assert about the outer world is that something exists, something entirely unknown to me, as it was said long ago both by the Brahmins and by Kant and by Berkeley. There is some kind of occasion, some kind of grain of sand which causes irritation in the shell of the snail and produces a pearl (*sécrétion*, secretion in the snail). This is our whole outside world.

What is there then? There is myself with my representations of myself, of the sun, trees, animals, stones. But what then is it that I call myself? Is it something arbitrary depending on myself? No, it is something independent of myself, predetermined. I can not not be myself, and not have that representation which I have, namely, that I include in myself a small part of these moving

atoms and call them myself. And all the other remaining atoms I see in the form of beings more or less like myself. The world appears to me to consist entirely of beings which are like me or resemble me.<sup>132</sup>

(I have become confused, yet have something to say. I am going to try when I have the strength.)

I am continuing to write out what I had to say and what I dreamt of all night, namely:

People think that their life is in the body, that from that which takes place in the body; from breathing, nutrition, circulation of the blood, etc., life flows. And this seems unquestionable; let nutrition, breathing, circulation of the blood cease and life will end. But what ends is the life of the body, life in this body...

And in fact if you consider that life comes from the process of the body and only in the body then as soon as the processes of the body are ended, then life ought to be ended. But certainly this is an arbitrary assertion. No one has proven and can prove that life is only in the body and can not be without the body. To assert this, is all the same as asserting that when the sun has set then the sun has come to an end. One must first decide what is life. Is it that which I see in the others as it begins and stops, or is it what I know in myself? If it is what I know in myself, then it is the only thing that is and therefore it can not be destroyed. And the fact that in bodies before me processes end which are connected with

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<sup>132</sup> Further in Tolstoi's manuscript, one page has been crossed out. A note by M. L. Obolensky in the copy in possession of the editors.

life in me and in other beings, shows me only this, that life goes away somewhere from my sensual eyes. To go away entirely, to be destroyed, it absolutely can not be, because outside of it there is nothing in the world. The problem, then, might be this: Will my life be destroyed, can it be destroyed? And the destruction of the body of a man, is that a sign of the destruction of his life? In order to answer this question one must first decide what is life?

Life is the consciousness of my separateness from other beings, of the existence of other beings and of those limits which separate me from them. My life is not bound up with my body. There may be a body, but no consciousness of separateness like for a sleeping one, an idiot, an embryo or for those who have fits.

It is true that there can be no life without the consciousness of the body; but that is because life is the consciousness of one's own separateness and of one's own boundaries. But the consciousness of one's own separateness and of one's own boundaries happens in our life in time and space, but it can happen in any other way and therefore the destruction of the body is not the sign of the destruction of life.

(Not clear and not what I want to say.)

*Oct. 11. Y. P. If I live.*

*To-day October 20. Y. P. Morning.*

I feel like writing down three things.

1) In a work of art the principal thing is the soul of the author. Therefore among medium productions the feminine ones are the better, the more interesting. A woman will push herself through



now and then, speak out the most inner mysteries of her soul; and that is what is needed. You see what she really loves, although she pretends that she loves something else. When an author writes, we the readers place our ears to his breast and we listen and say, “Breathe. If you have rumblings, they will appear.” And women haven’t the capacity of hiding. Men have learned literary methods and you can no longer see him behind his manner, except that you know he is stupid. But what is in his soul, you don’t see.

(Not good; malicious.)

The 2nd thing I wanted to write was that yesterday, in blowing out my candle, I began to feel for matches and did not find them, and an uneasiness came over me. “And you are getting ready to die! What, then, are you also going to die with matches?” I said to myself. And I at once saw in the dark my real life and became calm.

What is this fear of the dark? Besides the fear at the incapability of meeting whatever accident might happen, it is the fear at the absence of the delusion of our most important sense, that of sight. It is fear before the contemplation of our true life. I now no longer have that fear – on the contrary, that which had been fear is now peace; there only has remained the habit of fear; but to the majority of people the fear is exactly of that which alone can give them peace.

The 3rd thing I wanted to write was that when a man is put in the necessity of choosing between an act which is clearly beneficial to others, but with the thwarting of the demands of

conscience (the will of God), then the problem is only one of short-sightedness, because the man sees in the immediate future the good which will arise from his act, if he thwarts the will of God, but he does not see in the more remote future the other good, which is an infinite number of times greater, which will come from the abstention of this act and the fulfilment of the will of God. It is the same kind of thing that children do, destroying the general order of a house which is necessary for their own happiness, for the sake of the immediate pleasure of play.

The fact is that for the work of God and for man accomplishing the work of God, time does not exist. Man can not but represent to himself everything in time, and therefore in order to correctly judge of the importance of the work of God, he has to represent it to himself in the very remote future, even in infinite time. The fact, that I will not kill the murderer and will forgive him, that I shall die unseen by any one, fulfilling the will of God, will bear its own fruit ... if I insist upon thinking in terms of time – in infinite time. But it will bear its fruit surely.

I have to finish the former:

4) Refinement and power in art are almost always diametrically opposed.

5) Is it true that works of art are obtained by assiduous work? That which we call a work of art – yes. But is it real art?

6) The Japanese sang and we could not restrain ourselves from laughter. If we had sung before the Japanese they would have laughed. The more so had Beethoven been played

for them. Indian and Greek temples are understood by all. And Greek statues are understood by all. And our best painting is also understandable. So that architecture, sculpture, painting, having reached their perfection, have reached also cosmopolitanism, accessibility to all. To the same point in some of its manifestations has the art of speech reached; in the teaching of Buddha, of Christ, in the poetry of Sakia-Muni, Jacob, Joseph. In dramatic art; Sophocles, Aristophanes did not reach it. It is being reached in the new ones. But in music they have been lagging behind entirely. The ideal of all art to which it should strive is accessibility to all – but it, especially music to-day, noses its way into refinement.

7) The principal thing which I wanted to say about art, is that it does not exist in the sense of some great manifestation of the human spirit as it is understood now. There is play, consisting in the beauty of construction, in sculpting figures, or in representing objects, in dancing, in singing, in playing on various instruments, in poetry, in fables, in stories, but all this is only play and not an important matter to which one could consciously devote his strength.

And so it was always understood and is understood by the working, unspoiled people and every man who has not gone away from labour, from life, can not look upon it in any other way. It is necessary, one *must*, say it out loud – how much evil has come from this importance attributed by the parasites of society to their plays!

8) The whole outer world is formed by us, by our senses. We know nothing and can know nothing about it. All that we can know, in studying the outer world is the relation of our senses (*sens*) among themselves and the laws of these relations. There is no question but that this is very interesting, and from the study of these relations are opened many new situations which we can make use of and which increase the comforts of our life, but this is not only not everything, not all of science as people busying themselves with this study are now asserting, but it is only one minute particle of science.

Science is the study of the relation of our spiritual “self” – that which masters the outer senses and uses them – to our outer senses or to the outer world, which is the same thing. This relation has to be studied, because in this relation is accomplished the movement of humanity as a whole to perfection and the good, and the movement of each individual man to the same goal. This relation is the object of every science; but to-day the study of this relation is called Ethics by our present-day scholars, and is considered as a science by itself, and a very unimportant one from out the great mass of other sciences. It is all topsy-turvy; the whole of science is considered as a small part and a small part is considered as the whole. From this comes the brutalisation of men.

This arises out of the astonishing ignorance of most of the so-called learned. They are naïvely convinced that the outer world is an actual reality, just in the same way as the peasants are

convinced that the sun and the stars move around the earth. Just as the peasants know nothing of the work of Galileo, Copernicus and Newton, or if they have heard of it – do not believe – so the materialist scholars have never heard, do not know or do not believe what has been done as to criticism of knowledge by Descartes, Kant, Berkeley and even before, by the Hindus and by all religious doctrines.

9) When you suffer, you must enter into yourself – not seek matches, but put out that light which is there, and which interferes with the seeing of your true “self.” You must turn upside down the toy which stood on the cork and place it on the lead and then everything will become clear and the greatest part of your suffering will cease – all that part which is not physical.

10) When you suffer from passion, here are some palliative prescriptions:

(a) Remember how many times you have suffered before because in your consciousness you have connected yourself to your passion; lust, greed, desire, vanity, and remember how everything passed away and you have still not found that “self” which suffered then. And so it is now. It is not you who are suffering, but that passion which you wrongly joined to yourself.

(b) Again, when you suffer, remember that the suffering is not something disagreeable which you can wish to get rid of, but it is the very work of life, that very task which you have been designated to do. In wanting to get rid of it, you are doing that which a man would do who lifts the plough there where the earth

is hard, just where, in fact, it has to be ploughed up.

(c) Then remember, at the moment when you suffer, that if there is anger in the feelings you have, the suffering is in you. Replace the anger with love, and the suffering will end.

(d) Also this is possible; love towards enemies, which is indeed the one real love. You must struggle for it, struggle with toil, with the consciousness that in it is life. But when you have attained it, what relief!

(e) The principal thing is to turn the toy upside down, find your true “self” which is only visible without matches, and then anger will vanish by itself. That “self” is incapable of, cannot, and has no one to be angry with – loving, it can only pity.

During these latter days I didn’t feel like writing. I merely wrote letters to every one and sent to Schmidt an addition to the letter about the incompatibility ... with Christianity.<sup>133</sup> I have begun the Declaration of Faith anew. I am going to continue.

Went to Pirogovo with Masha. Serezha<sup>134</sup> is very good...

*October 21. Y. P. If I live.*

*To-day probably October 23. Y. P.*

All these days I have been out of tune with my work. Wrote a letter yesterday to the commander of the disciplinary battalion in Irkutsk about Olkhovik.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> This letter was printed at first in an issue of *The Free Press*, No. 8, 1898, England, and later in Russia in *Obnovleniia*, Petrograd, 1906, and was confiscated.

<sup>134</sup> Brother of Tolstoi, Count S. N. Tolstoi.

<sup>135</sup> A peasant of the province of Kharkov in the district of Sumsk, Peter Vasilevich

It is evening now, I am sitting down to write because I feel the special importance and seriousness of the hours of life which are left to me. And I do not know what I have to do, but I feel that there has ripened in me an expression of God's will which asks to be let out.

Have re-read *Hadji Murad*— it isn't what I want to say. As to *Resurrection* I can't even get hold of it. The drama interests me.

A splendid article by Carpenter on science.<sup>136</sup> All of us walk

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Olkhovik. Refused military service October 15, 1895, at recruiting, in the city of Bielopolie, province of Kharkov. Was sentenced by the Vladivostok military court to three years in a disciplinary battalion. The letters of Olkhovik to his relatives and acquaintances about his refusal were published by *The Free Press*, 1897, England, and in 1906 in Russia by *Obnoblennia* (and were confiscated). Influenced by Olkhovik, the private, Cyril Sereda, also refused military service, with whom Olkhovik became friendly on the steamer on the way to Siberia, where he was appointed for service. Both of them were turned over to the Irkutsk disciplinary battalions. Tolstoi's letter to the commanding officer of the regiment, in which he asks him "as a Christian and as a kind man to have pity on these people ..." was printed at first also in *The Free Press* and afterwards in various publications in Russia. (See the Complete Works of Tolstoi, published by Sytin: subscribed edition, Volume XX, popular edition, Volume XXII.) On the effect that Tolstoi's letter produced on the officer of the regiment, Tolstoi himself wrote the following in a letter to P. A. Boulanger, March 29, 1898: "Recently I was surprised, and very pleasantly, by a letter from a man exiled administratively from Verkholsensk, who writes that the commanding officer of the disciplinary battalion in Irkutsk openly told Olkhovich and Sereda that my appeal for them saved them from corporal punishment and shortened their sentence. Let a thousand letters pass in vain: if but one has such a result, then one ought to write unceasingly." The fate of P. V. Olkhovich was as follows: From the disciplinary battalion he was exiled for eighteen years to the district of Yakutsk, where he lived together with the exiled Dukhobors until 1905, when together with them he went to America. At the present moment he is living in California.

<sup>136</sup> Edward Carpenter, a noted contemporary English thinker, some of whose

near the truth and uncover it from various sides.

*October 26. Y. P.*

I am still just as indisposed and don't feel like writing. My head aches. Serezha came yesterday.<sup>137</sup> Wrote a letter to Sonya and to Andrusha.

But it seems to me that during this time of doubt, I arrived at two very important conclusions:

1) That, which I also thought before and wrote down; that *art* is an invention, is a temptation for amusement with dolls, with pictures, with songs, with *play*, with stories – and nothing more. But to place art as they do (and they do the same with science), on the same level with the good is a horrible *sacrilège*. The proof that it is not so, is that about truth also (the right) I can say that truth is a good (as God said, great good, *teib*, i.e., good), and about beauty one can say that it is good; but it is impossible to say about good that it is beautiful (at times it is homely), or that it is true (it is always true).

There is only one good; good and bad; but truth and beauty are good qualities of certain objects.

The other very important thing, is that reason is the only means of manifesting, and freeing love. It seems to me that this is an important thought, omitted in my Declaration of Faith.

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works Tolstoi valued highly. Carpenter's article, "Contemporary Science," was later translated into Russian by Countess Tolstoi and printed with a preface by Tolstoi in the magazine *Sievernii Viestnik* (1898, No. 3), later it was issued separately (*Posrednik*, Moscow, 1911).

<sup>137</sup> Count Sergei Lvovich Tolstoi (born, 1863), eldest son of Tolstoi.



*To-day November 1. Y. P.*

All this time I have felt neither well nor like working. I have written letters only, among the number was one to the Caucasian disciplinary battalion.<sup>138</sup> Yesterday, walking at night on the snow, in the blizzard, I tired my heart and it aches. I think I am going to die very soon. That is why I am writing out the notes. I think I am going to die without fear and without resistance.

Just now I sat alone and thought how strange it was that people live alone. People; I thought of Stasov;<sup>139</sup> how is he living now,

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<sup>138</sup> To the Ekaterinograd disciplinary battalion were sentenced the Dukhobors (41 in number) who had refused military service, while being in actual military service ... See *The Dukhobors in the Disciplinary Regiment*, published by *The Free Press*, 1902, England, where was printed also the letter of Tolstoi to the commanding officer of the regiment. Stating those religious convictions of the Dukhobors for which they suffered persecutions and calling their acts ... Tolstoi asked the commanding officer to do all that he could to lighten their fate. The letter of Tolstoi produced a softening effect on the commanding officer.

<sup>139</sup> Vladimir Vasilevich Stasov (1824–1906), a critic of art and music and the librarian of the Imperial Public Library in Petrograd, a friend of the Tolstoi family. When, after Stasov's death, his friend, the sculptor, I. Y. Ginzburg, asked Tolstoi to write his recollections of him, in the compilation, "To The Memory of V. V. Stasov," Tolstoi in his letter of November 7, 1907, replied that it was difficult for him to write about Stasov on account of "the misunderstanding" which had taken place between them: "the misunderstanding consisted in that Vladimir Vasilevich Stasov loved and valued prejudicially in me that which I did not value and could not value in myself, and in his goodness forgave me that which I valued and value in myself above everything else, – that by which I lived and live. With every other man such a misunderstanding would lead, if not to hostility then to a coolness, but the gentle, kind, spontaneous, warm nature of Vladimir Vasilevich and at the same time, his childlike clarity, was such, that I could not help succumbing to his influence and loving him without any thought of the difference of our points of view. I shall always remember our good

what is he thinking, feeling. Of Kolichka,<sup>140</sup> too. And so strange and new became the knowledge that they, all of them, people – are living, and I do not live in them; that they are closed to me.

*November 2. Y. P. If I live.*

*November 2nd. Y. P.*

Am alive. Am a little better. Have written on the Declaration of Faith. I think it is true that it is cold because it endeavours to be infallible.<sup>141</sup> A blizzard. Sent off the letters to Schmidt and Chertkov. Did not send the letter to Mme. Kalmikov.

To-day I thought about art. It is play. And when it is the play of working, normal people it is good, but when it is the play of corrupted parasites, then it is bad – and here now it has reached to decadence.

*November 3. Y. P. If I live.*

*To-day November 5. Y. P. Morning.*

Yesterday was a terrible day.

... At night I hardly slept and was depressed. I just now found the *prescriptions*<sup>142</sup> in my diary, looked them over and began to feel better; to separate one's true "self" from that which is offended and vexed, to remember that this is no hindrance, no accidental unpleasantness, but the very work predestined me, and

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friendly relationship with emotion."

<sup>140</sup> Nikolai Nicholaievich Gay, the son of the old friend of Tolstoi, N. N. Gay.

<sup>141</sup> These thoughts were called forth in Tolstoi by a letter received on October, 1896, from V. V. Rakhmanov, who, being acquainted with this work of Tolstoi, found it written in a cold and didactic tone and advised Tolstoi to abandon it.

<sup>142</sup> See Journal, Oct. 20, 1896. [Thoughts 9](#) and [10](#).

above all to know that if I have a dislike for any one, then as long as there is that dislike in me – then I am the guilty one. And as soon as you know you are guilty, you feel better.

To-day, lying on the bed, I thought about love towards God ... I wish I could say, the love of God, i.e., divine love – that the first and principal commandment is divine love, but that the other resembling it and flowing from it, especially flowing from it, is the love for neighbour.

Yesterday I wrote 18 pages of introduction to Art.<sup>143</sup>

It is wrong to say of a work of art, “You don’t yet understand it.” If I don’t understand it, that means that the work of art is poor, because its task is in making understandable that which is not understandable.

*November 6. Y. P. If I live.*

*November 6. Y. P.*

Am alive. It is the third day that I continue to write on art. It seems to me it is good. At least I am writing willingly and easily.

... Have received a good letter from Vanderveer. Wrote another letter to the commander of the battalion in the Caucasus. Chertkov sent me his copy of a similar letter.

To-day I rode horseback to Tula. A marvellous day and night. I am just now going to take a walk to meet the girls.

Have been thinking.

1) Natural sciences, when they wish to determine the very

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<sup>143</sup> This served as a beginning to Tolstoi’s book, *What Is Art?* completed by him only in 1898.

essence of things, fall into a crude materialism, i.e., ignorance. Such, besides Descartes' whirlwinds, are atoms and ether and the origin of species. All that I can say, is that it appears to me so, just as the heavenly vault appears round to me, while I know that it is not round and that it appears to me so, only because my sight for all directions extends on only one radius.

2) The highest perfection of art is its cosmopolitanism. But on the contrary, with us at present it is becoming more and more specialised, if not according to nations, then according to classes.

3) The refinement of art and its strength are always in inverse proportion.

4) "Conservatism lies in this" ... That is the way I have it noted, but further I can't remember now.

5) Why is it pleasant to ride? Because it is the very emblem of life. Life – you ride.

I wanted to take a walk...

*November 7. Y. P. If I live.*

*To-day November 12. Y. P.*

I haven't noted down anything during this time. I was writing the essay on Art. To-day a little on the Declaration of Faith. A weakness of thought and I am sad. One must learn to be satisfied with stupidity. If I do not love, at least not *not* to love. That, thank the Lord, I have attained.

*November 16. Y. P. Morning.*

I still work just as badly and am therefore depressed. The day

after to-morrow I am going to Moscow, if God commands.<sup>144</sup>

... In the meantime I received a strange letter from the Spaniard Zanini, with an offer of 22,000 francs for good works. I answered that I would like to use them for the Dukhobors. What is going to happen?<sup>145</sup> I wrote to Kuzminsky on Witte and Dragomirov<sup>146</sup> and the day before yesterday I wrote diligently all morning on War.<sup>147</sup> Something will come of it.

I am thinking continually about art and about the temptations or seductions which becloud the mind, and I see that art belongs to this class, but I do not know how to make it clear. This occupies

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<sup>144</sup> The initials I. G. C. in the original.

<sup>145</sup> The Spaniard, Demetrio Zanini, wrote from Barcelona to Tolstoi that the members of a certain club, who were his admirers, decided to offer him a present of a splendid inkwell, money for the purchase of which was being collected by subscription. At the request of Tolstoi, his daughter, Tatiana Lvovna, wrote to Zanini, saying that he preferred this money to be used for some good work. In answer to this, Zanini informed Tolstoi that they had already collected about 22,500 francs. Tolstoi explained in a letter to him the miserable condition of the Dukhobors and suggested using the money collected for their help.

<sup>146</sup> A close friend of Tolstoi, Senator Alexander Mickailovich Kuzminsky, president at this time of the St. Petersburg District Court. The finance-Minister, S. Y. Witte, wanted to communicate with Tolstoi through A. M. Kuzminsky, hoping to call forth his approval in the matter of his introducing the government sale of vodka and the founding of temperance societies. Tolstoi's letter to A. M. Kuzminsky, in which he answered Witte's proposal in the negative, with the omission of the harsh opinions concerning General Dragomirov (the author of the periodical, *The Soldier's Manual*, which was being displayed in the barracks) was printed in the bulletin of the Tolstoi Museum Society, 1911, Nos. 3 to 5.

<sup>147</sup> This article has remained unfinished and up to the present has not been printed anywhere.

me very, very much. I fall asleep and wake up with this thought, but up to now I have come to no conclusion.

The notes during this time about God and the future life are:

1) They say that God must be understood as a personality. In this lies great misunderstanding; personality is limitation. Man feels himself a personality, only because he comes in contact with other personalities. If man were only one, he would not be a personality. These two conceptions are mutually determined; the outer world, other beings, and the personality. If there were not a world of other beings, man would not feel himself, would not recognise himself as a personality; if man were not a personality he would not recognise the existence of other beings. And therefore man within this Universe is inconceivable otherwise than as a personality. But how can it be said of God, that He is a personality, that God is personal? In this lies the root of anthropomorphism.

Of God it only can be said what Moses and Mohammed said, that he is one, and one, not in that sense that there is no other or other gods (in relation to God there can be no notion of number and therefore it is even impossible to say of God that he is one (1 in the sense of a number), but in that sense that he is monocentric, that he is not a conception, but a being, that which the Greek Orthodox call a living God in opposition to a pantheistic God, i.e., a superior spiritual being living in everything. He is one in that sense that He is, like a being to whom one can address oneself, i.e., not exactly to pray, but that there is a relationship

between me, something which is limited, a personality, and God – something inconceivable but existing.

The most inconceivable thing about God for us consists exactly in this, that we know Him as a one being, can know him in no other way, and at the same time it is impossible for us to understand a one being who fills up everything with himself. If God is not one, then He is scattered and He does not exist. If He is one, then we involuntarily represent him to ourselves in the shape of a personality and then He is no longer a higher being, no longer everything. But, however, in order to know God and to lean on Him one must understand Him as filling everything and at the same time as one.

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