



The Unfinished Novels, Leo Tolstoy

The Unfinished Novels

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FIRST FRAGMENT

1 THE THREE chapters of the romance here printed under the name of the "Dekabristui" were written even before the author had begun "War and Peace." At this time he was planning a story, the principal characters of which were to be the conspirators who planned the December Insurrection; but he did not go on with it because, in his efforts at bringing to life the time of the Dekabrists, he involuntarily went back in thought to the preceding time period, to the past of his heroes.

Gradually before the author opened ever deeper and deeper the sources of those phenomena which he was designing to describe : the families, the education, the social conditions, etc., of his chosen characters. At last he paused at the time of the war with Napoleon, which he described in "War and Peace." At the end of that romance are

evident the symptoms of that awakening which was reflected in the events of December 27, 1825.

Afterward the author once more took up "The Dekabrists," and wrote two other beginnings, which are here printed.

IT happened not long ago, in the reign of the Emperor Alexander II., in our epoch of civilization, of progress, of questions, of the regeneration of Russia, etc., the time when the victorious Russian army had returned from Sevastopol, which had just been surrendered to the enemy, when all Russia was celebrating its triumph in the destruction of the Black Sea fleet, and White-walled Moscow had gone forth to meet and congratulate the remains of the crews of that fleet, and reach them a good Russian glass of vodka, and in accordance with the good Russian custom offer them the bread and salt of hospitality, and bow their heads to the ground; at the time when Russia in the person of perspicacious virgin-politicians bewailed the destruction of its favorite dreams about celebrating the Te Deum in the cathedral of Saint Sophia and the severely felt loss of two great men dear to the father-land, who had been killed during the war (one carried away by his desire to hear the Te Deum as soon as possible in the said cathedral and who fell on the plains of Vallachia, for that very reason leaving two squadrons of hussars on those same plains; the other an invaluable man distributing tea, other people's money, and sheets to the wounded, and not stealing either); at the time when from all sides, from all branches of human activity, in Russia, great men sprang up like mushrooms colonels, administrators, economists, writers, orators, and simply great men, without any vocation or object; at the time when at the jubilee of a Moscow actor, public sentiment, strengthened by a toast, began to demand the punishment of all criminals; when formidable committees from Petersburg were galloping away toward the south, to apprehend, discover, and punish the evil-doers of the commissary department; when in all the cities, dinners with speeches were given to the heroes of Sevastopol, and these men who came with amputated arms and legs were given trifles as remembrances, and they were met on bridges and highways; at the time when oratorical talents were so rapidly spreading among the people that a single tapster everywhere and on every

occasion wrote and printed, and, having learned by heart, made at dinners such powerful addresses that the keepers of order had, as a general thing, to employ repressive measures against the eloquence of the tapster; when in the English club itself they reserved a special room for the discussion of public affairs; when new periodicals made their appearance under the most diversified appellations journals developing European principles on a European soil, but with a Russian point of view, and journals exclusively on Russian soil developing Russian principles, but with a European point of view; when suddenly so many periodicals appeared that it seemed as if all names were exhausted the *Viestnik* (Messenger), and the *Slovo* (Word), and the *Besyeda* (Discussion), and the *Nabliudatyel* (Spectator), and the *Zvezda* (Star), and the *Orel* (Eagle), and many others and notwithstanding this, new ones and ever new ones kept appearing; a time when pleiads of writers and thinkers kept appearing, proving that science is popular, and is not popular, and is unpopular, and the like, and a pleiad of writer-artists, describing the grove and the sunrise and the thunderstorm and the love of the Russian maiden and the laziness of a single *chinovnik* and the bad behavior of many other functionaries; at the time when from all sides came up questions as in 1856 they called all those currents of circumstances to which no one could obtain a categorical answer questions of military schools, of universities, of the censorship, of verbal law-proceedings relating to finance, banks, police, emancipation, and many others, and all were trying to raise still new questions, all were giving experimental answers to them, were writing, reading, talking, arranging projects, all the time wishing to correct, to annihilate, to change, and all the Russians, as one man, found themselves in indescribable enthusiasm, a state of things which has been witnessed twice in Russia during the nineteenth century the first time when in 1812 we thrashed Napoleon I., and the second time when in 1856 Napoleon III. thrashed us great and never-to-be-forgotten epoch of the re-generation of the Russian people. Like that Frenchman, who said that no one had ever lived at all who had not lived during the great French Revolution, so I also do not hesitate to say that any one who was not living in Russia in the year '56 does not know what life is.

He who writes these lines not only lived at that time, but was actively at work then. Moreover, he himself stayed in one of the trenches before Sevastopol for several weeks. He wrote about the Crimean war a work which brought him great fame, and in this he clearly and circumstantially described how the soldiers fired their guns from the bastions, how wounds were bandaged at the ambulance stations, and how the dead were buried in the graveyard. Having accomplished these exploits, the writer of these lines spent some time at the heart of the empire, in a rocket establishment, where he received his laurels for his exploits. He saw the enthusiasm of both capitals and of the whole people, and he experienced in himself how Russia was able to reward genuine service. The powerful ones of that world all sought his acquaintance, shook hands with him, gave him dinners, kept inviting him out, and, in order to elicit from him the particulars of the war, told him their own sentiments. Consequently the writer of these lines may well appreciate that great unforgettable epoch. But that does not concern us now.

One evening about this time two conveyances and a sledge were standing at the entrance of the best hotel in Moscow. A young man was just going in to inquire about rooms. An old man was sitting in one of the carriages with two ladies, and was discussing about the Kuznetsky Bridge at the time of the French Invasion.

It was the continuation of a conversation which had been begun on their first arrival at Moscow, and now the old, white-bearded man, with his fur shuba thrown open, was calmly going on with it, still sitting in the carriage, as if he intended to spend the night there. His wife and daughter listened to him, but kept looking at the door, not without impatience. The young man came out again accompanied by the Swiss and the hall-boy.

“Well, how is it, Sergye’f? “asked the mother, looking out so that the lamplight fell on her weary face.

Either because it was his usual custom, or to prevent the Swiss from mistaking him for a lackey, as he was dressed in a half-shuba, Sergyei’ replied in French that they could have rooms, and he opened the carriage door. The old man for an instant glanced at his son, and fell

back once more into the dark depths of the carriage, as if this affair did not concern him at all.

“There was no theater then.”

“Pierre,” said his wife, pulling him by the cloak, but he continued :

“Madame Chalme was on the Tverskaya”

From the depths of the carriage rang out a young, merry laugh.

“Papa, come, you are talking nonsense.”

The old man seemed at last to realize that they had reached their destination, and he looked round.

“Come, step out.”

He pulled his hat over his eyes and obediently got out of the carriage. The Swiss offered him his arm, but, convinced that the old man was perfectly able to take care of himself, he immediately proffered his services to the elder lady.

Natalya Nikolayevna, the lady, by her sable cloak, and by the slowness of her motions in getting out, and by the way in which she leaned heavily on his arm, and by the way in which, without hesitation, she immediately took her son’s arm and walked up the steps, impressed the man as a woman of great distinction. He could not distinguish the young woman from the maids that dis-mounted from the second carriage; she, just as they, carried a bundle and a pipe, and walked behind. Only by her laughing, and the fact that she called the old man “father,” did he know it.

“Not that way, papa, turn to the right,” said she, detaining him by the sleeve ‘of his coat. “To the right.”

And on the stairway, above the stamping of feet, the opening of doors, and the panting of the elderly lady, was heard the same laughter which had rung out in the carriage, and which any one hearing would have surely exclaimed: “What a jolly laugh! I wish I could laugh like that.”

The son, Sergye’f, had been busied with all the mate-rial conditions on the way; and, while busied with them, made up for his lack of knowledge by the energy char-acteristic of his five and twenty years and his bustling activity, which filled him with satisfaction. Twenty

times, at least, and apparently without any sufficient cause, dressed in but a single paletot, he had run down to the sledge and up the steps again, shivering with the cold, and taking two or three steps at a time with his long, young legs. Natalya Nikolayevna begged him not to catch cold, but he assured her that there was no danger, and he kept giving orders, slamming doors, and going and coming; and, even after he was convinced that everything now rested on the servants and muzhiks alone, he several times made a tour of all the rooms, entering the drawing-room by one door and going out by another, trying to find something more to do.

“Tell me, papa, will you go to the bath? Do you know where it is?” he asked.

Papa was in a brown study, and seemed to be entirely unable to account for his present environment. He was slow in replying. He heard the words, but they made no impression on him. Suddenly he comprehended. “Yes, yes, yes; please find out;. ...at the Kamennoi’ Most.”

The head of the family, with quick, nervous step, crossed the room and sat down in an arm-chair.

“Well, now we must decide what is to be done, how to get settled,” said he. “Help me, children; be quick about it! Be good and take hold and get things ar-ranged, and then to-morrow we will send Serozha with a note to sister Mary Ivanovna, to Nikitin, or we will go ourselves. How is that, Natasha? But now let us get. settled.”

“To-morrow is Sunday; I hope that you will go to service first, before you do anything else, Pierre,” said his wife, who was kneeling before a trunk and open-ing it.

“Oh, it is Sunday, is it? Assuredly; we will go to the Uspyensky Cathedral. That will note the begin-ning of our return. My God! when I recall the last time I was in the Uspyensky Cathedral do you re-member, Natasha? But that is not the matter in hand.”

And the head of the family leaped up from the chair in which he had only just sat down.

“But now we must get established.”

Yet, without doing anything to help, he walked from one room into the other. "Tell me, will you drink some tea? Or are you tired, and would you rather rest?"

"Yes, yes," replied his wife, taking something from the trunk, "but I thought you were going to the bath."

"Yes in my day it used to be on the Kamenno'i Most. Serozha, just go and find out if the baths are still at the Kamenno'f Most. Here, Serozha and I will take this room. Serozha, do you like this one?"

But Serozha had already gone to find out about the baths. "No," the old man went on to say, "that won't do at all. You won't have a passage directly into the drawing-room. What do you think about it, Natasha?"

"Don't you worry, Pierre, everything will be ar-ranged," replied Natasha from the next room, into which the muzhiks were carrying various articles. But Pierre had come under the influence of the excitement and enthusiasm caused by his return.

"See here, don't disturb Serozha's things; there, they 've brought his snow-shoes into the drawing-room." And he himself picked them up, and with extraordinary carefulness, as if the whole future order of their estab-lishment depended on it, placed them against the lin-tel of the door, and pressed them close to it. But the shoes would not stay put, and as soon as Pierre had left them they fell with a crash across the door. Natalya Nikolayevna frowned and shuddered, but, when she saw the cause of the disturbance, she said :-

"Sonya, pick them up, my love."

"Pick them up, my love," echoed her husband. "And I am going to see the landlord. Don't make any changes in our arrangements. We must talk it all over with him first."

"Better send for him, Pierre. Why do you disturb yourself?"

Pierre acquiesced in this.

"Sonya, do you attend to this, please M. Cavalier; tell him that we want to talk things over with him."

“Chevalier, papa,” said Sonya, and she started to go.

Natalya Nikolayevna, who was giving orders in a low voice, and moving about quietly from room to room, now with a drawer, now with a pipe, now with a cushion, gradually and imperceptibly reducing the heaps of articles into order, and getting everything into its place, remarked, as she passed Sonya :

“Don’t go yourself; send a servant.”

While the man was gone after the landlord, Pierre employed his spare moments, under the pretext of assisting his wife, in rumpling up some of her gowns, and then he tumbled over a half-emptied trunk. Catching by the wall to keep from falling, the Dekabrist looked round with a smile. His wife, it seemed, was too busy to notice; but Sonya looked at him with such mischievous eyes that it seemed as if she were asking his permission to laugh out loud. He readily gave her that permission, and laughed himself with such a hearty laugh that all who were in the room, his wife as well as the maid-servant and the muzhik, joined in.

This laughter still more cheered up the old man; he discovered that the divan in the room taken by his wife and daughter was placed inconveniently for them, notwithstanding the fact that they assured him to the contrary and begged him not to trouble himself. Just as he, with the assistance of the muzhik, was trying to move it to another place, the French landlord entered the room.

“You asked for me?” asked the landlord, curtly; and, as a proof of his indifference, if not his disdain, he deliberately took out his handkerchief, deliberately unfolded it, and deliberately blew his nose.

“Yes, my dear friend,” said Piotr Ivanovitch, approaching him. “You see, we ourselves do not know how long we shall be here, my wife and I.” And Piotr Ivanovitch, who had the weakness of seeing an intimate in every man, began to tell him his circumstances and plans.

Mr. Chevalier did not share this way of men, and was not interested in the particulars communicated by Piotr Ivanovitch; but the excellent

French which the Dekabrist spoke, a French which, as every one knows, has something of the nature of a patent of respectability in Russia, and the aristocratic ways of the newcomers, caused him to have a higher opinion of them than before.

“In what way can I aid you?” he asked.

This question did not embarrass Piotr Ivanovitch. He expressed his desire to have rooms, tea, a samovar, luncheon, dinner, food for his servants, in a word, all those things for which hotels are intended to provide; and when Mr. Chevalier, amazed at the innocence of the old man, who, it may be surmised, thought that he had reached the Trukhmensky steppe, or that all these things were to be furnished as a free gift, explained that his desires would be fully gratified, Piotr Ivanovitch reached the height of enthusiasm.

“There, that is excellent! very good! Then we will arrange it so. Now; how then, please....”

But he began to feel ashamed of talking about him-self exclusively, and so he proceeded to ask Mr. Chevalier about his family and affairs. Sergyei’ Petrovitch, returning, showed evident signs of dissatisfaction at his father’s behavior. He noticed the landlord’s irritation, and he reminded his father of the bath. But Piotr Ivanovitch was greatly interested in the question how a French hotel could succeed in Moscow in 1856, and how Madame Chevalier spent her time. At last the landlord bowed, and asked if there was anything they wished to order.

“Will you have some tea, Natasia. Yes? Tea, then, if you please, and we will have another talk, mon cher monsieur! What a splendid man!”

“But are you going to the bath, papa?”

“Oh, then we don’t need any tea.”

Thus the only result of the conference with the new-comers was snatched away from the landlord.

Accordingly Piotr Ivanovitch was now proud and happy with the arrangements that he had made. The drivers who came to get their vodka-money annoyed him because Serozha had no small change, and Piotr Ivanovitch was about to send for the landlord again, when the

happy thought occurred to him that he ought not to be the only gay one that evening, and restored him to his good humor. He took out two three-ruble notes, and, pressing one into the hand of one of the drivers, said, "This is for you," Piotr Ivanovitch had the custom of addressing all persons without exception, save the members of his own family, with the formal second person, plural, *vui* "and this is for you," said he, thrusting the bank-note into the man's palm, somewhat as men do when they pay a doctor for his visit. After all these matters had been attended to, he went to his bath.

Sonya sat down on the divan, and, supporting her head on her hand, laughed heartily.

"Oh, how good it is, mamma; oh, how good it is!"

Then she put up her feet on the divan, stretched herself out, lay back, and thus fell asleep, with the sound, silent sleep of a girl of eighteen after a journey which had lasted a month and a half.

Natalya Nikolayevna, who was still busy in her sleeping-room, apparently heard with her maternal ear that Sonya was not stirring, and went in to see for herself. She took a cushion, and with her large white hand, raising the girl's rosy head, laid it gently on the cushion. Sonya sighed deeply, settled her shoulders, and let her head rest on the pillow, not saying "*merci*" but taking it as a matter of course.

"Not there, not there, Gavrilovna, Katya," said Natalya Nikolayevna, addressing the two maid-servants who were making a bed; and with one hand, as it were in passing, smoothing her daughter's disordered locks. Without delaying, and without haste, Natalya Nikolayevna put things in order, and by the time her husband and son returned everything was in readiness, the trunks were removed from the rooms; in Pierre's sleeping-room everything was just as it had been for years and years at Irkutsk; his *khalat*, his pipe, his tobacco-box, his *eau sucre*, the Gospels which he read at night, and even a little image fastened in some way above the beds, to the luxurious wall-hangings of the rooms of Chevalier, who did not employ this form of adornment, though that evening they made their appearance in all the rooms of the third suite of the hotel.

Natalya Nikolayevna, having got things arranged to rights, put on her collar and cuffs, which in spite of the long journey she had kept clean, brushed her hair, and sat down opposite the table. Her beautiful black eyes had a far-away look; she gazed, and rested!

It would seem that she rested, not from the labor of getting settled only, not from the journey only, not from her weary years only; she rested, it seemed, from her whole life; and the far distance into which she gazed, where in imagination she saw the living faces of dear ones, that was the rest for which she sighed. Whether it was the exploit of love which she had performed for her husband's sake, or the love which she had felt for her children when they were small, whether it was her heavy loss, or the peculiarity of her character, any one, looking at this woman, must have certainly comprehended that nothing more from her was to be expected, that she had already, and long ago, given herself to life, and that nothing remained for her. There remained a certain beautiful and melancholy dignity of worth, like old memories, like moonlight. It was impossible to imagine her otherwise than surrounded by reverence and all the amenities of life. That she should ever be hungry and eat ravenously, or that she should ever wear soiled linen, that she should ever stumble or forget to blow her nose, was utterly unthinkable. It was a physical impossibility! Why this was so, I do not know; but her every motion was majesty, grace, sympathy for all those that enjoyed the sight of her.

“Sie pflegen und weben Himmlische Rosen ins irdische Leben”

She knew that couplet and liked it, but she was not guided by it. Her whole nature was the expression of this thought; her whole life unconsciously devoted to the weaving of invisible roses into the lives of those with whom she came into contact. She accompanied her husband to Siberia purely because she loved him; she did what she might do for him, and she involuntarily did everything for him. She made his bed for him, she packed his things, she prepared his dinner and tea for him, and above all, she was always where he was, and greater happiness no woman could give her husband.

In the drawing-room the samovar was singing on the round table. Before it sat Natalya Nikolayevna. Sonya was wrinkling up her forehead and smiling under her mother's hand, which tickled her, when with trimmed fin-ger-tips and shining cheeks and brows, the father's bald spot was especially brilliant, fresh clean linen and dark hair and beaming faces, the men came into the room.

"It has grown lighter since you have come in," said Natalya Nikolayevna. "Ye powers, 1 how white."

For years she had said this every Saturday, and every Saturday Pierre had experienced a sense of modesty and satisfaction. They sat down at the table; there was a smell of tea and tobacco, the voices of the parents and the children were heard, and of the servants who in the same room were carrying away the cups. They re-called the amusing things which had happened on the road, they praised Sonya's mode of dressing her hair, they chatted and laughed. Geographically they had all been transported five thousand versts into an entirely different and alien environment, but morally they were that evening still at home, just the same as their pe-culiar lonely family life had made them. Of this there was to be no morrow. Piotr Ivanovitch sat down near the samovar and smoked his pipe. He was not gay at all.

"Well, here we are back again," said he, "and I am glad that we shall not see any one this evening; this evening will be the last that we shall spend together as a family;" and he drank these words down with a great swallow of tea.

"Why the last, Pierre?"

"Why? Because the young eagles have been taught to fly; they will have to be building their own nests, and so they will be flying off each in his own direction."

1 Batyushka.

"How absurd," exclaimed Sonya, taking his glass from him, and smiling as she smiled at everything. "The old nest is good enough."

"The old nest is a wretched nest; the father-eagle could not build it; he got into a cage; his young ones were hatched in the cage and he was let out only when his wings were no longer able to bear him aloft. No, the

young eagles will have to build their nests higher, more successfully, nearer to the sun. They are his young, in order that his example may aid them; but the old eagle, as long as he has his eyes, will look out for them, and if he becomes blind will listen for them give me a little rum, more, more there, that will do!"

"Let us see who will leave the others first," remarked Sonya, giving her mother a fleeting glance, as if she reproached herself for speaking before her. "Let us see who will leave the others first," she repeated. "I have no fear for myself or for Serozha either."

Serozha was striding up and down the room and thinking how the next day he would order some new clothes, and trying to decide whether he would go him-self or send for the tailor, and so he was not interested in the conversation between Sonya and his father.

Sonya laughed.

"What is the matter with you? What is it?" asked their father.

"You are younger than we are, papa, ever so much younger, that is a fact," said she, and again she laughed.

"How is that?" exclaimed the old man, and the gloomy frown on his brow melted away in an affection-ate and, at the same time, rather scornful smile.

Natalya Nikolayevna leaned out from behind the samovar, which prevented her from seeing her husband.

"Sonya is right. You are only sixteen years old, Pierre. Serozha is younger in his feelings, but you are younger than he in spirit. I can foresee what he will do, but you are still capable of surprising me."

Whether it was that the old man recognized the justice of the remark, or being flattered by it did not know what answer to make, he went on smoking in silence, drinking his tea, and only letting his eyes flash. But Serozha, with the egotism characteristic of youth, for the first time began to feel interested in what was said about him, joined the conversation, and assured them that he was really old, that his coming to Moscow and the new life which was opening before him did not re-

joice him in the least, that he was perfectly calm in his thought and expectations of the future.

“Nevertheless this is the last evening,” repeated Piotr Ivanovitch. “Tomorrow it will no longer be the same.”

And once more he filled up his glass with rum. And for some time longer he sat by the tea-table with an expression on his face as if he had much to say, but there was no one to listen. He kept pouring out the rum until his daughter surreptitiously carried away the bottle.

II

WHEN MR. CHEVALIER returned to his own room, after he had been up-stairs to arrange for his guests, he communicated his observations concerning the newcomers to the partner of his life, who, dressed in laces and silk, had her place in the Paris fashion behind the desk; in the same room sat several of the habitués of the establishment. Serozha, while he was down-stairs, had noticed that room and its occupants. You, probably, have also noticed it if ever you have been in Moscow.

If you, a modest man, not acquainted with Moscow, have arrived too late for a dinner invitation, have been mistaken in your supposition that the hospitable Muscovites will invite you to dinner and they have not invited you, or if you simply desire to dine in the best hotel, you will go into the anteroom. Three or four lackeys will dart forward; one of them will take your shuba from you and congratulate you on the new year, or the carnival, or your return, or will simply remark that it is a long time since you were there, although you may never have been at that establishment in your life. You go in, and the first thing that strikes your eyes is a covered table, spread, as it seems to you at the first instant, with an endless collection of edibles. But this is only an optical delusion, since the larger part of the space on this table is occupied by pheasants in their feathers, indigestible lobsters, baskets with scents, and pomade and vials with cosmetics and comfits. Only if you search carefully you will find vodka and a crust of bread with butter and a piece of fish under a wire fly-screen, perfectly useless in Moscow in the

month of December, but there because they are used in that way in Paris.

A little farther on, beyond the table, you will see in front of you the room in which sits the French woman behind the desk, always with a disgusting exterior, and yet with the cleanest of cuffs and in the most charming of modish gowns. Next the Frenchwoman you will see an officer with unbuttoned coat, sipping vodka and reading a newspaper, and a pair of civil or military legs stretched out in a velvet chair, and you will hear a chatter of French and more or less genuine and hearty laughter.

If you wish to find out what is going on in that room, then I should advise you not to go into it, but simply to keep your eyes open as you go by, pretending that you want to obtain a tartine. Otherwise you would be greeted with a questioning silence and with the eyes of the habitués of the room fixed on you, and probably you will put your tail between your legs and take refuge at one of the tables in the big “hall” or in the winter garden. There no one will disturb you. These tables are for the general public, and there in your solitude you may call the garden and order truffles, as much as you please. This room with the French woman exists for the select gilded youth of Moscow, and to become one of the chosen is not so easy as it may seem to you.

Mr. Chevalier, returning to this room, told his spouse that the man from Siberia was a bore, but on the other hand his son and daughter were young people such as could be brought up only in Siberia.

“You ought to look at the daughter, what a-rose she is!”

“Oh, he loves fresh young women this old man does!” exclaimed one of the guests, who was smoking a cigar.

The conversation, of course, was carried on in French, but I translate it into Russian, as I shall do throughout this story.

“Oh, I am very fond, too, of them,” replied Mr. Chevalier. “Women are my passion. Don’t you believe me?”

“Hear that, Madame Chevalier,” cried a stout young Cossack officer, who was deeply in the debt of the establishment and liked to chat with the landlady.

“Why, you see he shares my taste,” said Chevalier, tapping the stout officer on the epaulet.

“And so the little Sibiryatchka is pretty, is she?”

Chevalier put his fingers together and kissed them.

Whereupon ensued among the occupants a very gay and confidential conversation. It concerned the stout officer; he smiled as he listened to what was said about him.

“Can he have such mutable tastes,” shouted one man through the laughter. “Mademoiselle Clarisse, you know Strugof likes above all things, next to women, hens’ legs.”

Although Mademoiselle Clarisse, from behind her desk, did not see the wit of this remark, she broke out into laughter as silvery as her bad teeth and declining years allowed.

“Has the Siberian girl awakened such thoughts in him? “and again they all laughed harder than ever. Even Mr. Chevalier almost died with laughing, add-ing, “Ce vieux coquin” and patting the Cossack officer on the head and shoulders.

“But who are they these Sibiryaki manufacturers or merchants? “asked one of the gentlemen when the laughter had somewhat subsided.

“Nikit! Go and ask the gentleman who has just come for his passport,” said Mr. Chevalier.”’ We Alex-ander, Autocrat.’

Chevalier was just beginning to read the passport which was brought him, when the Cossack officer snatched the paper out of his hands, but his face suddenly ex-pressed amazement.

“Well, now, guess who it is,” said he; “all of you know him by reputation.”

“How can we guess, tell us.”

“Well, Abd-el Kader, ha, ha, ha Well, Cagliostro, ha, ha, ha Well, then, Peter III., ha, ha, ha. “....

“Well, then, read for yourselves.”

The Cossack officer unfolded the paper and read : the former Prince Piotr Ivanovitch and one of those Russian names which every one knows and pronounces with a certain respect and pleasure when speaking of any one bearing that name, as of a personal friend or intimate.

We will call it Labazof.

The Cossack officer vaguely remembered that this Piotr Labazof was a person of some consequence in '25, and that he was sent to the mines of Siberia as a convict, but why he was famous he did not remember very well.

The others knew nothing about it, and they replied :

“Oh, yes, famous,” just exactly as they would have likewise said “Famous “of Shakespeare who wrote the “Aeneid”!

The most that they knew about him was what the stout officer said, that he was the brother of Prince Ivan, uncle of the Chikins, the Countess Prunk, yes, “famous.”

“Why, he must be very rich if he is a brother of Prince Ivan,” remarked one of the young men. “If they have restored his estates to him. They have re-stored their property to some.”

“How many of these exiles are coming back nowa-days,” remarked another person present. “Truly I don't believe there were so many sent as have already returned. Yes, Zhikinsky, tell us that story about the eighteenth of the month,” said he, addressing an officer of light infantry, reputed as a clever story-teller.

“Yes, tell us it.”

“In the first place, it is genuine truth and happened here, at Chevalier's, in the large ' hall.' Three Deka-brists came here to dinner. They took seats at one table, they ate, they drank, they talked. Now opposite them was sitting a man of respectable appearance, of about the same age, and he kept listening to what they had to say about Siberia : ‘ And do you know Ner-chinsk?’ ‘Why, yes, I lived there.’ ‘And do you know Tatyana Ivanovna?’ ‘Why, of course I do.’ ‘ Permit me to ask if you were also exiled? ‘ ‘ Yes, I had to suffer that misfortune.’ ‘ ‘ And you? ‘ ‘ We were all sent on the 14th of December. Strange that we* don't know

you, if you also were among those sent on the 14th. Will you tell us your name? — ‘Feo-dorof.’ ‘Were you also on the 14th?’ — ‘No, on the 18th.’ ‘How on the 18th?’ — ‘18th of September; for a gold watch; I was falsely charged with stealing it, and though I was innocent, I had to go.’

All burst out laughing except the narrator, who with a preternaturally solemn face looked at his hearers each and all, and swore that it was a true story.

Shortly after this tale one of the gilded youths got up and went to his club. After passing through the room furnished with tables, where old men were playing cards; after turning into the “infernalnaya” where already the famous “Puchin” was beginning his game against the “assembled crowd”; after lingering awhile near one of the billiard-tables at which a little old man of distinction was making chance shots; and after glancing into the library where some general was reading sedately over his glasses, holding his newspaper far from his eyes, and where a literary young man, striving not to make a noise, was turning over the files of papers, the gilded youth sat down on a divan in the billiard-room with another man, who like himself belonged to the same gilded youth, and was playing back-gammon.

It was the luncheon day, and there were present many gentlemen who were frequenters of the club. Among the number was Ivan Pavlovitch Pakhtin. He was a man of forty, of medium height, pale complexion, stout, with wide shoulders and hips, with a bald head, a shiny, jolly, smooth-shaven face. Though he did not play back-gammon, he joined Prince D , with whom he was on intimate terms, and he did not refuse the glass of champagne which was offered to him. He arranged himself so comfortably after his dinner, slightly smoothing the seat of his trousers, that any one would think he had been sitting there a century, smoking his cigar, sipping his champagne, and happily conscious of the nearness of princes and counts and the sons of ministers. The tidings of the return of the Labazofs disturbed his equanimity. “Where are you going, Pakhtin?” asked the son of a minister, who in the interval of his play, noticed

that Pakhtin got up, pulled down his waistcoat, and drank his champagne in great swallows.

“Seviernikof invited me,” said Pakhtin, feeling a certain unsteadiness in his legs, “say, are you going?”

Anastasya, Anastasya, otvorya’i-ka vorota.

This was a gipsy song that was in great vogue at the time.

“Perhaps so. And you?”

“How should I go, an old married man?”

“There now.”

Pakhtin, smiling, went to find Seviernikof in the “glass room.” He liked to have his last word take the form of a jest. And so it was now.

“Tell me, how is the countess’s health?” he asked, as he joined Seviernikof, who did not know him at all, but, as Pakhtin conjectured, would consider it of the greatest importance to know of the Labazofs’ return. Seviernikof had been himself somewhat implicated in the affair of December 14, and was a friend of the Deka-brists.

The countess’s health was much better, and Pakhtin was very glad of it.

“Did you know that Labazof got back to-day, and is staying at Chevalier’s?”

“What is that you say? Why, we are old friends. How glad I am. He has grown old, poor fellow. His wife wrote my wife....”

But Seviernikof did not cite what she wrote. His partner, who was playing without trumps, made some mistake. While talking with Ivan Pavlovitch, he kept his eye on them, but now suddenly he threw his whole body on the table, and, pounding on it with his hands, proved that he ought to have played a seven.

Ivan Pavlovitch got up and went to another table, joined the conversation there, and communicated to another important man his news, again got up and did the same thing at a third table. All these men of distinction were very glad to hear of Labazof’s return, so that when Ivan Pavlovitch came back to the billiard-room again he no longer doubted, as he had at first, whether it was the proper thing to be glad of Labazof’s return, and no longer employed any periphrasis about the

ball, or the article in the *Viestnik*, or any one's health, or the weather, but broke his news at once with an enthusiastic account of the happy return of the famous Dekabrist. The little old man, who was still making vain attempts to hit the white ball with his cue, was, in Pakhtin's opinion, most likely to be rejoiced by the news. He went to him.

"You play remarkably well, your highness," said Pakhtin, just as the little old man struck his cue full in the marker's red waistcoat, signifying by this that he wished it chalked.

The title of address was not spoken at all as you would suppose, with any servility, oh, no, that would have been impossible in 1856. Ivan Pavlovitch called this old man simply by his given name and patronymic, and the title was given partly as a joke on those who did use it, and partly to let it be known that "we know with whom we are speaking, and yet we like to have a bit of sport and that is a fact; "at any rate, it was very subtle.

"I have just heard that Piotr Labazof has got back. He has arrived to-day from Siberia with his whole family."

Pakhtin uttered these words at the instant that the
1 Vashe vuisokoprevaskhadityelstvo.

little old man was aiming at his ball again this was his misfortune.

"If he has come back such a hare-brained fellow as he was when he was sent off, there is nothing to be rejoiced over," said the little old man, gruffly, provoked at his incomprehensible lack of success.

This reply disconcerted Ivan Pavlovitch; once more he did not know whether it was the proper thing to be glad of Labazof's return, and in order definitely to settle his doubts he directed his steps to the room where the men of intellect collected to talk, the men who knew the significance and object of everything, who knew every-thing, in one word. Ivan Pavlovitch had the same pleasant relations with the habitués of the "intellectual room" as he had with the gilded youth and the dignitaries.

To tell the truth, he was out of his place in the “intellectual room,” but no one was surprised when he entered and sat down on a divan. The talk was turning on the question in what year and on what subject a quarrel had occurred between two Russian journals. Taking advantage of a moment’s silence, Ivan Pavlo-vitch communicated his tidings, not at all as a matter to rejoice over, nor as a matter of little account, but as if it were connected with the conversation. But immediately, by the way the “intellectuals” employ this word to signify the habitats of the “intellectual room” received the tidings and began to discuss it, immediately Ivan Pavlovitch understood that here at least this tidings was investigated, and that here only it would take such a form as he could safely carry it further, and “savoir a quoi s* en, tenir”

“Labazof was the only one left,” said one of the “in-tellectuals.” “Now all of the Dekabristes who are alive have returned to Russia.”

“He was one of the band of famous” said Pakhtin, in a still experimental tone of voice, ready to make this quotation either comic or serious.

“Undoubtedly Labazof was one of the most important men of that time,” began one of the “intellectuals.” “In 1819 he was ensign of the Semyonovsky regiment and was sent abroad with despatches for Duke Z / . Then he came back, and in 1824 was admitted to the first Masonic lodge. All the Masons of that time met at D ‘s and at his house. You see, he was very rich;

Prince Z , Feodore D , Ivan P , those were

his most intimate friends. And so his uncle, Prince Vis-sarion, in order to remove the young man from their society, brought him to Moscow.”

“Excuse me, Nikola? Stepanovitch,” interrupted another of the “intellectuals.” “It seems to me that that was in 1823, because Vissarion Labazof was appointed commander of the third Corps in 1824 and was in War-saw. He took him on his own staff as aide, and after his dismissal brought him here. However, excuse me, I interrupted you.”

“Oh, no, you finish the story.”

“No, I beg of you.”

“No, you finish; you ought to know about it better than I do, and besides, your memory and knowledge have been satisfactorily shown here.”

“Well, in Moscow he resigned, contrary to his uncle’s wishes,” proceeded the one whose “memory and knowl-edge had been satisfactorily shown.” “And here around him formed another society of which he was the head and heart, if one may so express oneself. He was rich, had a good intellect, was cultivated. They say he was remarkably lovable. My aunt used to say that she never knew a man more charming. And here, just be-fore the conspiracy, he married one of the Krinskys.”

“The daughter of Nikolai” Krinsky, the one who be-fore Borodino.... oh, yes, the famous one,” interrupted some one.

“Oh, yes. Her enormous property is his now, but his own estate, which he inherited, went to his younger brother, Prince Ivan, who is now Ober-hoff-kafermeis-ter that is what he called it and was minister. Best of all was his behavior toward his brother,” contin-ued the narrator.

“When he was arrested the only thing that he had time to destroy was his brother’s letters and papers.”

“Was his brother implicated?”

The narrator did not reply “yes,” but compressed his lips and closed his eyes significantly.

“Then to all questions Piotr Labazof inflexibly denied everything that would reflect on his brother, and for this reason he was punished more severely than the others. But what is best of all is that Prince Ivan got possession of his whole property, and never sent a grosh to him.”

“They say that Piotr Labazof himself renounced it,” remarked one of the listeners.

“Yes, but he renounced it simply because Prince Ivan, just before the coronation, wrote him that if he did not take it they would confiscate the property, and that he had children and obligations, and that now he was not in a condition to restore anything. Piotr replied in two lines : * Neither I nor my heirs have or wish to have any claim to the estate assigned to you by law.’ And nothing further. Why should he? And

Prince Ivan swallowed it down, and with rapture locked this document and various bonds into his strong-box and showed it to no one." One of the peculiarities of the "intellectual" room consisted in the fact that its habitués knew, when they wanted to know, everything that was done in the world, however much of a secret it was.

"Nevertheless it is a question," said a new speaker, "whether it would be fair to take from Prince Ivan's children the property which they have had ever since they were young, and which they supposed they had a right to."

The conversation thus took an abstract turn which did not interest Pakhtin.

He felt the necessity of finding fresh persons to communicate his tidings to, and he got up and made his way leisurely through the rooms, stopping here and there to talk. One of his fellow-members delayed him to tell him the news of the Labazofs' return.

"Who doesn't know it?" replied Ivan Pavlovitch, smiling calmly as he started for the front door. The news had gone entirely round the circle and was coming back to him again. There was nothing left for him to do at the club, so he went to a reception. It was not a formal reception, but a "salon," where every evening callers were received. There were present eight ladies and one old colonel, and all of them were awfully bored. Pakhtin's assurance of bearing and his smiling face had the effect of immediately cheering up the ladies and girls. The tidings was all the more apropos from the fact that there was present the old Countess Fuchs with her daughter. When Pakhtin repeated almost word for word all he had heard in the "intellectual" room, Madame Fuchs, shaking her head and amazed to think how old she was, began to recall how she had once ridden horse-back with Natasha Krinsky before she was married to Labazof.

"Her marriage was a very romantic story, and it all took place under my eyes. Natasha was almost engaged to Miatlin, who was afterward killed in a duel with Debro. Just at that time Prince Piotr came to Moscow, fell in love with her, and made her an offer. Only her father, who

was very favorably inclined to Miatlin and was especially afraid of Labazof as a Mason her father refused his consent. But the young man continued to meet her at balls, everywhere, and he made friends with Miatlin, and asked him to withdraw. Miatlin consented. Labazof persuaded her to elope with him. She had already agreed to do so, but repented at the last moment” the conversation was carried on in French “she went to her father and told him that all was ready for their elopement, and that she could leave him, but that she hoped for his generosity. And in fact her father forgave her, all took her part, and he gave his consent.

And so the wedding took place, and it was a gay wedding! Who of us dreamed that within a year she would follow him to Siberia? She was an only daughter, the richest and handsomest heiress of that time. The Emperor Alexander always paid her attention at balls, and how many times he danced with her. The Countess G. gave a bal costumt, if I remember rightly; and she went as a Neapolitan girl, wonderfully beautiful. Whenever the Emperor came to Moscow he would ask: *Que fait la belle Napolitaine?* And suddenly this woman, in a delicate condition, her baby was born on the way, without a moment’s hesitation, without making any preparations, without packing her trunks, just as she was, when they arrested him, followed him for five thousand versts.”

“Oh, what a wonderful woman,” exclaimed the hostess.

“And both he and she were such uncommon people,” said still another woman. “I have been told, but I don’t know whether it is true or not, that everywhere in Siberia where they work in the mines, or whatever it is called, the convicts who were with them became better from associating with them.”

“Yes; but she never worked in the mines,” corrected Pakhtin.

That is what the year ‘56 was! Three years before no one had a thought for the Labazofs, and if any one remembered them, it was with that inexplicable sense of terror with which one speaks of the recently dead. Now how vividly all their former relations were remembered, all their admirable qualities were brought up, and every lady already began to

form plans for securing a monopoly of the Labazofs, and by means of them to attract other guests.

“Their son and daughter have come with them,” said Pakhtin.

“If only they are as handsome as their mother was! “said the Countess Fuchs however, their father also was very, very handsome.”

“How could they educate their children there?” queried the hostess.

“They say they are admirably educated. They say the young man is so handsome, so likeable! and educated as if he had been brought up in Paris.”

“I predict a great success for the young lady,” said a very handsome girl.

“All these Siberian ladies have about them something pleasantly trivial, and every one likes it.”

“Yes, that is so,” said another girl.

“So we have still another wealthy match,” said a third girl.

The old colonel, who was of German extraction, and three years before had come to Moscow to make a rich marriage, decided that it was for his interest, as soon as possible, before the young men found out about this, to get an introduction to her, and offer himself. The girls and ladies had almost precisely the same thought re-garding the young man from Siberia.

“This must be and is my fate,” thought one girl who for eight years had been vainly launched on society. “It must have been for the best that that stupid cavalier guardsman did not offer himself to me. I should surely have been unhappy.

“Well, they will all grow yellow with jealousy when this young man like the rest falls in love with me,” thought a young and beautiful woman. Whatever is said of the provincialism of small towns, there is nothing worse than the provincialism of high society. There one finds no new faces, but society is ready to take up with any new persons as soon as once they appear; here it is rarely that, as now with the La-bazofs, people are acknowledged as belonging to their circle and received, and the sensation produced by these new personages was even stronger than would have been the case in a district city.

“MOSCOW, OH, MOTHER Moscow, white-walled city! “I exclaimed Piotr Ivanovitch, rubbing his eyes the next morning and listening to the sound of bells that floated above the Gazetnui Pereulok.

Nothing so vividly recalls the past as sounds; and these peals of the Moscow bells, together with the sight of the white wall seen from the window and the rattle of wheels, so vividly recalled to him not only that Moscow which he had known thirty-five years before, but also that Moscow with its Kreml, its roofs, its Ivans, and the rest which he had borne in his heart, that he felt a childish delight in the fact that he was a Russian and that he was in Moscow.

There appeared a Bukhara khalat, flung open over a broad chest in a chintz shirt, a pipe with an amber mouth-piece, a lackey with gentle manners, tea, the scent of to-bacco; a loud impetuous voice of a man was heard in Chevalier’s rooms; morning kisses were exchanged, and the voices of daughter and son intermingled, and the Dekabrist was just as much at home as in Irkutsk or as he would have been in New York or Paris.

As I should not wish to present to my readers my Dekabrist hero as above all weaknesses, it must be confessed in the interests of truth that Piotr Ivanovitch shaved himself with the greatest care, combed his hair, and looked into the mirror. He was dissatisfied with his coat, which had been none too well mended in Siberia, and twice he unbuttoned and buttoned up his waistcoat.

Natalya Nikolayevna came into the drawing-room with her black moire gown rustling, with such sleeves and laces on her cap, that, although it was entirely out of the prevalent fashion, still it was so devised that it not only was not ridicule but on the contrary distingue. But in case of ladies this is a peculiar sixth sense, and sagacity is not to be compared with it.

Sonya was likewise so constituted that, although every-thing she wore was at least two years behind the style, still one could find no fault with

it. The mother wore what was dark and simple; the daughter what was light and gay.

Serozha had only just woke up, and the ladies went without him to mass. The father and the mother sat behind, the daughter in front. Vasili sat on the box, and an izvoshchik's cab carried them to the Kreml. When they entered, the ladies adjusted their gowns, and Piotr Ivanovitch took Natalya Nikolayevna on his arm, and, hanging his head, entered the doors of the cathedral. Few either merchants, or officers, or the common people could have known who these strangers were.

Who was that deeply sunburnt and decrepit old man with the straight and circling wrinkles, indicative of a laborious life wrinkles of a kind never met with at the English club with his hair and beard white as snow, with his proud yet kindly glance and his energetic movements? Who was that tall lady with her air of distinction and her large beautiful eyes, so weary and so dim? Who was that strong, fresh, well-proportioned girl, dressed so unfashionably, and yet so self-assured? Of the merchant class or not of the merchant class? Germans or not Germans? People of rank? Apparently not, and yet evidently people of distinction.

Thus thought those that saw them in the church, and consequently they all even more willingly made haste to step aside and to let them pass than if they were men with heavy epaulets.

Piotr Ivanovitch held himself as majestically as at his entrance, and said his prayers with dignity and solemnity, not forgetting himself.

Natalya Nikolayevna knelt lightly, taking out her handkerchief, and she wept many tears during the time of the Kheruvimskaya song. Sonya evidently seemed to be making an effort to control herself so as to say her prayers. The service did not appeal to her, but she did not look round; she crossed herself assiduously.

Serozha stayed at home partly because he slept over, partly because he did not like to stand during the service; it made his feet swell, and he never could understand why it was that to travel on snow-shoes forty versts did not trouble him in the least, while to stand during the twelve

Gospels caused him the greatest physical pain; but his chief excuse was that he needed new clothes.

He dressed and went to the Kuznetsky Most. He had plenty of money. His father had made it a rule ever since his son was twenty-one years old, to give him as much money as he wanted. It was in his power to leave his father and mother absolutely penniless.

What a pity about the two hundred and fifty silver rubles which he wasted in Kuntz's ready-made clothing establishment! Any one of the gentlemen who passed Serozha on the street would have gladly taught him, and would have considered it a pleasure to go with him to show him what to get; but, as usually happens, he was alone in the throng, and he went along the Kuznetsk 1 Most in his cap, opened the door, and emerged from there in a cinnamon-colored semi-dress-coat, cut narrow, they were worn wide, in black trousers, cut wide, they were worn narrow, and in a flowered satin waist-coat which not one of the gentlemen who frequented the special room at Chevalier's would have permitted himself to bestow on his lackey; and these things Serozha bought largely because Kuntz was in perplexity about the young man's slender figure, and, as he was in the habit of saying to all his customers, he declared that he had never seen the like before.

Serozha knew that he had a good figure, but the praise of a stranger like Kuntz greatly flattered him. He went out minus his two hundred and fifty rubles; and yet he was very badly dressed, so badly in fact that his new clothes within two days went into the possession of Vasili, and this episode always remained an unpleasant recollection for Serozha. When he reached the hotel again he went down-stairs and took his seat in the large room, also looking into the Chevalier's private room, and he called for such strange dishes for his breakfast that the garçon when he went into the kitchen had to laugh. But nevertheless he asked for a newspaper and pre-tended to read it. When the garçon, presuming on the youth's inexperience, began to ask him questions, Serozha bade him go to his place and his face grew red. But he spoke so haughtily that the man obeyed him. His mother, his father, and sister when they returned home found likewise that his new clothes were admirable.

Do you remember that delightful feeling of childhood when on your name-day you were dressed up in your best, and were taken to mass, and then, returning home with the festival in your clothes, in your face, and in your soul, you found guests and toys waiting for you? You knew that on that day you had no lessons, that your elders also rejoiced with you, that for the entire house that day was exceptional and joyous; you knew that you alone were the sole cause of this enthusiasm, and that whatever you did, it would be forgiven you; and it seemed strange that people in the street were not also rejoicing with you, just as your friends were, and everything sounded louder and the lights were brighter; in a word, it was the festival feeling. Such a feeling did Piotr Ivanovitch experience on returning from church.

Pakhtin's evening labors had not been in vain; instead of toys Piotr Ivanovitch, when he reached his rooms, found a number of visiting cards of influential Muscovites who in '56 counted it their bounden duty to show the distinguished exile all possible attention, although three years before they would not have cared to see him. In the eyes of Chevalier, the Swiss, and the people of the hotel, the arrival of so many carriages with inquiries for Piotr Ivanovitch in one single morning multiplied their respect and obsequiousness tenfold. All this stood for the name-day gifts for Piotr Ivanovitch. However experienced in life a man may be, wise as he may be, the manifestation of respect from men who are themselves respected by the great majority of men is always pleasant. Piotr Ivanovitch felt gay at heart when Chevalier, bowing, proposed to him to change his rooms for better ones, and begged him to make known whatever he would like done for his comfort, and assured him that he counted it an honor to have him a guest at his hotel; and, so it was when, glancing over the cards and again throwing them into the card-receiver, he mentioned the names of Count

S , Prince D , and the like. Natalya Nikolayevna declared that she would receive no one, but would go immediately to Marya Ivanovna's, and to this Piotr Ivanovitch agreed, although he would have been glad to talk with many of the visitors.

Only one of the visitors succeeded in forcing the countersign. This was Pakhtin. If this man had been asked why he had come from Pretchistenka to the Gazetnui Pereulok, he would not have been able to give any satisfactory excuse, except that he liked anything which was new and interesting, and so he had come to look at Piotr Ivanovitch as at a curiosity. It might be thought that he would have felt a little hesitation at intruding with such an excuse on a perfect stranger to him. But it was quite the contrary. Piotr Ivanovitch and his son and Sofya Petrovna were dumfounded. Natalya Nikolayevna was too much of a grande dame to be confused at any such thing. A weary look from her beautiful black eyes rested calmly on Pakhtin. Pakhtin was fresh, self-satisfied, and very genial, as usual. He and Marya Ivanovna were friends.

“Ah!” said Natalya Nikolayevna.

“Well, not exactly friends our years, you know, but she has always been very kind to me.”

Pakhtin had been long a worshiper of Piotr Ivanovitch; he knew his companions. He hoped he might be useful to the newcomers. He had intended to have come the evening before; but had not been able to manage it, and he begged them to excuse him, and so he sat down and talked for a long time.

“Yes, I will tell you that I have found many changes in Russia since I went away,” said Piotr Ivanovitch, in reply to a question. As soon as Piotr Ivanovitch began to speak it was worth while to notice with what respectful attention Pakhtin listened to every word which fell from the old man’s lips, and how, at every phrase or word, Pakhtin, by a nod, a smile, or a motion of the eyes, let it be understood that he was listening, and taking in all the force of words and phrases so memorable. The weary eyes approved this maneuver. Serguei Petrovitch, it seemed, was afraid that his father’s talk would not be worth the hearer’s attention. Sofya Petrovna, on the contrary, smiled with that slight smile of satisfaction characteristic of people who detect the ridiculous side of a man. It seemed to her that nothing was to be expected from this man, that he was a “softy”¹ as she and her brother called a certain kind of man.

Piotr Ivanovitch explained that during his journey he had remarked many great changes which pleased him.

“Beyond doubt the people the peasantry are greatly improved; there has come to be greater recognition in them of their dignity,” said he, as if repeating an old phrase.

“And I must say, that the people interest me, and always have interested me, more than anything else. I firmly believe that the strength of Russia is not in us, but in the common people.”

Piotr Ivanovitch, with a warmth characteristic of him, communicated his more or less original ideas concerning a number of important subjects. We shall have to hear them more at length. Pakhtin was enraptured, and expressed his perfect agreement with everything : “You will surely have to make the acquaintance of the Aksatofs; you will allow me to present them to you, prince? You know his new journal is now to be permitted; the first number will be out to-morrow. I have read his wonderful article on the orderliness of the theory of science in the abstract. Thoroughly interesting. There is still another article of his the history of Serbia in the eleventh century, of that famous voyevode Karbovanietz; also very interesting. On the whole it is a great stride in advance.”

“Oh, yes,” said Piotr Ivanovitch. But all this news evidently did not interest him; he did not even know the names and services of these men whom Pakhtin spoke about as if they were universally known. Natalya Nikolayevna, however, not scorning the necessity of knowing all these men and conditions, remarked in her husband’s exculpation that Pierre received the journals very late, but he read them very assiduously.

“Papa, are we going to auntie’s?” asked Sonya, coming in.

“Yes, but we must have luncheon first. Would n’t you like something?”

Pakhtin, of course, refused; but Piotr Ivanovitch, with hospitality peculiarly Russian, and characteristic of himself, insisted on Pakhtin’s having something to eat and drink. He himself drank a small glass of

vodka and a cup of Bordeaux. Pakhtin noticed that, when he drank the wine, Natalya Nikolayevna unexpectedly turned away from the glass, and the son looked at his father's hand. After the wine, Piotr Ivanovitch replied to Pakhtin's questions as to what he thought about the new literature, the new tendencies, about the war, about the peace. Pakhtin knew how to unite the most diver-gent topics into one disconnected but fluent conversa-tion.

To these questions Piotr Ivanovitch immediately launched into a general profession de foi, and either the wine, or the topic of conversation, caused him to grow so excited that tears stood in his eyes, and Pakhtin grew enthusiastic and even wept; he did not hesitate to ex-press his conviction that Piotr Ivanovitch was far ahead of the most advanced liberals, and that he ought to be the leader of all parties. Piotr Ivanovitch's eyes flashed; he had faith in all Pakhtin said to him, and he would have continued the conversation much longer if Sofya Petrovna had not conspired with Natalya Niko-layevna to put on her mantilla, and had not herself come in to get Piotr Ivanovitch.

He was going to drink up the rest of his wine, but Sofya Petrovna took it herself.

"What do you mean?"

"I have n't had any yet, papa. Excuse me."

He smiled.

"Well, we must go to Marya Ivanovna's. You pardon us, Mr. Pakhtin."

And Piotr Ivanovitch went out, carrying his head high. In the vestibule he fell in with a general who had come to pay his respects to his old friend. They had not met for thirty-five years. The general had no teeth and was bald.

"Why, how fresh you are," said he, "Siberia must be better than Petersburg. Are these your family? Pray present me! What a fine young man your son is. Then you will dine with us to-morrow?"

"Yes, yes, certainly."

On the doorstep they met the famous Chikhayef, also an old acquaintance.

"How did you know that I had come?"

“It would be a shame for Moscow, if it was not known; it was a shame that you were not met at the barriers. If you are going out to dine, it must be at your sister’s, Marya Ivanovna’s. Well, that is excellent; I shall be there also.”

Piotr Ivanovitch always had the look of a proud man for those who could not penetrate that exterior and read his expression of unspeakable goodness and susceptibility; but now Natalya Nikolayevna admired him for his unusual majesty, and Sofya Petrovna’s eyes smiled as she looked at him.

They reached Marya Ivanovna’s.

Marya Ivanova was Piotr Ivanovitch’s godmother and was ten years his senior. She was an old maid.

Her story and how she failed to secure a husband, and how she lived in her youth, I shall tell in some other place.

She had lived uninterruptedly in Moscow. She had neither great intellect nor great wealth, and she did not value her relatives, on the contrary; but there was not a man who would not value her friendship. She was so convinced that all ought to value her, that all did value her. There were young liberals from the university who did not acknowledge her power, but these gentlemen conspired only in her absence. All it required was for her to walk with her imperial gait into the drawing-room, to speak in her calm manner, to smile her caressing smile, and they were subjected. Her circle included every one. She looked on Moscow and treated it as her own household. Her special friends consisted of young people and intellectual men; women she did not like. She had also those sycophants, male and female, whom, for some reason or other, our literature has included in the general scorn it lavishes on the Hungarian cloak and on generals. But Marya Ivanovna considered that it was better for the ruined gambler Skopin and the “grass widow” Byesheva to live with her than in poverty, and so she supported them.

There were two powerful feelings in Marya Ivanovna’s present existence; they were her two brothers. Piotr Ivanovitch was her idol. Prince Ivan was her detestation. She did not know that Piotr Ivanovitch had come, she had been at mass, and was at the present moment

drinking her coffee. The vicar of Moscow, Byesheva, and Skopin were sitting at the table. Marya Ivanovna was telling them of the young Count V , the son of Count P. Z , who had just returned from

Sevastopol and with whom she was in love for she was always having passions. He was to dine with her that day.

The vicar got up and took his leave. Marya Ivanovna did not attempt to detain him. She was a latitudinarian in this respect; she was pious, but she did not like monks. She made sport of girls who ran after them, and she said boldly that, in her opinion, monks were the same kind of people as we poor sinners, and that salvation was to be obtained in the world better than in monasteries.

“Give out word that I am not receiving,” said she. “I am going to write to Pierre; I don’t understand why he has not come yet. Probably Natalya Nikolayevna is ill.”

Marya Ivanovna was convinced that Natalya Niko-layevna did not like her, and was her enemy. She could never forgive her because it was Natalya Nikola-yevna, and not she, his sister, who gave him her property and went with him to Siberia, and because her brother had definitely refused to accept this sacrifice when she had got ready to go with him. After thirty-five years she was beginning to believe her brother in his asser-tion that Natalya Nikolayevna was the best woman in the world, and his guardian angel; but she was jealous of her, and she kept imagining that she was a wicked woman.

She got up, went through the “hall,” and was start-ing for her library when the door opened, and the gray-haired Byesheva’s wrinkled face, expressing a joyous terror, appeared in the doorway.

“Marya Ivanovna, prepare your mind,” said she.

“A letter?”

“No, something more important.”

But, before she had a chance to finish her sentence, a man’s loud voice was heard in the vestibule.

“Where is she? You go on, Natasha.”

"It is he!" exclaimed Marya Ivanovna, and with long, firm steps she went to her brother. She met him as if she had parted with him only the day before.

"When did you arrive? Where are you staying? How did you come by carriage?" Such questions as this did Marya Ivanovna put, as she went with him into the drawing-room; nor did she wait or listen to his replies, but kept looking, with wide-open eyes, now at one, now at another of them. Byesheva was amazed at such calmness, or indifference rather, and did not approve of it. They all smiled; the conversation languished. Marya Ivanovna relapsed into silence, and kept looking at her brother gravely.

"How are you?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch, taking her hand, and smiling. Piotr Ivanovitch addressed his sister with the plural pronoun "vui," and she used the singular "tui." Marya Ivanovna looked once more at the gray beard and the bald head, at his teeth, at the wrinkles around his eyes, at his sunburned face, and she knew it all.

"Here is my Sonya."

But she did not look at her.

"Whatafoo...."

Her voice broke; she seized her brother's bald head with both her big white hands. "What a fool you were," she was going to say, "that you did not give me warning," but her bosom and shoulders shook, her face grew convulsed, and she began to sob, while still pressing the bald head to her bosom, and repeating :

"What a foo-1 you were not to give me notice."

Piotr Ivanovitch no longer seemed to himself such a great man, or so important, as he had seemed to be when he stood on the doorsteps of the Hotel Chevalier. He was seated in an arm-chair, but his head was in his sister's arms, and his nose was squeezed against her corset, and something tickled his nose, and his hair was tumbled, and tears were in his eyes. But still he liked it

When this ebullition of happy tears had passed, Marya Ivanovna realized and believed in the reality of what had happened, and began to study them all. But several times again, during the course of that

day, when it came over her what he had once been, and what she had once been, and what they were now, and when her imagination vividly pictured their past unhappiness, and their former happiness and their former love, she would again spring up, and say :

“What a fool you were, Petrushka; what a fool not to give me warning. Why did you not come directly to me? I would have taken you in,” said Marya Ivanovna. “At any rate, you will dine with me. It won’t be a bore to you, Sergye’f, for a young hero from Sevastopol is coming. But don’t you know the son of Nikolai’ Mi-khai’lovitch? He is a writer who has already written something. I have-not read it yet, but it* is praised, and he is a fine young fellow. I will have him invited. Chikhayef also wanted to come. Well, he is a chatter-box. I don’t like him. He ‘s been to see you already. And have you seen Nikita? Now all that is rubbish. What do you intend to do? And how is your health, Natalie? Where did you get this handsome lad and lassie?”

But the conversation kept flagging.

Before dinner Natalya Nikolayevna and the children went to see the old aunt. The brother and sister were left alone together, and he began to unfold his plans.

“Sonya is grown up; we shall have to bring her out; of course we shall live in Moscow,” said Marya Ivanovna.

“Not for the world.”

“Serozha will have to go into the service.”

“Not for the world.”

“You are as crazy as ever.”

Nevertheless, she had a great fondness for the “crazy” one.

“We shall have to settle down here, then go into the country and show the children everything.”

“My rule is not to interfere in family affairs,” said Marya Ivanovna, who was now growing calm after her excitement, “and I never give advice.

But that a young man should go into the service I have always thought, and think so still, but now more than ever. You have no idea, Petrusha, what young men are nowadays. I know them all; here is Prince Dmitri’s son, he has entirely failed. Yes, and what is more, they are to blame for

it. You see, I am not afraid of any one; I am an old woman, and it is not well.”

And she began to talk about the government. She was dissatisfied with the excessive freedom granted to every one.

“They have done one good thing, they let you come home. That is good.”

Petrusha began to speak in the government’s defense, but Marya Ivanovna was of a different nature from Pakhtin’s. She would not argue with him; she instantly grew heated.

“Now, here you are defending it? Why do you defend it? I see you are just the same, just as unreasonable as ever.”

Piotr Ivanovitch held his peace, but smiled faintly, showing that, he was not convinced, but that he did not wish to quarrel with Marya Ivanovna.

“You smile. We know what that means. You don’t want to discuss with me, with an old woman,” said she, gayly and soothingly, and looking at her brother more keenly, more cleverly, than one would have expected from an old woman with such strong features. “Yes, you’d better not discuss, little friend. You see, I have lived seventy years. And I have not lived to be a fool, either; but I have seen some things and learned some things; I have not read your books, and I don’t intend to read them, either. What rubbish there is in books.”

“Now tell me how my children please you,” said Piotr Ivanovitch, with the same smile.

“Well, well, now,” said his sister, threatening him, “don’t get on to the subject of your children yet; we will talk about that by and by. But here is something I want to tell you. You are such an unpractical man. I can see it by your eyes you are just what you always have been. And now they will make much of you. That is the fashion now; you are all in the style. Yes, yes, I see it in your eyes that you are just the same impracticable fellow that you always were,” she added, replying to his smile. “You had better keep in the background. I pray to Christ our God to keep you from all these modern liberals. God knows what they are up to. This thing is sure; it will end badly. Our government is keeping quiet now, but by and by it will show its claws; mark my word, I am

afraid you will get entangled again. Give it up, it 's all folly; you have children."

"You see you don't know me now, Marya Ivanovna," said her brother.

"Very good, but we shall see. Either I don't know you, or you don't know yourself. I have only said what was in my mind, and if you heed me, well and good. But now let us talk about Serozha. What do you think about him? "She was going to say, "He does not please me very much; "but she said "He resembles his mother; they are as alike as two drops of water. Now there is your Sonya. She pleases me very much; there is something very sweet and frank about her. Very pretty. Where is she, where is Sonyushka? Yes, I had forgotten about her."

"What can I say? Sonya will make a good wife and a good mother, but Serozha is clever, very clever, no one can deny that. He is an excellent scholar, though he is rather lazy. He has a great aptitude for the natural sciences. We were very fortunate; we had a splendid, splendid tutor for him. He wants to enter the university; to have lectures on the natural sciences, chemistry"

"If you only knew, Petrusha, how I pity them," said she, in a tone of genuine, softened, and even submissive melancholy. "So sorry, so sorry! Their whole life before them. What won't they have to endure!"

"Well, we must hope that they will be more fortunate than we were."

"God grant it, God grant it! Oh, life is hard, Petrusha! Now listen to me in one thing. Don't go into subtleties, my dear. What a fool you are, Petrusha, oh, what a fool! However, I made some arrangements. I have invited some people, and what shall I give them to eat?"

She gave a little sob, turned round, and rang the bell.

"Call Taras."

"Is the old man still with you? "asked her brother.

"Yes, he is still here. But you '11 see he is only a boy in comparison with me."

Taras was surly and blunt, but he undertook to do everything.

Shortly after, elated with the cold and their joy, came in Natalya Nikolayevna and Sonya, their gowns rustling. Serozha had remained to make some more purchases.

“Let me look at her.”

Marya Ivanovna clasped her face between her two hands.

Natalya Nikolayevna told what she had been doing.

SECOND FRAGMENT

(VARIANT OF THE First Chapter)

lawsuit brought by the proprietor, Ivan Apuikhtin, retired lieutenant of the guard, for the possession of four thousand desyatins of land occupied by his neighbors, the crown-peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi, in the district of Krasnoslobodsky, government of Penza, had been decided at the first trial, by the District Court, in favor of the peasants, through the clever pleading of Ivan Mironof their advocate, and an enormous datcha, or parcel, of land, part forest, and part cultivated, cleared by Apuikhtin's serfs, fell into the hands of the peasants in 1815; and in 1816 the peasants sowed this land and harvested the crops. The profit of this irregular action of the peasants surprised all the neighborhood and the peasants themselves.

This success of the peasants was explained solely by the fact that Ivan Petrovitch Apuikhtin, a man of very sweet and peaceable nature, and no lover of lawsuits, though he was convinced of his rights in the matter, had taken no measures against the peasants. Ivan Mironof, however, a peasant who had studied law, a dry, hawk-nosed, educated muzhik, who had been golova, or head man, and had been about as collector of taxes, made an assessment of fifty kopeks apiece from each of the men, and spent this money to the best advantage in bribes, and cleverly conducted the whole affair to a successful issue.

But shortly after the decision of the District Court, Apuikhtin, seeing his danger, gave a power of attorney to a skilful lawyer, Ilya Mitrofanof, who appealed the case to the higher court against the decision of the District Court. Ilya Mitrofanof conducted the affair so cleverly that, in spite of the efforts of Ivan Mironof, the peasants' advocate,

notwithstanding all the considerable gifts of money presented by him to the members of the tribunal, the decision of the District was reversed in favor of the proprietor, and the land once more had to be given up by the peasants, and their advocate had to make the announcement to them.

Their advocate, Ivan Mironof, explained to the assembled peasants, that the gentlemen of the government had "lengthened the proprietor's arm and spoiled the affair entirely," so they were going to take away the land from them again; but that the proprietor's business would fall through because his petition had already been written to the senate, and there was a man there who had faithfully promised to do the right thing in the senate, and that then the land would be forever granted to the peasants : all that was wanted was a fresh assessment of a ruble apiece from every soul among them. The peasants voted to collect the money, and once more they intrusted the whole affair to Ivan Mironof. Having got the money, Mironof went to Petersburg.

When the season for plowing opened in Holy Week, 1817 it came late that year the peasants of Izlegoshchi met in an assembly and began to discuss whether they should cultivate the disputed land that year; and notwithstanding the fact that Apuikhtin's manager had come during Lent with an order to them not to plow his land, and to render account of the rye that they had harvested the year before, nevertheless the peasants, for the very reason that they had already sowed their winter crop on the disputed land, and because Apuikhtin, not wishing to be too hard on them, was trying to give them a fair chance, decided to cultivate the disputed land, and to take hold of it before they did anything else. On the very day the peasants went to plow the Berestof datcha, on Maundy Thursday, Ivan Petrovitch Apuikhtin, who had been fasting during Holy Week, partook of the communion and went early in the morning to the church in the village of Izlegoshchi, of which he was a parishioner, and there, being unwitting of the peasants' action, attended mass amiably with the church elder.

Ivan Petrovitch made confession in the afternoon and had the vespers performed at his house; in the morning he himself read the precepts,

and at eight o'clock he left his house. They were expecting him at mass. As he stood at the altar where he usually stood, Ivan Petro-vitch reasoned rather than prayed; and so he was dis-satisfied with himself. He, like many men of his time, indeed of all times, felt that his attitude toward the faith was not clear.

He was now fifty years old, he had never neglected the Church ritual, he went to church regularly and fasted once a year; in talking with his only daughter he had tried to ground her in the fundamentals of the true faith : but if any one had asked him exactly what he himself believed, he would have found it hard to decide what answer to give. Es-pecially on this particular day he felt his heart melt within him, and, as he stood by the altar, instead of say-ing the prayers, he kept thinking how strangely every-thing was arranged in this world : here he was, almost an old man, who had fasted perhaps forty times in his life, and he knew that all his domestics and all in the church regarded him as a model, took him as an example, and he felt himself bound to set this example in relation to religion; but here he did not know anything, and before long it would be time for him to die, and for the life of him he could not tell whether what he was giving his people as an example was true or not. And it was strange to him how all as he could see took it for granted that old people were firm in the faith and knew what was necessary and what was not necessary so he had always thought of old people; and here he was an old man, and yet he really did not know and was just as uncertain as he had been when he was twenty; hitherto he had disguised this fact, but now he acknowledged it.

Just as when he was a child the thought had some-times occurred to him during service to crow like a cock, so now all sorts of ridiculous notions went through his brain; but here he was, an old man, reverently bowing, resting the aged bones of his hand on the flagging of the floor, and here was Father Vasili showing evident signs of timidity in performing the service before him, and "thus by our zeal we encourage his!"

"But if they only knew what notions were flying through my head. But it is sin, it is sin, I must con-quer it by prayer," said he to himself as the

service began; and as he listened to the significance of the Ek-tenia, 1 he tried to pray, and in fact his emotions speedily carried him over into the spirit of prayer, and he began to realize his sins, and all that he had confessed.

A pleasant old man, walking evenly in bark shoes which had lost their shape, with a bald spot in the midst of his thick gray hair, wearing a shuba with a patch half way down the back, came up to the altar, bowed to the ground, shook back his hair, and went behind the altar to place the candles.

This was the church starosta, or elder, Ivan Feodotof, one of the best muzhiks of the village of Izlegoshchi. Ivan Petrovitch knew him. The sight of this grave, firm face led Ivan Petrovitch into a new trend of thought. He was one of the muzhiks that wanted to get his land away from him, and one of the best and richest of the married farmers who needed land, who knew how to till it, and with good reason.

His grave face, his reverent obeisance, his dignified walk, the neatness of his attire, his leg-wrappers clung round his calves like stockings, and the fasten-ings were symmetrically crossed so that they were the same on both, his whole appearance, seemed to express reproach and animosity to all that was of the earth.

“Now I have asked forgiveness of my wife and of my daughter Mani, and of my servant Volodya, and now I must ask also this man’s forgiveness and for-give him,” said Ivan Petrovitch, and he determined to go and ask forgiveness of Ivan Feodotof after the service. And so he did.

There were few people in the church. The majority made their devotions in the first or the fourth week of Lent. So that now there were only about forty men and women who had not been able to attend the ser-vices earlier, besides a few old men devoted church attendants from among Apuikhtin’s house servants and those of his rich neighbors, the Chernuishefs. There were among them an old .lady, a relative of the Chernui-shefs, who lived with them, and the widow of

a sacris-tan, whose son the Chernuishefs, out of sheer kindness, had educated and made a man of, and who was now serving as a. functionary in the senate.

Between matins and mass comparatively few remained in the church. The peasant men and women stayed outside. There remained two beggar women, sitting in one corner, whispering together and occasionally glanc-ing at Ivan Petrovitch with an evident desire to wish his health and talk with him, and two lackeys, his own lackey, in livery, and the Chernuishefs', who had come with the old lady. These two were also whispering to-gether with great animation when Ivan Petrovitch came out from behind the altar, and as soon as they saw him they stopped talking.

There was still another woman in the high head-dress decorated with glass beads, and a white shuba, which she wrapped round a sick infant, trying to keep it from screaming. Then there was still another, a hunch-backed old woman also in a peasant head-dress, but dec-orated with woolen tags, and in a white kerchief tied in old woman's fashion, and wearing a gray chuprun, or sack, with cocks embroidered down the back, and she knelt in the middle of the church, bowing toward an ancient image which was placed between the grated windows, and covered with a new towel with red ends, and she prayed so fervently, solemnly, and passionately, that it was impossible to avoid noticing her.

Before going to speak to the church elder, who was standing at the closet, kneading the candle-ends into a ball of wax, Ivan Petrovitch paused to glance at this old woman praying. She prayed very fluently. She knelt as straight as one could when addressing an image; all of her limbs were composed with mathematical sym-metry, the toes of her bark shoes touched the stone flag-ging in exactly the same spot, her body was bent back as far as the hump on her back permitted, her arms were folded with absolute regularity across her stomach, her head was thrown back, and her wrinkled face, with an expression of modest entreaty, with dim eyes was turn-ing directly toward the towel-covered ikon.

After she had remained motionless in such a position for a minute or less, but still a definitely determined time, she drew a long sigh, and, withdrawing her right hand, with a wide swing she raised it higher than her head-dress, touched the crown of her head with her closed fingers, and thus widely made the sign of the cross on her abdomen and on her shoulders, and then bringing it back again she bowed her head down to her hands, spread according to rule on the ground, and once more she lifted herself and once more repeated the whole operation.

“There is true prayer,” said Ivan Petrovitch to him-self, as he looked at her; “not such as us sinners offer; here is faith, though I know that she addresses her image or her towel or the jewels on the image, as they all do. But it is all right. Why not? Each person has his own creed,” said he to himself; “she prays to an image, and here I consider it necessary to beg pardon of a muzhik!”

And he started to find the starosta, involuntarily look-ing about the church to see if any one was watching his proposed action, which was both pleasing and humiliat-ing to him. It was disagreeable to him to have the old women beggars, he called them, see him, but most disagreeable of all was it to have Mishka, his lackey, see him; in Mishka’s presence he knew his keen, shrewd wit he felt that he had not the power to seek Ivan Feodotof. And he beckoned Mishka to come to him.

“What do you wish?”

“Please go, brother, and get me the rug from the calash, it is so damp here for one’s legs.”

“I will do so.”

And as soon as Mishka had left the church, Ivan Petrovitch immediately went to Ivan Feodotof.

Ivan Feodotof was abashed, just as if he had been detected in some misdemeanor, as soon as his barin drew near. His bashfulness and nervous movements made a strange contrast with his grave face and his curly steel-gray hair and beard. “Do you wish a ten-kopek candle,”

he asked, lifting the cover of his desk, and only occasionally raising his large handsome eyes to his barin.

“No, I need no candle. Ivan, I ask you to pardon me for Christ’s sake, if I have in any way offended you. Pardon me, for Christ’s sake,” he repeated, bowing low.

Ivan Feodotof was wholly dumfounded, and at a loss what to say, but at last he said, with a gentle smirk, collecting his wits :

“God pardons. As far as I know I have nothing to complain of from you. God pardons, there is no offense,” he hastily repeated.

“Still....”

“God pardons, Ivan Petrovitch. Then you will have two ten-kopek candles?”

“Yes, two.”

“He ‘s an angel, just an angel; he begs pardon of a mean peasant. O Lord, he is truly an angel!” exclaimed the deacon’s wife, who wore an old black capote and a black kerchief. “And just what we ought to expect.”

“Ah, Paramonovna,” exclaimed Ivan Petrovitch, turn-ing to her. “Are you preparing for the sacrament? I ask your pardon also, for Christ’s sake.”

“God pardons, oh, you angel, 1 my kind benefactor, let me kiss your hand.”

“There, that will do, that will do! You know I don’t like that sort of thing,” said Ivan Petrovitch, smiling, and he went to the altar.

The mass, as it was ordinarily performed in the Izlegoshchi parish, was of short duration, the more so because there were few participants. When the “holy gates” were opened after “Our Father” had been said, Ivan Petrovitch glanced at the northern door to summon Mishka to take his shuba. When the priest noticed this movement, he sternly beckoned to the deacon; the deacon almost ran and summoned the lackey Mikhaifl. Ivan Petrovitch was in a self-satisfied and happy frame of mind, but this obsequiousness and the expression of deference shown by the priest who was officiating at mass, again distracted him, his thin, curved, smooth-shaven lips grew still more curved, and a flash of satire came into his kindly eyes.

“It is just as if I were his general,” said he to him-self, and he instantly remembered the words spoken by his German tutor, whom he once took with him to the altar to witness the Russian service; how this German had amused him and angered his wife by saying :
“Der Pop war ganz bosc, dass ich ihm A lies nachgesehen hatte? It also occurred to him how a young Turk had once declared that there was no God, because he had nothing more to eat.
“And here I am taking the communion,” he said to himself, and, frowning, he performed the reverences.

And, taking off his bearskin shuba, and remaining only in a blue coat with bright buttons and a high white cravat and waistcoat and close-fitting trousers in heelless boots with pointed toes, he went in his quiet, unobtrusive, and easy gait to bow before the images of the church. And again even here he met with the same complaisance on the part of the participants, who made room for him.

“They seem to be saying, apres votts s’il en reste” he remarked to himself, as he made his obeisances to the very ground, with an awkwardness which arose from the fact that he had to find the mean between what might be irreverence and hypocrisy. At last the doors opened. He followed the priest in the reading of the prayer repeating the yako razboinika^ they covered his cravat with the sacred veil, and he partook of the sacra-ment, and of the tepid water in the ancient vessel, and placed his coins in the ancient plates. He listened to the last prayers, bowed low toward the cross, and, putting on his shuba, left the church acknowledging the saluta-tions and experiencing a pleasant sensation of a good work accomplished. As he left the church he again fell in with Ivan Feodotovitch.

“Thank you, thank you,” said he, in reply to his sal-utation. “Tell me, are you going to plow soon?”

“The boys have begun, the boys have begun,” replied Ivan Feodotovitch, even more timidly than usual. He supposed that Ivan Petrovitch already knew where the men of Izlegoshchi had gone to plow. “Well, it has been wet, been wet. It is yet early, as yet it is early.”

Ivan Petrovitch went to the memorial of his father and mother, bowed low, and then took his seat in his calash drawn by six horses with outrider.

“Well, thank the Lord,” said he to himself, as he swayed gently on the soft easy springs, and gazed up at the spring sky with scattered clouds, and at the bare ground, and at the white spots of still unmelted snow, and at the closely twisted tail of the off horse, and breathed in the joyous, fresh spring air which was especially pleasant after the atmosphere of the church.

“Thank God that I have partaken of the communion, and thank God that I can take a little snuff.”

And he took out his snuff-box and long held the tobacco between his thumb and finger, and with the same hand, not applying the snuff, he raised his hat in reply to the low bows of the people whom he met, especially the women scrubbing their chairs and benches in front of their doorsteps, as the calash with a swift dash of the spanking horses went splashing and dashing through the muddy street of the village of Izlegoshchi.

Ivan Petrovitch, anticipating the pleasant sensation of the tobacco, held the snuff between his thumb and finger all the way through the village, even till after they had got beyond the bad place at the foot of the hill, up which the coachman evidently could not drive without difficulty; he gathered up the reins, settled himself better in his seat, and shouted to the outrider to keep to the ice. When they had passed beyond the bridge and had got out of the broken ice and mud, Ivan Petrovitch, looking at two lapwings rising above the ravine, took his snuff, and, feeling that it was rather cool, he put on his gloves, wrapped himself up, sunk his chin into his high cravat, and said to himself, almost aloud, the word “slavno” glorious, which was his favorite expression whenever everything seemed good to him.

During the night the snow had fallen, and even when Ivan Petrovitch was going to church the snow had not wholly melted, but was soft; but now, although there was no sun, the snow was almost liquid, and along the highway, by which he had to drive for three versts before he

reached the side road to Chirakovo, there were only gleams of snow on the last year's grass growing between the ruts. The horses trampled through the viscous mud on the black road. But for the fat, well-fed horses of his team it was no effort to draw the calash, and it seemed to go of itself, not only over the grass where the black tracks were left, but also through the mud itself.

"Ivan Petrovitch gave himself up to pleasant thoughts; he thought about his home, his wife, and his daughter.

"Masha will meet me on the steps, and with enthusiasm. She will see in me such a saint! She is a strange, sweet girl; only she takes everything to heart so. And the role which I have to play before her the role of dignity and importance has already begun to seem to me serious and ridiculous. If she only knew how much I stand in awe of her," he said to himself. "Well, Kato "that was his wife "will probably be in good spirits to-day really in good spirits, and the day will be excellent. Not as it was last week, owing to those Proshkinsky peasant women. She is a wonderful creature. And how afraid of her I am. But what is to be done about it? She herself is not happy."

Then he recalled a famous anecdote about a calf; how a proprietor who had quarreled with his wife was one day sitting at his window and saw a calf gamboling. "I would marry you," said the proprietor; and again he smiled, deciding everything puzzling and difficult, as was his wont, by a jest, generally directed against himself.

At the third verst, near the chapel, the postilion turned off to the left to take the cross-road, and the coachman shouted to him because he turned so short it struck the shaft horses with the pole, and from here on the calash rolled almost all the way down hill. Before they reached the house, the postilion looked at the coachman and pointed at something; the coachman looked at the lackey and also pointed at something. And they all gazed in one direction.

"What are you looking at?" asked Ivan Petrovitch.

"Wild geese," said MikhaTla.

"Where?"

But, though he strained his eyes, he could not see anything.

“Yonder, there is a forest, and beyond is a cloud, and there between, if you will be good enough to look.”

Still Ivan Petrovitch could not see anything. “Well, it is time for them. A week from to-day will be Annunciation.”

“So it will.”

“Well, go ahead.”

At the little lodge Mishka jumped down from the foot-board and examined the road, then climbed back again, and the calash rolled smoothly along by the edge of the pond into the park, mounted the driveway, passed the ice-house and the laundry, from which the water was dripping, and skilfully rounding up stopped at the porch. The Chernuishefs’ britchka was only just driving away from the yard. Immediately some people came hurrying down from the house : a surly-looking old man, Danilutch, with side-whiskers, Nikola, Mikhai’la’s brother, and the boy Pavlushka, and behind them a girl with large black eyes and red arms bare above the elbows, and also with open neck.

“Marya Ivanovna, Marya Ivanovna. Where are you? Here, your mamasha is getting anxious about you. Come,” said the voice of the stout Katerina in the background.

But the little girl did not heed her; as her father expected, she seized him by the hand, and looked at him with a peculiar look.

“Tell me, papenka, have you had the sacrament,” she asked, with a sort of terror.

“Yes, I have had the sacrament. Why, were you afraid that I was such a sinner that they would not let me have it?”

The little girl was evidently shocked at her father’s levity on such a solemn occasion. She sighed, and as she went with him she held him by the hand and kissed it.

“Who has come?”

“It is young Chernuishef. He is in the drawing-room.”

“Has mamma got up? What is she doing?”

“Mamenka is better to-day. She is sitting down stairs.”

In the passage-way Ivan Petrovitch met the nurse Yevpraksia, his foreman Andrei' Ivanovitch, and his surveyor, who was staying there to divide the land. All congratulated Ivan Petrovitch. In the drawing-room were sitting Luiza Karlovna Turgoni, for ten years a friend of the family, an emigree governess, and a young man of sixteen, Chernuishef, with his French tutor.

THIRD FRAGMENT

(VARIANT OF THE First Chapter)

ON the 14th of August, 1817, the sixth department of the Controlling Senate rendered a decision in the lawsuit between the "ekonom" and peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi and Prince Chernuishef, granting the land that was in dispute to the peasants.

This decision was unexpected and serious, and un-fortunate for Chernuishef. The suit had been dragging along already for five years. Having been brought originally by the advocate of the rich and populous vil-lage of Izlegoshchi, it had been gained by the peasants in the District Court; but when Prince Chernuishef, by the advice of Ilya Mitrofanof, a solicitor, a domestic serf belonging to Prince Saltuikof, hired by him, ap-pealed the case, he won it, and, moreover, the Izlegoshchi peasants were punished by having six of them, who had insulted the surveyor, sent to the mines.

After this, Prince Chernuishef, with a good-natured carelessness characteristic of him, was perfectly at ease, the more because he knew well that he had never "usurped" any land of the peasants, as it had been said in the peasants' petition. If any land had ever been "usurped" it had been done by his father, but since then more than forty years had passed away. He knew that the peasants of the village of Izlegoshchi

1 Ekonomichesky krestyanin was formerly a peasant who belonged to a monastery and was subject to an ekonom or steward.

even without this land were prosperous, that they did not need it, and that they were good neighbors of his, and he could not understand why they were “mad “with him.

He knew that he had never injured any one, and that he had no wish to injure any one; he had always lived with charity to all and that was all he wanted to do, and so he did not believe that they wanted to do him any wrong : he detested litigation, and therefore he had not labored in the senate, notwithstanding the advice and admonition of his attorney, Ilya Mitrofanof. Hav-ing disregarded the term of the appeal, he lost the case in the senate, and lost it in such a manner that ruin stared him in the face. According to the decree of the senate not only were five thousand desyatins of land to be taken from him, but on account of his illegal use of the land he was obliged to pay the peasants 107,000 rubles.

Prince Chernuishef had had eight thousand serfs, but all his estates were mortgaged; he had many debts, and this decision of the senate ruined him together with all his great family. He had a son and five daughters. He woke up when it was too late to do anything in the senate. According to Ilya Mitrofanof he had one way of salvation; that was to petition the Emperor and ap-peal the case to the imperial council. For this it was necessary personally to address one of the ministers or one of the members of the council, or even and this would be still better the Emperor himself. Having decided on this plan of action, Prince Grigori Ivanovitch, in the autumn of 1817, left his beloved Studentso, where he always lived, and went with his whole family to Moscow. He went to Moscow and not to Petersburg, because during the autumn of that year the sovereign, with his. court, and all his highest dignitaries, and a part of the Guard in which Grigori Ivanovitch’s son served, was to be in Moscow for the ceremony of dedi-cating the cathedral of the Saviour in memory of the deliverance of Russia from the invasion of the French.

Even in August immediately after the receipt of the horrible news of the decision of the senate, Prince Gri-gori Ivanovitch found himself in Moscow. His steward had been sent on in advance to make ready his private house on the Arbata; a baggage-train was sent on with

furniture, servants, horses, equipages, and provisions. In September the prince, with his whole family in seven carriages drawn by his own horses, reached Moscow, and settled down in their mansion. His relatives and friends, who had come to Moscow from the country or from Petersburg, began to gather in Moscow in September; the Moscow life with all its gayeties, the arrival of his son, the coming out of his daughters, and the success of his eldest daughter, Aleksandra, the one blonde among all the dark Chernuishefs, so occupied and engrossed the prince, that notwithstanding the fact that he was spending there in Moscow all the remainder of his substance, in case he had to pay his fine, he kept forgetting his chief business, and was annoyed and bored when Ilya Mitrofanof mentioned it, and he kept putting off doing anything to further the success of his affairs.

Ivan Mironovitch Baushkin, the chief advocate of the muzhiks, who had carried the lawsuit through the senate with such zeal, who knew all the ways and means of dealing with the secretaries and head clerks, and who had so cleverly spent at Petersburg in the form of bribes the ten thousand rubles collected from the muzhiks, had also now put an end to his activity and had returned to the village; where, with the reward for his success and with the money not expended in bribes, he had bought a piece of woodland of a neighboring proprietor, and had established in it an office. ¹ The lawsuit in the highest instance was at an end, and by good rights the affair should now take care of itself.

Of all those that had been entangled in this affair, the only ones who could not forget it were the six muzhiks, who had been for seven months in prison, and their families deprived of their head men. But there was nothing to be done about it. There they were in the Krasnoslobodsky prison, and their families were struggling to get along without them, There was no one to petition. Even Ivan Mironovitch declared that there was nothing he could do in their behalf; that this was not an affair of the "mir" or of the civil court, but a criminal case. The muzhiks were in prison and no one was working in their behalf; only the family of Mikhai'l Gerasimovitch, especially his old woman/ Tikhonovna, could not acquiesce in the fact that her "golden one," her old man, Gerasimvitch, was confined in prison with a shaven head.

Tikhonovna could not remain in peace. She besought Mironuitch to work for her; Mironuitch refused. Then she resolved herself to go, and pray God to release her old man. The year before she had vowed to go on a pilgrimage to the saints, and yet for lack of leisure, and because she did not like to leave the house in the care of her sisters-in-law, who were young, she had postponed it for a year. Now that she had become poor, and Gerasimuitch was in prison, she re-membered her vow. She let her household cares have the go-by, and with a deacon's wife of her village, she started in on her pilgrimage. At first they went to the district where the old man was in prison; they carried him some shirts, and thence they went to Moscow, passing through the governmental city.

On the way Tikhonovna related the story of her mis-fortune, and the deacon's wife advised her to petition the Tsar, who, she had heard, was to be at Penza, telling her what were the chances of pardon. When the pilgrims reached Penza they learned that the Tsar's brother, the Grand Duke Nikola'f Pavlovitch, and not the Tsar himself, had already come to Penza. Coming forth from the cathedral at Penza, Tikhonovna forced her way through the line, threw herself on her knees, and began to beg for her lord and master. The Grand Duke was amazed, the governor was angry, and the old woman was arrested. After a day's detention she was set free, and went on to Troitsa. At this monastery Tikhonovna prepared for the sacrament, and made confession to Father Pa'fsi.

At confession she told all her misfortune, and confessed how she had tried to offer her petition to the Tsar's brother. Father Pa'fsi told her there was no sin in that, and that she was on the right track, and that it was no sin to petition the Tsar, and then he let her go. Also at Khotkovo she stopped with "an inspired woman,"¹ and this woman advised her to present her petition to the Tsar himself. Tikhonovna, on her way back with the deacon's wife, went to Moscow to visit the saints there. There she learned that the Tsar was in Moscow, and it seemed to her that God had commanded her to petition the Tsar. All she had to do was to get the petition written. At Moscow the pilgrims stopped at an inn. They asked for a night's lodgings; it was granted them. After supper

the deacon's wife lay down on the oven, but Tikhonovna lay down on a bench, placing her kotomka, or birch-bark wallet, under her head, and went to sleep. In the morning, before it was light, Tikhonovna got up, awakened the deacon's wife, and came down into the court before the dvornik had called them.

"You are up early, baushka," said he.

"You see we are going to matins, benefactor," re-plied Tikhonovna.

"God go with you, baushka. Christ save you," said the dvornik; and the pilgrim women started for the Kreml.

After attending matins and mass, and having kissed the holy things, the two old women, with difficulty find-ing their way, went to the Chernuishefs'. The deacon's wife said that the old lady Chernuishef had strongly urged her to stop there, that she always received all pilgrims.

"There we shall find a man to help with the peti-tion," said the deacon's wife, and the two pilgrims went wandering along the streets, asking the way as they went. The deacon's wife had been there once, but had forgot-ten where it was. Twice they were almost crushed, men shouted at them, and scolded them. Once a police officer grasped the deacon's wife by the shoulder, and gave her a push, forbidding them to pass through the street on which they were walking, and directing them into a wilderness of lanes. Tikhonovna did not know that they were driven out of Vozdvizhenka for the very reason that the Tsar himself, of whom she was all the time thinking, and to whom she was going to write and present the petition, was to ride along that very street.

The deacon's wife, as always, walked heavily and painfully. Tikhonovna, as usual, went along with a free and easy gait, like a young woman. The pilgrims paused at the very gates. The deacon's wife did not know the place; a new izba had been built there; it had not been there before. But when the deacon's wife saw a well and pump at one corner of the dvor she recognized it. The dogs began to bark, and sprang toward the old women who appeared with staves.

"Don't be afraid, they won't hurt you," cried the dvornik. "Back, you rascals," said he to the dogs, waving his broom at them. "You see they

are country dogs, and they hanker after country folks. Come round this way. God keeps the frost off.”

But the deacon’s wife, afraid of the dogs, pitifully mumbling, sat down on a bench at the gate, and asked the dvornik to take the dogs away. Tikhonovna, bow-ing low before the dvornik, and leaning on her staff, spreading wide her legs, tightly bound with leg-wrap-pers, halted near the other, calmly looking ahead, and waiting for the dvornik, who was coming toward them.

“Whom do you want?” asked the dvornik.

“Don’t you know us, benefactor? Is n’t your name Yegor? “asked the deacon’s wife. “We have been on a pilgrimage, and here we have come to her excellency.”

“You are from Izlegoshchi,” said the dvornik. “Are you not the old deacon’s wife? Well, well! Come into the izba. They will receive you. No one is ever turned away. But who is this woman?”

He pointed to Tikhonovna.

“I am from Izlegoshchi. I am Gerasim’s wife; I was a Fadeyef,” said Tikhonovna. “I am from Izle-goshchi too.”

“Is that so? I have heard your man is in jail. Is that so?”

Tikhonovna made no reply. She only sighed, and with a powerful gesture shifted her wallet and her shuba on her back.

The deacon’s wife asked if the old princess was at home, and, learning that she was, asked to be taken to her. Then she asked after her son, who had been made a functionary, and through the prince’s favor was serving in Petersburg. The dvornik could not answer her question, and he took them along a planked walk, across the yard, into the common izba. The old women entered the izba, which was full of people, women and children, young and old, domestic serfs, and there they bowed low toward the images. The laundress and the old princess’s chambermaid immediately recognized the deacon’s wife and immediately engaged her in conver-sation; they took her wallet from her, and sat her down at a table, and offered her something to eat.

Tikhonovna, meantime, crossing herself toward the images and greeting every one, stood by the door waiting to be invited in. At the very door, by the first window, sat an old man mending boots.

“Sit down, babushka; why do you stand? Sit down here and take off your wallet,” said he.

“There is no room in there for her to sit down. Take her into the dark room,” I remarked some woman.

“Ah, here we have Madame de Chalme,” said a young lackey, pointing to the cocks on the back of Tikhonovna’s zipun; “stockings and slippers too! He pointed to her leg wrappers and bark shoes nov-elties for Moscow.

“You ought to have some like them, Parasha.”

“Come, come into the izba. I will show you the way.”

And the old cobbler, thrusting in his awl, got up, but as he caught sight of a young girl he called to her and bade her lead the old woman into the kitchen.

Tikhonovna not only paid no heed to what was said around her and about her, but she did not even hear it or notice it. Ever since she had left her home she had been impressed with the sense of the necessity of laboring in God’s service, and with one other feeling which had come into her soul she knew not how the necessity of presenting the petition. As she left the sitting-room where the people were, she went close to the deacon’s wife, and bowing low said :

“For Christ’s sake, Matushka Paramonovna, don’t forget my business. Ask if there isn’t some man.”

“What does the old woman want?”

“She has a grievance, and the people advise her to present a petition to the Tsar.”

“Go straight to the Tsar and take it,” said the joker of a lackey.

“Oh, fool, what an ill-bred fool,” said the old cobbler. “I will teach you with my last, in spite of your good coat, not to make sport of old women.”

The lackey began to call names, but the old man, not heeding him, led Tikhonovna into the kitchen. Tikhonovna was glad to be sent out from the crowded sitting-room and led into the “black” izba which the coach-

men frequented. In the sitting-room everything was too clean and the people were all clean, and Tikhonovna did not feel at home. But in the coachmen's "black" izba it was like the hut of a peasant, and Tikhonovna was much more contented. The room was finished in spruce, and measured about twenty-one feet, and dark, with a great stove and with sleeping-benches and berths, and the newly laid floor was all trampled over with mud. When Tikhonovna entered the izba she found there the cook, a white, ruddy, fat peasant woman with the sleeves of her chintz dress rolled up, laboriously putting a pot into the oven with an oven-hook; then a fine-looking young coachman practising the balalai'ka, and a crooked-legged old man with a full, white, soft beard sitting on the sleeping-bench, with a skein of silk in his mouth, sewing something delicate and beautiful; a ragged, dark young man in a shirt and blue trousers, with a surly face, chewing bread, was sitting on a bench near the stove, leaning his head on both hands, supported on his knees.

The barefooted girl with shining eyes ran with her light young legs in advance of the old woman, and opened the door, which was dripping with steam, and whined with her high-pitched voice :
"Auntie Marina, Simonitch sends this old woman to you and tells you to give her something to eat. She is from our parts, and has been making a pilgrimage to the saints with Paramonovna. They are giving Paramonovna some tea, and Vlasyevna sends this one to you."

The fluent little girl would have continued still longer talking glibly; the words seemed to flow from her mouth, and she evidently liked to hear her own voice. But Marina, who was sweating over the oven, not having settled to her satisfaction the pot of shchi which stuck half way in the oven, cried out angrily to her :
"Now, that'll do. Stop your chatter; how can we feed any more old women; we can't even feed our own. Curse you," she cried, to the pot which almost tipped over as it moved from its hearth on which it had stuck.

But having once got her pot settled she looked round, and seeing the pleasant-faced Tikhonovna with her wallet and in regular country

attire, kissing the cross and bowing low to the corner where the images were, she instantly felt compunction for her words; and, apparently bethinking her of the labors which tormented her, and putting her hand to her breast where below the collar-bone the buttons fastened her dress, she felt to see if one was unfastened, and, putting her hand to her head, she pulled back the knot of her kerchief which covered her well-oiled hair, and thus she stood leaning on her oven-fork waiting for the greeting of the pleasant-looking old woman. Having bowed for the last time to the image, Tikhonovna turned round and bowed to the three directions.

“God be your refuge! I wish your health,” she said.

“We ask your blessing, auntie,” said the tailor.

“Thank you, babushka, take off your wallet. There is a place for you,” said the cook, pointing to the bench where the ragged man sat. “Make yourself at home, if you can. How cold it is growing, is n’t it?”

The ragged fellow, scowling still more angrily, got up, moved along, and, still chewing his bread, kept his eyes fixed on the old woman. The young coachman bowed low, and, ceasing to strum his instrument, began to tune up the strings of his balalai’ka, looking first at the old woman, then at the tailor, not knowing how to treat the old woman : whether with deference as it seemed to him proper, because the old woman wore the same kind of attire as his babushka and the mother of his house did he was a postilion taken from among the muzhiks or banteringly, as he would have liked to do, and as it seemed to him the suitable thing for him in his present position in his blue poddevka and his top boots. The tailor closed one eye and seemed to smile, pushing the skein of silk to one side of his mouth, and he also looked at her. Marina started to put in another pot, but, though she was busy with her work, she looked at the old woman as she cleverly and deftly took off her wallet, and, endeavoring not to incommode any one, stowed it under the bench. Nastka ran to her and helped her; she took out from under the bench the boots which were in the way of the wallet.

“Uncle Pankrat,” she cried, addressing the surly man, “I have your boots here; what shall I do with them?”

“The devil take them; throw them into the oven,” said the surly man, flinging them into the farther corner.

“Come here, you wise one, Nastka,” said the tailor; “the journeyman needs some one to pacify him.”

“Christ save you, little girl. It is so comfortable,” said Tikhonovna. “Only, my dear young man, we have dis-turbed you,” said the old woman, addressing Pankrat.

“It is of no consequence,” said Pankrat.

Tikhonovna sat down on the bench, taking off her zipun and carefully folding it up, and then she began to take off her foot-gear. First of all, she unwound her cords, which she had smoothed with the greatest solici-tude for this pilgrimage; then she unwound carefully the lamb’s-wool white leg-wrappers, and, carefully fold-ing them, laid them on her wallet.

While she was unwinding the second leg, Marina awkwardly again caught the pot on something, and t it spilt over, and she began once more to scold, grasping it with her oven-hook.

“Something has evidently burnt out the hearth. You ought to have it plastered,” said Tikhonovna.

How can I get it plastered? The chimney is not right; you put in two loaves of bread a day, you take out some, but the others are spoiled.” In answer to Marina’s complaints about the loaves and the burnt-out hearth, the tailor stood up in defense of the conveniences of the Chernuishevsky house, and he explained how they had come suddenly to Moscow, that the whole izba had been built in three weeks, and the oven set up; and there were at least a hundred domestics, all of whom had to be fed.

“It ‘s evident it is hard work. It is a great establish-ment,” said Tikhonovna.

“And where did God bring you from, babushka?” asked the tailor.

And immediately Tikhonovna, while still continuing to divest herself of her wraps, told whence she came and where she had been and how she was on her way home. But she said nothing about the petition. The con-versation went on uninterruptedly. The tailor learned all about the

old woman, and the old woman learned about the awkward and handsome Marina, how her husband was a soldier and she had been taken as a cook, that the tailor himself was making kaftans for the coachmen, that the little girl who ran errands was the house-keeper's orphan, and that the shaggy, surly Pankrat was in the employ of the overseer, Ivan Vasilyevitch.

Pankrat left the izba, stumbling at the door; the tailor told how he was such a clownish peasant, but to-day was particularly surly. That afternoon he had broken two of the overseer's windows, and that day they were going to flog him at the stable. Ivan Vasilyevitch is coming now to attend to the flogging. The little coachman was a countryman taken to be postilion, and he is growing up, and is now getting his hand in to take care of the horses, and he plays the balalafka, but he is not very skilled at it

The End

A Morning of a Landed Proprietor Or A Russian Proprietor

An Unfinished Novel

Tolstoy lived on his family estate until 1851, when his brother, an artillery officer, convinced him to visit Caucasia. Charmed by the life there, he joined an artillery regiment and in 1853 was attached to the army of the Danube during the Crimean campaign. During this time he wrote *The Morning of a Landed Proprietor*, which he intended to be a novel. However, the work was left unfinished and was only rediscovered after Tolstoy's death.

A Morning of a Landed Proprietor

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I

PRINCE NEKHLYUDOV WAS nineteen years old when he came from the Third Course of the university to pass his vacation on his estate, and remained there by himself all summer. In the autumn he wrote in his unformed childish hand to his aunt, Countess Byeloryetski, who, in his opinion, was his best friend and the most brilliant woman in the world. The letter was in French, and ran as follows :

“Dear Aunty : — I have made a resolution on which the fate of my whole life must depend. I will leave the university in order to devote myself to country life, because I feel that I was born for it. For God’s sake, dear aunty, do not laugh at me! You will say that I am young; and,

indeed, I may still be a child, but this does not prevent me from feeling what my calling is, and from wishing to do good, and loving it.

“As I have written you before, I found affairs in an indescribable disorder. Wishing to straighten them out, and to understand them, I discovered that the main evil lay in the most pitiable, poverty-stricken condition of the peasants, and that the evil was such that it could be mended by labour and patience alone. If you could only see two of my peasants, David and Ivan, and the lives which they lead with their families, I am sure that the mere sight of these unfortunates would convince you more than all I might say to explain my intention to you. “Is it not my sacred and direct duty to care for the welfare of these seven hundred men, for whom I shall be held responsible before God? Is it not a sin to abandon them to the arbitrariness of rude elders and managers, for plans of enjoyment and ambition? And why should I look in another sphere for opportunities of being useful and doing good, when such a noble, brilliant, and immediate duty is open to me?”

“I feel myself capable of being a good landed proprietor; and, in order to be one, as I understand this word, one needs neither a university diploma, nor ranks, which you are so anxious I should obtain. Dear aunty, make no ambitious plans for me! Accustom yourself to the thought that I have chosen an entirely different path, which is, nevertheless, good, and which, I feel, will bring me happiness. I have thought much, very much, about my future duty, have written out rules for my actions, and, if God will only grant me life and strength, shall succeed in my undertaking.

“Do not show this letter to my brother Vasya. I am afraid of his ridicule; he is in the habit of directing me, and I of submitting to him. Vanya will understand my intention, even though he may not approve of it.”

The countess answered with the following French letter

“Your letter, dear Dmitri, proved nothing to me, except that you have a beautiful soul, which fact I have never doubted. But, dear friend, our good qualities do us more harm in life than our bad ones. I will not tell you that you are committing a folly, and that your conduct mortifies me; I will try to influence you by arguments alone. Let us reason, my

friend. You say that you feel a calling for country life, that you wish to make your peasants happy, and that you hope to be a good proprietor. (1) I must tell you that we feel a calling only after we have made a mistake in it; (2) that it is easier to make yourself happy than others; and (3) that in order to be a good proprietor, one must be a cold and severe man, which you will scarcely be, however much you may try to dissemble.

“You consider your reflections incontrovertible, and even accept them as rules of conduct; but at my age, my dear, we do not believe in reflections and rules, but only in experience; and experience tells me that your plans are childish. I am not far from fifty, and I have known many worthy people, but I have never heard of a young man of good family and of ability burying himself in the country, for the sake of doing good. You always wished to appear original, but your originality is nothing but superfluous self-love. And, my dear, you had better choose well-trodden paths! They lead more easily to success, and success, though you may not need it as success, is necessary in order to have the possibility of doing the good which you wish.

“The poverty of a few peasants is a necessary evil, or an evil which may be remedied without forgetting all your obligations to society, to your relatives, and to yourself. With your intellect, with your heart and love of virtue, there is not a career in which you would not obtain success; but at least choose one which would be worthy of you and would do you honour.

“I believe in your sincerity, when you say that you have no ambition; but you are deceiving yourself. Ambition is a virtue at your years and with your means; but it becomes a defect and a vulgarity, when a man is no longer able to satisfy that passion. You, too, will experience it, if you will not be false to your intention. Good-bye, dear Mitya! It seems to me that I love you even more for your insipid, but noble and magnanimous, plan. Do as you think best, but I confess I cannot agree with you.”

Having received this letter, the young man long meditated over it; finally, having decided that even a brilliant woman may make mistakes,

he petitioned for a discharge from the university, and for ever remained in the country.

II

THE YOUNG PROPRIETOR, as he wrote to his aunt, had formed rules of action for his estate, and all his life and occupations were scheduled by hours, days, and months. Sunday was appointed for the reception of petitioners, domestic and manorial serfs, for the inspection of the farms of the needy peasants, and for the distribution of supplies with the consent of the Commune, which met every Sunday evening, and was to decide what aid each was to receive. More than a year passed in these occupations, and the young man was not entirely a novice, either in the practical or in the theoretical knowledge of farming.

It was a clear June Sunday when Nekhlyudov, after drinking his coffee, and running through a chapter of "Maison Eustique," with a note-book and a package of bills in the pocket of his light overcoat, walked out of the large, columnated, and terraced country-house, in which he occupied a small room on the lower story, and directed his way, over the neglected, weed-grown paths of the old English garden, to the village that was situated on both sides of the highway. Nekhlyudov was a tall, slender young man with long, thick, wavy, auburn hair, with a bright sparkle in his black eyes, with red cheeks, and ruby lips over which the first down of youth was just appearing.

In all his movements and in his gait were to be seen strength, energy, and the good-natured self-satisfaction of youth. The peasants were returning in variegated crowds from church; old men, girls, children, women with their suckling babes, in gala attire, were scattering to their huts, bowing low to their master, and making a circuit around him. When Nekhlyudov reached the street, he stopped, drew his note-book from his pocket, and on the last page, which was covered with a childish handwriting, read several peasant names, with notes. "Ivan Churis asked for fork posts," he read, and, proceeding in the street, walked up to the gate of the second hut on the right.

Churis's dwelling consisted of a half-rotten log square, musty at the corners, bending to one side, and so sunken in the ground that one broken, red, shding window, with its battered shutter, and another smaller window, stopped up with a bundle of flax, were to be seen right over the dung-heap. A plank vestibule, with a decayed threshold and low door; another smaller square, more rickety and lower than the vestibule; a gate, and a wicker shed clung to the main hut. All that had at one time been covered by one uneven thatch; but now the black, rotting straw hung only over the eaves, so that in places the framework and the rafters could be seen.

In front of the yard was a well, with a dilapidated box, with a remnant of a post and wheel, and a dirty puddle made by the tramping of the cattle, in which some ducks were splashing. Near the well stood two ancient, cracked, and broken willows, with scanty, pale green leaves. Under one of these willows, which witnessed to the fact that at some time in the past some one had tried to beautify the spot, sat an eight-year-old blonde little maiden, with another two-year-old girl crawling on the ground. A pup, which was wagging his tail near them, ran headlong under the gate, the moment he noticed the master, and from there burst into a frightened, quivering bark.

"Is Ivan at home?" asked Nekhlyudov.

The older girl was almost petrified at this question, and was opening her eyes wider and wider, but did not answer; the smaller one opened her mouth, and was getting ready to cry. A small old woman, in a torn checkered dress, girded low with an old, reddish belt, looked from behind the door, but did not answer. Nekhlyudov walked up to the vestibule, and repeated his question.

"At home, benefactor," said the old woman, in a quivering voice, bowing low, and agitated with terror.

When Nekhlyudov greeted her, and passed through the vestibule into the narrow yard, the old woman put her hand to her chin, walked up to the door, and, without turning her eyes away from the master, began slowly to shake her head.

The yard looked wretched. Here and there lay old blackened manure that had not been removed; on the manure-heap lay carelessly a musty block, a fork, and two harrows. The sheds about the yard, under which stood, on one side, a plough and a cart without a wheel, and lay a mass of empty, useless beehives in confusion, were nearly all unthatched, and one side had fallen in, so that the girders no longer rested on the fork posts, but on the manure.

Churis, striking with the edge and head of his axe, was trying to remove a wicker fence which the roof had crushed. Ivan Churis was a man about fifty years of age. He was below the average height. The features of his tanned, oblong face, encased in an auburn beard with streaks of gray, and thick hair of the same colour, were fair and expressive. His dark blue, half-shut eyes shone with intelligence and careless good nature. A small, regular mouth, sharply defined under a scanty blond moustache, expressed, whenever he smiled, calm self-confidence and a certain derisive indifference to his surroundings. From the coarseness of his skin, deep wrinkles, sharply defined veins on his neck, face, and hands, from his unnatural stoop, and crooked, arch-like legs, it could be seen that all his life had passed in extremely hard labour, which was beyond his strength. His attire consisted of white hempen drawers, with blue patches over his knees, and a similar dirty shirt, which was threadbare on his back and arms. The shirt was girded low by a thin ribbon, from which hung a brass key.

“God aid you!” said the master, entering the yard.

Churis looked around him, and again took up his work. After an energetic effort he straightened out the wicker work from under the shed; then only he struck the axe into a block, pulled his shirt in shape, and walked into the middle of the yard.

“I wish you a pleasant holiday, your Grace!” he said, making a low obeisance, and shaking his hair.

“Thank you, my dear. I just came to look at your farm,” said Nekhlyudov, with childish friendliness and embarrassment, examining the peasant’s garb. “Let me see for what you need the fork posts that you asked of me at the meeting of the Commune.”

“The forks? Why, your Grace, you know what forks are for. I just wanted to give a little support to it, — you may see for yourself. Only a few days ago a corner fell in, and by God’s kindness there were no animals in it at the time. It barely hangs together,” said Churis, contemptuously surveying his unthatched, crooked, and dilapidated sheds. “When it comes to that, there is not a decent girder, rafter, or box case in them. Where am I to get the timber? You know that yourself.”

“Then why do you ask for five forks when one shed is all fallen in, and the others soon will fall? What you need is not forks, but rafters, girders, posts, — all new ones,” said the master, obviously parading his familiarity with the subject.

Churis was silent.

“What you need, therefore, is timber and not forks. You ought to have said so.”

“Of course, I need that, but where am I to get it? It won’t do to go for everything to the manor. What kind of peasants should we be if we were permitted to go to the manor to ask your Grace for everything? But if you will permit me to take the oak posts that are lying uselessly in the threshing-floor of the manor,” he said, bowing, and resting now on one foot, now on the other, “I might manage, by changing some, and cutting down others, to fix something with that old material.”

“With the old material? But you say yourself that everything of yours is old and rotten. To-day one corner is falling in, to-morrow another, and day after to-morrow a third. So, if you are to do anything about it, you had better put in everything new, or else your labour will be lost. Tell me, what is your opinion? Can your buildings last through the winter, or not?”

“Who knows?”

“No, what do you think? Will they fall in, or not?”

Churis meditated for a moment.

“It will all fall in,” he said, suddenly.

“Well, you see, you ought to have said at the meeting that you have to get the whole property mended, and not that you need a few forks. I am only too glad to aid you.”

“We are very well satisfied with your favour,” answered Churis, incredulously, without looking at the master. “If you would only favour me with four logs and the forks, I might manage it myself; and whatever useless timber I shall take out, might be used for supports in the hut.”

“Is your hut in a bad condition, too?”

“My wife and I are expecting every moment to be crushed,” Churis answered, with indifference. “Lately a strut from the ceiling struck down my old woman.”

“What? Struck down?”

“Yes, struck her down, your Grace. It just whacked her on the back so that she was left for dead until the evening.”

“Well, did she get over it?”

“She did get over it, but she is ailing now. Although, of course, she has been sickly since her birth.”

“What, are you sick?” Nekhlyudov asked the old woman, who continued to stand in the door, and began to groan the moment her husband spoke of her.

“Something catches right in here, that’s all,” she answered, pointing to her dirty, emaciated bosom.

“Again!” angrily exclaimed the young master, shrugging his shoulders.

“There you are, sick, and you did not come to the hospital. That is what the hospital was made for. Have you not been told of it?”

“They told us, benefactor, but we have had no time : there is the manorial work, and the house, and the children, — I am all alone! There is nobody to help me— “

III

NEKHLYUDOV WALKED INTO the hut. The uneven, grimy walls were in the kitchen corner covered with all kinds of rags and clothes, while the corner of honour was literally red with cockroaches that swarmed

about the images and benches. In the middle of this black, ill-smelling, eighteen-foot hut there was a large crack in the ceiling, and although supports were put in two places, the ceiling was so bent that it threatened to fall down any minute.

“Yes, the hut is in a very bad shape,” said the master, gazing at the face of Churis, who, it seemed, did not wish to begin a conversation about this matter.

“It will kill us, and the children, too,” the old woman kept saying, in a tearful voice, leaning against the oven under the hanging beds.

“Don’t talk!” sternly spoke Churis, and, turning to the master, with a light, barely perceptible smile, which had formed itself under his quivering moustache, he said: “I am at a loss, your Grace, what to do with this hut. I have braced it and mended it, but all in vain.”

“How are we to pass a winter in it? Oh, oh, oh!” said the woman.

“Now, if I could put in a few braces and fix a new strut,” her husband interrupted her, with a calm, businesslike expression, “and change one rafter, we might be able to get through another winter. We might be able to live here, only it will be all cut up by the braces; and if anybody should touch it, not a thing would be left alive; but it might do, as long as it stands and holds together,” he concluded, evidently satisfied with his argument.

Nekhlyidov was annoyed and pained because Churis had come to such a state without having asked his aid before, whereas he had not once since his arrival refused the peasants anything, and had requested that everybody should come to him directly if they needed anything. He was even vexed at the peasant, angrily shrugged his shoulders, and frowned; but the sight of wretchedness about him, and Churis’s calm and self-satisfied countenance amidst this wretchedness, changed his vexation into a melancholy, hopeless feeling.

“Now, Ivan, why did you not tell me before?” he re-marked reproachfully, sitting down on a dirty, crooked bench.

“I did not dare to, your Grace,” answered Churis, with the same scarcely perceptible smile, shuffling his black, bare feet on the uneven

dirt floor; but he said it so boldly and quietly that it was hard to believe that he had been afraid to approach the master.

“We are peasants : how dare we— “began the woman, sobbing.

“Stop your prattling,” Churis again turned to her.

“You cannot live in this hut, that is impossible! “said Nekhlyudov, after a moment’s silence. “This is what we will do, my friend— “

“I am listening, sir,” Churis interrupted him.

“Have you seen the stone huts, with the hollow walls, that I have had built in the new hamlet?”

“Of course I have, sir,” replied Churis, showing his good white teeth in his smile. “We marvelled a great deal as they were building them, — wonderful huts! The boys made sport of them, saying that the hollow walls were storehouses, to keep rats away. Fine huts! “he concluded, with an expression of sarcastic incredulity, shaking his head. “Regular jails!”

“Yes, excellent huts, dry and warm, and not so likely to take fire,” retorted the master, with a frown on his youthful face, obviously dissatisfied with the peasant’s sarcasm.

“No question about that, your Grace, fine huts.”

“Now, one of those huts is all ready. It is a thirty-foot hut, with vestibules and a storeroom, ready for occupancy. I will let you have it at your price; you will pay me when you can,” said the master, with a self-satisfied smile, which he could not keep back, at the thought that he was doing a good act. “You will break down your old hut,” he continued; “it will do yet for a barn. We will transfer the outhouses in some way. There is excellent water there. I will cut a garden for you out of the cleared ground, and also will lay out a piece of land for you in three parcels. You will be happy there. Well, are you not satisfied?”

“asked Nekhlyudov, when he noticed that the moment he mentioned changing quarters Churis stood in complete immobility and, without a smile, gazed at the floor.

“It is your Grace’s will,” he answered, without lifting his eyes.

The old woman moved forward, as if touched to the quick, and was about to say something, but her husband anticipated her.

“It is your Grace’s will,” he repeated, firmly, and at the same time humbly, looking at his master, and shaking his hair, “but it will not do for us to live in the new hamlet.”

“Why?”

“No, your Grace! We are badly off here, but if you transfer us there, we sha’n’t stay peasants long. What kind of peasants can we be there? It is impossible to live there, saving your Grace!”

“Why not?”

“We shall be completely ruined, your Grace!”

“But why is it impossible to live there?”

“What life will it be? You judge for yourself : the place has never been inhabited; the quality of the water is unknown; there is no place to drive the cattle to. Our hemp plots have been manured here since time immemorial, but how is it there? Why, there is nothing but barrenness there. Neither fences, nor kilns, nor sheds, — nothing. We shall be ruined, your Grace, if you insist upon our going there, completely ruined! It is a new place, an unknown place— “he repeated, with a melancholy, but firm, shake of his head.

Nekhlyudov began to prove to the peasant that the transfer would be very profitable to him, that fences and sheds would be put up, that the water was good there, and so forth; but Churis’s dull silence embarrassed him, and he felt that he was not saying what he ought to. Churls did not reply; but when the master grew silent, he remarked, with a light smile, that it would be best to settle the old domestic servants and Aleshka the fool in that hamlet, to keep a watch on the grain.

“Now that would be excellent,” he remarked, and smiled again. “It is a useless affair, your Grace!”

“What of it if it is an uninhabited place? “Nekhlyudov expatiated, patiently. “Here was once an uninhabited place, and people are living in it now. And so you had better settle there in a lucky hour — Yes, you had better settle there— “

“But, your Grace, there is no comparison! “Churis answered with animation, as if afraid that the master might have taken his final resolution. “Here is a cheery place, a gay place, and we are used to it, and to the road, and the pond, where the women wash the clothes and the cattle go to water; and all our peasant surroundings have been here since time immemorial, — the threshing-floor, the garden, and the willows that my parents have set out. My grandfather and father have given their souls to God here, and I ask nothing else, your Grace, but to be able to end my days here. If it should be your favour to mend the hut, we shall be greatly obliged to your Grace; if not, we shall manage to end our days in the old hut. Let us pray to the Lord all our days,” he continued, making low obeisances. “Drive us not from our nest, sir.”

While Churis was speaking, ever louder and louder sobs were heard under the beds, in the place where his wife stood, and when her husband pronounced the word “sir,” his wife suddenly rushed out and, weeping, threw herself down at the master’s feet :

“Do not ruin us, benefactor! You are our father, you are our mother! What business have we to move? We are old and lonely people. Both God and you— “She burst out in tears.

Nekhlyudov jumped up from his seat, and wanted to raise the old woman, but she struck the earth floor with a certain voluptuousness of despair, and pushed away the master’s hand.

“What are you doing? Get up, please! If you do not wish, you do not have to,” he said, waving his hands, and retreating to the door.

When Nekhlyudov seated himself again on the bench, and silence reigned in the hut, interrupted only by the blubbering of the old woman, who had again removed herself to her place under the beds, and was there wiping off her tears with the sleeve of her shirt, the young proprietor comprehended what meaning the dilapidated wretched hut, the broken well with the dirty puddle, the rotting stables and barns, and the spht willows that could be seen through the crooked window, had for Churis and his wife, and a heavy, melancholy feeling came over him, and he was embarrassed.

“Why did you not say at the meeting of last week that you needed a hut? I do not know now how to help you. I told you all at the first meeting that I was settled in the estate, and that I meant to devote my life to you; that I was prepared to deprive myself of everything in order to see you contented and happy, — and I vow before God that I will keep my word,” said the youthful proprietor, unconscious of the fact that such ebullitions were unable to gain the confidence of any man, least of all a Kussian, who loves not words but deeds, and who is averse to the expression of feelings, however beautiful.

The simple-hearted young man was so happy in the sentiment which he was experiencing that he could not help pouring it out. Churis bent his head sideways and, blinking slowly, listened with forced attention to his master as to a man who must be listened to, though he may say things that are not very agreeable and have not the least reference to the listener.

“But I cannot give everybody all they ask of me. If I did not refuse anybody who asks me for timber, I should soon be left with none myself, and would be unable to give to him who is really in need of it. That is why I have put aside a part of the forest to be used for mending the peasant buildings, and have turned it over to the Commune. That forest is no longer mine, but yours, the peasants’, and I have no say about it, but the Commune controls it as it sees fit. Come this evening to the meeting; I will tell the Commune of your need : if it resolves to give you a new hut, it is well, but I have no forest. I am anxious to help you with all my heart; but if you do not want to move, the Commune will have to arrange it for you, and not I. Do you understand me?”

“We are very well satisfied with your favour,” answered the embarrassed Churis. “If you will deign to let me have a little timber for the outbuildings, I will manage one way or other. The Commune? Well, we know— “

“No, you had better come.”

“Your servant, sir. I shall be there. Why should I not go? Only I will not ask the Commune for anything.”

IV

THE YOUNG PROPRIETOR evidently wanted to ask the peasant people something else; he did not rise from the bench, and with indecision looked now at Churis, and now into the empty, cold oven.

“Have you had your dinner?” he finally asked them.

Under Churis’s moustache played a sarcastic smile, as though it amused him to hear the master ask such foolish questions; he did not answer.

“What dinner, benefactor?” said the old woman, with a deep sigh. “We have eaten some bread. That was our dinner. There was no time to-day to go for some sorrel, and so there was nothing to make soup with, and what kvas there was I gave to the children.”

“To-day we have a hunger fast, your Grace,” Churis chimed in, glossing his wife’s words. “Bread and onions, — such is our peasant food. Thank the Lord I have some little bread; by your favour it has lasted until now; but the rest of our peasants have not even that. The onions are a failure this year. We sent a few days ago to Mikhaylo the gardener, but he asks a penny a bunch, and we are too poor for that. We have not been to church since Easter, and we have no money with which to buy a candle for St. Nicholas.”

Nekhlyudov had long known, not by hearsay, nor trusting the words of others, but by experience, all the extreme wretchedness of his peasants; but all that reality was so incompatible with his education, his turn of mind, and manner of life, that he involuntarily forgot the truth; and every time when he was reminded of it in a vivid and palpable manner, as now, his heart felt intolerably heavy and sad, as though he were tormented by the recollection of some unatoned crime which he had committed.

“Why are you so poor?” he said, involuntarily expressing his thought.

“What else are we to be, your Grace, if not poor? You know yourself what kind of soil we have : clay and clumps, and we must have angered God, for since the cholera we have had very poor crops of grain. The meadows and fields have grown less; some have been taken into the

estate, others have been directly attached to the manorial fields. I am all alone and old, I would gladly try to do something, but I have no strength. My old woman is sick, and every year she bears a girl; they have to be fed. I am working hard all by myself, and there are seven souls in the house. It is a sin before God our Lord, but I often think it would be well if he took some of them away as soon as possible. It would be easier for me and for them too, it would be better than to suffer here— “

“Oh, oh! “the woman sighed aloud, as though confirming her husband’s words.

“Here is my whole help,” continued Churis, pointing to a flaxen-haired, shaggy boy of some seven years, with an immense belly, who, softly creaking the door, had just entered timidly, and, morosely fixing his wondering eyes upon the master, with both his hands was holding on to his father’s shirt. “Here is my entire help,” continued Churis, in a sonorous voice, passing his rough hand through his child’s hair. “It will be awhile before he will be able to do anything, and in the meantime the work is above my strength. It is not so much my age as the rupture that is undoing me. In bad weather it just makes me scream. I ought to have given up the land long ago, and been accounted an old man. Here is Ermilov, Demkin, Zyabrev, — they are all younger than I, but they have long ago given up the land. But I have no one to whom I might turn over the land, — that’s where the trouble is. I must support the family, so I am struggling, your Grace.”

“I would gladly make it easier for you, really. How can I? “said the young master, sympathetically, looking at the peasant.

“How make it easier? Of course, he who holds land must do the manorial work; that is an established rule. I shall wait for the little fellow to grow up. If it is your will, excuse him from school; for a few days ago the village scribe came and said that your Grace wanted him to come to school. Do excuse him : what mind can he have, your Grace? He is too young, and has not much sense yet.”

“No; this, my friend, must be,” said the master. “Your boy can comprehend, it is time for him to study. I am saying it for your own

good. You judge yourself : when he grows up, and becomes a householder, he will know how to read and write, and he will read in church, — everything will go well with you, with God’s aid,” said Nekhlyudov, trying to express himself as clearly as possible, and, at the same time, blushing and stammering.

“No doubt, your Grace, you do not wish us any harm; but there is nobody at home; my wife and I have to work in the manorial field, and, small though he is, he helps us some, by driving the cattle home, and taking the horses to water. As little as he is, he is a peasant all the same,” and Churis, smiling, took hold of his boy’s nose between his thick fingers, and cleaned it.

“Still, send him when he is at home, and has time, — do you hear? — without fail.”

Churis drew a deep sigh, and did not reply.

V

“THERE IS SOMETHING else I wanted to tell you,” said Nekhlyudov.

“Why has not your manure been removed?”

“What manure is there to take away, your Grace? How many animals have I? A little mare and a colt, and the young heifer I gave last autumn to the porter; that is all the animals I have.”

“You have so few animals, and yet you gave your heifer away? “the master asked, in amazement.

“What was I to feed her on?”

“Have you not enough straw to feed a cow with? Everybody else has.”

“Others have manured land, and my land is mere clay that you can’t do anything with.”

“But that is what your manure is for, to take away the clay : and the soil will produce grain, and you will have something to feed your animals with.”

“But if there are no animals, where is the manure to come from?”

“This is a strange cercle vicieux” thought Nekhlyudov, but was at a loss how to advise the peasant.

“And then again, your Grace, not the manure makes the grain grow, but God,” continued Churis. “Now, last year I got six ricks out of one unmanured eighth, but from another dressed eighth I did not reap as much as a cock. God alone!” he added, with a sigh. “And the cattle somehow do not thrive in our yard. They have died for six years in succession. Last year a heifer died, the other I sold, for we had nothing to live on; two years ago a fine cow died; when she was driven home from the herd, there was nothing the matter with her, but she suddenly staggered, and staggered, and off she went. Just my bad luck!”

“Well, my friend, you may say what you please about not having any cattle, because you have no feed, and about having no feed, because you have no cattle, — here is some money for a cow,” said Nekhlyudov, blushing, and taking from his trousers’ pocket a package of crumpled bills, and running through it. “Buy yourself a cow, with my luck, and get the feed from the barn, — I will give orders. Be sure and have a cow by next Sunday, — I will look in.”

Churis smiled and shuffled his feet, and for so long did not stretch out his hand for the money, that Nekhlyudov put it on the end of the table, and reddened even more.

“We are very well satisfied with your favour,” said Churis, with his usual, slightly sarcastic smile.

The old woman sighed heavily several times, standing under the beds, and seemed to be uttering a prayer.

The young master felt embarrassed; he hastily rose from his bench, walked out into the vestibule, and called Churis. The sight of a man to whom he had done a good turn was so pleasant, that he did not wish to part from it so soon.

“I am glad I can help you,” he said, stopping near the well. “It is all right to help you, because I know you are not a lazy man. You will work, and I will help you; with God’s aid things will improve.”

“There is no place for improvement, your Grace,” said Churis, suddenly assuming a serious, and even an austere, expression on his face, as though dissatisfied with the master’s supposition that he might improve. “I lived with my brothers when my father was alive, and we

suffered no want; but when he died, and we separated, things went from worse to worse. It is all because we are alone!”

“But why did you separate?”

“All on account of the women, your Grace. At that time your grandfather was not living, or they would not have dared to; then there was real order. He looked after everything, like you, — and we should not have dared to think of separating. Your grandfather did not let the peasants off so easily. But after him the estate was managed by Audrey Ilich, — may he not live by this memory, — he was a drunkard and an unreliable man. We went to him once, and a second time. ‘There is no getting along with the women,’ we said, ‘let us separate.’ Well, he gave it to us, but, in the end, the women had their way, and we separated; and you know what a peasant is all by himself! Well, there was no order here, and Audrey Ilich treated us as he pleased. ‘Let there be everything!’ but he never asked where a peasant was to get it. Then they increased the capitation tax, and began to collect more provisions for the table, but the land grew less, and the crops began to fail. And when it came to resurveying the land, he attached our manured land to the manorial strip, the rascal, and he left us just to die!

“Your father — the kingdom of heaven be his — was a good master, but we hardly ever saw him : he lived all the time in Moscow; of course, we had to carry supplies there frequently. There may have been bad roads, and no fodder, but we had to go! How could the master get along without it? We can’t complain about that, only there was no order. Now, your Grace admits every peasant into your presence, and we are different people, and the steward is a different man. But before, the estate was left in guardianship, and there was no real master; the guardian was master, and Ilich was master, and his wife was mistress, and the scribe was master. The peasants came to grief, oh, to so much grief!”

Again Nekhlyudov experienced a feeling akin to shame or to pricks of conscience. He raised his hat a little, and walked away.

“YUKHVANKA THE SHREWD wants to sell a horse,” Nekhlyidov read in his note-book, and crossed the street. Yukhvanka’s hut was carefully thatched with straw from the manorial barn, and was constructed of fresh, light gray aspen timbers (also from the manorial forest), with two shutters painted red, and a porch with a roof, and a quaint shingle balustrade of an artistic design. The vestibule and the “cold” hut were also in proper condition; but the general aspect of sufficiency and well-being, which this collection of buildings had, was somewhat impaired by the outhouse which leaned against the gate, with its unfinished wicker fence and open thatch which could be seen from behind it.

At the same time that Nekhlyudov was approaching the porch from one side, two peasant women came from the other with a full tub. One of them was the wife, the other the mother of Yukhvanka the Shrewd. The first was a plump, red-cheeked woman, with an unusually well-developed bosom, and broad, fleshy cheek-bones. She wore a clean shirt, embroidered on the sleeves and collar, an apron similarly decorated, a new linen skirt, leather shoes, glass beads, and a foppish square head-gear made of red paper and spangles.

The end of the yoke did not shake, but lay firmly on her broad and solid shoulder. The light exertion which was noticeable in her ruddy face, in the curvature of her back, and in the measured motion of her arms and legs, pointed to extraordinary health and masculine strength.

Yukhvanka’s mother, who was carrying the other end of the yoke, was, on the contrary, one of those old women who seem to have reached the extreme limit of old age and disintegration possible in living man. Her bony frame, covered with a black, torn shirt and colourless skirt, was so bent that the yoke rested more on her back than on her shoulder. Both her hands, with the distorted fingers of which she seemed to cling to the yoke, were of a dark brown colour, and seemed incapable of unbending; her drooping head, which was wrapped in a rag, bore the most monstrous traces of wretchedness and old age. From under her narrow brow, which was furrowed in all directions by deep wrinkles, two red eyes, bereft of their lashes, looked dimly to the ground. One yellow tooth protruded from her upper sunken lip, and,

shaking continually, now and then collided with her sharp chin. The wrinkles on the lower part of her face and throat resembled pouches that kept on shaking with every motion. She breathed heavily and hoarsely; but her bare, distorted feet, though apparently shuffling with difficulty against the ground, moved evenly one after the other.

VII

HAVING ALMOST COLLIDED with the master, the young woman deftly put down the tub, looked abashed, made a bow, glanced timidly at the master with her sparkling eyes, and trying with the sleeve of her embroidered shirt to conceal a light smile, and tripping in her leather shoes, ran up the steps.

“Mother, take the yoke to Aunt Nastasya,” she said, stopping in the door and turning to the old woman.

The modest young proprietor looked sternly, but attentively, at the ruddy woman, frowned, and turned to the old woman, who straightened out the yoke with her crooked fingers, and, slinging it over her shoulder, obediently directed her steps to the neighbouring hut. “Is your son at home?” asked the master.

The old woman bent her arched figure still more, bowed, and was about to say something, but she put her hands to her mouth and coughed so convulsively that Nekhlyudov did not wait for the answer, and walked into the hut.

Yukhvanka, who was sitting in the red ^ corner on a bench, rushed to the oven the moment he espied the master, as if trying to hide from him; he hastily pushed something on the beds, and twitching his mouth and eyes, pressed against the wall, as if to make way for the master.

Yukhvanka was a blond, about thirty years of age, spare, slender, with a young beard that ran down to a point; he would have been a handsome man but for his fleeting hazel eyes which looked unpleasantly beneath his wrinkled brows, and for the absence of two front teeth, which was very noticeable because his lips were short and in continuous motion.

He was clad in a holiday shirt with bright red gussets, striped calico drawers, and heavy boots with wrinkled boot-legs.

The interior of Yukhvanka's hut was not so small and gloomy as Churis's, though it was as close, and smelled of smoke and sheepskins, and the peasant clothes and uten-sils were scattered about in the same disorderly fashion. Two things strangely arrested the attention : a small dented samovar, which stood on a shelf, and a black frame with a remnant of a glass, and a portrait of a general in a red uniform, which was hanging near the images.

Nekhlyudov looked with dissatisfaction at the samovar, at the general's portrait, and at the beds, where from under a rag peeped out the end of a brass-covered pipe, and turned to the peasant.

"Good morning, Epifan," he said, looking into his eyes.

Epifan bowed, and mumbled, "We wish you health, 'r Grace," pronouncing the last words with peculiar tenderness, and his eyes in a twinkle surveyed the whole form of the master, the hut, the floor, and the ceiling, not stopping at anything; then he hurriedly walked up to the beds, pulled down a coat from them, and began to put it on.

"Why are you dressing yourself?" said Nekhlyudov, seating himself on a bench, and obviously trying to look as stern as possible at Epifan.

"Please, 'r Grace, how can I? It seems to me we know— "

"I came in to see why you must sell a horse, how many horses you have, and what horse it is you want to sell," dryly said the master, evidently repeating questions prepared in advance.

"We are well satisfied with 'r Grace, because you have deigned to call on me, a peasant," replied Yukhvanka, casting rapid glances at the general's portrait, at the oven, at the master's boots, and at all objects except Nekhlyudov's face. "We always pray God for 'r Grace— "

"Why are you selling a horse?" repeated Nekhlyudov, raising his voice, and clearing his throat.

Yukhvanka sighed, shook his hair (his glance again surveyed the whole hut), and, noticing the cat that had been quietly purring on a bench, he called out to her, "Scat, you scamp!" and hurriedly turned to the

master. "The horse, 'r Grace, which is useless — If it were a good animal I would not sell it, 'r Grace."

"How many horses have you in all?"

"Three, 'r Grace."

"Have you any colts?"

"Why, yes, 'r Grace! I have one colt."

1 The best corner, corresponding to a sitting-room, is called "red."

VIII

"COME, SHOW ME your horses! Are they in the yard?"

"Yes, 'r Grace. I have done as I have been ordered to, 'r Grace. Would we dare to disobey 'r Grace? Yakov Alpatych commanded me not to let the horses out to pasture for the next day, as the prince wanted to inspect them, so we did not let them out. We do not dare disobey 'r Grace."

As Nekhlyudov walked out of the door, Yukhvanka got the pipe down from the beds, and threw it behind the oven. His lips quivered just as restlessly, though the master was not looking at him.

A lean gray mare was rummaging through some musty hay under the shed; a two-months-old, long-legged colt of an indefinable colour, with bluish feet and mouth, did not leave her mother's thin tail that was all stuck up with burrs. In the middle of the yard stood, blinking and pensively lowering his head, a thick-bellied chestnut gelding, apparently a good peasant horse.

"Are these all your horses?"

"By no means, 'r Grace. Here is a little mare and a little colt," answered Yukhvanka, pointing to the horses which the master could not help having noticed.

"I see that. Now, which one do you want to sell?"

“This one, ‘r Grace,” he answered, waving with the flap of his coat in the direction of the drowsy gelding, continually blinking, and twitching his lips. The gelding opened his eyes and lazily turned his back to him.

“He does not look old, and is apparently a sound horse,” said Nekhlyudov. “Catch him, and show me his teeth! I will find out if he is old.”

“It is impossible for one person to catch him, ‘r Grace. The whole beast is not worth a penny. He has a temper : he bites and kicks, ‘r Grace,” answered Yukhvanka, smiling merrily, and turning his eyes in all directions.

“What nonsense! Catch him, I tell you!”

Yukhvanka smiled for a long time, and shuffled his feet, and not until Nekhlyudov cried out in anger, “Well, will you? “did he run under the shed and bring a halter. He began to run after the horse, frightening him, and walking up to him from behind, and not in front.

The young master was evidently disgusted, and, no doubt, wanted to show his agility. “Give me the halter! “he said.

“I pray, ‘r Grace! How can you?— “

But Nekhlyudov walked up to the horse’s head and, suddenly taking hold of his ears, bent it down with such a force that the gelding, who, as could be seen, was a very gentle peasant horse, tottered and groaned, in his attempt to tear himself away. When Nekhlyudov noticed that it was unnecessary to use such force, and when he glanced at Yukhvanka, who did not cease smiling, the thought, so offensive at his years, occurred to him that Yukhvanka was making fun of him and mentally regarding him as a child. He blushed, let the horse go, and without the help of a halter opened his mouth and examined his teeth : the teeth were sound, the crowns full, and the young proprietor was enough informed to know that all this meant that the horse was young. Yukhvanka, in the meantime, had gone under the shed, and, noticing that the harrow was not in place, he lifted it and put it on edge against the fence.

“Come here! “cried the master, with an expression of childlike annoyance on his face, and almost with tears of mortification and anger in his voice. “Well, you call that an old horse?”

“I pray, ‘r Grace, he is very old, some twenty years old — some horses— “

“Silence! You are a liar and a good-for-nothing, because an honest peasant would not lie, — he has no cause to lie! “said Nekhlyudov, choking with tears of anger, which rose in his throat. He grew silent in order not to burst out into tears, and thus disgrace himself before the peasant. Yukhvanka, too, was silent, and, with the expression of a man who is ready to burst into tears, snuffled and slightly jerked his head.

“Well, with what animal will you plough your field when you have sold this horse? “continued Nekhlyudov, having calmed down sufficiently to speak in his customary voice. “You are purposely sent to do work on foot, so as to give your horses a chance to improve for the ploughing, and you want to sell your last horse. But, the main thing is, why do you lie?”

The moment the master grew calm, Yukhvanka quieted down, too. He stood straight, and, still jerking his lips, let his eyes flit from one object to another.

“We will drive out to work, ‘r Grace,” he replied, “not worse than the rest.”

“What will you drive with?”

“Do not worry, we will do the work of ‘r Grace,” he answered, shouting to the gelding, and driving him away. “I should not have thought of selling him if I did not need the money.”

“What do you need the money for?”

“There is no bread, ‘r Grace, and I have to pay my debts to the peasants, ‘r Grace,”

“How so, no bread? How is it the others, who have families, have bread, and you, who have none, have not any? What has become of your grain?”

“We have eaten it up, and now not a crumb is left. I will buy a horse in the fall, ‘r Grace.”

“You shall not dare sell this horse!”

“If so, ‘r Grace, what kind of a life will it be? There is no bread, and I must not sell anything,” he answered sideways, twitching his lips, and suddenly casting a bold glance upon the master’s face. “It means, we shall have to starve.”

“Look here, man! “cried Nekhlyudov, pale with anger, and experiencing a feeling of personal hatred for the peasant. “I will not keep such peasants as you. It will go hard with you.”

“Such will be your will, ‘r Grace,” he answered, covering his eyes with a feigned expression of humility, “if I have not served you right. And yet, nobody has noticed any vices in me. Of course, if ‘r Grace is displeased with me, ‘r Grace will do as you wish; only I do not know why I should suffer.”

“I will tell you why : because your yard is not fenced in, your manure not ploughed up, your fences are broken, and you sit at home and smoke a pipe, and do not work; because you do not give your mother, who has turned the whole farm over to you, a piece of bread, and permit your wife to strike her, and have treated her so badly that she has come to me to complain about you.”

“I beg your pardon, ‘r Grace, I do not know what pipes you are speaking of,” Yukhvanka answered, confusedly, apparently very much insulted by the accusation of smoking a pipe. “It is easy to say anything about a man.”

“There you are lying again! I saw myself— “

“How would I dare to lie to ‘r Grace?”

Nekhlyudov was silent, and, biting his lips, paced the yard. Yukhvanka stood in one spot and, without raising his eyes, watched his master’s feet.

“Listen, Epifan,” said Nekhlyudov, in a voice of childlike gentleness, stopping in front of the peasant, and endeavouring to conceal his agitation. “Bethink yourself. If you want to be a good peasant, you must change your life : leave your bad habits, stop lying, give up drinking, and honour your mother. I know all about you. Attend to your farm, and stop stealing timber in the Crown forest and frequenting the

tavern! What good is there in it, think! If you have need of anything, come to me, ask straight out for what you need, and tell why you need it, and do not lie, but tell the whole truth, and I will not refuse you anything I can do for you.”

“If you please, ‘r Grace, we can understand ‘r Grace!” answered Yuhvanka, smiling, as if fully comprehending the charm of the master’s jest.

This smile and reply completely disappointed Nekhlyudov, who had hoped to touch the peasant and bring him back on the true path by persuasion. And then, it seemed improper for him, who was possessed of power, to persuade his peasant, and it seemed, too, that everything he said was not exactly what he ought to have said. He lowered his head in sadness and walked into the vestibule. The old woman was sitting on the threshold and groaning aloud, in order, as it seemed, to express her sympathy with the master’s words which she had heard.

“Here is some money for bread,” Nekhlyudov whispered into her ear, putting a bill into her hand. “Only buy for yourself, and do not give it to Yuhvanka, who will spend it in drinks.”

The old woman took hold of the lintel with her bony hand, in order to rise and thank the master, and her head began to shake, but Nekhlyudov was on the other side of the street when she rose.

IX

“DAVYDKA THE WHITE asked for grain and posts,” it said in the notebook after Yuhvanka.

After passing several huts, Nekhlyudov, in turning into a lane, met his steward, Yakov Alpatych, who, upon noticing his master at a distance, doffed his oilcloth cap, and, taking out his fulled handkerchief, began to wipe his fat, red face.

“Put it on, Yakov! Yakov, put it on, I tell you— “

“Where have you been, your Grace?” asked Yakov, protecting himself with his cap against the sun, but not donning it.

“I have been at Yukhvanka the Shrewd’s. Tell me, if you please, what has made him so bad,” said the master, continuing on his way.

“Why so, your Grace?” replied the manager, following the master at a respectful distance. He had put on his cap and was twirling his moustache.

“Why? He is a thorough scamp, a lazy man, a thief, a liar; he torments his mother, and, so far as I can see, he is such a confirmed good-for-nothing that he will never reform.”

“I do not know, your Grace, why he has displeased you so much— “

“And his wife,” the master interrupted his manager, “seems to be a worthless wench. The old woman is clad worse than a mendicant, and has nothing to eat, but she is all dressed up, and so is he. I really do not know what to do with them.”

Yakov was obviously embarrassed when Nekblyudov spoke of Yukhvanka’s wife.

“Well, if he has acted like that, your Grace,” he began, “we must find means. It is true he is indigent, like all peasants who are alone, but he is taking some care of himself, not like the others. He is a clever and intelligent peasant, and passably honest. He always comes when the capitation tax is collected. And he has been elder for three years, during my administration, and no fault was found with him. In the third year it pleased the guardian to depose him, and then he attended properly to his farm. It is true, when he lived at the post in town, he used to drink a bit, — and measures must be taken. When he went on a spree, we threatened him, and he came back to his senses : he was then all right, and in his family there was peace; but if you are not pleased to take these measures, I really do not know what to do with him. Well, he has got very low. He is not fit to be sent into the army again because, as you may have noticed, he lacks two teeth. But he is not the only one, I take the liberty of reporting to you, who is not in the least afraid— “

“Let this alone, Yakov,” answered Nekhlyudov, softly smiling; “we have talked it over often enough. You know what I think of it, and I shall not change my mind, whatever you may tell me.”

“Of course, your Grace, all this is known to you,” said Yakov, shrugging his shoulders and gazing at the master’s back, as though what he saw did not promise anything good. “But as to your troubling yourself about the old woman, it is all in vain,” he continued. “It is true she has brought up the orphans, has raised and married off Yukhvanka, and all that. But it is a common rule with the peasants that when a father or mother transfers the farm to the son, the son and daughter-in-law become the masters, and the old woman has to earn her bread as best she can. Of course they have not any tender feelings, but that is the common rule among peasants.

And I take the liberty of informing you that the old woman has troubled you in vain. She is a clever old woman and a good housekeeper; but why should she trouble the master for everything? I will admit she may have quarrelled with her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law may have pushed her, — those are women’s affairs. They might have made up again, without her troubling you. You deign to take it too much to heart,” said the manager, looking with a certain gentleness and condescension at the master, who was silently walking, with long steps, up the street in front of him.

“Homeward bound, sir? “he asked.

“No, to Davydka the White, or Kozlov : is not that his name?”

“He, too, is a good-for-nothing, permit me to inform you. The whole tribe of the Kozlovs is like that. No matter what you may do with them, it has no effect. I drove yesterday over the peasant field, and I saw he had not sowed any buckwheat; what are we to do with such a lot? If only the old man taught the son, but he is just such a good-for-nothing : he bungles everything, whether he works for himself or for the manor. The guardian and I have tried everything with him : we have sent him to the commissary’s office, and have punished him at home, — but you do not like that— “

“Whom, the old man?”

“The old man, sir. The guardian has punished him often, and at the full gatherings of the Commune; but will you believe it, your Grace, it had no effect : he just shook himself, and went away, and did the same. And

I must say, Davydka is a peaceful peasant, and not at all stupid : he does not smoke, nor drink, that is," explained Yakov, "he does something worse than drink. All there is left to do is to send him to the army, or to Siberia, and nothing else. The whole tribe of the Kozlovs is like that. Matryushka, who lives in that hovel, also belongs to their family, and is the same kind of an accursed good-for-nothing. So you do not need me, your Grace? "added the manager, noticing that the master was not listening to him.

"No, you may go," Nekhlyudov answered, absent-mindedly, and directed his steps to Davydka the White.

Davydka's hut stood crooked and alone at the edge of the village. Near it was no yard, no kiln, no barn; only a few dirty stalls clung to one side of it : on the other were heaped in a pile wattles and timber that were to be used for the yard. Tall, green steppe-grass grew in the place where formerly had been the yard. There was not a living being near the hut, except a pig that lay in the mud in front of the threshold, and squealed.

Nekhlyudov knocked at the broken window; but, as nobody answered him, he walked up to the vestibule and shouted : "Ho there! "Nobody replied. He walked through the vestibule, looked into the empty stalls, and walked through the open door into the hut. An old red cock and two hens promenaded over the floor and benches, jerking their crops, and clattering with their claws. When they saw a man, they fluttered with wide-spread wings against the walls with a clucking of despair, and one of them flew upon the oven.

The eighteen-foot hut was all occupied by the oven with a broken pipe, a weaver's loom which had not been removed in spite of summer, and a begrimed table with a warped and cracked board. Though it was dry without, there was a dirty puddle near the threshold which had been formed at a previous rain by a leak in the ceiling and roof. There were no beds. It was hard to believe that this was an inhabited place, there was such a decided aspect of neglect and disorder, both inside and outside the hut; and yet Davydka the White lived in it with his whole family. At that particular moment, in spite of the heat of the June day,

Davydka lay, his head wrapped in a sheepskin half-coat, on the corner of the oven, fast asleep. The frightened hen, which had alighted on the oven and had not yet calmed down, was walking over Davydka's back, without waking him.

Not finding any one in the hut, Nekhlyudov was on the point of leaving, when a protracted, humid sigh betrayed the peasant.

"Oh, who is there?" cried the master.

On the oven was heard another protracted sigh.

"Who is there? Come here!"

Another sigh, a growl, and a loud yawn were the answer to the master's call.

"Well, will you come?"

Something stirred on the oven. There appeared the flap of a worn-out sheepskin; a big foot in a torn bast shoe came down, then another, and finally the whole form of Davydka the White sat up on the oven, and lazily and discontentedly rubbed his eyes with his large fist. He slowly bent his head, yawned, gazed at the hut, and, when he espied the master, began to turn around a little faster than before, but still so leisurely that Nekhlyudov had sufficient time to pace three times the distance from the puddle to the loom, before Davydka got off the oven.

Davydka the White was actually white; his hair, his body, and face, — everything was exceedingly white. He was tall and very stout, that is, stout like a peasant, with his whole body, and not merely with his belly; but it was a flabby, unhealthy obesity. His fairly handsome face, with its dark blue, calm eyes and broad, long beard, bore the imprint of infirmity. There was neither tan nor ruddiness in his face; it was of a pale, sallow complexion, with a light violet shade under his eyes, and looked suffused with fat, and swollen. His hands were swollen and sallow, like those of people who suffer with the dropsy, and were covered with fine white hair. He was so sleepy that he could not open his eyes wide, nor stand still, without tottering and yawning.

"Are you not ashamed," began Nekhlyudov, "to sleep in bright daylight, when you ought to build a yard, and when you have no grain?"

As soon as Davydka came to his senses, and began to understand that the master was standing before him, he folded his hands over his abdomen, lowered his head, turning it a little to one side, and did not stir a limb. He was silent; but the expression of his face and the attitude of his whole form said, "I know, I know, it is not the first time I hear that. Beat me if you must, — I will bear it."

It looked as though he wanted the master to stop talking and to start beating him at once; to strike him hard on his cheeks, but to leave him in peace as soon as possible.

When Nekhlyudov noticed that Davydka did not understand him, he tried with various questions to rouse the peasant from his servile and patient silence.

"Why did you ask me for timber when you have had some lying here for a month, and that, too, when you have most time your own, eh?"

Davydka kept stubborn silence, and did not stir.

"Well, answer!"

Davydka muttered something, and blinked with his white eyelashes.

"But you must work, my dear : what will happen without work? Now, you have no grain, and why? Because your land is badly ploughed, and has not been harrowed, and was sowed in too late, — all on account of laziness. You ask me for grain : suppose I give it to you, because you must not starve! It will not do to act in this way. Whose grain am I giving you? What do you think, whose? Answer me : whose grain am I giving you?" Nekhlyudov stubbornly repeated his question.

"The manorial," mumbled Davydka, timidly and questioningly raising his eyes.

"And where does the manorial grain come from? Think of it : who has ploughed the field? Who has harrowed it? Who has sowed it in, and garnered it? The peasants? Is it not so? So you see, if I am to give the manorial grain to the peasants, I ought to give more to those who have worked more for it; but you have worked less, and they complain of you at the manor; you have worked less, and you ask more. Why should I give to you, and not to others? If all were lying on their sides and

sleeping, as you are doing, we should all have starved long ago. We must work, my friend, but this is bad, — do you hear, Davyd?”
“I hear, sir,” he slowly muttered through his teeth.

X

JUST THEN THE head of a peasant woman carrying linen on a yoke flashed by the window, and a minute later Davydka’s mother entered the hut. She was a tall woman of about fifty years, and was well preserved and active. Her pockmarked and wrinkled face was not handsome, but her straight, firm nose, her compressed thin lips, and her keen gray eyes expressed intelligence and energy. The angularity of her shoulders, the flatness of her bosom, the bony state of her hands, and the well-developed muscles on her black bare feet witnessed to the fact that she had long ceased to be a woman, and was only a labourer.

She entered boldly into the room, closed the door, pulled down her skirt, and angrily looked at her son. Nekhlyudov wanted to tell her something, but she turned away from him, and began to make the signs of the cross before a black wooden image that peered out from behind the loom. Having finished her devotion, she straightened out her dirty checkered kerchief in which her head was wrapped, and made a low obeisance before the master.

“A pleasant Lord’s Day to your Grace,” she said. “May God preserve you, our father — !”

When Davydka saw his mother he evidently became embarrassed, bent his back a little, and lowered his neck even more.

“Thank you, Arina,” answered Nekhlyudov. “I have just been speaking with your son about your farm.”

Anna, or, as the peasants had called her when she was still a maiden, Arishka-Burlak,[^] supported her chin with the fist of her right hand, which, in its turn, was resting on the palm of her left hand; and, without hearing what the master had still to say, began to speak in such a penetrating and loud voice that the whole hut was filled with sound,

and in the street it might have appeared that several women were speaking at the same time.

“What use, father, is there of speaking to him? He can’t even speak like a man. There he stands, block-head,” she continued, contemptuously pointing with her head to Davydka’s wretched, massive figure. “My farm, your Grace? We are mendicants; there are no people in your whole village more wretched : we have neither of our own, nor anything for the manorial dues — a shame! He has brought us to all this. I bore him, raised, and fed him, and with anticipation waited for him to grow up. Here he is: the grain is bursting, but there is no more work in him than in this rotten log. All he knows how to do is to lie on the oven, or to stand and scratch his stupid head,” she said, mocking him. “If you, father, could threaten him somehow! I beg you : punish him for the Lord’s sake; send him to the army, and make an end of it. I have lost my patience with him, I tell you.”

“How is it you are not ashamed, Davydka, to bring your mother to such a state? “said Nekhlyudov, reproachfully turning to the peasant. Davydka did not budge.

“It would be different if he were a sickly man,” Arina continued, with the same vivacity and gestures, “but you look at him, he is fatter than a mill pig. He is a good-looking chap, fit enough to work! But no, he lies like a lubber all day on the oven. My eyes get tired looking when he undertakes to do something; when he rises, or moves, or anything,” she said, drawling her words and awkwardly turning her angular shoulders from side to side. “Now, for example, to-day the old man has gone for brushwood into the forest, and he has told him to dig holes; but no, not he, he has not had the spade in his hands— “She grew silent for a moment. “He has undone me, abandoned woman! “she suddenly whined, waving her hands, and walking up to her son with a threatening gesture. “Your smooth, good-for-nothing snout, the Lord forgive me!”

She turned away contemptuously and in despair from him, spit out, and again turned to the master, continuing to wave her hands, with the same animation and with tears in her eyes :

“I am all alone, benefactor. My old man is sick and old, and there is little good in him, and I am all sole alone. It is enough to make a stone burst. It would be easier if I just could die; that would be the end. He has worn me out, that rascal! Our father! I have no more strength! My daughter-in-law died from work, and I shall, too.”

1 Biu'lak is a labourer towing boats up the Volga.

XI

“WHAT, DIED? “NEKHLUDOV asked, incredulously.

“She died from exertion, benefactor, as God is holy. We took her two years ago from Baburin,” she continued, suddenly changing her angry expression to one of tearfulness and sadness. “She was a young, healthy, obedient woman, father. She had lived, as a maiden, in plenty, at her father’s home, and had experienced no want; but when she came to us, and had to do the work, — in the manor and at home, and everywhere — She and I, that was all there was. To me it did not matter much. I am used to it, but she was pregnant, and began to suffer; and she worked all the while beyond her strength, until she, my dear girl, overworked herself. Last year, during St. Peter’s Fast, she, to her misfortune, bore a boy, and there was no bread; we barely managed to pick up something, father; the hard work was on hand, and her breasts dried up.

It was her first-born, there was no cow, and we are peasant people, and it is not for us to bring up children on the bottle; and, of course, she was a foolish woman, and worried her life away. And when her baby died, she cried and cried from sorrow, and sobbed and sobbed, my darling, and there was want, and work, ever worse and worse; she wore herself out all summer, and died, my darling, on the day of St. Mary’s Intercession. It is he who has undone her, beast! “She again turned to her son with the anger of despair. « I wanted to ask you, your

Grace," she continued after a short silence, lowering her head, and bowing.

"What is it? "Nekhlyudov asked absent-mindedly, still agitated by her recital.

"He is a young man yet. You can't expect much work from me; to-day I am alive, to-morrow dead. How can he be without a wife? He will not be a peasant, if he is not married. Have pity on us, father."

"That is, you want to marry him off? Well?"

"Do us this favour before God! You are our father and mother."

She gave her son a sign, and both dropped on the ground before their master's feet.

"Why do you make these earth obeisances? "said Nekhlyudov, angrily raising her by her shoulder. "Can't you tell it without doing so? You know that I do not like it. Marry off your son, if you wish. I should be glad to hear that you have a bride in view."

The old woman rose, and began to wipe off her dry eyes with her sleeve. Davydka followed her example, and, having wiped his eyes with his dry fist, continued to stand in the same patient and subservient attitude as before, and to listen to what Arina was saying.

"There is a bride, why not? Mikhey's Vasyitka is a likely enough girl, but she will not marry him without your will."

"Does she not consent?"

"No, benefactor, not if it comes to consenting."

"Well, then what is to be done? I cannot compel her; look for another girl, if not here, elsewhere; I will buy her out, as long as she will give her own consent, but you can't marry by force. There is no law for that, and it would be a great sin."

"benefactor! But is it likely that any girl would be willing to marry him, seeing our manner of life and poverty? Even a soldier's wife would not wish to take upon herself such misery. What peasant will be willing to give his daughter to us? The most desperate man will not give his. We are mendicants, and nothing else. They will say that we have starved

one woman, and would do so with their daughter. Who will give his?
“she added, skeptically shaking her head. “Consider this, your Grace.”

« But what can I do?”

“Think of some plan for us, father!” Arina repeated, persuasively.

“What are we to do?”

“What plan can I find? I can do nothing for you in this matter.”

“Who will do something for us, if not you?” said Arina, dropping her head, and waving her hands with an expression of sad perplexity.

“You have asked for grain, and I will order it to be given to you,” said the master, after a short silence, during which Arina drew deep breaths and Davydka seconded her. « That is all I can do.”

Nekhlyudov stepped into the vestibule. The woman and her son followed the master, bowing.

XII

“O MY ORPHANHOOD!” said Arina, drawing a deep breath.

She stopped, and angrily looked at her son. Davydka immediately wheeled around and, with difficulty lifting his fat leg, in an immense dirty bast shoe, over the threshold, was lost in the opposite door.

“What am I going to do with him, father?” continued Arina, turning to the master. “You see yourself what he is! He is not a bad peasant : he does not drink, is peace-ful, and would not harm a child, — it would be a sin to say otherwise; there is nothing bad about him, and God only knows what it is that has befallen him that he has become his own enemy. He himself is not satisfied with it. Really, father, it makes my heart bleed when I see how he worries about it himself. Such as he is, my womb has borne him; I am sorry, very sorry for him! He would do no harm to me, or his father, or the authorities; he is a timid man, I might say, like a child. How can he remain a widower? Do something for us, benefactor,” she repeated, evidently trying to correct the bad impression which her scolding might have produced on the master.

“Your Grace,” she continued, in a confidential whisper, “I have reasoned this way and that way, but I can’t make out what has made

him so. It cannot be otherwise but that evil people have bewitched him.”

She was silent for a moment.

“If the man could be found, he might be cured.”

“What nonsense you are talking, Arina! How can one bewitch?”

“Father, they can bewitch so as to make one a no-man for all his life! There are many evil people in the world! Out of malice they take out a handful of earth in one’s track — or something else — and one is a no-man for ever. It is easy to sin! I have been thinking of going to see old man Dundiik, who lives at Vorobevka: he knows all kinds of incantations, and he knows herbs, and he takes away the evil eye, and draws the dropsy out of the spine. Maybe he will help!” said the woman. “Maybe he will cure him!”

“Now that is wretchedness and ignorance!” thought the young master, sorrowfully bending his head, and walking with long strides down the village. “What shall I do with him? It is impossible to leave him in this state, on my account, and as an example for others, and for his own sake,” he said to himself, counting out the causes on his fingers. “I cannot see him in this condition, but how am I to take him out of it? He destroys all my best plans for the estate. If such peasants are left in it, my dreams will never be fulfilled,” he thought, experiencing mortification and anger against the peasant for destroying his plans. “Shall I send him as a settler to Siberia, as Yakov says, when he does not want to be well off, or into the army? That’s it. I shall at least be rid of him, and shall thus save a good peasant,” he reflected.

He thought of it with delight; at the same time a certain indistinct consciousness told him that he was thinking with one side of his reason only, and something was wrong. He stopped. “Wait, what am I thinking about?” he said to himself; “yes, into the army, to Siberia. For what? He is a good man, better than many others, and how do I know — Give him his liberty?” he reflected, considering the question not with one side of his reason only, as before, “It is unjust, and impossible.” Suddenly a thought came to him that gave him great pleasure; he smiled, with the

expression of a man who has solved a difficult problem. "I will take him to the manor," he said to himself. "I will watch over him myself, and with gentleness and persuasion, and proper selection of occupations, accustom him to work, and reform him."

XIII

"I WILL DO so," Nekhlyudov said to himself with cheerful self-satisfaction, and, recalling that he had to visit yet the rich peasant, Dutlov, he directed his steps to a tall and spacious building, with two chimneys, which stood in the middle of the village. As he was getting near it, he met, near the neighbouring hut, a tall, slatternly woman, of some forty years of age, who came out to see him.

"A pleasant holiday, sir," the woman said, without the least timidity, stopping near him, smiling pleasantly, and bowing.

"Good morning, nurse," he answered. "How are you getting on? I am going to see your neighbour."

"Yes, your Grace, that is good. But why do you not deign to call on us? My old man would be ever so happy to see you."

"Well, I will come in, to talk with you, nurse. Is this your hut?"

"Yes, sir."

And the nurse ran ahead. Nekhlyudov walked after her into the vestibule, sat down on a pail, took out a cigarette, and lighted it.

"It is hot there; let us stay here and talk," he answered to the nurse's invitation to walk into the hut.

The nurse was still in her prime, and a fine-looking woman. In her features, and especially in her large black eyes, there was a great resemblance to the master's face. She put her hands under her apron, and, boldly looking at the master and continually shaking her head, began to speak with him :

"What is the reason, sir, you are honouring Dutlov with a visit?"

"I want him to rent from me thirty desyatinas ^ of land, and start a farm of his own, and also to buy some timber with me. He has money, — why should it be idle? What do you think about that, nurse?"

“Well! Of course, sir, the Dutlovs are powerful people. I suppose he is the first peasant in the whole estate,” answered the nurse, nodding her head. “Last year he added a new structure out of his own timber, — he did not trouble the master. Of horses, there will be some six sets of three, outside of colts and yearlings; and of stock, there are so many cows and sheep that when they drive them home from the field, and the women go out to drive them into the yard, there is a terrible crush at the gate; and of bees, there must be two hundred hives, and maybe more. He is a powerful peasant, he must have money, too.”

“Do you think he has much money?” the master asked.

“People say, of course, out of malice, that the man has a great deal; naturally, he would not tell, nor would he let his sons know, but he must have. Why should he not put his money out for a forest? Unless he should be afraid to let out the rumour about having money. Some five years ago he invested a little money in bottom meadows with Shkalik the porter; but I think Shkalik cheated him, so that the old man was out of three hundred roubles; since then he has given it up. And why should he not be well fixed, your Grace,” continued the nurse, “he is living on three parcels of land, the family is large, all workers, and the old man himself — there is nothing to be said against him — is a fine manager. He has luck in everything, so that the people are all wondering; he has luck with the grain, with the horses, the cattle, the bees, and his children. He has married them all off. He found wives for them among his own, and now he has married Ilyushka to a free girl, — he has himself paid for her emancipation. And she has turned out to be a fine woman.”

“Do they live peaceably?” asked the master.

“As long as there is a real head in the house, there will be peace. Though with the Dutlovs it is as elsewhere with women: the daughters-in-law quarrel behind the oven, yet the sons live peacefully together under the old man.”

The nurse grew silent for a moment.

“Now the old man wants to make his eldest son, Karp, the master of the house. He says he is getting too old and that his business is with the

bees. Well, Karp is a good man, an accurate man, but he will not be such a manager as the old man, by a good deal. He has not his intellect."

"Maybe Karp will be willing to take up land and forests, what do you think?" said the master, wishing to find out from his nurse what she knew about her neighbours.

"I doubt it, sir," continued the nurse; "the old man has not disclosed his money to his son. As long as the old man is alive, and the money is in his house, his mind will direct affairs; besides, they are more interested in teaming."

"And the old man will not consent?"

"He will be afraid."

"What will he be afraid of?"

"How can a manorial peasant declare his money, sir? There might be an unlucky hour, and all his money would be lost! There, he went into partnership with the porter, and he made a mistake. How could he sue him? And thus the money was all lost; and with the proprietor it would be lost without appeal."

"Yes, on this account—" said Nekhlyudov, blushing. "Good-bye, nurse."

"Good-bye, your Grace. I thank you humbly."

1 A desyatina is equal to 2,400 square fathoms.

XIV

"HAD I NOT better go home?" thought Nekhlyudov, walking up to Dutlov's gate, and feeling an indefinable melancholy and moral fatigue. Just then the new plank gate opened before him with a creak, and a fine-looking, ruddy, light-complexioned lad, of about eighteen years of age, in driver's attire, appeared in the gateway, leading behind him a set of three stout-legged, sweaty, shaggy horses; boldly shaking his flaxen hair, he bowed to the master.

"Is your father at home, Пяа?" asked Nekhlyudov.

"He is with the bees, back of the yard," answered the lad, leading one horse after another through the half-open gate.

“No, I will stick to my determination; I will make the proposition to him, and will do my part,” thought Nekhlyudov, and, letting the horses pass by, he went into Dutlov’s spacious yard. He could see that the manure had lately been removed : the earth was still black and sweaty, and in places, particularly near the gate, lay scattered red-fibred shreds. In the yard, and under the high sheds, stood in good order many carts, ploughs, sleighs, blocks, tubs, and all kinds of peasant possessions. Pigeons flitted to and fro and cooed in the shade under the broad, solid rafters. There was an odour of manure and tar.

In one corner Karp and Ignat were fixing a new transom-bed on a large, three-horse, steel-rimmed cart. Dutlov’s three sons resembled each other very much. The youngest, Ilya, whom Nekhlyudov had met in the gate, had no beard, and was smaller, ruddier, and more foppishly clad than the other two. The second, Ignat, was taller, more tanned, had a pointed beard, and, although he too wore boots, a driver’s shirt, and a lambskin cap, he did not have the careless, holiday aspect of his younger brother. The eldest, Karp, was taller still, wore bast shoes, a gray caftan, and a shirt without gussets; he had a long red beard, and looked not only solemn, but even gloomy.

“Do you command me to send for father, your Grace?” he said, walking up to the master and bowing slightly and awkwardly.

“No, I will go myself to the apiary; I wish to look at his arrangement of it; but I want to talk with you,” said Nekhlyudov, walking over to the other end of the yard, so that Ignat might not hear what he was going to say to Karp.

The self-confidence and a certain pride, which were noticeable in the whole manner of these two peasants, and that which his nurse had told him, so embarrassed the young master that he found it hard to make up his mind to tell him of the matter in hand. He felt as though he were guilty of something; and it was easier for him to speak to one of the brothers, without being heard by the other. Karp looked somewhat surprised at being asked by the master to step aside, but he followed him.

"It is this," began Nekhlyudov, hesitating, "I wanted to ask you how many horses you had."

"There will be some five sets of three; there are also some colts," Karp answered, freely, scratching his back.

"Do your brothers drive the stage?"

"We drive the stage with three troykas. Ilyushka has been doing some hauling; he has just returned."

"Do you find that profitable? How much do you earn in this manner?"

"What profit can there be, your Grace? We just feed ourselves and the horses, and God be thanked for that."

"Then why do you not busy yourselves with something else? You might buy some forest or rent some land."

"Of course, your Grace, we might rent some land, if it came handy."

"This is what I want to propose to you. What is the use of teaming, just to earn your feed, when you can rent some thirty desyatinas of me? I will let you have the whole parcel which lies behind Sapov's, and you can start a large farm."

Nekhlyudov was now carried away by his plan of a peasant farm, which he had thought over and recited to himself more than once, and he began to expound to Karp, without stammering, his plan of a peasant farm. Karp listened attentively to the words of the master.

"We are very well satisfied with your favour," he said, when Istekhlyudov stopped and looked at him, expecting an answer. "Of course, there is nothing bad in this. It is better for a peasant to attend to the soil than to flourish his whip. Peasants of our kind get easily spoiled, when they travel among strange men, and meet all kinds of people. There is nothing better for a peasant than to busy himself with the land."

"What do you think of it, then?"

"As long as father is alive, your Grace, there is no use in my thinking. His will decides."

"Take me to the apiary; I will talk to him."

“This way, if you please,” said Karp, slowly turning toward the barn in the back of the yard. He opened a low gate which led to the beehives, and, letting the master walk through it, and closing it, he walked up to Ignat, and resumed his interrupted work.

XV

NEKHLIUDOV BENT HIS head, and passed through the low gate underneath the shady shed to the apiary, which was back of the yard. The small space, surrounded by straw and a wicker fence which admitted the sunlight, where stood symmetrically arranged the beehives, covered with small boards, and surrounded by golden bees circling noisily about them, was all bathed in the hot, brilliant rays of the June sun.

A well-trodden path led from the gate through the middle of the apiary to a wooden-roofed cross with a brass-foil image upon it, which shone glaringly in the sun. A few stately linden-trees, which towered with their curly tops above the straw thatch of the neighbouring yard, rustled their fresh dark green foliage almost inaudibly, on account of the buzzing of the bees. All the shadows from the roofed fence, from the lindens, and from the beehives that were covered with boards, fell black and short upon the small, wiry grass that sprouted between the hives.

The small, bent form of an old man, with his uncovered gray, and partly bald, head shining in the sun, was seen near the door of a newly thatched, moss-calked plank building, which was situated between the lindens. Upon hearing the creaking of the gate, the old man turned around and, wiping off his perspiring, sunburnt face with the skirt of his shirt, and smiling gently and joyfully, came to meet the master.

The apiary was so cosy, so pleasant, so quiet, and so sunlit; the face of the gray-haired old man, with the abundant ray-Ике wrinkles about his eyes, in his wide shoes over his bare feet, who, waddling along and smiling good-naturedly and contentedly, welcomed the master in his exclusive possessions, was so simple-hearted and kind, that

Nekhlyudov immediately forgot the heavy impressions of the morning, and his favourite dream rose up before him. He saw all his peasants just as rich and good-natured as old Dutlov, and all smiled kindly and joyously at him, because they owed to him alone all their wealth and happiness.

“Will you not have a net, your Grace? The bees are angry now, and they sting,” said the old man, taking down from the fence a dirty linen bag fragrant with honey, which was sewed to a bark hoop, and offering it to the master. “The bees know me, and do not sting me,” he added, with a gentle smile, which hardly ever left his handsome, sunburnt face.

“Then I shall not need it, either. Well, are they swarming already?” asked Nekhlyudov, also smiling, though he knew not why.

“They are swarming, Father Dmitri Nikolaevich,” answered the old man, wishing to express his especial kindness by calling his master by his name and patronymic, “but they have just begun to do it properly. It has been a cold spring, you know.”

“I have read in a book,” began Nekhlyudov, warding off a bee that had lost itself in his hair, and was buzzing over his very ear, “that when the combs are placed straight on little bars, the bees begin to swarm earlier. For this purpose they make hives out of boards — with cross-bea— “

“Please do not wave your hand, it will make it only worse,” said the old man. “Had I not better give you the net?”

Nekhlyudov was experiencing pain, but a certain childish conceit prevented him from acknowledging it; he again refused the net, and continued to tell the old man about the construction of beehives, of which he had read in the “Maison Rustique,” and in which the bees, according to his opinion, would swarm twice as much; but a bee stung his neck, and he stopped confused in the middle of his argument.

“That is so, Father Dmitri Nikolaevich,” said the old man, glancing at the master with fatherly condescension, “they write so in books. But they may write so maliciously. ‘Let him do,’ they probably say, ‘as we write, and we will have the laugh on him.’ I believe that is possible! For how

are you going to teach the bees where to build their combs? They fix them in the hollow blocks as they please, sometimes crossways, and at others straight. Look here, if you please," he added, uncorking one of the nearest blocks, and looking through the opening, which was covered with buzzing and creeping bees along the crooked combs.

"Now here, these young ones, they have their mind on a queen bee, but they build the comb straightways and aslant, just as it fits best into the block," said the old man, obviously carried away by his favourite subject, and not noticing the master's condition. "They are coming heavily laden to-day, it is a warm day, and everything can be seen," he added, corking up the hive, and crushing a creeping bee with a rag, and then brushing off with his coarse hand a few bees from his wrinkled brow. The bees did not sting him. But Nekhlyudov could no longer repress his desire to run out of the apiary; the bees had stung him in three places, and they were buzzing on all sides about his head and neck.

"Have you many hives?" he asked, retreating to the gate.

"As many as God has given," answered Dutlov, smiling. "One must not count them, father! the bees do not like that. Now, your Grace, I wanted to ask you," he continued, pointing to thin hives that stood near the fence, "in regard to Osip, the nurse's husband. Could you not tell him to stop it? It is mean to act thus to a neighbour of your own village."

"What is mean? — But they do sting me!" answered the master, taking hold of the latch of the gate.

"Every year he lets out his bees against my young ones. They ought to have a chance to improve, but somebody else's bees steal their wax, and do other damage," said the old man, without noticing the master's grimaces.

"All right, later, directly," said Nekhlyudov, and, unable to stand the pain any longer, he rushed out of the gate, defending himself with both hands.

“Rub it in with dirt; it will pass,” said the old man, following the master into the yard. The master rubbed with dirt the place where he had been stung, blushing, looked at Karp and Iguat, who did not see him, and frowned angrily.

XVI

“I WANTED TO ask your Grace about my children,” said the old man, accidentally or purposely paying no attention to the master’s angry look.

“What?”

“Thank the Lord, we are well off for horses, and we have a hired man, so there will be no trouble about the manorial dues.”

“What of it?”

“If you would be kind enough to let my sons substitute money payment for their manorial labour, Ilyushka and Ignat would take out three troykas to do some teaming all summer. They may be able to earn something.”

“Where will they go?”

“Wherever it may be,” replied Ilyushka, who had in the meantime tied the horses under the shed, and had come up to his father. “The Kadma boys took eight troykas out to Eomen, and they made a good living, and brought back home thirty roubles for each troyka; and they say fodder is cheap in Odessa.”

“It is precisely this that I wanted to talk to you about,” said the master, turning to the old man, and trying to introduce the discussion about the farm as deftly as possible. “Tell me, if you please, is it more profitable to do hauling than attend to a farm?”

“No end more profitable, your Grace! “again interrupted Ilya, boldly shaking his hair. “There is no fodder at home to feed the horses with.”

“Well, and how much do you expect to earn in a summer?”

“In the spring, when fodder was dreadfully expensive, we travelled to Kiev with goods; in Kursk we again took a load of grits for Moscow, and we made our living, the horses had enough to eat, and I brought fifteen roubles home.”

“It is not a disgrace to have an honest trade,” said the master, again turning to the old man, “but it seems to me one might find another occupation; besides, it is a kind of work where a young fellow travels about, sees all kinds of people, and gets easily spoiled,” he said, repeating Karp’s words.

“What are we peasants to take up, if not hauling?” answered the old man, with his gentle smile. “If you have a good job at teaming, you yourself have enough to eat, and so have the horses. And as to spoiling, thank the Lord, they are not hauling the first year; and I myself have done teaming, and have never seen anything bad, nothing but good.” “There are many things you might take up at home : land and meadows— “

“How can we, your Grace?” Ilyiishka interrupted him with animation. “We were born for this; we know all about it; the business is adapted to us, and we like it very much, your Grace, and there is nothing like teaming for us fellows.”

“Your Grace, will you do us the honour to walk into the hut? You have not yet seen our new house,” said the old man, bowing low, and winking to his son. Ilyushka ran at full speed into the hut, and Nekhlyudov followed him, with the old man.

XVII

WHEN THEY ENTERED the hut, the old man bowed again, wiped off the bench in the front corner with the flap of his coat, and, smiling, asked : “What may we serve to you, your Grace?”

The hut was white (with a chimney), spacious, and had both hanging and bench beds. The fresh aspen-wood beams, between which the

moss-calking had just begun to fade, had not yet turned black; the new benches and beds had not yet become smooth, and the floor was not yet stamped down.

A young, haggard peasant woman, with an oval, pensive face, Ilya's wife, was sitting on the bench-bed, and rocking with her foot a cradle that hung down from the ceiling by a long pole. In the cradle a suckling babe lay stretched out, and slept, barely breathing, and closing its eyes. Another, a plump, red-cheeked woman, Karp's wife, stood, with her sunburnt arms bared above the elbows, near the oven, and cut onions into a wooden bowl. A third, a pockmarked, pregnant woman, stood at the oven, shielding herself with her sleeve. The hut was hot, not only from the sun, but from the oven also, and was fragrant with freshly baked bread. From the hanging beds the flaxen heads of two boys and a girl, who had climbed there in expectation of dinner, looked down with curiosity at the master.

Nekhlyudov was happy to see this well-being; but, at the same time, he felt embarrassed before these women and children who gazed at him. He sat down on the bench, blushing.

"Give me a piece of warm bread, I like it," he said, and blushed even more.

Karp's wife cut off a big slice of bread, and handed it to the master on a plate. Nekhlyudov was silent, not knowing what to say; the women were silent, too; the old man smiled gently.

"Really, what am I ashamed of? I am acting as though I were guilty of something," thought Nekhlyudov. "Why should I not make the proposition about the farm to him? How foolish! "But still he kept silent.

"Well, Father Dmitri Nikolaevich, what will your order be about the boys?" said the old man.

"I should advise you not to send them away, but to find work for them here," suddenly spoke Nekhlyudov, taking courage. "Do you know what I have thought out for you? Buy in partnership with me a young grove in the Crown forest, and fields— "

“How, your Grace? Where shall I get the money for it?” he interrupted the master.

“A small grove, for about two hundred roubles,” remarked Nekhlyidov. The old man smiled angrily.

“It would not hurt to buy it if I had the money,” he said.

“Do you mean to tell me you have not that amount?” said the master, reproachfully.

“Oh, your Grace!” answered the old man, in a sorrowful voice, looking at the door. “I have enough to do to feed the family, and it is not for me to buy groves.”

“But you have money, and why should it lie idle?” insisted Nekhlyudov. The old man became greatly agitated; his eyes flashed, he began to shrug his shoulders.

“It may be evil people have told you something about me,” he spoke in a trembling voice, “but, as you believe in God,” he said, becoming more and more animated, and turning his eyes to the image, “may my eyes burst, may I go through the floor, if I have anything outside of the fifteen roubles which Ilyushka has brought me, and I must pay the capitation tax, and, you know yourself, I have just built a new hut— “

“All right, all right!” said the master, rising from the bench. “Good-bye, people!”

XVIII

“MY GOD! MY God!” thought Nekhlyudov, making his way with long strides to the house through the shady avenues of the weed-grown garden, and absent-mindedly tearing off leaves and branches on his way. “Is it possible all my dreams of the aims and duties of my life have been absurd? Why do I feel so oppressed and melancholy, as though I were dissatisfied with myself, whereas I had imagined that the moment I entered on the path, I would continually experience that fulness of a morally satisfied feeling which I had experienced when these thoughts came to me for the first time?”

He transferred himself, in imagination, with extraordinary vividness and clearness, a year back, to that blissful moment.

He had risen early in the morning before everybody in the house, painfully agitated by some secret, inexpressible impulses of youth; had aimlessly walked into the garden, thence into the forest; and, amidst the strong, luscious, but calm Nature of a May day, he had long wandered alone, without thought, suffering from an excess of some feeling, and unable to find an expression for it.

His youthful imagination, full of the charm of the unknown, represented to him the voluptuous image of a woman, and it seemed to him that this was the unexpressed desire. But another higher feeling said to him, "Not this," and compelled him to seek something else. Then again, his vivid imagination, rising higher and higher, into the sphere of abstractions, opened up to him. as he thought, the laws of being, and he dwelt with proud delight upon these thoughts.

And again a higher feeling said, "Not this," and again caused him to seek and be agitated.

Without ideas and desires, as always happens after an intensified activity, he lay down on his back under a tree, and began to gaze at the translucent morning clouds, which scudded above him over the deep, endless sky. Suddenly tears stood, without any cause, in his eyes, and, God knows how, there came to him the clear thought, which filled his soul, and which he seized with delight, — the thought that love and goodness were truth and happiness, and the only truth and possible happiness in the world. A higher feeling did not say, "Not this," and he arose, and began to verify his thought.

"It is, it is, yes!" he said to himself in ecstasy, measuring all his former convictions, all the phenomena of life, with the newly discovered and, as he thought, entirely new truth. "How stupid is all which I have known, and which I have believed in and loved," he said to himself. "Love, self-sacrifice, — these constitute the only true happiness which is independent of accident!" he repeated, smiling, and waving his hands. He applied this thought to life from every side, and he found its confirmation in life, and in the inner voice which told him, "It is this,"

and he experienced a novel feeling of joyful agitation and transport. "And thus, I must do good in order to be happy," he thought, and all his future was vividly pictured to him, not in the abstract, but in concrete form, in the shape of a landed proprietor.

He saw before him an immense field of action for his whole life, which he would henceforth devote to doing good, and in which he, consequently, would be happy. He would not have to look for a sphere of action : it was there; he had a direct duty, — he had peasants —

What refreshing and grateful labour his imagination evoked : "To act upon this simple, receptive, uncorrupted class of people; to save them from poverty; to give them a sufficiency; to transmit to them the education which I enjoy through good fortune; to reform their vices which are the issue of ignorance and superstition; to develop their morality; to cause them to love goodness — What a brilliant and happy future! And I, who will be doing it all for my own happiness, shall enjoy their gratitude, and shall see how with every day I come nearer and nearer to the goal which I have set for myself. Enchanting future! How could I have failed to see it before?

"And besides," he thought at the same time, "who prevents my being happy in my love for a woman, in domestic life?" And his youthful imagination painted a still more entrancing future to him.

"I and my wife, whom I love as no one in the world has ever loved, will always live amidst this tranquil, poetical country Nature, with our children, perhaps with an old aunt. We have a common love, the love for our children, and both of us know that our destiny is goodness. We help each other to walk toward this goal. I take general measures, furnish general and just assistance, start a farm, savings-banks, factories; but she, with her pretty little head, in a simple white dress, lifted over her dainty foot, walks through the mud to the peasant school, to the hospital, to some unfortunate peasant, who really does not deserve any aid, and everywhere she consoles and helps — The children and the old men and women worship her, and look upon her

as upon an angel, a vision. Then she returns home, and she conceals from me that she has gone to see the unfortunate peasant, and has given him money; but I know everything, and I embrace her tightly, and firmly and tenderly kiss her charming eyes, her bashfully blushing cheeks, and her smiling ruddy lips— “

XIX

“WHERE ARE THESE dreams? “now thought the youth, as he approached his house after his visits. “It is now more than a year that I have been seeking happiness upon this road, and what have I found? It is true, at times I feel that I might be satisfied with myself, but it is a kind of dry, mental satisfaction. Yes and no, I am simply dissatisfied with myself! I am dissatisfied because I have found no happiness here, and yet I wish, I passionately wish for happiness. I have not experienced enjoyment, and have already cut off from me everything which gives it. Why? For what? Who has been better off for it? My aunt was right when she said that it is easier to find happiness than to give it to others.

“Have my peasants grown richer? Have they been morally educated and developed? Not in the least. They are not better off, but I feel worse with every day. If I only saw any success in my undertaking, if I saw gratitude — but no, I see the perverted routine, vice, suspicion, helplessness.

“I am wasting in vain the best years of my life,” he thought, and it occurred to him that his nurse had told him that his neighbours called him a “minor”; that there was no money left in his office; that the new threshing-machine, which he had invented, to the common delight of the peasants, only whistled but did not thresh, when it was for the first time set in motion in the threshing-barn, before a large audience; that from day to day he might expect the arrival of the agrarian court in order to take an invoice of the estate, since he had allowed payments on the mortgage to lapse, in his preoccupation with all kinds of new farm undertakings.

And suddenly, just as vividly as before, came to him the picture of his walk through the forest, and the dream of a country life; and just as vividly stood before him his student room in Moscow, in which he used to stay up late at night, by one candle, with his classmate and adored sixteen-year-old friend. They read and recited for hours in succession some tiresome notes of civil law, and, after finishing them, sent for supper, pooled on a bottle of champagne, and talked of the future that was in store for them. How differently the future had presented itself to a young student! Then the future was full of enjoyment, of varied activities, of splendid successes, and incontestably led both of them to the highest good in the world, as it then was understood by them, — to fame!

“He is walking, and rapidly walking, on that road,” thought Nekhlyudov of his friend, “and I— “

At this time he had arrived at the entrance of the house, where ten or more peasants and domestics stood, waiting for the master with all kinds of requests, and he had to turn from his dreams to the reality before him.

Here was a ragged, dishevelled, and blood-stained peasant woman who complained in tears of her father-in-law, who, she said, wanted to kill her; here were two brothers who had been for two years quarrelling about the division of their farm, and who looked upon each other with desperate malice; here was also an unshaven, gray-haired servant, with hands quivering from intoxication, whom his son, the gardener, had brought to the master, to complain of his dissolute conduct; here was a peasant who had driven his wife out of the house because she had not worked all the spring; here was also that sick woman, his wife, who sat, sobbing and saying nothing, on the grass near the entrance, and displayed her inflamed, swollen leg, carelessly wrapped in a dirty rag —

Nekhlyudov listened to all requests and complaints, and he gave his advice to some, and settled the quarrels or made promises to others. He experienced a certain mixed feeling of weariness, shame, helplessness, and remorse, and walked to his room.

IN THE SMALL room which Nekhlyudov occupied, stood an old leather divan studded with brass nails, several chairs of the same description, an open antiquated card-table, with incrustations, indentations, and a brass rim, on which lay papers, and an antiquated, yellow, open English grand, with worn, narrow keys. Between the windows hung a large mirror in an old gilt carved frame. On the floor, near the table, lay stacks of papers, books, and accounts. The room bore altogether a disorderly aspect, and was devoid of character; and this living disorder formed a sharp contrast to the affected, old-fashioned, aristocratic arrangement of the other rooms of the large house.

Upon entering the room Nekhlyudov angrily threw his hat upon the table, and sat down on a chair which stood in front of the grand, and crossed his legs and dropped his head.

“Well, will you have your breakfast, your Grace?” said, upon entering the room, a tall, haggard, wrinkled old woman, in cap, large kerchief, and chintz dress.

Nekhlyudov turned around to take a look at her, and kept’ silent for awhile, as though considering something.

“No, I do not care to, nurse,” he said, and again became pensive. The nurse angrily shook her head at him, and sighed.

“Oh, Dmitri Nikolaevich, why do you look so sad? There are greater sorrows, and they pass, — really they do— “

“But I am not sad. What makes you think so, Mother Malanya Finogenovna?” answered Nekhlyudov, trying to smile.

“Yes, you are. Don’t I see it?” the nurse began to speak with animation. “You are day in, day out, all alone. And you take everything to heart, and attend to everything yourself. You have even quit eating. Is this right? If you only went to visit the city, or your neighbours, — but this is an unheard-of thing. You are young, so why should you worry about everything? Forgive me, sir, I will sit down,” continued the nurse, seating herself near the door. “You have been so indulgent with them, that nobody is afraid of you. Is this the way masters do? There is

nothing good in it. You are ruining yourself, and the people are getting spoilt. You know, our peasants do not understand what you are doing for them, really they don't. Why do you not go to see your aunty; she wrote you the truth— "the nurse admonished him.

Nekhlyudov kept growing more and more despondent. His right hand, which was resting on his knee, fell flaccidly upon the keys. They gave forth a chord, a second, a third — Nekhlyudov moved up, drew his other hand from his pocket, and began to play. The chords which he took were sometimes unprepared, and not always correct; they were often common enough to be trite, and did not display the least musical talent; but this occupation afforded him a certain indefinable melancholy pleasure.

At every change of harmony, he waited in breathless expectancy what would come out of it, and, when something came, his imagination dimly supplied what was lacking. It seemed to him that he heard hundreds of melodies : a chorus and an orchestra, in conformity with his harmony.

But he derived his chief pleasure from the intensified activity of his imagination, which at that time brought up before him, disconnectedly and fragmentarily, but with wonderful clearness, the most varied, mixed, and absurd images and pictures from the past and future.

Now he saw the bloated form of Davydka the White timidly blinking with his white eyelashes at the sight of his mother's black, venous fist; his curved back, and immense hands covered with white hair, answering to all tortures and deprivations with patience and submission to fate.

Then he saw the nimble nurse, emboldened through her association with the manor, and he imagined her visiting the villages and preaching to the peasants that they must conceal their money from the proprietors; and he unconsciously repeated to himself, "Yes, it is necessary to conceal the money from the proprietors!"

Then suddenly presented itself to him the blonde head of his future wife, for some reason in tears, and in great anguish leaning upon his shoulder.

Then he saw Churis's kindly blue eyes, tenderly looking down upon his only thick-bellied little son. Yes, he saw in him not only a son, but a helper and saviour. "This is love!" he whispered.

Then he recalled Yukhvanka's mother, and the expression of long-suffering and forgiveness which he had noticed upon her aged face, in spite of her prominent tooth and abhorrent features. "No doubt, I am the first one to have noticed this, in the seventy years of her life," he thought; and he whispered, "It is strange," and continued unconsciously to run his fingers over the keys and to listen to the sounds they made.

Then he vividly recalled his flight from the apiary, and the expression of the faces of Ignat and Karp, who evidently wanted to laugh, but pretended that they did not see him.

He blushed, and involuntarily looked at his nurse, who remained sitting at the door, silently gazing at him, and now and then shaking her gray hair.

Suddenly there came to him the troyka of sweaty horses, and Ilyushka's handsome and strong figure, with his blond curls, beaming, narrow blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, and light-coloured down just beginning to cover his lip and chin. He remembered how Ilyushka was afraid he would not be permitted to go teaming, and how warmly he defended his cause, which he liked so well. And he saw a gray, misty morning, a slippery highway, and a long row of heavily laden, mat-covered three-horse wagons, marked with big black letters.

The stout-legged, well-fed horses, jingling their bells, bending their backs, and tugging at their traces, pulled evenly up-hill, straining their legs so that the sponges might catch on the slippery road. Down-hill, past the train of wagons, came dashing the stage, tinkling its little bells, which reechoed far into the large forest that extended on both sides of the road.

“Whew! “shouted, in a childish voice, the first driver, with a tin label on his lambskin cap, raising his whip above his head.

Karp, with his red beard and gloomy look, was striding heavily in his huge boots beside the front wheel of the first wagon. From the second wagon stuck out the hand-some head of Ilyushka, who, at the early dawn, was making himself snug and warm under the front mat. Three troykas, laden with portmanteaus, dashed by, with rumbling wheels, jingling bells, and shouts. Ilyushka again hid his handsome head under the mat, and fell asleep.

Now it was a clear, warm evening. The plank gate creaked for the tired teams that were crowded in front of the tavern, and the tall, mat-covered wagons, jolting over the board that lay in the gate entrance, disappeared one after another under the spacious sheds.

Ilyushka merrily greeted the fair-complexioned, broad-chested landlady, who asked, “Do you come far? And will you have a good supper? “looking with pleasure at the handsome lad, with his sparkling, kindly eyes.

Now, having unharnessed the horses, he went into the close hut crowded with people, made the sign of the cross, sat down at a full wooden bowl, and chatted merrily with the landlady and his companions.

And then his bed was under the starry heaven, which was visible from the shed, and upon the fragrant hay, near his horses which, stamping and snorting, rummaged through the fodder in the wooden cribs. He walked up to the hay, turned to the east, and, crossing himself some thirty times in succession, over his broad, powerful breast, and shaking his bright curls, he said the Lord’s Prayer, and repeated some twenty times the “Kyrie eleison,” and, wrapping his cloak around body and head, slept the sound, careless sleep of a strong, healthy man.

And he saw in his dream the city of Kiev, with its saints and throngs of pilgrims; Eomen, with its merchants and merchandise; and Odessa and

the endless blue sea with its white sails; and the city of Constantinople, with its golden houses, and white-breasted, black-browed Turkish maidens; and he flew there, rising on some invisible pinions. He flew freely and easily, farther and farther, and saw below him golden cities bathed in bright splendour, and the blue heaven with its pure stars, and the blue sea with its white sails, and he felt a joy and pleasure in flying ever farther and farther —

“Glorious! “Nekhlyudov whispered to himself, and the thought came to him, “Why am I not Ilyushka?”

The End