

# The Biographies of Leo Tolstoy

Sophie Andreevna Tolstoy

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# Reminiscences of Tolstoy by Count Ilya Tolstoy

Translated By George Calderon

Tolstoy' son, Ilya Lvovich Tolstoy (1866–1933), was also a writer. In 1916, Ilya left Russia, and travelled to the United States, where he made a living lecturing on art and on his father's works. He took part in movie versions of the novels *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection*, which were unsuccessful. Ilya Tolstoy is best known for this book of memoirs about his father. He also wrote the short novel *The Corpse* in 1890, which was published posthumously.

Count Ilya Tolstoy (second from left) with his brothers

# Part 1

IN one of his letters to his great-aunt, Alexandra Andreyevna Tolstoy, my father gives the following description of his children:

The eldest [Sergei] is fair-haired and good-looking; there is something weak and patient in his expression, and very gentle. His laugh is not infectious; but when he cries, I can hardly refrain from crying, too. Every one says he is like my eldest brother.

I am afraid to believe it. It is too good to be true. My brother's chief characteristic was neither egotism nor self-renunciation, but a strict mean between the two. He never sacrificed himself for any one else; but not only always avoided injuring others, but also interfering with them. He kept his happiness and his sufferings entirely to himself.

Ilya, the third, has never been ill in his life; broad-boned, white and pink, radiant, bad at lessons. Is always thinking about what he is told not to think about. Invents his own games. Hot-tempered and violent, wants to fight at once; but is also tender-hearted and very sensitive. Sensitive; fond of eating and lying still doing nothing.

Tanya [Tatyana] is eight years old. Every one says that she is like Sonya, and I believe them, although I am pleased about that, too; I believe it only because it is obvious. If she had been Adam's eldest daughter and he had had no other children afterward, she would have passed a wretched childhood. The greatest pleasure that she has is to look after children.

The fourth is Lyoff. Handsome, dexterous, good memory, graceful. Any clothes fit him as if they had been made for him. Everything that others do, he does very skilfully and well. Does not understand much yet.

The fifth, Masha [Mary] is two years old, the one whose birth nearly cost Sonya her life. A weak and sickly child. Body white as milk, curly white hair; big, queer blue eyes, queer by reason of their deep, serious expression. Very intelligent and ugly. She will be one of the riddles; she will suffer, she will seek and find nothing, will always be seeking what is least attainable.

The sixth, Peter, is a giant, a huge, delightful baby in a mob-cap, turns out his elbows, strives eagerly after something. My wife falls into an ecstasy of agitation and emotion when she holds him in her arms; but I am completely at a loss to understand. I know that he has a great store of physical energy, but whether there is any purpose for which the store is wanted I do not know. That is why I do not care for children under two or three; I don't understand.

This letter was written in 1872, when I was six years old. My recollections date from about that time. I can remember a few things before.

## Family Life in the Country

FROM my earliest childhood until the family moved into Moscow — that was in 1881 — all my life was spent, almost without a break, at Yasnaya Polyana.

This is how we live. The chief personage in the house is my mother. She settles everything. She interviews Nikolai, the cook, and orders dinner; she sends us out for walks, makes our shirts, is always nursing some baby at the breast; all day long she is bustling about the house with hurried steps. One can be naughty with her, though she is sometimes angry and punishes us.

She knows more about everything than anybody else. She knows that one must wash every day, that one must eat soup at dinner, that one must talk French, learn not to crawl about on all fours, not to put one's elbows on the table; and if she says that one is not to go out walking because it is just going to rain, she is sure to be right, and one must do as she says.

Papa is the cleverest man in the world. He always knows everything. There is no being naughty with HIM. When he is up in his study "working," one is not allowed to make a noise, and nobody may go into his room. What he does when he is at "work," none of us know. Later on, when I had learned to read, I was told that papa was a "writer."

This was how I learned. I was very pleased with some lines of poetry one day, and asked my mother who wrote them. She told me they were written by Pushkin, and Pushkin was a great writer. I was vexed at my father not being one, too. Then my mother said that my father was also a well-known writer, and I was very glad indeed.

At the dinner-table papa sits opposite mama and has his own round silver spoon. When old Natalia Petrovna, who lives on the floor below with great-aunt Tatyana Alexandrovna, pours herself out a glass of kvass, he picks it up and drinks it right off, then says, "Oh, I'm so sorry, Natalia Petrovna; I made a mistake!" We all laugh delightedly, and it seems odd that papa is not in the least afraid of Natalia Petrovna. When there is jelly for pudding, papa says it is good for gluing paper boxes; we run off to get some paper, and papa makes it into boxes. Mama is angry, but he is not afraid of her either. We have the gayest times imaginable with him now and then. He can ride a horse better and run faster than anybody else, and there is no one in the world so strong as he is.

He hardly ever punishes us, but when he looks me in the eyes he knows everything that I think, and I am frightened. You can tell stories to mama, but not to papa, because he will see through you at once. So nobody ever tries.

Besides papa and mama, there was also Aunt Tatyana Alexandrovna Yergolsky. In her room she had a big eikon with a silver mount. We were very much afraid of this eikon, because it was very old and black.

When I was six, I remember my father teaching the village children. They had their lessons in "the other house," where Alexey Stepanytch, the bailiff, lived, and sometimes on the ground floor of the house we lived in.

There were a great number of village children who used to come. When they came, the front hall smelled of sheepskin jackets; they were taught by papa and Seryozha and Tanya and Uncle Kostya all at once. Lesson-time was very gay and lively.

The children did exactly as they pleased, sat where they liked, ran about from place to place, and answered questions not one by one, but all together, interrupting one another, and helping one another to recall what they had read. If one left out a bit, up jumped another and then another, and the story or sum was reconstructed by the united efforts of the whole class.

What pleased my father most about his pupils was the picturesqueness and originality of their language. He never wanted a literal repetition of bookish expressions, and particularly encouraged every one to speak “out of his own head.” I remember how once he stopped a boy who was running into the next room.

“Where are YOU off to?” he asked.

“To uncle, to bite off a piece of chalk.”

“Cut along, cut along! It’s not for us to teach them, but for them to teach.”

## **The Servants in the House**

WHEN my father married and brought home his young and inexperienced bride, Sofya Andreyevna, to Yasnaya Polyana, Nikolai Mikhailovitch Rumyantsef was already established as cook. Before my father’s marriage he had a salary of five rubles a month; but when my mother arrived, she raised him to six, at which rate he continued the rest of his days; that is, till somewhere about the end of the eighties. He was succeeded in the kitchen by his son, Semyon Nikolayevitch, my mother’s godson, and this worthy and beloved man, companion of my childish games, still lives with us to this day. Under my mother’s supervision he prepared my father’s vegetarian diet with affectionate zeal, and without him my father would very likely never have lived to the ripe old age he did.

Agafya Mikhailovna was an old woman who lived at first in the kitchen of “the other house” and afterward on the home farm. Tall and thin, with big, thoroughbred eyes, and long, straight hair, like a witch, turning gray, she was rather terrifying, but more than anything else she was queer.

Once upon a time long ago she had been housemaid to my great-grandmother, Countess Pelageya Nikolayevna Tolstoy, my father’s grandmother, nee Princess Gortchakova. She was fond of telling about her young days. She would say:

I was very handsome. When there were gentlefolks visiting at the big house, the countess would call me, ‘Gachette [Agafya], femme de chambre, apportez-moi un mouchoir!’ Then I would say, ‘Toute suite, Madame la Comtesse!’ And every one would be staring at me, and couldn’t take their eyes off. When I crossed over to the annex, there they were watching to catch me on the way. Many a time have I tricked them — ran round the other way and jumped over the ditch. I never liked that sort of thing any time. A maid I was, a maid I am.



After my grandmother's death, Agafya Mikhailovna was sent on to the home farm for some reason or other, and minded the sheep. She got so fond of sheep that all her days after she never would touch mutton.

After the sheep, she had an affection for dogs, and that is the only period of her life that I remember her in.

There was nothing in the world she cared about but dogs. She lived with them in horrible dirt and smells, and gave up her whole mind and soul to them. We always had setters, harriers, and borzois, and the whole kennel, often very numerous, was under Agafya Mikhailovna's management, with some boy or other to help her, usually one as clumsy and stupid as could be found.

There are many interesting recollections bound up with the memory of this intelligent and original woman. Most of them are associated in my mind with my father's stories about her. He could always catch and unravel any interesting psychological trait, and these traits, which he would mention incidentally, stuck firmly in my mind. He used to tell, for instance, how Agafya Mikhailovna complained to him of sleeplessness.

"Ever since I can remember her, she has suffered from 'a birch-tree growing inside me from my belly up; it presses against my chest, and prevents my breathing.'

"She complains of her sleeplessness and the birch-tree and says: 'There I lay all alone and all quiet, only the clock ticking on the wall: "Who are you? What are you? Who are you? What are you?" And I began to think: "Who am I? What am I?" and so I spent the whole night thinking about it.'

"Why, imagine this is Socrates! 'Know thyself,'" said my father, telling the story with great enthusiasm.

In the summer-time my mother's brother, Styopa (Stephen Behrs), who was studying at the time in the school of jurisprudence, used to come and stay with us. In the autumn he used to go wolf-hunting with my father and us, with the borzois, and Agafya Mikhailovna loved him for that.

Styopa's examination was in the spring. Agafya Mikhailovna knew about it and anxiously waited for the news of whether he had got through.

Once she put up a candle before the eikon and prayed that Styopa might pass. But at that moment she remembered that her borzois had got out and had not come back to the kennels again.

"Saints in heaven! they'll get into some place and worry the cattle and do a mischief!" she cried. "'Lord, let my candle burn for the dogs to come back quick, and I'll buy another for Stepan Andreyevitch.' No sooner had I said this to myself than I heard the dogs in the porch rattling their collars. Thank God! they were back. That's what prayer can do."

Another favorite of Agafya Mikhailovna was a young man, Misha Stakhovitch, who often stayed with us.

"See what you have been and done to me, little Countess!" she said reproachfully to my sister Tanya: "you've introduced me to Mikhail Alexandrovitch, and I've fallen in love with him in my old age, like a wicked woman!"

On the fifth of February, her name-day, Agafya Mikhailovna received a telegram of congratulation from Stakhovitch.

When my father heard of it, he said jokingly to Agafya Mikhailovna:

“Aren’t you ashamed that a man had to trudge two miles through the frost at night all for the sake of your telegram?”

“Trudge, trudge? Angels bore him on their wings. Trudge, indeed! You get three telegrams from an outlandish Jew woman,” she growled, “and telegrams every day about your Golokhvotika. Never a trudge then; but I get name-day greetings, and it’s trudge!”

And one could not but acknowledge that she was right. This telegram, the only one in the whole year that was addressed to the kennels, by the pleasure it gave Agafya Mikhailovna was far more important of course than this news or the about a ball given in Moscow in honor of a Jewish banker’s daughter, or about Olga Andreyevna Golokvastovy’s arrival at Yasnaya.

Agafya Mikhailovna died at the beginning of the nineties. There were no more hounds or sporting dogs at Yasnaya then, but till the end of her days she gave shelter to a motley collection of mongrels, and tended and fed them.

## **The Home of the Tolstoys**

I CAN remember the house at Yasnaya Polyana in the condition it was in the first years after my father’s marriage.

It was one of the two-storied wings of the old mansion-house of the Princes Volkonsky, which my father had sold for pulling down when he was still a bachelor.

From what my father has told me, I know that the house in which he was born and spent his youth was a three-storied building with thirty-six rooms. On the spot where it stood, between the two wings, the remains of the old stone foundation are still visible in the form of trenches filled with rubble, and the site is covered with big sixty-year-old trees that my father himself planted.

When any one asked my father where he was born, he used to point to a tall larch which grew on the site of the old foundations.

“Up there where the top of that larch waves,” he used to say; “that’s where my mother’s room was, where I was born on a leather sofa.”

My father seldom spoke of his mother, but when he did, it was delightful to hear him, because the mention of her awoke an unusual strain of gentleness and tenderness in him. There was such a ring of respectful affection, so much reverence for her memory, in his words, that we all looked on her as a sort of saint.

My father remembered his father well, because he was already nine years old when he died. He loved him, too, and always spoke of him reverently; but one always felt that his mother’s memory, although he had never known her, was dearer to him, and his love for her far greater than for his father.

Even to this day I do not exactly know the story of the sale of the old house. My father never liked talking about it, and for that reason I could never make up my mind to ask him the details of the transaction. I only know that the house was sold for five thousand paper rubles by one of his relatives, who had charge of his affairs by power of attorney when he was in the Caucasus.

It was said to have been done in order to pay off my father's gambling debts. That was quite true.

My father himself told me that at one time he was a great card-player, that he lost large sums of money, and that his financial affairs were considerably embarrassed.

The only thing about which I am in doubt is whether it was with my father's knowledge or by his directions that the house was sold, or whether the relative in question did not exceed his instructions and decide on the sale of his own initiative.

My father cherished his parents' memory to such an extent, and had such a warm affection for everything relating to his own childhood, that it is hard to believe that he would have raised his hand against the house in which he had been born and brought up and in which his mother had spent her whole life.

Knowing my father as I do, I think it is highly possible that he wrote to his relative from the Caucasus, "Sell something," not in the least expecting that he would sell the house, and that he afterward took the blame for it on himself. Is that not the reason why he was always so unwilling to talk about it?

In 1871, when I was five years old, the zala and study were built on the house.

The walls of the zala were hung with old portraits of ancestors. They were rather alarming, and I was afraid of them at first; but we got used to them after a time, and I grew fond of one of them, of my great-grandfather, Ilya Andreyevitch Tolstoy, because I was told that I was like him.

Beside him hung the portrait of another great-grandfather, Prince Nikolai Sergeyevitch Volkonsky, my grandmother's father, with thick, black eyebrows, a gray wig, and a red kaftan.

This Volkonsky built all the buildings of Yasnaya Polyana. He was a model squire, intelligent and proud, and enjoyed the great respect of all the neighborhood.

On the ground floor, under the drawing-room, next to the entrance-hall, my father built his study. He had a semi-circular niche made in the wall, and stood a marble bust of his favorite dead brother Nikolai in it. This bust was made abroad from a death-mask, and my father told us that it was very like, because it was done by a good sculptor, according to his own directions.

He had a kind and rather plaintive face. The hair was brushed smooth like a child's, with the parting on one side. He had no beard or mustache, and his head was white and very, very clean. My father's study was divided in two by a partition of big bookshelves, containing a multitude of all sorts of books. In order to support them, the shelves were connected by big wooden beams, and between them was a thin birch-wood door, behind which stood my father's writing-table and his old-fashioned semicircular arm-chair.

There are portraits of Dickens and Schopenhauer and Fet as a young man on the walls, too, and the well-known group of writers of the *Sovremennik* circle in 1856, with Turgenieff, Ostrovsky, Gontcharof, Grigorovitch, Druzhinin, and my father, quite young still, without a beard, and in uniform.

My father used to come out of his bedroom of a morning — it was in a corner on the top floor — in his dressing-gown, with his beard uncombed and tumbled together, and go down to dress.

Soon after he would issue from his study fresh and vigorous, in a gray smock-frock, and would go up into the *zala* for breakfast. That was our *dejeuner*.

When there was nobody staying in the house, he would not stop long in the drawing-room, but would take his tumbler of tea and carry it off to his study with him.

But if there were friends and guests with us, he would get into conversation, become interested, and could not tear himself away.

At last he would go off to his work, and we would disperse, in winter to the different school-rooms, in summer to the croquet-lawn or somewhere about the garden. My mother would settle down in the drawing-room to make some garment for the babies, or to copy out something she had not finished overnight; and till three or four in the afternoon silence would reign in the house.

Then my father would come out of his study and go off for his afternoon's exercise. Sometimes he would take a dog and a gun, sometimes ride, and sometimes merely go for a walk to the imperial wood.

At five the big bell that hung on the broken bough of an old elm-tree in front of the house would ring and we would all run to wash our hands and collect for dinner.

He was very hungry, and ate voraciously of whatever turned up. My mother would try to stop him, would tell him not to waste all his appetite on *kasha*, because there were chops and vegetables to follow. "You'll have a bad liver again," she would say; but he would pay no attention to her, and would ask for more and more, until his hunger was completely satisfied. Then he would tell us all about his walk, where he put up a covey of black game, what new paths he discovered in the imperial wood beyond Kudeyarof Well, or, if he rode, how the young horse he was breaking in began to understand the reins and the pressure of the leg. All this he would relate in the most vivid and entertaining way, so that the time passed gaily and animatedly.

After dinner he would go back to his room to read, and at eight we had tea, and the best hours of the day began — the evening hours, when everybody gathered in the *zala*. The grown-ups talked or read aloud or played the piano, and we either listened to them or had some jolly game of our own, and in anxious fear awaited the moment when the English grandfather-clock on the landing would give a click and a buzz, and slowly and clearly ring out ten.

Perhaps mama would not notice? She was in the sitting-room, making a copy.

"Come, children, bedtime! Say good night," she would call.

"In a minute, Mama; just five minutes."

“Run along; it’s high time; or there will be no getting you up in the morning to do your lessons.”

We would say a lingering good night, on the lookout for any chance for delay, and at last would go down-stairs through the arches, annoyed at the thought that we were children still and had to go to bed while the grown-ups could stay up as long as ever they liked.

#### A JOURNEY TO THE STEPPES

WHEN I was still a child and had not yet read “War and Peace,” I was told that NATASHA ROSTOF was Aunt Tanya. When my father was asked whether that was true, and whether DMITRY ROSTOF was such and such a person and LEVIN such and such another, he never gave a definite answer, and one could not but feel that he disliked such questions and was rather offended by them.

In those remote days about which I am talking, my father was very keen about the management of his estate, and devoted a lot of energy to it. I can remember his planting the huge apple orchard at Yasnaya and several hundred acres of birch and pine forest, and at the beginning of the seventies, for a number of years, he was interested in buying up land cheap in the province of Samara, and breeding droves of steppe horses and flocks of sheep.

I still have pretty clear, though rather fragmentary and inconsequent, recollections of our three summer excursions to the steppes of Samara.

My father had already been there before his marriage in 1862, and afterward by the advice of Dr. Zakharyin, who attended him. He took the kumiss-cure in 1871 and 1872, and at last, in 1873, the whole family went there.

At that time my father had bought several hundred acres of cheap Bashkir lands in the district of Buzuluk, and we went to stay on our new property at a khutor, or farm.

In Samara we lived on the farm in a tumble-down wooden house, and beside us, in the steppe, were erected two felt kibitkas, or Tatar frame tents, in which our Bashkir, Muhammed Shah Romanytch, lived with his wives.

Morning and evening they used to tie the mares up outside the kibitkas, where they were milked by veiled women, who then hid themselves from the sight of the men behind a brilliant chintz curtain, and made the kumiss.

The kumiss was bitter and very nasty, but my father and my uncle Stephen Behrs were very fond of it, and drank it in large quantities.

When we boys began to get big, we had at first a German tutor for two or three years, Fyodor Fyodorovitch Kaufmann.

I cannot say that we were particularly fond of him. He was rather rough, and even we children were struck by his German stupidity. His redeeming feature was that he was a devoted sportsman. Every morning he used to jerk the blankets off us and shout, “Auf, Kinder! auf!” and during the daytime plagued us with German calligraphy.

## Outdoor Sports

THE chief passion of my childhood was riding. I well remember the time when my father used to put me in the saddle in front of him and we would ride out to bathe in the Voronka. I have several interesting recollections connected with these rides.

One day as we were going to bathe, papa turned round and said to me:

“Do you know, Ilyusha, I am very pleased with myself to-day. I have been bothered with her for three whole days, and could not manage to make her go into the house; try as I would, it was impossible. It never would come right. But to-day I remembered that there is a mirror in every hall, and that every lady wears a bonnet.

“As soon as I remembered that, she went where I wanted her to, and did everything she had to. You would think a bonnet is a small affair, but everything depended on that bonnet.”

As I recall this conversation, I feel sure that my father was talking about that scene in “Anna Karenina” where ANNA went to see her son.

Although in the final form of the novel nothing is said in this scene either about a bonnet or a mirror, — nothing is mentioned but a thick black veil, — still, I imagine that in its original form, when he was working on the passage, my father may have brought Anna up to the mirror, and made her straighten her bonnet or take it off.

I can remember the interest with which he told me this, and it now seems strange that he should have talked about such subtle artistic experiences to a boy of seven who was hardly capable of understanding him at the time. However, that was often the case with him.

I once heard from him a very interesting description of what a writer needs for his work:

“You cannot imagine how important one’s mood is,” he said. “Sometimes you get up in the morning, fresh and vigorous, with your head clear, and you begin to write. Everything is sensible and consistent. You read it over next day, and have to throw the whole thing away, because, good as it is, it misses the main thing. There is no imagination in it, no subtlety, none of the necessary something, none of that only just without which all your cleverness is worth nothing. Another day you get up after a bad night, with your nerves all on edge, and you think, ‘To-day I shall write well, at any rate.’ And as a matter of fact, what you write is beautiful, picturesque, with any amount of imagination. You look it through again; it is no good, because it is written stupidly. There is plenty of color, but not enough intelligence.

“One’s writing is good only when the intelligence and the imagination are in equilibrium. As soon as one of them overbalances the other, it’s all up; you may as well throw it away and begin afresh.”

As a matter of fact, there was no end to the rewriting in my father’s works. His industry in this particular was truly marvelous.

We were always devoted to sport from our earliest childhood. I can remember as well as I remember myself my father’s favorite dog in those days, an Irish setter called

Dora. They would bring round the cart, with a very quiet horse between the shafts, and we would drive out to the marsh, to Degatna or to Malakhov. My father and sometimes my mother or a coachman sat on the seat, while I and Dora lay on the floor.

When we got to the marsh, my father used to get out, stand his gun on the ground, and, holding it with his left hand, load it.

Dora meanwhile fidgeted about, whining impatiently and wagging her thick tail.

While my father splashed through the marsh, we drove round the bank somewhat behind him, and eagerly followed the ranging of the dog, the getting up of the snipe, and the shooting. My father sometimes shot fairly well, though he often lost his head, and missed frantically.

But our favorite sport was coursing with greyhounds. What a pleasure it was when the footman Sergei Petrovitch came in and woke us up before dawn, with a candle in his hand!

We jumped up full of energy and happiness, trembling all over in the morning cold; threw on our clothes as quickly as we could, and ran out into the zala, where the samovar was boiling and papa was waiting for us.

Sometimes mama came in in her dressing-gown, and made us put on all sorts of extra woolen stockings, and sweaters and gloves.

"What are you going to wear, Lyovotchka?" she would say to papa. "It's very cold to-day, and there is a wind. Only the Kuzminsky overcoat again today? You must put on something underneath, if only for my sake."

Papa would make a face, but give in at last, and buckle on his short gray overcoat under the other and sally forth. It would then be growing light. Our horses were brought round, we got on, and rode first to "the other house," or to the kennels to get the dogs.

Agafya Mikhailovna would be anxiously waiting us on the steps. Despite the coldness of the morning, she would be bareheaded and lightly clad, with her black jacket open, showing her withered, old bosom. She carried the dog-collars in her lean, knotted hands.

"Have you gone and fed them again?" asks my father, severely, looking at the dogs' bulging stomachs.

"Fed them? Not a bit; only just a crust of bread apiece."

"Then what are they licking their chops for?"

"There was a bit of yesterday's oatmeal left over."

"I thought as much! All the hares will get away again. It really is too bad! Do you do it to spite me?"

"You can't have the dogs running all day on empty stomachs, Lyoff Nikolaievich," she grunted, going angrily to put on the dogs' collars.

At last the dogs were got together, some of them on leashes, others running free; and we would ride out at a brisk trot past Bitter Wells and the grove into the open country.

My father would give the word of command, "Line out!" and point out the direction in which we were to go, and we spread out over the stubble fields and meadows, whistling and winding about along the lee side of the steep balks, beating all the bushes with our hunting-crops, and gazing keenly at every spot or mark on the earth.

Something white would appear ahead. We stared hard at it, gathered up the reins, examined the leash, scarcely believing the good luck of having come on a hare at last. Then riding up closer and closer, with our eyes on the white thing, it would turn out to be not a hare at all, but a horse's skull. How annoying!

We would look at papa and Seryozha, thinking, "I wonder if they saw that I took that skull for a hare." But papa would be sitting keen and alert on his English saddle, with the wooden stirrups, smoking a cigarette, while Seryozha would perhaps have got his leash entangled and could not get it straight.

"Thank heaven!" we would exclaim, "nobody saw me! What a fool I should have felt!" So we would ride on.

The horse's even pace would begin to rock us to sleep, feeling rather bored at nothing getting up; when all of a sudden, just at the moment we least expected it, right in front of us, twenty paces away, would jump up a gray hare as if from the bowels of the earth.

The dogs had seen it before we had, and had started forward already in full pursuit. We began to bawl, "Tally-ho! tally-ho!" like madmen, flogging our horses with all our might, and flying after them.

The dogs would come up with the hare, turn it, then turn it again, the young and fiery Sultan and Darling running over it, catching up again, and running over again; and at last the old and experienced Winger, who had been galloping on one side all the time, would seize her opportunity, and spring in. The hare would give a helpless cry like a baby, and the dogs, burying their fangs in it, in a star-shaped group, would begin to tug in different directions.

"Let go! Let go!"

We would come galloping up, finish off the hare, and give the dogs the tracks, tearing them off toe by toe, and throwing them to our favorites, who would catch them in the air. Then papa would teach us how to strap the hare on the back of the saddle.

After the run we would all be in better spirits, and get to better places near Yassenki and Retinka. Gray hares would get up oftener. Each of us would have his spoils in the saddle-straps now, and we would begin to hope for a fox.

Not many foxes would turn up. If they did, it was generally Tumashka, who was old and staid, who distinguished himself. He was sick of hares, and made no great effort to run after them; but with a fox he would gallop at full speed, and it was almost always he who killed.

It would be late, often dark, when we got back home.

"ANNA KARENINA"

I REMEMBER my father writing his alphabet and reading-book in 1871 and 1872, but I cannot at all remember his beginning "Anna Karenina." I probably knew nothing about it at the time. What did it matter to a boy of seven what his father was writing?



It was only later, when one kept hearing the name again and again, and bundles of proofs kept arriving, and were sent off almost every day, that I understood that "Anna Karenina" was the name of the novel on which my father and mother were both at work.

My mother's work seemed much harder than my father's, because we actually saw her at it, and she worked much longer hours than he did. She used to sit in the sitting-room off the zala, at her little writing-table, and spend all her free time writing.

Leaning over the manuscript and trying to decipher my father's scrawl with her short-sighted eyes, she used to spend whole evenings over it, and often sat up late at night after everybody else had gone to bed. Sometimes, when anything was written quite illegibly, she would go to my father's study and ask him what it meant. But this was very rare, because my mother did not like to disturb him.

When it happened, my father used to take the manuscript in his hand, and ask with some annoyance, "What on earth is the difficulty?" and would begin to read it out aloud. When he came to the difficult place he would mumble and hesitate, and sometimes had the greatest difficulty in making out, or, rather, in guessing, what he had written. He had a very bad handwriting, and a terrible habit of writing in whole sentences between the lines, or in the corners of the page, or sometimes right across it.

My mother often discovered gross grammatical errors, and pointed them out to my father, and corrected them.

When "Anna Karenina" began to come out in the "Russky Vvestnik," long galley-proofs were posted to my father, and he looked them through and corrected them.

At first the margins would be marked with the ordinary typographical signs, letters omitted, marks of punctuation, etc.; then individual words would be changed, and then whole sentences, till in the end the proof-sheet would be reduced to a mass of patches quite black in places, and it was quite impossible to send it back as it stood, because no one but my mother could make head or tail of the tangle of conventional signs, transpositions, and erasures.

My mother would sit up all night copying the whole thing out afresh.

In the morning there would lie the pages on her table, neatly piled together, covered all over with her fine, clear handwriting, and everything ready so that when "Lyovotchka" got up he could send the proof-sheets off by post.

My father carried them off to his study to have "just one last look," and by the evening it would be just as bad again, the whole thing having been rewritten and messed up.

"Sonya my dear, I am very sorry, but I've spoiled all your work again; I promise I won't do it any more," he would say, showing her the passages he had inked over with a guilty air. "We'll send them off to-morrow without fail." But this to-morrow was often put off day by day for weeks or months together.

"There's just one bit I want to look through again," my father would say; but he would get carried away and recast the whole thing afresh.

There were even occasions when, after posting the proofs, he would remember some particular words next day, and correct them by telegraph. Several times, in consequence of these rewritings, the printing of the novel in the "Russky Vvestnik" was interrupted, and sometimes it did not come out for months together.

In the last part of "Anna Karenina" my father, in describing the end of VRONSKY'S career, showed his disapproval of the volunteer movement and the Panslavonic committees, and this led to a quarrel with Katkof.

I can remember how angry my father was when Katkof refused to print those chapters as they stood, and asked him either to leave out part of them or to soften them down, and finally returned the manuscript, and printed a short note in his paper to say that after the death of the heroine the novel was strictly speaking at an end; but that the author had added an epilogue of two printed sheets, in which he related such and such facts, and he would very likely "develop these chapters for the separate edition of his novel."

In concluding, I wish to say a few words about my father's own opinion of "Anna Karenina."

In 1875 he wrote to N. N. Strakhof:

"I must confess that I was delighted by the success of the last piece of 'Anna Karenina.' I had by no means expected it, and to tell you the truth, I am surprised that people are so pleased with such ordinary and EMPTY stuff."

The same year he wrote to Fet:

"It is two months since I have defiled my hands with ink or my heart with thoughts. But now I am setting to work again on my TEDIOUS, VULGAR 'ANNA KARENINA,' with only one wish, to clear it out of the way as soon as possible and give myself leisure for other occupations, but not schoolmastering, which I am fond of, but wish to give up; it takes up too much time."

In 1878, when the novel was nearing its end, he wrote again to Strakhof:

"I am frightened by the feeling that I am getting into my summer mood again. I LOATHE what I have written. The proof-sheets for the April number [of "Anna Karenina" in the "Russky Vvestnik"] now lie on my table, and I am afraid that I have not the heart to correct them. EVERYTHING in them is BEASTLY, and the whole thing ought to be rewritten, — all that has been printed, too, — scrapped and melted down, thrown away, renounced. I ought to say, 'I am sorry; I will not do it any more,' and try to write something fresh instead of all this incoherent, neither-fish-nor-flesh-nor-fowlish stuff."

That was how my father felt toward his novel while he was writing it. Afterward I often heard him say much harsher things about it.

"What difficulty is there in writing about how an officer fell in love with a married woman?" he used to say. "There's no difficulty in it, and above all no good in it."

I am quite convinced that if my father could have done so, he long ago would have destroyed this novel, which he never liked and always wanted to disown.

(To be continued)

## Part 2

IN the summer, when both families were together at Yasnaya, our own and the Kuzminsky's, when both the house and the annex were full of the family and their guests, we used our letter-box.

It originated long before, when I was still small and had only just learned to write, and it continued with intervals till the middle of the eighties.

It hung on the landing at the top of the stairs beside the grandfather's clock; and every one dropped his compositions into it, the verses, articles, or stories that he had written on topical subjects in the course of the week.

On Sundays we would all collect at the round table in the zala, the box would be solemnly opened, and one of the grown-ups, often my father himself, would read the contents aloud.

All the papers were unsigned, and it was a point of honor not to peep at the handwriting; but, despite this, we almost always guessed the author, either by the style, by his self-consciousness, or else by the strained indifference of his expression.

When I was a boy, and for the first time wrote a set of French verses for the letter-box, I was so shy when they were read that I hid under the table, and sat there the whole evening until I was pulled out by force.

For a long time after, I wrote no more, and was always fonder of hearing other people's compositions read than my own.

All the events of our life at Yasnaya Polyana found their echo in one way or another in the letter-box, and no one was spared, not even the grown-ups.

All our secrets, all our love-affairs, all the incidents of our complicated life were revealed in the letter-box, and both household and visitors were good-humoredly made fun of.

Unfortunately, much of the correspondence has been lost, but bits of it have been preserved by some of us in copies or in memory. I cannot recall everything interesting that there was in it, but here are a few of the more interesting things from the period of the eighties.

### The Letter-box

THE old fogey continues his questions. Why, when women or old men enter the room, does every well-bred person not only offer them a seat, but give them up his own?

Why do they make Ushakof or some Servian officer who comes to pay a visit necessarily stay to tea or dinner?

Why is it considered wrong to let an older person or a woman help you on with your overcoat?

And why are all these charming rules considered obligatory toward others, when every day ordinary people come, and we not only do not ask them to sit down or to stop to dinner or spend the night or render them any service, but would look on it as the height of impropriety?

Where do those people end to whom we are under these obligations? By what characteristics are the one sort distinguished from the others? And are not all these rules of politeness bad, if they do not extend to all sorts of people? And is not what we call politeness an illusion, and a very ugly illusion?

LYOFF TOLSTOY.

Question: Which is the most "beastly plague," a cattle-plague case for a farmer, or the ablative case for a school-boy?

LYOFF TOLSTOY.

Answers are requested to the following questions:

Why do Ustyusha, Masha, Alyona, Peter, etc., have to bake, boil, sweep, empty slops, wait at table, while the gentry have only to eat, gobble, quarrel, make slops, and eat again?

LYOFF TOLSTOY.

My Aunt Tanya, when she was in a bad temper because the coffee-pot had been spilt or because she had been beaten at croquet, was in the habit of sending every one to the devil. My father wrote the following story, "Susoitchik," about it.

The devil, not the chief devil, but one of the rank and file, the one charged with the management of social affairs, Susoitchik by name, was greatly perturbed on the 6th of August, 1884. From the early morning onward, people kept arriving who had been sent him by Tatyana Kuzminsky.

The first to arrive was Alexander Mikhailovitch Kuzminsky; the second was Misha Islavin; the third was Vyatcheslaf; the fourth was Seryozha Tolstoy, and last of all came old Lyoff Tolstoy, senior, accompanied by Prince Urusof. The first visitor, Alexander Mikhailovitch, caused Susoitchik no surprise, as he often paid Susoitchik visits in obedience to the behests of his wife.

"What, has your wife sent you again?"

"Yes," replied the presiding judge of the district-court, shyly, not knowing what explanation he could give of the cause of his visit.

"You come here very often. What do you want?"

"Oh, nothing in particular; she just sent her compliments," murmured Alexander Mikhailovitch, departing from the exact truth with some effort.

"Very good, very good; come whenever you like; she is one of my best workers."

Before Susoitchik had time to show the judge out, in came all the children, laughing and jostling, and hiding one behind the other.

“What brought you here, youngsters? Did my little Tanyitchka send you? That’s right; no harm in coming. Give my compliments to Tanya, and tell her that I am always at her service. Come whenever you like. Old Susoitchik may be of use to you.”

No sooner had the young folk made their bow than old Lyoff Tolstoy appeared with Prince Urusof.

“Aha! so it’s the old boy! Many thanks to Tanyitchka. It’s a long time since I have seen you, old chap. Well and hearty? And what can I do for you?”

Lyoff Tolstoy shuffled about, rather abashed.

Prince Urusof, mindful of the etiquette of diplomatic receptions, stepped forward and explained Tolstoy’s appearance by his wish to make acquaintance with Tatyana Andreyevna’s oldest and most faithful friend.

“Les amis des nos amis sont nos amis.”

“Ha! ha! ha! quite so!” said Susoitchik. “I must reward her for to-day’s work. Be so kind, Prince, as to hand her the marks of my good-will.”

And he handed over the insignia of an order in a morocco case. The insignia consisted of a necklace of imp’s tails to be worn about the throat, and two toads, one to be worn on the bosom and the other on the bustle.

LYOFF TOLSTOY, SENIOR.

## Sergei Nikolayevich Tolstoy

I CAN remember my Uncle Seryozha (Sergei) from my earliest childhood. He lived at Pirogovo, twenty miles from Yasnaya, and visited us often.

As a young man he was very handsome. He had the same features as my father, but he was slenderer and more aristocratic-looking. He had the same oval face, the same nose, the same intelligent gray eyes, and the same thick, overhanging eyebrows. The only difference between his face and my father’s was defined by the fact that in those distant days, when my father cared for his personal appearance, he was always worrying about his ugliness, while Uncle Seryozha was considered, and really was, a very handsome man.

This is what my father says about Uncle Seryozha in his fragmentary reminiscences:

“I and Nitenka were chums, Nikolenka I revered, but Seryozha I admired enthusiastically and imitated; I loved him and wished to be he.

“I admired his handsome exterior, his singing, — he was always a singer, — his drawing, his gaiety, and above all, however strange a thing it may seem to say, the directness of his egoism.

“I always remembered myself, was aware of myself, always divined rightly or wrongly what others thought about me and felt toward me; and this spoiled the joy of life for me. This was probably the reason why I particularly delighted in the opposite of this in other people; namely, directness of egoism. That is what I especially loved in Seryozha, though the word ‘loved’ is inexact.

"I loved Nikolenka, but I admired Seryozha as something alien and incomprehensible to me. It was a human life very beautiful, but completely incomprehensible to me, mysterious, and therefore especially attractive.

"He died only a few days ago, and while he was ill and while he was dying he was just as inscrutable and just as dear to me as he had been in the distant days of our childhood.

"In these latter days, in our old age, he was fonder of me, valued my attachment more, was prouder of me, wanted to agree with me, but could not, and remained just the same as he had always been; namely, something quite apart, only himself, handsome, aristocratic, proud, and, above all, truthful and sincere to a degree that I never met in any other man.

"He was what he was; he concealed nothing, and did not wish to appear anything different."

Uncle Seryozha never treated children affectionately; on the contrary, he seemed to put up with us rather than to like us. But we always treated him with particular reverence. The result, as I can see now, partly of his aristocratic appearance, but chiefly because of the fact that he called my father "Lyovotchka" and treated him just as my father treated us.

He was not only not in the least afraid of him, but was always teasing him, and argued with him like an elder person with a younger. We were quite alive to this.

Of course every one knew that there were no faster dogs in the world than our black-and-white Darling and her daughter Wizard. Not a hare could get away from them. But Uncle Seryozha said that the gray hares about us were sluggish creatures, not at all the same thing as steppe hares, and neither Darling nor Wizard would get near a steppe hare.

We listened with open mouths, and did not know which to believe, papa or Uncle Seryozha.

Uncle Seryozha went out coursing with us one day. A number of gray hares were run down, not one, getting away; Uncle Seryozha expressed no surprise, but still maintained that the only reason was because they were a poor lot of hares. We could not tell whether he was right or wrong.

Perhaps, after all, he was right, for he was more of a sportsman than papa and had run down ever so many wolves, while we had never known papa run any wolves down.

Afterward papa kept dogs only because there was Agafya Mikhailovna to be thought of, and Uncle Seryozha gave up sport because it was impossible to keep dogs.

"Since the emancipation of the peasants," he said, "sport is out of the question; there are no huntsmen to be had, and the peasants turn out with sticks and drive the sportsmen off the fields. What is there left to do nowadays? Country life has become impossible."

With all his good breeding and sincerity, Uncle Seryozha never concealed any characteristic but one; with the utmost shyness he concealed the tenderness of his affections,

and if it ever forced itself into the light, it was only in exceptional circumstances and that against his will.

He displayed with peculiar clearness a family characteristic which was partly shared by my father, namely, an extraordinary restraint in the expression of affection, which was often concealed under the mask of indifference and sometimes even of unexpected harshness. In the matter of wit and sarcasm, on the other hand, he was strikingly original.

At one period he spent several winters in succession with his family in Moscow. One time, after a historic concert given by Anton Rubinstein, at which Uncle Seryozha and his daughter had been, he came to take tea with us in Weavers' Row.

My father asked him how he had liked the concert.

"Do you remember Himbut, Lyovotchka? Lieutenant Himbut, who was forester near Yasnaya? I once asked him what was the happiest moment of his life. Do you know what he answered?

"'When I was in the cadet corps,' he said, 'they used to take down my breeches now and again and lay me across a bench and flog me. They flogged and they flogged; when they stopped, that was the happiest moment of my life.' Well, it was only during the entr'actes, when Rubinstein stopped playing, that I really enjoyed myself."

He did not always spare my father.

Once when I was out shooting with a setter near Pirogovo, I drove in to Uncle Seryozha's to stop the night.

I do not remember apropos of what, but Uncle Seryozha averred that Lyovotchka was proud. He said:

"He is always preaching humility and non-resistance, but he is proud himself.

"Nashenka's sister had a footman called Forna. When he got drunk, he used to get under the staircase, tuck in his legs, and lie down. One day they came and told him that the countess was calling him. 'She can come and find me if she wants me,' he answered.

"Lyovotchka is just the same. When Dolgoruky sent his chief secretary Istomin to ask him to come and have a talk with him about Syntayef, the sectarian, do you know what he answered?

"'Let him come here, if he wants me.' Isn't that just the same as Forna?

"No, Lyovotchka is very proud. Nothing would induce him to go, and he was quite right; but it's no good talking of humility."

During the last years of Sergei Nikolayevitch's life my father was particularly friendly and affectionate with him, and delighted in sharing his thoughts with him.

A. A. Fet in his reminiscences describes the character of all the three Tolstoy brothers with extraordinary perspicacity:

I am convinced that the fundamental type of all the three Tolstoy brothers was identical, just as the type of all maple-leaves is identical, despite the variety of their configurations. And if I set myself to develop the idea, I could show to what a degree all three brothers shared in that passionate enthusiasm without which it would have

been impossible for one of them to turn into the poet Lyoff Tolstoy. The difference of their attitude to life was determined by the difference of the ways in which they turned their backs on their unfulfilled dreams. Nikolai quenched his ardor in skeptical derision, Lyoff renounced his unrealized dreams with silent reproach, and Sergei with morbid misanthropy. The greater the original store of love in such characters, the stronger, if only for a time, is their resemblance to Timon of Athens.

In the winter of 1901-02 my father was ill in the Crimea, and for a long time lay between life and death. Uncle Seryozha, who felt himself getting weaker, could not bring himself to leave Pirogovo, and in his own home followed anxiously the course of my father's illness by the letters which several members of our family wrote him, and by the bulletins in the newspapers.

When my father began to improve, I went back home, and on the way from the Crimea went to Pirogovo, in order to tell Uncle Seryozha personally about the course of the illness and about the present condition of my father's health. I remember how joyfully and gratefully he welcomed me.

"How glad I am that you came! Now tell me all about it. Who is with him? All of them? And who nurses him most? Do you go on duty in turn? And at night, too? He can't get out of bed. Ah, that's the worst thing of all!

"It will be my turn to die soon; a year sooner or later, what does it matter? But to lie helpless, a burden to every one, to have others doing everything for you, lifting you and helping you to sit up, that's what's so awful.

"And how does he endure it? Got used to it, you say? No; I cannot imagine having Vera to change my linen and wash me. Of course she would say that it's nothing to her, but for me it would be awful.

"And tell me, is he afraid to die? Does he say not? Very likely; he's a strong man, he may be able to conquer the fear of it. Yes, yes, perhaps he's not afraid; but still —

"You say he struggles with the feeling? Why, of course; what else can one do?

"I wanted to go and be with him; but I thought, how can I? I shall crack up myself, and then there will be two invalids instead of one.

"Yes, you have told me a great deal; every detail is interesting. It is not death that's so terrible, it's illness, helplessness, and, above all, the fear that you are a burden to others. That's awful, awful."

Uncle Seryozha died in 1904 of cancer in the face. This is what my aunt, Maria Nikolayevna, the nun, told me about his death. Almost to the last day he was on his legs, and would not let any one nurse him. He was in full possession of his faculties and consciously prepared for death.

Besides his own family, the aged Maria Mikhailovna and her daughters, his sister, Maria Nikolayevna, who told me the story, was with him, too, and from hour to hour they expected the arrival of my father, for whom they had sent a messenger to Yasnaya. They were all troubled with the difficult question whether the dying man would want to receive the holy communion before he died.



Knowing Sergei Nikolayevitch's disbelief in the religion of the church, no one dared to mention the subject to him, and the unhappy Maria Mikhailovna hovered round his room, wringing her hands and praying.

They awaited my father's arrival impatiently, but were secretly afraid of his influence on his brother, and hoped against hope that Sergei Nikolayevitch would send for the priest before his arrival.

"Imagine our surprise and delight," said Maria Tolstoy, "when Lyovotchka came out of his room and told Maria Mikhailovna that Seryozha wanted a priest sent for. I do not know what they had been talking about, but when Seryozha said that he wished to take the communion, Lyovotchka answered that he was quite right, and at once came and told us what he wanted."

My father stayed about a week at Pirogovo, and left two days before my uncle died.

When he received a telegram to say he was worse, he drove over again, but arrived too late; he was no longer living. He carried his body out from the house with his own hands, and himself bore it to the churchyard.

When he got back to Yasnaya he spoke with touching affection of his parting with this "inscrutable and beloved" brother, who was so strange and remote from him, but at the same time so near and so akin.

## **Fet, Strakhof, Gay**

"WHAT'S this saber doing here?" asked a young guardsman, Lieutenant Afanasyi Afanasyevitch Fet, of the footman one day as he entered the hall of Ivan Sergeyevitch Turgenieff's flat in St. Petersburg in the middle of the fifties.

"It is Count Tolstoy's saber; he is asleep in the drawing-room. And Ivan Sergeyevitch is in his study having breakfast," replied Zalchar.

"During the hour I spent with Turgenieff," says Fet, in his reminiscences, "we talked in low voices, for fear of waking the count, who was asleep on the other side of the door."

"He's like that all the time," said Turgenieff, smiling; "ever since he got back from his battery at Sebastopol, and came to stay here, he has been going the pace. Orgies, Gipsies, and gambling all night long, and then sleeps like a dead man till two o'clock in the afternoon. I did my best to stop him, but have given it up as a bad job.

"It was in this visit to St. Petersburg that I and Tolstoy became acquainted, but the acquaintance was of a purely formal character, as I had not yet seen a line of his writings, and had never heard of his name in literature, except that Turgenieff mentioned his 'Stories of Childhood.'"

Soon after this my father came to know Fet intimately, and they struck up a firm and lasting friendship, and established a correspondence which lasted almost till Fet's death.

It was only during the last years of Fet's life, when my father was entirely absorbed in his new ideas, which were so at variance with Afanasyi Afanasyevitch's whole philosophy of life, that they became estranged and met more rarely.

It was at Fet's, at Stepanovka, that my father and Turgenieff quarreled.

Before the railway was made, when people still had to drive, Fet, on his way into Moscow, always used to turn in at Yasnaya Polyana to see my father, and these visits became an established custom. Afterward, when the railway was made and my father was already married, Afanasyi Afanasyevitch still never passed our house without coming in, and if he did, my father used to write him a letter of earnest reproaches, and he used to apologize as if he had been guilty of some fault. In those distant times of which I am speaking my father was bound to Fet by a common interest in agriculture as well as literature.

Some of my father's letters of the sixties are curious in this respect.

For instance, in 1860, he wrote a long dissertation on Turgenieff's novel "On the Eve," which had just come out, and at the end added a postscript: "What is the price of a set of the best quality of veterinary instruments? And what is the price of a set of lancets and bleeding-cups for human use?"

In another letter there is a postscript:

"When you are next in Oryol, buy me six-hundred weight of various ropes, reins, and traces," and on the same page: "'Tender art thou,' and the whole thing is charming. You have never done anything better; it is all charming." The quotation is from Fet's poem:

The lingering clouds' last throng flies over us.

But it was not only community of interests that brought my father and Afanasyi Afanasyevitch together. The reason of their intimacy lay in the fact that, as my father expressed it, they "thought alike with their heart's mind."

I also remember Nikolai Nikolayevitch Strakhof's visits. He was a remarkably quiet and modest man. He appeared at Yasnaya Polyana in the beginning of the seventies, and from that time on came and stayed with us almost every summer till he died.

He had big, gray eyes, wide open, as if in astonishment; a long beard with a touch of gray in it; and when he spoke, at the end of every sentence he gave a shy laugh.

When he addressed my father, he always said "Lef Nikolayevitch" instead of Lyoff Nikolaievich, like other people.

He always stayed down-stairs in my father's study, and spent his whole day there reading or writing, with a thick cigarette, which he rolled himself, in his mouth.

Strakhof and my father came together originally on a purely business footing. When the first part of my father's "Alphabet and Reading-Book" was printed, Strakhof had charge of the proof-reading. This led to a correspondence between him and my father, of a business character at first, later developing into a philosophical and friendly one. While he was writing "Anna Karenina," my father set great store by his opinion and valued his critical instinct very highly.

"It is enough for me that that is your opinion," he writes in a letter of 1872, probably apropos of the "Alphabet."

In 1876, apropos of "Anna Karenina" this time, my father wrote:

"You ask me whether you have understood my novel aright, and what I think of your opinion. Of course you understood it aright. Of course I am overjoyed at your understanding of it; but it does not follow that everybody will understand it as you do."

But it was not only his critical work that drew my father to Strakhof. He disliked critics on the whole and used to say that the only people who took to criticism were those who had no creative faculty of their own. "The stupid ones judge the clever ones," he said of professional critics. What he valued most in Strakhof was the profound and penetrating thinker. He was a "real friend" of my father's, — my father himself so described him, — and I recall his memory with deep affection and respect.

At last I have come to the memory of the man who was nearer in spirit to my father than any other human being, namely, Nikolai Nikolayevitch Gay. Grandfather Gay, as we called him, made my father's acquaintance in 1882. While living on his farm in the Province of Tchernigoff, he chanced to read my father's pamphlet "On the Census," and finding a solution in it of the very questions which were troubling him at the time, without delay he started out and hurried into Moscow. I remember his first arrival, and I have always retained the impression that from the first words they exchanged he and my father understood each other, and found themselves speaking the same language.

Just like my father, Gay was at this time passing through a great spiritual crisis; and traveling almost the same road as my father in his search after truth, he had arrived at the study of the Gospel and a new understanding of it. My sister Tatyana wrote:

For the personality of Christ he entertained a passionate and tender affection, as if for a near and familiar friend whom he loved with all the strength of his soul. Often during heated arguments Nikolai Nikolayevitch would take the Gospel, which he always carried about with him, from his pocket, and read out some passage from it appropriate to the subject in hand. "This book contains everything that a man needs," he used to say on these occasions.

While reading the Gospel, he often looked up at the person he was talking to and went on reading without looking at the book. His face glowed at such moments with such inward joy that one could see how near and dear the words he was reading were to his heart.

He knew the whole Gospel almost by heart, but he said that every time he read it he enjoyed a new and genuine spiritual delight. He said that not only was everything intelligible to him in the Gospel, but that when he read it he seemed to be reading in his own soul, and felt himself capable of rising higher and higher toward God and merging himself in Him.

## Turgenieff

I DO not mean to recount all the misunderstandings which existed between my father and Turgenieff, which ended in a complete breach between them in 1861. The actual external facts of that story are common property, and there is no need to repeat them. According to general opinion, the quarrel between the two greatest writers of the day arose out of their literary rivalry.

It is my intention to show cause against this generally received opinion, and before I come to Turgenieff's visits to Yasnaya Polyana, I want to make as clear as I can the real reason of the perpetual discords between these two good-hearted people, who had a cordial affection for each other — discords which led in the end to an out-and-out quarrel and the exchange of mutual defiance.

As far as I know, my father never had any serious difference with any other human being during the whole course of his existence. And Turgenieff, in a letter to my father in 1865, wrote, "You are the only man with whom I have ever had misunderstandings."

Whenever my father related his quarrel with Ivan Sergeyevitch, he took all the blame on himself. Turgenieff, immediately after the quarrel, wrote a letter apologizing to my father, and never sought to justify his own part in it.

Why was it that, as Turgenieff himself put it, his "constellation" and my father's "moved in the ether with unquestioned enmity"?

This is what my sister Tatyana wrote on the subject in her article "Turgenieff," published in the supplement to the "Novoye Vremya," February 2, 1908:

All question of literary rivalry, it seems to me, is utterly beside the mark. Turgenieff, from the very outset of my father's literary career, acknowledged his enormous talents, and never thought of rivalry with him. From the moment when, as early as 1854, he wrote to Kolbasina, "If Heaven only grant Tolstoy life, I confidently hope that he will surprise us all," he never ceased to follow my father's work with interest, and always expressed his unbounded admiration of it.

"When this young wine has done fermenting," he wrote to Druzhenin in 1856, "the result will be a liquor worthy of the gods." In 1857 he wrote to Polonsky, "This man will go far, and leave deep traces behind him."

Nevertheless, somehow these two men never could "hit it off" together. When one reads Turgenieff's letters to my father, one sees that from the very beginning of their acquaintance misunderstandings were always arising, which they perpetually endeavored to smooth down or to forget, but which arose again after a time, sometimes in another form, necessitating new explanations and reconciliations.

In 1856 Turgenieff wrote to my father:

Your letter took some time reaching me, dear Lyoff Nikolaievich. Let me begin by saying that I am very grateful to you for sending it to me. I shall never cease to love you and to value your friendship, although, probably through my fault, each of us will long feel considerable awkwardness in the presence of the other... I think that you

yourself understand the reason of this awkwardness of which I speak. You are the only man with whom I have ever had misunderstandings.

This arises from the very fact that I have never been willing to confine myself to merely friendly relations with you. I have always wanted to go further and deeper than that; but I set about it clumsily. I irritated and upset you, and when I saw my mistake, I drew back too hastily, perhaps; and it was this which caused this "gulf" between us.

But this awkwardness is a mere physical impression, nothing more; and if when we meet again, you see the old "mischievous look in my eyes," believe me, the reason of it will not be that I am a bad man. I assure you that there is no need to look for any other explanation. Perhaps I may add, also, that I am much older than you, and I have traveled a different road... Outside of our special, so-called "literary" interests, I am convinced, we have few points of contact. Your whole being stretches out hands toward the future; mine is built up in the past. For me to follow you is impossible. For you to follow me is equally out of the question. You are too far removed from me, and besides, you stand too firmly on your own legs to become any one's disciple. I can assure you that I never attributed any malice to you, never suspected you of any literary envy. I have often thought, if you will excuse the expression, that you were wanting in common sense, but never in goodness. You are too penetrating not to know that if either of us has cause to envy the other, it is certainly not you that has cause to envy me.

The following year he wrote a letter to my father which, it seems to me, is a key to the understanding of Turgenieff's attitude toward him:

You write that you are very glad you did not follow my advice and become a pure man of letters. I don't deny it; perhaps you are right. Still, batter my poor brains as I may, I cannot imagine what else you are if you are not a man of letters. A soldier? A squire? A philosopher? The founder of a new religious doctrine? A civil servant? A man of business?... Please resolve my difficulties, and tell me which of these suppositions is correct. I am joking, but I really do wish beyond all things to see you under way at last, with all sails set.

It seems to me that Turgenieff, as an artist, saw nothing in my father beyond his great literary talent, and was unwilling to allow him the right to be anything besides an artist and a writer. Any other line of activity on my father's part offended Turgenieff, as it were, and he was angry with my father because he did not follow his advice. He was much older than my father, he did not hesitate to rank his own talent lower than my father's, and demanded only one thing of him, that he should devote all the energies of his life to his literary work. And, lo and behold! my father would have nothing to do with his magnanimity and humility, would not listen to his advice, but insisted on going the road which his own tastes and nature pointed out to him. Turgenieff's tastes and character were diametrically opposed to my father's. While opposition always inspired my father and lent him strength, it had just the opposite effect on Turgenieff.

Being wholly in agreement with my sister's views, I will merely supplement them with the words uttered by his brother, Nikolai Nikolayevitch, who said that "Turgenieff

cannot reconcile himself to the idea that Lyovotchka is growing up and freeing himself from his tutelage.”

As a matter of fact, when Turgenieff was already a famous writer, no one had ever heard of Tolstoy, and, as Fet expressed it, there was only “something said about his stories from ‘Childhood.’”

I can imagine with what secret veneration a young writer, just beginning, must have regarded Turgenieff at that time, and all the more because Ivan Sergeyevitch was a great friend of my father’s elder and beloved brother Nikolai.

I do not like to assert it positively, but it seems to me that just as Turgenieff was unwilling to confine himself to “merely friendly relations,” so my father also felt too warmly toward Ivan Sergeyevitch, and that was the very reason why they could never meet without disagreeing and quarreling. In confirmation of what I say here is a passage from a letter written by V. Botkin, a close friend of my father’s and of Ivan Sergeyevitch’s, to A. A. Fet, written immediately after their quarrel:

I think that Tolstoy really has a passionately affectionate nature and he would like to love Turgenieff in the warmest way possible; but unfortunately his impulsive feeling encounters nothing but a kindly, good-natured indifference, and he can by no means reconcile himself to that.

Turgenieff himself said that when they first came to know each other my father dogged his heels “like a woman in love,” and at one time he used to avoid him, because he was afraid of his spirit of opposition.

My father was perhaps irritated by the slightly patronizing tone which Turgenieff adopted from the very outset of their acquaintance; and Turgenieff was irritated by my father’s “crankiness,” which distracted him from “his proper metier, literature.”

In 1870, before the date of the quarrel, Turgenieff wrote to Fet:

“Lyoff Tolstoy continues to play the crank. It was evidently written in his stars. When will he turn his last somersault and stand on his feet at last?”

Turgenieff was just the same about my father’s “Confession,” which he read not long before his death. Having promised to read it, “to try to understand it,” and “not to lose my temper,” he “started to write a long letter in answer to the ‘Confession,’ but never finished it... for fear of becoming disputatious.”

In a letter to D. V. Grigorevitch he called the book, which was based, in his opinion, on false premises, “a denial of all live human life” and “a new sort of Nihilism.”

It is evident that even then Turgenieff did not understand what a mastery my father’s new philosophy of life had obtained over him, and he was inclined to attribute his enthusiasm along with the rest to the same perpetual “crankinesses” and “somersaults” to which he had formerly attributed his interest in school-teaching, agriculture, the publication of a paper, and so forth.

IVAN SERGEYEVITCH three times visited Yasnaya Polyana within my memory, in: August and September, 1878, and the third and last time at the beginning of May, 1880. I can remember all these visits, although it is quite possible that some details have escaped me.

I remember that when we expected Turgenieff on his first visit, it was a great occasion, and the most anxious and excited of all the household about it was my mother. She told us that my father had quarreled with Turgenieff and had once challenged him to a duel, and that he was now coming at my father's invitation to effect a reconciliation.

Turgenieff spent all the time sitting with my father, who during his visit put aside even his work, and once in the middle of the day my mother collected us all at a quite unusual hour in the drawing-room, where Ivan Sergeyevitch read us his story of "The Dog."

I can remember his tall, stalwart figure, his gray, silky, yellowish hair, his soft tread, rather waddling walk, and his piping voice, quite out of keeping with his majestic exterior. He had a chuckling kind of laugh, like a child's, and when he laughed his voice was more piping than ever.

In the evening, after dinner, we all gathered in the zala. At that time Uncle Seryozha, Prince Leonid Dmitryevitch Urusof, Vice-Governor of the Province of Tula; Uncle Sasha Behrs and his young wife, the handsome Georgian Patty; and the whole family of the Kuzminskys, were staying at Yasnaya.

Aunt Tanya was asked to sing. We listened with beating hearts, and waited to hear what Turgenieff, the famous connoisseur, would say about her singing. Of course he praised it, sincerely, I think. After the singing a quadrille was got up. All of a sudden, in the middle of the quadrille, Ivan Sergeyevitch, who was sitting at one side looking on, got up and took one of the ladies by the hand, and, putting his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat, danced a cancan according to the latest rules of Parisian art. Everyone roared with laughter, Turgenieff more than anybody.

After tea the "grown-ups" started some conversation, and a warm dispute arose among them. It was Prince Urusof who disputed most warmly, and "went for" Turgenieff.

Of Turgenieff's third visit I remember the woodcock shooting. This was on the second or third of May, 1880.

We all went out together beyond the Voronka, my father, my mother and all the children. My father gave Turgenieff the best place and posted himself one hundred and fifty paces away at the other end of the same glade.

My mother stood by Turgenieff, and we children lighted a bonfire not far off.

My father fired several shots and brought down two birds; Ivan Sergeyevitch had no luck, and was envying my father's good fortune all the time. At last, when it was beginning to get dark, a woodcock flew over Turgenieff, and he shot it.

"Killed it?" called out my father.

"Fell like a stone; send your dog to pick him up," answered Ivan Sergeyevitch.

My father sent us with the dog, Turgenieff showed us where to look for the bird; but search as we might, and the dog, too, there was no woodcock to be found. At last Turgenieff came to help, and my father came; there was no woodcock there.

"Perhaps you only winged it; it may have got away along the ground," said my father, puzzled. "It is impossible that the dog shouldn't find it; he couldn't miss a bird that was killed."

"I tell you I saw it with my own eyes, Lyoff Nikolaievich; it fell like a stone. I didn't wound it; I killed it outright. I can tell the difference."

"Then why can't the dog find it? It's impossible; there's something wrong."

"I don't know anything about that," insisted Turgenieff. "You may take it from me I'm not lying; it fell like a stone where I tell you."

There was no finding the woodcock, and the incident left an unpleasant flavor, as if one or the other of them was in the wrong. Either Turgenieff was bragging when he said that he shot it dead, or my father, in maintaining that the dog could not fail to find a bird that had been killed.

And this must needs happen just when they were both so anxious to avoid every sort of misunderstanding! That was the very reason why they had carefully fought shy of all serious conversation, and spent all their time merely amusing themselves.

When my father said good night to us that night, he whispered to us that we were to get up early and go back to the place to have a good hunt for the bird.

And what was the result? The woodcock, in falling, had caught in the fork of a branch, right at the top of an aspen-tree, and it was all we could do to knock it out from there.

When we brought it home in triumph, it was something of an "occasion," and my father and Turgenieff were far more delighted than we were. It turned out that they were both in the right, and everything ended to their mutual satisfaction.

Ivan Sergeyevitch slept down-stairs in my father's study. When the party broke up for the night, I used to see him to his room, and while he was undressing I sat on his bed and talked sport with him.

He asked me if I could shoot. I said yes, but that I didn't care to go out shooting because I had nothing but a rotten old one-barreled gun.

"I'll give you a gun," he said. "I've got two in Paris, and I have no earthly need for both. It's not an expensive gun, but it's a good one. Next time I come to Russia I'll bring it with me."

I was quite taken aback and thanked him heartily. I was tremendously delighted at the idea that I was to have a real central-fire gun.

Unfortunately, Turgenieff never came to Russia again. I tried afterward to buy the gun he had spoken of from his legates not in the quality of a central-fire gun, but as Turgenieff's gun; but I did not succeed.

That is all that I can remember about this delightful, naively cordial man, with the childlike eyes and the childlike laugh, and in the picture my mind preserves of him the memory of his grandeur melts into the charm of his good nature and simplicity.

In 1883 my father received from Ivan Sergeyevitch his last farewell letter, written in pencil on his death-bed, and I remember with what emotion he read it. And when



the news of his death came, my father would talk of nothing else for several days, and inquired everywhere for details of his illness and last days.

Apropos of this letter of Turgenieff's, I should like to say that my father was sincerely annoyed, when he heard applied to himself the epithet "great writer of the land of Russia," which was taken from this letter.

He always hated cliches, and he regarded this one as quite absurd.

"Why not 'writer of the land'? I never heard before that a man could be the writer of a land. People get attached to some nonsensical expression, and go on repeating it in season and out of season."

I have given extracts above from Turgenieff's letters, which show the invariable consistency with which he lauded my father's literary talents. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same of my father's attitude toward Turgenieff.

In this, too, the want of dispassionateness in his nature revealed itself. Personal relations prevented him from being objective.

In 1867, apropos of Turgenieff's "Smoke," which had just appeared, he wrote to Fet:

There is hardly any love of anything in "Smoke" and hardly any poetry. The only thing it shows love for is light and playful adultery, and for that reason the poetry of the story is repulsive. ... I am timid in expressing this opinion, because I cannot form a sober judgment about an author whose personality I dislike.

In 1865, before the final breach with Turgenieff, he wrote, again to Fet: "I do not like 'Enough'!" A personal subjective treatment is never good unless it is full of life and passion; but the subjectivity in this case is full of lifeless suffering.

In the autumn of 1883, after Turgenieff's death, when the family had gone into Moscow for the winter, my father stayed at Yasnaya Polyana alone, with Agafya Mikhailovna, and set earnestly about reading through all Turgenieff's works.

This is what he wrote to my mother at the time:

I am always thinking about Turgenieff. I am intensely fond of him, and sorry for him, and do nothing but read him. I live entirely with him. I shall certainly give a lecture on him, or write it to be read; tell Yuryef.

"Enough" — read it; it is perfectly charming.

Unfortunately, my father's intended lecture on Turgenieff never came off. The Government forbade him to pay this last tribute to his dead friend, with whom he had quarreled all his life only because he could not be indifferent to him.

(To be continued)

## Part 3

AT this point I shall turn back and try to trace the influence which my father had on my upbringing, and I shall recall as well as I can the impressions that he left on my mind in my childhood, and later in the melancholy days of my early manhood, which happened to coincide with the radical change in his whole philosophy of life.

In 1852, tired of life in the Caucasus and remembering his old home at Yasnaya Polyana, he wrote to his aunt, Tatyana Alexandrovna:

After some years, I shall find myself, neither very young nor very old, back at Yasnaya Polyana again: my affairs will all be in order; I shall have no anxieties for the future and no troubles in the present.

You also will be living at Yasnaya. You will be getting a little old, but you will be healthy and vigorous. We shall lead the life we led in the old days; I shall work in the mornings, but we shall meet and see each other almost all day.

We shall dine together in the evening. I shall read you something that interests you. Then we shall talk: I shall tell you about my life in the Caucasus; you will give me reminiscences of my father and mother; you will tell me some of those “terrible stories” to which we used to listen in the old days with frightened eyes and open mouths.

We shall talk about the people that we loved and who are no more.

You will cry, and I, too; but our tears will be refreshing, tranquilizing tears. We shall talk about my brothers, who will visit us from time to time, and about dear Masha, who will also spend several months every year at Yasnaya, which she loves, with all her children.

We shall have no acquaintances; no one will come in to bore us with gossip.

It is a wonderful dream; but that is not all that I let myself dream of.

I shall be married. My wife will be gentle, kind, and affectionate; she will love you as I do; we shall have children who will call you granny; you will live in the big house, in the same room on the top floor where my grandmother lived before.

The whole house will be run on the same lines as it was in my father’s time, and we shall begin the same life over again, but with a change of roles.

You will take my grandmother’s place, but you will be better still than she was; I shall take my father’s place, though I can never hope to be worthy of the honor.

My wife will take my mother’s place, and the children ours.

Masha will fill the part of both my aunts, except for their sorrow; and there will even be Gasha there to take the place of Prashovya Ilyinitchna.

The only thing lacking will be some one to take the part you played in the life of our family. We shall never find such a noble and loving heart as yours. There is no one to succeed you.

There will be three new faces that will appear among us from time to time: my brothers, especially one who will often be with us, Nikolenka, who will be an old bachelor, bald, retired, always the same kindly, noble fellow.

Just ten years after this letter, my father married, and almost all his dreams were realized, just as he had wished. Only the big house, with his grandmother's room, was missing, and his brother Nikolenka, with the dirty hands, for he died two years before, in 1860. In his family life my father witnessed a repetition of the life of his parents, and in us children he sought to find a repetition of himself and his brothers. We were brought up as regular gentlefolk, proud of our social position and holding aloof from all the outer world. Everything that was not us was below us, and therefore unworthy of imitation. I knew that my father felt very earnestly about the chastity of young people; I knew how much strength he laid on purity. An early marriage seemed to me the best solution of the difficult question that must harass every thoughtful boy when he attains to man's estate.

Two or three years later, when I was eighteen and we were living in Moscow, I fell in love with a young lady I knew, my present wife, and went almost every Saturday to her father's house.

My father knew, but said nothing. One day when he was going out for a walk I asked if I might go with him. As I very seldom went for walks with him in Moscow, he guessed that I wanted to have a serious talk with him about something, and after walking some distance in silence, evidently feeling that I was shy about it and did not like to break the ice, he suddenly began:

"You seem to go pretty often to the F — s'."

I said that I was very fond of the eldest daughter.

"Oh, do you want to marry her?"

"Yes."

"Is she a good girl? Well, mind you don't make a mistake, and don't be false to her," he said with a curious gentleness and thoughtfulness.

I left him at once and ran back home, delighted, along the Arbat. I was glad that I had told him the truth, and his affectionate and cautious way of taking it strengthened my affection both for him, to whom I was boundlessly grateful for his cordiality, and for her, whom I loved still more warmly from that moment, and to whom I resolved still more fervently never to be untrue.

My father's tactfulness toward us amounted almost to timidity. There were certain questions which he could never bring himself to touch on for fear of causing us pain. I shall never forget how once in Moscow I found him sitting writing at the table in my room when I dashed in suddenly to change my clothes.

My bed stood behind a screen, which hid him from me.

When he heard my footsteps he said, without looking round:

"Is that you, Ilya?"

"Yes, it's I."

"Are you alone? Shut the door. There's no one to hear us, and we can't see each other, so we shall not feel ashamed. Tell me, did you ever have anything to do with women?"

When I said no, I suddenly heard him break out sobbing, like a little child.

I sobbed and cried, too, and for a long time we stayed weeping tears of joy, with the screen between us, and we were neither of us ashamed, but both so joyful that I look on that moment as one of the happiest in my whole life.

No arguments or homilies could ever have effected what the emotion I experienced at that moment did. Such tears as those shed by a father of sixty can never be forgotten even in moments of the strongest temptation.

My father observed my inward life most attentively between the ages of sixteen and twenty, noted all my doubts and hesitations, encouraged me in my good impulses, and often found fault with me for inconsistency.

I still have some of his letters written at that time. Here are two:

I had just written you, my dear friend Ilya, a letter that was true to my own feelings, but, I am afraid, unjust, and I am not sending it. I said unpleasant things in it, but I have no right to do so. I do not know you as I should like to and as I ought to know you. That is my fault. And I wish to remedy it. I know much in you that I do not like, but I do not know everything. As for your proposed journey home, I think that in your position of student, not only student of a gymnase, but at the age of study, it is better to gad about as little as possible; moreover, all useless expenditure of money that you can easily refrain from is immoral, in my opinion, and in yours, too, if you only consider it. If you come, I shall be glad for my own sake, so long as you are not inseparable from G ——— .

Do as you think best. But you must work, both with your head, thinking and reading, and with your heart; that is, find out for yourself what is really good and what is bad, although it seems to be good. I kiss you.

L. T.

Dear Friend Ilya:

There is always somebody or something that prevents me from answering your two letters, which are important and dear to me, especially the last. First it was Baturlin, then bad health, insomnia, then the arrival of D ——— , the friend of H ——— that I wrote you about. He is sitting at tea talking to the ladies, neither understanding the other; so I left them, and want to write what little I can of all that I think about you.

Even supposing that S ——— A ——— demands too much of you, there is no harm in waiting; especially from the point of view of fortifying your opinions, your faith. That is the one important thing. If you don't, it is a fearful disaster to put off from one shore and not reach the other.

The one shore is an honest and good life, for your own delight and the profit of others. But there is a bad life, too — a life so sugared, so common to all, that if you follow it,

you do not notice that it is a bad life, and suffer only in your conscience, if you have one; but if you leave it, and do not reach the real shore, you will be made miserable by solitude and by the reproach of having deserted your fellows, and you will be ashamed. In short, I want to say that it is out of the question to want to be rather good; it is out of the question to jump into the water unless you know how to swim. One must be truthful and wish to be good with all one's might, too. Do you feel this in you? The drift of what I say is that we all know what PRINCESS MARYA ALEXEVNA verdict about your marriage would be: that if young people marry without a sufficient fortune, it means children, poverty, getting tired of each other in a year or two; in ten years, quarrels, want — hell. And in all this PRINCESS MARYA ALEXEVNA is perfectly right and plays the true prophet, unless these young people who are getting married have another purpose, their one and only one, unknown to PRINCESS MARYA ALEXEVNA, and that not a brainish purpose, not one recognized by the intellect, but one that gives life its color and the attainment of which is more moving than any other. If you have this, good; marry at once, and give the lie to PRINCESS MARYA ALEXEVNA. If not, it is a hundred to one that your marriage will lead to nothing but misery. I am speaking to you from the bottom of my heart. Receive my words into the bottom of yours, and weigh them well. Besides love for you as a son, I have love for you also as a man standing at the cross-ways. I kiss you and Lyolya and Noletchka and Seryozha, if he is back. We are all alive and well.

The following letter belongs to the same period:

Your letter to Tanya has arrived, my dear friend Ilya, and I see that you are still advancing toward that purpose which you set up for yourself; and I want to write to you and to her — for no doubt you tell her everything — what I think about it. Well, I think about it a great deal, with joy and with fear mixed. This is what I think. If one marries in order to enjoy oneself more, no good will ever come of it. To set up as one's main object, ousting everything else, marriage, union with the being you love, is a great mistake. And an obvious one, if you think about it. Object, marriage. Well, you marry; and what then? If you had no other object in life before your marriage, it will be twice as hard to find one.

As a rule, people who are getting married completely forget this.

So many joyful events await them in the future, in wedlock and the arrival of children, that those events seem to constitute life itself. But this is indeed a dangerous illusion.

If parents merely live from day to day, begetting children, and have no purpose in life, they are only putting off the question of the purpose of life and that punishment which is allotted to people who live without knowing why; they are only putting it off and not escaping it, because they will have to bring up their children and guide their steps, but they will have nothing to guide them by. And then the parents lose their human qualities and the happiness which depends on the possession of them, and turn into mere breeding cattle.

That is why I say that people who are proposing to marry because their life SEEMS to them to be full must more than ever set themselves to think and make clear to their own minds for the sake of what each of them lives.

And in order to make this clear, you must consider the circumstances in which you live, your past. Reckon up what you consider important and what unimportant in life. Find out what you believe in; that is, what you look on as eternal and immutable truth, and what you will take for your guide in life. And not only find out, but make clear to your own mind, and try to practise or to learn to practise in your daily life; because until you practise what you believe you cannot tell whether you believe it or not.

I know your faith, and that faith, or those sides of it which can be expressed in deeds, you must now more than ever make clear to your own mind, by putting them into practice.

Your faith is that your welfare consists in loving people and being loved by them. For the attainment of this end I know of three lines of action in which I perpetually exercise myself, in which one can never exercise oneself enough and which are specially necessary to you now.

First, in order to be able to love people and to be loved by them, one must accustom oneself to expect as little as possible from them, and that is very hard work; for if I expect much, and am often disappointed, I am inclined rather to reproach them than to love them.

Second, in order to love people not in words, but in deed, one must train oneself to do what benefits them. That needs still harder work, especially at your age, when it is one's natural business to be studying.

Third, in order to love people and to b. l. b. t., one must train oneself to gentleness, humility, the art of bearing with disagreeable people and things, the art of behaving to them so as not to offend any one, of being able to choose the least offense. And this is the hardest work of all — work that never ceases from the time you wake till the time you go to sleep, and the most joyful work of all, because day after day you rejoice in your growing success in it, and receive a further reward, unperceived at first, but very joyful after, in being loved by others.

So I advise you, Friend Ilya, and both of you, to live and to think as sincerely as you can, because it is the only way you can discover if you are really going along the same road, and whether it is wise to join hands or not; and at the same time, if you are sincere, you must be making your future ready.

Your purpose in life must not be the joy of wedlock, but, by your life to bring more love and truth into the world. The object of marriage is to help one another in the attainment of that purpose.

The vilest and most selfish life is the life of the people who have joined together only in order to enjoy life; and the highest vocation in the world is that of those who live in order to serve God by bringing good into the world, and who have joined together for that very purpose. Don't mistake half-measures for the real thing. Why should a

man not choose the highest? Only when you have chosen the highest, you must set your whole heart on it, and not just a little. Just a little leads to nothing. There, I am tired of writing, and still have much left that I wanted to say. I kiss you.

#### HELP FOR THE FAMINE-STRICKEN

AFTER my father had come to the conclusion that it was not only useless to help people with money, but immoral, the part he took in distributing food among the peasants during the famines of 1890, 1891, and 1898 may seem to have shown inconsistency and contradiction of thought.

"If a horseman sees that his horse is tired out, he must not remain seated on its back and hold up its head, but simply get off," he used to say, condemning all the charities of the well-fed people who sit on the back of the working classes, continue to enjoy all the benefits of their privileged position, and merely give from their superfluity.

He did not believe in the good of such charity and considered it a form of self-hallucination, all the more harmful because people thereby acquire a sort of moral right to continue that idle, aristocratic life and get to go on increasing the poverty of the people.

In the autumn of 1890 my father thought of writing an article on the famine, which had then spread over nearly all Russia.

Although from the newspapers and from the accounts brought by those who came from the famine-stricken parts he already knew about the extent of the peasantry's disaster, nevertheless, when his old friend Ivanovitch Rayovsky called on him at Yasnaya Polyana and proposed that he should drive through to the Dankovski District with him in order to see the state of things in the villages for himself, he readily agreed, and went with him to his property at Begitchovka.

He went there with the intention of staying only for a day or two; but when he saw what a call there was for immediate measures, he at once set to work to help Rayovsky, who had already instituted several kitchens in the villages, in relieving the distress of the peasantry, at first on a small scale, and then, when big subscriptions began to pour in from every side, on a continually increasing one. The upshot of it was that he devoted two whole years of his life to the work.

It is wrong to think that my father showed any inconsistency in this matter. He did not delude himself for a moment into thinking he was engaged on a virtuous and momentous task, but when he saw the sufferings of the people, he simply could not bear to go on living comfortably at Yasnaya or in Moscow any longer, but had to go out and help in order to relieve his own feelings. Once he wrote:

There is much about it that is not what it ought to be; there is S. A.'s money and the subscriptions; there is the relation of those who feed and those who are fed. THERE IS SIN WITHOUT END, but I cannot stay at home and write. I feel the necessity of taking part in it, of doing something.

Six years later I worked again at the same job with my father in Tchernski and Mtsenski districts.

After the bad crops of the two preceding years it became clear by the beginning of the winter of 1898 that a new famine was approaching in our neighborhood, and that charitable assistance to the peasantry would be needed. I turned to my father for help. By the spring he had managed to collect some money, and at the beginning of April he came himself to see me.

I must say that my father, who was very economical by nature, was extraordinarily cautious and, I may say, even parsimonious in charitable matters. It is of course easy to understand, if one considers the unlimited confidence which he enjoyed among the subscribers and the great moral responsibility which he could not but feel toward them. So that before undertaking anything he had himself to be fully convinced of the necessity of giving aid.

The day after his arrival, we saddled a couple of horses and rode out. We rode as we had ridden together twenty years before, when we went out coursing with our greyhounds; that is, across country, over the fields.

It was all the same to me which way we rode, as I believed that all the neighboring villages were equally distressed, and my father, for the sake of old memories, wanted to revisit Spasskoye Lyutovinovo, which was only six miles from me, and where he had not been since Turgenieff's death. On the way there I remember he told me all about Turgenieff's mother, who was famous through all the neighborhood for her remarkable intelligence, energy, and craziness. I do not know that he ever saw her himself, or whether he was telling me only the reports that he had heard.

As we rode across the Turgenieff's park, he recalled in passing how of old he and Ivan Sergeyevitch had disputed which park was best, Spasskoye or Yasnaya Polyana. I asked him:

"And now which do you think?"

"Yasnaya Polyana IS the best, though this is very fine, very fine indeed."

In the village we visited the head-man's and two or three other cottages, and came away disappointed. There was no famine.

The peasants, who had been endowed at the emancipation with a full share of good land, and had enriched themselves since by wage-earnings, were hardly in want at all. It is true that some of the yards were badly stocked; but there was none of that acute degree of want which amounts to famine and which strikes the eye at once.

I even remember my father reproaching me a little for having sounded the alarm when there was no sufficient cause for it, and for a little while I felt rather ashamed and awkward before him.

Of course when he talked to the peasants he asked each of them if he remembered Turgenieff and eagerly picked up anything they had to say about him. Some of the old men remembered him and spoke of him with great affection.



## My Father's Illness in the Crimea

IN the autumn of 1901 my father was attacked by persistent feverishness, and the doctors advised him to spend the winter in the Crimea. Countess Panina kindly lent him her Villa Gaspra, near Koreiz, and he spent the winter there.

Soon after his arrival, he caught cold and had two illnesses one after the other, enteric fever and inflammation of the lungs. At one time his condition was so bad that the doctors had hardly any hope that he would ever rise from his bed again. Despite the fact that his temperature went up very high, he was conscious all the time; he dictated some reflections every day, and deliberately prepared for death.

The whole family was with him, and we all took turns in helping to nurse him. I look back with pleasure on the nights when it fell to me to be on duty by him, and I sat in the balcony by the open window, listening to his breathing and every sound in his room. My chief duty, as the strongest of the family, was to lift him up while the sheets were being changed. When they were making the bed, I had to hold him in my arms like a child.

I remember how my muscles quivered one day with the exertion. He looked at me with astonishment and said:

"You surely don't find me heavy? What nonsense!"

I thought of the day when he had given me a bad time at riding in the woods as a boy, and kept asking, "You're not tired?"

Another time during the same illness he wanted me to carry him down-stairs in my arms by the winding stone staircase.

"Pick me up as they do a baby and carry me."

He had not a grain of fear that I might stumble and kill him. It was all I could do to insist on his being carried down in an arm-chair by three of us.

Was my father afraid of death?

It is impossible to answer the question in one word. With his tough constitution and physical strength, he always instinctively fought not only against death, but against old age. Till the last year of his life he never gave in, but always did everything for himself and even rode on horseback.

To suppose, therefore, that he had no instinctive fear of death is out of the question. He had that fear, and in a very high degree, but he was constantly fighting to overcome it.

Did he succeed?

I can answer definitely yes. During his illness he talked a great deal of death and prepared himself for it firmly and deliberately. When he felt that he was getting weaker, he wished to say good-by to everybody, and he called us all separately to his bedside, one after the other, and gave his last words of advice to each. He was so weak that he spoke in a half-whisper, and when he had said good-by to one, he had to rest for a while and collect his strength for the rest.

When my turn came, he said as nearly as I can remember:

"You are still young and strong and tossed by storms of passion. You have not therefore yet been able to think over the chief questions of life. But this stage will pass. I am sure of it. When the time comes, believe me, you will find the truth in the teachings of the Gospel. I am dying peacefully simply because I have come to know that teaching and believe in it. May God grant you this knowledge soon! Good-by."

I kissed his hand and left the room quietly. When I got to the front door, I rushed to a lonely stone tower, and there sobbed my heart out in the darkness like a child. Looking round at last, I saw that some one else was sitting on the staircase near me, also crying.

So I said farewell to my father years before his death, and the memory of it is dear to me, for I know that if I had seen him before his death at Astapova he would have said just the same to me.

To return to the question of death, I will say that so far from being afraid of it, in his last days he often desired it; he was more interested in it than afraid of it. This "greatest of mysteries" interested him to such a degree that his interest came near to love. How eagerly he listened to accounts of the death of his friends, Turgenieff, Gay, Leskof, Zhemtchuzhnikof; and others! He inquired after the smallest matters; no detail, however trifling in appearance, was without its interest and importance to him.

His "Circle of Reading," November 7, the day he died, is devoted entirely to thoughts on death.

"Life is a dream, death is an awakening," he wrote, while in expectation of that awakening.

Apropos of the "Circle of Reading," I cannot refrain from relating a characteristic incident which I was told by one of my sisters.

When my father had made up his mind to compile that collection of the sayings of the wise, to which he gave the name of "Circle of Reading," he told one of his friends about it.

A few days afterward this friend came to see him again, and at once told him that he and his wife had been thinking over his scheme for the new book and had come to the conclusion that he ought to call it "For Every Day," instead of "Circle of Reading."

To this my father replied that he preferred the title "Circle of Reading" because the word "circle" suggested the idea of continuous reading, which was what he meant to express by the title.

Half an hour later the friend came across the room to him and repeated exactly the same remark again. This time my father made no reply. In the evening, when the friend was preparing to go home, as he was saying good-by to my father, he held his hand in his and began once more:

"Still, I must tell you, Lyoff Nikolaievich, that I and my wife have been thinking it over, and we have come to the conclusion," and so on, word for word the same.

"No, no, I want to die — to die as soon as possible," groaned my father when he had seen the friend off.

"Isn't it all the same whether it's 'Circle of Reading' or 'For Every Day'? No, it's time for me to die: I cannot live like this any longer."

And, after all, in the end, one of the editions of the sayings of the wise was called "For Every Day" instead of "Circle of Reading."

"Ah, my dear, ever since this Mr. ——— turned up, I really don't know which of Lyoff Nikolaievich's writings are by Lyoff Nikolaievich and which are by Mr. ——— !" murmured our old friend, the pure-hearted and far from malicious Marya Alexandrovna Schmidt.

This sort of intrusion into my father's work as an author bore, in the "friend's" language, the modest title of "corrections beforehand," and there is no doubt that Marya Alexandrovna was right, for no one will ever know where what my father wrote ends and where his concessions to Mr. ———'s persistent "corrections beforehand" begin, all the more as this careful adviser had the forethought to arrange that when my father answered his letters he was always to return him the letters they were answers to.

Besides the desire for death that my father displayed, in the last years of his life he cherished another dream, which he made no secret of his hope of realizing, and that was the desire to suffer for his convictions. The first impulse in this direction was given him by the persecution on the part of the authorities to which, during his lifetime, many of his friends and fellow-thinkers were subjected.

When he heard of any one being put in jail or deported for disseminating his writings, he was so disturbed about it that one was really sorry for him. I remember my arrival at Yasnaya some days after Gusef's arrest. I stayed two days with my father, and heard of nothing but Gusef. As if there were nobody in the world but Gusef! I must confess that, sorry as I was for Gusef, who was shut up at the time in the local prison at Krapivna, I harbored a most wicked feeling of resentment at my father's paying so little attention to me and the rest of those about him and being so absorbed in the thought of Gusef.

I willingly acknowledge that I was wrong in entertaining this narrow-minded feeling. If I had entered fully into what my father was feeling, I should have seen this at the time.

As far back as 1896, in consequence of the arrest of a doctor, Miss N ———, in Tula, my father wrote a long letter to Muravyof, the Minister of Justice, in which he spoke of the "unreasonableness, uselessness, and cruelty of the measures taken by the Government against those who disseminate these forbidden writings," and begged him to "direct the measures taken to punish or intimidate the perpetrators of the evil, or to put an end to it, against the man whom you regard as the real instigator of it... all the more, as I assure you beforehand, that I shall continue without ceasing till my death to do what the Government considers evil and what I consider my sacred duty before God."

As every one knows, neither this challenge nor the others that followed it led to any result, and the arrests and deportations of those associated with him still went on.

My father felt himself morally responsible toward all those who suffered on his account, and every year new burdens were laid on his conscience.

## Masha's Death

As I reach the description of the last days of my father's life, I must once more make it clear that what I write is based only on the personal impressions I received in my periodical visits to Yasnaya Polyana.

Unfortunately, I have no rich shorthand material to rely on, such as Gusef and Bulgakof had for their memoirs, and more especially Dushan Petrovitch Makowicki, who is preparing, I am told, a big and conscientious work, full of truth and interest.

In November, 1906, my sister Masha died of inflammation of the lungs. It is a curious thing that she vanished out of life with just as little commotion as she had passed through it. Evidently this is the lot of all the pure in heart.

No one was particularly astonished by her death. I remember that when I received the telegram, I felt no surprise. It seemed perfectly natural to me. Masha had married a kinsman of ours, Prince Obolenski; she lived on her own estate at Pirogovo, twenty-one miles from us, and spent half the year with her husband at Yasnaya. She was very delicate and had constant illnesses.

When I arrived at Yasnaya the day after her death, I was aware of an atmosphere of exaltation and prayerful emotion about the whole family, and it was then I think for the first time that I realized the full grandeur and beauty of death.

I definitely felt that by her death Masha, so far from having gone away from us, had come nearer to us, and had been, as it were, welded to us forever in a way that she never could have been during her lifetime.

I observed the same frame of mind in my father. He went about silent and woebegone, summoning all his strength to battle with his own sorrow; but I never heard him utter a murmur of a complaint, only words of tender emotion. When the coffin was carried to the church he changed his clothes and went with the cortege. When he reached the stone pillars he stopped us, said farewell to the departed, and walked home along the avenue. I looked after him and watched him walk away across the wet, thawing snow with his short, quick old man's steps, turning his toes out at a sharp angle, as he always did, and never once looking round.

My sister Masha had held a position of great importance in my father's life and in the life of the whole family. Many a time in the last few years have we had occasion to think of her and to murmur sadly: "If only Masha had been with us! If only Masha had not died!"

In order to explain the relations between Masha and my father I must turn back a considerable way. There was one distinguishing and, at first sight, peculiar trait in my father's character, due perhaps to the fact that he grew up without a mother, and that was that all exhibitions of tenderness were entirely foreign to him.

I say "tenderness" in contradistinction to heartiness. Heartiness he had and in a very high degree.

His description of the death of my Uncle Nikolai is characteristic in this connection. In a letter to his other brother, Sergei Nikolayevitch, in which he described the last day of his brother's life, my father tells how he helped him to undress.

"He submitted, and became a different man... He had a word of praise for everybody, and said to me, 'Thanks, my friend.' You understand the significance of the words as between us two."

It is evident that in the language of the Tolstoy brothers the phrase "my friend" was an expression of tenderness beyond which imagination could not go. The words astonished my father even on the lips of his dying brother.

During all his lifetime I never received any mark of tenderness from him whatever.

He was not fond of kissing children, and when he did so in saying good morning or good night, he did it merely as a duty.

It is therefore easy to understand that he did not provoke any display of tenderness toward himself, and that nearness and dearness with him were never accompanied by any outward manifestations.

It would never have come into my head, for instance, to walk up to my father and kiss him or to stroke his hand. I was partly prevented also from that by the fact that I always looked up to him with awe, and his spiritual power, his greatness, prevented me from seeing in him the mere man — the man who was so plaintive and weary at times, the feeble old man who so much needed warmth and rest.

The only person who could give him that warmth was Masha.

She would go up to him, stroke his hand, caress him, and say something affectionate, and you could see that he liked it, was happy, and even responded in kind. It was as if he became a different man with her. Why was it that Masha was able to do this, while no one else even dared to try? If any other of us had done it, it would have seemed unnatural, but Masha could do it with perfect simplicity and sincerity.

I do not mean to say that others about my father loved him less than Masha; not at all; but the display of love for him was never so warm and at the same time so natural with any one else as with her.

So that with Masha's death my father was deprived of this natural source of warmth, which, with advancing years, had become more and more of a necessity for him.

Another and still greater power that she possessed was her remarkably delicate and sensitive conscience. This trait in her was still dearer to my father than her caresses.

How good she was at smoothing away all misunderstandings! How she always stood up for those who were found any fault with, justly or unjustly! It was all the same to her. Masha could reconcile everybody and everything.

During the last years of his life my father's health perceptibly grew worse. Several times he had the most sudden and inexplicable sort of fainting fits, from which he used to recover the next day, but completely lost his memory for a time.

Seeing my brother Andrei's children, who were staying at Yasnaya, in the zala one day, he asked with some surprise, "Whose children are these?" Meeting my wife, he said, "Don't be offended, my dear; I know that I am very fond of you, but I have quite forgotten who you are"; and when he went up to the zala after one of these fainting fits, he looked round with an astonished air and said, "Where's my brother Nitenka." Nitenka had died fifty years before.

The day following all traces of the attack would disappear.

During one of these fainting fits my brother Sergei, in undressing my father, found a little note-book on him. He put it in his own pocket, and next day, when he came to see my father, he handed it back to him, telling him that he had not read it.

"There would have been no harm in YOUR seeing it," said my father, as he took it back.

This little diary in which he wrote down his most secret thoughts and prayers was kept "for himself alone," and he never showed it to any one. I saw it after my father's death. It is impossible to read it without tears.

It is curious that the sudden decay of my father's memory displayed itself only in the matter of real facts and people. He was entirely unaffected in his literary work, and everything that he wrote down to the last days of his life is marked by his characteristic logicalness and force. It may be that the reason he forgot the details of real life was because he was too deeply absorbed in his abstract work.

My wife was at Yasnaya Polyana in October, and when she came home she told me that there was something wrong there. "Your mother is nervous and hysterical; your father is in a silent and gloomy frame of mind."

I was very busy with my office work, but made up my mind to devote my first free day to going and seeing my father and mother.

When I got to Yasnaya, my father had already left it.

I paid Aunt Masha a visit some little time after my father's funeral. We sat together in her comfortable little cell, and she repeated to me once more in detail the oft-repeated story of my father's last visit to her.

"He sat in that very arm-chair where you are sitting now, and how he cried!" she said.

"When Sasha arrived with her girl friend, they set to work studying this map of Russia and planning out a route to the Caucasus. Lyovotchka sat there thoughtful and melancholy.

"'Never mind, Papa; it'll be all right,' said Sasha, trying to encourage him.

"'Ah, you women, you women!' answered her father, bitterly. 'How can it ever be all right?'

"I so much hoped that he would settle down here; it would just have suited him. And it was his own idea, too; he had even taken a cottage in the village," Aunt Masha sadly recalled.

"When he left me to go back to the hotel where he was staying, it seemed to me that he was rather calmer.

“When he said good-by, he even made some joke about his having come to the wrong door.

“I certainly would never have imagined that he would go away again that same night.”

It was a grievous trial for Aunt Masha when the old confessor Iosif, who was her spiritual director, forbade her to pray for her dead brother because he had been excommunicated. She was too broad-minded to be able to reconcile herself to the harsh intolerance of the church, and for a time she was honestly indignant. Another priest to whom she applied also refused her request.

Marya Nikolayevna could not bring herself to disobey her spiritual fathers, but at the same time she felt that she was not really obeying their injunction, for she prayed for him all the same, in thought, if not in words.

There is no knowing how her internal discord would have ended if her father confessor, evidently understanding the moral torment she was suffering, had not given her permission to pray for her brother, but only in her cell and in solitude, so as not to lead others astray.

## **My Father's Will. Conclusion**

ALTHOUGH my father had long since renounced the copyright in all his works written after 1883, and although, after having made all his real estate over to his children, he had, as a matter of fact, no property left, still he could not but be aware that his life was far from corresponding to his principles, and this consciousness perpetually preyed upon his mind. One has only to read some of his posthumous works attentively to see that the idea of leaving home and radically altering his whole way of life had presented itself to him long since and was a continual temptation to him.

This was the cherished dream that always allured him, but which he did not think himself justified in putting into practice.

The life of the Christian must be a “reasonable and happy life IN ALL POSSIBLE CIRCUMSTANCES,” he used to say as he struggled with the temptation to go away, and gave up his own soul for others.

I remember reading in Gusef's memoirs how my father once, in conversation with Gusoryof, the peasant, who had made up his mind to leave his home for religious reasons, said, “My life is a hundred thousand times more loathsome than yours, but yet I cannot leave it.”

I shall not enumerate all the letters of abuse and amazement which my father received from all sides, upbraiding him with luxury, with inconsistency, and even with torturing his peasants. It is easy to imagine what an impression they made on him.

He said there was good reason to revile him; he called their abuse “a bath for the soul,” but internally he suffered from the “bath,” and saw no way out of his difficulties. He bore his cross, and it was in this self-renunciation that his power consisted, though many either could not or would not understand it. He alone, despite all those about

him, knew that this cross was laid on him not of man, but of God; and while he was strong, he loved his burden and shared it with none.

Just as thirty years before he had been haunted by the temptation to suicide, so now he struggled with a new and more powerful temptation, that of flight.

A few days before he left Yasnaya he called on Marya Alexandrovna Schmidt at Ovsyanniki and confessed to her that he wanted to go away.

The old lady held up her hands in horror and said:

“Gracious Heavens, Lyoff Nikolaievich, have you come to such a pitch of weakness?”

When I learned, on October 28, 1910, that my father had left Yasnaya, the same idea occurred to me, and I even put it into words in a letter I sent to him at Shamerdino by my sister Sasha.

I did not know at the time about certain circumstances which have since made a great deal clear to me that was obscure before.

From the moment of my father’s death till now I have been racking my brains to discover what could have given him the impulse to take that last step. What power could compel him to yield in the struggle in which he had held firmly and tenaciously for many years? What was the last drop, the last grain of sand that turned the scales, and sent him forth to search for a new life on the very edge of the grave?

Could he really have fled from home because the wife that he had lived with for forty-eight years had developed neurasthenia and at one time showed certain abnormalities characteristic of that malady? Was that like the man who so loved his fellows and so well knew the human heart? Or did he suddenly desire, when he was eighty-three, and weak and helpless, to realize the idea of a pilgrim’s life?

If so, why did he take my sister Sasha and Dr. Makowicki with him? He could not but know that in their company he would be just as well provided with all the necessities of life as he would have been at Yasnaya Polyana. It would have been the most palpable self-deception.

Knowing my father as I did, I felt that the question of his flight was not so simple as it seemed to others, and the problem lay long unsolved before me until it was suddenly made clear by the will that he left behind him.

I remember how, after N. S. Leskof’s death, my father read me his posthumous instructions with regard to a pauper funeral, with no speeches at the grave, and so on, and how the idea of writing his own will then came into his head for the first time.

His first will was written in his diary, on March 27, 1895.

The fourth paragraph, to which I wish to call particular attention, contains a request to his next of kin to transfer the right of publishing his writings to society at large, or, in other words, to renounce the copyright of them.

“But I only request it, and do not direct it. It is a good thing to do. And it will be good for you to do it; but if you do not do it, that is your affair. It means that you are not yet ready to do it. The fact that my writings have been bought and sold during these last ten years has been the most painful thing in my whole life to me.”



Three copies were made of this will, and they were kept by my sister Masha, my brother Sergei, and Tchertkof.

I knew of its existence, but I never saw it till after my father's death, and I never inquired of anybody about the details.

I knew my father's views about copyright, and no will of his could have added anything to what I knew. I knew, moreover, that this will was not properly executed according to the forms of law, and personally I was glad of that, for I saw in it another proof of my father's confidence in his family. I need hardly add that I never doubted that my father's wishes would be carried out.

My sister Masha, with whom I once had a conversation on the subject, was of the same opinion.

In 1909 my father stayed with Mr. Tchertkof at Krekshin, and there for the first time he wrote a formal will, attested by the signature of witnesses. How this will came to be written I do not know, and I do not intend to discuss it. It afterward appeared that it also was imperfect from a legal point of view, and in October, 1909, it had all to be done again.

As to the writing of the third we are fully informed by Mr. F. Strakhof in an article which he published in the St. Petersburg "Gazette" on November 6, 1911.

Mr. Strakhof left Moscow at night. He had calculated on Sofya Andreyevna, whose presence at Yasnaya Polyana was highly inexpedient for the business on which he was bound, being still in Moscow.

The business in question, as was made clear in the preliminary consultation which V. G. Tchertkof held with N. K. Muravyof, the solicitor, consisted in getting fresh signatures from Lyoff Nikolaievich, whose great age made it desirable to make sure, without delay, of his wishes being carried out by means of a more unassailable legal document. Strakhof brought the draft of the will with him, and laid it before Lyoff Nikolaievich. After reading the paper through, he at once wrote under it that he agreed with its purport, and then added, after a pause:

"All this business is very disagreeable to me, and it is unnecessary. To insure the propagation of my ideas by taking all sorts of measures — why, no word can perish without leaving its trace, if it expresses a truth, and if the man who utters it believes profoundly in its truth. But all these outward means for insuring it only come of our disbelief in what we utter."

And with these words Lyoff Nikolaievich left the study.

Thereupon Mr. Strakhof began to consider what he must do next, whether he should go back with empty hands, or whether he should argue it out.

He decided to argue it out, and endeavored to explain to my father how painful it would be for his friends after his death to hear people blaming him for not having taken any steps, despite his strong opinion on the subject, to see that his wishes were carried out, and for having thereby helped to transfer his copyrights to the members of his family.

Tolstoy promised to think it over, and left the room again.

At dinner Sofya Andreyevna “was evidently far from having any suspicions.” When Tolstoy was not by, however, she asked Mr. Strakhof what he had come down about. Inasmuch as Mr. Strakhof had other affairs in hand besides the will, he told her about one thing and another with an easy conscience.

Mr. Strakhof described a second visit to Yasnaya, when he came to attest the same will as a witness.

When he arrived, he said: “The countess had not yet come down. I breathed again.”

Of his departure, he said:

As I said good-by to Sofya Andreyevna, I examined her countenance attentively. Such complete tranquillity and cordiality toward her departing guests were written on it that I had not the smallest doubt of her complete ignorance of what was going on... I left the house with the pleasing consciousness of a work well done — a work that was destined to have a considerable historic consequence. I only felt some little twinge within, certain qualms of conscience about the conspiratorial character of the transaction.

But even this text of the will did not quite satisfy my father’s “friends and advisers”; it was redrafted for the fourth and last time in July, 1910.

This last draft was written by my father himself in the Limonovski Forest, two miles from the house, not far from Mr. Tchertkof’s estate.

Such is the melancholy history of this document, which was destined to have historic consequences. “All this business is very disagreeable to me, and it is unnecessary,” my father said when he signed the paper that was thrust before him. That was his real opinion about his will, and it never altered to the end of his days.

Is there any need of proof for that? I think one need know very little of his convictions to have no doubt about it.

Was Lyoff Nikolaievich Tolstoy likely of his own accord to have recourse to the protection of the law? And, if he did, was he likely to conceal it from his wife and children?

He had been put into a position from which there was absolutely no way out. To tell his wife was out of the question; it would have grievously offended his friends. To have destroyed the will would have been worse still; for his friends had suffered for his principles morally, and some of them materially, and had been exiled from Russia. He felt himself bound to them.

And on the top of all this were his fainting fits, his increasing loss of memory, the clear consciousness of the approach of death, and the continually growing nervousness of his wife, who felt in her heart of hearts the unnatural estrangement of her husband, and could not understand it. If she asked him what it was that he was concealing from her, he would either have to say nothing or to tell her the truth. But that was impossible.

So it came about that the long-cherished dream of leaving Yasnaya Polyana presented itself as the only means of escape. It was certainly not in order to enjoy the full realization of his dream that he left his home; he went away only as a choice of evils.

"I am too feeble and too old to begin a new life," he had said to my brother Sergei only a few days before his departure.

Harassed, ill in body and in mind, he started forth without any object in view, without any thought-out plan, merely in order to hide himself somewhere, wherever it might be, and get some rest from the moral tortures which had become insupportable to him.

"To fly, to fly!" he said in his deathbed delirium as he lay at Astapova.

"Has papa considered that mama may not survive the separation from him?" I asked my sister Sasha on October 29, when she was on the point of going to join him at Shamerdino.

"Yes, he has considered all that, and still made up his mind to go, because he thinks that nothing could be worse than the state that things have come to here," she answered.

I confess that my explanation of my father's flight by no means exhausts the question. Life is complex and every explanation of a man's conduct is bound to suffer from one-sidedness. Besides, there are circumstances of which I do not care to speak at the present moment, in order not to cause unnecessary pain to people still living. It may be that if those who were about my father during the last years of his life had known what they were doing, things would have turned out differently.

The years will pass. The accumulated incrustations which hide the truth will pass away. Much will be wiped out and forgotten. Among other things my father's will will be forgotten — that will which he himself looked upon as an "unnecessary outward means." And men will see more clearly that legacy of love and truth in which he believed deeply, and which, according to his own words, "cannot perish without a trace."

In conclusion I cannot refrain from quoting the opinion of one of my kinsmen, who, after my father's death, read the diaries kept both by my father and my mother during the autumn before Lyoff Nikolaievich left Yasnaya Polyana.

"What a terrible misunderstanding!" he said. "Each loved the other with such poignant affection, each was suffering all the time on the other's behalf, and then this terrible ending!... I see the hand of fate in this."

**Autobiography of Countess Tolstoy  
by Sophie Andreevna Tolstoy**

Translated by S. S. Koteliansky and Leonard Woolf

Tolstoy's wife, Countess Sophia Andreyevna Tolstaya (1844–1919), was devoted to her husband in his literary work. She acted as copyist of *War and Peace*, copying the manuscript seven times from beginning to end. Sophia was also a diarist and documented her life with Tolstoy in a series of diaries which were published in English translation in the 1980s.

However, the couple had an increasingly troubled marriage, arguing over Tolstoy's desire to give away his private property and the copyright of his works. Eventually the author left Sophia in 1910, aged 82, with his doctor and daughter Alexandra. Tolstoy died 10 days later in a railway station, whilst Sophia was kept away from him. Following the death of her husband, Sophia continued to live in Yasnaya Polyana, surviving the Russian Revolution in relative peace. This detailed autobiography was first published in English in 1922, three years after Sophia's death.

Sophia Tolstaya with her daughter Alexandra Tolstaya

Helen Mirren and Christopher Plummer, who play the Tolstoy couple in the 2009 film 'The Last Station'

## Preface by Vassili Spiridonov

THE manuscript of the autobiography of Sophie Andreevna Tolstoy exists among the documents of the late director of the Russian Library, Professor Semen Afanasevich Vengerov, which, in accordance with the will of the deceased, have been handed over to the Library. The Library is now in the Petrograd Institute of Learning, and the documents form a special section in the Institute under the title: "The Archives of S. A. Vengerov."

The history of the manuscript is as follows. At the end of July, 1913, S. A. Vengerov sent a letter to S. A. Tolstoy asking her to write and send him her autobiography which he proposed to publish. We do not know the details of S. A. Vengerov's letter, but from the replies of S. A. Tolstoy which are printed below we may conclude that Professor Vengerov enclosed in his letter to S. A. Tolstoy a questionnaire, and that, besides the usual questions which he was accustomed to send out broadcast to authors and men of letters, he put a number of additional questions, especially for S. A. T., asking for light upon certain moments in the history of the life and creative activity of Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, and upon the time and causes of the differences between the husband and wife, the beginning of that formidable drama which took place in the Tolstoy family.

S. A. T. answered immediately; she wrote to Vengerov as follows:

Yasnaya Polyana,  
30 July, 1913.

Much-respected Semen Afanasevich: I received your letter to-day, and hasten to tell you that I will try to answer all your questions soon; but in order to do it fully, I

need a little time. I shall hardly be able to write an autobiography, even a brief one. At any rate, whatever I may communicate to you, you have my permission to cut out anything that you think superfluous. As to your questions about my family, my sister, Tatyana Andreevna Kuzminskii, could answer you better than I; she and my first cousin, Alexander Alexandrovich Bers, have devoted a good deal of time to this matter and have, in particular, tried to trace the origin of my father's family, which came from Saxony. We have the seal with its coat-of-arms: a bear (hence Bers, i. e. Bär in German) warding off a swarm of bees. I will write to my sister to send me this information, and I will let you have it. Please also let me know roughly when you expect me to send you the information you desire.

The most difficult thing for me will be to fix the moment and the cause of our differences. It was not a difference, but a gradual going-away of Leo Nikolaevich from everything in his former life, and thus the harmony of all our happy previous life was broken.

Of all this I will try to write briefly, after having thought it over as well and as accurately as I can.

Accept the assurance of my respect and devotion for you,  
Sophie Tolstoy.  
Yasnaya Polyana,  
Station Zassyeka,  
21 August, 1913.

Much-respected Semen Afanasevich: This is a difficult task which you have set me, writing my autobiography, and, although I have already begun it, I am continually wondering whether I am doing it properly. The chief thing which I have decided to ask you is to tell me what length my article should be. If, for instance, you take a page of the magazine *Vyestnik Europa* as a measure, how many full pages, approximately, ought I to write? To-morrow I shall be sixty-nine years old, a long life; well, what out of that life would be of interest to people? I have been trying to find some woman's autobiography for a model, but have not found one anywhere.

Pardon me for troubling you; I want to do the work you have charged me with as well as possible, but I have so little capacity and no experience at all.

I shall hope for an answer.

With sincere respect and devotion,  
S. Tolstoy.

It may be supposed that Vengerov again came to the assistance of S. A. T. and solved her doubts, after which she went on with her work and finished it at the end of October, 1913. Being in Petersburg, she personally handed it over to Vengerov. The work did not satisfy Vengerov, as he did not find in it what, evidently, particularly interested him, namely, information as to the life in Yasnaya Polyana during the time when *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* were written. Vengerov wrote to S. A. T. about this, urging her to fill up the gap, to write a new additional chapter. S. A. T. did this. She sent the new material to Vengerov accompanied by the following letter:

Yasnaya Polyana,  
Station Zassyeka,  
24 March, 1914.

Much-respected Semen Afanasevich: You are perfectly right in your observation that I left a great gap in my autobiography, and I thank you very much for advising me to write one more chapter; I have now done so. But the question is, have I done it well, and is the new material suitable? Hard as I tried, and carefully as I searched for materials for that chapter, I found very little, but I have made the best use of it which I could.

In the former manuscript which I gave you in Petersburg, Chapter 3 should be cut out and the new one which I enclose in this letter substituted. The chapter had to be corrected considerably, things altered, struck out, and added.

The chapter about the children in the new material has been slightly altered at the beginning, and all the rest remains without alteration, as in the former manuscript.

Be so good as to note the Roman figures marking chapters, but divide it up into chapters anew at your discretion.

As I have not the whole manuscript in its final form before me, I cannot do it myself and am obliged to trouble you. Please also write me a word to say you have received the new chapter and give me your opinion, which I value greatly.

Accept the assurance of my sincere respect and devotion.

Sophie Tolstoy.

The additional matter did not satisfy S. A. Vengerov. He had long ago formed an idea of Yasnaya Polyana, during the period in which *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* were created, as of a "home" in which the interests of the family were such that literary interests were removed to the second floor. He hoped that S. A. T. in her additional matter would turn her attention to that particular side in the life and activity of L. N. Tolstoy, making use for that purpose of the very rich material possessed by her. But S. A. T. did not fulfil his hopes, as he told her in a letter to her and as may be seen from her reply.

S. A. T. held a different view, and she wrote to Vengerov:

Yasnaya Polyana,  
Station Zassyeka,  
5 May, 1914.

Much-respected Semen Afanasevich: I have received your letter; you are not quite satisfied with the new chapter, to which I reply: you want more facts, but where am I to get them? Our life was quiet, placid, a retired family life.

You write about the 'home' interests which must have been subordinated to Leo Nikolaevich's writing of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. But what was that home? It consisted only of Leo Nikolaevich and myself. The two old women had become childish and took no interest at all in Leo N.'s writings, but used to lose their tempers over patience; and their only interests were the children and the dinner.

In so far as I could tear myself from domestic matters, I lived in my husband's creative activity and loved it. But one can not put into the background a baby who has to be fed day and night, and I nursed ten children myself, which Leo N. desired and approved.

You mention among professional writers Gogol, Turgenev, Goncharov, and I would add Lermontov and others; all of them were bachelors without families, and that is a very different matter. This was reflected in their work, just as Leo N.'s family life was completely reflected in his works.

It is perfectly true that Leo N. was generally a man, and not merely a writer. But it is not true, if you will pardon me, that he wrote easily. Indeed, he experienced the 'tortures of creative activity' in a high degree; he wrote with difficulty and slowly, made endless corrections; he doubted his powers, denied his talent, and he often said: 'Writing is just like childbirth; until the fruit is ripe, it does not come out, and, when it does, it comes with pain and labour.'

Those are his own words.

And now, Semen Afanasevich, with regard to your last remark, that Yasnaya Polyana of the years 1862 to 1870 gives the impression of a 'home' in which literary interests had been removed to the second floor — I repeat once more that there was no such 'home'; it is true that I was quite a young girl, in my eighteenth year, when I married, and I only vaguely realized the great importance of the husband whom I adored. Now I have come to the end of the page.

With respect and devotion,

S. Tolstoy.

Nearly three years separate the going away and death of Leo N. Tolstoy from the writing of her autobiography by S. A. T. It might have been expected that that interval of time would have stilled the pain in her heart and that her soul would have found peace from her sufferings. But S. A. T. is far from peace and reconciliation. Pain, a void in her heart, a protest against some one or something are felt in every word of her autobiography. In her work she has given new and interesting information about her family; she has dwelt upon her children, the guests who visited Yasnaya Polyana, the literary works of her husband, without giving us anything new; and then she concentrated all her attention upon the domestic drama. The domestic drama is the centre round which all the thoughts and all the feelings of S. A. T. turn.

In her story about this domestic drama she has not sinned against the truth; she has gone back again into the past deeply and with sincerity — every one who reads her work without prejudice will admit this. And yet one feels that it is not for nothing that she tells of family difficulties and pours out before us the pain of her soul. Continual references to the difficulties of her position as a mother, insistent emphasis upon the mutual love of herself and her husband, and the allusions to "friends" who entered the house, got possession of the mind, heart, and will of Leo N., and disturbed the harmony of their married life — all this creates an impression in the reader's mind that S. A. T., in writing her autobiography, was guided by a definite purpose, that



of contradicting the unfavourable rumours about her which circulated everywhere and were getting into newspapers and magazines.

This desire, which is masked in the autobiography, is definitely expressed by S. A. T. in another place, in her preface to Leo N. Tolstoy's *Letters to His Wife*, published in 1913. There she says frankly: "This, too, has induced me to publish these letters, that after my death, which in all likelihood is near, people will, as usual, wrongly judge and describe my relations to my husband and his to me. Then let them study and form their judgment upon living and genuine data, and not upon guesses, gossip and inventions."

We shall understand S. A. T.'s desire, if we consider her position. It is true that the great honour of being the wife of a genius fell to the lot of S. A. T., but there also fell to her lot the difficult task of creating favourable conditions for the life and development of that genius. She knew the joy of living with a genius, but she also knew the horror of living in public, so that her every movement, smile, frown, incautious word was in everyone's eyes and ears and was caught up by the newspapers and spread over the whole world, recorded in diaries and reminiscences as material for future judgments upon her. Forty-eight years is a long period. Many unnecessary words were spoken in that time, many incautious movements were made; and for every one she will be made to answer before the court of mankind. S. A. T. knew this, and with an anxious heart she prepared herself for the judgment. The *Autobiography* and *L. N. Tolstoy's Letters to his Wife* are the last words of the accused. We should listen to them carefully and with attention, weighing every word. If S. A. T. bears a responsibility before all mankind, each of us before our conscience has a responsibility for whatever verdict he may pass upon her. We must judge sternly, but justly.

S. A. T.'s wish has been carried out. In the autobiography printed below two new chapters are substituted for the first half of Chapter III in the original draft, and an independent Chapter V has been made out of the last half of the original third chapter. Passages cut out of this third chapter are given in full in notes 20, 38, and 43.

Our notes are given at the end of the autobiography.

Vassili Spiridonov.

## Chapter 1

I WAS born on 22 August, 1844, in the country, at the village of Pokrovskoye in the Manor of Glyebov-Stryeshnev, and up to the time of my marriage I spent every summer there. In the winter our family lived in Moscow, in the Kremlin at the house near the Troizki Gate, which belonged to the Crown, for my father was court physician and also principal physician to the Senate and Ordnance Office.

My father was a Lutheran, but my mother belonged to the Orthodox Church. The investigations of my sister, T. A. Kuzminskii, and of my brother, A. A. Bers, show, with regard to my father's origin, that it was his grandfather who emigrated from

Germany to Russia. During the reign of the Empress Elisabeth Petrovna, regiments were raised in Russia for which new instructors were required. At the request of the Empress, the King of Prussia sent four officers of the Horse Guards to Petersburg; among them was Captain Ivan Bers, who, after serving for several years in Russia, was killed at the battle of Zorndorf. He left a widow and one son, Evstafii. All that is known about her is that she was called Marie, that she was a baroness, and that she died young, leaving a moderate fortune to her son, Evstafii.

Evstafii Ivanovich lived in Moscow and married Elisabeth Ivanovna Wulfert, belonging to an old, aristocratic, Westphalian family. She had two sons, Alexander and Andrey, my father. Both were medical men and studied at the Moscow University.

In 1812 all the property of Evstafii Ivanovich was destroyed by fire, including all his houses, documents, and his seal with his coat-of-arms, a bee-hive with a swarm of bees attacking a bear, from which we derive our family name, Bers (Bär in German means bear). The right to the coat-of-arms was not restored to my father, though applications were made by his descendants; permission was given only to use a bee-hive and bees on the coat-of-arms.

After the war of 1812 the government made a small grant of money to Evstafii Ivanovich, and my grandmother, Elizabeth Ivanovna, when she became a widow, managed with difficulty to educate her sons. After finishing their studies at the medical schools of the university, the brothers Bers began to earn their own living. The elder, Alexander settled in Petersburg, the younger lived with his mother in Moscow.

At the age of thirty-four Andrey married Lyubov Alexandrovna Islavin, who was sixteen years old and the daughter of Alexander Mikhailovich Islenev and of Princess Sophie Petrovna Kozlovskii, née Countess Zavadovskii.

My mother's descent was as follows: Count Peter Vasilevich Zavadovskii, my mother's grandfather, was the well-known statesman and favourite of the Empress Catherine II. Under Alexander I he became the first Minister of Education in Russia. He was married to Countess Vera Nikolaevna Apraxin, who was a maid-of-honour, a peeress in her own right, and a remarkable beauty. The elder daughter, Countess Sophie Petrovna Zavadovskii, at the age of sixteen was married against her will to Prince Kozlovskii; she had one son by him, but, after a short and unhappy married life, left him and had a liaison with Alexander Mikhailovich Islenev, with whom she lived for the remainder of her life. She died in childbirth, but had previously borne him three sons and three daughters, of whom the youngest, Lyubov Alexandrovna, was my mother.

Sophie Petrovna lived permanently on my grandfather's estate in the village Krasnoye, and there she was buried near the church. It was said that she induced a priest to marry her to my grandfather. She used to say: "I want to be the wife of Alexander Mikhailovich at any rate in the sight of God, if not in the view of man."

My grandfather, Alexander Mikhailovich Islenev, of an old aristocratic family, took part in the battle of Borodino, after which he was given a commission in the Preobrazhenskii Guards. Subsequently he was aide-de-camp to Count Chernishov. The

family name “Islenev” was not given to his children by Sophie Petrovna; the marriage was not considered legal, and the descendants now bear the name “Islavin.” Many of them rose to high rank.

## Chapter 2

MY father and mother had a large family, and I was their second daughter. My father had, besides his government posts, a very large medical practice and often overworked. He tried to give us the best education and surrounded us with all the comforts of life. My mother did the same, but she also instilled into us the idea that, as we had no fortune at all, and the family was large, we must prepare ourselves in order to earn our own livings. Besides learning our own lessons we had to teach our younger brothers, do sewing, embroidering, and housekeeping, and later on prepare for the examination of a private teacher.

Our first governesses were German; we were taught French first by mother, then by governesses, and later by the French lecturer of the university. We were taught the Russian language and science by university students. One of them tried in his own way to develop my mind and to make me a believer in extreme materialism; he used to lend me Blüchener and Feuerbach, suggested that there was no God and that religion was an obsolete superstition. At first I was fascinated by the simplicity of the atomic explanation and the reduction of everything in the world to the correlations of atoms, but I soon felt the want of the ordinary orthodox faith and church, and I gave up materialism for ever.

Up to the time of the examinations we daughters were educated at home. At the age of sixteen I went in for the private teacher’s examination at the Moscow university, taking Russian and French as my principal subjects. The examiners were the well-known professors, Tikhonravov, Ilovaiskii, Davidov, Father Sergievskii, and M. Paquaut. It was an interesting time. I was working with a friend, the daughter of the Inspector of the University, and therefore moved in university circles, among intelligent professors and students. It was the beginning of the ‘sixties, a time of intellectual ferment. The abolition of serfdom had just been announced; every one was discussing it, and we young people were enthusiastic for the great event. We used to meet, discuss, and enjoy ourselves.

At that time a new type had just appeared in life and in literature; there was the new breath of nihilism among the young. I remember how at a large party, when professors and students were present, Turgenev’s *Fathers and Sons* was read aloud, and Bazarov seemed to us to represent a strange type, something new, something which contained a promise for the future.

I was not a good student, always concentrating exclusively upon the subject which I liked. For instance, I liked literature very much. I was carried away by Russian literature and read a great many books, getting the oldest books and manuscripts from

the university library, beginning with the chronicles and ending with the latest Russian writers. I was fascinated and surprised that the Russian tongue should have developed out of the feeble beginnings in monastic writings into the language of Pushkin. It was like the growth of a living creature.

In my youth Tolstoy's *Childhood* and Dickens's *David Copperfield* made the greatest impression on me. I copied out and learnt by heart passages in *Childhood* which I particularly liked, for instance: "Will one ever get back the freshness, the freedom from care, the desire for love, and the power of belief which one possessed in childhood?" "When I finished *David Copperfield*, I cried as though I were being separated from a close friend. I did not like studying history from the text-books; in mathematics I only liked algebra, and that, owing to a complete lack of mathematical gifts, I soon forgot.

I was successful in the university examinations; in both Russian and French I received the mark "excellent," and I was given a diploma of which I was very proud. Later, I remember, I was pleased at hearing Professor Tikhonravov praise my essay on "Music" to my husband; he added: "That is just the wife you need. She has a great flair for literature; in the examination her essay was the best of the year."

Soon after the examination I began writing a story, taking as the heroines myself and my sister Tanya, and calling her Natasha. Leo Tolstoy also called the heroine in his *War and Peace* Natasha. He read my story some time before our marriage and wrote of it in his diary: "What force of truth and simplicity." Before my marriage I burnt the story and also my diaries, written since my eleventh year, and other youthful writings, which I much regret.

Of music and drawing I learnt little; I did not have enough time, though throughout my life I have loved all the arts and have more than once returned to them, using the little leisure left to me from a life which, in my girlhood and particularly during my marriage, was always busy and hardworking.

## Chapter 3

COUNT LEO NIKOLAEVICH TOLSTOY had known my mother from his childhood and was a friend of hers, though he was two and a half years younger. Now and then on his way to Moscow he used to pay a visit to our family. His father, Count Nikolai Ilitch Tolstoy was very friendly with my grandfather, Alexander Mikhailovich Islenev, and they used to visit each other at the village Krasnoye and the hamlet Yasnaya Polyana. In August, 1862, my mother took us girls to see our grandfather at the village of Ivitsi in Odoevski, and on our way we stopped at Yasnaya Polyana which my mother had not seen since she was a child; at the time my mother's greatest friend, Marie Nikolaevna Tolstoy, was staying there, having just returned from Algiers.

On our way back Leo Nikolaevich accompanied us as far as Moscow, and he used to come and see us almost daily at our country-house in Pokrovskoye, and afterwards in Moscow. On the evening of 16 September he handed me a written proposal of marriage.

Up to that time no one knew the object of his visits. There was a painful struggle going on in his soul. In his diary at the time he wrote, for instance:

12 Sept. 1862.

I am in love, as I did not think it was possible to be in love.

I am a madman; I'll shoot myself, if it goes on like this. They had an evening party; she is charming in everything...

13 Sept. 1862.

To-morrow as soon as I get up, I shall go and tell everything or shoot myself...

I accepted Leo Nikolaevich and our engagement lasted only one week. On 23 September we were married in the royal church of the Nativity of Our Lady, and immediately afterwards left for Yasnaya Polyana in a new carriage with a team of six horses and a postillion. We were accompanied by Alexei Stepanovich, Leo Nikolaevich's devoted servant, and the old maid-servant, Varvara.

After coming to Yasnaya Polyana, we decided to settle down there with Aunt Tatyana Alexandrovna Ergolskii. From the very first I assisted my husband in the management of the house and estate, and in copying out his writings.

After the first days of our married life had passed, Leo Nikolaevich realized that besides his happiness he needed activity and work. In his diary of December, 1862, he wrote: "I feel the force of the need to write." That force was a great one, creating a great work which made the first years of our married life bright with joy and happiness.

Soon after our marriage Leo Nikolaevich finished *Polikushka*, finally completed *The Cossacks* and gave it to Katkov's *Russkii Vvestnik*. He then began to work on the *Decembrists* whose fate and activity interested him a great deal. When he began to write about that period, he considered it necessary to relate who they were, to describe their origin and previous history, and so to go back from 1825 to 1805. He became dissatisfied with the *Decembrists*, but *The Year 1805* served as a beginning for *War and Peace* and was published in *Russkii Vvestnik*. This work, which Leo Nikolaevich did not like to be called a novel, he wrote with pleasure, assiduously, and it filled our life with a living interest.

In 1864 a good deal of it was already written, and Leo Nikolaevich often read aloud to me and to our two cousins, Varya and Lise, the daughters of Marie Nikolaevna Tolstoy, the charming passages as soon as he had written them. In the same year he read a few chapters to friends and to two literary men, Zhemchuzhnikov and Aksakov, in Moscow, and they were in raptures over it. Generally Leo Nikolaevich read extraordinarily well, unless he was very excited, and I remember how pleasant it was in Yasnaya Polyana to listen to him reading Molière's comedies, when he had not anything new from *War and Peace*.

During the first years at Yasnaya Polyana we lived a very retired life. I could not recall anything of importance during that time in the life of the people, society, or State, because everything passed us by; we lived the whole time in the country, we followed nothing, saw nothing, knew nothing — it did not interest us. I desired nothing else but to live with the characters of *War and Peace*; I loved them and watched the

life of each of them develop as though they were living beings. It was a full life and an unusually happy one, with our mutual love, our children, and, above all, that great work, beloved by me and later by the whole world, the work of my husband. I had no other desires.

Only at times in the evenings, when we had put the children to bed and sent off the MSS. or corrected proofs to Moscow, as a recreation we would sit down at the piano and till late at night play duets. Leo Nikolaevich was particularly fond of Haydn's and Mozart's symphonies. At that time I played rather badly, but I tried very hard to improve. Leo Nikolaevich too, it was clear, was satisfied with his fate. In 1864 he wrote in a letter to my brother: "It is as though our honeymoon had only just begun." And again: "I think that only one in a million is as lucky as I am." When his relation, Countess Alexandra Andreevna Tolstoy, complained that he wrote little and rarely to her, he replied: "Les peuples heureux n'out pas d'histoire; that is the case with us." Every new idea or the successful carrying out of some creation of his genius made him happy. Thus, for instance, he writes in his diary on 19 March, 1865: "A cloud of joy has just come upon me at the idea of writing the psychological history of Alexander and Napoleon."

It was because he felt the beauty of his own creations that Leo Nikolaevich wrote: "The poet takes the best out of his life and puts it into his writings. Hence his writing is beautiful and his life bad." But his life at that time was not bad; it was as good and as pure as his work.

How I loved copying War and Peace! I wrote in my diary: "The consciousness of serving a genius and a great man has given me strength for anything." I also wrote in a letter to Leo Nikolaevich: "The copying of War and Peace uplifts me very much morally, i. e. spiritually. When I sit down to copy it, I am carried away into a world of poetry, and sometimes it even seems to me that it is not your novel that is so good, but I that am so clever." In my diary I also wrote: "Levochka all the winter has been writing with irritation, often with tears and pain. In my opinion, his novel, War and Peace, must be superb. Whatever he has read to me moves me to tears." In 1865, when my husband was in Moscow looking up historical material, I wrote to him: "Today I copied and read on a little ahead, what I had not yet seen nor read, namely, how the miserable, muffled-up old Mack himself arrives to admit his defeat, and round him stand the inquisitive aides-de-camp, and he is almost crying, and his meeting with Kutuzov. I liked it immensely, and that is what I am writing to tell you."

In November, 1866, Leo Nikolaevich used to go to the Rumyantsev Museum and read up everything about the freemasons. Before leaving Yasnaya Polyana he always left me work to copy. When I had finished it, I sent it off to Moscow, and I wrote to my husband: "How have you decided about the novel? I have got to love your novel very much. When I sent the fair-copy off to Moscow, I felt as if I had sent off a child and I am afraid that some harm may come to it."

In copying I was often astonished and could not understand why Leo Nikolaevich corrected or destroyed what seemed so beautiful, and I used to be delighted if he

put back what he had struck out. Sometimes proofs which had been finally corrected and sent off, were returned again to Leo Nikolaevich at his request in order to be recorrected and recopied. Or a telegram would be sent to substitute one word for another. My whole soul became so immersed in copying that I began myself to feel when it was not altogether right, for instance, when there were frequent repetitions of the same word, long periods, wrong punctuation, obscurity, etc. I used to point all these things out to Leo Nikolaevich. Sometimes he was glad for my remarks; sometimes he would explain why it ought to remain as it was: he would say that details do not matter, only the general scheme matters.

The first thing which I copied out in my clumsy, but legible writing was Polikushka, and for years afterwards that work delighted me. I used to long for the evening when Leo Nikolaevich would bring me something newly written or recorrected. Some passages in *War and Peace*, and also in his other works, had to be copied over and over again. Others, for instance the description of the uncle's hunting party in *War and Peace*, were written once and for all and were not corrected. I remember how Leo Nikolaevich called me down to his study and read aloud to me that chapter just after he had written it, and we smiled and were happy together.

In copying I sometimes allowed myself to make remarks and to ask him to strike out anything which I thought not sufficiently pure to be read by young people, for instance in the scene of the beautiful Ellen's cynicism, and Leo Nikolaevich granted my request. But often in my life, when copying the poetical and charming passages in my husband's works, I have wept, not only because they moved me, but simply from the artist's pleasure which I felt together with the author.

It used to grieve me much when Leo Nikolaevich suddenly became depressed and disappointed with his work, and wrote to me that he did not like the novel and was miserable. This was particularly the case in 1864, when he broke his arm, and I wrote to him in Moscow: "Why have you lost heart in everything? Everything depresses you; nothing goes right. Why have you lost heart and courage? Haven't you the strength to rouse yourself? Remember how pleased you were with the novel, how well you thought it all out, and suddenly you don't like it. No, no, you must not. Now, come to us, and instead of the Kremlin's walls you will see our Chepyzh, lighted up by the sun, and the fields ... and with a happy face you will begin telling me the ideas for your work, you will dictate to me, and ideas will again come to you, and the melancholy will pass away." And so it was after he had come home.

If Leo Nikolaevich stopped working, I used to feel dull and wrote to him: "Prepare, prepare work for me." In Moscow he sold the first part of *War and Peace* to Katkov for the *Russkii Vyesnik*, and he handed the MS. over to the secretary, Lyubimov. Somehow or other it made me sad, and I wrote to my husband: "I felt so sorry that you had sold it. Terrible! Your thoughts, feelings, your talent, even your soul — sold!"

When Leo Nikolaevich had finished *War and Peace*, I asked him to publish that beautiful epic in book form, and not to publish it in magazines, and he agreed. Soon afterwards N. N. Strakhov's brilliant review of it came out, and Leo Nikolaevich said

that the place which Strakhov gave to War and Peace by his appreciation would remain permanent. But apart from this Tolstoy's fame grew with great rapidity, and his reputation as a writer rose higher and higher and soon extended to all countries and all classes.

Princess Paskevich was the first to translate War and Peace into French for some charitable purpose, and the French, although surprised, appreciated the work of the Russian writer. Among my papers I have a copy of I. S. Turgenev's letter to Edmond About, in which Turgenev gives the highest praise to War and Peace. Among other things, he says on 20 January, 1880: "Un des livres les plus remarquables de notre temps." And again: "Ceci est une grande œuvre d'un grand écrivain et c'est la vraie Russie."

In 1869 the printing of the first edition of War and Peace was completed; it was quickly sold out and a second printed. The writer Shedrin's opinion of War and Peace was strange; he said with contempt that it reminded him of the chatter of nursemaids and old ladies.

After finishing his great work, Leo Nikolaevich's need for creative activity did not come to an end. New ideas sprang up in his mind. In working at the period of Peter the Great, despite all his efforts, he was unable to describe the period, particularly its every-day life. I wrote to my sister about it:

"All the characters of the time of Peter the Great he now has ready; they are dressed, arranged, sitting in their places, but they don't breathe yet. Perhaps they will begin to live."

But these characters did not come to life. The beginning of this work on the time of Peter the Great still remains unpublished.

At one time Leo Nikolaevich intended to write the history of Mirovich, but he did not accomplish that either. He always shared with me his plans about work, and in 1870 he told me that he wanted to write a novel about the fall of a society woman in the highest Petersburg circles, and the task which he set himself was to tell the story of the woman and of her fall without condemning her. The idea was later carried out in his new novel, Anna Karenina. I well remember the circumstances in which he began to write that novel.

In order to amuse old Aunt Tatyana Alexandrovna Ergolskii, I sent my son Serge, who was her godson, to read aloud to her Pushkin's Tales of Byelkin. She fell asleep while he was reading, and Serge went up to the nursery, leaving the book on a table in the drawing-room. Leo Nikolaevich took up the book and started to read a passage beginning with the words: "The guests were arriving at the country-house of Count L — — " "How good, how simple," said Leo Nikolaevich. "Straight to business. That's the way to write. Pushkin is my master." That same evening Leo Nikolaevich began to write Anna Karenina and read the opening chapter to me; after a short introduction about the families he had written: "Everything was in a muddle in the house of the Oblonskiis." That was on 19 March, 1872.



When he had written the first part of *Anna Karenina* and had given me the second part to be copied, Leo Nikolaevich suddenly stopped working at it and became interested in education. In 1874 he wrote to Countess Alexandra Andreevna Tolstoy: "I am again deep in education, as I was fourteen years ago. I am writing a novel, but I cannot tear myself away from the living in order to describe imaginary people."

However difficult I might find it to combine the copying with my maternal and other duties, when I had not got it, I missed it and waited impatiently for my husband's artistic work to begin again.

The conditions under which *Anna Karenina* was written were much more difficult than those under which *War and Peace* was written. Then we had undisturbed happiness, now there died in succession three of our children and two aunts. I became ill, grew thin, coughed blood, and suffered from pains in the back. Leo Nikolaevich became alarmed, and in Moscow, on the way to get kumiss, he consulted Professor Zakharin, who said: "It is not yet consumption, but her nerves may be shattered"; and he added reproachfully: "You have neglected her, though." He forbade me to teach the children or do the copying, and he prescribed a régime of silence. For a long time I got no better, especially as we had to spend the summer on the Samara steppes in very inconvenient surroundings and living on kumiss, which I could not drink. Miserable and ill, I wrote to my sister: "Levochka's novel is published and is said to be a great success. In me it arouses strange feelings; there is so much sorrow in our house, and we are everywhere made so much of."

After *Anna Karenina*, Leo Nikolaevich, wishing to purify the literature read by simple folk and to introduce more morality and art into it, wrote a series of stories and legends which I admired very much; I sympathized keenly with their idea and object. I remember being present at the university when these legends were read aloud, and I wrote to Leo Nikolaevich at Yasnaya Polyana:

"The legends were a tremendous success. They were beautifully read by Professor Storozhenko. The majority of the audience were students. The impression which the stories makes on one is that the style is remarkably severe, concise, not a single unnecessary word, everything true and pointed — a harmonious whole. Much meaning, few words; it gives one satisfaction right up to the end."

I mention these works, as I have done those which were created during the happiest years of our life.

## Chapter 4

DURING the first years of our married life we had few people to stay with us. I remember that Count Sollogub, the author of *Tarantas*, with his two sons, used to come and visit us. He was a clever and amiable man, and we all liked him very much; he won my heart by saying to Leo Nikolaevich: "Lucky man to have such a wife." To me he once said: "You are, in fact, the nurse of your husband's talent, and go on being

that all your life long.” I always remembered this wise and friendly advice of Count Sollogub, and I tried to follow it as well as I could.

Very often Fet used to come to us; Leo Nikolaevich was fond of him and Fet was fond of us both. On his journeys between Moscow and his estate he used to stay with us, and his good wife, Marie Petrovna, often came with him; he used to make the house ring with his loud, brilliant, often witty, and sometimes flattering, talk.

In the early summer of 1863, he was at Yasnaya Polyana when Leo Nikolaevich was tremendously interested in bees and used to spend whole days among the hives; sometimes I used even to bring the lunch out there. One evening we all decided to have tea in the apiary. Everywhere in the grass glow-worms began to shine. Leo Nikolaevich took two of them and laughingly held them to my ears, saying: “Look, I always promised you emerald ear-rings; could anything be better than these?” When Fet left, he wrote me a letter in verse, ending as follows:

In my hand is yours,  
What a marvel!  
And on the earth are two glow-worms,  
Two emeralds.

Almost always after a visit Afanasii Afanasevich Fet sent me a poem, and many of them were dedicated to me. In one of them I was pleased by the, perhaps, undeserved description of the qualities of my soul in the following stanza:

And, behold, enchanted  
By thee, here, remote,  
I understand, bright creature,  
All the purity of thy soul.

When we settled down in Moscow, Fet bought a house near us and often visited us, saying that in Moscow all he wanted was a samovar. We laughed at this unexpected desire of Fet’s, and he explained: “I must be certain that in such and such a house, in the evening, the samovar is boiling and that there is sitting there a sweet hostess with whom I can spend a pleasant evening.”

Among the interesting visitors at Yasnaya Polyana was Turgenev, who came twice. The first time was in 1878, and the second when he came to ask Leo Nikolaevich to be present at the opening of the Pushkin memorial. He was amiable and lively and liked our happy family life, and he said to Leo Nikolaevich: “How well you did for yourself, my dear, in marrying your wife.”

I thank those dear, dead, real friends of ours for their invariable goodness and kindness to me. Many of them were more than twenty years older than I and treated me, as a young woman, with kindliness.

Nikolai Nikolaevich Strakhov often came to us on long visits; he was for all of us a loved and respected friend and he was always deeply touched by our life and was fond of the children. He used to say: “I must write about Yasnaya Polyana and the life here.” But his intention remained unfulfilled.

Many other guests came to us at Yasnaya Polyana and in Moscow. Among them were foreigners, Riepin, the famous artist, Gué, Syerov, Ginsburg, Truberskoi, Aronson who painted and sculptured Leo Nikolaevich and myself. My portraits for some reason were never like me.

A great deal could be written about this happy period of my life, when everything was so full of joy, interest, and occupation. I regret that at the time I kept few records of events and the interesting conversation of visitors and of Leo Nikolaevich himself; now I remember little, for I have passed through different experiences in which I had to pay with sorrow and tears for former happiness, experiences caused by painful circumstances and by wicked people.

## Chapter 5

WHEN children began to appear upon the scene, I could no longer devote myself entirely to my husband's service and to the constant sympathy with his work. We had many children: I bore thirteen. Ten of them I nursed myself, on principle and because I wanted to do so. I did not want to have wet-nurses. Owing to difficulties, I had to give up the principle on three occasions.

The children were growing up, and at that time we were of one mind with regard to their education. Leo Nikolaevich always himself engaged or found teachers and governesses for them. We parents taught them a great deal ourselves. Their father wanted to give them a most refined education, and to the boys an exclusively classical one. He learnt Greek himself with great labour in order to teach our eldest son, Serge, whom Leo Nikolaevich wanted to go to the university. "By that time Tanya will be grown up," he would say, "and we shall have to bring her out." I had to teach the children those subjects for which at the time there were no teachers, French, German, music, drawing, Russian literature, and even dancing. I knew very little English. Leo Nikolaevich, who also at that time had a poor knowledge of the language, began teaching it to me, and the first book which we read together in English was Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*. Later on I easily acquired the language from the English governess whom we had for the children.

What we were chiefly concerned for in the education of the elder children, we obtained in 1881 when we moved to Moscow for the winter. Our eldest son, Serge, entered the university; our two other sons, Ilya and Leo, were sent by Leo Nikolaevich to L. I. Polivanov's classical school. He sent our daughter, Tanya, to the School of Painting and Sculpture, and he took her out to her first fancy-dress ball at the Olsufevs, as I was expecting my eighth child, Alesha, born on 31 October, and did not go out anywhere.

The move to Moscow and our life in the town turned out for both of us to be much more difficult than we could have anticipated. It is true that Leo Nikolaevich wrote to me from the Samara steppes, where he had gone for a kumiss cure: "If God will, I shall come and help you in your Moscow affairs willingly — you have only to give me the

order"; but he was unable to carry out his word and he suddenly fell into despondency. Now that he was away from the country and nature, the impressions of town life, which he had forgotten, but which now came fresh to him, with its poverty on the one side and its luxury on the other, threw him into despondency, so that it often made me cry to see his moods which became much worse after he took part in the Moscow census. City life was for the first time presented, as it were, to his impressionable mind. But a return to our previous life was impossible, as the children's education had just been begun and had become the principal problem in our life. With sadness I had to look back and recognize that the nineteen years which we had spent continuously at Yasnaya Polyana were the happiest time of our lives. Besides the family and the copying for Leo Nikolaevich, what a number of good occupations I had in the country! Sick peasants used to come to me and, as far as I could, I used to treat them, and I was fond of the work. We planted apple trees and other trees and took pleasure in watching them grow. Once we had a school in the house and the village children were taught with ours as they grew up. But this did not last long, because we had to have our own children educated and we wanted to make their life as varied as possible. In the winter the whole family, including us parents, the tutors, and governesses, skated on the ice or tobogganed on the hills, and we cleared the snow from the pond ourselves. Every summer, for twenty years, the family of my sister, T. A. Kuzminskii, came to Yasnaya Polyana, and our life was so merry that the summer with us was a continuous holiday. There were various games like croquet and tennis, amateur theatricals, and other amusements like bathing, gathering mushrooms, boating, and driving, and besides these, the summer was devoted to music, and concerts arranged by the children and grown-ups, with piano, violin, and singing.

One summer all the young people worked on the land, and with Leo Nikolaevich gathered in the crops for the poor peasant women. Already at the same time, i. e. at the end of the 'seventies and beginning of the 'eighties, he felt in him that inner crisis, that desire for a different, more simple and spiritual, life which never left him until the end of his life. But there also came an end to the undisturbed happiness with which we had lived so many years. At the beginning of his spiritual crisis Leo Nikolaevich, as is well known, gave himself ardently to the orthodox faith and church. He saw himself united in it with the people. But gradually he left it, as his later writings show. It is difficult to trace the steps of this crisis in Leo Nikolaevich, and when it was exactly that I, with my intensely hardworking life and maternity, could no longer live so completely in my husband's intellectual interests, and he began to go further and further away from family life. We had already nine children, and the older they grew, the more complicated became the problem of their education and our relations to them. But their father was withdrawing himself more and more from them, and at last he refused altogether to have anything to do with the education of his children, on the plea that they were being taught according to principles and a religion which he considered harmful for them.

I was too weak to be able to solve the dilemma, and I was often driven to despair; I became ill, but saw no way out. What could be done? Go back to the country and give up everything? But Leo Nikolaevich did not seem to want that either. Against my will he bought a house in Moscow, and thus seemed to fix our life in the town.

The difference between my husband and myself came about, not because I in my heart went away from him. I and my life remained the same as before. It was he who went away, not in his everyday life, but in his writings and his teachings as to how people should live. I felt myself unable to follow his teachings myself. But our personal relations were unaltered: we loved each other just as much, we found it just as difficult to be parted even temporarily, and, as an old and respected friend of our family expressed it in a letter to me: "Not a jot could be added to or taken from either of you without disturbing the wonderful harmony of your private spiritual life in the midst of the multitude of people surrounding you..."

Only rarely was our happiness clouded and the harmony broken by flashes of mutual jealousy, which had no ground at all. We were both hot-tempered and passionate; we could not bear the thought that anyone should alienate us. It was just this jealousy which woke up in me with terrible force when, towards the end of our life, I realized that my husband's soul, which had been open to me for so many years, had suddenly been closed to me irrevocably and without cause, while it was opened to an outsider, a stranger.

## Chapter 6

IN four years we had suffered five losses in the family. The two aunts died, in 1874 Tatyana Alexandrovna Ergolskii, and in 1875 Pelageya Ilinishna Yushkov. Also three of our young children died; I caught whooping-cough from them, and at the same time became ill with peritonitis which brought on child-birth prematurely and I was on the point of death.

Whether these events influenced Leo Nikolaevich or whether there were other causes, his discontent with life and his seeking for truth became acute. Everyone knows from his Confession and other works that he even contemplated hanging himself, when he did not find satisfaction in his seeking. I could not feel as happy as before, when my husband, though without saying it frankly, threatened to take his life, as later he threatened to go away from his family. It was difficult for me to discover the causes of his despair or to induce myself to believe in them. Our family lived its normal, good life, but it no longer satisfied him; he was looking for the meaning of life in something different; he was seeking for belief in God, he always shuddered at the thought of death, and he could not find that which might comfort him and reconcile him with it. At one time he would speak to Count Bobrinsky of the teaching of Radstock, at another to Prince S. S. Urusov of the orthodox faith and church, at another with pilgrims and sectaries, and later with bishops, monks, and priests. But nobody and nothing satisfied

Leo Nikolaevich or put his mind at rest. A spirit which rejected the existing religions, the progress, science, art, family, everything which mankind had evolved in centuries, had been growing stronger and stronger in Leo Nikolaevich, and he was becoming gloomier and gloomier. It was as though his inner eye was turned only to evil and suffering, as though all that was joyful, beautiful, and good had disappeared. I did not know how to live with such views; I was alarmed, frightened, grieved. But with nine children I could not, like a weather-cock, turn in the ever changing direction of my husband's spiritual going away. With him it was a passionate, sincere seeking; with me it would have been a silly imitation, positively harmful to the family. Besides, in my innermost heart and beliefs I did not wish to leave the church to which from my childhood I had always turned in prayer. Leo Nikolaevich was himself for nearly two years at the beginning of his seeking extremely orthodox and observed all rituals and feasts. At the time the family also followed his example. When exactly we parted from him and over what, I do not know, I cannot remember.

Leo Nikolaevich's denial of the church and orthodoxy had a sharp contrast in his recognition of the efficacy and wisdom of Christ's teaching, which he considered incompatible with the doctrine of the church. Personally I could have no difference with him regarding the Gospel, since I considered the Gospel to be the foundation of the orthodox faith. When he accepted Christ's teaching and tried to live in accordance with the Gospel, Leo Nikolaevich began to suffer through our apparently luxurious mode of life, which I could not alter. I simply did not understand why I should alter it, nor could I alter conditions which had not been created by ourselves. If I had given away all my fortune at my husband's desire (I don't know to whom), if I had been left in poverty with nine children, I should have had to work for the family — to feed, do the sewing for, wash, bring up my children without education. Leo Nikolaevich, by vocation and inclination, could have done nothing else but write. He was always rushing off from Moscow to Yasnaya Polyana; he lived alone there, read, wrote, and thought out his work. I bore these partings from him with difficulty, but I considered them necessary for my husband's intellectual work and peace of mind.

In my turn, as I grew older, the external and internal complexity of life made me look seriously into its demands, and again, as in my early youth, I turned to philosophy, to the wisdom of the thinkers who had preceded us. At that time, about 1881 or 1882, Prince Leonid Dmitrievich Urusov, an intimate friend who often visited us and who was Deputy Governor of the Tula Province, translated into Russian *The Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius and brought us the book to read. The thoughts of that royal sage produced a great impression on me. Later Prince Urusov gave me the works of Seneca in a French translation. The brilliant style and richness of thought in that philosopher so attracted me that I read his works through twice. I then read in succession various philosophers, buying their books and copying out the ideas and sayings which struck me. I remember how impressed I was by Epictetus's thoughts on death. I found Spinoza very difficult to understand, but I became interested in his *Ethics* and especially in his explanation of the conception of God. Socrates, Plato, and other philosophers,

but particularly the Greeks, enchanted me, and I can say that these sages helped me greatly to live and to think. Later on I also tried to read modern philosophers; I read Schopenhauer and others, but I much preferred the ancients. Of Leo Nikolaevich's philosophical works I liked and understood best his book *On Life*, and I translated it into French with the assistance of M. Tastevin. I worked hard at that translation, being particularly ill at the time and expecting the birth of our last child, Vanichka. While working conscientiously at the translation, I often went for advice to my husband and to the philosophers, N. Y. Grot and V. S. Solovev.

I always very much liked writing of whatever kind. When Leo Nikolaevich was writing his *A. B. C. and Four Reading-Books*, he used to intrust to me the work of making up sentences and of re-telling and translating them so as to adapt them to the Russian language and customs. I also wrote the small story *Sparrows* and others.

On the appearance of *Kreutzer Sonata*, which I never liked, I wrote a story from the woman's point of view, but I did not publish it. Later on I wrote a tale, *A Song without Words*. I got the idea for it by seeing girls at a concert behave strangely to a famous pianist. They kissed his goloshes, tore his handkerchief to pieces and altogether acted as if they were mad. What has music to do with all that? I wanted to convey the idea that our attitude towards art, as towards nature, must be chaste, i. e. pure, without any mixture of base human passions.

When I taught the children, I wrote a Russian grammar from which they quickly learnt to write correctly. Unfortunately the Russian teacher, who much approved of my work, lost it.

I used to invent stories to tell to my children, and I wrote some of them down and later published them with illustrations. In the first story, *Skeleton Aurelias*, I used an idea of Leo Nikolaevich's. He began to write the story, but the beginning was lost. Whether it was lost with his suit-case, or whether it was carried off with the other MSS., I do not know.

I always regarded my literary work with a certain contempt and irony, considering it in the nature of a joke. For instance, after reading various writings of the decadents, I tried to imitate them, and, for a joke, wrote prose poems under the title *Groans*. They were published, without my name, and without the author being known, in the *Journal Dlya Vsvekh* for March, 1904.

I remember two others of my writings, translations which Leo Nikolaevich commissioned me to do. One was from the German, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, which he afterwards corrected himself, and the other from English, *On the Sect of the Bahaists*.

I also published various articles in newspapers. The most important were: my appeal for funds for the famine-stricken on 3 November, 1891; my letter to the Metropolitans and Synod on Leo Nikolaevich's excommunication, which had deeply revolted and pained me. I also published an article, *A Recollection of Turgenev*, in the *Orlovskii Vyestnik*, a critical article on Andreyev, and others.

If I ever wrote anything of value, it was the seven thick note-books, under the title *My Life*. In them I described all my long life up to 1897. When after the death of Leo Nikolaevich I was, quite illegally, forbidden access to the Historical Museum, where I had placed for safe keeping all my husband's papers, diaries, letters, note-books, as well as my own, I could not continue my work without materials, and three years of my life, which was drawing to a close, were lost to the work. And who knows better than I the life of Leo Nikolaevich? It was I myself who in 1894 placed those documents first in the Rumyantsev Museum, and later during its repair transferred them to the Historical Museum, where they now lie awaiting the verdict as to their fate from the courts of law.

## Chapter 7

IN the summer of 1884 Leo Nikolaevich worked a great deal on the land; for whole days he mowed with the peasants, and when tired out he came home in the evenings, he used to sit gloomy and discontented with the life lived by the family. That life was in discordance with his teaching, and this tormented and pained him. At one time he thought of taking a Russian peasant woman, a worker on the land, and of secretly going away with the peasants to start a new life; he confessed this to me himself. At last, on 17 June, after a little quarrel with me about the horses, he took a sack with a few things on his shoulder and left the house, saying that he was going away for ever, perhaps to America, and that he would never come back. At the time I was beginning to feel the pains of childbirth. My husband's behaviour drove me to despair, and the two pains, of the body and of the heart, were unendurable. I prayed to God for death. At four o'clock in the morning Leo Nikolaevich came back, and, without coming to me, lay down on the couch downstairs in his study. In spite of my cruel pains I ran down to him; he was gloomy and said nothing to me. At seven o'clock that morning our daughter Alexandra was born. I could never forget that terrible, bright June night.

Once more in 1897 Leo Nikolaevich had the desire to go away; but no one knew of it. He wrote me a letter which, at his desire, was handed over to me only after his death. But that time also he did not go away.

In the autumn of that year Leo Nikolaevich gave me a power-of-attorney to manage all his affairs, including the publication of his works. Inexperienced and without a farthing, I energetically began to learn the business of publishing books, and then of selling and subscribing L. N. Tolstoy's works. I had to manage the estates and in general all his affairs. How difficult it was, with a large family and with no experience! I had more than once to appeal to the censor, and for that purpose I had to go to Petersburg.

Once Leo Nikolaevich called me into his study and asked me to take over in full ownership all his property, including his copyrights. I asked him what need there was for that, since we were so intimate and had children in common. He replied that he



considered property an evil and that he did not wish to own it. "So you wish to hand over that evil to me, the creature nearest to you," I said, in tears; "I do not want it and I shall take nothing." So I did not take my husband's property, but I managed his affairs under the power-of-attorney, and it was only some years afterwards that I agreed to a general division of the property, and the father himself apportioned the shares to each of the children and to myself. He renounced altogether the copyright of his books written after 1881. But he retained until the end of his life the copyright of the previous books. The division was completed in 1891, and Yasnaya Polyana was given to our youngest son, Vanichka, and to myself.

In the same year 1891 an important event happened to me. I went to Petersburg to petition the authorities to remove the ban on the thirteenth volume of L. N. Tolstoy's works, which contained *Kreutzer Sonata*. I made an application to the Emperor Alexander III. He graciously received me, and, after I had left, he ordered the ban on the forbidden book to be removed, although he expressed a desire that *Kreutzer Sonata* should not be sold as a separate volume. But some one secretly published the story, and envious persons calumniated me by telling the Tsar that I had disobeyed his will. The Sovereign was, naturally, highly displeased, and, as Countess A. A. Tolstoy told me he said: "If I was mistaken in that woman, then there are no truthful people in the world." I got to know about this too late to clear up the matter, and I was deeply grieved, the more so because the Tsar died that autumn without ever knowing the truth.

## Chapter 8

THE year 1891 and the two following years were memorable for us because of the assistance given by the family to the famine-stricken Russian people. Distressed by the news which we received about the calamity, I decided to publish in the newspapers an appeal for subscriptions. What a joy to me was the ardent sympathy of the good people who sent generous donations, often accompanied by moving letters! The four younger children remained with me in Moscow. It was extraordinarily difficult for me to part from my husband and the elder children who were exposing themselves to many dangers. My only comfort was that I, too, was taking part in the good work. I bought trucks of corn, beans, onions, cabbage, everything needed for the feeding centres where the famine-stricken poor from the villages were fed. To pay for this I received money which was sent to me in considerable sums. From the material sent to me by textile manufacturers I had under-clothing made by poor women for small wages, and I sent it to the places where it was needed most, chiefly for those suffering from typhoid.

It might have been thought that this work would have satisfied Leo Nikolaevich. And at first it did, but he became disappointed with this too, and he began again to dream of a great act of renunciation, as he expressed it in his diary. He was annoyed with the family, though he did love us. He was often angry with me. We were what stood in the

way of his carrying out his dream of a free, new life, of an act of renunciation. At times he would soften, and he wrote, for instance in his diary: "It is good to be with Sonya. Yesterday I thought, as I saw her with Andryusha and Misha, what a wonderful wife and mother she is in one sense." Remarks like that, when they were made directly to me, comforted me; but, on the other hand, his obstinate rejection of all our method of life pained and tormented me.

The famine relief work nearly cost my son Leo his life; he was at the time a young undergraduate and worked on his own account on famine relief in the Samara Province. His health, especially after an attack of typhus, broke down completely, and for a long time afterwards I suffered to see him sinking. But he recovered after being ill for two years. In 1895 our youngest son, Vanichka, died; he was seven years old, a general favourite, extraordinarily like his father, a clever, sensitive child, not long for this earth, as people say of such children. This was the greatest sorrow of my life, and for long I could find neither peace nor comfort. At first I spent whole days in churches and cathedrals; I also prayed at home and walked in my garden, where I remembered the dear little slim figure of my boy. "Where are you, where are you, Vanichka?" I used often to cry, not believing in my loss. At last, after having spent nine hours one day in the Archangel Cathedral — it was a fast-day — I was walking home and got soaked in a violent storm of rain. I became very ill and my life was despaired of, but on Easter night at the ringing of the bells I came to myself and reëntered upon my sorrowful existence. Everybody about me, and particularly my husband and two eldest daughters, looked after me with extraordinary goodness and tenderness. This gladdened and comforted me.

In the spring my sister, T. A. Kuzminskii, arrived and took me off with her to Kiev, and that disposed me still more to religion and made a strong impression on me. My depression and loss of interest in everything continued during the summer, and it was only by chance and quite unexpectedly that my state of mind was changed — by music. That summer there was staying with us a well-known composer and superb pianist. In the evenings he used to play chess with Leo Nikolaevich, and afterwards, at the request of all of us, he often played the piano. Listening to the wonderful music of Beethoven, Mozart, Chopin, and others, superbly executed, I forgot for a time my sharp sorrow, and I used morbidly to look forward to the evening, when I should again hear that wonderful music.

Thus the summer passed, and in the autumn I engaged a music mistress and, at the age of fifty-two, began again to practise and learn to play. As time went on, I made little progress. But I went to concerts, and music saved me from despair. Leo Nikolaevich wrote somewhere about music: "Music is a sensual pleasure of hearing, just as taste is a sensual pleasure. I agree that it is less sensual than taste, but there is no moral sense in it." I could never share this view. He himself often cried, when his favourite pieces were played. Does the pleasure of taste make one cry? Music always acted upon me like something soothing and elevating. All the petty, everyday troubles lost their meaning. When I heard the Chopin sonata with the funeral march or certain

Beethoven sonatas, I often had the desire to pray, to forgive, to love, and to think of the infinite, spiritual, mysterious, and beautiful, just as the sounds themselves do not say anything definite, but make one think, dream, and rejoice vaguely and beautifully.

## Chapter 9

IN August, 1896, Leo Nikolaevich suggested that I should go with him and his sister, Marie Nikolaevna, to the monastery near Shamardin. From there we went to the Optina Monastery, where I fasted. While I confessed, Leo Nikolaevich walked round the cell of the venerable monk, Father Gerasim, but he did not come in.

After Vanichka's death our family life was no longer happy. Gradually the other children married and the house became empty. The parting with our daughter was especially hard. Leo Nikolaevich's health began to be bad, and in September, 1901, the doctors after a consultation ordered him off to the south, to the Crimea. Countess Panin kindly lent us her magnificent house in Gaspra, where our whole family spent nearly ten months. Leo Nikolaevich's health not only did not improve, it grew worse. He was ill in Gaspra from one infectious disease after another, and it is with pain in my heart that I remember how I used to sit at night by my husband's bed during nearly the whole of those ten months. We took it in turns to sit by him, I, my daughters, the doctors, friends, and above all my son, Serge. How much I used to go through and think over during those nights!

We did not go back again to our life in Moscow, and the doctors and I decided that it was best for Leo Nikolaevich to live in Yasnaya Polyana, where he was born and bred.

After making up our minds on our return from the Crimea to remain in the country, during the following years we lived quietly and peacefully, all occupied with our own work. I worked hard at writing my memoirs, under the title *My Life*; I often went to Moscow on business in connection with Leo Nikolaevich's publications, and then every day in the morning I used to sit in the Historical Museum, copying from the diaries, letters, and note-books the material which I wanted for my work. It gave me great pleasure, that work upstairs in the tower of the museum, in complete solitude, surrounded by such interesting papers. I did not arrange the MSS., thinking that I might leave that for others, and considering it more useful to write my reminiscences, as I did not anticipate a long life or that my memory would remain fresh.

Moreover by mere accident I took to painting passionately, for it always attracted me. In Petersburg in the Tauric Palace a very good and interesting exhibition of old and modern portraits was opened, and we were asked to lend all our family portraits from Yasnaya Polyana. It seemed to me most unpleasant to have the walls of the drawing-room bare, and with my usual boldness I began copying the portraits before they were removed. I had never studied painting, but I loved it, like all the arts, and I was terribly excited and worked for whole days, and often the nights as well. As formerly with music,

I was completely carried away by painting. Leo Nikolaevich laughingly said that I had caught a disease called “portraitis,” and that he was afraid for my sanity. The most successful of my attempts was a copy of Leo Nikolaevich’s portrait by Kramskoi. Later I tried to paint landscapes and flowers from nature, but extreme short-sightedness put me at a great disadvantage, and I was dissatisfied with my want of skill. But I do not regret that I took up music and painting, however unskilfully, towards the end of my life. One only thoroughly understands any art when one practises it, however badly.

My last attempts were water-colour paintings of all the Yasnaya Polyana flora and of all the fungi of the Yasnaya Polyana woods.

## Chapter 10

IN 1904 I had to endure the pain of my son, Andrey, leaving to fight in the war against Japan. In my heart I was opposed to war as to any other kind of murder, and it was with a peculiar pain in my heart that I saw my son off at Tambov and with other mothers looked at the carriages full of soldiers — our sons doomed to death.

A happy event for our family in 1905 was the birth of an only child to our daughter, Tatyana Lvovna Sukhotin. This granddaughter, as she grew up, was a favourite of Leo Nikolaevich and of the whole family.

In 1906 I underwent a serious operation, performed by Professor V. F. Snegirev in Yasnaya Polyana. How quietly I prepared myself for death, how happy I felt, when the servants, saying good-bye to me, cried bitterly! I felt a strange sensation, when I fell asleep under the anaesthetic which was given to me: it was new and significant. All external life in its complicated setting, especially of towns, flashed before my inner vision like a quickly changing panorama. And how insignificant human vanity appeared to me! I seemed to be asking myself: what, then, is important? One thing: if God has sent us on to the earth and we are to live, then the most important thing is to help one another in whatever way possible. To help one another to live. I think the same now.

The operation was quite successful, but it seemed as though the will of fate, having aimed at taking my life, wavered and then removed its hand to our daughter Masha. I recovered, and that lovely, unselfish, spiritual creature, Masha, died of pneumonia in our house two and a half months after my operation. This sorrow was a heavy weight on our life and aging hearts. The previous rift, the reproaches and unpleasantness ceased for a while and we humbled ourselves before fate. The time passed in our usual occupations, and Leo Nikolaevich, as a distraction, played cards with his children and friends; he was very fond of whist. In the mornings he wrote, and every afternoon he rode; he lived the most quiet and regular life. He was, however, often worried by visitors who tired him, by applicants, and by letters in which people disagreed with his teaching and reproached him with his way of life, or asked him for money or to get them jobs.

These reproaches and the interference of outsiders in our peaceful family life ruined it. Even before this the influence of outside people was creeping in and towards the end of Leo Nikolaevich's life it assumed terrifying dimensions. For instance, these outsiders frightened Leo Nikolaevich with the prediction that the Russian Government would send the police and seize all his papers. On that pretext they were removed from Yasnaya Polyana, and, therefore, Leo Nikolaevich could no longer work at them, as he had not the whole material. Eventually with difficulty I succeeded in getting back seven thick note-books containing my husband's diaries which are now in the possession of our daughter Alexandra; but the affair led to strained relations with the man who had them in his keeping and he ceased his daily visits.

## Chapter 11

IN 1895 Leo Nikolaevich wrote a letter in which, as a request to his heirs, he expressed the desire that the copyright in his works should be made public property, and in which he entrusted the examination of his MSS. after his death to Nikolai Nikolaevich Strakhov, to Chertkov, and to me. The letter was in the keeping of my daughter Masha and was destroyed, and in its place in September, 1909, a will was made at Chertkov's house in Krekshino not far from Moscow, where Leo Nikolaevich and several other persons were staying at the time. The will turned out to have been drawn incorrectly and to be invalid, a fact which the "friends" soon found out.

Our journey home from Krekshino through Moscow was terrible. One of the intimates had informed the press that on such and such a day at a certain hour Tolstoy would be at the Kursk Station. Several thousands of people came there to see us off. At moments it seemed to me, as I walked arm in arm with my husband and limped on my bad leg, that I should be choked, fall down, and die. In spite of the fresh, autumnal air, we were enveloped in a hot, thick atmosphere.

This had a very serious effect upon Leo Nikolaevich's health. Just after the train had passed Schekino station, he began to talk deliriously and lost all consciousness of his surroundings. A few minutes after our arrival at home he had a prolonged fainting fit and this was followed by a second. Luckily there was a doctor in the house. After this I suffered more and more from a painful, nervous excitement: day and night I watched my husband to see when he would go for a ride or a walk by himself, and I awaited his return anxiously, for I was afraid that he might have another fainting fit or simply fall down somewhere where it would be difficult to find him.

Owing to these agitations and to the difficult and responsible work connected with L. N. Tolstoy's publications, I continually grew more nervous and worried, and my health broke down completely. I lost my mental balance, and, owing to this, I had a bad effect upon my husband. At the same time Leo Nikolaevich began continually to threaten to leave the house and his "intimate" friend carefully prepared, together, with

the lawyer M., a new and correct will which was copied by Leo Nikolaevich himself on the stump of a tree in the forest on 23 July, 1910.

This was the will which was proved after his death.

In his diary he wrote at the time, among other things: "I very clearly see my mistake; I ought to have called together all my heirs and told them my intention; I ought not to have kept it secret. I wrote this to — , but he was very annoyed— "

On 5 August he writes of me:

"It is painful the constant secrecy and fear for her..."

On 10 August he writes:

"It is good to feel oneself guilty, as I do..." And again: "My relations with all of them are difficult; I cannot help desiring death..."

Clearly the pressure brought to bear upon him tormented him. One of his friends, P. I. B..V, was of opinion that no secret should be made of the will, and he told Leo Nikolaevich so. At first he agreed with the opinion of this true friend, but he went away and Leo Nikolaevich submitted to another influence though at times he was obviously oppressed by it. I was powerless to save him from that influence, and for Leo Nikolaevich and myself there began a terrible period of painful struggle which made me still more ill. The sufferings of my hot and harassed heart clouded my reasoning powers, while Leo Nikolaevich's friends worked continually, deliberately, subtly upon the mind of an old man whose memory and powers were growing feeble. They created around him who was dear to me an atmosphere of conspiracy, of letters received secretly, letters and articles sent back after they had been read, mysterious meetings in forests for the performance of acts essentially disgusting to Leo Nikolaevich; after their performance he could no longer look me or my sons straight in the face, for he had never before concealed anything from us; it was the first secret in our life and it was intolerable to him. When I guessed it and asked whether a will was not being made, and why it was concealed from me, I was answered by a "no" or by silence. I believed that it was not a will. It meant, therefore, that there was some other secret of which I knew nothing, and I was in despair with the perpetual feeling that my husband was being carefully set against me and that a terrible and fatal ending was in front of us. Leo Nikolaevich's threats to leave the house became more and more frequent, and this threat added to my torment and increased my nervousness and ill-health.

I shall not describe in detail Leo Nikolaevich's going away. So much has been and will be written about it, but no one will know the real cause. Let his biographers try to find out.

When I read in the letter which Leo Nikolaevich sent me through our daughter Alexandra that he had gone away finally and for ever, I felt and clearly understood that without him — and especially after all that had happened — life would be utterly impossible, and instantly I made up my mind to put an end to all my sufferings by throwing myself into the pond in which some time before a girl and her little brother had been drowned. But I was rescued, and, when Leo Nikolaevich was told of it, he

wept bitterly, as his sister, Marie Nikolaevna, wrote to me, but he could not get himself to return.

After Leo Nikolaevich's going away an article appeared in the newspapers expressing the joy of one of his most "intimate" friends at the event.

## Chapter 12

ALL my children came to Yasnaya Polyana and called in a specialist on nervous diseases and had a nurse to be with me. For five days I ate nothing and did not take a drop of water.

I felt no hunger, but my thirst was acute. In the evening of the fifth day my daughter Tanya persuaded me to drink a cup of coffee, by saying that, if father summoned me, I would be so weak that I should be unable to go.

Next morning we received a telegram from the newspaper *Russkoye Slovo* that Leo Nikolaevich had fallen ill at Astapovo and that his temperature was 104. The "intimate" friend had received a telegram before this and had already left, carefully concealing from his family the place where the patient was lying. We took a special train at Tula and went to Astapovo. Our son Serge on his way to his estate had been overtaken by a telegram from his wife who had sent it at our daughter Alexandra's request, and he was already with his father.

This was the beginning of new and cruel sufferings for me. Round my husband was a crowd of strangers and outsiders, and I, his wife who had lived with him for forty-eight years, was not admitted to see him. The door of the room was locked, and, when I wanted to get a glimpse of my husband through the window, a curtain was drawn across it. Two nurses who were told off to look after me held me firmly by the arms and did not allow me to move. Meanwhile Leo Nikolaevich called our daughter Tanya to him and began asking all about me, believing me to be in Yasnaya Polyana. At every question he cried, and our daughter said to him: "Don't let us talk about mama, it agitates you too much." "Ah, no," he said, "that is more important to me than anything." He also said to her, but already indistinctly: "A great deal of trouble is falling upon Sonya; we have managed it badly."

No one ever told him that I had come, though I implored every one to do so. It is difficult to say who was responsible for this cruelty. Every one was afraid of accelerating his death by agitating him; that was also the doctors' opinion. Who can tell? Perhaps our meeting and my ways of looking after him to which he was accustomed, might have revived him. In one of his letters to me, which I have recently published, Leo Nikolaevich writes that he dreads falling ill without me.

The doctors allowed me to see my husband when he was now hardly breathing, lying motionless on his back, with his eyes already closed. I whispered softly some tender words in his ear, hoping that he might still hear how I had been all the time there in Astapovo and how I loved him to the end. I don't remember what more I said to him,

but two deep sighs, as though the result of a terrible effort, came as an answer to my words, and then all was still...

All the days and nights that followed, until his body was removed, I spent by the dead, and in me too life became cold. The body was taken to Yasnaya Polyana; a multitude of people came there, but I saw and recognized no one, and the day after the funeral I collapsed with the same illness, pneumonia, though in a less dangerous form, and I was in bed for eighteen days.

A great comfort to me at the time was the presence of my sister Tatyana Andreevna Kuzminskii, and of Leo Nikolaevich's cousin, Varvara Valeryanovna Nagornaya. My children, tired out, returned to their families.

## Chapter 13

AND then there began my lonely life in Yasnaya Polyana, and the energy which I used to spend on life was and is directed only to this, that I may endure my sorrowful existence worthily and with submission to the will of God. I try to occupy myself only with what in some way or another concerns the memory of Leo Nikolaevich.

I live in Yasnaya Polyana keeping the house and its surroundings as they were when Leo Nikolaevich was alive, and looking after his grave. I have kept for myself two hundred desyatins of land with the apple orchard and the plantations, the making of which had given us such pleasure. The greater part of the land (475 desyatins), with the fine, carefully preserved woods, I sold to my daughter Alexandra to be transferred to the peasants.

I also sold my Moscow house to the municipality, and I sold the last edition of the works of Leo Tolstoy, and gave all the proceeds to my children. But they, and particularly the grandchildren, are so numerous! Including the daughters-in-law and myself, we are now a family of thirty-eight, and my help was, therefore, far from satisfactory.

I always feel in my heart profound gratitude to the Sovereign Emperor for granting me a pension, which allows me to live in security and to keep the manor of Yasnaya Polyana.

Three years have now passed. I look sadly on the havoc in Yasnaya Polyana, how the trees which we planted are being cut down, how the beauty of the place is gradually being spoiled, now that everything has been handed over to the timber-merchants and peasants who frequently have painful quarrels, now about the land and now about the woods. And what is going to happen to the manor and the house after my death?

Almost daily I visit the grave; I thank God for the happiness granted to me in early life, and as to the last troubles between us, I look upon them as a trial and a redemption of sin before death. Thy will be done.

Countess Sophie Tolstoy.

October 28, 1913.



## Notes

. In The Book of Genealogies of the Nobility of the Moscow Government, Vol. I, page 122, it is said of S. A. T.'s father: "Andrey Evstafevich, son of a chemist, born 9 April, 1808, a physician on the staff of the Moscow Palace Control, collegiate assessor 1842, State Councillor 1864."

. This was the former name of the Commandant's Board.

. Alexander Alexandrovich Bers, first cousin of S. A. T.

. Born 3 December, 1789, died 25 March, 1855. Buried in Petersburg in the Volkov Lutheran Cemetery. Peterburgskii Necropol, Petersburg, 1912, Vol. I, page 204.

. In The Book of Genealogies of the Nobility of the Moscow Government, Vol. I, page 122, the Bers are included under Section III, i. e. among those families which were promoted to the title of nobility through the civil service. The year of their promotion was 1843. The right to the coat-of-arms was granted by Supreme Order to the father of S. A. T. in 1847. See V. Lukomskii and S. Troinizkii, List of persons to whom has been granted by H. I. M. the right to coats-of-arms and the title of nobility of the All-Russian Empire and of the Kingdom of Poland, Petersburg, 1911, page 14.

. Alexander Evstafevich Bers, born 18 February, 1807, died 6 September, 1871. See Peterburgskii Necropol, Vol. I, page 204; also V. Lukomskii and S. Troinizkii, page 14.

. In the Tula Province, twenty-five versts from Yasnaya Polyana.

. A. M. Islenov, born 16 July, 1794, died 23 April, 1882. Leo Tolstoy, who knew him well, described him as the father in Childhood Boyhood and Youth. See P. Sergeenko, From the Life of L. N. Tolstoy and How Count L. N. Tolstoy Lives and Works, Moscow, 1898, page 40.

. The well-known Vladimir Alexandrovich Islavin, State Councillor, born 29 November, 1818, died 27 May, 1895, author of the The Samoyeds, their Domestic and Social Life, Petersburg, 1847, which at the time was much discussed in newspapers and magazines. See V. I. Maezkov's Systematic Catalogue of Russian Books, A. F. Basunov, Petersburg, 1869, page 404.

. There were five sons and three daughters, The Book of Genealogies, Vol. I, pages 122 and 123. The best known of these, besides Sophie Andreevna, were: Tatyana Andreevna (by marriage Kuzminskii) born 24 October 1846, the author of My Reminiscences of Countess Marie Nikolaevna Tolstoy, Petersburg, 1914; Stepan Andreevich Bers, born 21 July 1855, author of Reminiscences of L. N. Tolstoy, Smolensk, 1894; Peter Andreevich Bers, born 26 August 1849, died 19 May 1910, the editor of Detskyii Otdikh (1881-1882), and co-editor with L. D. Obolenskii of the collection of Stories for Children by I. S. Turgenev and L. N. Tolstoy, 1883 and 1886; Vacheslav Andreevich Bers, born 3 May 1861, died 19 May, 1907, an engineer who was killed for no obvious reason by workmen during the revolutionary days in Petersburg. Leo N. Tolstoy was

very fond of him. See P. Biryukov, How L. N. T. Composed the Popular Calendar, 1911.

. A. Y. Davidov, 1823-1885, professor of mathematics in the University of Moscow, author of popular text-books on algebra and geometry.

. N. A. Sergievskii, 1827-1892, a writer on theology, author of many scholarly theological books, founder and editor of *The Orthodox Review*, professor of theology in the University of Moscow.

. In the *Natasha of War and Peace* there are many characteristics of S. A. T. and of her sister, Tatyana Andreevna Kuzminskii. According to S. A. T., Leo Nikolaevich made the following remark about his heroine: "I took Tanya, ground her up with Sonya, and there came out Natasha." See P. Biryukov, *Biography of L. N. T.*, Vol. II, page 32.

. In S. A. T.'s story *Natasha* L. N. T. recognized himself in the hero, Dublitskii, and he wrote to her in September, 1862: "I am Dublitskii, but to marry merely because I needed a wife — that I could not do. I demand something tremendous, impossible from marriage; I demand that I should be loved as much as I am able to love." L. N. T. doubted whether a woman could fall in love with him deeply and completely, as he was not good-looking. On 28 August, 1862, he put down in his diary: "I got up in the usual despondency. I thought out a society for apprentices. A sweet, placid night. Ugly face, don't think of marriage, your vocation is different and much has been given you instead." L. N. T.'s *Letters to his Wife*, edited by A. E. Gruzinskii, 1913. P. Biryukov, *Biography of L. N. T.*, Vol. I, page 471.

. M. N. Tolstoi, 7 March, 1830 — 6 April, 1912, sister of L. N. T. In the 'sixties she went abroad with her brother Nikolai and lived with him at Hyères in the South of France. After her brother's death, M. N. T., overcome with grief, did not wish to return to Russia and settled for a short time in Algiers. She returned from there in 1862 and visited Yasnaya Polyana for a short time and met S. A. T. and her mother there. See T. A. Kuzminskii, *My Reminiscences of Marie N. Tolstoy*, Petersburg, 1914. P. Biryukov, Countess Marie N. Tolstoy, in "*Russkaya Vedomostii*," 1912, Moscow. A. Khiryakov, L. N. Tolstoy's Sister, in "*Solitse Rossii*," 1912. S. Tolstoy, To the Portrait of Countess Marie N. Tolstoy in *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, 1912. L. N. Tolstoy's *Letters to Marie N. Tolstoy* in *New Collection of Letters of L. N. Tolstoy*, collected by P. A. Sergeenko, edited by A. E. Gruzinskii, Moscow, 1912, and *Complete works of L. N. Tolstoy*, Vols. XXI-XXIV, edited by P. I. Biryukov, Moscow, 1913.

. S. A. T. here leaves out some curious details. According to her own account, Leo Nikolaevich followed the Bers family, first to Ivitsa, Tula Province, fifty versts from Yasnaya Polyana, and then to Moscow. Leo Nikolaevich's proposal to S. A. T., which was like Levin's to Kitty in *Anna Karenina*, took place at Ivitsa. See "The Marriage of L. N. Tolstoy," from the reminiscences of S. A. T. under the title "My Life," in *Russkoye Slovo*, 1912. Also P. Biryukov, *Biography of L. N. Tolstoy*, Vol. I, pages 464-473, and L. N. Tolstoy's *Letters to his Wife*, pages 1-3.

. The Bers family were convinced that L. N. T. was in love with Liza, the elder sister of S. A. T., and expected him to propose to her. This misunderstanding worried

L. N. T. as he said in his letter to S. A. T. See L. N. Tolstoy's Letters to his Wife, pages 1-3.

. Orekov, a serf of Yasnaya Polyana, L. N. T.'s inseparable companion during the war in Sevastopol, and later steward at Yasnaya Polyana. See I. Tolstoy, My Reminiscences, Moscow, 1914, pages 18, 22-23.

. T. A. Ergolskii, born 1795, died 20 June 1874, a remote relation brought up in the Tolstoy family, taught Marie, Leo and his brothers, who lost their mother at an early age. In Tolstoy's house she was called aunt. See Reminiscences of Childhood and L. N. T.'s Letters to T. A. Ergolskii; also L. N. Tolstoy's Letters, 1848-1910, collected and edited by P. A. Sergeenko, L. N. Tolstoy's Diary, Vol. I, 1847-1852, edited by V. G. Chertkov, Moscow, 1917.

. The beginning of Chapter II, ending with the words "and in copying out his writings," is incorporated literally by S. A. T. from the first MS. There is also written in pencil by her "This is new." The statement is not quite accurate. In the remainder of Chapter III, which is new, a small part of the original Chapter III, slightly altered, is incorporated. We shall quote this part in full:

"The first thing which I copied in my clumsy, but legible handwriting was Polikushka. For many, many years afterwards that work delighted me. I used to long for the evening when Leo N. would give me something newly written or corrected for me to copy.

"I was carried away by the newly created scenes and descriptions, and I tried to understand and watch the artistic development and growth of ideas and creative activity in my husband's works..."

. The beginning was published in two numbers of Russkii Vvestnik, 1865 and 1866, and under the title of The Year 1805 was later published in book form, Moscow, 1866. Tolstoy returned to the Decembrists when he had finished Anna Karenina, but was again disappointed. "My Decembrists are again God knows where; I don't even think of them," he wrote to Fet in April, 1879, (Fet, My Reminiscences, Vol. II, page 364). The first three chapters of the Decembrists were published in a miscellaneous volume called Twenty-five Years, 1859-1884, Petersburg, 1884. But towards the end of his life Tolstoy again became interested in the Decembrists and began to study the period, see A. B. Goldenweiser, Diary, Russkie Propilei. Vol. II, pages 271-272, Moscow, 1916.

. A. M. Zhemchuznikov and I. S. Aksakov visited Leo Nikolaevich in the middle of December, 1864, in Moscow at his father-in-law's house where he came to have his arm medically treated. It was then that he read to them some chapters from War and Peace. See L. N. Tolstoy's Letters to his Wife, page 41.

. There were a number of musical works which always made a deep impression upon Tolstoy. See list of musical works loved by L. N. Tolstoy, given by A. B. Goldenweiser, Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik, pages 158-160; also musical works loved by L. N. Tolstoy, in S. L. Tolstoy's Reminiscences.

. Countess A. A. Tolstoy reproached Leo Nikolaevich for his long silence in a letter of 1 May 1863. Leo Nikolaevich wrote a four page letter in reply, but did not send it; later in the autumn of 1863 he wrote another letter, which he sent. The quotation

referred to is, evidently, from the letter which was not sent, and which, as far as we know, has not appeared in print.

. This quotation from L. N. T.'s Diary is also given in Biryukov's Biography, but in somewhat different form. He also gives a detailed sketch of the work, which Tolstoy wrote in his diary; see Biryukov, Vol. II, pages 27-28.

. N. A. Lyubimov, 1830-1897, well-known professor of physics at the University of Moscow, a collaborator with Katkov and K. Leontev in editing the *Russkii Vvestnik* and *Moskovskaya Vedomosti*.

. Strakhov's articles on War and Peace were published in *Zarya*, 1869 and 1870, and in book form in 1871. His articles on Tolstoy and Turgenev appeared in book form under the title, *Critical Articles on I. S. Turgenev and L. N. Tolstoy*, second edition, 1887.

. Edmond About, 1828-1885, the French writer to whom Turgenev sent a copy of War and Peace, translated by Princess Paskevich, and a letter from which the above quotation is taken. M. About published the letter in *Le XIX e Siècle*, 23 January, 1880, under the title "Une Lettre de Tourguéneff."

. Vasilii Yakoblevich Mirovich, 1740-1764, a lieutenant in the Smolenskii infantry regiment, executed for his attempt to rescue Ivan Antonovich from prison. His story formed the plot of G. P. Danilevskii's novel *Mirovich* (Petersburg, 1886).

. From the sketch of the year 1831-2: "The guests were arriving at the country-house." See Pushkin, edited by S. A. Vengerov, Petersburg, 1910, Vol. IV, pages 255-258.

. In P. Biryukov's Biography, Vol. II, page 205, the words are given thus: "That is how one should begin. The reader is at once made to feel the interest of the plot. Another writer would begin to describe the guests, the rooms, but Pushkin goes straight to the point."

. This quotation is a combination of two passages from L. N. T.'s letter to Countess A. A. Tolstoy of December, 1874. In the beginning of this letter he says that he has written a letter to her, but has torn it up and is writing another. It is possible that S. A. T. is quoting from the original letter.

. Peter, eighteen months old, 18 November, 1873; Nikolai, two months old, February, 1875; and the daughter born prematurely, November, 1875.

. T. A. Ergolskii (see note 19), and Pelageya Ilinishna Yushkov, the sister of L. N. T.'s father, died 22, December, 1875. This death particularly affected Tolstoy. He wrote to Countess A. A. Tolstoy: "It is strange, but the death of this old woman of eighty affected me more than any other death... Not an hour passes without my thinking of her." *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. I, pages 262-3.

. From Fet's poem: "I repeated: 'When I will...'" Later Fet evidently re-wrote the poem; his last four lines are:

In my hand — what a marvel —  
Is your hand.  
And on the grass — two emeralds.  
Two glow-worms.

See A. A. Fet, *Complete Works*, Vol. I, page 427, Petersburg, 1912.

. Five poems are known to have been dedicated by Fet to S. A. Tolstoy, see *Complete Works*, Vol. I, pages 413, 414, and 449.

. A few months after his visit to Yasnaya Polyana Turgenev wrote to Fet: "I was very glad to make it up again with Tolstoy, and I spent three pleasant days with him; his whole family is very sympathetic and his wife is a darling." See Fet, *My Reminiscences*, Vol. II, page 355, Moscow, 1890.

. Wilkie Collins, 1824-1889; his novel *The Woman in White*, was translated into Russian under the same title, Petersburg, 1884.

. The house was bought in 1882 in the Khamovnicheskii Pereulok.

. An allusion to V. G. Chertkov who became acquainted with Tolstoy in 1883. See P. A. Boulanger, *Tolstoy and Chertkov*, Moscow, 1911; A. M. Khiryakov, "Who is Chertkov?" in *Kievskaya Starina*, 1910; P. Biryukov, *Biography*, Vol. II, pages 471-3, 479-480; V. Mikulich, *Shadows of the Past*, Petersburg, 1914; Ilya Tolstoy, *My Reminiscences*, pages 234-5, 247, 265, 269-275; Countess A. A. Tolstoy, "Reminiscences" in *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. I, pages 36-38.

. S. A. T. for a long time did not believe in the seriousness of Leo Nikolaevich's searchings, considering them a weakness, a disease due to over-work and the playing of a part. See Biryukov, *Biography*, pages 474-478; L. N. Tolstoy's *Letters to his Wife*, pages 196-8.

. A. P. Bobrinskii, Minister of Transport 1871-1874, and a disciple of Radstock; Tolstoy was struck by "the sincerity and warmth of his belief." See *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. I, pages 245, 265, 268, and 275.

. An English preacher who in the middle of the 'seventies lived in Petersburg and preached with success in aristocratic houses. A short, but good, description of Radstock is given by Countess A. A. Tolstoy, who knew him personally, in her letter to L. N. T. of 28 March, 1876, *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. I, pages 267-8.

. S. S. Urusov, 1827-1897, an intimate friend of Tolstoy ever since the Crimean War, a land-owner and a deeply religious man. Tolstoy corresponded with him and often stayed with him in his country-house at Spassko. Urusov translated into French Tolstoy's *In What do I Believe?*

. But Tolstoy did not recognize the Gospel which serves as the foundation of the orthodox faith, and he interpreted the Gospel in his own way. It is strange that S. A. T. did not realize this. In this respect Countess A. A. Tolstoy, who also differed from Leo Nikolaevich on religious questions and was deeply pained by the difference, was more understanding and consistent. She wrote of Tolstoy's Gospel: "Your crude denial and bold perversions of the divine book caused me extreme indignation. Sometimes I had to stop reading and throw the book on the floor." See *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. I, page 44.

. It is interesting to compare the autobiography of S. A. T. with Tolstoy's play *And Light Shines in Darkness*. In this Marie Ivanovna, a character taken from S. A. T., uses the family, children, house, and so on, as the chief arguments against the attempts of

Nikolai Ivanovich to arrange their life in accordance with his views. She says: "I have to bring them up, feed them, bear them... I don't sleep at nights, I nurse, I keep the whole house..." And the husband "wishes to give everything away... He wants me at my time of life to become a cook, washerwoman." See Act I, scenes xix and xx; Act II, scene ii.

. L. D. Urusov, died 6, October, 1885, a devoted friend and enthusiastic follower of Tolstoy. When he died in the Crimea, where he had gone with Tolstoy, Urusov, according to Countess A. A. Tolstoy, left to his son who was with him Tolstoy's letters, as the greatest treasures which he was leaving him. See *Tolstovskii Musei*, Vol. II; L. N. Tolstoy's Correspondence with N. N. Strakhov; L. N. Tolstoy's Letters to his Wife, pages 255-266.

. Tolstoy lost his suit-case, containing MSS., books, and proofs, in 1883 on his way to Yasnaya Polyana. Among the lost MSS. were several chapters of *In What do I Believe?* which Tolstoy had to rewrite. Biryukov, *Biography*, Vol. II, pages 457-8.

. Another allusion to Chertkov, who in the middle of the 'eighties began taking Tolstoy's MSS. to England.

. Tolstoy himself translated this work from the Greek, and twice wrote a preface to it, in 1885 and 1905. See L. N. Tolstoy's *Diary, 1895-1899*, edited by V. G. Chertkov, second edition, Moscow, 1916, page 46.

. As far as we know, this translation has not been published.

. Her letter to the Metropolitan Antonius of 26 February, 1901, copies of which were sent to the other Metropolitans and to the Attorney to the Synod. The letter and the answer of the Metropolitan Antonius were published in many newspapers.

. A short article in the form of a letter to the editor, on Leonid Andreyev on the appearance of Burenin's critical *Sketches* in *Novoe Vremya*, 1903. At the time it attracted great attention in the press owing to the exceptional bitterness with which S. A. T. attacked Andreyev and in general all modern novelists. She wrote: "One would like to continue M. Burenin's splendid article, adding ever more ideas of the same kind, raising higher and higher the standard for artistic purity and moral power in contemporary literature. Works of Messieurs Andreyevs ought not to be read, nor glorified, nor sold out, but the whole Russian public ought to rise in indignation against the dirt which in thousands of copies is being spread over Russia by a cheap journal and by repeated editions of publishers who encourage them. If Maxim Gorky, undoubtedly a clever and gifted writer from the people, introduces a good deal of cynicism and nakedness into the scenes in which he paints the life of a certain class, one always, nevertheless, feels in them a sincere sorrow for all the evil and suffering which is endured by the poor, ignorant, and drunken of fallen humanity. In the works of Maxim Gorky one can always dwell on some character or pathetic moment in which, one feels, the author, grieving for the fallen, has a clear knowledge of what is evil and what good, and he loves the good. But in Andreyev's stories one feels that he loves and takes delight in the baseness in the phenomena of vicious human life, and with that love of vice he infects the undeveloped, the reading public which, as M. Burenin says,

is untidy morally, and the young who cannot yet know life... The wretched new writers of contemporary fiction, like Andreyev, are only able to concentrate upon the dirty spots in the human fall and proclaim to the uneducated, the half-intelligent reading public, and invite them to examine deep into the decayed corpse of fallen humanity and to shut its eyes to the whole of God's spacious and beautiful world with its beauty of nature, with the greatness of art, with the high aspirations of human souls, with the religious and moral struggle and the great ideals of good..." *Novoe Vremya*, 1903.

. Three fragments of this have been published: "L. N. Tolstoy's Marriage" in *Russkoye Slovo*, 1912; "On the Drama, The Power of Darkness" in *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, 1912, pages 17-23; and "L. N. Tolstoy's Visits to the Optina Monastery" in *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, 1913, Part III, pages 3-7.

. The history of these MSS. has been discussed at great length in newspapers and magazines. The gist of the matter is as follows. By Tolstoy's will everything written by him up to the date of his death, "wherever it may be found and in whose possession," was to pass to his daughter Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy. She laid claim to the MSS. deposited in the Historical Museum. But S. A. T. opposed this, declaring that the MSS. had been given to her as a gift by Tolstoy, were her own property, and therefore could not be included in his will. The authorities of the Historical Museum refused both parties access to the MSS. until the question had been settled by a court. The history of the case is given in *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik* for 1913. Part V, pages 3-10, and in the journal *Dela i Dni*, 1921, pages 271-293, in which A. S. Nikolaev gave an account of the case, re Count L. N. Tolstoy's MSS.

. The letter of 8 July, 1897. On the envelope Tolstoy wrote: "Unless I direct otherwise, this letter shall after my death be handed over to Sophie Andreevna." The letter was entrusted to N. L. Obolenskii, Tolstoy's son-in-law. See L. N. Tolstoy's *Letters to his Wife*, pages 524-526.

. Tolstoy announced this in a letter to the editor of *Russkaya Vedomostii* which was published in the paper on 19 September, 1891. The letter is reprinted in the supplement to L. N. Tolstoy's *Diary, 1895-1899*, second edition, pages 241-242.

. The death of Vanichka was a terrible blow to Tolstoy who "loved him, as the youngest child, with all the force of an elderly parent's attachment." With him the last tie binding Tolstoy to his family was broken. Ilya Tolstoy was inclined to think that there was "a certain inner connection" between the child's death and Tolstoy's attempt to leave Yasnaya Polyana in 1897. See Ilya Tolstoy, *My Reminiscences*, pages 214-219.

. Sergei Ivanovich Taneev, 1856-1915, who for three years consecutively, 1894-6, came to stay in the summer with the Tolstoy's at Yasnaya Polyana.

. The story of Tolstoy's illness and his life at Gaspra is told in the fine reminiscences of Dr. S. Y. Elpatevskii, the well-known writer and doctor who treated Tolstoy, entitled "Leo N. Tolstoy, Reminiscences and Character," *Rosskoe Bogatstvo*, Number XI, 1912, pages 199-232; also S. Elpatevskii, *Literary Reminiscences*, Moscow, 1916, pages 26-49.

. There was a stern struggle between Sophie Andreevna Tolstoy and Chertkov over Tolstoy's diaries almost from the first moment of his acquaintance with Tolstoy. Orig-

inally the diaries were in Chertkov's hands. But in October, 1895, S. A. T. insisted upon their return to Tolstoy. On 5 November, 1895, Tolstoy wrote in his diary: "I have gone through a great deal of unpleasantness with regard to fulfilling my promise to Sophie Andreevna; I have read through my diaries for seven years." After he had read them, the diaries were handed over to S. A. T. who sent them for safe-keeping to the Rumyantsev Museum and later to the Historical Museum. The later diaries, ending with 19 May, 1900, were also handed over to S. A. T. The diaries of the last ten years, of which S. A. T. is speaking here, turned out to be in Chertkov's possession. It cost S. A. T. not only much effort, but tears and even her health, in order to get them back. Personally and in writing, and also through V. F. Bulgakov, she entreated and implored Chertkov to return them, but everything proved of no avail. An atmosphere, painful for the whole family, was thus created, and Tolstoy was literally stifled, finding himself between the stubbornness of a morbid woman and the fear of offending a no less stubborn man, Chertkov. It ended by Tolstoy, in the middle of July, 1910, taking the diaries from Chertkov and placing them for safe-keeping in the Tula bank, in order not to hurt either party. After Tolstoy's death, according to his will, the diaries passed to Alexandra L. Tolstoy. See L. N. Tolstoy's Diary, Vol. I, 1895-1899, pages 11, 12, and 6; L. N. Tolstoy's Letters to His Wife, page 493; V. F. Bulgakov, *Leo Tolstoy During the Last Years of his Life*, Moscow, 1918, pages 255, 261-263, and 265.

. This will in the form of a letter was an extract from Tolstoy's diary of 27, March, 1895... His request that his works should become public property was later made in his diary for 1907, also on 4 and 8 March, 1909.

. Three copies of this extract from the diary were kept by Marie Nikolaevna Obolenskii, V. G. Chertkov, and Serge Tolstoy. Evidently S. A. T. did not know this. See *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, page 9.

. According to A. B. Goldenweiser, Tolstoy, perhaps having reason to think that his will with regard to his works would not be carried out, decided to make a will which would be binding legally as well as morally. On 17 September, 1909, the will was drawn at Krekshino, and on the 18 it was signed by Tolstoy. By this will all his works, written after 1 January, 1881, both published and unpublished, became public property. Consequently the will meant that all works written and published before that date remained the property of the family. On 18 September on their return from Moscow, Alexandra L. Tolstoy went to see the lawyer N. K. Muravev and showed him the will. Muravev said that from a legal point of view the will was quite invalid, since according to law you could not leave property to "nobody," and he promised to draw up and send to Yasnaya Polyana the rough draft of a will. Two or three consultations took place at Muravev's house, at which there were present V. G. Chertkov, A. B. Goldenweiser, and F. A. Strakhov. Several drafts of the will were made which it was decided to take to Tolstoy in order that "he might read them and choose one of them, or reject them all, if he found that they did not meet his wishes." On 26 October Strakhov left for Yasnaya Polyana with the drafts. When he returned, he said that "Tolstoy expressed the firm resolution to leave as public property, not only the works written after 1881, as was



originally proposed, but generally everything written by him,” a resolution completely new, and unexpected by those who had taken part in the consultations. In accordance with Tolstoy’s new decision, Muravev drew up another will by which everything written by Tolstoy, “wherever found and in whosoever possession,” was transferred to the full ownership of Alexandra L. Tolstoy. This will was taken to Yasnaya Polyana, copied in Tolstoy’s own hand, and signed by him on 1 November, 1909. This is Goldenweiser’s account of the two wills in his diary. We see from this story that Tolstoy himself decided to make a formal will, and he himself, to his friends’ surprise, radically changed the first will regarding his works written and published before 1881. But the reader is confronted with a series of puzzling questions: How did Tolstoy make up his mind to have recourse to the protection of the law, which he denied with his whole soul? What caused him to alter so quickly and resolutely his intention with regard to the disposal of works written by him before 1881? Why were “two or three” consultations with an experienced lawyer necessary, if the friends had the simple task of drawing up in correct and legal form Tolstoy’s clearly expressed intention with regard to his works? Goldenweiser provides no answer to these questions.

Let us turn to Chertkov, the principal actor in these consultations. In the *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik* for 1913, Part I, pages 21-30, he published photographs of the will of 1 November, 1909, and of the two subsequent wills, with a short prefatory note in which he says: “The photographs published here of the three successive wills, written by Tolstoy’s own hand in the space of ten months, are sufficient proof of the repeated and serious attention which he gave to the fate of his writings, MSS., and papers after his death.” But there is no answer here to the puzzling questions... Approximately three years later Chertkov, indeed, gave us the full history of Tolstoy’s wills in the Supplement to L. N. Tolstoy’s *Diary*, pages 241-252. There he quoted Tolstoy’s letter with regard to the transfer to public property of his works written before 1881; the will in the form of a letter from Tolstoy’s diary of 27 March 1895; the will written in Krekshino; the final will and “explanatory memorandum.” Above all Chertkov at great length tried to prove from Tolstoy’s letters and from extracts from his diaries that Tolstoy always had complete confidence in him as a true friend, and for that reason, in preference to all the members of his family, made him sole executor for his writings, by giving him the right to “omit” or “leave in” what he thought necessary. But Chertkov does not say a single word either of the Moscow consultations of the friends or of the will of 1 November, 1909, and thus not only gives no answer to our questions, but excludes the possibility of our putting them, by skilfully passing direct from the Krekshino will to the last two wills made in the summer of 1910. Let us now hear what the third participant in the consultations has to say, namely Strakhov, who, in his own words, felt a “little doubt begin to stir within him,” when the friends on 1 November, 1909, “carefully performed the transactions which are bound to have certain historical consequences.” His article on how the will of 1 November, 1909, was drawn up fills in the gap which Chertkov passed over in silence.

Strakhov says nothing about the Krekshino will, in the making of which he took no part... After the failure of the will at Krekshino, the new draft of a will was worked out at the Moscow consultations, and Strakhov left with the draft for Yasnaya Polyana on 26 October, when, as the friends supposed, Sophie Andreevna would be in Moscow. Their calculation was mistaken: S. A. T. was returning to Yasnaya Polyana in the same train as Strakhov. But her presence did not prevent Strakhov from executing his mission brilliantly. When alone with Tolstoy, he explained that it was necessary to draw up a formal will transferring the rights in his literary property to a definite person or persons, and "he put before him the draft document and asked him to read it and sign it, if he approved of its contents." Tolstoy read the paper and "at once wrote at the bottom that he agreed with its contents; and then, after thinking for a little, he said: "The whole affair is very painful to me. And it is all unnecessary — in order to secure that my ideas are spread by such measures. Now Christ — although it is strange that I should compare myself with him — did not trouble that some one might appropriate his ideas as his personal property, nor did he record his ideas in writing, but expressed them courageously and went on the cross for them. His ideas have not been lost. Indeed no word can be completely lost, if it express the truth and if the person uttering it profoundly believe in its truth. But all these external measures for security come only from our non-belief in what we are uttering." Saying this Tolstoy left the room. Strakhov was undecided what to do, whether to oppose Tolstoy or to leave Yasnaya Polyana without having achieved anything. He made up his mind to oppose Tolstoy and attacked him in his most vulnerable spot. He said to him: "You mentioned Christ. He, indeed, took no thought about the dissemination of his words. But why? Because he did not write and, owing to the conditions of the time, received no payment for his ideas. But you write and have received payment for your writings, and now your family receives it... If you will not do something to secure the public use of your writings, you will be indirectly furthering the establishment of the rights of private property in them by your family... I shall not conceal from you that it has been painful for us who are your friends to hear you reproached because, in spite of your denial of private property in land, you transferred your estate to the ownership of your wife. It will also be painful to hear people saying that Tolstoy, in spite of his knowledge that his declaration in 1891 had no legal validity, took no steps to ensure his wish being carried out and thus consciously assisted the transference of his literary property to his family. I cannot say how painful it will be for your friends to hear that, Leo Nikolaevich, after your death, and the complete triumph of your survivors' monopoly over your writings during the long fifty years of copyright, and all this with the definite knowledge of your views on the subject."

Tolstoy acknowledged Strakhov's considerations to be a "weighty argument" and, promising to think it over, left the room. He had to wait a long time for the answer. Tolstoy went for a ride, had a sleep, dined, and only after his dinner called Strakhov and Alexandra Lvovna into his study and said to them: "I shall surprise you by my ultimate decision... I want, Sasha, to leave to you alone everything, do you see? Everything, not

excepting what I reserved in the declaration in the newspapers... The details you may think over with Vladimir Grigorevich."

Strakhov informed Chertkov by telegram of the "successful" result of his conversations with Tolstoy. On 1 November, 1909, he returned to Yasnaya Polyana with Goldenweiser, this time to witness the signature of the new will by which "everything" passed to Alexandra Lvovna. This time Strakhov entered Yasnaya Polyana with a "certain pricking of conscience," because he had hid his purpose from Sophie Andreevna. The signing of the will took place in the setting of a conspiracy. Strakhov says that, when Tolstoy took the pen, "he locked the two doors of his study one after the other." And it was so strange and unnatural to see Tolstoy in the part of a man taking steps against unwanted visitors...

. Indeed, some time before Tolstoy's going away, S. A. T.'s mind was unhinged. This became very clear in the middle of 1910. By the common consent of the family, Dr. N. V. Nikitin and the well-known alienist Rossolino were summoned from Moscow to Yasnaya Polyana and they found her to be suffering from hysteria and paranoia in the early stage (see *Dela i Dni*, 1921, Number I, page 288). As regards paranoia, the data existing seem to show that the doctors were mistaken, since paranoia belongs to the class of incurable diseases and comparatively soon passes from the first to the second stage, characterized by frenzy and acute madness, from which, so far as is known, S. A. T. did not suffer. On the contrary her mental and bodily health improved considerably after Tolstoy's death. But no doubt the doctors' diagnosis of hysteria was correct. There is evidence that she had a predisposition to that disease from her birth. Her parents also suffered from lack of mental balance, as may be seen from Tolstoy's letters to his wife. We read in them: "L. A. and A. E. (her mother and father) love each other, and yet both seem to make it the purpose of their lives to irritate each other over trifles, they spoil their own lives and those of all who surround them, and especially their daughters'. This atmosphere of irritation is very painful, even to outsiders." "A. E... is difficult because of his unceasing and overpowering care of his health, which would indeed be much better, if he thought less about it and himself." "Lyubov Alexandrovna is wonderfully like you... Even the faults are the same in you and in her. I listen sometimes to her beginning to talk confidently about something which she does not know, and to make positive assertions and exaggerate — and I recognize you." Signs of this disease, though in a mild form, were observed in S. A. T. from the first years of her married life. But the strength of her constitution and the healthy elements of her mind for a long time had the upper hand, and the symptoms were not obviously visible. But then the bearing and nursing of children, the complicated business of the estate, the strain on the mind for many years resulting from the differences with her husband and her struggle with Chertkov — all this sapped her mental and physical powers and made it possible for the morbid characteristics to assume an acute form. Even in 1910, before Tolstoy's going away, she was definitely a sick person.

. The will of 1 November, 1909, was drawn in correct legal form, but Tolstoy made the following addition to it: "In case, however, of my daughter, Alexandra Lvovna

Tolstoy dying before me, all the above-mentioned property I bequeath absolutely to my daughter Tatyana Lvovna Sukhotin.” Consequently a new will was drawn up on 17 July, 1910, but a formal mistake was made in it though Goldenweiser’s fault, who left out the words: “being of sound mind and memory.” Owing to this it became necessary to draw up a will, the fourth in number, which was copied and signed by Tolstoy on 22 July, 1910, and not, as S. A. T. says, on 23 July.

Such is the bare history of the two last wills, as related by Chertkov. But he does not tell us how and under what circumstances these wills were signed. This task Sergeenko junior, Chertkov’s secretary, has taken upon himself: he tells us how the fourth will was made. According to him, on 22 July, Tolstoy fetched the witnesses who were with Chertkov at Telyatenki and went on horse-back with them to the old forest of Zaseka, and there in the depths of the forest, sitting on the stump of a great tree, he copied his will, first from a draft and then at Goldenweiser’s dictation. From the expression on Tolstoy’s face Sergeenko saw clearly that “although the whole business was painful to him, he did it with a firm conviction of its moral necessity. No hesitation was visible.”

. P. I. Biryukov, an old friend of Tolstoy, author of the *Biography of L. N. Tolstoy*, two volumes, Moscow, 1906-8. On 1 August, 1910, according to V. F. Bulgakov, Biryukov, during a visit to Yasnaya Polyana, pointed out to Tolstoy “the undesirable atmosphere of conspiracy which the business of the will was assuming. To call the whole family together and explain his will to them would, perhaps, correspond better with Tolstoy’s general spirit and convictions.” After his conversation with Biryukov Tolstoy was extremely disturbed. When V. F. Bulgakov, who was going to Chertkov’s estate, asked him whether there was anything which he wanted him to say to Chertkov, Tolstoy replied: “No. I want to write to him, but I will do it to-morrow. Tell him, I am in such a state that I want nothing and...” Tolstoy stopped for a little. “And am waiting. I am waiting for what is going to happen and am prepared for anything.” Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy and the Chertkovs were very annoyed at Biryukov’s behaviour, thinking that his interference was ill-timed and only disconcerted Tolstoy. See V. F. Bulgakov, *Leo Tolstoy During the Last Years of his Life*, pages 277-8.

. The typewritten MS. has “whose powers were growing feeble.” The words “and memory” were inserted in S. A. T.’s handwriting. This is clearly no exaggeration. Ilya Tolstoy also says that Tolstoy during his last year of life had several fainting fits and that after them he used for a short time to lose his memory to such an extent that he did not recognize his near relations, and once even asked about his brother who had been dead fifty years: “And how is Mitenka?” Bulgakov, who lived at Yasnaya Polyana in 1910, gives not a few similar instances. Tolstoy confirms it himself. In June 1910, when asked whether he had seen the Tula asylum, he replied: “I don’t remember. I have forgotten. A phenomenon, like the weakening of memory, must interest you mental specialists. My memory has become very bad.” See Ilya Tolstoy, *My Reminiscences*, pages 246-7 and 272; Bulgakov, *Leo Tolstoy*, pages 34-5, 267, 289, and 323.

. Was it not the desire to discover this secret which made S. A. T. steal into Tolstoy's study at nights and search there, as is stated by Tolstoy in his diary? See *Dela i Dni*, 1921, Number I, pages 290-1.

. This letter is quoted in *My Reminiscences*, by Ilya Tolstoy, pages 261-3.

. This of course refers to Chertkov's letter on the occasion of Tolstoy's going away, published in *Russkaya Vedomostii*, 1910, Number 252. An extract is quoted in Chertkov's pamphlet, *On the Last Days of L. N. Tolstoy*, Moscow, 1911, page 15.

. This was also the opinion of all the members of the family who were at Astapovo. See Ilya Tolstoy's, *My Reminiscences*, pages 253-5.

. The sale of Yasnaya Polyana has its history. S. A. T. and her sons originally approached the Government and asked whether it would acquire Yasnaya Polyana for the State. The Council of Ministers discussed the question at the two sittings of 26 May and 14 October, 1911. At the first sitting it was decided to acquire Yasnaya Polyana at the price of 500,000 roubles suggested by the heirs; but at the second sitting the Council adopted the view of the Attorney to the Synod, V. K. Sabler, and the Minister of Education, L. A. Kasso, who held it inadmissible that the Government should honour its enemies and enrich their children at the State's expense; and the question of purchasing Yasnaya Polyana went no further. Later a Bill for its purchase was introduced in the Duma, but nothing came of it... On 26 February, 1913, Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy bought Yasnaya Polyana for 400,000 roubles, which she had received from Sitin, the publisher, for the right of publishing a complete edition of Tolstoy's works. On 26 March, 1913, Tolstoy's long-cherished desire was fulfilled and the land of Yasnaya Polyana was transferred to the peasants. See *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, 1911, Number II, page 31, Numbers III, IV, and V, pages 190-4 and 198; 1913, Part V, pages 10-12.

. On 15 November, 1912, the Moscow municipality acquired Tolstoy's house in Moscow with all its furniture for 125,000 roubles and decided to use it for a Tolstoy Museum and Library, and to build in the court-yard a new building for a Tolstoy School of sixteen classes. See *Tolstovskii Ezhegodnik*, 1911, Number II, pages 31-2, and Numbers III, IV, and V, pages 194-6.

. The newspapers announced that S. A. T. died in October, 1919. We have not succeeded in verifying the date and, therefore, cannot vouch for its accuracy.

# Appendix

## 1. Semen Afanasevich Vengerov

S. A. Vengerov was born 5 April, 1855 and died 14 September, 1920. On leaving his public school in 1872, he entered the Academy of Medicine and Surgery in Petersburg and took the general course in natural science. He then changed to the Faculty of Law in the Petersburg University and graduated in 1879. A year later he graduated in the Historical and Philological Faculty in the Derpl University, after which he remained at the Petersburg University in order to prepare for the professorship of Russian Literature. In 1897 he began a course of lectures on the history of Russian literature at the Petersburg University, but was soon dismissed by the Minister of Education because of his liberal views. It was only in 1906 that Vengerov was again allowed to lecture in the University, and in 1910 he was made professor of the University for Women and of the Institute of Psychoneurology. At last in 1919 he was appointed Professor of Russian Literature in the Petrograd University. In addition to his lectures, after 1908 he conducted in the University a special Pushkin school, and the work of this school was published in three volumes, *The Pushkinist*, 1914, 1916, and 1918. After the revolution, when The Library was established, Vengerov was appointed Director and managed the institution, under very unfavourable conditions, until his death.

"I can only remember three days in my whole life when I felt at leisure," Vengerov used to say. The intense industriousness of his life may be seen from the following incomplete list of his works: "Russian Literature in her Contemporary Representatives: I. S. Turgenev, 1875; I. I. Lazhechnikov, 1883; A. F. Pisemskii, 1884.

"Critico-Biographical Dictionary of Russian Authors and Men of Letters," Six volumes, 1889-1904. These six volumes only complete the first letter of the alphabet, most of the articles being written by Vengerov.

Russian Poetry. Seven volumes, 1893-1901.

Thirty volumes of Russian authors edited with notes about the writers.

"The Sources of the Dictionary of Russian Authors," four volumes, 1900-1917.

"Library of Great Writers," edited by Vengerov and containing the complete works of Shakespeare, Byron, Molière, and Pushkin.

"Outlines of the History of Russian Literature," 1907.

"Russian Literature of the Twentieth Century," 1890-1910.

“The Heroic Character of Russian Literature.” It will be seen from the above list that Vengerov devoted the whole of his life to Russian literature. As a writer and man of letters, he achieved considerable popularity.

## **2: Nikolai Nikolaevich Strakhov.**

N. N. Strakhov was born 16 October, 1828, and died 24 January, 1896. He studied at the ecclesiastical seminary of Kostroma and completed his course in 1845. He then passed to the Faculty of Mathematics in the Petersburg University and took his degree in 1848. He then entered the Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics in the Teachers’ Training Institute and completed his course in 1851, after which he became a teacher of physics and mathematics. In 1857 he received the degree of Master of Zoology. In 1861 he gave up teaching and became the principal collaborator with the brothers Dostoevskii on the monthly magazine, *Vremya*. His chief writings were polemical. Under the nom-de-plume of “N. Kossiz,” he wrote a series of articles which had a great success and were chiefly directed against the “westerners,” radicals, and socialists, e. g. Chernishersikii, Pisarev. *Vremya*, which had a large circulation, was suppressed by the authorities because of an article by Strakhov, called “The Fatal Problem,” which dealt with Russian-Polish relations in a spirit of opposition to the Government. Being without work, Strakhov began translating books into Russian, chiefly on Philosophical, scientific, and literary subjects.

Tolstoy’s friendship with Strakhov began in 1871. When someone asked him about the friendship, Strakhov sent him the following autobiographical note: “The origin of my acquaintance with L. N. Tolstoy in 1871 was as follows. After my articles on War and Peace, I decided to write him a letter asking him to let the Sarya have some of his work. He replied that he had nothing at present, but added a pressing invitation to come and see him at Yasnaya Polyana whenever an opportunity should present itself. In 1871 I received four hundred roubles from the Sarya, and in June I went to stay with my people in Poltava. On my way back to Petersburg I stopped at Tula for the night, and in the morning took a cab and drove out to Yasnaya Polyana. After that we used to see each other every year, that is, I used to stay a month or six weeks with him every summer. At times we quarrelled and grew cool to each other, but good feeling always won the day; his family got to like me, and now they see in me an old, faithful friend, which indeed I am.”

With Strakhov Tolstoy was on very friendly terms, which allowed complete frankness between them. Tolstoy himself wrote of his correspondence with Strakhov (in a letter of 6 February, 1906, to P. A. Sergeenko): “In addition to Alexandra Andreevna Tolstoy, I had two persons to whom I have written many letters which, as far as I can remember, might interest people interested in my personality. They are Strakhov and Prince Serge S. Urusov.” (Letters, Vol. II, page 227.)

The friendship of Tolstoy and Strakhov lasted for twenty-five years, and on Strakhov's part there was thirty years adoration of Tolstoy's genius and of his great spiritual and intellectual qualities. V. V. Rosanov wrote the following after Strakhov's death: "Strakhov's attachment to Tolstoy was most deep and mystical: he loved him as the incarnation of the best and most profound aspirations of the human soul, as a special nerve in the huge body of mankind in which we others form parts less understanding and significant; he loved him for what was indefinite and incomplete in him. He loved in him the dark abyss, the bottom of which no one could see, from the depths of which still rise numbers of treasures; and there is no doubt that Tolstoy never lost a better friend."

Strakhov's works included: *From the History of Russian Nihilism*, 1890; *Essays on Pushkin and Other Poets*, 1888; *Biography of Dostoevskii*; *The Struggle of the West with our Literature*, three volumes, 1882-1886; and some scientific works.

### 3: Tolstoy's First Will

Tolstoy's first will was contained in the form of a letter in his diary of 27 March, 1895 and repeated in his diary of 1907, see Notes 62 and 63 above. The following is the text of the entry in the diary: —

My will is approximately as follows.

(Until I have written another this holds good.)

(1). To bury me where I die, in the cheapest cemetery, if I die in a town, and in the cheapest coffin, as paupers are buried. Flowers and wreaths are not to be sent, speeches are not to be made. If possible, bury me without priests or burial service. But if those who bury me dislike this, let them bury me in the ordinary way with a funeral service, but as cheaply and simply as possible.

(2.) My death is not to be announced in the newspapers, nor are obituary notices to be written.

(3.) All my papers are to be given to my wife, V. G. Chertkov, Strakhov, and to my daughters Tanya and Masha, for them, or for such of them as survive, to sort and examine. (I have myself struck out my daughter's names. They ought not to be bothered with this.)

I exclude my sons from this bequest not because I did not love them (I have come of late to love them better and better, thank God) and I know that they love me; but they do not altogether understand my ideas; they did not follow their development; and they may have views of their own which may lead them to keep what ought not to be kept and to reject what ought to be kept. I have taken out of the diaries of my bachelor life what is worth keeping. I wish them to be destroyed. Also in the diaries of my married life I wish to be destroyed everything which might hurt anyone if published. Chertkov has promised me to do this even during my lifetime, and knowing the great and undeserved love that he has for me and his moral sensibility I am sure



that he will do it splendidly. I wish the diaries of my bachelor life to be destroyed not because I wish to conceal the wickedness of my life — my life was the usual unclean life of an unprincipled young man — but because the diaries in which I recorded only the torments which arise from the consciousness of sin produce a false and one-sided impression and represent... Well, let my diaries remain as they are. In them at least is seen how in spite of all the frivolity and immorality of my youth I yet was not deserted by God and though it was only in old age, I began, though only a little, to understand and love Him.

I write this not that I attribute great or even any importance to my papers, but because I know beforehand that after my death my books will be published, and will be talked about, and will be thought to be important. If that is so, it is better that my writings should not harm people.

As for the remainder of my papers I ask those who will have the arrangement of them not to publish everything, but only that which may be of use to people.

(4). With regard to the publishing rights of my former works — the ten volumes and the A. B. C. — I ask my heirs to give these to the public, i. e. to renounce the copyrights. But I only ask this, in no sense order it. It would be a good thing to do it. It would be good for you also. But if you do not wish to do it, that is your business. It means that you are not ready to do it. That my books for the last ten years have been sold was to me the most painful thing in my life.

(5). There is one more request, and it is the most important. I ask all, relations and strangers alike, not to praise me (I know that this must happen, because it has happened during my life time and in the worst way possible). Also if people are going to occupy themselves with my writings, let them dwell upon those passages in which I knew that the Divine power spoke through me; and let them make use of them in their lives. There were times when I felt that I had become the agent of the Divine will. Often I was so impure, so filled with personal passions, that the light of this truth was obscured by my darkness; but at times the truth passed through me, and these were the happiest moments of my life. God grant that their passage through me did not profane those truths, and that people, notwithstanding the petty and impure character which they received from me, may feed on them. The value of my writings lies in this alone. And therefore I am to be blamed for them, but not praised.

That is all.

L. N. T.

## 4: Tolstoy's Will of 22 July, 1910

THE following is the text of Tolstoy's will, written by him on 22 July, 1910, and proved for execution by the Tula High Court on 16 November, 1910: —

July, 1910, I, the undersigned, being of sound mind and memory, make the following disposition in the event of my death: all my literary works, both those already written

and those which may be written between now and my death, both those which have already been published and those which are unpublished, my works of fiction as well as any other works finished or unfinished, dramatic works or those in any other form, translations, revisions, diaries, private letters, rough drafts, jottings, and notes, — in a word everything without any exception, written by me up to the day of my death, wherever such may be found or in whosever possession, whether in manuscript or in print, and also the rights of literary property in all my works, as well as the MSS. themselves and all my papers left after my death — I bequeath in full ownership to my daughter, Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy. In the event of my daughter, Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy, dying before me, I bequeath the above-mentioned absolutely to my daughter, Tatyana Lvovna Sukhotin. (Signed) Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy.

I hereby bear witness that the above will was actually made, written by his own hand, and signed by Count Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, who is of sound mind and memory, Alexander Boresovich Goldenweiser, artist.

Witness to the same: Alexei Petrovich Sergeenko, citizen.

Witness to the same: Anatolii Dionsevich Radinskii, son of a lieutenant-colonel.

## 5: Tolstoy's Going Away

The following letter from Tolstoy to his daughter Alexandra and extracts from his diary give his own account of his going away, and will enable the reader to see something of his side of the question:

### Tolstoy's Letter to His Daughter Alexandra Lvovna

29 October, 1910, Optina Monastery.

"...will tell you all about me, my dear friend Sasha. It is hard. I can't help feeling it a great load on me. The chief thing is — not to do wrong. That is the difficulty. Certainly, I have sinned and shall sin, but I should wish to sin less.

This is the chief thing above all others, that I wish for you, the more so that I know that the task is terrible and beyond your powers at your age. I have not decided anything, and I do not want to decide. I am trying to do only what I can't help doing; and not to do what I need not do. From my letter to Chertkov you will see, not how I look at this question, but how I feel about it. I hope very much that good will come from the influence of Tanya and Serge.

The chief thing is that they should realize and try to suggest to her (Countess S. A. T.) that this perpetual spying, eavesdropping, incessant complaining, ordering me about, as her fancy takes her, constant managing, pretended hatred of the man who is nearest and most necessary to me, with her open hatred of me and pretence of love, — that a life like this is not only unpleasant, but impossible; and if one of us is to drown himself, let it not be her on any account, but myself; that there is but one thing I want

— freedom from her, from that falsehood, pretence, and spite with which her whole being is permeated.

Of course they cannot suggest this to her, but they can suggest to her that all her acts towards me not only do not express love but are inspired by the obvious wish to kill me, which she will achieve since I hope that the third fit which attacks me will save her as well as myself from the terrible state in which we have lived, to which I do not wish to return.

You see, my dear, how wicked I am. I do not conceal myself from you. I do not send for you yet, but I will as soon as I can, very shortly. Write and tell me how you are. I kiss you.

L. Tolstoy.

The following extracts from Tolstoy's diary which describe his actual flight and the circumstances that led up to it also throw light upon Countess Tolstoy's attitude to her husband, and completely refute the false accounts which she persisted in publishing everywhere from the day of Tolstoy's death until the present time.

## **From Tolstoy's Diary**

25 Oct. 1910... Sophie Andreevna is as anxious as ever.

27 Oct. 1910. I got up very early. All night I had bad dreams. The difficulty of our relation is constantly increasing.

28 Oct. 1910. I went to bed at half past eleven. Slept till two. I woke, and again as on other nights heard steps and the opening of doors. On previous nights I did not look out of my door; now I looked and saw through a chink a bright light in my study and heard rustling. It is Sophie A. searching for something and probably reading my papers.

Yesterday she asked, indeed demanded, that I should not shut the door. Both her doors are open, so that my least movement is audible to her. Both during the day and during the night all my movements and words must be known to her and be under her control.

Again steps, a cautious opening of the door, and she passes by.

I do not know why this has roused in me such overpowering repulsion and indignation. I wanted to fall asleep, but could not, tossed about for an hour, lit the candle, and sat down.

The door opens and in comes S. A. asking about "my health," and surprised at seeing a light in my room.

The repulsion and indignation are growing. I am choking. I count my pulse: 97. I cannot lie down; and I suddenly come to a final decision to go.

I write a letter to her, and begin to pack only what things are needed for the journey. I wake Dushan then Sasha they help me with the packing. It is night, pitch dark, I lose my way to the ledge; get into the wood; I am pricked by the branches; knocked against the trees; fall; lose my hat; cannot find it; get out with difficulty; walk home;

take my cap; and with a lantern go to the stable, give an order to harness the horses. Sasha, Dushan, Varya come there. I tremble, expecting that S. A. T. will pursue me.

But we leave. In Schekino we wait an hour for the train, and every minute I expect her to appear. But now we are in the train; we start.

The fear passes. And pity for her rises in me, but no doubt at all but that I have done what I ought to do. Perhaps I am wrong to justify myself, but I believe that I am saving myself — not Leo N. T., but that which at times exists, though ever so feebly, in me...

29. Oct. 1910. Shamardino... On the journey I have been thinking all the time about a way of escape from her and from my situation, but could think of none. But surely there will be some way, whether one likes it or not; it will come, but not in any way that one can foresee. What has to happen will happen. It is not my business. I got at Mashenka's 'the Krug Chtenia' and reading the quotation for the 28th, I was at once struck by the reply which seemed to be given purposely to refer to my situation. I need a trial; it is good for me...

Tolstoy's grave, at his estate Yasnaya Polyana, Southern Russia

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Sophie Andreevna Tolstoy  
The Biographies of Leo Tolstoy

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